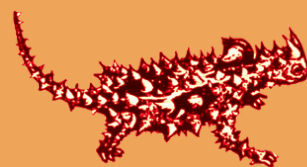


A climate-safe, resilient future

Policies for the 2020 Northern Territory election and beyond



**Arid
Lands
Environment
Centre**

Introduction

A healthy natural environment and safe climate are essential to our people, economy and cultural identity.

Our communities rely on clean drinking water, clean air and a stable climate to sustain our health and well-being.

Our planet is warming up and ecosystem damage is already threatening lives and the livelihoods for all Territorians. Aboriginal people living in bush communities are feeling the impacts of climate change most severely.

At the Territory election in August 2020, we need all political parties and candidates to make the protection of nature and a safe and liveable climate their number-one priority.

The Arid Lands Environment Centre is seeking the commitments contained in this document from all political parties at the 2020 Territory election.

Priority policies:

- PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT AND ICONIC PLACES
- BAN DANGEROUS FOSSIL FUEL PROJECTS
- SAFE CLIMATE
- PROTECT WATER, OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE
- A SUSTAINABLE AND JUST RECOVERY

Contact:

Please don't hesitate to contact the Arid Lands Environment Centre CEO Jimmy Cocking in relation to any of these election asks of urgent public interest.

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1. PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT AND ICONIC PLACES

Our natural environment, the places that we love and those that hold special cultural significance are in an overall state of decline and are under increasing threat. The current environmental trajectory is unsustainable.

Unchecked mining, inappropriate development and species extinction are major issues which our environmental laws are not adequately addressing. They also fail to meet the aspirations of Traditional Owners for managing their land. Stronger, more robust laws are needed to protect our desert country, wildlife and people.

PRIORITY POLICIES:

- Bring the environmental provisions of the Mining Management Act 2001 (NT) into the Environment Protection Act 2019.
- Include provisions to comply with our responsibility under international law to require free prior informed consent to ensure Aboriginal people can have a meaningful say in the decision-making process.
- Reject the Federal Government's push to devolve national environmental approvals.



2. BAN DANGEROUS FOSSIL FUEL PROJECTS

Unconventional oil and gas development like hydraulic fracturing and underground coal gasification are dangerous, polluting and expensive. Despite strong community opposition, the Northern Territory government is considering new sources of gas supply being pushed by energy companies – with a focus on opening new onshore gas fields in the Beetaloo Basin, among others.

To protect our water, do our fair share in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and avoid the worst consequences of climate change, we need to invest in clean, renewable energy and end our dependence on fossil fuels.

PRIORITY POLICIES:

- A permanent ban on hydraulic fracturing and underground coal gasification including immediate legislative changes to prevent new fracking environmental management plans (EMP's) from being approved.






3. SAFE CLIMATE

The Territory is lagging behind other jurisdictions nationally when it comes to climate action and the transition to a clean energy future, despite facing some of the most extreme impacts from climate change.

We currently have bipartisan support for reaching net zero emissions by 2050. We need to make sure these targets are upheld with a legislated commitment that ensures our government is accountable for a safe and liveable climate for future generations.

Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania have laws to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as do many other international jurisdictions, including Canada, the UK, various US states (such as California and New York) and New Zealand.

PRIORITY POLICIES:

