STANDING UP FOR WHAT MATTERS

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT • CARING SOCIETY • CLEAN ECONOMY

THE GREENS' PLAN FOR A BETTER AUSTRALIA

GREENS

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INTRODUCTION

06 – 07 Australian Greens Leader Senator Christine Milne

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

10 – 11 Stronger National Environment Laws

14 — 15 Iconic Species, Our Marine Environment and Forests **12 — 13** National Parks Great Barrier Reef

15 Nuclear Issues Animal Justice

GROWING THE CLEAN ECONOMY

18 – 21Resourcing a Caring Society andProtecting the Environment

22 — 29 Jobs in the Future Economy

30 — 31 Education for the Future

CONTENTS

CARING FOR PEOPLE

E 34 – 37

Supporting People When They Need It

40 — 41 Families

38 — 39

Health

42 — 43 Liveable Cities

CARING SOCIETY

46 — 49 Fostering Equality and Ending Discrimination **50 — 51** Arts

52

Open and Accountable Society **52 — 53** Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy

INTRODUCTION



We are living at an extraordinary time in the history of the world. Never before have nations been so interconnected through trade, communication and the movement of people. Never before have we seen such pressure on people and the natural world as populations increase and the Earth's natural ability to sustain us is tested. Never before have we so badly needed new ideas, innovation, creativity and optimism.

Einstein once said that you cannot solve problems with the same mind-set that created them.

That's why Australia needs the Australian Greens in Parliament. We are a party with a philosophy we stand by, a party with its eyes fixed firmly on caring for people and the environment as we meet the 21st century challenges. No one should be left behind as we embrace the environmental, social and economic opportunities in everything from high-speed rail, high-speed broadband, medical technology, solar power, food production, communication, education and technical innovation.

In 2010 an unprecedented 1.6 million people voted Green, electing four new senators and, for the first time in a general election, a representative in the lower-house seat of Melbourne.

Without a majority, neither of the old parties were able to form government in their own right. With our record vote, the Australian Greens set out a clear agenda, knowing we had the ability to put into practice the things that mattered to millions of people in this country.

The agreement then-leader of the Australian Greens Bob Brown, Greens Member for Melbourne Adam Bandt and I signed with Julia Gillard and Wayne Swan to support the Labor party in Government included real action to address global warming, a more caring society and a more transparent and accountable government.

The achievements made possible over the past three years because people voted for the Greens are remarkable. We have driven and delivered the biggest environmental, economic and social reform for decades – all as a result of that 1.6 million vote.

The reform I am most proud of – and for which history will judge this period of government kindly – is the clean energy package. Science is telling us that the Earth is on track for a 2-4°C increase in temperature. Climate change is real and urgent. From cyclones to firestorms, from droughts to floods, we're seeing more and more extreme weather events around the world, the greater intensity of which scientists are clearly attributing to global warming. Australians are already suffering as a result of increasing frequency of extreme weather events, whether through loss of life, homes, increased food prices and insurance premiums, health impacts and the loss of treasured species and habitat.

We know that swift action to reduce the pollution that heats our planet is vital if we are to avoid devastating consequences.

Because of the Greens, Australia has put a price on pollution, changing the way industry operates and cutting the pollution that drives global warming by 8.6%. Renewable energy use is up almost 30% and dirty coal is down 12%. It is helping to secure wildlife habitats and raise funds to drive the transition to a more resilient, innovative and diverse low-carbon future through new clean energy projects and jobs. The price on pollution will also be among the first positive reforms on the chopping block if Tony Abbott succeeds at the next election.

Delivering free dental care as part of Medicare was a central part of the agreement with Labor. Because of the Greens, parents can take their children to the dentist next year and use their Medicare card to get free dental care for their kids. This is part of a \$5 billion investment that also included a massive expansion for the public dental system and over \$500,000 in this year's budget to tackle waiting lists, all secured because people voted Greens.

The Greens also drove the establishment of the Parliamentary Budget Office – a vital new institution that will strengthen our democracy by costing election promises and providing independent analysis of government budgets. Unlike Tony Abbott's Opposition, the Greens will present a fully costed election platform in the lead up to this year's election.

Also because of the Greens in Parliament over the past three years, Australians now have:

- steps to eradicate the scourge of petrol sniffing with laws to mandate non-sniffable petrol in Aboriginal communities
- recognition for Australia's first people and Traditional Owners at the beginning of Parliament and central to our national Arts and Culture Policy
- new laws to protect the independence of the ABC and SBS and their ability to deliver news and content online
- recognition for Peacekeepers at the Australian War Memorial along with other veterans
- strong momentum for marriage equality.

Even when the old parties have obstructed action, the Greens standing with the community and advocating against vested interests have delivered results. Taxpayer money is no longer being invested in deadly tobacco after Greens pressure convinced the Future Fund to stop investment in tobacco companies. James Price Point is safe for now after a long community campaign. Coal-seam gas projects will be scrutinised for water impacts. Action is being taken to reduce the influence of gambling on sport.

In this term of minority government, the Greens have provided stability, integrity and a caring, responsible and consistent approach in the public interest. We have worked with all parties to improve and then pass the vast bulk of the legislative agenda as well as several of our own bills. We have been outspoken on issues about which many people care deeply, whilst being cooperative wherever opportunity for agreement and improvement existed.

Standing with the community, we have achieved so much. But there is more to do. This document outlines the measures we need to build a caring Australia, to protect our precious environment and to create a new future-ready, diversified, innovative economy.

It is not an idealistic vision or pie-in-the-sky offering. The Australian Greens outline not only what we need to do – but also how it is to be paid for. Every policy announced by the Australian Greens this election will be fully costed by the Parliamentary Budget Office. We will collect the revenue to pay for every single one of our policies. Reforming our nation so the economy serves people and the environment – not the other way around – is central to the Australian Greens plan. Instead of providing tax breaks to corporate polluters, we want to invest in the education of Australian children and boost innovation and research in this country. A small levy on the profits of the biggest four banks would deliver funding to give job seekers a living wage, and ensure children living in single parent families do not go without. Fixing the mining tax would enable our nation to pay for publicly funded dental care as part of Medicare and tackle the problem of homelessness and housing affordability. All of this can happen without destroying our irreplaceable environment and unique species, beloved by our communities and critical to the clean air, clean water and the uncontaminated soils which sustain us.

For people who value public education, who care about our children and future generations, who want to see poverty alleviated not entrenched in our society, who want a smart economy based on innovation, and who want to see the arts promoted and funded as an indispensable part of creative culture and life – we are with you.

The Australian Greens will deliver a caring Australia, a safer climate and a proud global reputation. We are the strong, honest party who will stand up to those who protect their own interests to the detriment of the environment and deny everyone else a fair go. It is the Greens who will stand up for what matters.

Christine Milne





PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

Our natural world, our fragile, complex and interconnected environment, is under increasing pressure from habitat loss, climate change, pollution, resource extraction and inappropriate development. More and more endangered species are moving closer to extinction, and we are losing the precious places that are close to our hearts and identity.

Our world has changed. It is now warmer and wetter than it was because of accelerating global warming. This affects people and nature in many ways, from sea-level rise and more intense storms, heatwaves and bushfires, to the spread of disease and the survival of species. Where food can and cannot be grown is changing. We are living in the critical decade to keep global warming to less than 2°C. That's why acting on climate change is critical to protecting our natural world so that it can nurture us. The Greens support an ambitious greenhouse gas reduction target of net carbon zero by 2050 and a rapid transition to a clean energy economy driven by renewable energy.

