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Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Grayndler Electorate Office
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Via email: A.Albanese.MP@aph.gov.au

14th December 2018

Dear Anthony,

Thanks very much for taking the opportunity to meet us 30th October to discuss the increased urgency of strong action on climate change as signalled in the recent IPCC report comparing the difference in impact of warming of 1.5 degrees and 2 degrees. To limit global warming to 1.5 degrees the IPCC says greenhouse emissions will need to be halved by 2030.

We welcome your commitment to the next Labor government do its utmost at home and abroad to achieve this outcome. We welcome your invitation for specific ideas for steps Labor can do to make this happen.

We offer ten proposals, put together after a call-out to our members. Each of these is discussed further on the following pages.

1. At this year's ALP national conference, advocate and vote for the package of 21st Century environmental law reform measures proposed by the Labor Environment Action Network.
2. Prior to the Federal election, declare a firm policy that Labor will oppose opening new coal mines and the expansion of existing ones.
3. Implement the Clean Energy Target (CET) as recommended by Chief Scientist Alan Finkel.
4. Work with state governments, employers and unions for a planned and accelerated transition away from coal.
5. Rewrite codes of conduct for ministers and parliamentary staff to eliminate the conflicts of interest inherent in the revolving door of employment between government and big business.
6. Implement emission standards for fuel and new vehicles similar to those in the EU.
7. Phase out diesel rebates for miners and agriculture.
8. Take measures to accelerate the uptake of zero emission vehicles.
9. [Accelerate R&D and other support](#) for Australia's emerging hydrogen energy industries.
10. Expand initiatives to support agricultural sector carbon sequestration in soil to make them accessible for small farmers.
11. Make climate action a goal of Australia's diplomacy and overseas aid agenda.

If you have any queries or would like further references for these suggestions, we would be happy to discuss them further.

We look forward to your response and to hearing of your own initiatives in increasing urgent support for climate action.

Yours sincerely

Dominic Case
President, Climate Change Balmain-Rozelle

Cc: Hon Bill Shorten MP; Hon Mark Butler MP (by email)



Our key suggestions from our members are:

1. At this year's ALP national conference, advocate and vote for the package of "21st Century environmental law" reform measures proposed by the Labor Environment Action Network and supported by over 450 Labor Party branches.

LEAN's package includes a new Environment Act within the first term of a Labor government, the establishment of a new independent National Environment Commission and an Environment Protection Agency to make the long term plans the environment needs and new laws to improve streamlining, transparency and certainty for development approvals. All LEAN's proposals need urgent action, including its proposal for national air pollution standards. Air pollution kills almost three times more people in Australia each year than car accidents and coal mining and coal-fired power stations are among the biggest sources of damaging air pollution and disproportionately affect already disadvantaged communities.

2. Announce a moratorium on the approval of new coal mines and the expansion of existing ones pending a review of the environmental impacts.

Perpetuating Australia's addiction to coal as a source of jobs and revenue is incompatible with the need highlighted in the IPCC report to rapidly decarbonise the world economy. Continued coal mining regardless of risks invites stranded assets and workers entering the workforce in jobs that have no future, while the public purse accumulates long term liabilities.

Our current state of knowledge about the risks and consequences of extracting and burning coal expose existing planning controls as completely inadequate. Yet even such controls and regulations we already have in place are silent around key issues. And those controls that are relevant are routinely subverted by departmental and ministerial obfuscation. The Water Trigger is a good example. LEAN's assessment of our current Environment Act is correct and until there is a new one there needs to be a moratorium on new coal approvals.

3. Implement the Clean Energy Target (CET) as recommended by Chief scientist Alan Finkel.

Business has made clear that it wants to implement renewable energy projects. In NSW there is [\\$21 billion](#) worth of such projects in the pipeline and this investment is growing exponentially. To encourage this trend all that is needed is policy certainty on the path that will deliver the emissions reductions required to meet the climate challenge of 1.5 degrees. With the failure of the Coalition government to agree on the terms of the NEG, Labor has an opportunity to make a fresh start, building on the work of Alan Finkel and others (such as Climate Action Network Australia). Grid modernisation is becoming urgent because of the rapid uptake of renewable generation and because households and industry are paying more for electricity than is necessary.

