

LEAN & ITS ARGUMENT FOR CLIMATE ACTION

A story in 8 parts



1. Labor's experience of climate action

Labor's experience of climate change action has been grim.

Our 2011 Clean Energy Future Package made an excellent start on responding to climate change.

But we failed to tell Australians a compelling story about why the reforms were vital to the nation's future.

Tony Abbott ran a shallow but effective campaign. His success can only be understood in the context of our mistakes.

Leadership talking complex & uninspiring technocratic policy.

Cost of living implications.

Negative impacts on some of the country's largest vested interests.



2. But it's not going away

The urgency increases with every day. Every day of inaction, the solutions become more radical.

Tony Abbott has learned that the political potency of the issue cannot be quashed.

And the world is moving with or without us.

- 39 countries and 23 sub-national regions have emissions trading schemes (ETS).
- The European Union's carbon pollution reduction target is 40% on 1990 levels by 2030.
- US-China agreement in November 2014 commits US to a pollution reduction target of 26-28% on 2005 levels by 2025 and China to have its carbon pollution peak by 2030.
- China already has 7 regional carbon pricing schemes that cover more than 200 million people.
- California, the world's 8th largest economy, has an ETS that will cover 85% of all carbon pollution in 2015.

"For all the immediate challenges we gather to address this week - terrorism, instability, inequality, disease - there's one issue that will define the contours of this century more dramatically than any other, and that is the urgent and growing threat of a changing climate."

– US President, Barack Obama, September 2014



3. Ambitious action is now critical

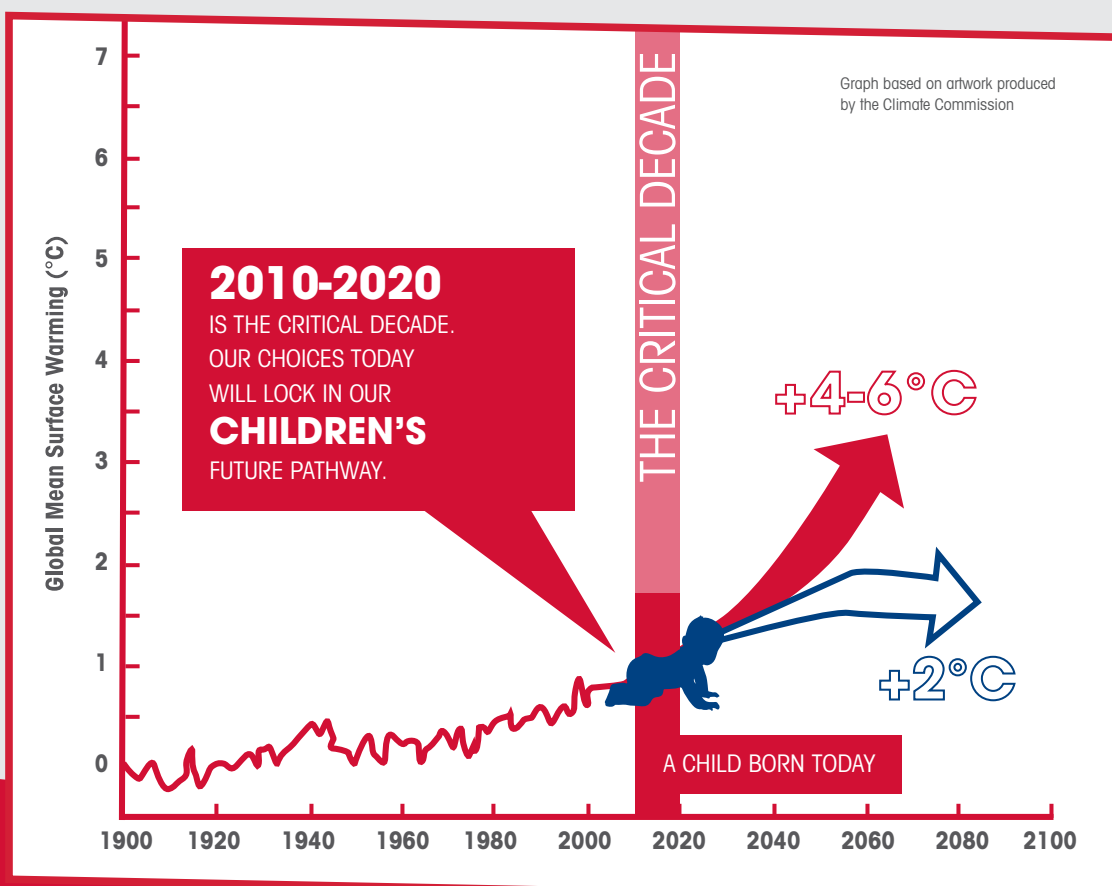
Since the industrial revolution we have been polluting our atmosphere with greenhouse gases. We have done this by mass deforestation and use of fossil fuels – such as coal. The pollution traps heat that used to be reflected back into space, making the planet warmer. This destabilises the climate system in ways we don't fully understand.