TOO PRECIOUS TO LOSE

- The Great Barrier Reef is under threat like never before and only the Greens are standing up for its survival.
- The Kimberly requires ongoing vigilance to stop industrialisation of one of the worlds most remarkable environments.
- The Leadbeater possum needs its last remaining habitat protected by the establishment of a national park.
- Koalas in New South Wales and Queensland need their habitats protected from logging and development.
- The Tarkine must be protected from mining to protect one of the world's last great wilderness areas.
- Kangaroo Island and the blue whales that feed around it need to be protected from offshore petroleum extraction.

STRONGER NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

LAWS Labor and Tony Abbott are ganging up to make our national environment laws weaker.

Our national environment laws are already failing to protect precious places like the Great Barrier Reef, the Tarkine, the Coorong and our Great Artesian Basin. But both Labor and Tony Abbott's Coalition have pursued plans to water down John Howard's environment laws and give up Commonwealth responsibility for protecting the environment, by handing back powers to the states.

State governments can't be trusted to look after our precious places. They reap the profits of mining and development. The money they get from allowing these developments or logging to go ahead often makes them turn a blind eye to water, air and soil contamination, and species extinction as the perilous plight of the Leadbeater's possum and the koala demonstrate.

Not only does Tony Abbott want to put state governments in complete control of the national environment, he announced in July that he would slash state environment protections as well. The Greens will vote against any attempt by the old parties to weaken environmental protection, and, unlike Labor, we will stand up against Tony Abbott's plan to hand national environmental law to the states. The Australian Greens will strengthen our national environmental laws so that they actually protect our natural heritage, our air, water and soils and will see our biodiversity flourish.

We will halt any further extinction of our unique wildlife and save our ancient landscapes for generations to come by:

- retaining federal veto powers over damaging developments, and ensuring transparent decision-making processes with independent scientific evidence, greater opportunities for community consultation and reasons provided for all decisions
- ensuring climate, forestry and water impacts are covered by our environmental laws, and for cumulative impacts to be considered, rather than projects in isolation
- allowing the merits of decisions to be challenged in court by the community, with protection from court costs for public interest cases
- resourcing ongoing monitoring, enforcement and evaluation of the impacts of decisions.

PAST ENVIRONMENT WINS COULD BE LOST

Many major environmental wins in the past have occurred when the Australian Government overturned a bad development decision by a state government. Traveston Dam, the Franklin River, drilling for oil in the Great Barrier Reef and cattle grazing in the Alpine Park are all examples of the federal government using its powers to stop state governments from destroying precious places. We can't leave protecting Australia's environment up to the states.



PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

NATIONAL PARKS Despite their name, national parks are not protected by national laws. That means they are vulnerable to moves by state governments to allow shooting, logging, grazing and development inside national park boundaries.

The Greens want national parks protected by national laws. Australia's national parks are home to unique wildlife and their precious habitat. As our cities expand, national parks have become refuges critical for the survival of threatened species. Including national parks under national environmental laws would mean the federal Environment Minister could step in and protect our national parks from environmentally damaging activities. **GREAT BARRIER REEF IN PERIL** The Great Barrier Reef is a World Heritage icon and a national treasure. But it's under threat like never before: 50% of its coral cover has disappeared in the past 27 years and it is now threatened by climate change, pollution and proposals for new and expanded coal and gas ports, requiring mass dredging to accommodate large ships.

The World Heritage Committee says Australia has just one year to turn this trajectory around or it will put the reef on the international list of shame – the World Heritage in Danger list. The Greens have a plan to save the reef:

- no new coal ports in pristine Great Barrier Reef areas, and no damaging port expansions: the Reef is not a coal and gas highway
- no new permits for dredging or offshore dumping of that sediment in our World Heritage reef waters
- increase financial support for farmers to adopt sustainable practices to reduce run-off into the reef.



PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

ICONIC SPECIES Australia is facing an extinction crisis. The combined threats of climate change, habitat destruction, pollution, invasive species and disease, as well as a rapidly expanding resources sector, are putting many of our precious plants and animals at risk. We need to urgently make big changes if they are to survive.

The Greens will invest \$40 million a year to:

- identify and map all protected ecological communities, areas of critical habitat for threatened species and important wildlife corridors
- protect that habitat through bioregional plans that guide development and establish clear no-go zones for different activities within each region across Australia
- support the rapid listing of all species and ecological communities which belong on the threatened list and develop and resource the implementation of recovery plans and threat abatement plans for listed species and ecological communities;
- restore Labor's \$257 million cut to the Biodiversity Fund
- make sure responsibility for assessing and approving Australia's most environmentally damaging projects cannot be handed to reckless state governments.

MARINE The Australian Greens will defend Australia's new network of marine protected areas from any attempts by Tony Abbott's Coalition to roll them back. While supporting new marine parks, Labor in government has continued to release new oil and gas exploration leases over environmentally sensitive areas, including known whale calving grounds in South Australia and areas earmarked for protection off north-west Australia. The Greens will exclude destructive industries from our most precious marine areas and reject new oil and gas exploration permits in marine parks.

REDUCING OUR WASTE

A big contributor to polluting our environment is rubbish. The Greens support a nation-wide container deposit scheme to recycle the 10 billion drink containers Australians throw away each year. We'll stand up to the big corporations to clean up our nation's rubbish and the environmental problems it causes. FORESTS The Australian Greens support the protection of native forests, as the home of native animals and plants and as critical carbon stores. We oppose industrial native forest logging and woodchipping and the conversion of native forests to plantations. We support the transition of the logging industry out of native forests and into sustainably managed plantations. The recent modification of the boundaries of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area to include forests of high conservation and World Heritage value was driven in the federal Parliament by former leader Bob Brown and current Greens leader Christine Milne.

NUCLEAR The Greens want to see an end to nuclear weapons and nuclear power. Unlike Labor, the Greens oppose uranium mining. The whole nuclear-fuel chain – from uranium mining to the unresolved problem of nuclear waste – presents unacceptable environmental and security risks and is phenomenally expensive. Rather than leaving future generations the burden of nuclear waste, we should be giving them truly safe, clean, timely and economic solutions to reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. The future is renewable, not radioactive. ANIMAL JUSTICE How we treat animals is a key indicator of a caring society. Removing suffering and providing better care should come before big profits for corporations. The live export trade and intensive factory farming of animals is cruel, causes great suffering to animals, and should be phased out.

The Australian Greens have introduced a bill that would ban live exports. We support a transition away from live exports to the sustainable chilled meat industry. This means jobs in Australia and properly supervised abbatoirs to meet high standards of animal welfare. We have also worked with Humane Research Australia to introduce private member's bill banning importation of primates for experimentation.

A TARKINE NATIONAL PARK

The Tarkine is one of the world's great wild places, and it is unique. Spanning 447,000 hectares, it is a relic of Gondwanaland, and Australia's largest tract of temperate rainforest. It is home to more than 60 rare, threatened and endangered species, including the giant freshwater lobster, the Tasmanian wedge-tailed eagle, the spotted-tail quoll, and the iconic endangered Tasmanian devil. The Labor government and the Coalition rejected the Australian Heritage Council's recommendation to protect the Tarkine, preferring instead to declare it open for mining, putting the Tasmanian devil closer to extinction. There are at least 10 new mines proposed for the Tarkine, including the Shree Minerals iron ore mine and three huge open-cut mines proposed by Venture Minerals. The Australian Greens support the immediate protection of the Tarkine as national park and its assessment for World Heritage Listing.



