

Green

THE AUSTRALIAN GREENS magazine

MELBOURNE WAS NO ACCIDENT

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

UNWISE AID CUT

**STILL GREEN
& GROWING**

Thank you! Merci! Toda! Grazie! Danke sehr! Dankie! Do Jeh! Arigato! Gracias!

However you say it, thank you is a powerful sentiment. It's an expression of gratitude and recognition of a special deed.

When we started fundraising for the 2013 Federal Election campaign back in May 2012, we set ourselves an ambitious target. Three million dollars. \$3mil. \$3,000,000.

However you write it – that's a lot of money.

In the planning stages of the 2013 campaign, we knew that our positive Green message had to reach every voter in Australia.

We worked hard to prepare a campaign that was professional, targeted and well researched. For it to be delivered across the country, we knew that it was critical to raise \$3 million for a mass advertising campaign.

You may remember that the 2010 campaign was greatly bolstered by the one off donation of \$1.6 million from philanthropist Graeme Wood. Alongside our other fundraising efforts, we went to that election with just under \$3million in the coffers.

For the 2013 campaign there was no single \$1.6 million donor. There was YOU.

You responded to our letters, our phone calls and our emails.

We had:

**12,600 donors who made
22,000 donations
totalling \$3.3million**

Thank you!

The results of the 2013 Federal Election make it clear that now, more than ever, is the time to make sure the Green voice remains loud and strong across the country. While we have maintained our numbers in Parliament, we have also suffered a swing against us. This means that the States will receive less in electoral funding from the AEC.

But thanks to our supporters and our donors, we will continue to stand up for what matters.

Susan Sussems

National Fundraising Coordinator



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WE WELCOME YOUR RESPONSES TO ARTICLES AND IDEAS - EMAIL US GREENMAG@GREENS.ORG.AU

RESPONSE TO 'BOLD CAMPAIGNING: SMART CAMPAIGNING'

(ISSUE 40: Winter 2013)

I read the "Bold Campaigning; Smart Campaigning" article with great interest in the last edition of the *Green* magazine.

I was dismayed by the rather glib assertion that the landmark campaign to oppose plans for a massive gas hub just north of Broome was a) an environmental issue and b) brought onto the national agenda by the Greens.

The 'No Gas Campaign' has always been a community-based campaign led by Traditional Owners, with cultural and environmental heritage at its heart.

Yet this article doesn't even acknowledge the leadership of Goolarabooloo Traditional Owners in the campaign.

No mention of the authority of the Goolarabooloo in standing up for their country; their years of work fighting protracted and expensive legal battles; the leadership of a community blockade on-site.

The battle for Walmadan/James Price Point exposed the federal legislative shortcomings for Indigenous cultural heritage protection as much as environmental ones.

And though this article doesn't mention it, the work of the Greens in supporting this campaign was as much concerned with cultural values as it was environmental advocacy.

And it must be said, this was hardly a community campaign floundering in obscurity until the Greens brought it up in Parliament.

This was a campaign with all the ingredients to capture hearts and minds. A staunch community campaigning in imaginative and innovative ways. A landscape of heart-stopping beauty, a David and Goliath struggle of small remote community VS six huge mining companies. A contested native title claim and the threat of compulsory acquisition. Two years of sustained civil disobedience from a community campaign. The world's largest population of humpback whales cruising by to calve nearby, dinosaur tracks that make up a creation story of the Goolarabooloo. Fragments of threatened monsoon vine

thicket, the discovery of new species of dolphin, and endangered bilbies on-site. A pro-mining caricature of a Premier sending in 200 over zealous police to break the blockade...you can see there is plenty of reasons this campaign made it to the front page and stayed there.

I can't speak highly enough of the work of Greens MPs supporting this campaign.

Importantly, Rachel, Scott and other Greens have nurtured the establishment of a Kimberley Greens branch. The Kimberley Greens contested the recent state and federal elections with impressive results, on the most nominal of campaign budgets.

But the reason any of us outside Broome know about Walmadan/JPP and why it matters comes down to the Broome community. Credit where credit's due.

Kind regards
Emma Belfield*

** I lived in Broome for two years and took an active part in the 'No Gas Campaign'. Before that, I spent much of the last decade working for Green MPs and as a staffer and volunteer on numerous Greens election campaigns.*



TWEET ROUNDUP

HERE ARE SOME NOTABLE TWEETS FROM OUR SENATORS & MPS.

SCOTT LUDLAM

@SenatorLudlam

31 Oct

so now what. #14votes #1375votes
Retweeted 72 times

ADAM BANDT

@AdamBandt

30 Oct

"Prime Minister's Prize for Science" awards tonight in Canb. Good thing Parl House security doesn't screen for irony. *Retweeted by Scott Ludlam*

RACHEL SIEWERT

@SenatorSiewert

30 Oct

As expected the punitive approach to getting Aboriginal kids to school hasn't worked in the NT, time to change system to what community want.

CHRISTINE MILNE

@senatormilne

29 Oct

Great Barrier Reef World Heritage listing is at risk of "In Danger" label because of coal port developments. #auspol

CHRISTINE MILNE

@senatormilne

29 Oct

After ACT legislation, 700 couples ready to marry regardless of federal High Court appeal. Sad that Tas Leg Co can't see big opportunity.

RACHEL SIEWERT

@SenatorSiewert

28 Oct

Older workers on Newstart may face rest of their lives living in poverty. Need to end age discrimination, increase Newstart + better support

SARAH HANSON-YOUNG

@sarahinthesen8

24 Oct

Tony Abbott's decision to spend taxpayer \$ in High Court to stop #marriageequality is foolish and backwards

CHRISTINE MILNE

@senatormilne

9 Oct

3 million cubic metres of sludge dumped on Great Barrier Reef if Abbot Pt coal development gets go ahead. What does GBR mean to us all?

EDITORIAL

STILL GREEN & GROWING

When we started planning this issue of *Green* magazine with the Green Magazine Working Group only days after the federal election we were still waiting to see the outcome of many seats around the country. It is thrilling now to see that the Greens will return to Parliament with at least as many MPs as before, re-electing Adam Bandt, Sarah Hanson-Young, Peter Whish-Wilson, and welcoming the new Senator for Victoria Janet Rice. And at the time of writing, the AEC had just announced the result of the WA Senate recount; returning a win for Senator Scott Ludlam. What happens now though is anyone's guess with Palmer chafing at the bit to launch an appeal.

Also, in the short time since we started planning for this issue, the slew of brutal policies and announcements from the Abbott led government has been almost beyond belief; abolishing the Climate Commission while continuing its threats to repeal the price on carbon that the Greens worked so hard to deliver; shirking Australia's foreign aid commitments and terminating AusAID as an independent organisation; and continuing its sickening and inhumane approach to asylum seekers. We have invited contributors to write on a number of these issues in this, the final edition of *Green* for 2013 so I encourage you to take the time to read these and the other articles, and to share the publication with your friends and family.

But reading this issue of *Green* should be just the start. As we see in the 'Continuous Campaigning' and the 'Community Organising' articles, what we need to do now as members and supporters is to catch our breath after the hard fought federal election campaign, re-group, and organise ourselves to be a continued presence in the face of Abbott's government as the only political party that is standing up for what matters.

Catherine Green
Editor



Green

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The Australian Greens wish to acknowledge that we are on indigenous ground – this land is the spiritual and sacred place of the traditional owners and their ancestors and continues to be a place of significance. Further, we thank them for sharing this land with us and agree to respect their laws and lore.

ILLUSTRATION: NATALIJA BRUNOV'S

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So, Where To From Here?

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK IS BOTH HARD AND REWARDING. IT TAKES TIME AND PLANNING TO INVOLVE A MEMBERSHIP OF 10,000 PEOPLE IN A MEANINGFUL DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE GREENS. NOW THAT THE ELECTION IS OVER, **BEN SPIES-BUTCHER & CHRISTINE CUNNINGHAM** EXPLORE THIS SPACE THAT WE HAVE FOR A LONGER-TERM DISCUSSION.

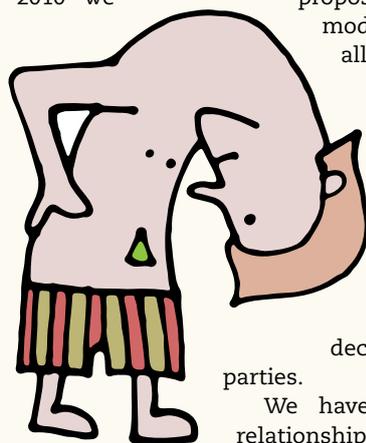
Each election cycle we undertake a significant review of the party. Following 2010 we adopted a national research framework, moved many of our staff to permanent employment and undertook a root and branch review of policy. Now, we are focusing on our constitution and governance.

The Australian Greens as a national party is now more than 20 years old and so too is our constitution. That original document allowed us to enact a unique form of politics in the Australian political landscape. We use consensus decision making procedures, we do not have entrenched factions, and while we have strong relationships with progressive unions, environment NGOs and wider social movements generally we do not allow these organisations to directly affiliate with us.

In the two decades since we came together as one national party we have grown, changed and outstripped our beginnings. Our party is now firmly entrenched throughout all levels of government in our Australian parliamentary system of representative democracy. This success has brought new challenges. How do we ensure our local, state and federal parties act together to promote a just and sustainable world? How do we meaningfully engage not only the 1,000 members we had at our birth, or the 10,000 members that we have now, but also the hundreds of thousands of people who share our vision? How do we better use technology to aid that conversation?

Our constitutional founders foresaw tensions and possibilities in the document they designed. We are a confederation of states and territories which, simply put, means national bodies have less power in decision making than state and territory bodies have. This reflects a strong commitment to grass roots decision making and local autonomy amongst many of our founders. This confederacy is reflected in our governance. Our constitution cannot be changed without consensus, meaning no state party can be overruled. Delegates to national meetings come relatively evenly from all states, with only a modest adjustment to recognise the significant disparity in number of members across the country. And many decisions about issues such as budgets, pre-selection and preferences are solely the domain of state, local / regional parties.

