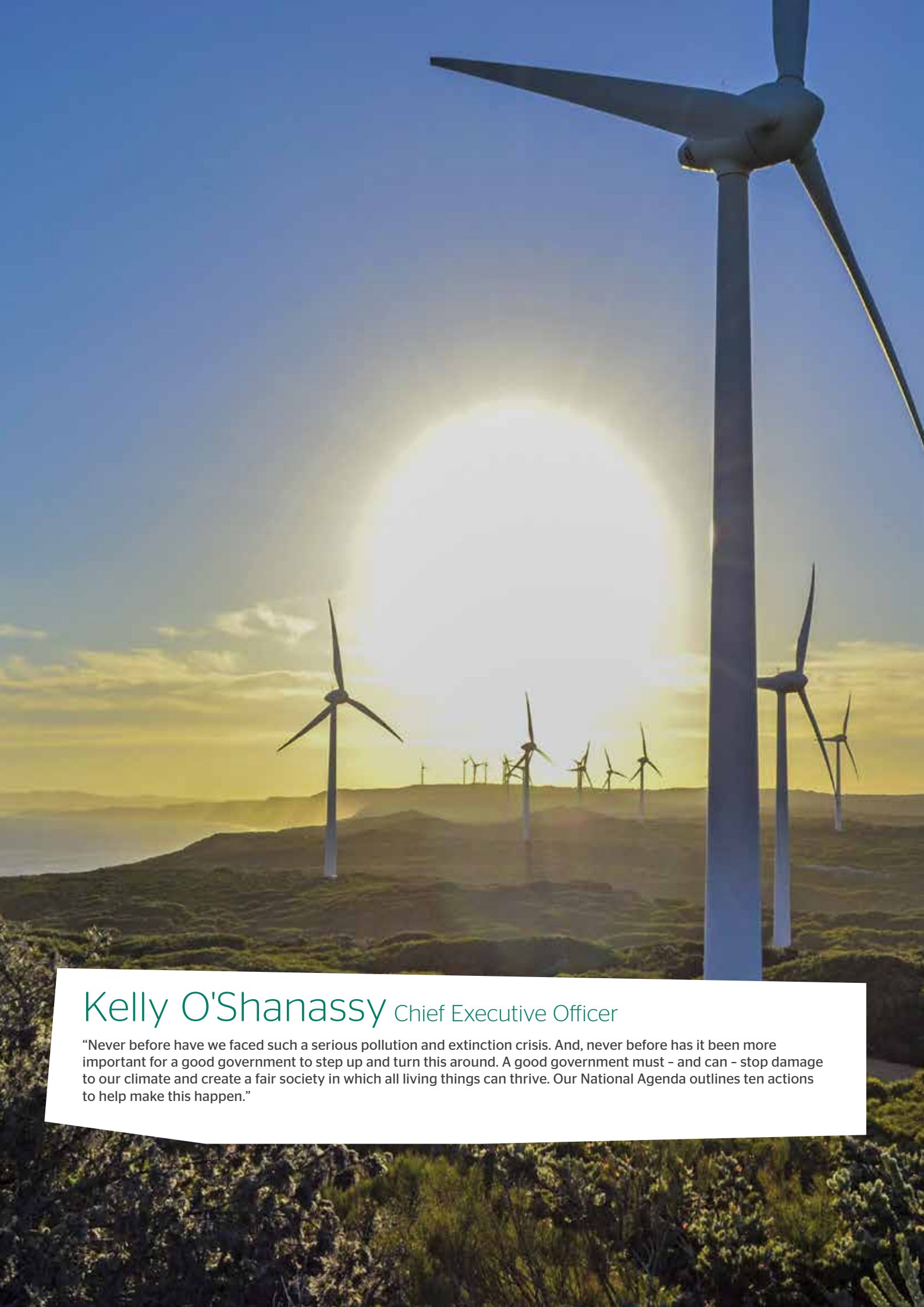


Ten actions to protect nature and stop climate damage

ACF's National Agenda 2018



**AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION**



Kelly O'Shanassy Chief Executive Officer

"Never before have we faced such a serious pollution and extinction crisis. And, never before has it been more important for a good government to step up and turn this around. A good government must - and can - stop damage to our climate and create a fair society in which all living things can thrive. Our National Agenda outlines ten actions to help make this happen."

Our vision

Australians love this ancient island continent – its seas and forests, its unique critters and country. We thrive as part of a vibrant community of living things – sugar gliders, moss, people, coral, ants, wallabies and big old trees.

But, climate damage is here, now, and Australia's living systems are in peril. Vested interests pursue short-term profits at the expense of our long-term wellbeing, bulldozing forests, digging mines and draining waterways. By burning coal and gas, big polluters are fuelling extreme weather and making people sick. Plants and animals are vanishing like never before.

