



Media Release

LEICHHARDT CANDIDATE POLICIES PUT TO THE TEST

19 August 2010

The Cairns and Far North Environment Centre's (CAFNEC's) recent Federal election candidate survey reveals that the Greens candidate has the best environmental platform of any Leichhardt candidate. Clear differences between the other parties on climate policy and marine protection are highlighted, with the ALP narrowly coming out ahead of the LNP based on an overall policy performance.

The major parties have a clear difference in approach and philosophy that emerge from the survey responses. The ALP offers a mostly party form-letter response to the survey which is none-the-less detailed and informative. The LNP candidate gives little detail and makes a point of attacking others rather than outlining policy responses or plans. Independent candidates were mostly short on detail and clear in showing their level of literacy and approach to the subject.

The Reef Rescue Package and other measures in decreasing pollution reaching the Great Barrier Reef gave the ALP an overall lead on the LNP. This is despite recent LNP announcements of extra resources for Indigenous land and sea management and grants for primary producers. Improving water quality is absolutely vital for ensuring long term health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef and its wildlife. The ALP has shown greater resolve in ensuring environmental outcomes are pursued, even when impacted land managers are not always happy with the changes.

Developing a national marine protection network has been a welcome focus of the current Labor Government. Whilst the Coalition delivered the current level of Great Barrier Reef protection whilst in government, it has now indicated an unwillingness to move forward on marine protection.

See survey background and results for further details.

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Survey background

This survey addressed a range of local environmental issues, with topics ranging from a price on carbon to investment in indigenous land and sea management and sustainable transport infrastructure for our region. These questions relate to CAFNEC's Federal election platform which identifies key environment issues and outcomes for the region. Some of the key elements of CAFNEC's platform are:

1. Climate Action

- A price on carbon, no new coal and support for clean energy and public transport
- Renewable energy investment in the region
- Regional investment in sustainable transport as opposed to investment in road infrastructure

2. Halt to Biodiversity Decline

- Continued investment in Indigenous land and sea management including Dugong and turtle management
- Support Cape York NRM process
- Buy back of Ella Bay and False Cape

3. Sustainable Population

- National Stable Population Policy introduced in next term, including identification of carrying capacity down to the regional level
- Provide support to specific industries to implement sustainable agricultural practices and improvement strategies
- Ensure water management provides sufficient environmental flows to support ecosystem health

Survey result highlights:

All candidates in the seat of Leichhardt responded to the survey, though not all clearly answered the questions asked.

Marine protection

The Greens fully support marine biodiversity protection. Candidates from the two major parties offer a clear choice on ocean protection, with Jim Turnour supporting a process for delivering a national marine park network within two years and Liberal-National's Warren Entsch backing away from marine biodiversity protection measures and a timetable for their implementation. When asked about protection of marine biodiversity, particularly major new protection of the Coral Sea region, the ALP's highlighted its sound record in seeking to produce a national network of marine reserves, in line with Australia's international commitments. Mr Entsch attacks CAFNEC for campaigning on the issue but offers no clear response. Neither Turnour nor Entsch answered the question directly. LNP the current policy is put all new commonwealth marine parks on hold, followed by a re-drawing of the focus away from biodiversity protection objectives.

Climate change

On Climate Change, only the Greens indicated a commitment to introduce a carbon price. While Labour candidate Jim Turnour offered a commitment to heading towards one, the LNP shied away from anything other than "direct action" on climate change. Direct action was an ineffective and expensive policy failure of the Howard years that, on its own, cannot form a credible policy. No independent candidate supports a price on carbon.

Indigenous land and sea management

Resourcing of Indigenous management of sea country, especially dugong and turtle populations, brought Mr Turnour out on the ALP record of investment in indigenous rangers and other programs, whilst Mr Entsch chastised CAFNEC for not being vocal enough on this issue.

Liberal National Party candidate Warren Entsch deserves special mention for claiming to be a more active environmentalist than community conservation groups on Land and Sea management, including dugong and turtle protection. Mr Entsch attempts to lay the blame for a decade of his obstruction and inaction on this issue at CAFNEC's feet.

