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THE AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDA

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Vote for the Environment

The green vote may well determine the result of the Federal Election on March 24. Your vote will not only decide who is in government but will also affect the future of our environment.



All Illustrations by Mark Evans

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- ▲ Your Vote ACF Election Policy
- Questionnaire: how the parties scored
- ▲ The Parties, The Issues, The Policies

The ACF believes that this election is an important opportunity to show our political parties that being environmentally responsible is not just a matter of image and rhetoric but a question of commitment to clear strong policies which will give Australia an ecologically sustainable future.

To determine its position on this election the ACF has conducted a careful and comprehensive evaluation of the parties. This broadsheet presents the results of our evaluation and offers a guide on how to Vote for the Environment on 24th March.

ACF supports Democrats, Greens

On the basis of the questionnaire results and a careful examination of policies and records for each party the ACF has decided to support the Australian Democrats, the Western Australian Greens and the United Tasmania Group (UTG) in the House of Representatives and the Senate. [The UTG, of which Bob Brown is a member, established one of the world's first green parties.]

Preferences to Labor Party

The ACF also recommends that the Labor Party receive your next preference.

This decision was taken because on key environmental areas there are critical differences between the two major parties. They include Kakadu, the continuing Commonwealth management of Uluru, enrichment of uranium, land use planning of Cape York, protection and listing of the National Estate, the integrity of National Parks, and the Federal government's willingness to use its powers to protect Australia's environment, even in the face of State opposition.

THE PARTIES, THE ISSUES, THE POLICIES

The following is a synopsis of the positions of the major parties taken from the ACF questionairre, policy documents and verifiable media comment by party spokespersons.

Given that the Australian Democrats, the Jo Vallentine Greens, the Irina Dunn Greens and the United Tasmania Group supported all of the questions put to them, we have concentrated almost exclusively on the positions, records and differences between the ALP and the Coalition.

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY



All parties support an international Blodiversity Convention. In answer to our call for a major increase in funding for comprehensive biological survey of Australia to be completed by the year 2000, both the ALP and the Coalition agreed, subject to funding being available in order to achieve the target date.

ALP: Will produce a national strategy which guarantees protection of all Australia's species of flora and fauna. They will spend \$4 million over first two years of 10 year program.

COALITION: Will establish Endangered Species Unit to identify endangered species and threatened habitats. "We will encourage States and Territories to explicitly ban, by legislations, any logging and mining in our system of proposed Priority National Parks" (Senator Puplick, 2nd March, 1990). A

GENETIC ENGINEERING

DEMOCRATS: Support regulations to control genetic engineering and abolition of the right to patent all genetic material, including plants and animals.

ALP: Undecided on these issues pending a Parliamentary Inquiry.

COALITION: Supports the need for uniform national regulations on genetically engineered organisms, but will allow the patenting of genetically engineered plants and animals.

AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

Both ALP and Coalition have agreed to maintain the autonomy of, and increase funding to, the Australian Heritage Commission. Whilst the ALP expressly rejects economic criteria being attached to National Estate listings, the Coalition does not.

ANTARCTICA

Both the ALP and the Coalition support the declaration of Antarctica as a wilderness park, opposing any mining or similar activity there, and will work to persuade other treaty parties to support the declaration.

NATIONAL PARKS



ALP: Opposes mining, mineral exploration, grazing and logging as well as inappropriate tourist development in all National Parks where such activity would adversely affect the prime function of the park. Will not excise any areas to allow such activities.

The ALP will undertake comprehensive land use planning for Cape York Peninsula that gives high priority to key conservation and Aboriginal areas, and institute a moratorium on all major developments. The Coalition opposes this.

