

2016 FEDERAL ELECTION



**AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION**

ELECTION ACTION KIT



ACF is Australia's national environment group. We are a quarter of a million people who speak out, show up and act for a world where forests, rivers, people and wildlife thrive. We are proudly independent, non-partisan and funded by donations from Australians.

YOUR CHOICE



This election, you will make a choice.

Will you vote for a party who backs the big polluting companies that are damaging our climate? Or will you vote for candidates who are committed to creating a brighter future powered by clean energy – a future in which our reefs, rivers, forests and wildlife can thrive?

Together, our votes are powerful.

Why does this election matter?

A handful of big polluters – and the politicians who do their bidding – are damaging our climate and destroying our living world. When community voices are weak, they can get away with it.

Poll after poll shows, no matter who they vote for, the majority of Australians want a government with a plan to protect our wildlife, air and water. People care deeply, but are not always sure what they can do to make a real difference.

But when we come together, we can make our voices so loud our elected representatives cannot ignore us. When communities are active and engaged, political parties and businesses are compelled to do the right thing. This is the way to change our world.

This election, you will choose a candidate to make decisions on your behalf.

Will you ask candidates of all parties to promise to support clean energy, cut pollution and protect our reefs, rivers, forests and wildlife? Will you pledge to vote for candidates who will solve the pollution and extinction crisis and create a future where our living world can thrive?

Let's show candidates from all political parties they must get serious about nature to win your vote – and the votes from your community.



Will you help grow a huge wave of people power that's strong enough to show candidates of all political parties just how much we care – and want action?

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Handy links:

Join ACF's digital town hall meetings > www.acf.org.au/digital-town-hall

Host or join a meet-up > www.acf.org.au/meetups

Download free posters, yard signs and election materials > www.acf.org.au/election-materials

Download this ACF election action kit > www.acf.org.au/election-action-kit

Download the ACF local meet-up pack > www.acf.org.au/local-meetup-kit

Send us an email > action@acfonline.org.au

Sign the voter pledge > www.acf.org.au/pledge

Download a candidate pledge > www.acf.org.au/candidate-pledge

Explore the national election scorecard > scorecard.acf.org.au

Download the printed scorecard > www.acf.org.au/scorecard

Email your election candidates > www.acf.org.au/email-your-candidates

Call your election candidates > www.acf.org.au/call-your-candidates

Write a letter to a newspaper > www.acf.org.au/letter-to-editor

Tell us what you did > www.acf.org.au/reportback

Read ACF's National Agenda > www.acf.org.au/national-agenda

Read ACF's vision for a clean energy future > www.acf.org.au/clean-energy-vision

Return signed pledges (no stamp needed!) to >

Australian Conservation Foundation

Reply Paid 74883

Carlton VIC 3053



GET CONNECTED

There are lots of ways to get involved and connected during this election campaign. **Here's how to get started!**

Join the ACF digital town hall meetings

Every Tuesday night until the election, join us online and on the phone to talk all things election.

Get the inside story on our election strategy to put the environment on the agenda for all political parties. Find out how you can make a difference and get involved in your community – and get help with tactics that will pressure candidates to lift their game. We'll also discuss the important issues, analyse what policy announcements really mean for our environment and get field reports from around the country.

Where: Online and on the phone

When: Tuesday evenings from 6:30-7.30pm, May 24 & 31, June 7, 14, 21 & 28

Register now and we'll get in touch to tell you how to join the calls >

www.acf.org.au/weekly-election-strategy-meeting

Find out how you can make a difference and get involved in your community

Come to a World Environment Day meet-up near you

This World Environment Day, ACF community leaders from electorates right across Australia are hosting meet-ups to hatch plans to get the environment on the agenda this election.

Check if there's a meet-up in your electorate on Sunday 5 June and join a community team to:

- Ask voters in your electorate to sign the pledge
- Ask candidates to lift their game on the environment – and sign the candidate pledge
- Make the environment visible this election with posters, yard signs, letter boxing and policy scorecards

Together, we will make a plan to get the environment on the agenda in your local electorate for the final four weeks of the election.

Find a team in your electorate and sign up >

www.acf.org.au/meetups

After World Environment Day, community teams will run more meet-ups in the lead up to the election.

Connect to people in your neighbourhood

No meet-ups near you? Create your own!

Your meet-up can be anything and anywhere you like.

