

# ★★★ THE *GetUp* GUIDE TO THE ★★★ 2014 W.A. SENATE BY-ELECTION

## Clarifications

- In our original survey to parties, there was an additional question regarding maintaining Federal government's powers to approve or reject major projects that could impact on the Great Barrier Reef. The comments on this question revealed that many parties had misunderstood the premise of the question as it was intended, where the alternative is approval or rejection powers resting with State governments. We have removed the question from our published and online scorecards due to the potentially misleading nature of our question and of the subsequent answers. Answers for the parties' position on that question remain published in the survey responses we have on our website.
- For a reference for most answers, first refer to party's survey responses. Cases where our rating differs from the answer that a political party gave are listed below.
- Some parties have not responded to our invitation to respond to the survey. In that case, we have sought research and rated them on that policy to the best of our ability. Links to our primary resources and references are listed below. Any questions or clarifications can be requested by emailing [tips@getup.org.au](mailto:tips@getup.org.au).

## **Justifications**

**Would you support increasing Australia's emissions reductions target to at least 19% by 2020, as recommended by the Climate Change Authority earlier this year?**

**The ALP said:** *Yes. Labor has committed to a target range of 5-25% contingent on certain conditions being met. The CCA has advised that the conditions for increasing from the current 5% minimum have been met to the mid point of 15%. The CCA have also advised that the conditions for the high point of 25% has not been met. When in Government Labor committed to serious consideration of the CCA recommendations. This target is under consideration by Labor.*

**GetUp awarded:** No points.

Our understanding of the ALP's policy is that while they are open to a target of up to 25%, and it is under consideration, currently their policies state a breadth of percentages – not a minimum target of 19%. As stated in The Conversation (<http://theconversation.com/steep-emissions-cuts-needed-or-well-blow-australias-carbon-budget-climate-authority-23425>), their minimum target for 2020 emissions reduction of 5% is insufficient. In order to satisfy the criteria for this point, parties must have a policy of a minimum of 19% emissions reduction by 2020.

**Would you support strengthening the Renewable Energy Target to at least 50% by 2030?**

**Save our ABC said:** *Conditional yes. I am strongly supportive of the urgent need to address the issues of climate change that*

*affect our community. I reject the Climate Change sceptics and I will be guided by those that have a much better understanding of the details of what is necessary to achieve a proper reduction in those activities that are influencing climate change.*

**GetUp awarded:** Insufficient information.

Giving a statement in support of deferring to scientific advice is not equal to giving unequivocal support or commitment to a target of 50% by 2030, as a tick would have implied. As the position is unclear, but still remains open for clarification, we have awarded this question as insufficient information.

**Would you support Australia's commitment to a target of 100% renewable energy by 2050?**

**Voluntary Euthanasia Party said:** *Conditional yes. If this is possible without major social disruption.*

**GetUp awarded:** Insufficient information

“Major social disruptions” are a subjective and changeable measure for a policy position to rely upon, and the supporting statement does not definitively clarify the party’s commitment (or lack thereof) to a 100% renewable energy by 2050. It is possible that the VEP supports this commitment, but this statement is not equal to a commitment, as a tick would have implied. As the position is unclear but remains open for clarification, we have awarded this question as insufficient information.

**Would you support continued funding for large-scale renewable energy and energy efficiency technology through the Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC)?**

**Voluntary Euthanasia Party said:** Conditional yes. To reach targets with minimal social disruption, much greater spending on renewable R&D is required.

**GetUp awarded:** Insufficient information

This appears to be an answer of in-principle support, yet the supporting statement does not clarify why they have offered only a “conditional yes”. A tick may be appropriate, but as the position is unclear and remains open for clarification, we have awarded this question as insufficient information.

### **Would you support policies that prevent unconventional gas mining in drinking water catchments?**

**The ALP said:** *No Position Yet. Labor introduced the Water Trigger into legislation in 2013, proving our commitment to protecting the environment in general, and the protection of our water resources in particular. No other Government has secured such protections in relation to Gas production.*

**GetUp awarded:** Half marks

The ALP get half marks for showing in-principle support for protecting drinking water catchments from coal and gas mining projects; though fall short of holding it as party policy. They have shown in principle support through introducing a water trigger on large coal and CSG projects into Environment Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 for the first time. However, the party record of approving every coal and gas mine during the same term of Parliament does not bode well for strong

implementation of the water trigger - and an absence of party policy – means that we have not awarded them a tick.