SURVEY RESULTS

Survey responses in full below.

Summary and comment on candidate responses

Yodie Batzke (Ind.)

Did not directly answer any of the questions because she believes that “a simple 'yes' or 'no' to questions does not allow for a response such as 'maybe' or 'unsure’”. She gave no clear response on climate change or biodiversity, identified the need for indigenous management of land and resources, and indicated support for population growth.

Warren Entsch (LNP):

Does not commit to a price on carbon, would not prioritise sustainable transport networks over road infrastructure, Does not indicate support or otherwise of a Coral Sea marine park, does not support buying back land at False Cape of Ella Bay to protect these areas, supports large-scale investment in renewable energy in the region.

Attacks CAFNEC for not doing sufficient work on issues that were not actioned in his recent decade of office. E.g. Dugong and turtle protection as part of land and sea management were not progressed in over a decade of Mr Entsch holding office. Now the former MP claims to be a champion for these same causes.

The current LNP scare campaign on marine parks is at odds with their legacy of protecting 33% of the Great Barrier Reef from fishing and is no-doubt designed to worry anglers into changing their vote. Mr Entsch was never a fan of the Barrier Reef rezoning, and so it is no surprise he is opposing this current round of marine protection.

Steve Lane (Ind.)

Answered negatively to all questions with the exception of supporting continued investment in indigenous land and sea management and ensuring that water management provides sufficient environmental flows. Mr Lane apparently does not support renewable energy related subsidies and does not see the need for additional water efficiency measures or additional support for improved agricultural practices.

Jen Sackley (Ind.)

Some answers were unclear, full responses are included in detail below. Supports investment in large-scale renewable energy projects in the region, doesn't support the introduction of a price on carbon, does not support continued investment in indigenous land and sea management, supports the “local fish industry”, and was unsure about the concept of environmental flows in relation to water removal from the environment.

Neville St John-Wood (Greens)

Answered positively to all questions. Supports large-scale investment in renewable energy, the introduction of a price on carbon, investment in sustainable transport infrastructure, the establishment of climate refuges, the buyback of land at False Cape and Ella Bay for conservation, the creation of a marine park in the Coral Sea and improving water conservation measures before sourcing additional water supply for the region.

Jim Turnour (ALP)

Did not directly answer any of the questions asked, but did provide information on Labor policies and record in these areas. Indicated a general support for renewable energy, a commitment to building the deep and lasting consensus that is needed for a price on carbon, general trend for Labor government investment in sustainable transport, demonstrated an understanding of the need for increased resilience to climate change, outlined the Federal government policy and record on increased number of indigenous rangers working on country, and supports the creation of a national network of marine reserves, including areas under the “highest level of conservation protection”.

Complete survey results

CLIMATE ACTION	YES	NO
Do you support investment in large-scale renewable energy generation schemes in our region?		
Yodie Batzke (Ind.) <i>(Provided only a general comment on the subject of Climate Action)</i> Climate Action: because of the issues surrounding Wild Rivers and World Heritage Listing of Cape York the intent of the Government at both levels is yet unclear as to whether not such processes is the beginning of future actions relating to carbon off setting. Indigenous communities ability to manage and maintain 'country' has become complicated with regimes of so called 'good intent'.		
Warren Entsch (LNP)	YES	
Steve Lane (Ind.) There is as yet no viable alternative to coal – unless massive subsidy is in place. Subsidy will never create efficiency. New technology will come in time.		NO
Jen Sackley (Ind.) Wind Farming/Solar Power/	YES	
Neville St John-Wood (Greens) This will not only supply substantial power but is a job creation initiative.	YES	
Jim Turnour (ALP) Renewable energy generation will play an important role in meeting Australia's future energy needs, and the Gillard Labor Government has introduced a number of initiatives that will significantly increase investment in renewable energy and drive down its costs. The Government's key mechanism for supporting the development of renewable electricity generation projects is the 20 per cent by 2020 expanded Renewable Energy Target (RET). In June Federal Labor delivered on its commitment to pass the new and enhanced RET, which will help ensure at least 20 per cent of Australia's electricity comes from renewable sources by 2020. That's an increase of more than four times in the renewable energy target over the next 10 years. This means that by 2020, the electricity that comes from clean renewable sources will be about equal to all the current electricity use of Australian households. This will help drive nearly \$19 billion of investment in renewable energy. The RET will reduce carbon pollution by about 39 million tonnes in 2020. That's the equivalent of taking almost 10 million cars off the road. To complement the RET, Federal Labor announced a further \$652 million in the 2010-11 Budget to establish the Renewable Energy Future Fund (REFF) which forms part of the \$5.1billion Clean Energy Initiative (CEI). The existing initiatives under the CEI include the \$1.5 billion Solar Flagships Program, the \$100 million Australian Solar Institute and the Australian Centre for Renewable Energy (ACRE), which was established to manage \$560million in renewable energy investment. Further to all of these measures, a re-elected Gillard Labor Government will invest \$1 billion over the next decade in our electricity networks to connect Australia's rich renewable resources to Australian homes.		