- Invite your neighbours for a chat around your kitchen table about climate change or get together for morning tea at a cafe to hand out posters (download posters and materials at www.acf.org.au/election-materials).
- Meet for a beer at the local pub or your community centre and make plans to contact your local candidates and tell them how much your community wants action.
- Set up a table with pens and paper at your local market or shopping centre and invite your community to write letters to candidates and sign voter pledges (see page 13).
- You might like to ask people to bring a plate or some nibbles to share.
- You can register your meet-up at > www.acf.org.au/meetup

Set a time and place and start spreading the word!

Your meet-up can be anything and anywhere you like.

Invite people to join you

Ask your friends and family, promote your meet-up in community newsletters and bulletin boards, invite your bushwalking, footy or chess club, kindergarten parents or work colleagues.

On the day

Things to bring:

- Pens and paper
- Butchers paper and marker pens to brainstorm
- Stickers for name tags
- Food, drink, nibbles – depending on where you're meeting

Take lots of photos

Get your group together for a photo and make sure someone emails it to action@acfonline.org.au straight away so we can show the world what people power looks like! And make sure you send us photos of posters in your community so we can measure our impact.

Let us know how you went

We want to tell candidates in every electorate just how many voters have pledged to vote for what matters, so make sure you send us the pledges you collect so we can keep count. Send them to:

Australian Conservation Foundation

Reply Paid 74883

Carlton VIC 3053

The address is reply paid – so there's no need for a stamp!

We'd also love your feedback so we can improve how we run actions like this in the future. We've set up a short online feedback form to capture your experiences at www.acf.org.au/reportback

Here's a sample letter you could put into letterboxes
in your street or print in a community newsletter
to connect to people in your community who care:

Hi,

I [am your neighbour/live in your electorate] and I am care deeply about
[climate change/protecting nature/our reef etc].
[Add your story - why do you care?]

I know many people in our community care about this too, so let's get
together and make plans to change the world!
The Federal Election is just around the corner and we need to get stuff
happening ASAP to make a real difference—to show the concern voters
have for many, many environmental issues.

We're part of a huge wave of people power growing across the country.
Let's make this wave big enough to show political candidates just how
much we care - and want action.

I'm hosting [an Australian Conservation Foundation local meet-up/your
event details] at [add location, time and date]. Would you like to come?
[Add web link to ACF local meet-up]

We will [add details about what you'll do - make plans, sign pledges etc]
Get in touch if you'd like to find out more - call me on [phone number]
or email [email address].

I can't wait to meet you!

Together, we can make [climate change, our reef, protecting our
environment] frontline issues this election.

Let's do this!

[your name]

[your phone number and email address]

BE INFORMED

**Alone, it's easy to feel weak and disempowered.
But together, we can do amazing things.**

Every great environmental campaign, social movement and revolution started with a conversation, that galvanised people to make plans and work together to create a better world.

One of the most powerful ways to create social change is to tell people why you care. You don't need to be an expert or know every detail of party politics or how the political system works.

Talk to your friends, family, neighbours and colleagues, people from your book club walking club, birdwatching or soccer club, your temple, church, mosque or synagogue about what you care.

Talk to people about the future you want to see, and ask them to pledge to vote for a candidate who supports clean energy, cutting pollution and protecting our reefs, rivers, forests and wildlife.

“Humans have already changed the world several times by the way they had conversations. There have been conversational revolutions which have been as important as wars or riots or famines. When problems have appeared insoluble, when life has seemed to be meaningless, when governments have been powerless, people have sometimes found a way out by changing the subject of their conversation, or the way they talked, or the persons they talked to.”

– **Theodore Zeldin, Conversation**

Here are some talking points to get you started:

Pollution and clean energy

A handful of companies are pumping pollution into our skies. They are fuelling global warming and threatening our reefs, forests, communities and wildlife. These big polluters have formed a powerful lobby with deep pockets. They are peddling misinformation to influence public policy and delay the shift to clean energy.

Even though the rest of the world is cutting pollution and our government signed the UN climate agreement in Paris, Australia's pollution is still rising.

Businesses are crying out for federal government leadership to help polluting industries make the transition to a clean energy future.

This election, our politicians will make a choice that will define our future for generations. We're calling on them to:

- Phase out Australia's coal-fired power stations, starting with the dirtiest plants,
- Help affected communities with the transition, and
- Draw up rules for cleaning up and rehabilitating old mine sites and power stations.