THE GREENS STANDING UP FOR WHAT MATTERS





GROWING THE CLEAN ECONOMY

RESOURCING A CARING SOCIETY

With many in our community feeling under increasing pressure, governments have a responsibility to provide the services and support for a caring society.

Our economic future must go beyond the quarry vision of the mining bubble. We need to invest in research and innovation to underpin the jobs-rich and diverse economy of the future, beyond the mining boom and bust.

While both Labor and the Coalition are going down the path of budget cuts, putting people and services under even more pressure, the Greens offer an alternative. We recognise more revenue must be raised and we want it to come from those who can afford it. As a nation we should be investing in higher education and research and development, not cutting funding to universities and putting students under even greater pressure. We should be increasing Newstart, not condemning people to poverty, and we should be caring for single parents, not making their lives even more difficult.

We can do all these things and more, like bringing dental care into Medicare for everyone and tackling the housing crisis, by standing up to the big mining companies and big banks.

The Australian Greens will raise \$42.7 billion of revenue by fixing the mining tax, ending tax breaks for the big mining companies, taxing millionaires fairly and introducing a modest levy on the big banks. MINING TAX The Minerals Resource Rent Tax was supposed to be a tax that spread the benefits of the boom". Yet it will raise only \$200 million in its first year. This is a direct result of Labor's failure to stand up to the big mining companies.

It doesn't have to be this way. Despite talk of the end of the mining boom, industry profits remain at historically high levels and mining companies will continue to make billions for their overseas shareholders from the resources we all own. The Australian Greens' proposals to fix the mining tax will raise an additional \$21.8 billion over three years to be invested in the Australian community.

MILLIONAIRES' TAX The gap between rich and poor in Australia is growing. Those who earn enough to be classified millionaires don't face the same pressures as the rest of the community. An effective tax rate of 50% on income over \$1 million will make our tax system fairer and contribute more than \$0.5 billion to making a more caring society. (This only applies to the select few people with incomes of more than \$1 million a year, not to assets like the family home or farm.) BANK LEVY Our big banks are making record profits, around \$24 billion in the past year. These record profits off the back of consumers are underpinned by an implicit 'too big to fail' guarantee from the government. If the banks went to the wall the taxpayer would bail them out. The big four banks are taking all of the profits while the taxpayers are wearing all of the risk.

Based on similar levies in Europe and the United States, the Australian Greens propose a 0.2% levy on bank assets in excess of \$100 billion which will raise \$8.4 billion over three years. Because it only applies to the big four banks and not their competitors, competitive pressures will stop the big four passing the levy on to consumers. It is time the big four banks paid a fair contribution for the public support they receive. ACCOUNTABILITY Large corporations and wealthy business people exercise too much power over our governments. The formation of our current mining tax was a debacle, where three of the biggest mining companies in the world – BHP, Rio Tinto and Xstrata – ran rings around Labor. In the process, those three big companies looked after their own interests but left the Australian people out of pocket by billions – and demonstrated the influence of lobbyists. In NSW the corruption hearings demonstrate we must be ever vigilant. This is why the Greens are proposing a National Anti-Corruption Commission and greater transparency for corporate lobbyists.

The economy should serve the people and look after the environment, not the other way around. Labor and Tony Abbott don't have the backbone to stand up to the mining corporations and big business. Only the Greens have the economic plans to build on our environment, grow the clean economy and care for people.

RESOURCING A CARING SOCIETY

MAKE POLLUTERS PAY We value our clean air. We value our clean water. We value our fresh, local food. We value a safe climate, and we want to pass a safe Australia on to our children and their children.

But global warming puts all this at risk. We know what the impacts will be in Australia. Already, we are seeing extreme summer heat, breaking record after record. If we do nothing, we can expect catastrophic droughts, floods, heatwaves, cyclones and bushfires.

Climate change is a global crisis which profoundly threatens our economy, society, people's health, our Great Barrier Reef, fellow species like polar bears, and our way of life.

That's why the Greens made cutting the pollution that drives global warming a condition of supporting the government in 2010. And that's how we negotiated the visionary Clean Energy Act.

It's working. The Clean Energy Act is bringing down pollution by charging big companies to pollute and investing that money in clean energy, and helping people and local communities save energy. Cutting pollution isn't just about preventing a climate crisis. It helps us build a more caring, healthy and innovative Australia. Cutting pollution means cleaner air and cleaner water for all of us.

Neither Labor nor the Coalition can be trusted to take real action to cut the pollution that drives global warming. Tony Abbott's plans would be a disaster. Ripping up the Clean Energy Act would give the big polluting companies free rein, ending support for clean energy.

Though Labor joined with us to pass the Clean Energy package, they can't be relied on to protect the price on pollution or not weaken action on global warming. At a federal level, Labor has never said no to a mining company that wants to frack for coal-seam gas or expand a massive coal mine. Both Labor and the Coalition are risking jobs and investment when the world decides it doesn't want our coal.

The Greens in Parliament are essential to stand up for real action on global warming. We will continue to cut pollution and make clean energy cheaper.

REDIRECTING FOSSIL FUEL SUBSIDIES

The government spends billions on tax breaks to the big mining corporations and fossil fuel industry. In the past budget, for example, it continued to provide diesel fuel subsidies, exploration subsidies, and many other write-offs which make it cheaper and easier – via the public purse – for big miners to make record profits. Worse, these billions of dollars in subsidies are fuelling global warming by making it cheaper for big mining corporations to pollute and to extract more and more coal, oil and gas.

The Australian Greens will reinvest over \$12 billion from abolishing key tax breaks to the fossil fuel industry into the smart, clean industries for the future.

Labor cannot be trusted to stand up to the fossil fuel industry and the Abbott Opposition wants to give them a free ride but the Greens aren't afraid to end these hand-outs for billionaire companies and invest the money into the economy of the future. COAL-SEAM GAS AND COAL A caring society looks after the health of its people and the environment. The Greens are standing up with farmers and rural and regional Australians to say "No" to the rapid expansion of coal-seam gas, shale gas and coal mining.

Coal-seam gas and shale gas projects and coal mines are destroying Australia's valuable farming land and precious environment, contaminating our water supplies and leaking methane gas into the atmosphere.

The Greens will:

- reject all new coal-seam gas, shale and other unconventional gas projects and new and expanding coal mines
- stand with farmers to give them the right to say "No" to coal-seam gas on their land
- introduce stronger environmental laws so the environmental impacts of coal-seam gas and coal on our water, air and land are properly taken into account
- better regulate coal dust in the atmosphere
- oppose new coal ports along the Great Barrier Reef.

Ending our coal addiction means people who live near coal trains, mines and ports can breathe easy – without coal dust in their air.



JOBS IN THE FUTURE ECONOMY

CLEAN ENERGY Australia's future economy will be powered by clean renewable energy. Funding clean energy research means more innovative technologies to export to the world, and bringing our best and brightest home. Building clean energy plants means more jobs here in Australia and gives farmers another source of income.

The Greens support 100% renewable energy as quickly as we can achieve it. To get there, the Greens' Clean Energy Roadmap will:

- increase the Renewable Energy Target to 90% by 2030 – this will give investors and electricity network regulators the long-term policy certainty they need.
- increase Clean Energy Finance Corporation funding to \$30 billion over ten years to drive investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy – the Greens can't wait for Australia's first solar thermal plant.
- improve national electricity transmission planning to cost effectively exploit our huge renewable energy resources.

The renewable energy industry will create tens of thousands of jobs for decades to come.