**HEMP said:** *Conditional yes. There are thousands of water catchments. This question is woolly. Mining in a deserted catchment will have different implications to seeking a DA in a closely populated catchment. Approval for a mine in a pristine sandstone eucalyptus escarpment will be different to one in a parched and barren black soil plains environment. Mining is not the enemy - inappropriate development is.*

**GetUp awarded:** Insufficient information

HEMP's supporting statement does not clarify their position on whether they would support policies prevent unconventional gas mining in drinking water catchments. It appears to communicate that they would prefer that mining projects were considered on a case-by-case basis; but may also communicate that certain water catchments should be unequivocally protected. Their position is unclear, for which we have awarded no points due to insufficient information.

**Would you support a moratorium on coal seam gas and shale gas mining until a scientific consensus on the environmental and health impacts is reached?**

**The ALP said:** No position yet.

**GetUp awarded:** No points.

While the ALP have no position on these policies, based on their record while in government, we have awarded no marks. The ALP voted against Water Bill amendment that would confer rights

to landholders and farmers to say no, and earlier Landholders' Right to Refuse (Coal Seam Gas) Bill 2011. Approvals were given despite the uncertainty of impacts, and no moratorium, nor limits on residential areas were imposed. In order to satisfy the criteria for points on this, the ALP would need a voting record or policy that shows support for such restrictions. Refer to Lock the Gate's scorecard for more information:

[http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/lockthegate/pages/582/attachments/original/1376339310/The\\_Country\\_is\\_Calling\\_Final\\_Report\\_August12th2013.pdf?1376339310](http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/lockthegate/pages/582/attachments/original/1376339310/The_Country_is_Calling_Final_Report_August12th2013.pdf?1376339310)

**Save our ABC said:** *Conditional yes. I would need guidance from reliable environmental experts as to the proper answer on this question.*

**GetUp awarded:** Insufficient information.

Giving a statement in support of deferring to scientific advice is not equal to giving support for a moratorium, as a tick would have implied. As the position is unclear, but still remains open for clarification, we have awarded this question as insufficient information.

**Voluntary Euthanasia Party said:** *Conditional yes. We need to phase out fossil fuel energy sources if we are to reduce carbon emission.*

**GetUp awarded:** Insufficient information.

The Voluntary Euthanasia Party's statement does not appear to clarify their stance on a moratorium. As the position is unclear, but still remains open for clarification, we have awarded this question as insufficient information.

**Do you think children should be removed from indefinite detention?**

**The ALP said:** Yes.

**GetUp awarded:** No points.

Although Labor said yes, there is little evidence of this having been demonstrated in practice or policy. This was listed as a principle in their 2011 policy platform and yet children were placed in indefinite detention under Prime Ministers Gillard and Rudd.

**Would you oppose any industrial-scale dredging or dumping of dredge spoil within the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area?**

**The ALP said:** *Conditional yes: Labor believes that the current state of the GBR should cause the Government to consider such a position*

**GetUp awarded:** No points

The ALP's supporting statement for a "Yes" is insufficient. Encouraging another party to consider such a position does not qualify as a party's own support.

While ALP representatives did support a Greens motion in June 2013 to end the dumping of dredge material in the Great Barrier Reef's waters; under Labor government, 33 decisions were made to advance port and dredging activities at Abbot Point and a further 55 at Port of Gladstone, and at least 38 million cubic

metres of dredging was proposed for Abbot Point. The previous Rudd-Gillard governments also approved or considered over 93 million cubic metres of potential dredge actions at the Port of Gladstone and Abbot Point. The ALP's record does not demonstrate that they would oppose dredging and dumping.

In order to satisfy the criteria for marks on this answer, the ALP would have needed to unequivocally confirm their opposition or have a public party policy to the same effect.

