



CLIMATE *EMERGENCY* DECLARATION

Greenpeace Australia Pacific

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Cover image: Firefighters fight raging bushfire
©Shutterstock. This page: Activists raise wind
turbine in Durban ©Greenpeace/Robinson



BREAK FREE

We are in the grip of a complete ecological crisis. The climate emergency is all around us and is impacting our lives in so many ways - devastating droughts, bushfires all over the country, deadly air pollution, and a reef on life support.

Coal is the biggest cause of climate change, and the industry and corporations behind it are deeply entrenched in our politics. And for decades, politicians have been too afraid to act.

The era of waiting on politicians to act is over. We simply don't have time to wait out any more election cycles in the hope that the next government will be better than the last. We are in a climate emergency, and we need to act like it.

That's where you come in.

By uniting our collective drive, passion and strengths, we will work together to train and mobilise communities to take action that fits the scale of the crisis. Together, we will break free from coal.

No matter who you are, where you come from, or how much you are willing to contribute, you are an important part of this movement.

When we work together we can create extraordinary change. Throughout history, people power has overcome enormous adversaries and helped shape our lives for the better.

We have the solutions. We are a country blessed with abundant sunshine and wind, and we already have the clean renewable technology we need to power past coal and into the best possible future.

By uniting our collective courage, we can demand real solutions at every level, move past petty politics and build a system that protects life in all its diversity. Together we will break free.

OUR PLANET IS BREAKING

Rising seas and more frequent extreme weather events are putting tens of millions of lives around the world at risk. Meanwhile, globally, we are facing a frightening extinction crisis - one million animal and plant species now face extinction, a rate of loss that will accelerate further unless action is taken to eliminate the causes of biodiversity loss, particularly climate change.¹

Australia's First Nations, whose sovereignty we recognise was never ceded or extinguished, have an ongoing ancestral tie to this beautiful land which we all now share.² Recognising their unique connection to the land, Australians must act now to prevent harms that are already having a particularly damaging impact on First Nations People, including rising sea levels in the Torres Strait, the loss of sacred country, and diminishing food and water accessibility.³

Our government is failing to do what's needed in the face of these crises. Australia must pull the emergency brake now. ***The climate won't grant us any extensions.***

WHAT WE MUST DO TO PREVENT CATASTROPHIC CLIMATE DAMAGE

Against organised money and self-interest, we bring organised people.

Whether the Indigenous civil rights movement in Australia, Tasmania's Franklin Blockade, the gay rights movement, or the campaigns against whaling - ordinary people coming together and standing up to power have achieved remarkable things.

We call on Australia's governments, at Federal, State, and local levels, to tackle the climate emergency by:

- 1. Moving to power Australia with 100% renewable electricity by 2025;**
- 2. Shutting down all Australia's coal-fired power stations by 2025;**
- 3. Phasing out coal, oil, and gas mining in Australia by 2025, with a ban on new approvals for any new coal, oil, and gas mines or expansions;**

- 4. Banning the sale of new internal combustion engine private vehicles by 2025; and**

- 5. Ending deforestation immediately, and beginning the work of protecting and restoring nature.**

Development of plans to deliver these goals must centre the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The plans should also help create new jobs and support affected workers and other people from affected communities secure decent work.⁴





Students strike in global climate protest
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AUSTRALIA MUST LEAD

***If we value our beautiful, suffering country,
then we must act.***

Ours is a wealthy and advanced nation that is blessed with abundant sunshine and wind.⁵ And yet our ecosystems are on the brink of collapse. Fifty per cent of the corals of the Great Barrier Reef died in two mass bleaching events in 2016 and 2017 alone.⁶ If we wish to protect our unique home, we must lead the world by becoming the first 100% renewable powered major economy and by helping precipitate the global changes that we need to see.

Rapid change is challenging, and yet - as the examples above demonstrate - if we work together it is also entirely possible.