The Greens will also ensure solar panel owners are paid fairly for their clean power. One million Australian homes and businesses are already generating cleaner, cheaper and more local power for everyone. The big energy companies don't want to pay them fairly, because their corporate profits are in coal and gas. It is time for a fair return to investors in clean energy.

Our independent Energy Savings Agency will recommend fair prices for electricity companies to pay people who generate their own clean power. The Energy Savings Agency will also oversee an annual \$400 million program to lower electricity prices for everyone by better managing demand at peak times.

An Abbott government puts at risk Australia's renewable energy industry and the jobs it is already creating. Tony Abbott has pledged to abolish the Clean Energy Finance Corporation and will not commit to the existing Renewable Energy Target. The Greens will oppose any attempt to destroy or undermine the target or the corporation.

You cannot trust either the Coalition or Labor on renewable energy and energy efficiency. Labor is looking to weaken the carbon price and has already cut funding to the Australian Renewable Energy Agency and the Low Carbon Communities program.

CREATING JOBS IN THE CHANGING ECONOMY

The Greens policies to create a clean energy economy, invest in research and development and education from early childhood to university, address housing affordability, and lift people out of poverty will all create jobs in our economy. It's estimated the current renewable energy target will create 15,000 jobs in constructing power stations and infrastructure and almost 4,000 jobs in operating and maintaining them. Our policy to extend the target towards 100% renewable energy will multiply the extra jobs created. The Greens' policy to extend and increase funding for the Clean Energy Finance Corporation will potentially increase new jobs created in clean energy to 21,000.

Manufacturing, services and retail are far more labour-intensive than mining, so switching resources from mining subsidies to promoting research and development in other sectors of the economy and giving low-income households more support through lifting Newstart makes economic sense. The additional investment the Greens will make in research and development and higher education will create thousands more jobs into the future. Addressing housing affordability requires building more houses, particularly for low-income families. The Greens' policies to house the homeless will create construction jobs at a time when construction in the mining industry is slowing.

JOBS IN THE FUTURE ECONOMY

CONNECTING CLEAN ENERGY Australia is rich in clean energy hotspots: regions where our solar, wind, geothermal, biomass and wave resources are among the best in the world. Communities like Port Augusta have already identified their clean energy potential and are mobilising to make it a reality.

We need to empower communities that want to make the most of their clean energy resources, and help connect them to our cities to power Australia with 100% renewable energy. The Greens' Connecting Clean Energy plan would do just that. We would allocate \$2 billion to a new Connecting Clean Energy Task Group in the Department of Energy. The Connecting Clean Energy Task Group would:

- map Australia's clean energy resources with the latest information
- involve local communities in planning their energy future, by managing thorough consultation with communities, all levels of government, Australian Energy Market Operator and clean energy developers
- where our world-beating clean energy resources and genuine community support align, set up Renewable Energy Development Zones with quicker approval processes for clean energy projects
- run a competitive tender to link clean energy hotspots to the national energy grid and contribute financial support where necessary.



JOBS IN THE FUTURE ECONOMY

FARMERS Australian farmers are critical to our country's future prosperity and a sustainable economy. Caring about the food we eat means caring about Australia's farmers. Our farmers are under increasing pressure from the high Australian dollar and cheap imported food, the supermarket duopoly driving down fair prices at the farm gate, and the impacts of global warming and expanding coal and coal-seam gas projects encroaching on their farms.

The Greens will:

- strengthen competition laws to give farmers a fair go by introducing an anti-price-discrimination clause that actually works and giving the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission the power to break up the Coles-Woolworths duopoly
- insist that all Free Trade Agreements become Fair Trade Agreements by including costs of environmental and labour standards compliance
- legislate a National Interest Test for the Foreign Investment Review Board and reduce the threshold for assessment to \$5 million for private sector investment. The Greens oppose foreign ownership by wholly owned subsidiaries of foreign governments
- support farmers and local food manufacturing jobs by strengthening country-of-origin labelling laws so all of us can be confident that we are buying locally grown and locally made food
- invest more in agricultural research and development in particular for adapting to global warming
- establish an independent Biosecurity Commission and Authority to provide proper science-based decisions on protecting Australia's food production.

In contrast Tony Abbott has only promised another inquiry into competition laws and Labor has failed to act on any of these issues for the past six years. LOCAL MANUFACTURING Manufacturing in Australia has been under increasing pressure from the high Australian dollar and a skills shortage brought about by the mining boom. Despite rhetoric from both the old parties on jobs, neither has taken any real steps to confront the mining industry in order to support manufacturing jobs.

The Greens care about local jobs. We will mandate higher levels of local content, particularly for resource projects. We know that the big miners are sending much of their profits overseas, but now we know that a lot of the goods and services needed to develop these mines are coming from offshore as well. A 2011 report by the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research found that as little as 10% of steel used in major resource projects is sourced in Australia.

We will continue to support investment in innovation that can sustain and develop critical manufacturing sectors, such as advanced manufacturing and food processing. Investing in universities and commercialising new technologies is a priority.

We will also work to assist manufacturing become more energy efficient, saving manufacturers money with reduced electricity bills and supporting workers employed in manufacturing by providing a more secure future. SMALL BUSINESS Small businesses are under increasing pressure from an economy dominated by the mining industry and big corporations. Only the Greens have the backbone to stand up to the big end of town, whether it is the mining companies, the big four banks or Coles and Woolworths.

We will give the federal Small Business Commissioner more power and a secure future through legislation to ensure that office can be an effective advocate for small business and resolve disputes between small business and big business or government. As well as strengthening competition laws for a fairer playing field, we will also expand the instant asset write-off to \$10 000 providing a much needed boost to many small businesses to invest in new equipment or technology.

JOBS IN THE FUTURE ECONOMY

RIGHTS AT WORK The Australian Greens will stand up against any moves by an Abbott government to reduce the rights of workers and return to John Howard's WorkChoices. The Greens having a voice in Parliament is the best way to protect penalty rates, fair wages, unfair dismissal protection and the right to be fairly treated.

A caring society enables all workers to have a well-balanced, happy and healthy life. The Greens will provide an enforceable right to a better work-life balance, with all workers and especially carers able to request flexible working arrangement that employers can only refuse on genuine business arounds. We will also act to provide more secure work for Australians. The rise of casual and insecure work has left many workers under increased pressure – never knowing when they may be required to work next or whether their pay check will be enough to pay the bills. We will pursue our legislation to provide greater certainty for workers by making jobs ongoing instead of allowing casual workers to be increasingly exploited.

We will continue to care for workers by ensuring safe and healthy workplaces and practices. The Greens got Parliament to pass laws to better support firefighters who contract cancer from saving lives in the community. Asbestos remains a scourge in Australia and the Greens support the efforts of unions and those affected by asbestos in removing this deadly danger from the community.

GETTING JOBS FOR EVERYONE

Australia is home to people from all over the world, but many from refugee and migrant backgrounds are un- and under-employed. We have taxi drivers with Masters degrees and local university graduates who can't get job interviews. The Greens secured \$6.6 million to help find meaningful work for people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.



EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

Education is opportunity, for people and the nation. It is central to a caring and prosperous society. It must be funded from early childhood, through to tertiary and life-long learning.

