

# Energy & Greenhouse Challenge

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## AUSTRALIAN DEMOCRATS ACTION PLAN ENERGY & GREENHOUSE CHALLENGE CLIMATE CHANGE, LAND AND WATER

*Australia cannot wait 15 to 20 years for “clean coal” or nuclear power. We have a small window of opportunity to make the deep cuts needed to avoid dangerous climate change. We must act now to fundamentally decarbonise our economy. This plan would deliver those cuts. Australian Democrats advocate an aggressive push on energy efficiency and fossil fuels used strategically and sparingly as we shift to renewable energy.*

### Our Action Plan

*“If humans pursue a business-as-usual course for the first half of this century, I believe the collapse of civilisation due to climate change becomes inevitable”*

**Tim Flannery**  
**The Weather Makers**

- Ratify the **Kyoto Protocol** and press the USA and other nations to do likewise. Take a lead role in post Kyoto negotiations to achieve international cooperation for legally binding reduction targets, improved science, technology exchange, adaptation efforts and decisive responses to avoid dangerous climate change.
- Set **greenhouse reduction targets** informed by the latest science, reflected in international agreements and enshrined in law. Currently this means cuts of 30% of 1990 levels by 2020 and 60 to 90% by 2050.
- **Green certificate trading.** Boost the Mandatory Renewable Energy Target to 25% by 2020 and 50% by 2030.
- **Black certificate trading.** Introduce an internationally compatible, cap and trade, emissions trading scheme by 2010 with all permits auctioned after 2015.
- **White certificate trading.** Introduce a 20% energy efficiency target and delivered through white certificate trading creating a market for retrofit energy efficiency actions in the residential, industrial and commercial sectors.
- Require new power stations to have a greenhouse **emissions intensity threshold** of less than 0.6 T / MWh.
- Apply 6-star **minimum energy performance standards** for appliances, equipment and buildings by 2010 and 10-star by 2020. Ban the sale of electric hot water storage systems and expand rebates for solar hot water systems.
- **Transfer** coal and gas **subsidies** (currently ~\$10b/yr) to research, development, demonstration and commercialisation of ultra low and zero emission technology including big scale renewable energy generation and energy storage.
- **Reform energy markets** to remove all regulatory barriers to energy efficiency and renewable energy including depreciation and fringe benefits tax laws.



Other ACTION PLANS are available online at  
[www.democrats.org.au](http://www.democrats.org.au)

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- Mandate generous **feed-in tariffs** for small and medium scale distributed power generation like solar and cogeneration.
- Impose a **tax on coal exports** of \$5 per tonne. Persuade the other top ten coal exporters to do the same in order to approximate a global carbon price.
- Revenue raised (\$600m p.a.) from coal export tax used to reduce householders' energy bills and greenhouse emissions through a **million solar rooves program**.

## The Issues

Australia is the highest per capita greenhouse emitter and in the top ten global greenhouse emitters. Australia is not on track to meeting our Kyoto target and more alarmingly our emissions are projected to be a 127% increase of 1990 emissions by 2020. The highest priority for action must be to move from greenhouse intense fossil fuels to sustainable, efficient and renewable technologies for energy production and transport.

Since 1988, the Australian Democrats have campaigned to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Howard government plays politics with climate change, ignoring the science, creating doubt and all the time supporting the status quo - time and again showing that he is beholden to polluting industries. Yet the Prime Minister says he would do nothing that would damage our economy, intimating that action to reduce emissions would do so. There is enough evidence through current economic modelling and policy that greenhouse reduction policies are consistent with economic growth and productivity. These actions range from banning the most energy wasting practices and ramping up and enforcing minimum energy standards for houses, appliances and equipment. In many cases only political will, thought and imagination are required.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>1</sup> and the scientific community are in consensus about the cause and impacts of human induced climate change. The IPCC have advised the safest course for our environment and our economy is early action, within the next ten years, that avoid dangerous climate change beyond 2 degrees. This will require structural adjustment of our economy and how we do things.

Australians are now convinced that serious action is needed from government and needed fast. Big business is also calling for action on climate change and investment certainty. Our vision for a sustainable Australia is a solar hot water heater and solar power station on every roof, houses built to a 10 star energy rating with no heating and cooling required, for your insurer, electricity retailer and bank to provide you with discounts on a cleaner car or making your home or business more energy efficient.

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<sup>1</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in recognition of the problem of global climate change.



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