Over time, many Greens have proposed changes



to this model, in various directions. Some have proposed moving to a more proportional model of decision making; others to allow the constitution to be changed more easily without the consent of some states; some want to open our meetings and processes to the public and not only members; others to create a stronger coordination body (sometimes called an executive); and others to allow local groups and members a more direct say over important decisions, rather than through state

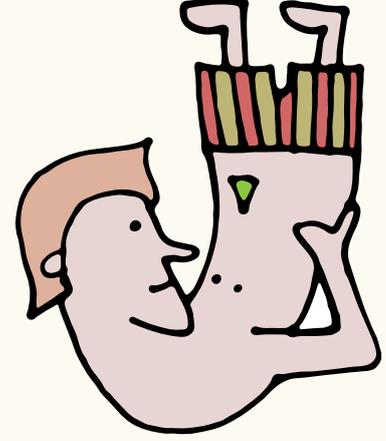
parties.

We have also had long debate over the relationship between our parliamentarians and the broader party in relation to policy, campaigning and our model of leadership. Our party room rules are mentioned only briefly in the constitution and were adopted by vote, without consensus, by National Conference in 2005. Since then a number of states have adopted different models for their own parliamentarians, and we have long planned a review.

Over time, as our party has grown we have adapted to the gaps and tensions in our constitution by writing specific by-laws and setting precedents. The roles of our two main coordinating bodies – the AG Coordinating Group (AGCG), which looks after party administration, and the National Election Campaign Committee (NECC), which runs the election campaign – have evolved. NECC is now a permanent standing committee where once it only existed for a few months before an election. The jobs of our office bearers now regularly go beyond the very modest roles set out in the constitution. And at the 2012 National Conference we initiated a shift from the election of a single party convener to a co-convenership model with a gender quota; something done without a formal change in the rules but which mirrors leadership models in other Greens parties internationally.

The Constitutional Review offers us an opportunity to take stock and reflect on these challenges and changes in a coordinated way. It also allows us to ask hard questions about how we more effectively promote social change. How do we best engage our members? How do we model the behaviour we seek to implement? And how do we best communicate our message through a corporate dominated media increasingly focused on short term personality disputes and scandal?

The Review was established in 2012 with a



Constitutional Committee established with a membership of representatives from all our states and territories and the federal party room. This group has been meeting regularly, has invited member submissions and has collected and collated a detailed and extensive array of information about our current party functioning. These details are in the appendices of the National Conference bundle which are currently being disseminated to all of you via your local/regional groups.

Alongside this, the AGCG has been working with the University of Sydney on the first ever independent survey of the members and supporters of an Australian parliamentary party. We hope this helps us all understand who we are and how we can grow. While debates about democratising parties have hit the headlines recently, in the Greens this process has been going on for well over a year.

At our November National Conference in Brisbane we discussed the findings of the Constitutional Review and these surveys, and decided the next steps in the process.

As a member you can read through the submissions that have been made and the preliminary findings of our surveys. State parties will be discussing the proposals at their next state meeting. So this is your opportunity to have your say, through your local and regional groups and your state party.

There are two specific proposals to consider: having another member survey specifically focused on the key questions that have come out of the constitutional review, and establishing a deliberative democracy process to develop proposals to change the constitution. Our timeline means next year will be dedicated to workshopping specific proposals, which we hope will be decided at the next National Conference in 2014. Hopefully this is the beginning of a vigorous debate.

Alongside this two other important reviews will take place. We will discuss our next three-year budget. This sets out the financial framework for the years ahead, our staffing levels and many of our organisational priorities. The draft budget is now with local and regional groups for you to review. A great success of the last three years has been a dramatic increase in our fundraising capacity, but we are also faced with a smaller pool of electoral funds following the 2013 election.

The other is our election review. Each state and local campaign has been busy with its own review of the election. These reviews feed into our national review, undertaken by NECC. NECC will be presenting a number of proposals that address the challenges we now face.

In many cases the changes members may want to see will involve changes to the budget, campaigning and the constitution, which is why we think it is important all these processes are discussed at Conference.

“...offers us an opportunity to take stock and reflect on these challenges and changes in a coordinated way.”

As we decide the next steps in our constitutional review process and plan for the year ahead, the ultimate question of our constitutional review, and the one we are asking all members to consider, is:

How can we make sure all of our states, territories and party rooms can eventually sit around a table and reach consensus on the creation of an updated constitution?

Our rules are clear. The constitution explicitly states that change can only come through consensus. Consensus is the only way forward. Fortunately the process has had the support of all state parties and the strong support of our parliamentary team and leader Christine Milne. That is a good start. The proposals demonstrate we have different ideas of how to proceed. However, consensus does not mean shying away from hard questions. Rather it is about provoking serious and considered debate, thinking through the implications of change, and being creative in addressing concerns.

Having serious debates in political parties is becoming increasingly difficult. One only has to look at the centralisation and decline of dissent in both major parties; where refugee policy changes without any notice and even a member ballot is contested by candidates in furious agreement. This reflects weaker parties, disconnected from their supporters, focused only on gaining the short-term allegiance of an increasingly disillusioned public.

If we are to promote real change we need strong foundations. We need to mobilise tens of thousands to our cause and millions to our vision. Our founders thought that could only be done with a participatory party. It's why grass roots democracy is one of our four pillars. But participatory politics only happens when we all get involved. So let's make it happen. ▲

Ben Spies-Butcher & Christine Cunningham are the Australian Greens Co-Convenors

POWER TO THE PEOPLE: COMMUNITY ORGANISING

WHILE COMMUNITY ORGANISING IS NOT A NEW APPROACH TO ACHIEVING SOCIAL CHANGE, IT IS BECOMING AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT TOOL FOR ADVOCACY AND CAMPAIGNS ACROSS AUSTRALIA, WRITES **HOLLY HAMMOND**.

Community organising builds power through gathering people with shared interests to take collective action. This approach recognises that significant social change tends to come about through the coordinated action of a number of people, rather than by isolated individuals.

Organising aims to shift relationships of power. From this approach all negative impacts on a community can be understood as a result of a lack of power. For example, where workers are divided and do not act collectively through a union they tend to receive lower pay and poorer conditions.

Organising does not focus energy on educating a target (decision-maker) in the merits of a policy; rather organising aims to show the target that adopting a particular position is in their political interests, by avoiding negative pressure and potentially winning support through the change. As Frederick Douglass, 19th Century US civil rights activist wrote, 'Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.' So the challenge is not to convince Tony Abbott that climate change is real, but that failure to act on it will result in political repercussions.

Some of the characteristics of an organising approach to social change include:

'Organisers organise organisations' - The role of an organiser is to develop relationships with people and connect them to an ongoing representative organisation which is capable of winning change.

Strategy - Having a clear path from the current situation to the desired outcome is key to community organising. Strategic analysis can identify political opportunity where there is greatest potential to shift power relationships and win outcomes for constituents.

An emphasis on direct communication - Direct communication such as one-to-one conversations shift people's thinking and move them to action. Tactics that use this focus include door-knocking and outreach phone calls.

Listening to people and identifying their concerns, motivations and values - For example, when campaigning for renewable energy you may meet someone who is primarily motivated by jobs and regional development. You could leverage those concerns into action for renewable energy - but if you focused on convincing that person to support renewable energy because of the need to reduce carbon emissions you may quickly lose their interest.

Recruitment - Growing the number of people involved in an organisation who are prepared to take action. If an organisation isn't growing it is shrinking,

simply due to natural turn-over.

Training and development to build capacity to work together and take action - There are many barriers to effective action including confidence and skills-gaps. Overcoming these barriers through targeted development increases the effectiveness and power of an organisation.

Developing leadership - To have an impact it isn't enough to just increase the number of people involved. People need to be prepared to take increasingly influential action, such as moving from signing a petition, to volunteering to door-knocking, to coordinating a team. Developing leaders allows action to be 'scaled', as information flows for example between active volunteers, neighbourhood organisers and regional organisers (depending on the organisation's structure). Leadership need not be interpreted hierarchically, but as many people with defined roles taking responsibility for making things go well.

Like organises like - The best results for engaging people involves connecting them with people from their own community, background or with particular shared values or interests. Knowing your people is key - by mapping a community and the relationships within it, engaging community leaders who can influence a number of people, and managing data to ensure targeted communication.

Organising is a well-established approach to social change in the USA, with many paid community organisers who may move between different movements and community campaigns with a transferable skill-set. Saul Alinsky is considered the founder of modern community organising, and his book *Rules for Radicals* (published in 1971) continues to influence organising practice today. Community organising has received a lot of exposure through the two presidential campaigns of Barack Obama. 'Obama style organising', developed in part by Marshall Ganz, emphasises personal story-telling and relationship building.

In Australia organising is becoming increasingly apparent as an approach to social change, particularly in workplace organising (through the activities of many trade unions), electoral organising (as demonstrated by the two following case studies from Adam Bandt and Simon Sheikh's campaigns) and community issues campaigns (such as *Your Rights at Work* and *100% Renewables*).

*Holly Hammond is the Director of Plan to Win
plantowin.net.au*

CASE STUDY 1

HOW MELBOURNE GOT ORGANISED

To re-elect Adam Bandt in Melbourne, we estimated we'd need 5833 new votes. It seemed like a big task, but by breaking it down and working methodically our people-powered campaign won Melbourne over.

Our campaign was focused on connecting with people across shared values. We organised in this way and talked directly to voters to cut through the barriers that prevent many people from voting Green. Time and again we heard people had switched their vote because someone from Adam's team had come to their door and engaged them in a meaningful conversation about their values and the issues they care about.