COALITION: Will introduce the grading of National Parks. They assert that States have prime responsibility for the creation and management of National Parks, but "by agreement" with the states, the

Coalition will establish a system of Priority National Parks of critical importance in preserving generic diversity. Logging, mining and other inappropriate activities will be banned from these parks. The question of exploration or mining in other national parks is to be determined by each State. They would transfer management of Uluru and Kakadu National Parks to the NT

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KAKADU



ALP: Have extended Kakadu National Park to take in 98% of the Conservation (mining exploration) Zone, and withheld approval for Coronation Hill and El Sherana mine prospects pending a Resource Assessment Commission inquiry. They will nominate Stage 3 for World Heritage listing. COALITION: Opposed the recent inclusion of the Conservation (mining exploration) Zone into the Kakadu National Park. They would allow the Coronation Hill mining project to go ahead immediately, and would allow exploration over both the areas of Stage 3 and Stage 2 of the Park, though they state that they would not allow mining production in Stage 2.

WORLD HERITAGE



ALP: During this past term in government the Labor party has successfully nominated the tropical rainforests of north Queensland and an expanded area of south-west Tasmania (including large tracts of tall forests) to the World Heritage List. It enacted the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act, and amended it in 1988, to protect all World Heritage areas. (The Coalition voted against this legislation.) Labor will continue to ban any activity which threatens the World Heritage values of any place inscribed on World Heritage List. Supports Shark Bay WA nomination. Will maintain or increase existing boundaries of World Heritage areas.

COALITION: Will not propose sites for World Heritage Listing without the co-operation of the states. Will not maintain and enhance the powers of the Commonwealth to protect World Heritage areas under the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act. "Any sites proposed for further consideration will be evaluated by a joint Commonwealth-State study and an early decision made about their future in relation to World Heritage Listing" (Environment Policy, February 1990), Will maintain or increase existing boundaries of the World Heritage areas.

ABORIGINAL ISSUES

ALP: Supports the Commonwealth's primary responsibility for land rights in the Northern Territory, and Aboriginal ownership of Uluru and Kakadu National Parks.

COALITION: Would hand over Commonwealth's primary responsibility for land rights in the Northern Territory to the NT Government. They opposed Aboriginal ownership of Uluru National park, and would transfer control of Uluru and Kakadu from ANPWS to the NT Government.

TROPICAL RAINFORESTS

Both the ALP and the Coalition are undecided about the use of rainforest derived wood products in Federal Government activities or banning the import of all tropical timbers, except those derived from long-term sustainable harvesting of non-primary forests or plantations. Both oppose multi-lateral development agency funding for projects destroying tropical forests and the use of Australian foreign aid for such purposes.

FORESTS



Here the differences between the parties are substantial because of their differing views on the role of Commonwealth intervention in State control of forestry activity. The ALP has been prepared to use its export licence decisions and World Heritage powers to pressure states to modify forestry plans, especially with respect to National Estate listed forests. The Coalition rejects using available Commonwealth powers in the national interest to override state plans to log forests in the National Estate. Both major parties are committed to a national forest management strategy.

COALITION supports a phase out of large scale clear felling in native forests, whilst the ALP remains undecided. Both give qualified support for a move to eucalypt hardwood plantations. The ALP is undecided. Both give qualified support for a move to eucalypt hardwood plantations. The ALP is

committed to the identification and protection of forests with high conservation value. The Coalition offers only qualified support for that proposition.

The ALP also says it will use the Trading Incorporations head of power in the constitution to expand its control over the protection of National Estate forests. It has not done so to date. In addition, they have provided a qualified yes to the phase out of export wood chipping in 1995, whereas the Coalition has said no to each of those propositions.

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URANIUM MINING



A critical difference between the two parties was found in their uranium policies.

ALP: On the issue of licensing any new uranium mines, the ALP is undecided pending a review of its policy. Labor rejects the option of developing a nuclear industry in Australia, including uranium enrichment.

COALITION: Will give the Northern Territory government full powers over NT uranium mining according to Senator Bronwyn Bishop, Coalition Federal Affairs spokesperson (NTNews, 19th January, 1990). Coalition will approve the licensing of new uranium mines, including Koongarra and Jabiluka (Peacock, 28th February, 1990), subject to adequate environmental controls and strict international

safeguards. National party support the establishment of a uranium enrichment industry for Australia.

