

CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

PREAMBLE

Climate Change, caused by the release of greenhouse gases (GHG) and land clearance, is the greatest issue of our time. It is a global crisis demanding a global response. It is also a key challenge for survival on our planet. Earth's climate is already changing at unprecedented speed, exemplified by higher temperatures, rising sea levels, ocean acidification, more frequent natural disasters and severe floods, droughts, and storms. The consequences of the climate emergency also include wars, starvation, disease, desertification, forced migration and species extinction. Global emissions of climate-changing pollutants must be halved by 2030, and we must get to net-zero emissions by 2050. The fight for a better climate and emission-free technologies requires common effort and consistent and feasible political solutions.

VISION

To prevent a climatic catastrophe, we must guarantee climate justice, effective mitigation and adaptation strategies, carbon emissions reduction, and a fossil fuel free future.

OBJECTIVE

The global Climate Emergency can only be tackled by global action . Urgent action must be taken. Therefore, the objectives of the Greens are to –

- Curtail the global emissions of climate-changing pollutants, especially carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, ozone, and synthetic gasses including chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), which are the main gasses responsible for human-induced climate change
- As a minimum, halve global emissions by 2030, and reach global net-zero or net negative emissions by 2050
- Implement global actions set by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement to reduce carbon emissions and land clearance to limit global temperature rise to less than 1.5°C
- Negotiate a multilateral emission abatement treaty that equitably shares the burden of global mitigation and adaptation measures, recognising the proportionately greater historical and current contribution of wealthy industrialised nations to climate change
- Remove all subsidies to the fossil fuel industry. An orderly phase out of fossil fuel mining, fossil fuel-based electricity generation and consumption of fossil fuels consistent with the emissions reduction plan
- Transition to a net-zero carbon economy through a range of mechanisms including a plan to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy through strong regulatory intervention and a strong effective price on carbon
- Bind national emission limits for each year through to 2050 supported by a well-funded, comprehensive, integrated and evidence-based emissions reduction plan with appropriate targets and reporting for all sectors with significant greenhouse emissions
- Secure an effective global mechanism to support and finance adaptation measures for countries already severely impacted by climate change

- Support industry-led climate reduction targets and conversions to clean energy
- Support the protection, conservation, rehabilitation and reclamation of carbon sinks, such as forests, wetlands, and other significant net-zero ecosystems

ACTION PLAN

The Greens will strengthen international agreements and work towards rapidly reducing global and national emissions through clear plans to help countries and people mitigate and adapt to climate change.. Therefore, the Greens will –

Climate for Future

- Make a Climate Change Act aiming at keeping global warming below 1.5°C
- Set budgets incorporating the need to limit greenhouse gas emissions
- Advocate an emergency international agreement to conserve and enhance carbon sinks and reservoirs including forests, peat fields and coastal and estuarine areas
- Create a just transition to a net-zero emissions economy and society
- Fund research and development and pilot projects in key emerging technologies
- Advocate for compensation for climate-related loss and damage
- Support the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 13, to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- Work locally to create zero-carbon communities and societies
- Create mitigation and adaptation programmes that ensures the safety of citizens, as well as of key property and infrastructure
- Encourage all public bodies and businesses to define their own adaptation plans and locally-determined contributions (LDCs) to climate emergency mitigation
- Reduce the demand for high-carbon products and services, especially energy production, industry, transport, and agriculture, forestry, and other land uses (AFOLU)
- Encourage family planning, a circular economy, less consumption and a shift to low carbon products, services and processes
- Establish a carbon tax (a tax on the burning of carbon-based fuels) and limit fossil fuel use to drive change throughout society
- Establish a cross-party inner cabinet to deal with climate change to bridge partisan divides
- Set and enforce declining legal emissions limits for industry and enforce penalties for exceeding those limits
- Create long-term and interim targets to achieve reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases
- Support directly affected communities in a just transition with mitigation schemes
- Support all international climate treaties under the auspices of the UN bodies
- Adopt a national zero waste policy
- Implement public awareness and education campaigns increasing climate change awareness and supporting and promoting individual mitigation strategies

Energy and Transportation

- Invest in energy efficiency in all sectors, especially in housing (including funding for retrofitting), industry and transport

- Set and progressively increase energy efficiency standards for vehicles, appliances and equipment
- Create an inclusive programme to train workers for the new, clean energy economy
- Adopt a clean energy portfolio standard that rapidly replaces combustion-based and nuclear power sources with wind, solar, ocean/tidal, small-scale hydro, geothermal, and other renewable power sources
- Retool society to run on non-polluting, renewable energy sources
- Prohibit new pipelines, or coal, oil or gas drilling or mining, including offshore wells
- Prohibit new, and decommission existing, uranium mines and nuclear power plants
- Ensure that existing oil and gas operations continue on a declining basis
- Phase out bitumen production by 2030-35 as it contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions
- Ban hydraulic fracturing (fracking) operations as they impact the groundwater quality and cause methane release and seismic activity
- Launch a large-scale energy efficiency retrofit of residential, commercial and institutional buildings
- Ban the sale of internal combustion engine passenger vehicles by 2030
- Make electric vehicles affordable and expand charging stations for electric vehicles, including in parking lots
- Create a national cycling and walking infrastructure fund to help support zero emissions active transportation
- Develop a green freight transport programme
- Fund the re-routing of tracks for freight and rail yards away from populated areas and strengthen rail safety rules, giving regulators the tools they need to protect neighbourhoods from train shipments of hazardous materials
- Build capacity within communities and industries to develop and expand local renewable energy
- Ban new coal-fired power stations, gas mines or oil wells, and prohibit expansions to any existing coal or gas-fired power stations or mines
- Carry out research, development and deployment of sustainable fuels which demonstrably reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and do not threaten biodiversity or food security
- Carry out research, development and deployment of carbon neutral technologies for manufacturing and industry, particularly replacing the direct use of fossil fuels in industrial processes
- Build an efficient, low cost public transportation system

Agriculture and Forest

- Implement national standards for reducing the use of nitrogen fertilisers in crop agriculture, reducing erosion and rebuilding soils to retain carbon, and transitioning away from industrial livestock production
- Support the transition of industrial agriculture systems to regenerative agriculture
- Increase forest fire preparedness using long-term programmes equipped with indigenous and local knowledge

- Promote agricultural, forestry and land use regimes in which photosynthetic sequestration of carbon dioxide exceeds its emission to the atmosphere
- Ban land clearing, logging of native forest and other activities that reduce carbon storage, including threats to kelp forests and seagrass beds
- Promote organic farming practices and local food production and distribution
- Reduce methane, nitrous oxide and other greenhouse gases by phasing out confined animal feeding operations, and encouraging reduction in meat consumption

Fossil Fuel

- Create an action plan for a future without fossil fuels and nuclear energy and to phase out methane, nitrous oxide and other greenhouse gases
- Eliminating subsidies for fossil fuels, nuclear power, biomass and waste incineration, and biofuels
- Develop an international mechanism to fund adaptation to climate change in countries with less responsibility for climate change

Research and Development

- Carry out research, development and deployment of mechanisms to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from sea and air transport
- Carry out research, development and deployment of mechanisms to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and waste from agriculture and encourage a move away from a reliance on carbon intensive food production

References:

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