Our next government has an urgent responsibility to step up. It's time for genuine leadership. It's time to think beyond election cycles. **Australians want a government with the courage and vision to take on the big polluters and stop climate damage.**

We all share a responsibility – communities, businesses and government – to live in a way that cares for life. With hope, ingenuity and creativity, we can protect our air, rivers, forests and wildlife.

Millions of Australians are already leading the way – installing solar panels, planting trees and saying no to dirty energy. While the stakes have never been higher, there is a great commitment to work together and transform our country.

We want our children and grandchildren to experience the bush as we did. We want to live in a country where our plants and wildlife thrive. Where the Great Barrier Reef is still a natural wonder of our world. Where natural and cultural heritage thrives and the rights of Traditional Owners are respected.

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) is a community of over half a million people that will hold all political parties and candidates to account. Our community expects the next government to lead with a plan to protect nature and stop climate damage.

Together, we can create a future where people and nature thrive. A future where we drink clean water and breathe clean air. A future where landscapes support vibrant communities. A future where business creates opportunities to work in harmony with nature and for people to work in fulfilling jobs. A future where Australia is powered by abundant clean energy from the sun, wind and water.

The Australia we hand onto the next generation will be shaped by the decisions our elected representatives make today. The power of these decisions is immense.

Let's create a
**tomorrow that is
brighter** than today.



Mt Buffalo National Park, Vic.
Photo: Martin Wurt

About our National Agenda

The majority of Australians expect our government to lead with a plan to protect nature and stop climate damage. ACF's National Agenda is this plan. It outlines ten actions a good government would take to create a better Australia, for everyone, and every living thing.

Like our living world, the problems we face are all interconnected. To protect the web of life and our way of life, Australia needs an ecosystem of solutions. That's why the ten actions in our national agenda all share common threads.

Each action stands alone but also works alongside the other actions. For example, a stronger democracy free of corruption will open opportunities to more rapidly cut pollution and grow clean energy in Australia. That's because a stronger democracy will constrain the influence of cashed up polluters, like mining lobbies, who use the power of their money over politicians to keep us locked to dirty fossil and nuclear fuels of the past.

Under each action we provide the context of the problem and the changes our elected government needs to make. The **How to make it happen** sections present a suite of evidence-based policies that ACF has determined to be the best way of achieving the action. These policies are critical steps a good government would take to create a future where forests, rivers, people, oceans and wildlife thrive. They were developed through extensive analysis, consultation and feedback from a range of internal and external stakeholders.

The **Tests of success** are measures against which ACF's half a million supporters will assess the performance of candidates and political parties for the next three years. These tests are less specific than the policies under 'how to make it happen' because we acknowledge political parties might propose different solutions that lead to the same outcome.

This is the policy agenda to which the ACF community will hold elected officials to account. It covers the most significant national environmental challenges that are here right now and will be ACF's campaign focus for the next three years.

The majority of Australians expect our government to lead with a plan to protect nature and stop climate damage.



Murray River, Merbein, VIC.
Photo: Krystal Seigerman

Ten actions

to protect nature and stop climate damage



ACF calls on political parties, and people who seek to represent Australians, to commit to:

1. Cut pollution

Set strong climate pollution reduction targets and credible, lasting policy consistent with Australia's Paris commitment to limit global warming to less than 2°C and to pursue a 1.5°C limit.

2. Switch to 100% clean energy

Build large scale clean energy projects and provide fair, reliable policies that modernise our outdated and polluting electricity system so all Australian households, industries and communities can harvest 100% of their electricity from clean energy like the sun and wind.

3. Stop digging up and burning coal, oil and gas

Shift away from polluting coal, oil and gas, beginning with replacing dirty, out-of-date coal-fired power plants with clean energy. Stop approving new thermal coal, oil and gas projects or expansions of mines, and start phasing out existing mines.

4. Create strong laws to protect life

Develop a new generation of strong national laws and institutions to protect our rivers, reefs, forests and wildlife, increase biodiversity and regulate pollution.

5. Protect, connect and restore habitats

Protect, restore and connect critical habitats, water catchments and forests to give communities, plants and animals the best chance to thrive and adapt to global warming.

6. Create an economy for life

Overhaul Australia's economic rules so that the health of Australia's rivers, oceans, forests, wildlife and land is integrated into political decision-making, policy advice and economic reporting.

7. Create a stronger democracy

Strengthen the laws and institutions that keep our democracy strong, and ensure the Australian government is honest, transparent, and accountable.

8. Be nuclear free

Reduce radioactive risks by stopping uranium mining and export, withdrawing from the global nuclear industry and responsibly managing Australia's radioactive waste.

9. Keep our rivers flowing

Deliver the historic Murray-Darling Basin Plan for healthier rivers, wetlands, wildlife and communities, and reinvigorate national water reform.