<p>The Connecting Renewables initiative will identify and develop projects that deliver clean energy resources from Australia’s outback to our suburbs.</p> <p>The new \$1 billion Connecting Renewables initiative will bring more renewable energy onto the national grid earlier.</p> <p>It will support major new infrastructure investments that would not otherwise proceed. Projects could include connecting renewable generation projects to the national network, significant network augmentations, upgrading of regional interconnectors or new interconnectors.</p> <p>The initiative could help build national infrastructure through projects such as making North West Queensland Australia's “next Pilbara” – opening a new wealth-generating mining province and bringing the wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal resources of the region to the national network. A re-elected Gillard Labor Government will also establish a new \$100 million Renewable Energy Venture Capital Fund for renewable energy projects.</p>		
Do you support the introduction of a price on carbon?		
<p>Warren Entsch (LNP)</p> <p>I support direct action on climate change to reduce Australian CO2 emissions by five per cent by 2020.</p> <p>Labor’s Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) will increase the cost of living, put greater pressure on the household budgets of Australian families, penalise industry, and cost jobs, without delivering commensurate environmental benefits.</p> <p>Labor’s ETS will also create a system of quasi-property rights that will be hard to amend or abolish should the understanding of these issues change or the best treatment of them be altered by new global agreements.</p>		
<p>Steve Lane (Ind.)</p> <p>Massive waster of taxpayers money. Efficiency can be created without punitive taxations.</p>		NO
<p>Jen Sackley (Ind.)</p> <p>Future Option/needs more discussion</p>		NO
<p>Neville St John-Wood (Greens)</p> <p>Large emitters must take responsibility and reduce carbon output. We should not have to pay for them to do so.</p>	YES	
<p>Jim Turnour (ALP)</p> <p>We are committed to building the deep and lasting consensus that is needed for a price on carbon. The Prime Minister has stated that we need to put a cap on carbon pollution, we need a market based mechanism to do that and that she will lead the national debate to take us there and get the community consensus to do it. We have announced an incentive for business to take early action to reduce pollution, ahead of a market mechanism to price carbon.</p>		
Do you support regional investment in sustainable transport over investment in road		

