

ALP LEADERSHIP BALLOT – ENVIRONMENT QUESTIONS – from Labor Environment Action Network

LEAN Question	Anthony Albanese Response	Bill Shorten Response
<p>1. How would you, as leader of the Australian Labor Party articulate the Party's response to the challenges of continued environmental decline and accelerating climate change? How would you incorporate this into the language of Labor's core mission and values?</p>	<p>One of the four principles on which I base my campaign for Federal Labor Leader is sustainability. Sustainability is a principle that should be integral to all areas of policy. The cost to future generations of unsustainable use of our natural resources is not just high, the damage is irreversible.</p> <p>As Shadow Minister for the Environment, I played a lead role in driving the Party's support for the Kyoto Protocol and action to address climate change. I have a track record of progressing environmental issues.</p> <p>Climate change threatens our environment, our economy and our way of life. No responsible government can ignore the advice of our leading scientists.</p> <p>Action on climate change therefore has to be one of Labor's highest priorities.</p> <p>Climate change affects the most vulnerable in our society the most. Labor must stand up for the rights of future generations to a sustainable environment with clean energy.</p>	<p>The great Australian Labor Party is committed to a sustainable environment, strong action on climate change and policies based on science.</p> <p>Personally, I believe climate change is real. I believe that humans contribute to climate change. I also believe that market based mechanisms are the best way to deal with carbon emissions in a modern and global economy. That's why I will oppose moves to deny the reality of climate change, to deny the science and to reject market based responses being part of our response.</p> <p>I have spoken often about building what I call the Good Society in Australia. To me, the Good Society is about simple and honest goals for our each of us, our families, workplaces and communities. The Good Society is about making sure Australians can lead a good, meaningful life, fulfilling and sustainable lives.</p> <p>On this basis, key elements of the Good Society would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities that are diverse, tolerant and safe places to live and well served by transport and infrastructure; and • A clean environment so that our kids can one day dream of creating their own good society and not have to remedy problems their parents neglected to address. <p>To me, the Good Society means seriously and appropriately addressing environmental concerns and climate change and moving to a clean energy future that</p>

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		<p>will ensure continued economic growth and support Australian jobs and families while protecting our environment.</p> <p>I want to ensure our next generation also get to live in a Good Society which is why we must address climate change now – not leaving our children to address even greater problems we failed to remedy.</p> <p>I believe that creating a Good Society is the core business for the Australian Labor Party. I believe we must stand on our record to demonstrate only Labor is prepared to take serious action to ensure we can leave a Good Society to our children and grandchildren, including on environmental issues.</p> <p>While Labor is committed to tackling climate change and protecting our precious environment, the Coalition’s environmental policies and direct action policy are an international embarrassment.</p> <p>We must ensure we highlight the Coalition’s poor record and environmental policies and fight their moves to deny climate change. We need to ensure that climate change and environmental issues are front and centre of how we evaluate policy, along with the impacts on the economy and community, we should consider the impact of policies environmental and sustainability indicators. This will be particularly important as we fight the Coalition’s attempts to undermine the steps we took in government to respond to these issues.</p>

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<p>2. Will you, as leader of the Australian Labor Party:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fully defend maintaining a price on carbon pollution - defend the commitment to raise Australia’s target to 15% or 25% if other nations make similar commitments - defend the Renewable Energy Target as currently legislated, and - oppose the closure of the Clean Energy Future Corporation and the Climate Change Authority? Or if they are abolished by the incoming Federal Government reinstate them when the ALP wins Government? 	<p>Action on climate change has been part of Labor's platform for over 20 years and we should never walk away from our great reforms. This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defending the Clean Energy future legislation because pricing carbon is the only effective, economical and fair approach to cut pollution and move to a clean energy future. • Making sure Labor keeps up the pressure on the Government to bring emissions down. Labor set up the independent Climate Change Authority to provide expert advice on what Australia's 2020 targets and pollution caps should be. Australia's 2020 target range includes targets up to 15 and 25 per cent conditional on the extent of international action. • Remaining committed to the legislated Renewable Energy Target, including the 41,000 GWh large-scale target. • Maintaining the Clean Energy Finance Corporation – an important complement to a price on carbon pollution – both now and into the future. • As stated above, the Climate Change Authority is an important source of independent scientific advice. On matters such as this, Governments will always require expert advice. 	<p>I am fully committed to maintaining a price on carbon pollution and believe the Labor Party should stand on our record in addressing climate change.</p> <p>Standing by our legacy is vital to opposing Tony Abbott’s plans to wind back the measures we implemented in Government. If elected Leader I will fight any attempt by Tony Abbott to remove a price on carbon pollution and market based mechanisms to address climate change.</p> <p>I stand by Labor’s record and legacy on climate change issues. As Leader, just as I have as an MP and Minister, I will respect our Party’s National Platform commitments, including on environmental issues. I will bring together members of the Labor movement, Labor Party and Labor caucus to work on the next round of progressive, big thinking Labor policies on climate change to take to the next election.</p>