We mapped win numbers for each neighbourhood and worked out how many attempts at voter contacts were required to generate enough conversations to start shifting voters' support to the Greens. To support our ambitious voter contact plans, we aimed to recruit a decentralised network of volunteer organisers who could drive our campaign across 17 neighbourhoods with an organiser for each area coordinating a small team of volunteers. We planned for teams to be made up of a few core members who could coordinate key activities including doorknocking, phone banking and data entry (pictured).



It wasn't easy and it wasn't until about a year out from Election Day that we managed to recruit two solid and committed neighbourhood organisers for our priority neighbourhoods. Their first steps were to hold house meetings with local members, and organise one-on-one meetings with supporters to build the relationships that would become the foundation of their team.

Our newly formed teams (often consisting of only one person to start with) were encouraged to take action immediately by organising their first voter contact events. I was there to support the first few voter contact events of each newly formed neighbourhood team but once a neighbourhood team was set up it was their responsibility to organise all aspects of voter contact events; finding a venue, posting the event to our website, recruiting volunteers, training new volunteers, and reporting back on every phone call, door knocked and conversation. The central campaign team provided basic support including training on strategy,



MARY-ANN PARKER, MELBOURNE

Your Role in the lead up to the election?

I was the Collingwood Neighbourhood Coordinator (seat of Melbourne) which involved coordinating and organising volunteer events in Collingwood. Mostly our events were door-knocking and phone-banking but we also had stalls, team meetings, electorate-wide days of action and people doing placard delivery. I was responsible for organising events, recruiting volunteers, making sure we had the data and resources we needed, making sure people had training and debriefing with volunteers after events. An important part of my role was making sure everyone had a positive experience and felt their efforts were making a difference.

Positive things to come out of this election?

Of course Adam Bandt retaining the seat of Melbourne!! The volunteer experience was also incredible and I was so impressed by the training that created a relaxed yet purposeful atmosphere – this was present throughout the entire campaign. I feel privileged to have had the opportunity to be involved and, wherever I can in the future, I am eager to use the community organising that made the campaign so successful.

What will you be doing over the next three years to stand up for what matters?

I've always voted Green but had never been particularly active. Now, since being involved in such a positive and successful campaign, I have made a three-year-election-resolution to be as actively involved as I can on the issues I care about. In fact, in the last few weeks I have already found myself joining the east-west tunnel picket to stop test drilling. In terms of a specific long term plan though, I haven't decided on one just yet!

Number one action for the Greens in the first 100 days of government?

Protecting the successes of the previous government on climate change; ensuring that climate change remains on the national agenda and also empowering people with concrete actions they can take to show their support for the price on pollution and oppose Tony Abbott's plans to scrap it.

What direction should we head in now?

I think the Greens can grow their number of lower house seats in future elections by using the same campaign strategy of mobilising volunteers. However, I think the party also needs to find ways to further boost their publicly perceived economic credentials if they are to really take on the old parties.

CONT...

organising and conversation, plus a neighbourhood organising manual and training guides.

In early 2013, as the campaign started to ramp up, we realised that our neighbourhood teams would need more support so we recruited four regional organisers to support the development and tactics of our neighbourhood teams. This model allowed our campaign to grow when the election was called and volunteers started joining exponentially. We prepared our teams to be ready for this, so we were able to harness all the new volunteers and get them talking to voters immediately.

In six months, our organisers and the 584 volunteers involved in the campaign made 24,213 phone calls, and knocked on 51,750 doors.

The people of Melbourne appreciated us reaching out to them. And our volunteers can't wait to do more – 98% of them said they found their campaign experience positive and are open to working with us in the future.

We'll be working together over the next three years to fight Tony Abbott's brutal agenda and protect the climate action we all worked so hard to achieve.

Kajute O'Riordan was Adam Bandt's Lead Community Organiser for the 2013 Federal Election campaign.

CASE STUDY 2

THE ACT GREENS SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGN

As part of the ACT Greens Senate election campaign, over 800 people knocked on doors, letterboxed, volunteered on stalls, put signage in their front yards, cooked food for volunteers, billeted volunteers, and made phone calls to voters.

Community organising is about relationship building. It operates on the principle that in order to grow, we need to share a common purpose and be committed to each other. In the eight months leading up to the election, we did a number of things to achieve this.

ONE-ON-ONE MEETINGS

Having a one-on-one meeting is structured (but informal) and usually took place between our Volunteer Manager (or equivalent) and a potential volunteer or member to determine:

1. Why the individual is interested in joining the party or campaign?
2. Are there any barriers to the individual's involvement?
3. How does the individual think they can participate in the campaign or party?

One-on-ones gave us information to move forward in a way that was meaningful for us and the new volunteer. The 'one-on-one' also establishes trust and commitment between the new volunteer and the party - personal relationships hold far more weight than an online volunteer sign up form. One-on-ones were held at various stages throughout the campaign to check in with volunteers that they hadn't encountered any obstacles, that they were being offered enough (not too much, not too little) volunteer opportunities and pathways to involvement, and to reiterate the purpose of their involvement and why we were all a part of the campaign.

REGULAR SOCIAL AND TRAINING EVENTS

During Simon's campaign we held a series of 'Meet Ups' (strategy days where the campaign strategy was explained to party members, supporters and volunteers and people joined regional teams), movie nights (both fundraisers and social events), skill shares (e.g. Obama-style campaign training) and regional strategy planning evenings.

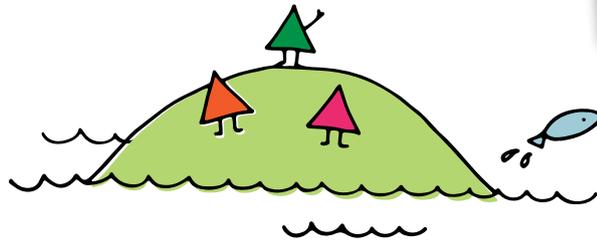
Our volunteers, supporters and members who formed our campaign were involved for a variety of reasons. Some were fulfilled and satisfied with campaign activities such as doorknocking and phone banking but were looking to the party or campaign to help them grow their skills and social networks. That's why it was important for us to provide opportunities for growth and social events.

CONSISTENT 'ASKS'

The number one reason why people do not join campaigns or political parties is because nobody asks them to. The most important part of community organising is asking for people's involvement. During the ACT Senate campaign we asked volunteers to do everything from standard doorknocking, stalls, phone banking through to cooking food for our full time volunteers, billeting interstate volunteers in their homes, and MCing events for us.

Finally, it was crucial for us to use the social events, campaign activities, trainings and one-on-ones to continue to reiterate and reinforce the purpose of people's engagement. Every volunteer, supporter and member should have in the forefront of their mind "I am volunteering because...". This is not only a personal motivator but it becomes the heart of the story they share with family, friends and colleagues to explain why they are campaigning and why, in turn, their friends, family and colleagues should consider also engaging with the campaign. ▲

Sophie Trevitt was the Media Adviser for Simon Sheikh's campaign



Greens Across the Seas

WHILE THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE AUSTRALIAN GREENS HAS BEEN DOMESTIC POLITICS OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS, SOME OF OUR NEAREST NEIGHBOURS HAVE ALSO BEEN EXPERIENCING GREAT DEVELOPMENTS IN THEIR GREEN PARTIES, WRITES **RATHI RAMANATHAN**.

Green parties are spreading across the globe, including more locally in the Asia Pacific Region. Work of the Australian Greens in supporting this development is being undertaken by our International Development Committee (IDC) which is working actively with the Asia Pacific Greens Federation (APGF - now incorporated in Australia).

The IDC manages and administers funding received from the AusAID 'Australian Political Parties for Democracy Program' (APPDP) to assist Green parties and organisations in other countries develop their capacity.

"The International Development Committee's impact is far-reaching, from cultivating good governance across the Asia-Pacific region to uplifting individuals such as myself... dedication to developing leadership integrity where it's really needed - to leverage individuals, political groups and environments". - TAIWANESE GREENS. KELI YEN

Members of the IDC have extensive experience and expertise in Official Development Assistance (ODA) and this helps the committee ensure at least 70% of the APPDP funding is directed to ODA countries.

Some specific outcomes of this funding include:

- Saraket Hijau Indonesia (Indonesian Greens) - has recruited 100 new women members in four provinces in South Sumatra, West Java, Southeast Sulawesi and Central Sulawesi, increasing the membership of women from 600 to 700 out of a total membership of 3210. Indonesia is holding elections in 2014, and female candidates will be encouraged and supported to enter politics.
- Partido Kalikasan (Philippine Greens) significantly increased its capacity to register as a national political party in the Philippines through the expansion of party branches. The party also fielded candidates for the local election in Laguna province in October 2013.
- The Green Party Solomon Islands - At the party's second Convention, party members endorsed the new constitution, developed and refined its governance procedures and policies, elected a new executive, and is currently pre-selecting candidates for general elections in 2014. Half of the newly elected executive committee are women.

- Green Civil Society (GCS) party in Kathmandu, Nepal - Provision of funds for staff and a computer to the youth-based GCS resulted in regular consultations and evidence-based policy and consensus on endorsing policies in the final version of the Green Book. The Green Book is now a key tool for outreach to increase membership and educate the public on green issues.
- Six representatives from the Asia Pacific region (including the secretary of APGF, Rior Santos) took part in an IDC organised election study tour to Perth and Sydney and will take new knowledge and skills back to their respective parties.

Meanwhile the APGF, armed with an interim board and a new constitution, is now able to carry out its own fundraising activities. A new board will be re-elected to take over from the interim board at the upcoming 3rd APGF Congress to be held in Batangas, Philippines from March 14-16, 2014 (see details below).

The APPDP programme, now entering its third year of implementation, will focus on providing core funding for staff of emerging Green parties so they are able to carry out project management, community organising, and education in a sustainable way to support upcoming Green political activities and candidates across the region. ▲

Rathi Ramanathan is the International Development Officer for the Australian Greens, a position funded by the grant from AusAID.