10. Help nature and culture thrive across Australia

Support Indigenous communities to care for country so our incredible natural and cultural heritage is protected and managed in a socially equitable and culturally appropriate way.



CLIMATE
JUSTICE!

NOT
DROWNING!

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MY H

WORLD

People's Climate March, VIC.
Photo: James Thomas

1. Cut pollution

Set strong climate pollution reduction targets and credible, lasting policy consistent with Australia's Paris commitment to limit global warming to less than 2°C and to pursue 1.5°C.

Pollution from burning coal, oil and gas is costing lives and damaging our planet. When the Australian government ratified the Paris climate agreement it committed to limit global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue a 1.5°C limit. Australia has the solutions to stop damage to our climate, including abundant clean energy from the sun and wind, and the technology to harvest and store it. What we are missing is a strong and enduring commitment from the Australian government to set ambitious goals, policies and reforms to cut pollution and protect communities, at home and overseas, from worsening droughts, fires and floods fueled by global warming.

How to make it happen

1. Set strong climate pollution reduction targets consistent with achieving zero net pollution well before 2050.
2. Rapidly shift to clean energy and stop companies from digging up and burning coal, oil and gas in Australia (see 'Shift to 100% clean energy').
3. Clean up industry and transport and make sure Australia uses energy wisely and efficiently.
4. Strategically protect and restore biodiverse natural landscapes to act as carbon storage reservoirs and draw down climate pollution from our atmosphere.
5. Support the international community to cut climate damage and adapt to a warming world.

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Put Australia on a path to achieve zero net pollution well before 2050 and set targets for 2025 and 2030 that get us there?
- Be effective at reducing climate pollution to meet pollution reduction targets?
- Be easily scaled up to meet increasing targets?
- Ensure the largest source of climate pollution, the electricity sector, leads the way in cutting pollution?
- Not rely on international offsets to achieve Australia's pollution reduction?
- Set vehicle emissions standards, to be fully phased in by 2025, that are at least as stringent as the US standards and align over time with the stronger EU standards while accelerating electric vehicle uptake?
- Establish a national fund to strategically protect and restore biodiverse natural landscapes to rapidly draw down climate pollution from our atmosphere?
- Provide our fair share of climate finance to support the international community to cut pollution and adapt to a warming world – a minimum \$3.2 billion annually, in addition to existing aid obligations; and share our skills, expertise and resources?

What it means to our everyday lives

Avoiding the most dangerous impacts of global warming will spare communities, at home and overseas, from worsening fires, floods, heatwaves and water shortages. We will leave our families and future generations a country with a liveable climate. And the Great Barrier Reef, home to dolphins, whales, turtles and other marine life, will remain one of the great wonders of our magnificent natural world.

Emily Driscoll Operations Manager at Off-Grid Energy

As co-founder of an Australian energy company specialising in battery storage systems, Emily Driscoll knows clean energy is already available and just waiting for the right government policy settings.

“There is simply no doubt that we already have the technology we need to transition to a 100% renewable electricity grid starting today. The old, overstated argument that renewable energy cannot provide base load power is completely redundant with energy storage in the picture,” she says.

“Most people in our industry have never questioned the inevitable dominance of renewable energy technologies in the electricity mix of the future. But the Australian public recognises this now.”

“The scale of the opportunity is immense. To put it simply - the government needs to stop hindering progress, embrace the inevitability of renewable energy, and let our highly capable industry brains loose on the biggest global technological (and economic) opportunity for this generation.”

She says her experience in the industry has shown her that “a well designed, distributed, 100% renewable grid is cleaner, cheaper, stronger, quieter, creates more jobs, and provides an opportunity for Australia to be an innovative world leader. There are no downsides!”



2. Switch to 100% clean energy

Build large scale clean energy projects and provide fair, reliable policies that modernise our outdated and polluting electricity system so all Australian households, industries and communities can harvest 100% of their electricity from clean energy like the sun and wind.

To rapidly cut pollution, Australia must continue supporting a strong pipeline of clean energy projects and energy efficiency improvements through new programs, stable policy and supportive financing. Governments must ensure the transition is fair by supporting low income households, remote Aboriginal communities and high energy consuming industries that need help. We must also look to create a thriving new renewable export industry, using excess energy harvested from our abundant wind and sun to create the equivalent of 'liquid sunshine' that can be exported as a clean, green hydrogen fuel, to other nations.

How to make it happen

1. Ensure clean energy powers 100% of Australia's electricity generation by 2030, and 100% of Australia's overall energy uses as soon as possible, but no later than 2040-2050.
2. Provide government support (e.g. through reverse auctions and public investment) to make sure the right clean energy solutions are available in the right places – including flexible, 'on demand' energy technologies such as demand response, solar thermal and battery storage.
3. Accelerate access to clean energy and energy efficiency upgrades for low income earners by creating a network of 50 community energy hubs, removing barriers for renters, and developing an Indigenous communities clean power program.
4. Double the energy productivity of Australia's economy by 2030 to make sure we use energy wisely and get more output from every bit of energy we use.
5. Provide ongoing support for renewable energy finance, research, development and deployment, including continuing and expanding the role of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) and the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC).

