

Policy comparisons – The Australian Labor Party, The Liberal Party, The Greens Party

Climate action has many facets. These are some important policy areas that need to be examined.

1. A plan to reduce emissions and lead in climate action
2. Phase out coal and gas
3. Modernise the electricity grid
4. Support growth of new industries
5. Ensure training for new jobs
6. Drive growth in electric vehicles and public transport services
7. Protect our land, rivers and native animals
8. Build resilience against natural disasters and other health impacts.

1. A plan to reduce emissions and lead in climate action		
Labor	Liberals	Greens
<p>The ALP commits to net zero by 2050 and to reduction of CO2 emissions from 2005 level by 43% by 2030.</p> <p>It will require the Commonwealth public sector to reach net zero by 2030 with exemptions for Australian Defence Force, Australian Federal Police, Australian Border Force and security agencies.</p> <p>The Plan for net zero focuses on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extending the electricity grid to transmit renewable energy • initiating wide take-up of electric vehicles • building access to renewable energy through community batteries and solar banks • Converting steel and aluminium production to renewable energy. <p>Outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of over 600,000 new jobs by 2030 	<p>The Liberal Party commits to net zero by 2050 and to 26-28% reduction in CO2 emissions from 2005 level by 2030 with a likelihood that emission reduction may be higher.</p> <p>The Liberals will invest \$20 billion over 10 years in “low emissions technologies” which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon capture and storage (CCS) • Low-emission steel and aluminium production • Using hydrogen as a fuel (‘brown’ or ‘green’) <p>Their Industry, Energy and Emissions Reduction Plan for reaching net zero is based on existing policies.</p> <p>It will reduce emissions by 40% and global technology trends, not yet identified, will reduce emissions by a further 15%. 20% reduction has already been achieved since 2005. Carbon credits will be used to account for the remaining 25%.</p>	<p>The Greens seek a legislated plan to reduce Australia’s emissions by 75% on 2005 level by 2030 with net zero to be achieved by 2035.</p> <p>The Green’s Plan is for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rapid transition to 100% renewables by 2030. It proposes a \$40 billion re-nationalisation of coal-fired generators which will then be closed by 2030. • largescale investment in renewable energy and reducing cost of electric vehicles. • taxing big corporations - A company with a turnover of more than \$100 million would face a 40 per cent super-profits tax. • an economy-wide carbon price • a special levy on corporations which export climate pollution • Snowy Hydro will become a not-for-profit, renewables-

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> power prices cut by \$275 per year per household by 2025. <p>The ALP seeks to provide leadership at the national level rather than leaving action to individual states to do their own thing.</p> <p>The ALP will re-establish leadership by restoring the independent role of the Climate Change Authority, while keeping decision-making and accountability with Government and introducing new annual Parliamentary reporting by the Minister.</p>	<p>It aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that responsibility for taking action on climate change does not fall unfairly on rural and regional Australians. keep household power bills down ensure reliable electricity supply by demanding a technology neutral approach by regulators. protect traditional industries and their employees shield the nation from negative impacts of changes in world economies position industries and regions to exploit new opportunities. <p>The Liberals reject targets and mandates which are considered reckless or intrusive.</p> <p>The Plan rules out taxes or a legislated mechanism. It includes 5 yearly reviews.</p> <p>It will continue to invest in renewable technologies while keeping electric prices low by</p>	<p>only generator and retailer of electricity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> investment in a Hunter Valley gas plant will be discontinued
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2. Phase out coal and gas		
Labor	Liberals	Greens
<p>The ALP will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide a roadmap for replacement of coal fired power stations (as they become non-viable) with renewable energy sources. It will not commit to funding 	<p>The Liberals strategy is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> commitment to a gas-fired recovery' after COVID19. gas is viewed as a transition fuel with fewer carbon emissions than coal and able to compensate for 	<p>The Greens will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ban political donations from fossil fuel companies. ban the construction of new coal, gas and oil infrastructure phase out burning and export of thermal coal by 2030.