ASIA PACIFIC GREEN FEDERATION CONGRESS

The 3rd APGF Congress will be hosted by Philippine Greens and will be in Batangas (south of Manila) on March 14-16, 2014.

The theme of the Congress is 'From Grassroots to Government'.

All Australian Greens' members are welcome to attend and it will be a great opportunity to understand what is happening in our region. The organising committee is also **looking for speakers and people to run workshops** as part of the Congress.

More details are on the Asia Pacific Greens web site at: <http://www.asiapacificgreens.org/apg-congress/2014/Home>

We need to keep up the conversation about climate change

In the few short months since the September federal election we have witnessed the beginning of what will be brutal and sustained attacks from the Abbott Government on climate change action.

With the Climate Commission abolished, criticism of the Direct Action Plan from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change being arrogantly dismissed, and a promise to repeal the price on pollution, it is up to the Greens to keep action on

climate change firmly on the agenda.

Many readers will have seen David Suzuki on Q&A on ABC TV on 23 September discussing climate change. Below are four great questions asked by audience members.

Green magazine is asking readers for their response to the questions in 300 words or less. Reader contributions will be published in the next issue of the magazine. Email greenmag@greens.org.au ▲

How can we as scientists sell to the general public that we apply cautious language because of the implications not because of our reservations?

- GREG STEINBAKER,
ECOLOGIST

In most of human history's narratives the good guys always win. And I am just wondering because it seems like the good guys are having such trouble at the moment up against their enemy, big carbon bullies. I'm wondering what plot twists do you think are possible at this point to capture the public imagination and turn this Grimm fairytale around and give us the happy ending we are all craving?

- NELL SCHOFIELD

How can we best shift the political debate from ideology and economic self-interest and back to science and an evidence base?

- DANIEL MAINVILLE,
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER

The doom and gloom around environmental and social issues can demotivate people and make them feel like the problem is beyond their control. What lessons can you share from around the world about how we can change that and help people achieve positive change for a more compassionate and sustainable future despite where our governments are leading us?

- NINA HARDY

MELBOURNE : NO ACCIDENT

THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA TOLD US THAT IT WAS A LUCKY FLUKE THAT ADAM BANDT WON THE SEAT OF MELBOURNE A SECOND TIME. BUT AS **SAM LA ROCCA** EXPLAINS, THIS WIN WAS NO ACCIDENT.

In the face of a national swing against the Greens of over 3%, Melbourne managed to lift our primary vote by 7% and record the highest Green Senate vote of any federal division at just under 35%. Greens results in Melbourne did not come by chance. We researched, analysed, prioritised and planned our campaign. We were willing to make the hard decisions about not just what to do, but what not to do, and then we worked really hard to make it happen. So what can other Greens' campaigns learn from our experience?

In 2010, Adam made history and won Melbourne with a primary swing of 13%. But in 2013 we expected the old parties to collude on preferences, which meant we needed to hold our base and lift our primary if we were going to win in our own right. It was ambitious - something no other minor party has done before.

The result in Melbourne was no accident. There were a range of factors that led to the result we got including strong support for Adam, disappointment with the old parties and our investment in effective communications including outdoor advertising. But the critical factor was our planned grassroots community engagement strategy.

The first thing we did was identify our win number - exactly how many votes we needed to retain the seat - 5833, or just over a 5% swing on top of last time. Then we worked out where these votes could come from in terms of demographics and geography. Which voters were most open to us? Which voters did we need to shift? What is important to these voters? We used publicly available information such as that from the ABS, looked at our booth-by-booth voting patterns, and conducted focus groups to better understand the communications challenges that Adam and the Greens face in building support.

Once we had identified which Melbourne voters might be willing to shift, we developed an outreach strategy to be rolled out over the three years to communicate directly with them. We knew we needed to shine a light on Adam's track record in parliament and the Greens commitment to looking after people and the environment. We also had a good story to tell about what Adam had done to stand up for Melbourne's values and his work for individual constituents.

We also knew we needed to build a people-powered campaign to compete with the old parties' deep pockets and the media's two-party political perspective. So our election campaign strategy in the final year focused on one-to-one community organising to make voters the heroes of our campaign and deliver our message. We worked out how many doors we had to knock on and how many phone calls we had to make to have enough meaningful conversations directly with voters. We knew that one of the most powerful ways to connect with people is by volunteers sharing why they support Adam and the Greens, so we worked out exactly how many volunteers we needed to make all those calls



and knock on those doors, and then we went out and recruited them.

In the end almost 600 people volunteered on Adam's campaign and we did our best to train them from the start so they all knew what our strategy was, their role in it, and how to do what we were asking them to do. If they were going to commit, we knew our volunteers needed to trust in our numbers and feel confident they could have effective conversations with the community. And we did. So much so that more than 90% of the people who answered our volunteer survey said they had a good time and will come back for more. Which is good because there is so much more to be done. ▲

Sam La Rocca is Adam Bandt's Chief of Staff.

Is there a difference between a member & a supporter?

WITH OVER 10,000 MEMBERS AND MANY MORE SUPPORTERS OF THE GREENS, WHAT DO WE REALLY KNOW ABOUT THESE TWO GROUPS AND WHY DOES IT MATTER? IN THIS ARTICLE, **DR STEWART JACKSON** COMPARES THE PROFILE AND POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF AUSTRALIAN GREENS PARTY MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS.

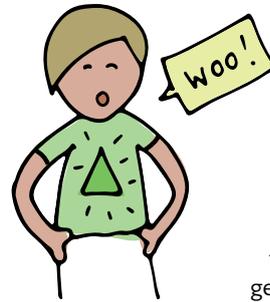
Over the last few years, you may have noticed ongoing and quite public discussions about the declining membership of the major parties, the collapse of branch structures, and the desperate need for parties to revitalise their membership and structure. For the ALP this has meant trying to rebuild their membership from the historical lows of 36000 members only a few years ago. Such political party membership decline is a worldwide phenomenon.

The Australia Greens have been able to look on with interest, as the Greens' membership has grown steadily over 20 years to now sit at well over 10,000. However, little is known about who the party members are, and even less is known about the Greens' supporters. Supporters in particular are important as they are now being seen by other parties, in Australia and across the western world, as an antidote to the decline in membership.

Over the last nine months Australian Greens' members and supporters have been surveyed to establish what, if any, is the difference between their political motivations and activity levels. What might be expected to be found is that members will show a stronger set of party-oriented obligations, values and benefit-expectations, while supporters would be more engaged in outreach and financial support – being considerably more numerous than party members.

So, with this as a starting point, all members with an email address (about 8700 people) and a sample of active and inactive supporters (9700 between the two supporter groups) were surveyed. 3650 responses were received from this pool of 18400 people, an overall response rate of just under 20%.

Perhaps surprisingly, members and supporters look remarkably similar. The average age for both is 53, although inactive supporters are slightly younger than active supporters. Women are marginally more represented amongst supporters, and most amongst inactive supporters. All had similar levels of education – 80% have a university degree, among whom 8-10%



have PhDs. Neither the membership nor supporter base are at all ethnically diverse, and the bulk (65%) live within a capital city.

Ideologically, supporters, whether active and inactive, are much closer to members than to Green voters or the general public, indicating that they are not a 'moderating' force on the party. On political strategy, members and supporters do diverge on the role and importance of the environment in campaigns, although both see a focus on upper house representation as critical (and supporters particularly so).

Importantly, while members and supporters may think and look alike on a political and demographic basis, the role of supporters is far less clear. Supporters would very much like to have a say in particular aspects of party functioning (such as policy determination and candidate selection) at opposite rates to members who would oppose supporter involvement. Indeed, members are quite unequivocal in suggesting that while supporters are good for attracting people to the party, they should not have a say in the general running of the party. While this may be understandable from a member's perspective, it also means the party gains little from supporters, and supporters are not encouraged to deepen their involvement with the party. At a time when both the ALP and National Party are looking at ways to expand supporter activities within their respective parties, through such activities as community pre-selections, this may act to stymie enthusiasm for the Greens. So while supporters might be seen as an antidote to declining memberships elsewhere, their role within the Greens needs to be carefully considered. ▲

University of Sydney researchers Dr Stewart Jackson and Dr Anika Gauja undertook survey research of the Australian Greens members and supporters in 2012-13. Their findings will be presented in detail to the 2013 Annual Conference of the Australian Greens.

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POST ELECTION Q&A



KATRINA BERCOV, PERTH WA

Your Role in the lead up to the election?

I was the Outreach Coordinator (full time for about 5 months) working with the WA campaign team. 'Outreach' refers to community engagement and grassroots activities that support our campaign such as training, information stalls, doorknocking, volunteer coordination and events, and supporting regional groups. The Greens WA had never had someone in that role before. Although Outreach activities have occurred in past elections we have never had the benefit of a full time staff member to focus exclusively on that area.

Positive things to come out of this election?

There was a real groundswell of community support and we saw hundreds of hardworking volunteers who were truly committed to sharing the Greens message and getting Scott elected. I was so privileged to work with them!

A few highlights of this campaign were:

- Scott Ludlam's WA 2.0 which really reached people and demonstrated that the Greens are the only party with a comprehensive plan to renew our state
- The establishment of the WA Young Greens as a new group
- A bunch of 15 amazing lower house candidates who all did us proud
- Our comedy event with Claire Hooper was a real highlight. It attracted a large number of people from outside our traditional supporter base and raised urgently needed funds

What will you be doing over the next three years to stand up for what matters?

Grassroots campaigning and also offering training opportunities to the many new members who were attracted to the Greens during the campaign.

Number one action for the Greens in the first 100 days of government?

I am very concerned that our hard won victory on the carbon price may come undone. I hope the Greens can work with other parties in the Senate to help retain it.

I also hope for a strong Green voice on key issues like the dumping set to destroy the Great Barrier Reef, reversing the cuts to single parent payments and ending cruel refugee detention. Locally I'd love to see a light rail for Perth and action on affordable housing.

What direction should we head in now?