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Set predictable, supportive, fair policies that remove barriers to clean energy and ensure clean energy powers 100% of Australia's electricity by 2030, and 100% of Australia's overall energy needs well before 2050 (See also 'Shift away from dirty fuels')?
- Make sure all Australians everywhere benefit from the transition to clean energy – including low-income households, renters, and remote Aboriginal communities?
- Guarantee that both ARENA and CEFC are retained until 2030 with a continued focus on supporting renewable energy and energy efficiency, and restore the \$500 million cut from ARENA's budget?
- Drive the establishment of a clean energy export industry to assist the clean energy transition in our region and grow a new clean export opportunity?
- Reform the National Electricity Market (NEM) with climate pollution reduction as a priority objective?

What it means to our everyday lives

Everyone - no matter what they earn or where they live - will share in the benefits of clean energy. Families will be able to heat their homes, keep food cool and travel to work or school without harming the climate. Fewer people in Australia will suffer from conditions exacerbated by air pollution, including coal dust and smoke.



Lou Gole is a primary school student who greatly cares for the environment and wants to stop the Adani coal mine.

"I love nature because it's so beautiful. I like it when it rains. I love the trees. I love the native trees and the creatures that live in the trees and the native lilly pillies," he says.

When Lou heard about the Adani coal mine he said "it made me feel sad because the creatures will be breathing in the polluted air".

"I hope that all the coal stays in the ground because taking coal takes part of the earth that should stay there. I hope that the reef will recover and become a healthier reef once again. I hope all the little fish in the reef are going to have a healthy and happy life in the future."

3. Stop digging up and burning coal, oil and gas

Shift away from polluting coal, oil and gas, beginning with replacing dirty, outdated coal-fired power plants with clean energy. Stop approving new thermal coal, oil and gas projects or expansions of mines, and start phasing out existing mines.

While other countries are rapidly abandoning dirty fuels, Australia's coal, gas and oil industry continues to pump toxic pollution into our air. Whether these fuels are burned in Australia or overseas, they are harmful and incompatible with stopping global warming. Like the rest of the world, Australia needs to keep thermal coal, gas and oil in the ground. This includes the coal in the Galilee Basin, therefore putting a stop to Adani's Carmichael coal mine. The Adani coal mine would dig up so much coal that burning it would add the equivalent of nine years' worth of Australia's annual pollution into the atmosphere.

How to make it happen

1. Make a national plan with policies to support the phased closure of Australia's coal-fired power stations by 2030, starting with the dirtiest, oldest and least efficient.
 2. Commit to a comprehensive transition plan and package for workers and communities affected by the shift away from coal, oil and gas.
 3. Intervene to stop Adani's coal mine and keep all Galilee Basin coal in the ground.
 4. Fix the laws that protect our environment so that damaging mines like the Adani coal mine are not approved again.
 5. Do not approve any new thermal coal, oil or gas projects or extensions of existing projects, and accelerate the closure and rehabilitation of thermal coal mining operations.
 6. Stop using public funds to support fossil fuels including all grants, concessional loans, direct investments, tax concessions and other subsidies.
7. Implement a federal plan obliging mining companies to retain mine rehabilitation securities at a level required to fully restore affected sites and landscapes.

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Provide a plan to rapidly phase out Australia's coal-fired power stations, starting with the dirtiest, most inefficient and polluting stations?
- Ensure properly resourced plans and a comprehensive transition package for workers, communities and regions affected by fossil fuel closures, including:
 - a statutory authority responsible for managing the effects of the energy transition
 - jobs hubs in transitioning communities
 - support for the growth of new and sustainable industries?
- Ensure no public funds are used to support Adani's mine or any other mines in the Galilee Basin?
- Stop the Adani mine and keep all Galilee Basin coal in the ground on the basis that it poses an undue threat to the Great Barrier Reef, water, and endangered species?
- Remove fossil fuel subsidies such as the diesel fuel tax credit?
- Improve mine rehabilitation rules and funding to make sure they lead to full mine rehabilitation?

What it means to our everyday lives

Coal mining companies are not allowed to walk away, leaving a toxic mess, but will clean up and rehabilitate the places they have mined. Australians are taking up the one million new jobs on offer in clean energy and climate action. Coal mine workers will no longer be exposed to 'black lung' and other hazards of coal mining.



Steve Meacher (M.Ed) is a forest educator and President of Friends of Leadbeater's Possum

Steve Meacher has been speaking out to save the endangered Leadbeater's Possum for over a decade, along with a dedicated team that make up Friends of the Leadbeater's Possum.