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<p>3. How do you see Labor managing the future of Australia’s coal seam gas, coal, oil and gas industries and meet Australia’s energy needs?</p>	<p>It’s important that we move towards more sustainable energy practises that’s why we need to maintain a price n carbon and remain committed to the renewable energy target.</p> <p>Under Labor, employment in the renewable energy industry has more than doubled, wind capacity has trebled and over 1 million solar PV systems have been installed – up from less than 7,500 under the Howard Government.</p> <p>Labor has a great record on these issues, a record which we must defend now, and build on when we regain Government.</p> <p>I have worked closely with the former Member of Page, Janelle Saffin and the current Member for Richmond, Justine Elliot, and understand the genuine community concerns about the impact of such investments on water resources. That’s why I supported the introduction of a water trigger into the EPBC Act.</p> <p>I also strongly supported and facilitated the establishment of the independent expert scientific committee on Coal Seam Gas to provide independent, expert scientific advice to the Australian Government.</p>	<p>Meeting Australia’s energy needs is essential for Australia’s sustained economic growth and prosperity.</p> <p>I am committed to Labor’s plan to move to a clean energy future which includes the promotion of innovation and investment in renewable energy, encouraging energy efficiency and creating new opportunities to support industry and jobs as we move to a low carbon economy.</p> <p>We must encourage the development of research and technologies for low emission energy sources and renewable energy sources alongside existing sources ensuring our energy needs are met.</p> <p>I recognise the community concern about coal seam gas extraction. I believe we have a strong obligation to ensure extraction processes manage local concerns, environmental impacts while also supporting sustainable local economic activity. The industry must demonstrate a high degree of responsibility for assessing and managing environmental impacts.</p> <p>I also support Labor’s establishment of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency and Clean Energy Finance Corporation to develop, commercialise and invest in new renewable energy technologies.</p>

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<p>4. What do you believe the Commonwealth Government can do to reverse the continued decline of biodiversity?</p>	<p>The Federal Labor Government earmarked over \$400 million of carbon price revenue for biodiversity protection. This came in addition to significant investment through the Caring for Country program.</p> <p>Robust environmental laws protect our iconic landscapes - reefs, forests, bushland, beaches and oceans, and the unique wildlife that call these ecosystems home. Labor must defend these laws and improve upon them where necessary. Labor should never water down Commonwealth protections and should never hand final approval powers to State Governments.</p> <p>I was proud to be part of a Government that delivered the world’s largest marine reserve network. The comprehensive management plans that recently passed through the Parliament will secure the long-term conservation and sustainable use of Australia’s precious oceans.</p> <p>Our bold vision for reconnecting the Australian landscape through a network of national parks and reserves across Australia is becoming a reality. A network of wildlife corridors is being established across Australia that will benefit our native animals and environment.</p> <p>As Labor people and as a Labor movement, I believe we have a duty to protect our natural habitats so that future generations can enjoy and benefit from them too.</p>	<p>Part of the Good Society is about ensuring we protect Australia’s biodiversity so future generations do not look back in frustration at our inability to recognise and respond to its decline.</p> <p>I believe the Federal Government must take a leadership role, working with state and territory governments and landholders on developing strategies and plans to preserve threatened species.</p> <p>I support Labor’s reconnecting of the Australian landscape by creating a network of national parks and reserves across Australia. Wildlife corridors will benefit and protect our native animals and the network of national parks in our oceans will conserve the plants and animals unique to them.</p> <p>The Federal Government also has a role around funding research into preserving threatened species as well as research into the management of invasive species and weeds as well as monitoring their spread and funding measures for their control.</p> <p>We also need to support those working on the land by supporting farming businesses engaged in sustainable practices and landholders who are conserving and regenerating native plant communities.</p>