The Coalition opposes the re-incorporation of Koongarra and Jabiluka uranium deposits into the Kakadu National Park, whilst the ALP is undecided on the issue, pending the outcome of their uranium policy review.

DEMOCRAT: All existing uranium mines will be closed immediately; no new uranium licences will be granted; and the export of uranium will be prohibited. ▲

GREENHOUSE

Both ALP and Coalition have offered qualified support for a 20% reduction in Greenhouse gas emissions by the turn of the century and 50% by 2015. ALP offers support for a National Energy Efficiency strategy based on 'least cost' principles, whereas the Coalition support is qualified by their unwillingness to be limited by those principles.

POLLUTION ISSUES

Both parties will investigate the options for the development of a 20 year Environment Plan and conduct a toxic hazardous waste audit to assess waste production and disposal in Australia.

ALP: Has offered qualified support for the establishment of a Federal Environmental Protection Agency whilst the Coalition opposes this.

CONSTITUTION AND LEGAL ISSUES

The parties were asked to promote increased Commonwealth powers to protect the environment over a range of areas, including pollution and degradation of land, air or water; the use of nuclear materials; and protection of nationally or internationally significant areas and of endangered species.

ALP: Agreed. In addition it has been prepared to use Commonwealth powers to protect some National Estate areas, and International Treaty powers to protect World Heritage areas. It would consider a referendum addressing the constitutional powers of the Commonwealth over the environment. It has used Foreign Investment Review Board powers to protect Shelburne Bay in Queensland. The ALP was also prepared to use these powers to protect the Wet Tropics and Daintree Rainforest in Queensland, and to stop the Franklin Dam.

The ALP, using its foreign investment review powers, would subject the proposal for the CRA coal fired power station in the proposed Mt Lesueur National Park, in WA, to rigorous environmental tests.

COALITION: Gave qualified support for increased powers arguing that the Commonwealth already has the capacity to act. They do not oppose the 'proper exercise' of such powers, but do not clarify this. They reject 'improper' use of the external affairs powers of the constitution to interfere with land use decisions of the states. The National Party has stated that it "will not use the Commonwealth's external affairs power to override state sovereignty in ... (any) regard" (Election '90 Policy Statement). The Coalition has said that it will not seek to intervene on the Mt Lesueur proposal, and indeed has plans to dismantle the Commonwealth Foreign Investment Review Board proposals, which have direct bearing on other high conservation areas such as Shelburne Bay silica sands.

DEMOCRAT: Supports Constitutional referendum to give the Commonwealth greater powers over environmental matters.

LAND DEGRADATION



There has been a pleasing bi-partisan recognition that land degradation must be urgently addressed. The ALP's Landcare initiative for \$320 million over the next decade is supported by the Coalition who have promised an additional \$23 million for the first year. A major concern, however, is the National Party commitment to re-introducing Drought Relief which in many instances exacerbates land degradation problems.

Unless specified otherwise, all text written and authorised by Phillip Toyne, 340 Gore Street, Fitzroy, 3065.

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Your ENVIRONMENT VOTE

What the Australian Conservation Foundation says

deciding the future of our environment.

As a national environment organisation, the ACF has long been involved in the process of public education and working to persuade politicians of all parties to take the decisions needed to give us a healthy environment. An election is a major part of this process. It offers an important opportunity to influence those who seek to govern us. It is also the time when politicians and parties are most willing to comply with the wishes of the people.

ENVIRONMENT A KEY ISSUE

It has been a long struggle to see environmental issues take their rightful place on the political agenda. Now we have succeeded. Polling by political parties and others shows that environment is one of the top three issues for voters in this election. For some age groups it is number one.

Hence the Foundation believes it must play a vigorous role in the election. With The Wilderness Society we sent extensive questionnaires on environmental issues to all the major parties as well as green parliamentary groups. The ACF's questions are based on the principles for an ecologically sustainable society adopted in our Master Plan.