“Leadbeater's Possums live in the forests within view of where I live in Toolangi. They are the seventh Australian mammal most at risk of extinction, so there is a strong motivation to do all I can to support their survival.

“We need to protect the possum's habitat - especially the Mountain Ash forests of the Central Highlands, which have been subjected to unsustainable clearfell logging for half a century.

“The environmental laws have been inadequate largely because government policy tends to favour the logging industry. That's why we took our fight to a new level by launching a case in the Federal Court of Australia.

“I want the government to take its moral responsibility for the environment seriously. Humanity exists within nature. If we continue to destroy the biosphere, we are destroying our own support systems.”

4. Create strong laws to protect life

Develop a new generation of strong national laws and institutions to protect our rivers, reefs, forests and wildlife, increase biodiversity and regulate pollution.

Our environment laws should protect the air we breathe, the water we drink and the places and wildlife we love. Yet under these laws today, corporations are allowed to pollute our air and water, exploit our oceans and land, and drive wildlife to extinction. We need national leadership to reform national environment laws, policies and institutions so nature in Australia can thrive. A new legal framework would guarantee environmental decisions are transparent and that governments and vested interests could be held to account when they fail to meet their obligations.

How to make it happen

1. Create national environment laws that genuinely protect Australia's natural and cultural heritage, retain federal government responsibility for Matters of National Environmental Significance, and expand national oversight to include protections for national parks, land clearing, critical habitats, wildlife corridors, water resources and climate change.
2. Establish an independent National Environmental Protection Authority that operates at arm's-length from government to conduct transparent environmental assessments and inquiries as well as undertake monitoring, compliance and enforcement actions.
3. Establish an independent national commission that develops enforceable national environmental protection standards, bioregional plans and conservation plans.
4. Ensure binding national air pollution standards that protect our air and people's health from harmful emissions.
5. Guarantee community rights and participation in environmental decision making, including; open standing provisions; review of decisions based on their merits; third-party enforcement provisions; and protections from cost orders in public interest proceedings.

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Result in a new generation of environmental laws that genuinely protect Australia's natural and cultural heritage in the next term of government?
- Expand the oversight of the federal government to climate change, land clearing, critical habitats, water resources, air pollution and protected areas?
- Establish and adequately resource an independent national environment protection authority that operates at arm's-length from government?
- Establish and adequately resource a national commission to develop enforceable national and regional threat abatement and species level conservation plans?
- Ensure open standing, merits review and third-party enforcement rights under national environmental laws?

What it means to our everyday lives

Tree clearing and mining projects that threaten the survival of unique species will not be given the green light. Communities and cities will develop in balance with nature. Our forest-filtered drinking water will flow clean from city taps. Our laws will protect the wildlife and places we love and value. Our grandchildren will still be able to see koalas in the wild.



5. Protect, connect and restore habitats

Protect, connect and restore critical habitats, water catchments, oceans and forests to give communities, plants and animals the best chance to thrive and adapt to global warming.

Australia has one of the world's worst records on species loss and extinction. Never before has our natural environment been more degraded or threatened due to urbanisation, land clearing, over-extraction, invasive species and the rising threat of global warming. To keep life thriving, we need big investments in the protection and restoration of nature in Australia. This means massively scaling up the resources that go into conservation efforts nationally, including the establishment of new protected areas and connecting important habitats across our lands, rivers and oceans.

How to make it happen

1. Establish a national environment fund with a minimum annual investment of \$1 billion to:
 - drive the growth of public, private and Indigenous Protected Areas through the strategic protection of important ecosystems, habitats and wildlife corridors
 - directly implement threatened species recovery plans and threat abatement plans, tackle invasive species and protect critical habitats
 - support restoration of degraded land in priority conservation corridors
 - restore priority native ecosystems to provide climate mitigation and adaptation services
 - deliver an urban canopy program to restore nature to our city streets.
2. Revitalise our national strategy for the National Reserve System and wildlife corridors, backed up with significant investments needed to ensure:
 - the protection of ten million hectares of high-value ecosystems by 2021
 - the ecological restoration of one million hectares of high value ecosystems by 2021.
3. Protect our native forests by removing exemptions for Regional Forest Agreements from national law and establishing a new national forest policy process to protect the full suite of conservation values in forests across the country.
4. Restore the 2012 zoning in 44 Commonwealth marine parks and make further zoning changes to increase environmental health.
5. Create incentives through the taxation systems for private landholders to improve the health and extent of ecosystems under their stewardship.

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Establish a fund with a minimum annual investment of \$1 billion to protect and restore habitats, implement recovery actions, tackle invasive species and help our communities and wildlife adapt to climate change?
- Ensure the protection of ten million hectares of high value ecosystems by 2021?
- Ensure the ecological restoration of one million hectares of high value ecosystems by 2021?
- Remove exemptions for native forest logging from national environment law and implement a national forest policy reform process?
- Restore the 2012 Commonwealth marine parks zoning supported by well-resourced enforcement, monitoring and community engagement?
- Improve tax incentives for conservation and ecological restoration on private lands?