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<p>5. Will you support Federal protection for our National Parks and the power to over-rule State Governments on inappropriate developments within National Parks?</p>	<p>I was proud that during the recent election campaign Labor committed to prioritise Australia’s National Parks and form a time-limited Expert Advisory Committee to inquire into how best to ensure protection for some of our favourite places to visit.</p>	<p>I have been very concerned about the actions of some state governments and believe we need to take a serious look at the policy options around how best to protect national parks.</p> <p>I support the need for further policy work on the two key options flagged during the election campaign: bringing national parks under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act</i> and looking at a new legal framework specifically for national parks – I believe we need to seek further policy advice on the merits of each of these options.</p> <p>In doing so, we should stand on our record of creating new national parks, wildlife corridors and the most comprehensive network of national parks in our oceans. In Government we added Ningaloo Reef and Koongarra within Kakadu to the World Heritage list and we recommended an expansion of Tasmania’s World Heritage Area.</p>
<p>6. Do you support or oppose the use of nuclear power? Do you support or oppose the opening of additional uranium mines?</p>	<p>Australia is blessed with abundant renewable and clean energy resources. We do not need to rely on nuclear power to move to a clean energy future and a sustainable energy system.</p> <p>I am not a supporter of nuclear power- there are real safety issues to be considered and recent events such as Fukushima in Japan remind us of the unsolved issue of nuclear waste.</p>	<p>I acknowledge these are issues of much concern and debate to Labor members and across the Australian community.</p> <p>I support the Party’s current policy approach to uranium mining and the use of nuclear power.</p> <p>My personal view is that I cannot see the circumstances where it would be appropriate, cost effective, safe and secure enough for Australia to need to utilise nuclear power generation.</p>

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	<p>For these reasons I have consistently advocated no expansion of Labor’s role in the nuclear fuel cycle and my attitude towards uranium mining has reflected this. I am also on the record as opposed to relaxing arrangements governing the sale of uranium to other countries.</p>	<p>In addition, I acknowledge there is a need to enforce stringent safety procedures to protect the environment and those working in the uranium mining sector. I believe the safety of workers is paramount and should be constantly under review to ensure we are adhering to best practice and the latest research. We must also continue researching the environmental impacts and respond accordingly. I also believe we must ensure transparency and accountability of the sector.</p>
<p>7. How will you, as Leader of the Australian Labor Party, ensure greater future consistency between Labor’s policies and actions and make Labor the party of choice for environmentally concerned Australians?</p>	<p>I will place sustainability - including environmental sustainability - at the core of Federal Labor policy. Labor has a proud environmental record in delivering the big environmental reforms in Australian history.</p> <p>It was Labor who initiated the protection of the Great Barrier Reef. It was Hawke and Keating who protected the Franklin, Kakadu and the Daintree as well as Antarctica. It was Labor who ended 30 years of conflict over Tasmania's forests and 120 years of disagreement over the Murray Darling Basin.</p> <p>If elected as leader of our great party, I will ensure that we continue to stand proud on this platform.</p>	<p>I believe that just like those who care about education, health, disability care, fair and productive workplaces, the Australian Labor Party should be that represents Australians who care about their environment, who want sustainable communities and a future for our children and grandchildren that is clean and celebrates our biodiversity as much as our cultural diversity.</p> <p>This leadership ballot is the first step in revitalising our party. I want to see more opportunities for all party members to be involved in this kind of decision making, as well as members of our Party having more opportunity to contribute ideas and have an active say in developing our policies. I want to see more party members contributing to the contest of ideas – to win the next election we need to be the party of big ideas.</p>