We have already caused irreparable damage and our climate will change.

The global community is now racing to try and limit pollution and keep the rise of temperature to 2 degrees Celsius.

Recently the idea of a "carbon budget" has gained currency. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) says our budget of carbon pollution, if we want to limit the change to 2 degrees, is 1,000 billion tonnes. We've spent over half our budget and at current rates will use it up by 2045. After that we slip into the cataclysm of chaotic changes beyond 2 degrees.

If we cannot avoid major climate change, Australia will face an incredible array of challenges. Whether it is a far smaller economy, water and food shortages, natural disasters or infrastructure failures, climate change poses a great threat to long-term national security and prosperity.



4. The Labor Party must lead

Whether it was introducing equal pay for women, establishing Medicare, opening the economy to the world, saving the Franklin River or protecting Australia from the Global Financial Crisis – Labor has shown that it is best when it is bravest.

Now it is time for Labor to lead Australia again in confronting the threat of climate change.

The Labor Party is built on values and vision. Action to arrest climate change is essential to deliver equity, prosperity and a safe future, all key Labor values.

Labor is the only party that has the courage and the history of reform to take the required action to mitigate dangerous climate change and transition the economy to a prosperous low-carbon future.

THE DANGERS OF A SMALL TARGET APPROACH

No one, including LEAN, is suggesting Labor lead its election offering with climate action in an election where health and education will dominate.

However, we cannot restructure the economy and save the planet by stealth. The Coalition will not be talking about their unfair budget

at election time, they will be talking refugees and climate change and telling their old tales.

We cannot simply regurgitate our old tarnished policy.

To win this issue we must own climate action and argue for it. We must have credible targets that define our ambition.

CHARTING THE PATH TO CONSENSUS

Labor needs to build consensus and cooperation in order for the country to move smoothly to a decarbonised economy.

Australians understand climate change is real. They are sick of division and endless debate, they want action. Labor must build a consensus around our leadership defined by ambitious targets and commitment to creating opportunity.

Labor could set up a process to bring all key stakeholders in society and the economy together to build this national consensus, *An Accord for a low carbon and prosperous Australia*.

The Climate Accord can be a promise between the next Labor Government and the people of Australia to share in prosperity by addressing the threat of climate change.

5. Labor must tell a compelling story

The transition won't be easy, so we must tell a compelling story. The two centrepieces of Labor's climate change story should be the hope offered by renewable energy and a grand Labor narrative of jobs, innovation and investment.

With two thirds of our carbon pollution coming from the energy sector, cleaning this up breaks the back of our problem while also stimulating jobs and investment.

PEOPLE LOVE RENEWABLE ENERGY

It is tangible, good news.

Crosby Textor tells us that 82% of Australians like the Renewable Energy

Target. Crosby Textor also tells us that the same people that hated the carbon tax, love renewable energy.

1.25 million Australian households have installed solar panels on their roofs. Most say they do it to save on power bills.

The places with the most solar households are Bundaberg and Hervey Bay in Queensland, Hoppers Crossing and Werribee in Victoria, and Mandurah in Western Australia.

Renewable energy needs to be at the centre of Labor's election promise for climate action.



COST OF LIVING

And we have to ensure our energy policy is keeping an eye on managing the costs of the transition to a renewable energy future. A single Department of Climate Change and Energy could deliver coherent energy policy that makes sure consumers are looked after.

Labor must address climate change and reform the electricity sector at the same time. It must rid the system and its own internal policy-making of contradictions in order to deliver two simple, dual policy aims: clean electricity at affordable prices.