What it means to our everyday lives

Australia's great natural places - the places that filter our drinking water, cool our climate, provide habitat for wildlife, the places where we walk, swim and explore and relax - will be properly protected. Animals can move through connected habitats to find safe refuges to breed and feed.

Maison Lukic-Bristow is a young activist living in Townsville, Queensland

As a young person growing up in north eastern Queensland in a Defence Forces family, Maison Lukic-Bristow, 18, says he loves living in the wet tropics - but he worries about the impacts of unsustainable mining on his region.

"I've always called Townsville home because that's where my family is. As a younger kid going to the reef and being awestruck by it - it was something that really shaped me. It has inspired me to get politically active and promote sustainability in economic policy and environmental management."

Maison says that most young people he knows in Townsville "tend to see things from a sustainability point of view".

"We want to think long term because, in the end, we are the ones that you have to pass the baton over to us and we need to take control of the economy at some point. If we are really thinking to the future, then we will have a good economy in the long term."

"An economy cannot sustain without an environment," Maison says.



6. Create an economy for life

Overhaul Australia's economic rules so that they support life.

Right now, the rules that govern our economic system value the wrong things. They focus on short-term gain and endless economic growth, and treat our unique places and wildlife as capital to be traded, extracted and exploited. Our economic laws and policies fail to recognise that we fundamentally rely on clean air, water, and a diverse, thriving natural world. If we harm these, we harm the entire web of life. It's time to redesign our economic rules to support life. This means integrating the health of Australia's rivers, oceans, forests, wildlife and land into political decision-making, policy advice and economic reporting.

How to make it happen

1. Redirect government payments from polluters to problem solvers by removing tax concessions, concessional loans, direct investments and other subsidies that drive poor environmental outcomes.
2. Conduct an environmental review of the tax system that recommends wide ranging reforms to ensure the tax system encourages protection and regeneration of the environment.
3. Measure and value what matters:
 - by implementing and resourcing measures of the health of the environment and overall wellbeing such as the System of Environmental-Economic Accounts across the federal government, including regional scale accounts, and a national measure of prosperity that replaces gross domestic product (GDP)
 - through reforming the Productivity Commission to be a Productivity and Sustainability Commission, mandated to publish an annual green paper that outlines the health of the ecosystems that underpin ongoing economic prosperity, the state of Australia's green infrastructure and barriers to improved resource productivity.

4. Stop environmental damage by requiring transparent analysis of major projects that fully incorporate environmental considerations.
5. Set a target and implement policies to halve the ecological footprint of Australia's economy by 2030 including:
 - a. ensuring clean energy powers 100% of Australia's electricity by 2030
 - b. revitalising our national strategy for the National Reserve System and wildlife corridors (see 'Protect, connect and restore habitats').

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Stop fossil fuel subsidies, including the diesel fuel tax credit, and end tax breaks that incentivise environmental damage?
- Ensure the tax system rewards the protection and regeneration of the environment and penalises its destruction?
- Introduce a well-resourced system of annual national and regional environmental accounts and measures of prosperity?
- Expand the mandate of the Productivity Commission to explicitly consider environmental matters?
- Introduce transparent and independent analysis of the social, economic and environmental costs and benefits of major projects through bodies such as Infrastructure Australia?
- Set Australia on a trajectory to halve our ecological footprint by 2030?

What it means to our everyday lives

Our governments can make decisions and laws so that what we produce, how we produce it and how we spend money does not damage our lives and the life around us. We will improve quality of life in Australia, not just the quantity of wealth. More and more people will work in good jobs with a future that are good for our future - like clean energy and caring for country.



People's Climate March, VIC.
Photo: James Thomas

7. Create a stronger democracy

Strengthen the laws and institutions that keep our democracy strong, and ensure the Australian government is honest, transparent, and accountable.

Political capture of decision-makers by special interests such as big business and industry lobbies is all too common – and worse, within the rules. Governments are not regulating political donations effectively, enabling powerful interest groups, such as the mining lobby, to distort policy outcomes and buy influence. We need a political system which is transparent, accountable, and free of corruption. Open, accountable governments are a vital part of the solution to the problems we are trying to solve. Our vision for Australia's democracy is one in which the welfare of all life in Australia is at the heart of every decision. Where dollars don't determine public policy – people do.