- A Climate Change Act that sets a legally binding pathway for the Territory to meet the Paris Agreement target of net zero emissions by 2050.
 - Embed consideration of climate risks across all departments and levels of government decision-making in the best interests of current and future generations of Territorians.
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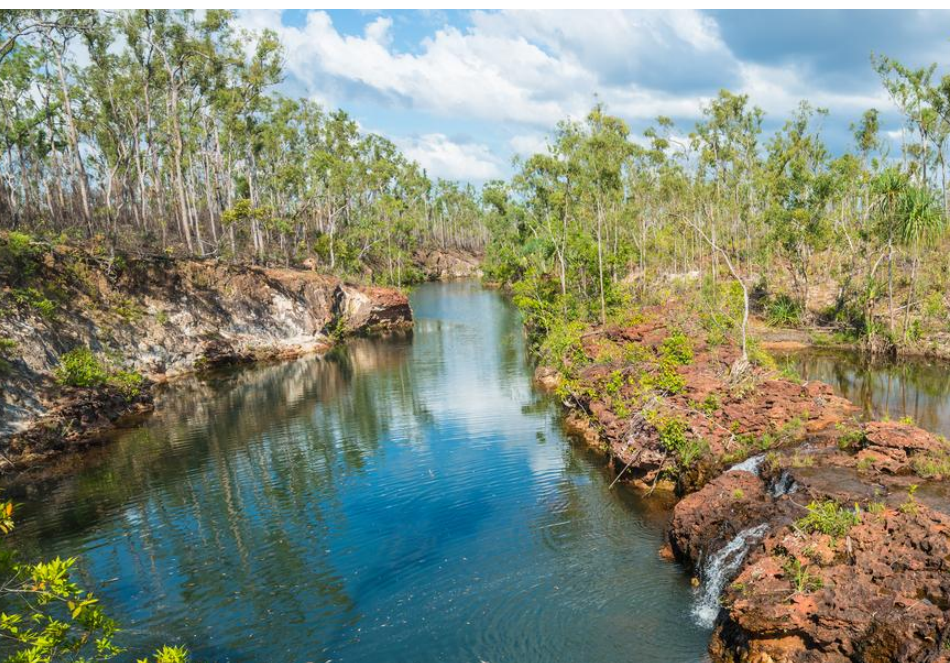
4. PROTECT WATER, OUR MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE

A lack of legally enforceable rights to safe drinking water in the NT means some bush communities are being supplied with contaminated water, a failure which largely impacts on the health and well-being of the Territory's Indigenous population.

Under the current system, water intensive industries including fracking and agriculture receive free water from the government while some communities are paying for unsafe water. Furthermore, competing demands for water from these industries often comes at the cost of public drinking water supply.

PRIORITY POLICIES:

- A Safe Drinking Water Act that legislates a guarantee to safe and reliable drinking water supply for every community in the NT.
- Funded water conservation programs for households and businesses to be more water efficient, similar to Living Water Smart.