As Julia Gillard pointed out in an important speech in August 2012, carbon pricing and other “green schemes” represent only a small part of recent price increases.

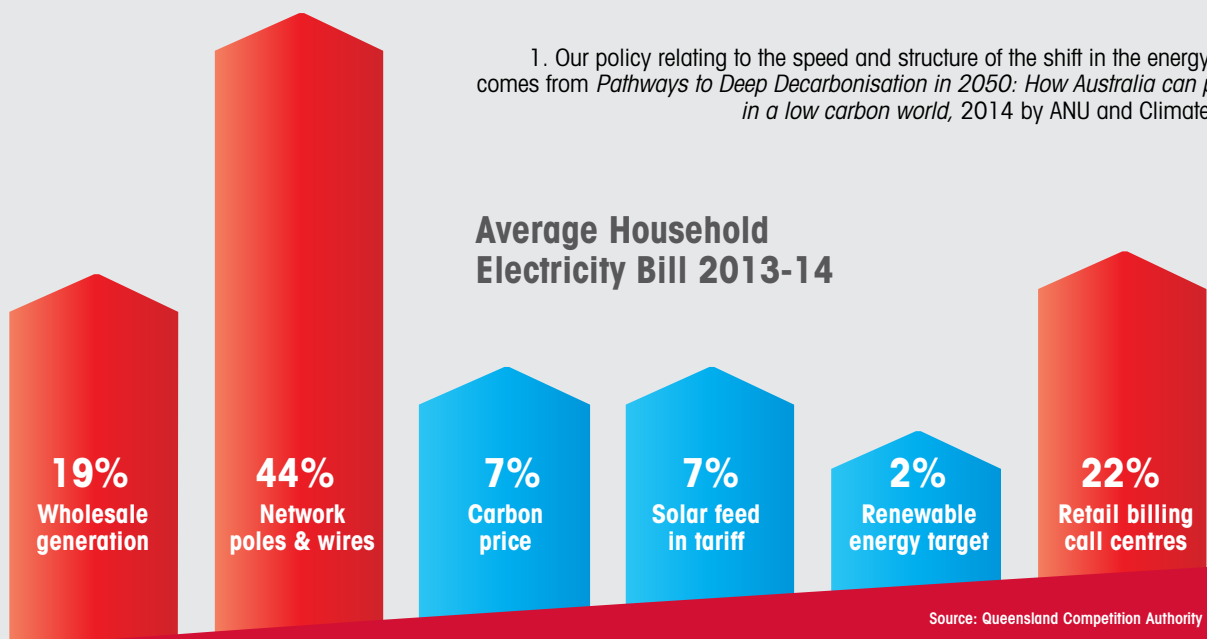
More significant are huge increases to network costs and “gold plating” infrastructure to ensure maximum profits.

THREE PILLARS

Decarbonising our economy is achievable over the next 35 years. It will be built on an energy policy with three pillars: shifting to renewable energy, radical energy efficiency gains and fuel switching to cleaner fuel sources, especially for cars and other transport.

- **Increase energy efficiency, particularly in building and transport.** Decreasing energy intensity of GDP by 50% by 2030.
- **Switch to 50% renewable electricity generation by 2030.** And to near zero carbon emission intensity electricity by 2050.
- **Fuel switching and electrification.** Bring on the electric car! Electrify end users as much as possible and switch to less emissions intensive fuels where this is not possible.¹

1. Our policy relating to the speed and structure of the shift in the energy sector comes from *Pathways to Deep Decarbonisation in 2050: How Australia can prosper in a low carbon world*, 2014 by ANU and Climateworks.



Source: Queensland Competition Authority



6. It's a story leading to a stronger economy

We must put climate action at the heart of our economic program.

Australia's path to a strong economic future is a low-carbon one. We must respond to declining manufacturing by creating clean-tech jobs that won't go offshore. We must invest in emerging industries, and exploit our great advantage of abundant renewable energy sources and innovation to create skilled jobs to service a low-carbon global economy.

To deliver this future Labor will need to embrace new thinking and approaches. In a powerful speech in September 2014, former Treasury boss Ken Henry, has specifically identified a simplistic obsession with costs, productivity and international competitiveness as a major obstacle to

acting on climate change. Henry says that building economic opportunities that include a response to climate change is tied to the construction of a new Australian economic approach and narrative.² Creating a clean energy sector is the key economic reform that reduces carbon pollution and puts us back on the path to innovation and jobs.