<p>new coal-fired electricity generators.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strengthen the existing Government Safeguard Mechanism so that the level of allowable emissions from the burning of fossil fuels will be reduced in line with the economy-wide progress towards net zero by 2050. Protection will be offered to companies that are internationally trade exposed, so that they will not face a greater constraint than their competitors. support the current export of coal and support government funding for exploration and development of new coal and gas mines and oil reserves. support government funding for carbon capture and storage projects. assist some households to replace gas appliances with electric appliances. provide direct financial support for measures that improve energy efficiency within existing industries. 	<p>irregular energy from wind and solar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> carbon capture and storage is a core part of this strategy and is driven through the Climate Change Authority and the financing mechanisms of ARENA and CCFC. to invest \$600 million for the establishment of a new gas-fired generator in the Hunter Valley, to be managed by Snowy Hydro. strongly supports the continued export of coal, gas and oil and seeks to grow those industries by providing financial support for exploration and mining including current subsidies for transport and related infrastructure. <p>The Safeguard Mechanism applies to high emitting companies that have Scope 1 emissions of more than 100,000 tonnes of CO₂. Allowable emission levels are set at 'business as usual', with the requirement to buy government certified carbon credits above these levels. The aim is not to reduce emissions but to stabilise them at existing levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> phase out the metallurgical coal industry by 2040. <p>stop subsidies to big coal, oil and gas companies and reinvest the money in clean energy transition.</p>
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3. Modernise the electricity grid

Labor	Liberals	Greens
<p>The ALP is proposing to spend \$20 billion on its "Rewiring the Nation" policy, which would</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • upgrade electricity infrastructure • ensure that renewable energy will account for 82% of national electricity supply by 2030 • expand storage to accommodate new power and battery sources coming online. • roll out 85 solar banks around Australia to ensure more households can benefit from rooftop solar. • install 400 community batteries in different areas across the country. One is promised for Canada Bay LGA. 	<p>The Liberal Government has</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • invested in Snowy 2.0 (a large pumped hydro project). • has or plans to invest in various interconnections across States in order to maximise electricity supply on the eastern sea bord. This includes Tasmania's 'Battery of the Nation' and an interconnector across Bass Strait. • is considering Project Energy Connect (linking SA, Victoria and NSW) and VNI West (linking Victoria and NSW). 	<p>The Greens will upgrade the electricity transmission and distribution grid, integrating more wind and solar energy while ensuring reliable electricity supply.</p>

4. Support growth of new industries

Labor	Liberals	Greens
<p>The ALP will support new industries in Regional Australia through a new Powering the Regions Fund. It will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocate up to \$3 billion from Labor's National Reconstruction Fund to invest in 	<p>The Liberal's \$2 billion Climate Solutions Fund will support emissions reduction projects, capturing methane from landfill and storing carbon in forests and soils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Liberals will set up a \$1.3 billion Modern Manufacturing Initiative to help drive new markets in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Greens will set up a \$500 million Green Steel Innovation Fund to allocate grants, and a Greens metal bank to help finance businesses commercialising zero emission technologies.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - green metals (steel, alumina and aluminium) - clean energy component manufacturing - hydrogen electrolyzers and fuel switching - agricultural methane reduction. • establish a \$1 billion Value-Adding in Resources Fund which will offer direct investments and loan guarantees in projects that process and increase the potential market value of Australia's raw mineral resources such as lithium, nickel, copper and cobalt. 	<p>minerals, electric vehicle and battery production.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2022-23 Budget may include a \$200 million Accelerator grants program, \$50 million to support research and development and an updated industry strategy for critical minerals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Greens will help mining workers and communities by creating long-term, sustainable industries and ensuring people do not lose work. • The Greens will drive new industries in green hydrogen and minerals processing, ensuring Australia becomes a renewable superpower. • The Greens will ensure government buys products made by local workers produced with clean, green materials and power. • The Greens will support households and small businesses to get off gas and move to electric alternatives through grants of up to \$25,000 and loans up to \$100,000. • The Greens will kickstart a household battery boom through grants up to \$10,000 and loans up to \$50,000. • The Greens will work with States/Territories to ban gas in new housing developments.
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5. Ensure training for new jobs