Want to know more? Read our vision for a clean energy future > www.acf.org.au/clean-energy-vision

Key facts:

- Around 75 per cent of Australia's domestic climate pollution comes from how we generate and use energy.
- Other countries are rapidly abandoning coal as a source of electricity. In the US, 200 coal-fired power stations have closed or are closing. China has announced it will close 1,245 coal mines by 2016. The UK and Austria plan to phase out coal by 2025, and Portugal by 2020. After Cyprus, Luxembourg, Malta and the Baltic countries, Scotland and Belgium are the latest EU countries to go coal-free.

Protecting our reefs, rivers, forests and wildlife

The Great Barrier Reef is the largest living thing on Earth, home to fish, coral, turtles, whales, dolphins, sharks and rays. But it is at risk because pollution is fuelling climate change and heating the ocean. The coral bleaching that just happened was the worst ever recorded.

Right now, the laws that protect the air we breathe, the water we drink and the places we love are too weak. Under these laws, our government is allowing companies to pump pollution into our skies, harming communities and damaging our air, water and wildlife.

For example, If Adani's Carmichael coal mine goes ahead, it would create more pollution than any other mine in Australia's history.

The science is clear – you cannot protect the reef and approve giant coalmines. We can choose the reef or we can choose coal. But we cannot have both.

Australia's next government must protect the reef, not just monitor its decline. That means shifting to clean energy, cutting pollution, and getting out of the coal industry, not expanding it.

Our laws must protect our communities and our reefs, rivers, forests and wildlife from pollution, overuse and extinction.



How people power can make a difference

It is heartbreaking to witness the damage to our world. People care deeply, but are not always sure what they can do to make a difference.

A handful of big polluters and the politicians who listen to them do not take responsibility for their part in destroying life. When community voices are weak, the polluters can get away with it.

But poll after poll shows, no matter who they vote for, most Australians want a government with a plan to protect our wildlife, air and water.

We're part of a passionate community for nature. It is growing fast. We meet, act and celebrate. Together, we connect landscapes and transform how we use energy. We sow the seeds of change.

People with the desire to make a difference, united with many voices – that's what it takes to change the world. When communities are active and engaged, political parties and businesses are compelled to do the right thing.

Throughout history, people have stood together and demanded governments do what is right. People power gave women the vote. It stopped apartheid. It abolished slavery, even though the naysayers said it would ruin the economy.

People create the change that improves lives and societies. In Australia, people power can drive and protect our living world.

Find out more

Read **Our choice: ten actions to protect people, rivers, reefs, forests and wildlife**, which explains what we're calling for this election >

www.acf.org.au/national-agenda

And in **We love a sunpowered country: our vision for a clean energy future**, find out how our next government can deliver a national Clean Energy Transformation Plan to shift Australia to 100% clean energy > www.acf.org.au/clean-energy-vision



SIGN THE PLEDGE AND SPREAD THE WORD

Pledge to vote for a candidates who will act on clean energy, pollution and nature

We, the people, **expect** our elected representatives to listen to their constituents – us. We **expect** them to protect the places we love, not just monitor their decline. We **expect** them to stand up to the big polluters and explain their plan for our reefs, rivers, communities and wildlife to thrive.

This election, will you pledge to vote for a candidate who will cut pollution, support clean energy and protect our living world?

Help grow the wave of people power – ask your friends, family, neighbours and networks to pledge to vote for what matters too!

Why your pledge matters

Together, our votes are powerful. Let's build a huge wave of people power to demand candidates from all political parties cut pollution, support clean energy and protect our reefs, rivers, forests and wildlife.

When candidates see just how many people pledge to vote for what matters, they'll know they must get serious about protecting life to win your vote.

With local volunteers, ACF will deliver the pledges to election candidates to show them how many of their constituents care. We will then report each candidate's position to the ACF community and media.

Ask your friends to pledge their vote

Help the wave of people power to surge – ask your friends, family, neighbours and networks to pledge to vote for what matters too!

Join the amazing people from the ACF community spreading the word. Rob, a taxi driver from Melbourne, has a pile of pledges in his taxi that he asks each passenger to sign. Michael's put the pledge into newsletters from local schools and kindergartens in inner Adelaide. And each weekend, Judith's awesome kids sell homemade cupcakes at their local market and ask each customer to sign a pledge to vote for the reef.

We want to tell candidates in every electorate how many voters have pledged to vote for what matters, so make sure you send us the pledges you collect so we can keep count.

