

11 March 2015

NSW ELECTION STATEMENT OF DEMANDS

Climate Change Australia (Hastings Branch) is a safe climate and clean energy group on the mid north coast of New South Wales, based in the electorates of Port Macquarie and Oxley. As we approach the March 2015 NSW election, we are confronted by some disturbing facts about our home state:

- NSW is the largest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions of all states and territories, (155 million tonnes each year - Australia National Greenhouse Accounts, 2011-12). This is 28% of Australia's total emissions.
- NSW is second only to Queensland in the number of coal mines and coal-fired power stations it has. Coal is the largest source of harmful emissions in the world and the mining and burning of coal has serious health impacts on the community.
- NSW is warming, along with the rest of the nation. 2013 was the hottest year on record for NSW and confirms the warming trend caused by burning fossil fuels, tree-clearing and other industrial and agricultural practices.
- Severe weather events in NSW are increasing, with more frequent, longer and more intense bush fires, droughts, high rainfall events and floods. These are becoming more costly for the government and the community to manage and recover from.
- Oceans along the east coast of NSW are warming and becoming more acidic, with long-term consequences for the oyster and fishing industries, as well as tourism. Sea levels are slowly rising.
- NSW is losing plant and animal species as a direct result of our changing climate.

These facts, and the urgency of the situation, leave us with no other option than to make the following demands on the major parties in the NSW parliament:

1 A clear commitment to achieve a 19% reduction in NSW greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 (this is the Climate Change Authority recommendation for Australia, made in 2014).

2 Plans and procedures to achieve an orderly phase-out of older coal-fired power stations in NSW and a ban on new coal-fired plants without CCS (as currently implemented in the USA). Clear policy direction that no new coal mines or extensions to existing mines will be approved in NSW.

- 3 A guarantee that by 2020, at least 25% of all electricity generation in NSW will come from renewable energy sources.
- 4 Policies and procedures to encourage wind farms in NSW. This means finalising the wind farm planning guidelines that single out wind for special treatment. The current guidelines are too restrictive and have acted to deter new wind farms since 2012.
- 5 A greater focus on energy efficiency by giving meaningful incentives to electricity networks to help customers reduce peak demand, instead of building more infrastructure.
- 6 A commitment to pay owners of small-scale renewable energy a fair price for the electricity they produce. We reject any assertion that referring this matter to IPART has produced a fair outcome when only 6-8 cents per KWh is being offered by the retailers (and even that is voluntary).
- 7 Policies that ban CSG mining on all productive farmland and water catchments in NSW, the safe-guarding of water resources for agriculture and town use, and the protection of native vegetation on NSW farms in order to save our state's biodiversity.
- 8 The reservation of more national parks and wilderness areas in NSW. (Under the Coalition the rate of park establishment has declined, leaving NSW lagging behind in the National Reserve System).
- 9 Expansion of marine reserves and improved management of commercial and recreational fisheries in NSW.
- 10 Introduction of differential vehicle registration costs based on fuel efficiency and CO₂ pollution standards to encourage the use of cleaner, smaller, more efficient cars and trucks.
- 11 Increased funding for cycle ways in towns and cities across the state.
- 12 Restoration of funding for the Environmental Defenders Office and Legal Aid.

Endorsed by the CCA-H committee, 12 March 2015.