**Save our ABC said:** *Conditional yes. I am strongly committed to protecting our environment but these are matters where I will seek out the advice from the experts who are committed to safeguarding our environment.*

**GetUp awarded:** Insufficient information

While this is a statement of in-principle support for environmental protections, the supporting statement does not clarify a position on dredging and dumping. Giving a statement in support of deferring to scientific advice is not equal to giving opposition to dredging and dumping, as a tick would have implied. As the position is unclear, but still remains open for clarification, we have awarded this question as insufficient information.

**Would you support implementing the recommendations of the World Heritage Committee to avoid the Great Barrier Reef being listed as 'in danger' by UNESCO?**

**The ALP said:** *Conditional yes: Australia should do everything in its power to avoid having the GBR listed as In Danger and all*

*recommendations by UNESCO should be considered very seriously. Labor is committed to ensuring the GBR is protected.*

**GetUp awarded:** No points

Given that the Labor government did not commit to opposing dredging and dumping and no new port developments, it's fair to say that they do not support implementing the full suite of Committee recommendations. For more info, see recommendations here and Government action taken:

[http://awsassets.wwf.org.au/downloads/mo032\\_fight\\_for\\_the\\_reef\\_report\\_to\\_the\\_unesco\\_world\\_heritage\\_committee\\_30jan14.pdf](http://awsassets.wwf.org.au/downloads/mo032_fight_for_the_reef_report_to_the_unesco_world_heritage_committee_30jan14.pdf)

### **Would you prevent any new port development along the Great Barrier Reef coastline?**

**The ALP said:** *Conditional yes. Labor initiated a significant amount of work to explore the current port situation along the Queensland coast. Labor is committed to ensuring the balance of economic development and environmental protection for this vital area.*

**GetUp awarded:** No points

The ALP's supporting statement for a "conditional yes" does not present any opposition to further port development along the Great Barrier Reef. Under Labor government, 33 decisions were made to advance port and dredging activities at Abbot Point and a further 55 at Port of Gladstone. In order to satisfy the criteria for this question, the ALP would have needed to confirm that they are in support of preventing port development along the Great Barrier Reef coast.

**Would you rule out policies that would increase regulation of Australia's free press?**

**The ALP said:** *Yes*

**GetUp awarded:** No points

In order to satisfy the criteria for this question, parties must be reasonably expected to rule out increased regulation of media as part of their policy platform. In 2013, Labor attempted to overhaul media regulation to further diversity of ownership and force better professional standards. Just this month, they have also been pushing the coalition to consider a whole range of issues in media reform. For more information, see here:

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/12/malcolm-turnbull-has-opened-a-can-of-worms-on-media-reform-labor>

**Would you oppose the inclusion of Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clauses in global trade deals like the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement?**

**The Greens said:** *No*

**GetUp awarded:** Tick

In order to qualify for a tick for this question, parties must have policies or statements that oppose the inclusion of ISDS clauses in trade deals. The Greens have policies that abjectly oppose the inclusion of ISDS clauses; and they have said they will not support any Free Trade Agreements that include Investor State

Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions. For more information, see here: <http://greens.org.au/node/3578>

**Would you support maintaining penalty rates for Australian workers?**

**The Voluntary Euthanasia Party said:** *Conditional yes. The question needs review. Some areas of employment may benefit with removal, but others certainly not*

**GetUp awarded:** Insufficient information.

The VEP's supporting statement disagrees with the premise of the question, but does not clarify the conditions for their approval or rejection of maintaining penalty rates. As the position is unclear but remains open for clarification, we have awarded this question as insufficient information.

## **References**

In determining ratings, GetUp first considered political parties' survey responses. Several parties did not respond to our invitation, including the Nationals, Katter's Australian Party, Australian Motoring Enthusiast Party, Australian Sports Party, Australian Christians, Liberal Party, Sustainable Population party Shooters and Fishers did not respond to the survey. Of them, we have independently researched and published anticipated policy positions for the Nationals, Sustainable Population Party and Liberal Party.

In order to determine ratings for parties whom didn't respond to our survey, we have referred to resources including (but not limited to) published policy positions, statements on the record, past voting records, policy overviews as compiled by major news outlets, announcements or statements by political parties (including representatives of political parties and their leaders) resources, and the scores on scorecards by expert issue-based groups, such as The Climate Institute.