Infrastructure?		
<p>Warren Entsch (LNP)</p> <p>I don't support one over the other, considerations need to be given for a range of issues including cost/benefit and at the end of the day there should be a balance of and a blend of both sustainable transport and road infrastructure</p>		NO
<p>Steve Lane (Ind.)</p>		NO
<p>Jen Sackley (Ind.)</p> <p>Comments: We need Transport & we need NO STRAIGHT INFRASTRUCTURE before we close it down (road).</p>	YES	NO
<p>Neville St John-Wood (Greens)</p>	YES	
<p>Jim Turnour (ALP)</p> <p>In the 2009-10 Federal Budget, Federal Labor took the historic decision to become the first-ever national government to significantly invest in public transport, allocating some \$4.5billion to new urban rail infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Once built, this public transport infrastructure will provide the residents of our major cities with a cleaner, greener and faster way of getting around.</p> <p>This decision is not about replacing the role of State and Territory Governments - it's designed to complement the record investment they're already making from their own budgets.</p> <p>In contrast, the former Coalition Government did nothing to improve public transport infrastructure during their almost 12 years in Government.</p> <p>The Gillard Labor Government is delivering record funding to improve and build new bike paths across our cities. We have funded the first ever federal National Bike Paths program, which is delivering \$40 million worth of new and extended bike paths across the country.</p> <p>Over 170 bike path projects are underway as part of this program. They are not only taking cars off our roads and delivering safe, sustainable ways for Australians to commute and exercise, they are also supporting nearly 1,900 local jobs and traineeships during construction.</p> <p>For example, in Queensland, the Hervey Bay Links Corridor will extend existing paths and link recreational areas with the CBD of Hervey Bay, while supporting 33 local jobs during construction.</p>		
<p>BIODIVERSITY</p>	YES	NO
<p>Do you support the creation of a national network of climate-specific habitat refuges to protect species at risk from climate change impacts?</p>		
<p>Yodie Batzke (Ind.) <i>(Provided only a general comment on the subject of Biodiversity)</i></p> <p>Biodiversity: the arguments for and against climate change is a contentious topic and yet the general public are under the illusion our aging environment and loss of plant or animal life are the victims of</p>		

<p>'climate change'. It is also important that the definition of such words as 'inappropriate' be clearly defined as current Commonwealth and State Act's or legislative processes have a different meaning of this word. To also include sustainable management of dugong and turtle under the heading of 'biodiversity' is misleading. This was a word commonly used in processes relating to Regional Forestry Argeements over 14 years. It is important that any future sustatinable management of sea marine life be driven by the Indigenous community through consent and engagement without inteference of a national regime dictated by Government.</p>		
<p>Warren Entsch (LNP)</p> <p>CAFNEC has been missing in action when it comes to raising issues regarding the appalling lack of resources and management on existing national parks, this issue needs to be addressed. My support for additional parks is conditional on Governments preparing a comprehensive management plan and providing long term appropriate funding for that plan.</p>		
<p>Steve Lane (Ind.)</p>		NO
<p>Jen Sackley (Ind.)</p> <p>No because we interfer with their natural paths – need to increase education/awareness T.V. Etc</p>		NO
<p>Neville St John-Wood (Greens)</p>	YES	
<p>Jim Turnour (ALP)</p> <p>A re-elected Gillard Labor Government will invest \$10 million to build the resilience of our environment to climate change.</p> <p>Federal Labor will work with the 56 regional natural resource management groups to develop a National Green Corridors Plan to prepare our native plants and animals, as well as our agricultural landscapes for climate change.</p> <p>In its first term, Federal Labor has established Caring for our Country as an ongoing program designed to make real environmental improvements to the landscape. By emphasising the importance of climate change adaptation, this announcement represents the next stage in this reform program and it will guide future investments under Caring for our Country in an era of a changing climate.</p> <p>Through the National Reserve System program, Federal Labor has quadrupled investment in acquiring new areas as national parks and reserves – critical reservoirs of biodiversity. Since coming to Government we have added 3.4 million hectares to Australia’s conservation estate, including the two million hectare Warddeken and Djelk Indigenous Protected Areas in Arnhem Land.</p>		
<p>Do you support buying back land at Ella Bay and False Cape to protect these areas from inappropriate development?</p>		
<p>Warren Entsch (LNP)</p>		NO
<p>Steve Lane (Ind.)</p>		NO
<p>Jen Sackley (Ind.)</p> <p>Please specify what is inappropriate.</p>		NO
<p>Neville St John-Wood (Greens)</p>	YES	
<p>Jim Turnour (ALP)</p>		