It's hard not to feel depressed about facing the 'Abbott Years' but we need to focus on building our capacity as an organisation and skilling up the entire social justice and environment sectors to face the challenges ahead.

SEE THE ASYLUM SEEKER PROBLEM HERE?

THE ASYLUM SEEKER POLICIES INTRODUCED BY THE ABBOTT GOVERNMENT POST-ELECTION WERE SWIFT AND BRUTAL AND AIMED TO REMOVE THE HUMAN ASPECT FROM THE ISSUE ENTIRELY.

MISHA COLEMAN EXPLAINS THE REALITY OF THESE NEW POLICIES AND WHY THIS DISCONNECT BETWEEN RHETORIC AND REALITY IS SO DANGEROUS.

Juxtapose the two images above and it highlights the problem Australia faces in the growing divergence between rhetoric and reality.

First, the 'tough as nails' image is portrayed by the new Immigration Minister Scott Morrison in his first 'Operation Sovereign Borders' briefing, flanked by his newly minted Commander and official paraphernalia.

Juxtapose this with the image of stateless Rohingya children fleeing constant anti-muslim attacks, often incited by leading Buddhist figures within Myanmar, in what Human Rights Watch is calling 'a systemic campaign of ethnic cleansing'.

See the problem? Not once, not even as an aside, has the new Government said one word of compassion in response to the plight of those who seek asylum in Australia. Our common humanity is waiting to break through the current discourse on this profoundly moral issue.

The most newsworthy talking point that emerged from Minister Morrison's first briefing was the proposal to cease regular reporting on new boat arrivals or any 'operational' aspects of the new policies, except at the discretion of the commanding officer and during set-piece briefings. As Minister Morrison justified it, "this briefing is not about providing shipping news to people smugglers."

It was instructive that the media soon reported ridicule from a people smuggler jailed in Indonesia, quoted as saying "that's a stupid policy. The politicians are wasting their time...This new policy can work only if the Abbott minister buys all the satellite phones in Indonesia (like they want to buy the scrap boats)."

And that is the crux of the ongoing challenge now faced by refugee advocates and people of faith working in this area, speaking truth and breaking through what the Very Reverend Dr Peter Catt (a Member of the Churches Refugee Taskforce) identified and described as the "Pocket Universe reality."

So what are these Coalition plans? Let us step through the new refugee journey, as it might be imagined under the new policies:

1. YOU WILL NEVER TO REACH AUSTRALIAN WATERS (LET ALONE LAND)

Firstly through early detection and disruption by working with the Sri Lankan Government to stop boats leaving, schemes in Indonesia such as 'buying back the

boats', paying Indonesian villagers to be the 'eyes and ears' for Australian authorities, offering bounties for valuable information, and placing more AFP officers within neighboring countries.

Secondly at sea. Turning back boats, interceptions where asylum seekers will be taken to transit ports (such as in Indonesia) or transferred directly by sea to an offshore processing location such as Manus or Nauru. Significant investment will also be made regionally in surveillance equipment, planes, and technology including that which enable bio-metric data on asylum seekers to be recorded and shared.

Asylum seekers are being framed as 'criminals' or 'security threats'. And the intent is to never allow asylum seekers to enter Australian jurisdiction. As the initial diplomatic efforts with Indonesia and their strong reaction suggest, the complex, dangerous and nuanced practicalities belie the policies. We should hold grave fears for 'turn backs' in particular. Of the 12 attempted turn backs under the Howard Government, only four were 'successful', and many deaths were attributed to these.

2. IF YOU REACH AUSTRALIA YOU WILL FACE AN INCREDIBLY DIFFICULT REFUGEE CLAIM PROCESS

The Refugee Review Tribunal will be replaced with a non-statutory system in which DIAC officials are both primary decision maker and reviewer. As part of this approach, a 'fast track' system will be implemented based on the UK model to quickly assess and remove people. However it is not yet clear whether this will also include commensurate safeguards, or merely cherry pick the more punitive measures.

Legal professionals Jane McAdam and Ben Saul suggested in a recent article that this proposal will "degrade administrative decision-making, undermine accountability of public power, and leave refugees in a permanent state of psychological and legal limbo. ...it will create enormous and expensive bureaucratic inefficiencies by flooding the courts with claims for judicial review."

The removal of funded legal assistance will be replaced with self-help kits in appropriate languages. Pro-bono legal services can be offered to those who are lucky enough to figure out how to ask for and access them. But with these resources already immeasurably stretched across the country, this system will be overwhelmed. These combined policies are Kafkaesque in the difficulty they pose to asylum seekers to access a 'fair go'.



3. IF YOU ARE IN OR REACH AUSTRALIA YOU FACE A LIFE IN LIMBO

For those lucky enough to navigate the system and be found to be genuine refugees, Temporary Protection Visas (TPVs) will be reintroduced. The devastating effects of TPVs on people's psychological health and wellbeing was well documented during their use between 1999-2007. With forced separation from family, a ban on family reunion, and the constant threat of repatriation – this was described by one researcher as amounting to a 'hope deficit'.

4. YOU ARE SENT OFFSHORE? OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND

As for Australia's return to offshore processing, much has been written about this flawed system. The UNHCR described the PNG agreement in terms that amount to diplomatic damnation stating it was "troubled by the current absence of adequate protection standards and safeguards... [and] [t]hese include a lack of national capacity and expertise in processing, and poor physical conditions within open-ended, mandatory and arbitrary detention settings. This can be harmful to the physical and psycho-social well-being of transferees, particularly families and children."

Another legal commentator, Alex Reilly has noted that these arrangements "...constitute an ambitious legal, social and cultural experiment that ...will prove difficult to implement in practice. As criticism from the international community mounts and stories of poor conditions in detention and psychological trauma of detainees increase, these arrangements could unravel quickly".

For those intercepted in Australian waters there is a new 'rapid turn-around' procedure to send asylum seekers offshore within 48 hours. Previously they would have been subject to proper health and security checks in Australia. The Australian Medical Association has expressed great concern, pointing out that not only does this risk compounding existing mental health issues, but many people are also affected by diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria. A spokesperson for Asylum Seekers Resource Centre also noted that since Manus was reopened "a substantial number have had to be transferred back to Australian hospitals for healthcare because effectively the [Immigration] Department got it wrong. We also know that of the six pregnant women who were transferred to Manus, three of those women lost their babies. That's a 50 per cent miscarriage rate."

The interception and transfer of asylum seeking individuals and families arriving by boat will continue apace. However factual and truthful information about how Australia is treating these desperate people seeking our protection may not. If this new era of refugee policy 'succeeds'- at least in the short term - many people may continue to come, and be sent away, and Australians may be none the wiser. ▲

Misha Coleman is the Executive Officer of the Australian Churches Refugee Taskforce and is on the Board of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, the peak body for Australian NGOs which operate in the international aid and development sector. She was formerly CEO of Anglican Overseas Aid and has extensive experience working in the regions from which people flee as asylum seekers and refugees including Palestine, Ethiopia, Kenya, Vietnam and Cambodia.

Do Something!

READ

Politicians bending reality on refugees: church leader
tinyurl.com/kkr6huc

Strong Reaction to policies by Indonesia
<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2013/09/25/indonesia-warning-over-asylum-boat-turnbacks>

Border Death database
artsonline.monash.edu.au/thebordercrossingobservatory/publications/australian-border-deaths-database/

Hope deficit
theconversation.com/back-to-the-future-on-temporary-protection-visas-17316

UNHCR critical of Australian policy
tinyurl.com/lgnbk8y

Alex Reilly – Where to now for refugee policy
theconversation.com/where-to-now-for-asylum-seeker-policy-under-tony-abbott-18010





AUSTRALIAN YOUNG GREENS CONFERENCE

WITH A THEME OF 'ORGANISING TO WIN', THE VICTORIAN YOUNG GREENS HOSTED THE AUSTRALIAN YOUNG GREEN NATIONAL CONFERENCE WITH A STRONG FOCUS ON BUILDING THE CAMPAIGNING AND ORGANISING SKILLS OF DELEGATES WRITES **JAMES SEARLE**.

With an election looming, the Victorian Young Greens organised the conference and speakers to focus on organising volunteers and campaign teams including lessons from the recent presidential campaigns in the US, how Adam Bandt's campaign team were using these to retain the seat Melbourne, as well as inspirational discussions from seasoned campaigners.

During the first day we were very lucky to have Bob Brown speak to us about his long history of activism and campaigning and what makes a successful campaign. Following the session with Bob Brown we ran a workshop focused on planning Australian Young Greens action in the lead up to the election. This resulted in a four week national action campaign strategy, successfully implemented by the AYG (see box for details of this campaign).

On the second day we were joined by Greens Leader Christine Milne who was our keynote speaker. Senator Milne discussed with delegates her history of successful campaigning and spent time answering many questions from the audience. This session with Senator Milne led into a series of workshops about campaign messaging strategy and a discussion about third-party politics.

A Victorian MPs panel in the afternoon of the second day gave delegates the chance to hear debate and discussion between Adam Bandt and Richard Di Natale as well as Greg Barber, Colleen Hartland and Sue Pennicuik from the Victorian State parliament.

Following this we had a comprehensive campaign planning workshop presented by Victorian Greens' Campaign Manager Kymberlie Dimazantos where delegates were led through planning a campaign from scratch.

Our last session for the day was a surprise visit by Senator Scott Ludlam who led an informal discussion on the various digital rights campaigns in which Scott has been crucially engaged.

The final day of the conference began with a social media strategy workshop by anti-homophobia campaigner Jason Ball followed by a youth leadership presentation from Victorian Greens State Director (and Founder of the Centre for Sustainability Leadership) Larissa Brown.

We held workshops on the 'Organising to Win' approach taken by the Melbourne campaign and on

the Australian Young Greens Terms of Reference and how it should be amended. Our final session was about women's involvement in the Greens run by lead Senate candidate (and now Senator-elect) Janet Rice.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The conference was well attended, with 55 young Greens members coming from almost every state and territory. Feedback for the organising sessions was overwhelmingly positive.

