

# PROTECTING OUR OCEANS, FORESTS, RIVERS AND REEFS

Despite Australia's natural wealth and our love for nature, our environment is under threat like never before. Broadscale land clearing and logging in native forests has made Australia a global deforestation hotspot.

Mass coral bleaching from climate change and dredging for coal and gas ports are pushing our Great Barrier Reef and many other reefs to the edge. The Murray-Darling Basin is suffering as politicians fail to enforce the law against big corporate irrigators and slash environmental water allocations.

The Greens have a plan to save our precious places.



## THE GREENS WILL:

- Keep our **oceans healthy**
- **End deforestation** in Australia
- **Save our Great Barrier Reef**
- **Save the Murray-Darling** and hold the wreckers to account



## **KEEPING OUR OCEANS HEALTHY**

Our oceans are under serious threat. Global crises such as climate change and plastic pollution are compounding the local impact of overfishing and oil and gas exploration. We must act if we are to protect our marine environment.

### **The Greens will:**

- Re-establish the original network of marine parks and then expand the network based on updated science
- Reform federal government fisheries management using an ecosystem based approach and based on updated science
- Permanently ban super trawlers
- Introduce a national seafood labelling system for country of origin and species
- Remove Commonwealth licensing of lethal shark abatement measures
- Pursue the Japanese Government over their lethal whaling
- Remove toxic plastics from our oceans and keep our oceans plastic free
- Ban all new offshore oil and gas, including a ban on seismic testing
- Stop all oil and gas exploration in marine parks and in the Great Australian Bight

## **END DEFORESTATION IN AUSTRALIA**

It's time to end the destructive logging and deforestation that is destroying our wildlife habitat, carbon stores, regional landscapes and water catchments.

The Greens will ensure long-term sustainability of regional jobs and local wood products industries, by completing the transition to 100% plantation-sourced timber and fibre and by protecting the natural resources that our precious endangered wildlife, local tourism and sustainable agriculture rely on.

### **The Greens will:**

- Scrap the Regional Forest Agreements and end logging of native forests on public land
- End broadscale land-clearing of forests and woodlands on private land to protect our precious places, animals and carbon stores that are being destroyed
- Unlock jobs and community benefit from environmental restoration and tourism and recreation
- Invest \$20m in research and development to support a long-term wood and fibre products industry from plantations (which already account for 88% of our wood products), other fibre sources such as hemp, and farm forestry.





## SAVE OUR GREAT BARRIER REEF

In the last three years, half of the coral cover of the Great Barrier Reef has died from climate change and poor water quality. As one of the seven natural wonders of the world, an employer of 64,000 people and one of our greatest tourist attractions, we must take serious action to protect what's left of our Reef.

### The Greens will:

- Act rapidly on global warming with detailed plans to boost clean energy and ban new coal and gas, including stopping the proposed Adani mega coal mine
- Improve water quality with a \$2 billion grant fund over 10 years<sup>1</sup> available to scientists, governments and farmers to improve farming practices and repair reef catchments, and setting legal caps on water pollution by catchment
- Reclaim the \$443 million grant made to the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, and reallocate this funding through an updated grants process for Reef funding
- Strengthen the Reef's champions, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) and the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) with \$90 million in extra funding, greater independence and stronger powers including to regulate coastal development
- Stop damaging coal and gas port expansions including at Abbot Point and pristine areas like the Fitzroy Delta and Cape York Peninsula
- Ban all offshore dumping of dredge spoil - the Reef is not a rubbish dump
- Address illegal fishing and overfishing, including ending hammerhead shark fishing
- Make shipping safer for our Reef and seafarers with compulsory marine pilotage.

## SAVING THE MURRAY-DARLING

The Murray Darling Basin covers an area bigger than Egypt. It contains sixteen internationally-recognised and protected wetlands,<sup>2</sup> and provides a habitat for 98 different species of waterbird and 46 species of native fish.<sup>3</sup> It is home to dozens of Aboriginal nations.<sup>4</sup> It supplies water to 3 million people.<sup>5</sup> And it's dying.

Birds are one of the best indicators for the health of an ecosystem, and in 2018 the number of migratory birds hit a record low in a pattern of decline spanning the last several years. Other indicators from river health to fish diversity also took a plunge while algal blooms are on the rise.<sup>6</sup> The importance of this ecosystem for both human communities and the health of our environment and ongoing biodiversity makes this demise all the more troubling.

Despite having spent billions of dollars on the Basin Plan, we still have no clear insight into what has been achieved. The Basin Authority has come under increased scrutiny but remains uncooperative and lacks transparency. The South Australian Royal Commission has helped to highlight the scope of problems faced by this vital river system but questions of corruption, water theft and political and regulatory capture remain.<sup>7</sup>

### The Greens will not sit by as Australia's food bowl turns to dust. We will:

- Lift the freeze on water buybacks to return more water to the river
- Work with state governments to ensure the forty-four recommendations of the South Australian Royal Commission are implemented in full
- Initiate a federal Royal Commission to clean up corruption and mismanagement, save the river system, and reinstate confidence that science is at the centre of decisions.

<sup>2</sup> [www.environment.gov.au/water/cewo/media-release/celebrating-murray-darling-basin-wetlands-world-wetland-day](http://www.environment.gov.au/water/cewo/media-release/celebrating-murray-darling-basin-wetlands-world-wetland-day)

<sup>3</sup> [www.mdba.gov.au/discover-basin/environment/animals](http://www.mdba.gov.au/discover-basin/environment/animals)

<sup>4</sup> [www.mldrin.org.au](http://www.mldrin.org.au)

<sup>5</sup> [www.mdba.gov.au/annual-reports/annual-report-2014-15/about-mdba/basin-statistics](http://www.mdba.gov.au/annual-reports/annual-report-2014-15/about-mdba/basin-statistics)

<sup>6</sup> [www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-27/coorong-murray-darling-basin-how-to-kill-a-river-system/9698108](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-27/coorong-murray-darling-basin-how-to-kill-a-river-system/9698108)

<sup>7</sup> The Australia Institute, [The Basin Files: Maladministration of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan: Volume I, June 2018.](#)

<sup>1</sup> Funded by reclaiming the Great Barrier Reef Foundation grant.