<p>Federal Labor has set the bar high on environmental regulation, enabling ecologically sustainable development while protecting our threatened species and ecosystems. We have made important environmental assessment decisions, protecting the cassowaries of Mission Beach, protecting threatened species in the Mary River, emergency National Heritage listing Tasmania's Tarkine, and protecting threatened species from inappropriate development in Melbourne's growth corridor while allowing new suburbs to be built. Since coming to office, Federal Labor has listed for protection a dozen threatened ecological communities, covering an estimated one million hectares.</p> <p>Any proposal likely to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance, as defined under the EPBC Act, will require assessment by the Federal Environment Department and Minister.</p>		
<p>Do you support continued investment in Indigenous land and sea management including dugong and turtle management?</p>		
<p>Warren Entsch (LNP)</p> <p>Again, CAFNEC actions in the area at best have been abysmal and it would appear to me that they have only come on board after people like Colin Riddell and myself have championed these issues. I have been more vocal & committed to this issue than CAFNEC.</p>	YES	
<p>Steve Lane (Ind.)</p>	YES	
<p>Jen Sackley (Ind.)</p> <p>Why is this not managed by the locals themselves.</p>		NO
<p>Neville St John-Wood (Greens)</p>	YES	
<p>Jim Turnour (ALP)</p> <p>More Indigenous rangers</p> <p>By the end of 2010, around 600 Indigenous rangers are expected to be employed through Working on Country in regional and remote communities across Australia.</p> <p>This will far exceed Federal Labor's 2007 election commitment of 300 new ranger positions. This \$90 million program has expanded because it is making a real difference to Indigenous wellbeing.</p> <p>The \$50 million Indigenous Protected Area program also supports Indigenous landowners to develop, declare and manage Indigenous Protected Areas on their lands.</p> <p>The program respects and contributes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's management of these lands. It helps communities to develop skills, maintain connection to culture through the transmission of culture via elders, and supports landowners to develop co-operative arrangements with government agencies to help manage protected areas.</p> <p>Today there are 37 declared Indigenous Protected Areas found all over Australia, covering more than 23 million hectares.</p> <p>Both the Indigenous Ranger and Indigenous Protected Areas programs provide opportunities for Indigenous people to maintain connections with the country and at the same time deliver important environmental outcomes for their land and the nation as a whole.</p> <p>Only Federal Labor is committed to working proactively with indigenous people to stamp out illegal hunting of turtle and dugong and is getting results through investment in compliance, management plans and rangers.</p>		

Do you support the concept of a very large, world-class, highly protected marine park in the Coral Sea that will provide a safe haven for marine life and recognise its historic significance?		
<p>Warren Entsch (LNP)</p> <p>CAFNEC's reliance on funding from the PEW foundation compromises your position on this issue. I support responsible conservation coupled with sustainable utilization of the resource.</p>		
<p>Steve Lane (Ind.)</p>		NO
<p>Jen Sackley (Ind.)</p> <p>I support the local Fish Industry</p>		NO
<p>Neville St John-Wood (Greens)</p> <p>We need this so our depleted stocks of marine life can breed in a safe haven</p>	YES	
<p>Jim Turnour (ALP)</p> <p>Federal Labor understands that we need our oceans to be healthy if they are to keep providing us with fish to eat, a place to drop a line, a base for sustainable tourism and of course, a place to relax, unwind and be inspired.</p> <p>As Australia has the third largest marine estate of any nation, we have a responsibility to manage it well.</p> <p>There will always be great opportunities for fishing both now and in the future through our balanced marine planning process.</p> <p>We will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue a thorough and balanced consultation process with stakeholders and the wider community to establish a shared vision for ocean health, ocean use and ocean protection, and the identification of new economic opportunities. 2. Establish a representative network of marine parks by 2012, protecting key areas in Federal waters, right around the country. 3. Use a scientifically driven process that determines the location and size of marine parks. 4. Provide the highest level of conservation protection for the most sensitive and special areas. 5. Continue to allow sustainable fishing in other areas that will benefit from the healthy fish stocks that the marine park network supports. 6. Release within three months of the election a draft plan for the South West Marine Bioregion, which extends from Kangaroo Island in South Australia to Kalbarri in Western Australia. 7. Provide an appropriate program budget to support the marine bioregional planning program nationally, including: 		