The most significant outcome of the conference was our four week national action campaign. The campaign consisted of a specific action to be taken in each week leading up to the Federal election. While some states were able to implement the four-week campaign more successfully than others, this was seen as a good start to the AYG's national organising and a great template for future campaigns. ▲

James Searle is the Co-Convenor of the Australian Young Greens and a member of the Australian Greens Victoria.

4 WEEK NATIONAL ACTION STRATEGY

WEEK 1

Recruitment stage; talk to 5 friends who are not Green voters about why you're voting Green

WEEK 2

Make our impact; Photo petition with Greens "I care about clean energy/education/refugees/marriageequality/the environment" signs

WEEK 3

Take to the streets Twitter storm; talk to people about what they care about it and tweet under #thismatters

WEEK 4

Spread our message; forums on digital rights, uni cuts, and climate change.



We Can't Afford 'Two Steps Forward, One Step Back' on Global Warming

WITH AUSTRALIA'S HISTORIC PRICE ON POLLUTION AT RISK THERE IS NO TIME FOR CAMPAIGN FATIGUE, WRITES GREENS LEADER **CHRISTINE MILNE**.

We can't afford 'two steps forward, one step back' on global warming. With Australia's historic price on pollution at risk there is no time for campaign fatigue, writes Greens Leader Christine Milne.

Why do Australians, despite living in one of the sunniest and windiest places on Earth, still get most of our energy from dirty black stuff in the ground? Why do we put our precious agricultural land and water at risk in the process?

The standard response is that fossil fuels are cheap. But of course, they simply aren't. This is especially the case when you factor in government subsidies and the costs to future generations of increased droughts, floods and extreme weather.

The real answer lies somewhere within a complex web of politics and vested interests determined to protect their mega coal profits. Thankfully we finally began the dangerous task of taking them on in the last parliament.

"Scientists are as certain that it's caused by human pollution as they are that cigarettes cause cancer."

Australia's price on pollution and the billions that came with it for clean energy was historic. We finally began to turn the ship around.

Solar arrays popped up on rooftops across the nation. People marched for Port Augusta to go solar thermal. Energy efficiency was improved on farms, at factories and in lounge rooms.

We kick-started the long over-due shift away from

fossil fuels to solar and wind. After only a year we're already seeing results. Pollution from the energy sector is down 6%. Jobs in new clean industries are up. Australia's leadership is helping drive stronger global action.

We took a big leap forwards, but now Mr Abbott's agenda puts all of this at risk.

It feels like the new government is living on a different planet to the rest of us. The world's leading experts have issued their clearest assessment yet that global warming is unequivocal. Scientists are as certain that it's caused by human pollution as they are that cigarettes cause cancer.

But in its first few months, the government has pressured NSW to lift restrictions on polluting coal seam gas, made a deal with Campbell Newman to fast track coal mines and coal ports, sacked our best climate scientists, and all but claimed victory in a battle to tear down our polluter pays, price on pollution.

This is where the Greens come in. Australia would not have had meaningful action on global warming without us. Now it's up to us to defend it.

The hard reality is that on global warming, we simply cannot afford two steps forward, one step back. It could take decades to recover the gains we've made if momentum is lost.

Labor politicians are busy talking about themselves. We will keep them to their promises and be the true opposition on global warming. An uncertain Senate means our courageous and steady hand will be all the more important.

The Greens will stand against PM Abbott's reckless global warming policy void. Stand with us. Not a single step back. ▲



THE DEEP CUTS TO INTERNATIONAL AID ANNOUNCED BY ABBOTT PRIOR TO THE ELECTION NOT ONLY THREATEN TO IMPACT SOME OF THE WORLD'S MOST VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES, BUT THEY ALSO MAKE POOR ECONOMIC SENSE WRITES **ALISTAIR GEE**.

In a surprise pre-election announcement, the Coalition cut \$4.5 billion from Australia's aid program. These cuts will have a terrible impact on the world's poor and represent a shirking of our international responsibilities as one of the wealthiest countries in the world.

As well as being morally reprehensible, these cuts are fiscally unwise. Australian aid helps support people displaced as a result of conflict and instability in developing countries (who host 90% of the world's refugees). It helps provide protection for people who would otherwise be forced to seek asylum in Australia and elsewhere. Cutting the aid budget means we can expect to spend more treating the symptoms of instability rather than addressing the underlying causes.

Given the Coalition's obsession with asylum seeker arrivals in Australia, we would have hoped they'd had the wisdom to see that prevention is far better, and cheaper, than the cure.

Before Joe Hockey made the official announcement it wasn't hard to predict that a new Coalition

government would slow the growth of the aid budget. However, the scale and the immediacy of the cuts have been shocking and were largely unexpected by the aid sector.

Despite claims that the \$4.5 billion would come from a reduction in promised growth (rather than actual cuts), \$653 million of real money has been slashed from this year's aid budget.

This not only breaks the Coalition's commitment to reaching 0.5% of national income spent on overseas aid by 2015 but, with a twist of the knife, will take our aid spend from 0.37% in 2013 down to 0.32% by 2015.

This means the Coalition will be responsible for the first reversal in aid growth since Australia signed on to support the Millennium Development Goals under Prime Minister John Howard.

Overall, while the cuts might fulfil the government's short-term domestic political priorities, both Australia and the world's poor will suffer in the long run.

Australian aid helps vulnerable communities to be safer. A large proportion of Australian aid is spent in countries where there are significant numbers of



refugees and other displaced people. Up until now, Australia was one of only six countries that directed a majority of its aid to communities in these 'fragile' or conflict-affected countries.

In Sri Lanka, Australia is the fourth largest donor of aid (\$47 million in 2012-13). The Australian aid agency, AusAID's, core objective here is to help rebuild communities affected by the conflict in order to stop the cycle of conflict and poverty.

This means building schools, de-mining farmland and providing seeds and farming equipment to help people re-build local economies and communities. In essence, Australian aid is helping to create a more stable and peaceful country, which in turn prevents people from needing to seek asylum in Australia and other countries.

By contrast, the government spent \$1.5 billion maintaining Australia's shockingly unjust detention network in the last financial year, which included funds diverted from the international aid budget. If the Coalition wants to reduce overall government expenditure, cutting the aid budget is not the answer.

To cut from the aid budget is shortsighted. Conflict will continue to happen if the root causes are not tackled head on. The cuts will direct aid away from programs that prevent conflict and will be extremely damaging for countries like Sri Lanka which are now slowly starting to recover after decades of trauma and economic hardship as a result of conflict.

Our aid programs help promote stability thereby reducing conflict and violence. They foster environments in which communities can genuinely develop. For example, AusAID also supports Act for Peace's Girls' Education Program in Laghman province, Afghanistan.

This program works with leaders in the community to change attitudes; explaining the value of girls' education and encouraging parents to send their daughters to school. It trains teachers and provides basic equipment like tables, chairs, and blackboards.

For girls, going to school means they will grow up with the power to earn a decent living and support themselves and their families. It gives them the power to stand up to discrimination, to confront injustice and to play an active role in building a more peaceful society.

After years of military investment in Afghanistan, it is critical to continue programs such as these that will help the country emerge from decades of conflict and rebuild. They will help stabilize communities and allow them to prosper and help reduce the number of people forced to seek safety overseas.

Aid cuts represent a broken promise to the world's

poor: There have been many global agreements to spend a higher proportion of national income on overseas aid. The first global target of 1% was suggested by the World Council of Churches in 1958.

Australia most recently committed – along with many other developed nations – to increase aid spending to 0.7% of GNI by 2020 with an interim target of 0.5% by 2015.

“Conflict will continue to happen if the root causes are not tackled head on.”

Many other countries have already achieved this, including Sweden, Norway, Luxemburg, Denmark and the Netherlands, and the UK is close behind. UK Prime Minister David Cameron reinforced his country's commitment despite its current economic woes: “We won't balance books on the backs of the poor. Charity begins at home, but it does not end there.”

Australia isn't a small player either. We are the world's eighth largest donor of overseas aid – \$5.2 Billion in 2012. However given we are also the fifth-richest country per capita and rank second in the UN's human development index, we shouldn't stop there. We have a moral responsibility to the world's poor to share this abundant wealth.

This should not come with caveats either.

Our new Prime Minister delivered a second surprise last month with the announcement of plans to reintegrate AusAID back into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).

A leaked memo to AusAID and DFAT staff also indicates that the objective of the aid budget will again be shifted to focus on promoting our national interests, stating that “Australia's aid program will promote Australia's national interests through contributing to international economic growth and poverty reduction.”

We don't know how much aid will be diverted to boost trade rather than reduce poverty. But we can expect that there will now be a disruptive and expensive transition period ahead for Australia's aid programs.

With uncertainty now hanging over all Australian aid programs, we hope that policy makers realise that supporting vulnerable and conflict-affected communities to rebuild is both a moral obligation and a good investment for Australia. ▲

Alistair Gee is Executive Director of Act for Peace, the international aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

PARTICIPATORY ECOLOGY

BE IT, OR LOSE IT! HUMAN BEINGS NEED TO SEE THEMSELVES AS PART OF ECOSYSTEMS, OTHERWISE THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS WE HAVE CREATED WILL CONTINUE TO ACCELERATE
WRITES GREENS SUPPORTER, **RUSSEL EDWARDS**.

ECOSYSTEMS AND DEATH

“Do we have to have so many bad ones?” asked the well-meaning teacher. We were being taken through a role-play of ecosystem interactions at a science teachers’ conference. A great activity, by the way. Each of us represented a species. We were tossing a ball of wool between us in order to form a representation of the web of relationships in an ecosystem. With each toss of the wool the thrower declared what type of interaction the new link in the web represented. Naturally, the most common type of interaction was predation.

To this teacher, and a handful of others who concurred, predation is ‘bad’.