After you return your pledges to ACF, we'll send an email thanking your friends for their commitment and before the election, we'll report back to them on our assessment of where parties stand on the environment.

Sign the pledge online >
www.acf.org.au/pledge

Mail signed paper pledges
(no stamp required!) to:
**Australian Conservation
Foundation**
Reply Paid 74883
Carlton VIC 3053



AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION

I'll vote for a
candidate who will:

✓ Support clean energy

✓ Cut pollution

✓ Protect our reefs, rivers,
forests and wildlife

TOGETHER OUR VOTES ARE POWERFUL

NAME

EMAIL

PHONE

POSTCODE

SIGNATURE

RAMP UP THE PRESSURE ON YOUR LOCAL CANDIDATES

We want all candidates to know just how many people care about clean energy, cutting pollution and protecting our reefs, rivers, forests and wildlife. When they see how many people have signed pledges, they will realise they must race to the top for our environment to win your vote.

Let's keep up the pressure. Will you tell your candidates why you pledged?

Is it because you love clean energy, want a healthy future for your children or grandchildren, or want Australia's beautiful reefs to survive?

For every letter or phone call they receive, your candidates will know where are many others in the electorate who feel the same way. The more they hear from people like you, the better the outcome for our reefs, communities, forests and wildlife.

Ask your candidates to sign the candidate pledge

Approach candidates from all political parties to pledge to act on clean energy, pollution and protecting nature. The commitments in the candidate pledge are specific and measurable, so candidates can't try to wriggle out of them later.

Download the candidate pledge poster to bring to your candidates' offices and make sure you send us photos of them signing! > www.acf.org.au/candidate-pledge

Email your candidates and ask them to lift their game

We've set up an online campaign to help you contact your local candidates >

www.acf.org.au/email-your-candidates

Here are some tips:

- Keep your message short and punchy – a couple of simple sentences explaining why you want your local candidate to curb pollution, support clean energy or protect nature.
- Mention you're a voter in their electorate and explain why you care.
- Write a clear subject line that describes what your email is about.
- Be polite – it's always best to get the message across in a friendly way. People are much more likely to listen to you if you're polite and reasonable.
- For more ideas, check out the talking points on page 10.

Call your candidates

When it comes to phone calls, there's strength in numbers and the more the better at this crucial time.

Find the contact details of your local candidate over here > www.acf.org.au/call-your-candidates

When you call, remember to be friendly, calm and patient. Your tone can help create the sort of democracy you want to be part of.

You will probably speak to a staffer. Make sure you mention that you live in the candidate's electorate.

Remember to thank them for their time.

And make sure you let us know who you spoke to and what they said, so we can measure our impact and keep track of which candidates are taking a stand on the environment > www.acf.org.au/call-your-candidates

Meet your candidates

Request a meeting with your local candidates to tell them just how many people in their electorate want them to act on pollution, energy and the reef – and ask them to sign a candidate pledge.

You could bring a delegation from your community to a sitting Member of Parliament's office. You could host a morning tea or a bushwalk and invite candidates, or organise a gala dinner.

If the candidate is not able to meet with you, you can ask to meet with a staffer and request that your message is passed on.

You can bring:

- A candidate pledge poster!
www.acf.org.au/candidate-pledge
- ACF's National Agenda 2016 (www.acf.org.au/national-agenda)
- ACF's national scorecard when it is released (www.acf.org.au/scorecard).

Make sure you mention that lots of people in your electorate are signing ACF's voter pledge. If you secure a meeting, email us at action@acfonline.org.au and we'll tell you how many voters in your electorate have signed the pledge.

Run a candidate forum or town hall meeting

A candidate forum is an event where you invite candidates from all political parties to meet with your local community. People can ask questions and candidates have the opportunity to explain their positions on pollution, climate change and protecting nature.

You can be creative with the format of your forum or meeting. For example, at one forum candidates were asked to sit at tables with their constituents, to listen carefully and then report back the table's views to the whole room.

You should always treat candidates from all parties with respect – your tone can help create the sort of democracy you want to be part of.

Engage candidates through their public appearances

Another powerful tactic is to create a team and shadow key local candidates during the election campaign. Ask them for their position on environmental issues in public forums and pop questions at local events. This can be a very effective way to elevate the issues you care about and encourage a response from candidates.

Be non-partisan

Make sure you treat candidates from all political parties equally, with a focus on our environmental purpose. Don't tell people to vote for a particular party or candidate. Be neutral and objective and hold all parties to account for their environmental decisions. This means if you want to ask your local candidates to sign the pledge, ask candidates from all parties.