The World Bank has identified Australia as the best placed of the G20 countries to build a carbon sequestration industry in carbon forestry and farming. Labor can revitalise rural communities, protect biodiversity and potentially build an export carbon credits industry by bringing together Landcare, Caring for Country and climate action.

2. <https://crawford.anu.edu.au/news/4667/writing-new-australian-story>

7. LEAN's 50/50 plan

1. Labor will lead the nation on climate action

- Labor will lead the nation on climate action because it is the party of reform and is prepared to deliver important but hard change for the sake of the country.
- Because climate action is essential to deliver equity, prosperity and a safe future, all key Labor values.
- Labor is best when it leads.

2. National energy policy that ensures half our electricity is renewable by 2030

- Labor will deliver energy policy that puts consumer interests and climate action at the heart of policy.
- It will deliver 50% of the nation's electricity from wind, solar and other renewables by 2030.
- It will create one Department of Energy and Climate Change to deliver coherent policy.

3. Labor's plan for jobs, innovation and investment will have climate action at its heart

- Labor's plans for stimulating jobs, innovation and investment will be built on servicing the global low-carbon economy.
- Labor will deliver regional renewal, biodiversity gains and emissions reductions through bold carbon farming and forestry initiatives in the agriculture sector.

4. Labor will ensure there is 50% less carbon pollution by 2030 with institutions to deliver it

- Labor will restore the institutional arrangements created by its 2011 Clean Energy Future Package, including an Emissions Trading Scheme.
- Labor will adopt the Climate Change Authority's recommendation and commit to at least 50% less carbon pollution than 2000 levels by 2030.





8. The campaign

The Abbott Government destroyed our national emissions reduction scheme, one of the first and bravest in the world. But the Liberals also undid the Whitlam Government's Medibank before the Hawke Government introduced Medicare. We must tell our story for our vision of a low-carbon economy in which all Australians prosper.

LEAN believes that with strong action on climate Labor can win elections and create a powerful economic program.

JOIN US!

LEAN is asking Labor members, branches, parliamentarians, unions and civil society to join us in calling for these four ideas to become Labor's approach and policy.

It is called the 50/50 campaign. LEAN is campaigning across the country within the Labor movement to make sure we can be proud of Labor's leadership on climate change.

We have a series of key events before us – National Conference in July 2015, the international climate meeting in Paris in December 2015 and the Federal election some time in 2016.

We believe members and constituents of

the Labor Party can change its course by working together and demanding to be heard.

1. Get your branch to sign the 50/50 motion and take a selfie

Ask your branch, Federal Electoral Council or Assembly to pass the following motion.

50/50 Motion

This branch calls upon the Australian Labor Party to lead the nation on climate action. It calls on the Australian Labor Party to adopt in its platform:

- An energy policy that delivers 50% of our electricity from renewable sources from 2030. And the creation of one ministry of Climate Change and Energy to deliver coherent policy with two aims – affordable and clean energy.
- Reducing Australia's carbon pollution by 50% on 200 levels by 2030.
- A commitment to put climate action at the heart of its program to deliver jobs, innovation and investment to build a prosperous, safe and fair Australia.

This branch calls on our Federal Electoral Council/Assembly to pass this motion in support of our branch's concern and bind its conference delegate to support this motion at National Conference.

Let LEAN know that you passed the motion. We can't advocate with it unless we know it happened! Email 50fifty@lean.net.au

For full details about how to make sure your branch's concern is heard and amplified visit www.lean.net.au/motion

2. Support the campaign personally

Go to www.lean.net.au/50fifty and sign up personally to show your support for 50/50. Spread the word. Ask all of your branch members and friends to sign a postcard in support or join the campaign online.

3. Agitate

Contact Louise at louise@lean.net.au to get involved in the heart of campaign. If we raise our voices together the party will listen. And this is our moment.

4. Donate

LEAN is a totally voluntary organisation. Commit \$5 a week and be part of changing the Labor Party by facilitating grass roots voices on the greatest challenge of our time.

Visit www.lean.net.au/donate