5. A SUSTAINABLE AND JUST RECOVERY

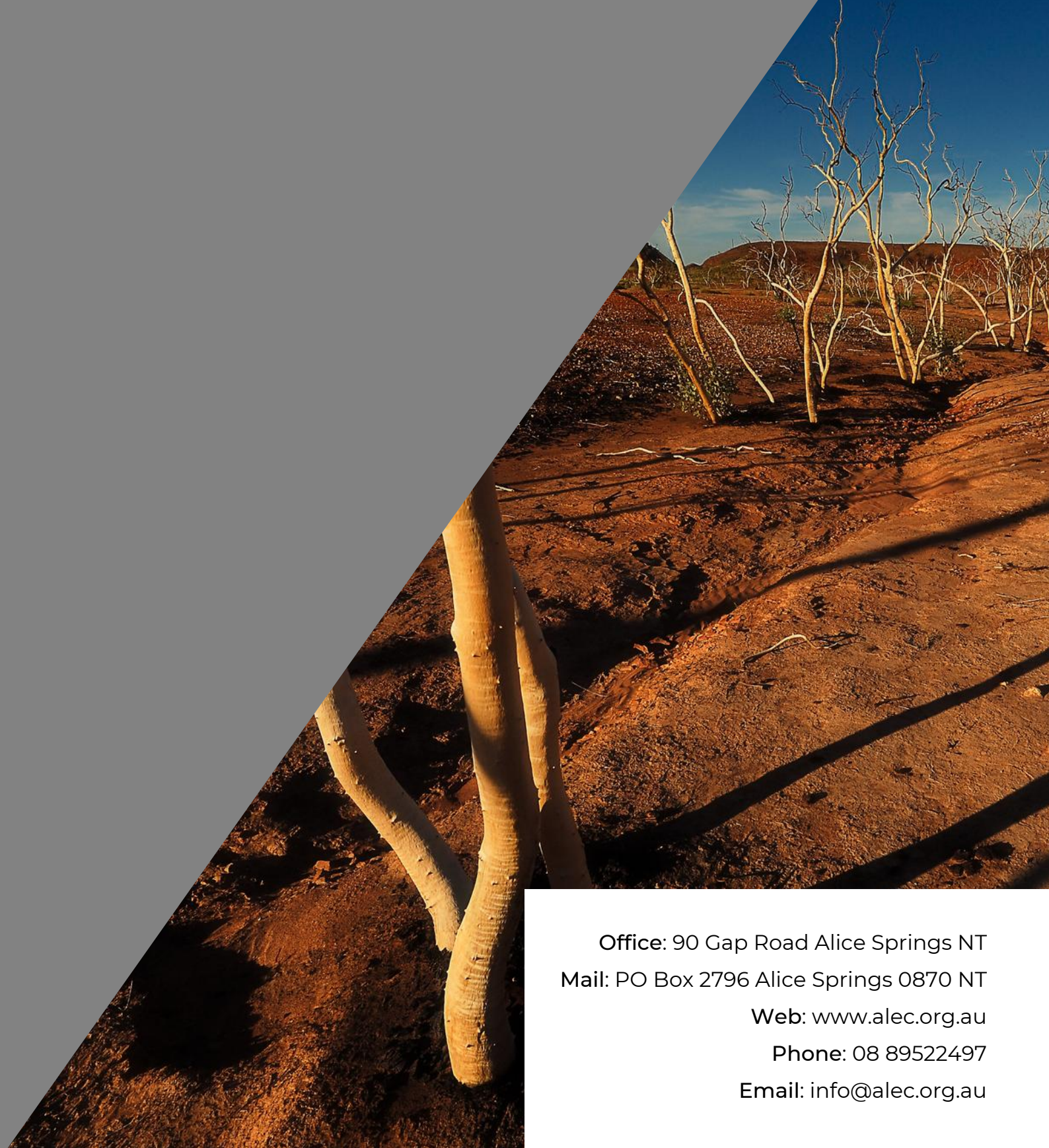
As we rebuild the economy and create opportunities that will take the Territory strongly into the next decade and beyond, our focus should not simply be on returning to growth but on becoming more sustainable and climate resilient and building a fairer, more just society.

Climate change will have far-reaching and long-term consequences for all Territorians, especially bush communities. We must acknowledge the challenges and risks climate change poses and use our recovery as an opportunity to safeguard ourselves against future shocks and a hotter world.

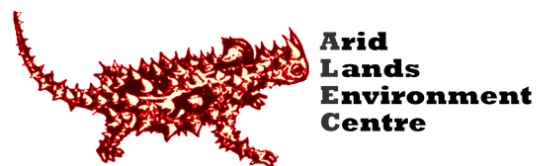
Decarbonizing our economy and positioning ourselves as a renewable energy superpower will strengthen the NT's economic competitiveness in a national and global economy that is becoming more innovative, low-carbon, and resource-efficient.

PRIORITY POLICIES:

- Repower the Northern Territory with renewable energy including 100% renewable powered Alice Springs by 2030.
- Mandate the installation of solar panels for all new government buildings, including social and affordable housing.
- Undertake a feasibility study to build a HVDC transmission line between Darwin and Alice Springs.
- Establish the NT as a Renewable Energy superpower and support a renewable hydrogen pilot plant.



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The Arid Lands Environment Centre acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands we work on and their vital role in caring for country for many thousands of years, now, and into the future. We acknowledge their Elders past, present and emerging and recognise that their sovereignty was never ceded.