SCHOOLS The Greens believe access to education should not depend on how much you can pay or where you live. This is why we backed the Gonksi school education reforms which will fund schools on the basis of need. Our public schools educate Australia's most disadvantaged kids. Our teachers need more support and professional development and our children need quality education. With a proper mining tax, the Greens would boost school funding sooner than Labor. The Greens will also keep pushing for dedicated investment in science and maths education as well as Asian languages. UNIVERSITIES AND TAFE Unlike Labor and Tony Abbott, we want to invest more in our universities, not cut essential funding and make it more difficult for students to attend university. The Greens will oppose Labor's \$2.3 billion cuts to universities. Cutting funding to universities to pay for schools and putting students and lecturers under increasing pressure is just dumb.

Instead of cutting funding, we need to be increasing funding of universities by 10% as an investment in our nation's future. Increasing university funding to provide an additional 10% of base funding by 2017 will cost \$1.5 billion over the next four years.

Our TAFE system is also under increasing pressure as state and federal governments cut funding while at the same time complaining about skills shortages. Federal funding for skills should prioritise the TAFE system and the federal government needs to increase its funding to TAFE.

MORE SCHOOL FUNDING SOONER

While the old parties are refusing to meet the challenge of investing in our nation's future, the Greens are committed to securing a world class education for all Australian children by:

- properly funding schools, over and above what the current government is prepared to commit – in the 2013 – 14 financial year the government is committing less than \$500 million to implement the recommendations of the Gonski Review. Australian students and public schools need more money, faster
- committing an extra \$2 billion more than the current government over the forward estimates, to ensure that every Australian child has access to a high quality education sooner.

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION Australia's future lies in our minds, not our mines. With our economy under pressure, innovation through research and development is critical for developing new industries and jobs as well as supporting current employment. Protecting jobs requires government to invest in the jobs of the future. The Greens will implement policies to increase investment in research and development by both government and business to a target of 3% of our GDP by 2020.

Government will need to invest an additional \$2.5 billion over the next four years to be on track to reach that goal. Instead of subsidising wealthy fossil fuel companies, the Greens would redirect that money into the knowledge-based industries of the future. We will reverse the cuts to the Sustainable Research Excellence program, ensuring our universities can continue to provide world-class research in state-ofthe-art facilities. We will also boost research funding, provide greater opportunities for students and researchers and implement key recommendations from the McKeon Review into health and medical research. THE GREENS STANDING UP FOR WHAT MATTERS



CARING FOR PEOPLE

SUPPORTING PEOPLE WHEN THEY NEED IT

A BETTER START FOR JOBSEEKERS The Australian Greens believe that a socially just, democratic and caring society is one that guarantees an adequate income safety net for all Australians and allows people to live with dignity even when facing some of the toughest times of their lives. Every day, people lose their jobs or cannot find employment through no fault of their own, and they need an adequate safety net to catch them.

Newstart, Australia's unemployment benefit, is simply too low. Today, the single rate of Newstart is \$247 a week; it has fallen to 45% of the minimum wage and is more than \$130 under the poverty line. After accounting for the cost of a relatively low-priced, private rental, recipients can be left with just \$17 a day.

The Australian Greens will:

- provide a \$50 per week increase to Newstart and Youth Allowance
- properly index all allowances in line with Pension payments
- improve employment service providers' ability to work intensively with disadvantaged job seekers.

By standing up to the mining companies, we can afford to invest in people. The Parliamentary Budget Office has costed our proposal at \$8.2 billion over the forward estimates. CARING FOR SINGLE PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES Under the Howard government's Welfare to Work laws single parents were moved onto Newstart when their child turns eight. On 1 January 2013, the Labor government continued this poor policy by moving over 100,000 single parents, who were previously protected from the reforms, off parenting payment and onto Newstart. That's a cut of \$60-120 per week from an already over-stretched household budgets. With the current rate of Newstart set at almost 40% below the poverty line, living on Newstart is next to impossible.

The Greens' plan is to help single parents instead of punishing them by:

- increasing payments to single parents by \$90 per week
- allowing single parents to earn more income from part-time work before having their payments cut
- making it easier for single parents to request flexible working arrangements so they can work and care for their children.

The Parliamentary Budget Office has costed our plan to help lift single parents out of poverty at \$360 million in 2014–15 and \$1 billion over the forward estimates.

AUSTRALIANS ARE A CARING PEOPLE.

We want to help those who are vulnerable or victims of persecution or circumstance. More than that, we want a society that creates the time and space for people to live caring lives. Whether at work or at home, Australians are feeling more pressured, and less able to live the rich fulfilling lives they desire. The Australian Greens plan would relieve that pressure, supporting people when they need it and fostering a better quality of life for everyone.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE WHEN THEY NEED IT

STUDENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE The Greens care about the future of university education. We believe a well-funded universal education system is vital for fairness and wellbeing in our society. In contrast, Labor wants to cut \$2.3 billion from universities and student support. The Coalition supports the cuts.

The rising cost of living is already hurting students, who are working longer hours to fund their university study. It will be much harder for disadvantaged students to afford a quality higher education.

The Australian Greens want to take the pressure off young people and better recognise the huge contribution they make to our economy and society. The Greens plan for young people includes:

- Restore the \$2.3 billion in funding cuts to our nation's universities. This means reversing \$900 million of lost grants and keeping Start-Up Scholarships as scholarships – not converting them into debts.
- Lift the living away from home Youth Allowance rate by \$100 a fortnight so that students can focus more on their studies and worry less about how to meet living expenses.
- We are the only party willing to increase our investment in the base funding of universities in line with the Bradley Review. This means locking in a 10% increase in funding.
- Restore TAFE as the leading provider of vocational education and training. Defunding TAFE is destroying opportunities for young Australians.
- Build thousands of new affordable rental and student housing places every year under our National Housing Affordability Plan. Renters will have greater rights, and we will look to make Rent Assistance more effective.
- Ensure that the National Broadband Network is not dismantled for a cheapskate, inferior, 20th century version that Tony Abbott is proposing. High-speed internet is essential for our future.



HEALTH



The Greens don't want Australia to go down the same road as the United States, where how much money you have decides how well you get looked after. Access to health services like dental care, preventative health and mental health care should be getting easier for people. Instead, it is getting harder and adding to the pressure felt in people's everyday lives, especially for people who live in rural Australia

INVESTING IN HOSPITALS When people need urgent medical treatment, they should be able to access it. The Labor party's hospital funding cuts have caused enormous upheaval in the public hospital system – surgeries have been cancelled, bed numbers have been reduced, emergency departments have been put under threat.

The Australian Greens plan is to reverse hospital funding cuts and reform ad-hoc and piecemeal direct funding approaches to local hospitals and to develop a better cooperative approach between state and federal funding systems.

The Australian Greens also want much more investment in programs to keep Australians healthier so they don't need to go to hospital. **DENTICARE** Poor oral health is one of the most significant health problems facing Australians. Cost is a significant barrier to at least one-third of the population in getting necessary dental care.

Following the 2010 election, the Greens made reform of dental care a condition of supporting Labor to form government. As a result the Greens have ensured that millions of children will get Medicare-funded dentistry and millions more adults will have better access to public dental care.

In this term of government the Greens secured almost \$5 billion of investment in dental care:

- \$2.7 billion for about 3.4 million Australian children (in Family Tax Benefit A families) who will be eligible for subsidised dental care under Medicare
- \$1.3 billion for around 1.4 million additional services in state public dental clinics
- \$225 million for dental capital and workforce grants for outer metropolitan, rural and regional areas
- \$500 million for public dental health and grants to help rural and remote areas.