Labor	Liberals	Greens
<p>The ALP will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> invest \$100 million to support 10,000 New Energy Apprenticeships, available over 4 years. apprentices who choose to train in new energy industries will receive up to \$10,000 - \$2,000 on commencement, and \$2,000 a year for up to four years afterwards, including on successful completion. To tailor skills training to the specific needs of new energy industries, Labor will also invest \$10 million in a New Energy Skills Program. Under the Program, Labor will work with the States/Territories, industry and unions to ensure workers have access to training pathways that are fit-for-purpose. will develop a mentoring program in which experienced workers in new energy industries help to train and support new apprentices. 	<p>The Liberals have</p> <p>increased apprenticeship places with expanded wage subsidies and direct payments to apprentices of up to \$5000 – the Hunter Region is especially targeted.</p> <p>Around 15,200 Hunter Valley small businesses will have access to a new 20% bonus reduction for training and upskilling their employees.</p>	<p>The Greens will</p> <p>ensure funds for re-skilling workers into similar industries.</p>

6. Drive growth in electric vehicles and public transport services

Labor	Liberals	Greens
<p>The ALP will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a National Electric Vehicle Strategy, including investment of \$251 million for an Electric Car Discount, Under this discount, Labor will exempt electric cars below the luxury car tax threshold (\$79,659 in 2021-2022) from import tariffs and fringe benefits tax (a tax that is levied when a car is provided through work for private use). A \$50,000 EV will be more than \$2000 cheaper as a result of removing the import tariff. The fringe benefit tax exemption for a \$50,000 EV car provided through work arrangements could save employers up to \$9000 per year. This policy would be reviewed in 3 years. The community battery program could build up solar electricity during daylight hours and used at night for electric car charging. improve electric vehicle charging infrastructure by requiring Commonwealth funded road upgrades 	<p>The Liberals' Future Fuels and Vehicles Strategy plan of \$250 million (\$178 million of new money) will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> focus on public electric vehicle charging and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure; heavy and long distance vehicle fleets; light vehicle commercial fleets; household smart charging. Plans to fund 50,000 charging stations in Australian homes to encourage people to buy EVs. The plan does not include subsidies or tax incentives that would make EVs more affordable. 	<p>The Greens will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assist people to buy their first EV, reducing cost by up to \$15,000 and provide cheap finance for the balance. provide \$1.2 billion to manufacture electric vehicles and components in Australia, building the Australian EV manufacturing industry. build a publicly owned EV fast charging network. electrify the Commonwealth fleet by 2025 – which will expand the second-hand EV market. end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 legislate strong vehicle pollution standards to drive down emissions. increase funds for rail and bus services by an extra \$25 million and \$500 million per year into making cycling and walking safe and accessible. <p>The Greens will fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thousands of new electric buses. the build of high-speed rail from Melbourne to Brisbane. <p>The Greens will invest in getting freight onto rail and cleaning up our truck fleets.</p>

<p>to incorporate charging infrastructure where appropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review the National Construction Code. <p>The ALP will <u>not</u> tighten emission standards for oil-based vehicles but proposes to commit \$14 million over four years to establish an emissions testing program in Australia.</p> <p>The ALP will contribute \$250 million and partner with the WA State Government to deliver a new electric vehicle manufacturing facility, commencing with 130 new electric buses for the Perth public transport system.</p>		
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7. Protect our land, rivers and native animals		
Labor	Liberals	Greens
<p>The Urban Rivers and Catchments Program of \$200 million will provide grants for community groups, local and state government to fund projects which</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> deliver improvements to water quality and the local environment Create wetlands to slow water flow and filter stormwater before it reaches our rivers Remove cement walls and return them to natural riverbanks Undertake revegetation and tree planting projects Citizen science and education projects for pre-schoolers and school age children. 	<p>The \$100 million Environment Restoration Fund will continue to help to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> protect and restore natural landscapes restore waterways, protect native animals reduce litter improve local parks. <p>Around \$1 billion is being invested in Landcare between 2018 and 2023. This includes Land Partnerships, to help protect threatened species, restore wetlands, and improve soil health on farms.</p> <p>The Liberal Government has or is investing over \$2 billion in its Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan, to improve water quality, fight crown of thorns starfish and</p>	<p>The Greens state that up to 24 million hectares of this country may need to be re-forested. The Greens will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> end land clearing and native forest logging and create local forestry jobs through tree planting restoring damaged forests and habitats. work with farmers to increase carbon sequestered on private land, providing new revenue streams for farms. <p>The Greens will increase indigenous ranger programs.</p>

