

PROTECTING OUR OCEANS, FORESTS, RIVERS AND REEFS

Despite Australia's natural wealth and our love for nature, our environment is under threat like never before. Browscale land clearing and logging in native forests has made Australia a global deforestation hotspot. Mass coral bleaching from climate change and dredging for coal and gas ports are pushing our Great Barrier Reef and many other reefs to the edge. The Murray-Darling Basin is suffering as politicians fail to enforce the law against big corporate irrigators and slash environmental water allocations. The Greens have a plan to save our precious places.



THE GREENS WILL:

- Keep our **oceans healthy**
- **End deforestation** in Australia
- **Save our Great Barrier Reef**
- Suspend payments and audit water recovery projects to **ensure 4,000 gigalitres are returned to the Murray-Darling**



KEEP OUR OCEANS HEALTHY

Our oceans are the canary in the coal mine. From climate change to plastics, species extinction to oil and gas extraction, the oceans and marine life are showing us the result of a polluting and careless lifestyle. We must protect our oceans.

The Greens will:

- Introduce a network of marine parks based on leading scientific recommendations;
- Reform federal government fisheries management;
- Introduce a national system of seafood labelling so consumers know what they are buying;
- Remove Commonwealth licensing of shark nets;
- Pursue the Japanese Government over their lethal whaling;
- Remove toxic plastics from our oceans;
- Make sure there are no new oil and gas exploration permits and a ban on seismic testing;
- Stop all oil and gas exploration in marine parks;
- Stop all oil and gas exploration in the Great Australian Bight, revoke existing exploration permits, and nominate the area as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

END DEFORESTATION IN AUSTRALIA

It's time to end the destructive logging and deforestation that is destroying our wildlife habitat, carbon stores, regional landscapes and water catchments.

The Greens will ensure long-term sustainability of regional jobs and local wood products industries, by completing the transition to 100% plantation-sourced timber and fibre and by protecting the natural resources that our precious endangered wildlife, local tourism and sustainable agriculture rely on.

The Greens will:

- Scrap the Regional Forest Agreements and end logging in native forests
- End broadscale land-clearing of forests and woodlands on private land to protect our precious places, animals and carbon stores that are being destroyed
- Unlock jobs and community benefit from environmental restoration and tourism and recreation
- Invest \$20m in research and development to prove that we can have a long-term wood and fibre products industry from plantations (which already account for 87% of our wood products), other fibre sources such as hemp, and farm forestry



SAVE OUR GREAT BARRIER REEF

In the last three years, half of the coral cover of the Great Barrier Reef has died from climate change driven heat stress and poor water quality. As one of the seven natural wonders of the world, an employer of 64,000 people and one of our greatest tourist attractions, we must take serious action to protect what's left of our Reef.

The Greens will:

- Act rapidly on global warming with our detailed plans to boost clean energy and ban new coal and gas including stopping the proposed Adani mega coal mine
- Improve water quality with a \$2 billion grant fund over 10 years¹ available to scientists, governments and farmers to improve farming practices and repair reef catchments, and setting legal caps on water pollution by catchment
- Strengthen the Reef's champions, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) and the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) with \$90 million in extra funding,² independence and stronger powers including to regulate coastal development
- Stop damaging coal and gas port expansions including at Abbot Point and pristine areas like the Fitzroy Delta and Cape York Peninsula
- Ban all offshore dumping of dredge spoil - the Reef is not a rubbish dump
- Address illegal fishing and overfishing, including ending shark fishing
- Make shipping safer for our Reef and seafarers with compulsory marine pilotage
- Double emergency response funding for oil spills and other pollution incidents,³ and clean up the Shen Neng coal ship mess where toxic paint has been left on our Reef since 2010⁴

SAVING THE MURRAY-DARLING

The Murray Darling Basin covers an area bigger than Egypt. It contains sixteen internationally-recognised and protected wetlands,⁵ and provides a habitat for 98 different species of waterbird and 46 species of native fish.⁶ It is home to dozens of Aboriginal nations.⁷ It supplies water to 3 million people.⁸ And it's dying.

Birds are one of the best indicators for the health of an ecosystem, and in 2018 the number of migratory birds hit a record low in a pattern of decline spanning the last several years. Other indicators from river health to fish diversity also took a plunge while algal blooms are on the rise.⁹ The importance of this ecosystem for both human communities and the health of our environment and ongoing biodiversity makes this demise all the more troubling.

Despite having spent billions of dollars on the Basin Plan, we still have no clear insight into what has been achieved. The Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) has come under increased scrutiny but remains uncooperative and lacks transparency. The South Australian Royal Commission and work of MDBA whistleblower, Maryanne Slattery, have helped to highlight the scope of problems faced by this vital river system but questions of corruption, water theft and political and regulatory capture remain.¹⁰

Only an independent, transparent audit of progress can identify what Australian taxpayers are actually funding through the MDBA and what return we're getting on that investment.

The Greens will not sit by as Australia's food bowl turns to dust. We will:

- suspend all payments for 'water-saving measures' and conduct an independent audit into taxpayer funding for water recovery projects to date;
- develop a new plan that actually returns 4,000 gigalitres of water for the environment to the Murray-Darling.

5 www.environment.gov.au/water/cewo/media-release/celebrating-murray-darling-basin-wetlands-world-wetland-day

6 www.mdba.gov.au/discover-basin/environment/animals

7 www.mldrin.org.au

8 www.mdba.gov.au/annual-reports/annual-report-2014-15/about-mdba/basin-statistics

9 www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-27/coorong-murray-darling-basin-how-to-kill-a-river-system/9698108

10 The Australia Institute, *The Basin Files: Maladministration of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan: Volume I*, June 2018.

1 Partially funded by reclaiming the \$443 million the Turnbull-Government gifted to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

2 Additional funding of \$20 million per year to GBRMPA and \$2.5 million per year to AIMS.

3 Funded by increased levies on shipping according to the polluter pays principle.

4 Clean up must start immediately and costs recouped from the polluter via an ongoing Federal Court case.