But there is still a long way to go to realise the Greens' vision for universal dental care under Medicare: Denticare. The Greens remain committed to a dental health scheme that is universal, so that every Australian can receive dental health care regardless of their financial circumstances. MENTAL HEALTH Following an extensive tour of regional Australia listening to communities, the Greens understand that people living outside major cities do not receive the mental health support and services they need. We are committed to improving access to quality mental health care for Australians living in rural, regional and remote areas. Rural Australians face unique challenges which impact upon their mental health, and therefore need robust, innovative responses locally.

The Greens support the promotion and extension of the Mental Health Nurse Incentive Program as a means of providing coordinated clinical care to support people with mental illness living in the community.

The Greens advocate additional stepped prevention and recovery care, improved access through outreach and tele-psychiatry services, and flexible, multidisciplinary whole-of-person care in the community and neighbourhood houses to promote strong communities and wellbeing. **PREVENTATIVE HEALTH** Caring for the health of the community requires more investment in preventative health, with a focus on tobacco, alcohol and obesity issues. The Greens call for an investment in community sport, including sports equipment libraries for low-income Australians, and measures to help volunteers. Participation in community sport is one of the simplest ways to help tackle obesity.

We continue to advocate for a ban on junk-food advertising to children and for clearer labelling for food.

DISABILITY CARE The Australian Greens supported the establishment of a National Disability Insurance Scheme. We support expanding the scheme to include Australians who acquire their disability after the age of 65.

AGED CARE The Greens supported and improved the recent aged care reform legislation and secured a homelessness supplement among other amendments. We will pursue further reform to ensure quality aged care is available for all Australians.

GREENS HOSPITALS INQUIRY SLAMS CUTS

A Greens initiated Senate inquiry into hospital funding was highly critical of Labor's hospital funding cuts. The inquiry found the cuts had had significant impact on patients, medical staff and hospital departments.

FAMILIES

Australian families are under increasing pressure from losing control over their working lives, lack of affordable and accessible childcare, inadequate paid parental leave entitlements, as well as worrying about the health and education of their children.

PAID PARENTAL LEAVE The Greens recognise paid parental leave as a workplace entitlement. We are working for a paid parental leave scheme that provides a right to at least 26 weeks paid leave including superannuation. A caring society recognises the value of supporting parents to take parental leave at least until their child is six months old. To provide greater financial security to women throughout their lives, superannuation must be incorporated into paid parental leave. QUALITY ACCESSIBLE CHILDCARE More and more parents are finding it difficult to access childcare that suits their needs. Parents need to be able to access affordable, flexible and high-quality childcare. We must support women returning to the workforce and as a society we can't afford to not invest in our children.

The Greens will:

- cut the cost of childcare by boosting public funding and paying the money directly to centres – we don't want parents to have to bear the burden of paying the full cost of up-front fees and we want to save them the trouble of chasing up repayments
- keep good quality early-education teachers in childcare by introducing a HELP fee waiver for early-education teachers; this would encourage up to 500 teachers to stay in the sector by wiping off their HELP debt for each year they stay in the childcare sector where they are so needed
- make more childcare spaces available by providing capital grants and interest-free loans for new and expanding centres to directly address the availability crisis in childcare – we have proposed a \$200 million fund over four years for community and not-for-profit childcare centres to build or expand centres.
- stand with childcare workers in their calls for better wages for all childcare educators and teachers.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE The average full-time working week in Australia was recently found to be 44 hours, the longest in the western world. We perform \$72 billion in unpaid overtime each year.

The Greens want to give people more control over their time and working arrangements, balancing this against their employers' legitimate operational needs.

Just over half of all Australians want to change their hours of work, even if it might impact on their income. Research shows that working hours are impacting on wellbeing, with poorer health and greater use of prescription medications. It is also affecting our personal and family lives. If people want to work different hours or work from home so that their life is better, then the law should allow it, provided it doesn't unduly impact on their employer.

The Greens have introduced legislation to deliver better work-life balance for Australians. The Fair Work Amendment (Better Work-Life Balance) Bill 2012:

- gives people who have been in their job 12 months enforceable rights to request flexible working arrangements, including the number of hours they work, the scheduling of those hours and the location of work.
- for carers who are looking after another person, employers may refuse flexible arrangements only where there are serious countervailing business reasons. For all other employees, employers can refuse on operational grounds.
- gives Fair Work Australia the ability to balance employees' requests against their employer's legitimate business needs by hearing and determining any disputes.

RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING Australians are the world's most prolific gamblers. The Greens are taking action to minimise the harm caused to individuals, families and the community from gambling. That includes:

- better regulation for poker machines: the Greens want to see Australian poker machines limited to low-intensity losses, to reduce the effects of problem gambling on individuals and on our community
- taking action in Parliament to ban live odds in sports broadcasts, cash-for-comment and gambling ads during kids viewing hours. The Greens have a bill before both houses of parliament that would end gambling advertisements before 9pm; ban the broadcast of betting odds during sports broadcasts and sports-related programs like the Footy Show; and prevent gambling promotion from being integrated into content, but the old parties lack the courage to back it.

LIVEABLE CITIES

Investing in the right infrastructure can make a huge difference to people's lives every day. Responsibility for planning sustainable, liveable cities lies with all levels of government.

TRANSPORT The Greens want to end the bias towards funding urban roads and motorways that has fuelled a car culture and seen a marked increase in congestion, pollution and road freight.

We support a funding shift that prioritises sustainable transport infrastructure, such as public and active transport and freight rail. A more balanced transport budget would spend around 40% on roads projects, 30% on public and active transport and up to 30% on freight rail.

The Greens will prioritise investing in public transport and active transport to take the pressure off travel and improve our quality of life.

Australia needs long-term investment in public transport and active travel (e.g. bike paths) to reduce traffic congestion, greenhouse gas emissions, and make our major cities more liveable.

HIGH SPEED RAIL FOR EASTERN SEABOARD

A report commissioned by the Australian Greens identifies \$48 billion in a range of benefits from a high-speed rail network on the east coast, including both direct benefits to rail users and operators and indirect benefits to society, such as fewer accidents, lower greenhouse gas emissions, less air and noise pollution, less congestion on roads and at airports and substantial time savings to users.

As part of the agreement to support the minority Labor government the Australian Greens secured a \$20 million feasibility study into high-speed rail.

We will get high-speed rail on track by establishing an authority to begin the construction of the highspeed rail network.



HOUSING Australia is in a housing crisis and cost pressures are increasing across the nation. Federal and state governments have dropped the ball on affordable housing, leaving millions of Australians battling with increasing costs.

Despite this, neither Labor nor Tony Abbott's Coalition has demonstrated it can be trusted to deliver the vision or commitment needed to tackle the growing housing crisis. Labor promised to halve homelessness by 2020 and provide services to all those seeking them, but homelessness has increased since the 2006 census. Tony Abbott refuses to even sign up to the commitment. Both parties have turned their backs on the hundreds of thousands of renters who are under increasing pressure with nowhere to turn.

Australia has the least affordable housing in the western world. The average house price in capital cities is now equivalent to about seven years of average earnings; up from just three in the early 1980s. People earning the minimum wage or on government payments such as the disability pension are priced out of 99% of the rental market. The mining boom added substantially to the wealth of existing home owners but made renting and new home ownership severely unaffordable. It also worsened the gap for Aboriginal people and workers living in boom towns, where chronic gaps in housing, services and infrastructure remain. Renters are hurting, with rents tripling in a decade and new supply not keeping up with demand. Meanwhile, massive taxpayer subsidies and incentives for property investment are geared towards creating demand rather than supply. These subsidies also continue to benefit landlords over tenants, and people who can afford to buy investment properties over people that have been waiting for years on the public housing waiting list.