The only thing standing in the way of an Australia that is able to drag the world towards a better future is lack of imagination and a little courage.⁷

Our clean energy resources are limitless⁸, and the renewable energy industry has huge momentum. In the last three years, Australia has installed as much renewable energy as we did in the thirty years preceding.⁹

Globally, the rise of electric cars is unstoppable.¹⁰

And when given the chance, nature will heal.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Diaz, S., Settele, J., & Brondizio, E. (2019). *Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. Retrieved from the IPBES website: <https://www.ipbes.net/news/Media-Release-Global-Assessment>; further, with its range of climatically diverse ecosystems, Australia is particularly vulnerable to the risks of climate change - see Williamson, G., Prior, L., Jolly, W., Cochrane, M., Murphy, B., & Bowman, D. (2015). Measurement of inter- and intra-annual variability of landscape fire activity at a continental scale: the Australian case. *Environmental Research Letters*, 11, 035003.
- 2 *The Uluru statement from the heart*. Retrieved from the 1 Voice Uluru website <https://www.1voiceuluru.org/the-statement>
- 3 See SEED's *Indigenous youth declaration for climate justice*. Retrieved from the SEED website https://www.seedmob.org.au/indigenous_youth_declaration
- 4 Australian Council of Trade Unions. (2016). *ACTU policy discussion paper: Sharing the challenges and opportunities of a clean energy economy*. Retrieved from the ACTU website: <https://www.actu.org.au/media/1032953/actu-policy-discussion-paper-a-just-transition-for-coal-fired-electricity-sector-workers-and-communities.pdf>
- 5 Australia's clean energy resources are far greater than our limited supply of fossil fuels. Solar and wind energy resources alone are estimated to be 75% greater than our supplies of coal, oil, gas, and uranium combined: see Drew, G. (2015). *Zero carbon Australia: Renewable energy superpower*. Retrieved from the Beyond Zero Emissions website: <https://bze.org.au/wp-content/uploads/renewable-energy-superpower-bze-report-2015.pdf>; Global Commission on the Geopolitics of Energy Transformation. (2019). *A new world: The geopolitics of the energy transformation*. Retrieved from the International Renewable Energy Agency website: http://geopoliticsofrenewables.org/assets/geopolitics/Reports/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Global_commission_renewable_energy_2019.pdf
- 6 James, L. (2018). *Half of the Great Barrier Reef is dead*. Retrieved from the National Geographic website: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2018/08/explore-atlas-great-barrier-reef-coral-bleaching-map-climate-change/>
- 7 Indeed we have the opportunity to provide clean energy to other countries and support their transition: see Drew, G. (2015). *Zero carbon Australia: Renewable energy superpower*. Retrieved from the Beyond Zero Emissions website: <https://bze.org.au/wp-content/uploads/renewable-energy-superpower-bze-report-2015.pdf>
- 8 Indeed, the Australian Energy Market Operator has identified that the potential for clean energy in Australia's eastern states exceeds the region's demand by 500 times. Australian Energy Market Operator. (2013). *100 per cent renewables study - modelling outcomes*. Retrieved from the Department of Environment and Energy website: <https://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/d67797b7-d563-427f-84eb-c3bb69e34073/files/100-percent-renewables-study-modelling-outcomes-report.pdf>. For a roadmap, see Drew, G. (2015). *Zero carbon Australia: Renewable energy superpower*. Retrieved from the Beyond Zero Emissions website: <https://bze.org.au/wp-content/uploads/renewable-energy-superpower-bze-report-2015.pdf>
- 9 Global Commission on the Geopolitics of Energy Transformation. (2019). *A new world: The geopolitics of the energy transformation*. Retrieved from the International Renewable Energy Agency website: http://geopoliticsofrenewables.org/assets/geopolitics/Reports/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Global_commission_renewable_energy_2019.pdf
- 10 Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BloombergNEF). (2019). *Electric Vehicle outlook 2019*. Retrieved from the Bloomberg NEF website: <https://about.bnef.com/electric-vehicle-outlook/>