



AUSTRALIAN **WIND ALLIANCE**

2019 Federal Election Platform

Australia's energy system is in transition. Australia benefits from this transition through reduced carbon pollution, investment in regional Australia, and lower wholesale electricity prices.

Australia has committed to reducing total greenhouse gas emissions to 26-28% below 2005 levels by 2030. At this election Labor is proposing emissions cuts of 45% by 2030, with a target for 50% renewable energy power generation by 2030. The Greens propose a 100% renewable energy target for 2030.

Australia's current target of 26-28% is inadequate to limit global temperature rises to 1.5 degrees and to reach net zero emissions by 2050¹. Additionally, government figures show we are not on track to meet even these targets².

Emissions from generating electricity comprise about one-third of Australia's total greenhouse emissions. Wind and solar power, even incorporating the cost of storage, represent some of the cheapest sources of electricity we can build³.

Wind farm construction has delivered a jobs and investment boost of \$5 billion to regional Australia in the last two decades. A further fifteen new wind farms being built now have created 3,200 direct local jobs and 7,600 indirect jobs in local businesses that supply to the projects.

Currently, an additional \$24.5 million goes directly to regional communities every year through payments to farmers and community funds. On completion of wind farms being built now, that annual figure will increase to \$42.5 million.

¹ [The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Limiting Temperature Rise to 1.5 degrees C](#), The Climate Council

² [Australia's Emissions Projections 2018](#), Department of Environment and Energy, p12.

³ <https://reneweconomy.com.au/solar-wind-batteries-killing-market-new-gas-plants-57621/>, Reneweconomy (accessed 5th April 2019)

The Australian Wind Alliance (AWA) calls on political parties and candidates to commit to:

- 100% Renewable Energy Target, grid modernization, electricity market reform

To play our part in limiting global temperature rises to 1.5 degrees, Australia should set a target to source 100% of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030, backed up by a robust policy mechanism to deliver it. Renewable energy is a cost-effective way to reduce emissions and is the cornerstone of decarbonisation efforts in other sectors of the economy, such as battery-powered transport and greater electrification of industrial processes⁴.

Additional enabling policy is urgently required to modernise transmission and distribution infrastructure in line with AEMO's Integrated System Plan to make them fit for purpose for an electricity supply dominated by distributed and variable sources. Significant electricity market reform is also required to include decarbonisation as part of the National Electricity Objective and to incentivise both large- and small-scale energy storage. ARENA and the CEFC should continue to be supported and properly funded.

- Supporting best practice community engagement and community investment

While Australians are world leaders in the uptake of solar panels on their rooves⁵, interest in direct community investment in utility scale wind farms is also becoming more prevalent⁶. Additionally, best practice community engagement promotes widespread support for renewable energy projects⁷.

Reverse auction processes undertaken by the ACT and Victorian governments prioritized community engagement and this led to strong community outcomes in winning bids, including a public investment scheme for a large-scale wind farm. Reverse auctions undertaken at a federal level could seek to emulate these results. Alternatively, ARENA could allocate funds to further develop and support community investment models and deliver the best outcomes for rural and regional Australia.

- An orderly transition from coal-burning power generation

The falling cost of renewables and storage and the urgent need for action on climate change mean that coal as an energy source does not have a long-term future in Australia's electricity sector⁸.

It is important that future closures of coal-burning power stations are orderly to ensure electricity demand continues to be met and that the well-being of coal communities is properly considered and supported. A well-resourced Commonwealth body should be established to oversee this process and ensure just transition arrangements for coal communities, including re-training of power workers for long term jobs in the clean energy sector.

⁴ [Deep Decarbonisation of the Australian Energy Industry](#), 2019. Lu, Blakers, Stocks, Cheng, Nadolny

⁵ Sydney Morning Herald, <https://www.smh.com.au/business/consumer-affairs/six-panels-a-minute-two-million-australian-homes-now-have-solar-20181203-p50jtn.html> (accessed 5 April 2019)

⁶ [Building Stronger Communities: Wind's growing role in regional Australia](#), 2018, Australian Wind Alliance.

⁷ Australian Wind Alliance, *ibid*.

⁸ [100% Renewable Electricity Penetration](#), 2019. Stocks, Lu, Blakers

- [Effective emissions reduction mechanisms outside the electricity sector](#)

Since the repeal of the Gillard Government's carbon pricing mechanism, Australia has lacked an effective and coordinated policy to transition Australia's economy towards a zero-carbon future. While electricity is the sector best prepared to quickly decarbonise, a robust and cost-effective mechanism is also required for non-electricity sectors of the economy. With the right policies, lower electricity sector emissions can facilitate reductions in other sectors by, for example, allowing vehicles to switch from high emissions petrol to emissions free electricity. Sectors where emissions are harder to achieve, such as agriculture, should be supported to adapt practices and adopt new technology, but in the meantime their sectoral emissions should be limited to thresholds consistent with limiting global temperature rises to 1.5 degrees.

About the Australian Wind Alliance

The Australian Wind Alliance is a community advocacy group for wind energy. We have over 800 members across Australia, who are a mix of farmers, community members, local businesses and wind energy workers. We advocate for greater uptake of wind energy to deliver economic and social benefits to regional Australia and clean up Australia's energy supply.