

If the climate is changing, & temperatures are getting warmer, why was winter so cold?

- Winter always seems cold but if you look at the long-term trend, Australian winters are getting warmer across most of the country. Even in a changing climate, there will still be day-to-day & year-to-year variability that will always include the cold & the hot. To get a picture of the impact of climate change on winter temperatures, look at the long-term trends rather than single-year data.
- And freak events, like heavy snowstorms can also be increased when the natural patterns are disturbed by changes in climate.

Hasn't there been a pause in global warming?

- No. 2015 marked the 39th year in a row that the yearly global temperature was hotter than average.
- In Australia, over the last 30 years, 26 years have been above average & 2015 was Australia's hottest year on record.

Isn't Australia a small contributor to the problem of climate change?

- No. Australia is a crucial global climate change player.
- Australia is one of the largest emitters per capita & the 13th largest greenhouse gas emitter in the world, ahead of 182 other countries.
- And then there are the emissions we export that are not counted on our ledger. The emissions from Australia's coal resources alone, if developed, would consume two-thirds of the world's remaining carbon budget. The carbon budget is the amount of carbon we can put into the atmosphere before we flip over into dangerous climate change above two degrees.

Doesn't more renewable energy make power prices go up?

- Renewable energy has no fuel costs. The wind & sun are free.
- Bloomberg New Energy Finance has found that in Australia the cost of electricity from new renewable energy is now cheaper than the cost of electricity from new coal or gas facilities.
- The biggest costs are in transforming our current system from a reliance on coal onto renewables. Many of our coal fired power generators in Australia are old & due for retirement, so many of the costs of building new generation capacity are there either way.
- Over time renewable energy will bring down electricity costs while also creating jobs & a safe climate.
- The low generation costs of renewables stops fossil fuel generators price gouging and limits them gaming the market.
- Modelling for the 2014 Warburton Renewable Energy Target (RET) review found that if Australia's Renewable Energy Target were removed electricity prices for an average household would increase. Furthermore, the modelling also found a higher target (30% by 2020) resulted in the lowest retail electricity prices compared with a lower or no renewable energy target.
- The Abbott/Turnbull Government dismantled the carbon price & radically reduced the RET but have you noticed your electricity bills coming down? Most of the rapidly increasing electricity prices were due to unnecessary upgrades of the networks that deliver the electricity.

Renewable Energy is too expensive

- Australian households have already benefited with solar PV panel prices falling 75% in the last 5 years, & 1.4 million Australian homes currently have solar installed. Solar PV costs are expected to fall another 45% over the next five years.
- And they are not fat cats who can afford to fork out for solar. The people most likely to install solar PV in Australia are those with mortgages & growing families, retirees, pensioners & mortgage belt communities on the fringes of major cities. The five places with the most solar rooftops are Bundaberg & the Hervey Bay area, Queensland; Mandurah, Western Australia; Werribee & Hoppers Crossing, Victoria. All five have below state average incomes. 40% of solar households are in rural areas.
- All over the world renewables are out competing coal & gas for new build power stations.

Renewable energy cannot provide all of Australia's energy needs- we will always need coal

- This is a myth. Australia has more than enough renewable energy resources to power all our electricity needs. Australia is one of the sunniest & windiest countries in the world & has enough renewable energy resources to power the country 500 times over.
- Rapid advances in battery storage will make the intermittent nature of renewable energy (solar at night, wind on a still day) no longer matter.

The Australian coal industry provides a big portion of jobs in Australia; we can't put Aussie jobs at risk

- Coal is a small employer. The coal industry is less than half of 1% of the Australian workforce.
- It is true however that these jobs are concentrated in regional communities, which would be heavily affected if they disappeared. That's why it is Labor's responsibility to ensure the coal workforce is protected, retrained & redeployed as we shift to a low emissions future.
- Australia is exporting more coal than ever, but the industry is slashing jobs to cut costs.
- Taxes from coal make up less than 1% of Commonwealth Government revenue, & around 4% of NSW government revenue.
- The coal industry is highly subsidized. Australian state government's have spent \$8 billion dollars of taxpayer's money on building railroad & port infrastructure for the coal industry between 2008-2014.
- With the right policies, Australia is well placed to become a global superpower in renewables; currently Australia has enough renewable energy resources to power the country 500 times over.

Renewable Energy, Jobs & the Economy

- The world is in the midst of a renewable energy boom; in 2014 the global renewable energy industry employed, directly or indirectly, 7.7 million people.
- In Australia 21,000 people are already employed in the renewable energy industry, & modelling estimates that by 2050 there will be approximately 255,744 operations jobs & 161,393 construction jobs in the renewable energy industry in Australia.
- The Abbott/Turnbull Government has gutted the industry. Australia has dropped from the 4th most attractive place to invest in renewable energy under Labor to the 13th.
- In 2014, clean energy investment grew in China (32 per cent), the US (8 per cent), Japan (12 per cent), Germany (3 per cent) & the UK (3 per cent). At the same time, renewables investment dropped by 35 per cent in Australia. In fact, investment in large-scale renewable energy actually fell 88 per cent – from over \$2 billion to around \$240 million.
- Since the Abbott/Turnbull Government was elected, the ABS has found that about 15 per cent of jobs in the sector have vanished.
- Failing to act on climate change will be incredibly costly for the Australian economy. For example, livelihoods such as farming, fishing & tourism will be affected by soaring temperatures, increased droughts & storms.
- More than \$226 billion in commercial, industrial, road, rail & residential assets around Australian coasts, most of them in urban areas, are also potentially exposed to flooding & erosion hazards at a sea-level rise of 1.1m.
- The longer we wait to combat climate change, the more likely we are to be effected by these high costs & miss out on fully accessing the benefits of a transition to renewables.

What the Abbott/Turnbull Government has done on climate action

1. Repealed the Carbon Pricing Mechanism – the cheapest way to reduce carbon emissions.
2. Appointed climate denier Dick Warburton to head the Renewable Energy Target Review & in the process destroyed investor confidence in the renewable energy sector.
3. Reduced the Renewable Energy Target from 41,000 kWh by 2020 to 33,000.
4. Since the 2013 election, Australia has fallen from fourth on the Global Attractiveness Index for renewable energy investment to 10th.
5. Abolished the Climate Commission, which was headed by Tim Flannery & provided scientific information to the Australian public on climate change.
6. Tried to abolish Clean Energy Finance Corporation & the Australian Renewable Energy Agency both of which support the establishment of renewable energy in Australia.
7. Tried to abolish the Climate Change Authority, but eventually agreed to keep it as part of a deal with Clive Palmer for his support on Direct Action.
8. Removed any reference to “climate change” in all Government departments. Removed “climate change” from the responsible Minister's title.
9. Abolished the Solar Roof program.
10. Significantly cut the Solar Towns commitment (from a promise of \$500m down to \$2.1m)
11. Its mechanism for reducing carbon pollution is Direct Action – a \$2.55bn slush fund to pay people to voluntarily stop polluting.