The Greens have a plan to address housing affordability across the entire spectrum, by housing the homeless, building more social housing, affordable rental properties, student housing, improving and protecting the rights of renters, and trialling innovative homeownership schemes.

The Greens also have a plan to support a sustainable and affordable housing industry.

HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN

Homelessness is a complex issue but the solution is simple: match the funding for housing and support services to the scale of need.

We need a cut-through solution. That's why we have announced a plan to care for people in housing crisis by doubling funding for homelessness services and providing a home for all Australians currently sleeping rough by 2020.

The Homelessness Action Plan has three priorities:

- to build 7000 new homes by 2020 enough to house every person currently sleeping without adequate shelter
- to include a 50% target of fast-build, modular or prefabricated housing, which will be significantly faster and more affordable to build
- to double the current funding for specialist homelessness services in Australia.

The Parliamentary Budget Office has costed our Homelessness Action Plan at \$3 billion over the forward estimates. THE GREENS STANDING UP FOR WHAT MATTERS





CARING SOCIETY

FOSTERING EQUALITY AND ENDING DISCRIMINATION

ENDING DISCRIMINATION Not only does discrimination against people from a range of backgrounds continue in Australia, our federal laws sanction it in many forms. Even our Constitution explicitly allows discrimination against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We want to see racial discrimination outlawed as part of the process for Constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

It is hard to believe, but according to our federal laws it is okay for religious schools to refuse enrolment children just because their parents are gay. It is also legal to refuse:

- a woman accommodation because she's a victim of domestic violence
- to grant requests for flexible working hours for people with family responsibilities such as caring for children or aging parents.

This is out of step with modern Australian society. The Greens believe we need a better approach to protect against discrimination and deal with inequality in our community.

We need a new federal Equality Act that:

- implements Australia's international human rights obligations
- removes outdated and arbitrary exemptions
- effectively addresses systemic discrimination.

Australia is a proudly multicultural society where all people, regardless of culture, ethnicity, religion, language, or place of birth should have equal rights and the right to participate equally in our social, economic and cultural life. We must do more than just remove formal barriers to active participation in society. We should ensure policy development and program implementation is based on wide and inclusive consultation that gives voice to Australians' diverse cultural and religious backgrounds and interests.



SAME-SEX MARRIAGE Who you love is more important than an outdated law. The majority of Australians support marriage equality for same-sex couples. It's an issue of basic fairness.

The Greens want to legalise same-sex marriage in Australia and recognise marriages of same-sex couples who marry overseas:

- The Greens have bills before Parliament that would remove discrimination from the Marriage Act and give same-sex couples the right to marry.
- Both the old parties blocked a vote on marriage equality laws before the election.
- The Greens have also moved to amend laws so that same-sex couples who marry overseas have their marriage recognised when they come home to Australia.

GREENS VOTE FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Labor and Tony Abbott's Coalition blocked a vote on marriage-equality laws before the election. Both parties voted against a Greens bill to legally recognise the marriages of samesex couples who marry overseas. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER AUSTRALIANS The Greens have driven policies and programs that value, empower and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities:

- The Greens made acknowledgement of Traditional Owners at the beginning of Parliament part of our agreement with the government. It was implemented and everyday people visiting Parliament hear that recognition given by the Presiding Officers. The Greens have permanently changed Parliamentary practice.
- We also made Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people part of our agreement with the government and are committed to seeing Constitutional Recognition by 2016.
- The Greens made the art and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people a central focus of the functions of the restructured Australia Council.

- The second Australian Greens bill to pass federal Parliament was legislation to mandate the use of non-sniffable petrol in Aboriginal communities.
- The Greens have actively opposed the coercive and paternal elements of the Stronger Futures program, in particular income management, as it extends many elements of the Northern Territory Emergency Response. This top-down, one-size-fits-all policy doesn't work.
- The Greens support a justice reinvestment response to the high number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are jailed. This includes greater investment in services for alcohol and drug prevention, youth education and diversionary programs, and secure housing.

The Greens have moved to improve the Native Title Act to ensure the mining boom benefits Traditional Owners, native title applicants exercise free informed prior consent for activity on their land, and onus of proof for native title claims is reversed.

FOSTERING EQUALITY AND ENDING DISCRIMINATION

FOREIGN POLICY The Greens believe foreign policy should facilitate peaceful relations between countries, increase Australia's friendships and standing as a middle power and uphold the framework of international law, of which a key element is human rights. Regionally, Australia should help our near neighbours create healthy, educated, ecologically sustainable and democratic societies. Only the Greens have the integrity and conviction to stand up for an independent foreign policy.

Australia, as a wealthy nation, should provide care and support for less developed countries, particularly in our region, and contribute our "fair share" to poverty alleviation and long-term ecologically sustainable development.

The Greens want an independent Australian foreign policy that creates relationships with the rest of the world based on mutual respect. We recognise many of our major challenges will not be solved without unprecedented global cooperation between governments. Australia should act as a responsible global citizen, pursuing a legitimate national interest, not an excessively competitive or unilateral one that is indifferent to global concerns and interests.

The Australian Greens plan includes:

 increasing Australia's aid contribution to 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2020, and ensuring we reach the target of 0.5% by 2015 as Labor originally promised. An additional investment of \$4.9 billion over the forward estimates will ensure Australia lives up to its commitment to the United Nations Millenium Development Goals and reduce global poverty

- spending aid money effectively to alleviate poverty and enhance self-reliance, not diverting it to military needs or the detention of refugees
- using Australia's two-year Security Council seat and presidency of the G20 (beginning in 2014) to reassert our nation's role as a constructive and independent player in the international community
- introducing new laws to ensure the power to declare war and deploy armed forces does not rest only with the executive of the government of the day. The Greens' Defence Amendment Bill would require parliamentary approval when such a grave decision is made. The bill provides for emergency deployment of armed personnel when Parliament is not sitting
- better scrutiny of Free Trade agreements. The Greens are very concerned about the Trans-Pacific Free Trade Agreement currently under negotiation and its potential impact on access to medicines, local content media rules, high-tech innovation and limitations placed on governments to make policies and regulations on health, food standards, safety and economic stability. The Greens recently secured greater scrutiny of free-trade agreements, with the government now required to release the priorities and objectives of any proposed agreements, including independent analysis of the anticipated costs and benefits.



REFUGEES It is not illegal to seek asylum. Globally, waves of refugees follow periods of conflict. Wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka have led to increases in numbers of people fleeing persecution. Deterrence does not work as Australia cannot be worse than the regimes from which people flee. We need to give refugees safe, official pathways to secure homes in Australia and other countries – before they board a boat in desperation. We agree with Malcolm Fraser and refugee experts: the successful regional response to the Vietnam War showed that only this policy will save lives.

The old parties' race to the bottom to bring back the worst of John Howard's policies – imprisoning refugees in indefinite detention in other countries, detaining their children, towing boats back and forcing poverty on refugees in Australia – is not saving lives. Only the Greens have the courage to stand up for a humanitarian approach to refugees.

We have been working hard in Parliament to:

- end the detention of children
- close offshore detention camps
- work with regional countries to protect refugees
- urgently and safely resettle 10,000 people from our region
- increase funding to UNHCR regional assessment centres in Indonesia
- care for refugees in Australia by giving them the right to work.

WOMEN Despite Australian women facing discrimination every day, neither Labor nor Tony Abbott's Coalition has demonstrated it can be trusted to deliver the social changes Australian women need. Labor put a political promise of a surplus above the wellbeing of single parents. On the day former Prime Minister Julia Gillard famously attacked Tony Abbott's politics of misogyny, the government passed a law ripping support from 150,000 single parents.