	conduct research into restoration and adaptation.	
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8. Build resilience against natural disasters and other health impacts		
Labor	Liberals	Greens
The ALP will establish a national climate adaptation plan and disaster recovery plans.	<p>Liberals will work on bushfire preparedness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hazard reduction, 'sensible' land clearing laws, managing fuel loads in national parks, learning from Indigenous Australians, improving technological capability, law enforcement to prevent arson, improving weather forecasting tools, better building codes, community education and information programs and how best to sustain our extensive volunteer fire-fighting effort. 	<p>The Greens will legislate to make fossil fuel companies pay compensation for environmental damage. Those funds will be re-invested for improvements to infrastructure such as flood-proofing stormwater drains and improving the capacity of transport systems to handle heatwaves.</p> <p>The Greens will increase funding for emergency workers such as firefighters.</p>

Comments

- According to the United Nations IPCC and a large consensus of scientific institutions, the world needs to cut its emissions by at least 50% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050.

The IPCC accepts that some developing countries will emit greenhouse gases for longer, but states that developed countries such as Australia should have targets lower than the global average, and argues for net zero by 2035 in these cases.

- Both Liberals and Labor do not address the UN declaration in their policies. The two parties embrace emission reduction targets out of step with Paris targets, although Labor's policies are more ambitious.
- Labor and Liberals reject an economy-wide carbon trading scheme, although Labor's revamped Safeguard Mechanism could apply this principle to the companies with very high emitting levels. However, companies trading their products overseas will be exempt.
- Emissions from various sectors of the economy are increasing. Transport emissions in the last quarter jumped 12%. Emissions from industrial use were also higher.

- The ALP and Liberal Party have limited policy announcements for natural environments, including reforestation programs and no announcements to remove native logging have been identified. Habitat re-construction is critical for mitigating effects of climate extremes.
- Disaster planning and resilience building policies do not feature strongly in either Labor or Liberals policy announcements, and \$ commitments are not made.
- Serious climate policy should be consistent, not 'scatter-gun' and across the whole economy and society.
- The support for a gas-fired recovery is contradictory to any serious program for emissions reduction. There is scant evidence that carbon capture and storage can be commercially viable in sequestering huge amounts of carbon gases.
- Banks, insurance companies and investment house are abandoning the same fossil fuel companies that the 2 main parties champion. State and local governments and market forces are responsible for most of the climate action that has been taken in Australia.
- A government body (independent) similar to Gillard's Climate Commission would ensure that the government was acting in concert on climate, with environmental, energy, agriculture and industry policy, all set to support emission reduction efforts.
- "Brown" hydrogen production has higher emissions than the conventional use of coal, gas or oil for energy generation. Green hydrogen is the only hydrogen production method that is free of emissions.
- The Parliamentary Budget Office estimates it would cost \$40 billion for the Commonwealth to construct the power, transmission and storage facilities required for the Greens' proposal. Other parties' policies are yet to be costed.
- The Greens' proposal would effectively renationalise the electricity system, wiping energy retailers and some generators out of the market. There is no appetite from the Labor or Liberal Party to adopt a takeover of the national electricity market.
- Australians must decide between:
 - the Liberals who downplay UN and scientific evidence on temperature rise and the acidification of oceans. They promote an evolutionary, conservative approach in which the economy slowly adapts without adverse effects on Australian industry and their stakeholders. This approach will not reign in emissions, as claimed. No clarity or certainty is offered on reaching net zero by 2050.
 - Labor has the more comprehensive agenda for education and training in emerging industries.
 - The Labor Party takes a utilitarian approach, seeking to reassure the electorate that transition can be achieved smoothly, and with overall economic benefits. It seeks to make strong investments in renewable energy but it also supports continuation of fossil fuel exports. Its policies sit within a larger philosophy of incremental improvements in the lives of people. Their policies can be challenged as inadequate and focused more on election prospects than a vision for the future.
 - The Greens seek dramatic change based on the scientific evidence of the climate emergency. For a society that dislikes change, the message is about strong

Government intervention and disruption to the status quo. The policies therefore may trigger widespread criticism from industry stakeholders and others opposed to Government controls and manipulation of markets. Yet the Greens hope that their strong call for action and their focus on the climate emergency will motivate enough Australians to act, enabling the Greens to hold the balance of power in the Senate and possibly also in the Lower House.

- The Climate Action Burwood and Canada Bay asks the community to vote with climate action paramount in their minds on 21 May 2022.