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistance for displaced activities - a Federal policy to provide fair and reasonable assistance to those industries affected by greater marine protection will be released within the first three months of the next term of government. 2. Funding for management, enforcement and education - the necessary resources for the effective management of marine protected areas and shore based community programs. 8. Finalise the National Network of Whale and Dolphin Sanctuaries Federal Labor has been developing in collaboration with State Governments. 		
SUSTAINABLE POPULATION	YES	NO
Do you believe that water conservation and efficiency measures should be implemented prior to sourcing additional water supplies for the region (such as the use of the Mulgrave aquifer)?		
<p>Yodie Batzke (Ind.)</p> <p>Sustainable population: this terminology is very misleading as a sustainable population attempts to address the population growth or our nation. The basic needs of water, agriculture and ecosystems maybe at a different level of heirarchical needs of individuals when in reality the current issues surrounding sustainable population is trying to address our future physical needs in the future. We have a current aging population. Our baby boomers may not have the support our current age care recipients are receiving if a proactive approach in increasing our population is not addressed. No population growth means our older are getting older and our younger population is getting less - who will be here to support the aging if we have noone willing to work and pay tax.</p>		
<p>Warren Entsch (LNP)</p>	YES	
<p>Steve Lane (Ind.)</p> <p>There are already sufficient in place.</p>		NO
<p>Jen Sackley (Ind.)</p> <p>Mulgrave aquifer)?</p> <p>Comments: <i>Within Reason But SO hard we hinder Development we are the best Tropics (Build some dams)</i></p>	YES	NO
<p>Neville St John-Wood (Greens)</p>	YES	
<p>Jim Turnour (ALP)</p> <p>Water conservation and efficiency measures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Investing in local water conservation and water security projects is part of Federal Labor's commitment to supporting a sustainable Australia. 2. So far Federal Labor has invested in over 170 urban water projects– including stormwater, desalination and recycling – that are helping prepare Australia for a future with less water. 3. Federal Labor is also helping households to conserve water through our National Rainwater and Greywater initiative, and by supporting the national Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme for household appliances. 		

<p>4. A re-elected Gillard Labor Government will continue to support communities around Australia to conserve water and reduce reliance on traditional rain-fed water supplies.</p>		
<p>Would you provide support for agricultural sectors to implement sustainable agricultural practices?</p>		
<p>Warren Entsch (LNP)</p>	<p>YES</p>	
<p>Steve Lane (Ind.) Not necessary, this matter is already being dealt with.</p>		<p>NO</p>
<p>Jen Sackley (Ind.) Comments: <i>within reason (thought some of these messages are happening)</i></p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Neville St John-Wood (Greens)</p>	<p>YES</p>	
<p>Jim Turnour (ALP)</p> <p>Federal Labor has committed \$200 million through the Reef Rescue program to improve the health of the Reef. The program has a clear objective of achieving, by 2013, a measurable reduction in the amount of nutrients, sediments and chemicals entering the Reef lagoon.</p> <p>To date the Australian Government has already approved \$144 million in Reef Rescue projects that together will improve the management and the quality of water entering the Great Barrier Reef lagoon. Over 1,400 farmers are currently undertaking or have completed works to improve water quality. Over the next 3 years we expect more than 1,800 additional farmers and graziers to continue this important work</p> <p>Locally more than \$10 million dollars is committed to support farmers of over the next few years adopt sustainable farming practices as a result of Reef Rescue.</p> <p>As the end of the current funding commitment approaches in 2013, Federal Labor will review the results achieved and consider additional funding as necessary.</p> <p>The Gillard Labor Government is helping our farmers prepare for climate change and support jobs and future productivity. More than 10,000 Australian farmers and 67 industry organisations have taken up FarmReady training grants which boost training opportunities for farmers and Indigenous land managers and enable farming and natural resource management groups to adapt and respond to the impacts of climate change.</p>		

Through Federal Labor's *Australia's Farming Future* initiative and our research partners, more than \$130million has been provided under a Climate Change Research Program into areas including soil carbon, biochar, reducing livestock emissions and nitrous oxide emissions. This includes \$46 million from the Government and \$84 million leveraged through research partners.