Life won't get any easier for women under Tony Abbott and his extreme policies. His priorities are in lock-step with big business; instead of taxing the wealthiest and most profitable in our society, he will cut education, health and welfare spending affecting the most vulnerable.

THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Attacks on women's reproductive rights are one of the most feared outcomes of an Abbott government. DLP Senator John Madigan, who may hold the balance of power in the Senate after the election, is already attempting to whip up pro-life activism. Guaranteed access to safe and confidential reproductive health services, including abortion, is what most Australians want.

Protecting the PBS listing and subsidisation of RU486 and Misoprostol are crucial, particularly for regional and rural women. The Australian Greens in Parliament will stand up to vested interests and fight for women and equality. The Australian Greens will:

- continue to support and advocate for equal pay
- develop plans to provide greater financial security for women throughout their lives
- stand firm on women's right to choose
- work to increase women's representation at all levels of government
- regulate large companies to ensure 40% of board positions are held by women
- extend protection against discrimination at work to domestic violence victims
- maintain Australian foreign aid programs that support women's reproductive health.



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THE ARTS

The arts, cultural experiences and creative artists are a vital ingredient for a happy, prosperous and fulfilled nation. The arts contribute to the social wellbeing, economy and cultural life of Australia. The Australian Greens are committed to supporting and promoting Australian artists and their work, and particularly encouraging young and emerging artists as they establish their careers.

The Australian Greens believe that a vibrant future for the arts in Australia will include both the traditional visual and performing arts, which enrich us and have provided so much to our culture for centuries, and a newer, more open approach to cultural policy, which brings arts into every aspect of our lives. The Greens' performing and visual arts policies focus on providing support for artists, encouraging innovation in the arts and taking art to the community. The Greens' priorities include:

- support for innovation in the arts
- support for live performances and exhibition both domestically and globally
- policies to support artists through periods of unpredictable work
- support for mentoring between established and emerging artists and performing arts companies
- a fund to assist artists to be paid for exhibitions
- bringing large film productions to Australia, like Wolverine, for their local skills development, job creation and economic injection by increasing the location tax offset to 30%
- support artists by making nationally significant arts awards, like the Miles Franklin Literary award, tax-free.



SUPPORTING REGIONAL ARTS

The Greens want our regional communities, which are rightly proud of their unique identities, to be able to express their talents, their values and their stories. Yet this tradition is at threat with declining government funding to support our creative regions. The Greens will turn this around through our regional arts policy.

The Greens are committed to restoring the Regional Arts Fund, in real dollars to its 2004 peak, and further expand its scope and funding. We will invest an additional \$10 million in regional arts. The Greens will expand the Regional Arts Fund so that:

- Australia's 408 regional and remote local governments can apply for funding to establish cultural policy officers to drive local, tailored community art projects
- regional artists will have greater ability to develop long-term artistic projects that directly involve their communities and use art as a vehicle to build social enterprises
- there will be more money to go around, reaching more regions and more people through more touring
- the accounting and allocation of grant money will be simplified so that individuals in remote areas are able to spend more time involved in their art projects and less time navigating complex management requirements.

Anangula a Tjutala Unparri yingila Manta ngangka win King Kula Kapi puntu tjarra Nanarri puntu ngurangka Puturna Kulinyi rriditja a Wan'Kara Kutju Anangula Kutjuringla 9 Warrala Avstralia

OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE SOCIETY

BROADBAND COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

DEMOCRACY The Greens is founded on the principle of grassroots democracy, where the political process encourages participation and empowers ordinary citizens. We believe that Parliament should serve the best interests of all Australians, not just those who can afford to buy influence with politicians. Our plan includes:

- · legislating to ensure truth in political advertising
- three-year fixed terms for federal Parliament
- tougher regulation of lobbyists and disclosure of their activities
- establishing a National Integrity and Anti-Corruption Commission
- holding a referendum at the 2013 election to recognise local government in the Constitution
- lowering the voting age to 16.

ON AIR

NATIONAL BROADBAND NETWORK The Australian Greens strongly support the fibre-tothe-home National Broadband Network (NBN) currently being built by NBN Co. Linking Australia through fast broadband holds out the promise of increases in productivity, innovation and global cultural exchange.

When the NBN was established, the Greens won amendments to remove the assumption that the network would be privatised when completed, and ensure that any planned sale would be properly scrutinised and require the approval of Parliament.

Now the project is at risk. Tony Abbott has set out to "demolish" the case for the NBN, and the Coalition's alternative plan is for a sub-standard, energy-intensive network, which will leave upwards of 8 million premises stranded on the ageing copper telephone network.

PROTECTING PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY BROADCASTERS

The Australian Greens will stand strong against any plans to privatise or undermine public broadcasters. With Australia's media among the most concentrated in the world, the last thing we need is privatisation of the two public broadcasters. A plan to privatise the ABC and SBS has been floated by the Victorian Branch of the Liberal Party and the Coalition refused to rule out privatisation, voting against a Greens motion to keep the broadcasters in public hands. DIGITAL PRIVACY While the Greens led the campaign to defeat the mandatory internet filter and helped defer dangerous data-retention proposals, it is more important than ever to protect online privacy and civil liberties against the surveillance and censorship proposals which are eroding the potential of the internet.

GET A WARRANT Just as warrants are required to enter your house, warrants should be required to access private information collected via computer networks and mobile phones. Australian law enforcement and intelligence agencies, local governments and a wide variety of other agencies are accessing vast amounts of private data without a warrant. This information includes data about telephone calls that you have made, emails you have sent, information that you have accessed online, and detailed information about the location of your mobile telephone. The Greens' Telecommunications Amendment (Get A Warrant) Bill returns us to the normal warrant procedures which have served us well for decades.

A STRONG MEDIA SECTOR The Greens believe the concentration of media ownership in Australia is at a crisis point. The public has an interest in a diverse and independent media, with a well-funded ABC, SBS and community media sector helping to provide quality journalism, cultural programming and current affairs. Reforms are needed in the face of technological change, concentration of media ownership and increasing instances of privacy breaches. The government conducted several reviews into the media landscape but then botched the attempt to legislate a small handful of reforms: the Greens will continue to campaign for a a stronger and more independent Press Council and a public interest test to protect against further consolidation of the industry.

FAIR GO FOR FAIR USE Australian copyright law is stranded in the 20th century and urgently needs reform – the Greens have proposed a set of measures to protect Australians from IT price gouging, to widen the availability of products for the visually impaired, and widen exceptions for "fair use" of creative works, as is the case in the United States.

GREENS WIN FOR COMMUNITY RADIO

The Australian Greens helped secure \$6 million for metropolitan community broadcasters to transition from analogue to digital services. More than 70% of community stations are located in rural, regional and remote areas: this is the next challenge for the digital transition. The Greens support the 22,000 volunteers who work in community media, reaching an audience of 3.7 million people via television and 4.4 million via radio.

PHOTO CREDITS

Page 36 – Photo: Bob Crombie.

- Page 37 The Tarkine, photo: Luke O'Brien.
- Page 38 Kangaroo Island, photo: Bill Doyle.
- Page 40 Head of navigation, Kangaroo Creek, photo: Bob Crombie.
- Page 41 Gladstone Harbour.
- Page 42 Tasmanian Devil, photo courtesy of Bonorong Wildlife Park.
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- Page 51 Kutju Australia Project, photo: Ted Egan.