4. Work with state governments, employers and unions for a planned and accelerated transition away from coal.

Coal has played an historic and significant role in government finances and jobs in regional areas, but its days are numbered due to competition from cheaper energy sources and its role in serious and ongoing environmental damage. We support the recommendations of IRRC report commissioned by the CFMMEU: *The Ruhr or Appalachia? Deciding the future of Australia's coal power workers and communities*; which draws on case studies to identify the best path for early, orderly and just transition plans for those communities currently dependent on coal. It is time for all remaining coal mines and power stations to meet the full costs of installing effective pollution controls and/or licences to pollute and to remediate their mining voids and ash dumps before taking profits. Royalties and taxes received by governments from



coal mining, transportation and power generation should be set aside to fund community plans to mitigate the impact of impending exits.

5. Rewrite codes of conduct for ministers, parliamentary staff and lobbyists to eliminate the conflicts of interest from influence peddling and the revolving door between government and big business.

Recently Melbourne company, Dragoman Global, staffed by former federal ministers, departmental secretaries, ambassadors and corporate heavyweights and offering its clients “total confidentiality and anonymity” met with federal politicians on behalf of naval shipbuilders. But Dragoman is not registered as a lobbying firm and therefore not subject to the lobbying code of contact. The path from retired government minister or premier to CEO of an industry peak body is a path well-trodden at the end of a political career. That cannot be said for many political staffers whose stints of employment literally rotate between the offices of politicians and the offices of peak bodies or lobbying firms - a phenomenon is known as “the revolving door”. The lack of transparency and accountability around these practices and culture account for much cynicism about politics and influence peddling in Australia. Labor in government would do well to examine Canada’s approach.

6. Implement vehicle emissions standards similar to those in the EU.

Unlike other Western countries Australia has no standard to restrict carbon and other noxious vehicle emissions. The Coalition has been sitting on recommendations made to government for changes to fuel standards required for Australia to import vehicles with Euro 6 technology. Consumers pay more for petrol because we drive cars that aren’t as fuel efficient as they can and should be - and we pay more for the human impacts through our health system. As you mentioned in your meeting with us, the transport sector is the fastest growing sector for greenhouse pollution (cars, plus other transport). The lack of transport emissions standards also does nothing to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles - or low sulphur fuel in cruise ships.

7. Phase out diesel fuel rebates for miners and agriculture.

This rebate is worth approximately \$2 billion a year and gives an effective subsidy to companies, many of which already pay no corporate tax. It subsidises environmental damage we can ill afford. Many miners are in any case investing in renewable generating capacity on site because it is cheaper. They are also moving rapidly towards the use of zero emission mining equipment for underground and surface operations, because it is safer and cheaper. Withdrawal of the diesel rebate will further encourage this trend.

8. Take measures to accelerate the uptake of zero emission vehicles.

Starting with the conversion of government fleets. Support for networks of charging stations for electric vehicles fuelling stations for hydrogen-electric vehicles as that technology develops.

9. Accelerate R&D and other support for Australia’s emerging hydrogen energy industries.

The CSIRO has been at the cutting edge of producing potentially game-changing technology. This is a renewable industry in which Australia could be a world leader. ‘Clean hydrogen’ from renewable energy is potentially a future export industry suited to regional and remote areas. The CSIRO’s recently released Hydrogen Energy Roadmap found:

- Hydrogen presents a new export opportunity for Australia and could also play a significant role in enabling the further uptake of renewable energy.

- While the benefits are clear, current barriers to market activation include a lack of supporting infrastructure such as hydrogen refuelling stations for transport, and the cost of hydrogen supply for some applications.
- An appropriate policy framework could create a 'market pull' for hydrogen, with investment in infrastructure then likely to follow.
- In or around 2025, clean hydrogen could be cost-competitive with existing industrial feedstocks such as natural gas, and energy carriers such as batteries in many applications.

10. Expand initiatives to support agricultural sector carbon sequestration in soil to make them accessible for small farmers.

Carbon farming (sequestration) in soil improves soil fertility, water retention and productivity as well as reducing greenhouse gas pollution. Current coalition policies through the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF) disproportionately favour larger farming businesses, in particular large-scale grazing and cropping. Legislative amendments put in place in January 2018 expand projects to horticultural businesses, however the input costs associated with setting up, measuring and reporting on carbon farming projects still restricts the ability of smaller agribusinesses to take part. The Australian Government has made the significant investment in the 'Filling the Gap - Soil carbon research' initiative but more research and new initiatives are needed.

11. Make climate action a goal of Australia's diplomacy and overseas aid agenda.

Work in partnership with Pacific nations to achieve global emission cuts that will achieve the goal of restricting anthropogenic global warming to within 1.5 degrees. Take a leadership role in international fora and in bi-lateral relations to address climate challenges, including making an appropriate commitment to the Green Climate Fund.