

**GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT CLIMATE POLICIES –  
an Evaluation of ALP, Liberal and Greens Platforms**

**By**

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The engagement I have had in the past ten years with [IPCC](#) has enabled me to follow the process of nation states around the world getting serious about climate change. There are only a few countries that are ‘hold outs’ as the [UN Secretary General](#) described Australia as he announced the Working Group 2 report. Getting serious means that policy statements are linked to real and achievable outcomes. This is how we developed policy in the IPCC, less about politics and more about the science of delivering change. So, I sought out the platforms released by the three main parties to see how serious they were.

The criteria I used to assess this are set out in the Table and my assessments are summarised there and outlined below.

	ALP	Liberal	Green
Strong interim target by 2030 with clear rationale	Yes 43% .	None.	100% by 2035 – rationale in new policy.
Long term transition plan for 2050	No, but some of the modelling goes to 2050.	Not clear how list would achieve 100%.	100% by 2035 is followed by negative emissions to 2050 through land repair.
All sectors covered	Yes. Weak on transport.	No. Transport a blatant missing element.	Transport weak in final numbers.
Immediate decline in GHG instigated	Modelling suggests it begins immediately but no clear policy.	None. In fact the opposite as it enables gas projects.	Clear policy of immediately banning new FF projects.
Economic competitiveness	Yes. With clear data.	Yes. But basis of data not shown.	Yes. Costed but a full economic analysis would need modelling.
Green H2 hubs linked to green H2 production	Green steel and AI but not clearly linked to H2 strategy.	Green steel and AI but not clearly linked to H2 strategy.	Hydrogen is still a developing concept in this policy as details are mostly about power plants being removed and replaced by solar and wind.
Distributed energy not just centralised	Small projects only.	None.	Mentioned but not developed into policies as mostly focusses on NEM transition.
Just transition	Clear data in employment strategy.	Stated but not quantified.	Stated and quantified in new jobs.

## ALP

The ALP climate change [platform](#) has a new approach in this election which is rare in any election: policies outlined along with modelling to show their expected outcomes. Their [modelling](#), by Reputex, seems very credible and traces each policy into a quantitative delivery of 43% GHG reduction by 2030 as well as jobs created and costs. The approach is based on conservative and well researched assumptions. The focus is on 2030 as that is the primary way any Federal Government can get serious and must get serious as its not long away.

For example, the ALP commitment to 43% by 2030 shows how the GHG saved adds up to 448mT and shows the associated costs and employment created from these policies:

- Continuing BAU 30% (351mT of GHG)
- Electricity 5% (4 main policies but the biggest is Rewiring the Nation, 37mT)
- Industry and Carbon Farming 7% (mostly from Safeguard Credits, 48mT, which are revamped from the present system, the National Reconstruction Fund, 33mT, and the New Energy Apprenticeships, 9mT)
- Transport 1% (mostly from EV discounts, 4mT)
- TOTAL 43% (448mT of GHG).

Some analysis continues through to 2050 but these early interventions are the most important part of the transition to 2050 as once they are under-way they take off. They certainly could have taken this analysis to 50% by 2030 as the IPCC are suggesting for all nations is needed in all the IPCC modelling. But we have had ten years going in the opposite direction so its important to get started and this approach is solid and scientific with credibility. It could be taken to the UNFCCC conference in Egypt in November and not be seen as a 'hold out'.

The Transport sector is very weak in the policy package and could be improved with more substantial interventions or else it may undermine the strong areas in power and industry. In particular it is important to apply all EV policies to [all electric vehicle modes](#).

*Conclusion: ALP climate policy could have a higher target by 2030 and do more on transport but its still up there with most progressive nations and once it gets started there can be serious ramping up as the Paris Agreement enables. It is a very solid start with the potential to make a real difference.*

## Liberals

The scattered list of ideas in the [Liberal Climate Platform](#) is not a serious policy strategy. It is two small sections within an Environment Policy. It is full of contradictions as it is enabling gas projects and building a new gas-fired power plant while suggesting they will be reducing emissions. There is no scientific basis to such statements.

The green hydrogen projects being funded are not seen as part of this strategy which can only suggest this is not a serious exercise. They will help reduce emissions but as they have not sought a quantitative base for their approach it suggests that their projects are simply political rather than being able to achieve the target they have committed to.

There is no interim target beyond business-as-usual and hence it is hard to see how they could lead to net zero by 2050 especially seeing they are backing new fossil fuel projects.

The problem of having a divided Party over climate change may be reflected in the lack of serious commitment reflected in their policy document.

*Conclusion: Liberals are obviously divided and seem unable to make a serious climate change contribution.*

## **Greens**

The Climate platform they had ready for the election announcement was a [State Conference document](#) from August 2020 which missed out on much of the trends and policy development that has happened globally since then. It was not a serious start to the campaign with a long shopping list of ideas. But a much better [document](#) came out last week with a coherent set of policies based on a background of [quantitative analysis](#).

The Greens want to reach 100% by 2035 but the plan of how to deliver this is very challenging. It is a serious plan which is quantified and costed (with jobs and GHG saved) clearly assigned in each state - no other party does this. It is however mostly about power and has no modelling to show how it can be achieved across all sectors though it has graphs that take lines straight to 2035.

The need to make climate change policies become real and deliverable begins with good modelling and then has to bring all the states on that journey. This is hard to see in the document and the states are generally going for 50% by 2030 which is very testing. To go to 100% in just a further 5 years would need some very strong deliverables.

The good part is that transport, including public transport and High Speed Rail, is discussed but these initiatives are not really linked to the quantification as its all about power. The landscape repair policies which continue after the 100% net zero is achieved are a powerful idea enabling a contribution to global decarbonization. No other party is dealing with that.

The weakness compared with the ALP policy is that Paris requires commitments to go beyond targets by having detailed strategies of how to achieve them.

*Conclusion: Greens strategies are good ideas but are not linked into detailed modelling that relates to delivery.*

The Teal Independents have not been assessed here but are unlikely to have the kind of detailed policies of the ALP and Greens. The fact that they stress climate policy is the biggest point in the election for many is likely to be filling the vacuum left by Liberals but are not developed as much as the ALP and Greens platforms.