CREATE THE BUZZ

MAKE THE ENVIRONMENT VISIBLE THIS ELECTION

Get the word out and spread your love with posters, stickers and yard signs

Let's paint our neighbourhoods with love for our reefs, forests and clean energy!

Download your posters and get printing >
www.acf.org.au/election-materials

Pop some posters in your front window at home, ask your local cafe to stick them up or pin them on a public noticeboard in your local library or community meeting space.



Help people understand what's possible this election – and give them the social proof that people care.

Make sure you send us photos of where you've put posters, so we can measure our impact and share the love with the ACF community in the weeks leading up to the election! Email us at action@acfonline.org.au or tag us on Twitter [@AusConservation](https://twitter.com/AusConservation) and Facebook [Australian Conservation Foundation](https://www.facebook.com/AustralianConservationFoundation)

Spread the word on social media

Social media is a great way to spread the word.

- Use these simple colourful shareable images to show your friends what you love and why > www.acf.org.au/election-materials
- Share the voter pledge and ask your friends to sign it > www.acf.org.au/pledge
- Instagram a turtle or a photo of a solar panel or a place you love to help spread the word.
- Make sure you tag us on Twitter [@AusConservation](https://twitter.com/AusConservation) and Facebook [Australian Conservation Foundation](https://www.facebook.com/AustralianConservationFoundation)

Most Australians want a government with a plan to cut pollution, shift to clean energy and protect the places and wildlife we love

Write a letter to your local paper

Letters pages in newspapers are a great way to respond to current issues and get an issue into public view. Politicians often keep an eye on the letters page, particularly in the community paper in their electorate.

Find your local paper's contact details and send your email through our letter to the editor webpage > www.acf.org.au/letter-to-editor

Capital city and national newspapers receive hundreds of letter to the editor every week. They have a bigger circulation and the competition for the space will be more intense.

Tips to get published:

- **Keep your letter short** – Stay under 200 words; some great letters are just 20-50 words. Make a brief, clear and punchy argument that grabs the reader's attention and focus on one important point. Remove every non-essential word. Don't say, "I think..." – it's obvious. This also minimises the chance of editors changing the letter.
- **Be relevant**, linking pollution and nature to breaking news and articles published yesterday or today.
- Try to get your letter in **before noon**, it's more likely to get printed.
- **Be creative** – Funny or clever letters are more likely to be published, but avoid sarcasm. Use your own voice.
- **Keep it about the issue** – don't make personal attacks.
- Include your full name, address and a daytime phone number with your letter – the paper does not print all of this information but may use it for verification. If you email it, include the letter in the body of the text (not as an attachment).
- Check out the **talking points on page 4!**

Call talkback radio

Call talkback radio in the weeks before the election and explain why you care enough to ask your friends and candidate to pledge their support for environmental outcomes, regardless of their political affiliation.

Talkback radio is a great way reach a large number of people from a wide range of backgrounds.

Be prepared. Listen to the show prior to calling in.

Read the introduction to this kit for ideas, write down one or two main talking points about what you'd like to say before you call but don't read them out on air. Talk naturally!

Make the call. You'll first speak to a producer who will ask what you plan to say. They'll then place you on hold until there is a slot for you. When you're in the queue, turn off the radio and listen over the phone.

When it's your turn:

- **Get to the point.** You'll probably only get about 30 seconds on air.
- **Speak slowly and clearly.** Being on air makes many people nervous. Breathe deep and wait for your turn to speak, don't interrupt.
- **Convince the listener, not the host.** Keep it friendly and don't make it personal. It's the presenters job to be provocative – don't take the bait.

Polling shows people often feel like they are a minority who care about our environment. But actually, the majority do care

BRING IT HOME

See how each party's environmental policies rate on ACF's scorecard.

This election, we rated all political parties on their environmental commitments in national scorecards – so people know what they are really voting for.

We calculated the scores by assessing the policy commitments of each party against our 'tests of success' from our 2016 National Agenda.

Explore the interactive scorecard to see how each party compares to what you care about >

scorecard.acf.org.au

We released round one of the scorecard a month before the election, and will release an updated version (reflecting any newly announced policy commitments) in the final week.

Help spread the word!

Share the scorecard on social media or email it to your friends and networks – you can download shareables at www.acf.org.au/election-materials



Photo: James Thomas



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