How to make it happen

1. Remove money from political decisions by capping donations to political parties, political candidates and associated entities to \$1000 per financial year and reducing the threshold for mandatory disclosure of donations to \$500 per year. Smaller donations should be aggregated; reporting of donations should be timely, and accessible; and caps on election spending must be harmonised across jurisdictions.
2. Introduce safeguards against political corruption by establishing a federal Independent Commission Against Corruption.
3. Introduce limits on politicians becoming lobbyists as soon as they leave elected office.
4. Protect the independence of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission.
5. Guarantee the rights of charities to pursue their mission through non-partisan advocacy, reinstate advocacy protections within the Not-for-profit Sector Freedom to Advocate Act 2013 and enhance opportunities for stakeholders and citizens to engage with policy making processes.
6. Restore funding to peak environment bodies and community law centres including Environmental Defenders' Offices (EDOs) and state conservation councils.

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Commit to a national consultation to identify a package of electoral and political regulation reforms for Australia, which strengthen integrity and accountability measures for parliament and safeguard the role of civil society advocacy in our democracy?
- Introduce effective political donations reform?
- Create and resource a federal anti-corruption regulator?
- Ensure MPs and Senators do not move into lobbying roles within a reasonable time of leaving office?
- Restore funding of EDOs and conservation councils to 2010 levels
- Guarantee the rights of charities to pursue their mission through non-partisan political advocacy?
- Guarantee the independence of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission?

What it means to our everyday lives

Our democracy will work for everyone and represent everyone. Elected representatives will, in parliament, speak up for the people – not the vested interests – and agree to policy outcomes that reflect the public interest. People everywhere can advocate for a better world and use their voice to hold corporations and elected leaders to account.



Flinders Ranges, SA.
Photo: Bette Devine

8. Be nuclear free

Reduce radioactive risks by stopping uranium mining and export, withdrawing from the global nuclear industry and responsibly managing Australia's radioactive waste.

Australia is home to one third of the world's uranium and the decisions we make here have profound and continuing global impacts. Uranium is like no other energy source – it fuels nuclear reactors, nuclear weapons and produces nuclear waste. Australian uranium exports cause significant environmental and cultural damage at home and increase nuclear risks internationally. Every kilogram of uranium becomes long-lived radioactive waste, an unresolved and expensive global environmental and security problem. Australia needs to phase out involvement in fuelling the global nuclear trade by ending the mining and export of uranium, acting responsibly on radioactive waste and supporting international efforts to improve nuclear safety and abolish nuclear weapons.

How to make it happen

1. Withdraw support for new or expanded uranium mines in Australia and accelerate the closure of existing operations.
2. Establish a responsible and transparent process for radioactive waste management in Australia.
3. Bolster international efforts to improve nuclear safety and security, and advance a nuclear-free future by ending new uranium sales, not advancing nuclear agreements and signing and ratifying the nuclear weapons prohibition treaty.

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Phase out uranium mining and export?
- Advance a new approach for the responsible and transparent management of Australia's radioactive waste?
- Stop new uranium sales and nuclear agreements?
- Advance the signing, ratification and implementation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons?

What it means to our everyday lives

Australia will never fuel another Fukushima. Regional and remote communities can be confident their land will not be used as a dumping ground for radioactive waste when more responsible options exist. People can work in jobs that don't trade off their health. Our planet has its best chance of ending the threat posed by its worst weapons.



Liz Frankel is a visual artist and children's book author living on the banks of the Murray River in South Australia

Living on the Murray River in a place called Good Hope Landing, Liz Frankel says her immersion in nature has been the biggest motivator to help protect it.

"I have always had an appreciation for the natural world, but when we moved to our Murray River property in 2001, we were able to immerse ourselves in the natural environment on a daily basis - able to understand its history, observe its profound beauty - but sadly, also witness its rapid decline."

Frankel says she has witnessed the gradual deterioration of the surrounding river ecology near her home. "In the lead-up to the end of the millennium drought, we witnessed many stately gums, some hundreds of years old, literally die of thirst," she says.

"As we move into a future with less fresh water, it is critical that we support the environmental work being done through the Murray Darling Basin Plan, so that water can be shared fairly, not only between the important industries that rely on the river water, but in times of water scarcity, also with the floodplain and the river itself, so that it can remain healthy."

9. Keep our rivers flowing

Deliver the historic Murray-Darling Basin Plan for healthier rivers, wetlands, wildlife and communities, and reinvigorate national water reform.

Wildlife, millions of people and 20,000 farms rely on the river water of the Murray-Darling Basin. But right now, our rivers and the country and communities they support are stressed because they don't have enough water. Our elected representatives have a duty to protect our rivers so everyone who calls the basin home can thrive for generations to come. This means committing to deliver the Murray-Darling Basin Plan – on time and in full. Outside the Murray Darling, national water reform must be reinvigorated to build sustainable and resilient river systems and communities.

