

2020 ALP DRAFT NATIONAL PLATFORM SUBMISSION GUIDE – Chapter 3, Climate Change and Environment

ALP Party President Wayne Swans says the ALP's National Platform "sits at the heart of our Party and speaks loudly with a Labor voice about the kind of Australia we believe in." It outlines Labor's values and the principles to underpin policy making.

You can read the full Draft Platform [here](#). Please take the time to contribute to improving Chapter 3 of the National Platform which deals with Climate Change and the Environment, submissions are open until November 30. As you know LEAN changes the Labor party when rank and file members get behind us to show they care about a healthy and safe future.

Following are a series of key amendments that LEAN is campaigning for. You can include whichever you like in your submission, the bolded headings will do. LEAN believes that one of the key amendments the Platform must include is reference to an independent Federal Environment Protection Authority (EPA), building institutional capacity to proactively protect our natural environment through good science, regulation, and compliance. Chapter 3, paragraph 32).

Here is the link to make your submission:

<https://www.alp.org.au/platform-consultation-draft/>

Submissions are due by November 30 2020

The short version - THE HEADLINE ASKS

LEAN is calling for the 2020 National Platform to include:

- Explicit commitment to setting **medium term emission reduction targets** - to make sure we deliver the goal of net zero emissions by 2050.
- Commitment to **assessment of greenhouse gas impacts** of new fossil fuel developments to inform decision making and **strengthened rights for indigenous people** on the development of their lands.
- **No public subsidy for new fossil fuel developments** or related infrastructure.
- Commitment to **create an independent Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)**, to improve environmental outcomes with expert science-based advice and delivery of compliance and enforcement.

LEAN also supports union negotiations to ensure **communities impacted by shifting global energy markets are backed by regional diversification bodies** that are locally led, include unions, industry and community voices and are powered by government investment.

Where we are coming from - LEAN's POLICY FRAMEWORK

LEAN's approach to providing a safe future for Australia through action to arrest climate change and environmental decline, is built on the following principles:

1. **Introduction of medium-term emission targets**, providing workers and business with certainty as to the legal pathway to Australia's net carbon neutral economy by 2050.
2. **Expansion of government investment in renewable energy** and associated industries. Government needs to be active in ensuring we harness Australia's potential to be a renewable energy superpower – using our natural advantages in renewable energy to build future-facing manufacturing industries and jobs. This includes restriction of public funding for the fossil fuel industry – mature industries do not need public subsidy.
3. **Protection and restoration of our natural environment** with stronger national environment laws & an independent Environment Protection Authority.
4. **Empowering our regional communities** to develop region-specific plans to prosper in a low carbon future.
5. **Investment to adapt to climate change**, building the natural and built infrastructure to improve the capacity of our environments to sustain Australia's prosperity.

LEAN acknowledges that a number of our key goals are already met (in part or in whole) by the current platform draft and commend its writers for their contributions.

The details - LEAN PLATFORM AMENDMENTS, Chapter 3

Climate Change

1. **Adapting to change – investment in resilience.** Introduce a new paragraph acknowledging that for Australians to prosper in the era of climate change, Labor will accelerate and boost investment to increase resilience in both the natural and built environment. (for inclusion in Chapter 1)
2. **Add medium-term emission targets.** Set medium-term targets between now and delivery of net zero in 2050. Suggested wording:
Labor is committed to setting medium-term emission reduction targets based on the best available science, consistent with net zero emissions by 2050, and ensuring there is a clear path to delivery of these targets
3. **Independent advice on the climate science.** As the current Government has gutted the Climate Change Authority, we must commit to ensuring we have independent advice to inform decision making on climate change, including target setting.
4. **Expand consumption & production of (renewably powered) electricity.** Policy must be geared to a rapid rise in (renewably powered) electrification of household, transport, and industrial uses of energy.

5. **Fossil Fuels – assessment of greenhouse gas emissions and strengthening of indigenous rights.** Fossil fuels are the main cause of global warming and any expansion of fossil fuels imperils the future. LEAN understands gas remains important for manufacturers and will remain part of the electricity mix, but it is a fossil fuel.

The current Platform commits to ‘rigorous science-based processes’ for environmental approval of new fossil fuel projects, it must also commit to:

- assessment of project greenhouse gas emission impacts to inform decision making
- strengthened rights for indigenous people on the development of their lands

6. **No public funding for new fossil fuel projects.** Suggested wording: *The fossil fuel industry is mature and no longer requires public funding for new projects or associated infrastructure*

7. **Regional diversification bodies for communities impacted by shifting global energy markets** need explicit inclusion. LEAN backs union negotiations on this but notes the approach needs to be locally led, include unions, industry and community voices and be powered by government investment.

Natural Environment

1. **Telling a story, articulating our commitment.** Labor has a proud history of action to protect our natural environment and has created a coherent frame for this task. The Environmental Protections section of Chapter 3 could be improved with:

- a. **Inclusion of a stronger framing paragraph** to articulate Labor’s commitment and reasons for environmental action. Proposed words:

Australia’s natural environment and iconic places are in an overall state of decline and are under increasing threat. The current environmental trajectory is unsustainable. The globe is facing an extinction crisis, and Australia has one of the worst records of extinctions on earth. Recent experiences of drought and catastrophic fire reveal the human cost of environmental decline and its impacts on the economy. Labor is committed to addressing the environmental crisis, while also building sustainable jobs and an economy that builds prosperous regions. (replace current Paragraph 29)

- b. **Organising the content to reflect the clear and powerful framework developed by Labor** over recent decades. We propose the material be organized under the following headings:

Environmental Governance, Indigenous & Built Heritage, Special Places – World Heritage, National Reserve System and National Parks, Landscapes, Indigenous Conservation, Wildlife Trade, Waste, Clean air & safe environment (pollution), Water, rivers and oceans.

Furthermore, LEAN is advocating for improvements in key areas – for instance we are calling for **stronger commitments on indigenous heritage** (Juukan Gorge has shown the current approach is failing!) and **cutting edge approaches to management of plastic waste** and

creation of a circular economy. We also need to acknowledge managing new threats, particularly fire.

2. Creation of an independent Environment Protection Authority.

The Platform must reflect the best of the current Samuel Review's recommendations on reforming environment laws as well as the key principles Labor has independently adopted to improve environmental governance in Australia. Most significantly this is our well-established commitment to an independent Environment Protection Agency to provide the rigour and expertise currently missing from Federal approaches to environmental protection. Many thousands of rank and file members and 500 party units backed this proposition before the last ALP Conference.

Proposed wording for inclusion in current paragraph 32:

Build institutions and institutional capacity to underpin effective and transparent environmental management systems that are essential for sound decision-making, monitoring, assessment and reporting of environmental performance and outcomes. Including:

- An empowered and independent Environment Protection Agency to provide science based expert oversight of the laws; enforcement and compliance of national and state laws, national and regional planning and coordination, leading public and expert inquiries into key policy challenges, leading assessment and approvals and managing environmental markets.*
- Creation of a national information and data base to inform best practice policy and decision making.*