We have also provided \$70 million for the CSIRO's Sustainable Agricultural National Research Flagship.

We are investing in local projects through Landcare and Caring for our Country to help communities improve the productivity of farming land and support a healthy environment. The Gillard Labor Government has invested over \$80 million on 630Landcare projects across the country, and we allocated an extra \$15 million for Caring for our Country in the 2010-11 Budget, for projects to be delivered over up to three years.

The increased funding reflects the Gillard Labor Government's strong support for Landcare and the 100,000 volunteers carrying out vital work in communities across the nation.

Federal Labor has also invested more than \$45 million in Environmental Stewardship, which provides payments to farmers to protect high value native vegetation on their land.

Federal Labor has provided more than \$1.3 billion to local, regional and nationally significant projects through Caring for our Country, including targeting weeds and pests such as lantana and rabbits, protecting sensitive wetlands, improving farmland productivity and investing in the health of the Great Barrier Reef.

We are also supporting grassroots community groups with more than \$15million announced in 2010-11 for small grants to support local priorities including in coastal rehabilitation, sustainable farming and Indigenous partnerships.

Carbon farming initiative

The Gillard Labor Government is investing \$45.6 million through the carbon farming initiative to provide new opportunities for Australian farmers and landholders to participate in lucrative international markets for carbon credits.

For the first time, the Federal Government will help facilitate the sale of carbon credits on domestic and international markets to ensure Australian farmers and landholders can take advantage of the opportunities available.

Farmers who help reduce and store pollution will receive credits that can be sold in Australia and overseas under a Carbon Farming Initiative to be set up by the Gillard Labor Government.

Tapping into these existing markets will give farmers and landholders the ability to find the best price available on the market for their carbon credits.

This initiative is fiscally responsible as the market will choose the most efficient and cost effective ways to reduce pollution and pay for it, rather than the Government picking winners and forcing taxpayers to bear the cost.

Farmers and landholders will benefit form a new income stream, and the environment will benefit from reduced pollution.

Would you ensure that water management provides sufficient environmental flows to support ecosystem health?

Warren Entsch (LNP)	YES	
Steve Lane (Ind.) Of course water management must include use of water for man and nature.	YES	
Jen Sackley (Ind.) What is Environmental Flow -		NO
Neville St John-Wood (Greens) These are our marine nurseries, keep them flowing.	YES	
Jim Turnour (ALP) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Gillard Labor Government knows that we have to reduce the amount of water we take from our rivers and help restore the Murray Darling Basin's rivers, wetlands and floodplains to health. The fastest way to do this is by purchasing water from willing sellers. 2. That's why, under Federal Labor's <i>Water for the Future</i> plan, we have committed to purchasing water to put back into the Basin's rivers. To date, our water purchase initiatives under the <i>Restoring the Balance in the Murray-Darling Basin</i> program have secured the purchase of over 900 billion litres of water entitlements worth nearly \$1.4 billion. <p>The Gillard Labor Government will build on its strong record of making our rivers sustainable and will provide certainty for farmers reliant on the Murray Darling Basin.</p> <p>By the time the Murray Darling Basin Plan comes into effect in 2014, a re-elected Gillard Labor Government will have returned one out of every seven litres of irrigation water to the rivers, through a combination of buy backs and more efficient irrigation.</p> <p>If re-elected, we will bridge any remaining gap between what has been returned and what is required to be returned by the independent Murray Darling Basin Authority.</p> <p>The Gillard Labor Government will do this by continuing to buy back water each year beyond 2014, until we have returned all the water the Authority determines our rivers need in the final Basin plan next year. We will do this consistent with the historical rate of purchase under this Government.</p> <p>Any buy backs will be subject to the availability of water for purchase from willing sellers.</p> <p>For too long, too much water has been taken out of our rivers, leaving them parched.</p> <p>The Liberal-National Coalition under Tony Abbott has said that returning water to the rivers is nothing more than "theft" from farmers.</p> <p>Over nearly 12 years in government, the Coalition did not buy a single drop of water for the Murray.</p>		