How to make it happen

1. Guarantee environmental outcomes equivalent to the delivery of 3,200 gigalitres of water for the environment, including the full 450 gigalitres of water to be recovered through the Water for the Environment special account.
 2. Return responsibility for water to the Environment portfolio and establish an independent water compliance unit within a federal Environment Protection Authority (EPA).
 3. Remove the 1,500 GL cap on water buybacks in the Murray-Darling Basin.
 4. Increase and stabilise long-term funding and resources for the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH) to build and manage its portfolio of environmental water.
 5. Remove barriers and outdated rules so our rivers can replenish natural floodplains, and native fish and other species are able to move and breed along the length of the river system.
6. Revitalise Australia's national water reform agenda to deliver responsible water management across Australia, account for the impacts of global warming and recognise Indigenous water rights.

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Deliver the commitments made under the Murray-Darling Basin Plan on time and in full, including the delivery of outcomes equivalent to 3,200 gigalitres in environmental water?
- Return responsibility for water to the environment portfolio and ensure an independent water compliance and enforcement unit is established in an EPA?
- Enable the recovery of water in the Murray-Darling Basin through voluntary purchase on the open market?
- Adequately resource the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder to build and deliver its critically important portfolio of environment water?
- Address constraints and barriers throughout the Basin to improve environmental outcomes and ensure water reaches natural floodplains?
- Revitalise national water reform in Australia and set out a roadmap for the recognition of Indigenous water rights?

What it means to our everyday lives

We will be able to keep swimming and fishing in our rivers – and the mighty Murray will flow all the way to the sea. Farms and fields will be green and gold and our rivers will support life and communities right across the basin for generations to come. Wetlands will croak with once-endangered frogs. Brolgas and rare Australasian bitterns will wade through swamps, and our rivers will teem with spawning native fish and millions of golden perch fingerlings.

Ashley Ross has been working for four years as an Indigenous park ranger for the Olkola Aboriginal Corporation

Ashley Ross has spent most of his life in northern Queensland as a member of the Olkola people of Cape York, where his people have lived for thousands of years. He says the opportunity to work as a park ranger allows him to combine two things he loves – helping to protect nature and keeping his culture alive.

“My work varies from weed detection and spraying to burning country, which includes both the cultural aspect and carbon reduction benefits, and protecting the Golden-shouldered Parrot and other Olkola totems.”

Ashley says he loves his work because it allows him to be out on country, working to protect both the environment and to keep Olkola culture thriving.

“The feeling of being on country is a feeling of freedom and a knowing that it is where I belong. I like to see Olkola Country thrive because when country is doing well so are Olkola People. For me, retracing our ancestors footsteps and protecting our cultural sites so future generations can understand and have connection to country just like I do.”



Ashley Ross (right) on Olkola Country, QLD.
Photo: Olkola Aboriginal Foundation

10. Help nature and culture thrive

Protect and manage natural and cultural values across Australia.

Across Australia, Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) are restoring landscapes rich in natural and cultural heritage. Traditional Owners are keeping coasts, rivers, forests, bushland and whole ecosystems thriving – for the benefit of all Australians. At the same time, these protected areas are providing social, cultural, educational and employment opportunities for remote communities. By supporting Indigenous communities to care for country, our next government must ensure our incredible natural and cultural heritage is protected and managed in a socially equitable and culturally appropriate way.

How to make it happen

1. In partnership with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal organisations and the Queensland government, build a regional network in support for a consent-driven natural and cultural nomination for the listing of the Cape York Peninsula as a World Heritage Site by 2020.
2. Increase funding for IPAs, scaling up to \$30 million per annum by 2021, as part of a National Environment Fund.
3. Increase funding for the successful federal Indigenous ranger program to achieve a target of 5,000 rangers by 2030 with ongoing security of funding.

Tests of success

Will the policies and programs committed to by our elected representatives:

- Establish a clear roadmap to deliver a Traditional Owner driven, consent based World Heritage nomination process for Cape York Peninsula?
- Increase funding for IPAs, scaling up to \$30 million per annum as part of a national strategy for the growth of the national reserve system?
- Commit to supporting the employment of 5,000 Indigenous rangers by 2030?

What it means to our everyday lives

Australians and overseas visitors will be able to explore our wide brown land and know that culturally and ecologically rich landscapes are being looked after by country's original owners. Indigenous communities will benefit from sustainable tourism, clean energy and Indigenous ranger programs, bringing renewed opportunities to support their health, families, communities, culture and country.

We love our beautiful planet

Australian Conservation Foundation

Level 1, 60 Leicester Street
Carlton VIC 3053
ABN 22 007 498 482

Telephone 1800 223 669

Website acf.org.au

Email acf@acf.org.au

Twitter @AusConservation

Published May 2018

ACF reports are available online at
acf.org.au/reports

Printed on 100% post-consumer
recycled paper

Authorised by Kelly O'Shanassy, ACF, 1/60 Leicester St, Carlton, Vic, 3053
(Printer: Sunnyland; Suite 110/91 Murphy Street Richmond Vic 3121)



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