As environmentalists, you and I value ecosystems. But in all ecosystems, predation is rampant. If one animal death by predation is bad, then the mass killing that ceaselessly occurs in every natural ecosystem is indescribably evil.

Furthermore, this ‘evil’ is the rule, not the exception. Exploitative relationships between organisms are fundamental to ecosystems. All species except for plants rely completely upon some form of predation in order to provide the materials to build their bodies and the energy to power them. Plants kill each other, too, through competition. Mutualism exists, but even that is inherently extractive; its motivation (through selection pressure) is the getting, not the giving.

That’s just how ecosystems are. If we value ecosystems, we cannot possibly find overwhelming evil in the processes that underpin them. Either we’re wrong to value ecosystems or, when all things are considered, death in the context of ecology is good. Death provides food to other organisms. Death frees resources for future generations, an essential component of a sustainable, finite system. Death makes way for reproduction and the creation of genetic diversity. Death before reproduction provides selection pressure, shaping diversity into evolution. As Gary Snyder says, “There is no death that is not somebody’s food, no life that is not somebody’s death.”

Most people understand that ecosystems function this way. Yet, as the story above illustrates, many people remain deeply uncomfortable with predation. The usual response is denial - the conception of ecosystems as a harmonious cooperative of peaceful creatures. A denatured nature, as in *Bambi* or *Finding Nemo*.

Where is the harm in this comfortable fantasy? Firstly, hidden beneath the denial is a deep-seated ambivalence about nature as it actually is. Secondly, this fantasy writes humans out of

ecosystems: if it is bad to prey or be preyed upon, to consume or be consumed, then the most important modes of ecosystem participation are illegitimate and the only ethical choice is alienation.

BE IT OR LOSE IT

It is a truism in the environmental movement that environmental protection is a matter of love it or lose it.

But for me, the need goes further: we must be it or lose it. We must see human beings as part of nature; as animals living in ecosystems, being part of ecosystems. Until our culture makes this shift, the ecological crisis we have wrought will continue to accelerate. Not until we identify with nature will we truly protect ecosystems, not merely as we would a prized possession, but as we would a family member.

This is not just my point of view. It is central to the worldview of many indigenous cultures and is prominent in the environment movement. “Human beings are part of the natural world,” affirms the opening sentence of the Australian Greens Environmental Principles Policy. Identifying humans primarily as ecosystem participants is a pillar stone of the broad-based deep ecology movement, with particular emphasis given to this aspect by writers Gary Snyder and Paul Shepard. It is also the starting point of ecofeminist analysis for Australian philosopher Val Plumwood, who identifies the human/nature dualism of Western culture as the source both of the ecological crisis and of our “denial of human inclusion in the food web.”

This is a message that has been out there for decades, but has failed to gain traction beyond environmentalists. Why is this? To me, the answer is clear. Our daily existence is not ecological. It is socio-cultural, and increasingly, economic. Our ecosystem interactions are totally mediated by distant third parties. We seldom even enter wild ecosystems, and when we do, we piously ‘look but don’t touch’.

We live in denial most especially of death. In our own deaths, we strive to deny ecosystems the feast of our corpse. Even so-called green burials exclude scavenging animals, restricting the bounty to microbial decomposers. Perhaps the greatest ecological travesty of all, our food is commodified and distributed by networks of strangers, denying proper ecological realisation both to humans and to the organisms we eat. As Val Plumwood put it, “all our food is souls.” Due respect to the gravity of such an ecological exchange

Do Something!



READ

The Eye of the Crocodile by Plumwood, V.
Man in the Landscape by Shepard, P.
The Practice of the Wild by Snyder, G.

surely demands that both parties participate, consciously and directly.

To genuinely see ourselves as ecosystem participants requires, obviously, that we actually participate in ecosystems. Directly. In hands-on ways that reignite the genetic memory we all possess of humankind's natural ecosystem roles. Those roles evolved over millions of years to equip us not as economic consumers, or even as farmers, but as hunter-gatherers. To participate authentically in ecosystems, at least occasionally (and always sustainably) we must enter intact wild ecosystems and spend some time obtaining our basic needs from them. We must find shelter there, gather wood and warm ourselves by a fire there. We must sleep there, eat and excrete there. And crucially, what we eat must come from there. We must forage and we must hunt.

Ah, the sharp drawing of breath. It's a sound I'm sadly familiar with since I came, some years ago, to the realisation above, quit being vegan and took up hunting. There isn't space here to pre-empt the criticism this will draw. I'll let my argument above stand for itself.

POLICY REFORM NEEDED

Australia desperately needs what the Greens alone have to offer: a genuine commitment to govern in the best interests of society and the environment, un beholden to big business or narrow self-interest. But when it comes to ecosystem participation, its policy positions fall short.

We must defend the right of every creature, including humans, to engage in a full range of natural ecosystem interactions. Greens policy demands this when it comes to non-human animals, but support for human ecosystem participation is lacking. The Environmental Principles policy should be augmented to explicitly support sustainable, direct ecosystem participation, including extractive activities such as non-commercial (subsistence) foraging, hunting and fishing, with this being linked to the existing opening Principle that "human beings are part of the natural world." This basic ecological right should be extended to everyone, not just indigenous people.

To support this change, it is necessary to remove an overt attack on this right that currently stands in Greens policy. The Animals policy calls for "a ban on recreational shooting of all animals." Presumably this would apply to conscientious subsistence hunters. Speaking for myself, "recreation" - literally to create anew - is a fair description of the spiritual renewal I find in ecosystem participation. And shooting is the most humane method of hunting available to me.

For this reason, conscience prevents me from becoming a member of The Greens at this time. But I really hope that those members who can see even a kernel of truth in this position will recognise a rights violation when they see it, and speak up to rectify it. I look forward to the day when I can join the fold. ▲

POST ELECTION Q&A



CR NEIL JONES, ORANGE CITY COUNCIL

Your Role in the lead up to the election?

As a member of the Central West Greens campaign committee, a small, yet dedicated committee of seven, I was involved in organising a campaign, media relations and planning for election-day in the electorate of Calare in NSW. Calare is predominantly a rural farming and grazing electorate of 30,526 sq km - an enormous area to cover.

Positive things to come out of this election?

Quite frankly, not many! Although, personally, I feel stronger than ever in my resolve to be a voice for regional cities, towns, farms, rural communities and the environment which will all suffer from Coalition policies and actions. A drop of 25% in first preference Green votes in Calare was disappointing. In my view this is attributable largely to a perception from middle age and older former supporters that the Greens had failed to push hard enough on environmental and sustainability issues; issues that drew them to the Greens at previous elections, and that the Greens had become too closely aligned to the Labor Party. The election result also reinforced my belief that policies and election strategies must be supported by the endorsement of candidates who have strong connections with their local communities.

What will you be doing over the next three years to stand up for what matters?

My focus over the next three years will be to help reinvigorate Greens' membership in regional and rural NSW. I will also be working to show leadership and activism on climate change, renewable energy and environmental sustainability in the face of coal seam gas and mining expansion, natural resource abuse and exploitation, and federal legislative changes. The voice of regional Australia must be taken to Canberra with more direct action. The opportunity to capitalise on increasing community concern through the promotion and expansion of the Country Greens network must be acted on.

What direction should we head in now?

The Greens must return to greater grass roots contribution by members to develop policy and, more importantly, the implementation of policy by elected representatives at local, state and federal level. While the development of positive and progressive policies across the political spectrum are important to the broad acceptance of the Greens as a viable alternative, the Greens must respect and never lose sight of its origins and the issues that resonate with the people who share our vision for a healthy environment and a caring society.

KEEP STANDING UP

WITH THE 2013 FEDERAL ELECTION NOW BEHIND US, IT'S TIME TO TAKE STOCK AND REFLECT ON OUR ACHIEVEMENTS, AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT – AND FACE THE CHALLENGE OF CONTINUING TO STAND UP FOR WHAT MATTERS. BY **ANNA CHANG** AND **ERIN FARLEY**.

With a new Tony Abbott led right-wing government many people will be facing the next three years with a mixture of fear and trepidation. But with the new challenge comes new opportunity for Greens' members and supporters to galvanise, rebuild and continue making a difference.

Less than 100 days into the new Government, Tony Abbott's Coalition has already demonstrated the need for a strong Greens voice to stand up for what matters in Parliament.

While much of the rest of the world is moving forward with action on climate change, Tony Abbott is taking Australia backwards so it was no surprise that one of his first acts in government was to abolish the Climate Commission.

The attack on our environment has also stepped up with the Coalition agreeing to hand power over environmental approvals to the Queensland government. This MOU signed between Tony Abbott and Campbell Newman will make it much easier for damaging industrial development and mining to proceed in Queensland, including along the Great Barrier Reef coast.

Tony Abbott's brutal, secretive agenda is now playing out with the re-introduction of temporary protection visas for refugees and a veil of secrecy regarding the plight of people being held in camps administered by

Australia. And despite words from Malcolm Turnbull about conscience votes, Attorney General George Brandis has wasted no time in initiating a High Court challenge to new equal marriage laws passed recently by the ACT Government.

All of these issues and more mean that 2016 represents a new challenge and a new opportunity. Standing up to Tony Abbott and defending all our seats in 2016 will mean reaching out to more voters and the community in new ways. With state elections in Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria all scheduled within the next twelve months, plus a likely by-election in Western Australia now, members across the nation need to be campaigning continuously. What we have learnt from the campaigning efforts of local groups, branches and MPs offices in the lead up to the election – particularly the Melbourne electorate – is the importance of developing strong connections with our local communities. Our task is to ensure all our work tells a story not just about the choice at each election, but the broader vision of the caring society we want to be.

Anna Chang is Communications and Campaigns Adviser for Senator Christine Milne & Erin Farley is the Campaigns and Liaison Officer for Senator Christine Milne

DON'T GO HOME, GET ACTIVE!