For more information on how we determined scores for these parties' policies, visit their websites and the additional resources we have listed below.

**Liberal Party:** <https://www.liberal.org.au/our-policies>

**The Nationals:** <http://www.nationals.org.au/Policy.aspx>

**Palmer Party:** <http://palmerunited.com/national-policy/>

**Sustainable Population Party:**

<http://www.populationparty.org.au/Population-Party-Policies>

## **Further resources on climate and renewables**

[http://www.climateinstitute.org.au/verve/\\_resources/TCI\\_ElectionClimatePolicyTests\\_InterimAnalysis\\_July2013.pdf](http://www.climateinstitute.org.au/verve/_resources/TCI_ElectionClimatePolicyTests_InterimAnalysis_July2013.pdf)

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-06-26/environment-policy-federal-election-2013/4761774>

<https://www.liberal.org.au/our-plan/carbon-tax>

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/renewable-energy-target-faces-cut-by-abbott-20131218-2zlg.html>

<http://ewp.industry.gov.au/pages/overview>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/12/abbott-government-abandons-emissions-reduction-target-range>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-02-17/government-to-review-renewable-energy-target/5265044>

## **Further resources on coal seam gas & unconventional gas mining**

<http://ewp.industry.gov.au/pages/overview>

[http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/lockthegate/pages/582/attachments/original/1376339310/The\\_Country\\_is\\_Calling\\_Final\\_Report\\_August12th2013.pdf?1376339310](http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/lockthegate/pages/582/attachments/original/1376339310/The_Country_is_Calling_Final_Report_August12th2013.pdf?1376339310)

[http://www.nationals.org.au/Portals/0/2013/policy/Policy\\_Platform\\_August2013.pdf](http://www.nationals.org.au/Portals/0/2013/policy/Policy_Platform_August2013.pdf)

## **Further resources on media**

<http://www.news.com.au/national/we-have-no-plans-to-privatise-abc-or-sbs-says-tony-abbott/story-fncynjr2-1226648278367>

<http://www.liberal.org.au/latest-news/2012/04/30/convergence-review-more-regulation-and-government-intrusion-0>

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/02/26/funding-questions-sbs-abc>

<http://palmerunited.com/national-policy/>

## **Further resources on refugees & asylum seekers**

<http://www.nationals.org.au/Portals/0/2013/policy/The%20Coalition%E2%80%99s%20Operation%20Sovereign%20Borders%20Policy.pdf>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-02-17/ten-unaccompanied-children-sent-to-nauru/5263916>

<http://palmerunited.com/national-policy/>

<http://expertpanelonasylumseekers.dpmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/public-submissions/StablePopulationParty.pdf>

<http://palmerunited.com/2014/01/clive-palmer-seeks-to-visit-christmas-island-detention-centre/>

## **Further resources on trade deals & workers' rights**

<http://www.smh.com.au/business/trade-treaty-stance-the-same-despite-promise-20130922-2u7wm.html>

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/coalition-blocks-senate-from-secret-details-of-transpacific-partnership-trade-deal-20131208-2yzh2.html>

<http://www.smh.com.au/federal-politics/political-news/coalition-mps-plot-to-strip-workers-weekend-and-holiday-penalty-rates-20140307-34cw8.html#ixzz2x7m6DuE9>

<http://www.news.com.au/national/abbott-government-could-cut-penalty-rates-under-fair-work-commission-review/story-fncynjr2-1226818271202>

## **Further resources on the Reef**

<http://www.wwf.org.au/?8920/New-report-Government-failures-put-Reef-World-Heritage-Status-on-the-line#>

[http://awsassets.wwf.org.au/downloads/mo032\\_fight\\_for\\_the\\_reef\\_report\\_to\\_the\\_unesco\\_world\\_heritage\\_committee\\_30jan14.pdf](http://awsassets.wwf.org.au/downloads/mo032_fight_for_the_reef_report_to_the_unesco_world_heritage_committee_30jan14.pdf)

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/abbot-point-coal-terminal-reef-dredging-project-approved-20131210-2z3v2.html>

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/western-australia-given-exemption-from-federal-laws-to-cull-sharks/story-fn59niix-1226806898694>