FOUR ISSUES THAT WE NEED TO KEEP CAMPAIGNING FOR UNDER THE COALITION

THE REEF

THE GREAT BARRIER REEF IS UNDER GRAVE PRESSURE from new port expansion driven largely by coal and gas development. This is on top of existing pressures such as poor water quality and storm damage.

The Queensland LNP is rolling out special treatment for mining companies and fast tracking approvals for five mega-ports and millions of tonnes of dredging and dumping in the Reef's waters.

The Federal Coalition has just signed a Memorandum of Understanding to hand back responsibility for major development approvals to Queensland, including those that will damage the Reef.

In the Whitsundays, the local federal MP George Christensen is threatening legal action on a tourism operator for speaking up against dredging and he is urging the Minister to approve the Abbot Point dredging and dumping project as quickly as possible.

Under the Coalition, we have no choice but to run

ongoing, strong, publicly focused campaigns. Our continuous campaign will use all peaceful means available to us, but especially community organising, media and digital engagement.

Under Abbott, like under the last Government, we are all going to have to continue the campaign and fight hard for the Reef.

Felicity Wishart is the Australian Marine Conservation Society's Great Barrier Reef Campaign Director. Visit amcs.org.au OR fightforthereef.org.au

EQUAL RIGHTS

OCTOBER 22, 2013 IS A DAY THAT HISTORY WON'T FORGET. On that day the ACT Legislative Assembly passed the Marriage Equality Bill 2013.

I was there in the assembly as this happened. I listened to the ACT Chief Minister, Katy

Gallagher and the Green Member for Molonglo Shane Rattenbury as they spoke in favour of the bill. I cried, too, as Deputy Chief Minister Andrew Barr choked back emotion, struggling to express how much this meant to him.

I first joined the Greens in 2008 and have since dabbled with unions, NGOs, grassroots collectives and election campaigns to try and create change. And it's hard sometimes to know what difference it really makes.

But on October 22 I saw the difference it can make. If the ALP and the Greens didn't have a majority in the ACT Legislative Assembly, this bill would not have passed. It's that simple.

I relocated to Canberra in April 2013 to work on the 'Simon Sheikh for the Senate' campaign. I door-knocked extensively and was saddened to meet many people who felt that politics was irrelevant to them, that nothing ever changed. And after seeing the Liberals' Zed Seselja win the second senate seat, it might have been easy to believe their doubts. But on October 22, something did change. People in the ACT, regardless of their sexual orientation, now have the right have the right to marry the person they love.

I have seen the power of politics and continuous campaigning myself – and the power of the Greens – to achieve justice.

In future parliaments there will be Greens politicians and I will have played a part in making this so. Someday soon our federal parliament will end marriage discrimination for good. I'm glad to be a part of this.

Joel Dignam works with the ACT Greens and blogs at ScitNecessitas.com

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NO EVENT HAS DEALT A GREATER BLOW to the morale of refugee advocates than the 7 September election of the Abbott government. And our fears have been justified with a swiftness that has been breathtaking. In the

first eight weeks of the new government, we have seen the reintroduction of temporary protection visas, a huge increase in people being returned to danger through the so-called 'enhanced screening' process, and hundreds of people being exiled to PNG and Nauru, including unaccompanied children, and heavily pregnant women. The relevant department is now called the Department of Immigration and Border Protection. The Minister has made an order that bureaucrats in the Department refer to asylum seekers arriving by boat as 'illegals'.

Through all this, we cannot see through a shroud of secrecy that has been drawn over the people desperately seeking safety on our shores. The weekly briefing on 'Operation Sovereign Borders' is whatever the Minister wants it to be and numbers are concealed. Slogans are regurgitated. Policies are inflexibly applied. Facts are obfuscated and fabricated. And the cruelty marches on, sight unseen but for the vital reportage of

heroic citizen journalists, writing through the fences of Australian detention centres, and observing – person by person – the movement of human traffic from the landing strips of Nauru and PNG.

It is not illegal to seek asylum. Government propaganda and bloviating will not change that fact. It is the role of those who are concerned about refugee rights to ensure that next time Australia votes the electorate cannot be bought by cheap political slogans and the inflammation of this country's ugly xenophobic underbelly. We can do better than this.

Jessie Taylor is a Barrister and refugee advocate.

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FIREFIGHTERS WORK IN CONDITIONS THAT MOST OF THE PUBLIC TRY TO FLEE. We often put our lives on the line. We understand that our job is dangerous by its very nature.

Firefighters do not profess to be scientists or climate change experts but based on our experience, fire seasons are getting longer, with more protracted and intense bush fires and we are also facing other more extreme weather events.

In Victoria for example, research by the CSIRO and the Bushfire Council found that a "low global warming scenario" will see catastrophic fire events happen in parts of regional Victoria every five to seven years by 2020, and every three to four years by 2050, with up to 50 per cent more extreme danger fire days. However, under a "high global warming scenario" catastrophic events are predicted to occur every year in Mildura, and firefighters have been warned to expect up to a 230 per cent increase in extreme danger fire days in Bendigo.

Unfortunately, the scientists are advising that no matter what we do, a "low global warming" scenario is almost inevitable and so we must make fire plans accordingly.

A National Institute of Economic and Industry Research report commissioned by the UFU, found that that the number of firefighters employed in Australia will need to grow by about 35% or 3566 firefighters by 2020 just to keep pace with extreme weather events such as fire and floods and taking into account forecasted population growth.

The recent debate on climate change and bushfires got very hot, but it is clear something is going on. Without the required increase in firefighters and the necessary infrastructure there will be tragic loss of life, huge loss of property and interruption to business and the community. We will be asking firefighters to put themselves at an unacceptable risk.

It is better to prevent an emergency than to have to rescue people from it.

There needs to be a consistent and cohesive approach to policy and planning to meet these challenges. ▲

Peter Marshall is national secretary of the United Firefighters Union of Australia.

Christine's Column

DEAR MEMBERS,

FIRSTLY, I WANT TO THANK YOU AGAIN. BECAUSE OF THE PASSION AND COMMITMENT OF OUR MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS, WE RETURN TO PARLIAMENT WITH AT LEAST AS MANY MPS AS BEFORE, RE-ELECTING ADAM BANDT, SARAH HANSON-YOUNG, PETER WHISH-WILSON, AND WELCOMING THE NEW SENATOR FOR VICTORIA JANET RICE. WE ARE ALSO HOLDING OUR BREATH ON A HIGH COURT CHALLENGE AND POTENTIAL BY-ELECTION IN WA – MORE ON THAT LATER.



With most polls declared now, it's clear we have had a tough federal election.

Cate Faehrmann in NSW, Adam Stone in Queensland, Simon Sheikh in the ACT and Warren H Williams in the NT are all candidates of the highest calibre and they ran excellent campaigns. They deserved to get elected and our Parliament and party is worse off because they were not.

On behalf of Greens across the nation I pay tribute to Cate, Adam, Warren and Simon. We should all thank them for their dedication, passion and for the sacrifices they made for the Greens and the planet this election.

At the time of writing this, the successful recount of Scott Ludlam's seat in WA was set to be challenged in the High Court. It seems almost certain that Western Australians will need to return to the polls early next year for a half-senate election. Scott is a great Green senator and I know you are all behind him at this stressful time.

But while the wait goes on in WA, we now need to look beyond this election to the future of our party. Now is a critical time for the Greens. Our strength in Parliament is more important than ever as we are starting to see Tony Abbott's agenda revealed. This will be a cruel, secretive government with the destruction of the environment and making life harder for those less well off firmly in its sights. The Greens will need to be the real opposition to it.

While we return to federal Parliament with a strong foundation, we must recognize the need to build our primary vote, and do our best to address the challenges we face to doing this.

National conference in Brisbane next month will mark the next

and most important stage of our constitutional review. Our current constitution and party structures were developed in a different technological and political context. Modernisation and renewal of the constitution is critical.

The constitutional review must examine our practices at every level, with the aim of developing robust structures appropriate for a national party - the Australian Greens - the next major party in Australian politics.

This includes:

- Processes for attracting and selecting the most talented and capable candidates
- Looking at how best to strengthen ways for our members to get involved in the party at a local level and new ways for people to participate in party activities
- Election of the leader of the party and options for doing this
- How best to use new technology to communicate and engage with members and supporters

Many of these issues have already been canvassed in the preparatory stages of the constitutional review and from a range of ideas submitted by members.

As leader of the Australian Greens, I believe it is crucial

that the next stages of the constitutional review contribute to the development of robust, effective structures and a revitalized party our members are proud to be part of.

National conference will initiate the next stage of discussion and debate over what our party needs for the future. I look forward to speaking with members across the country as this debate unfolds over the next 12 months.

I have been pleased to hear that many local groups have received a surge in members as a result of both new campaigning techniques and engagement subsequent to the election of the Abbott government. We must build on this, and continue the trend over the next three years.

It's an exciting and critical time to be Green in Australia. We have to show the community that the vision we have is to look after our environment, not pillage it; to look after people, not see them abandoned as the Government behaves cruelly and looks the other way. I am looking forward to working with you all to help our great Party do just that.

- Christine

Yours, Christine Milne



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2013 GREEN STATISTICS

900
NEW MEMBERS
(NOW MORE THAN 11,000)

22,000
DONATIONS
TOTTALLING \$3.3MILLION

12,600
VOLUNTEERS
HELPING
ON POLLING
BOOTHES

FACEBOOK
UP 45%

1400
EMAIL BROADCASTS

LIKES GROWING
FROM 59,166 ON 1 AUG
TO 85,563 ON 7 SEPT
& NOW MORE THAN 91,000

INVOLVING MORE
THAN 6 MILLION
INDIVIDUAL EMAILS
WITH AVERAGE OPEN
RATE GREATER THAN
25% AND CLICK
THROUGHS GREATER
THAN 3%

50,000
MORE
SUPPORTERS
ADDED TO OUR
SUPPORTER DATABASE

THE
GREENS