A total of 93 questions from ACF were put to the parties. Of these we identified 36 as being priority issues. These priority questions and a summary of the answers received are reproduced on this page. Graphs showing how the parties scored on both the full list and the priority questions are also provided. Also included in this broadsheet is a comparison of the policies and records of the

ACF ENDORSES DEMOCRATS AND GREENS

On the basis of the questionnaire results and a careful exami-share common ground: a wilderness park for Antarctica, reduc-

In the March 24 Federal election, your vote will be vital in nation of policies and records for each party, the ACF has decided to support the Australian Democrats and the Western Australian Greens and the United Tasmania Group (UTG). The UTG, of which Bob Brown is a member, formed the world's first Green

Only the Australian Democrats and some other environmental candidates, we believe, have fully recognised the urgency of the environmental crisis and the need for vastly increased commitments to the environment and its repair. For instance, the Australian Democrats and other environmental candidates are the only groups which have recognised the need for the TOTAL protection of Kakadu. They scored perfectly on the questionnaire and in the analysis of the parties' records and policies.

Therefore, the ACF believes that the Australian Democrats, and the WA and Tasmanian green parties, should receive your first preference in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

LABOR PARTY RECEIVES PREFERENCES

The ACF also recommends that the Labor Party receive your next preference in the House of Representatives and the Senate. This decision was taken because a comparison of policies,

records and questionnaire results shows major differences between the ALP and the Coalition.

There are key environmental areas where the two major parties have critical differences. They include Kakadu, the continuing Commonwealth management of Uluru, enrichment of uranium, land use planning of Cape York, protection and listing of the National Estate, the integrity of National Parks, and the Federal government's willingness to use its powers to protect Australia's environment, even in the face of State opposition.

On some other issues the ALP and the Coalition's policies

Aust.

Demo-

crats

Yes

tion of greenhouse gases, support for an international biodiversity convention and land degradation (though the Coalition has promised money for drought relief which is acknowledged as major factor in degrading the land) and commitment to a wilderness inventory. Both the Foundation and the Wilderness Society acknowledge that the Coalition has made progress in responding to environmental issues. But they do not go far enough.

FEDERAL POWERS IMPORTANT

The Federal powers issue is of particular importance. Our national government must be prepared, where necessary, to use its powers to protect Australia's environment. It was this which saved the Franklin River, protected the Daintree rainforests and the Shelburne Bay wilderness, and demanded strong pollution controls over the Wesley Vale pulp mill proposal in Tasmania.

The Coalition's position on such intervention is vague and unconvincing. It appears that "states rights" continues to be central. to the philosophy of the Coalition, particularly the National Party.

VOTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

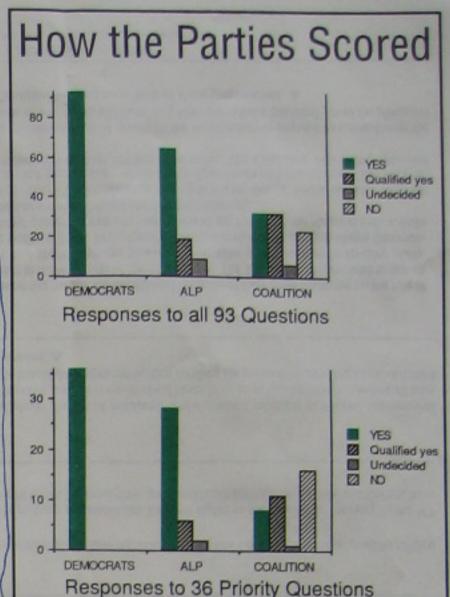
The ACF election position has not been taken lightly. It is the result of extensive research, analysis and discussion as well as the questionnaire results. It was unanimously endorsed by the ACF executive and strongly supported by a ballot of ACF Councillors. The aim of this broadsheet it to provide you with the information which led us to our decision. I hope you will study it carefully and work with us to protect the environment.

I urge you to support our position and Vote for the Environment on March 24.

Peter Garrett President, Australian Conservation Foundation

LAND DEGRADATION

MINING



A.Dem.

Yes

Labor

Yes

Yes

Yes but

qualified

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Lib/Nat

Yes

No

No

No

Yes

No

Yes

Yes but

qualified

Yes but

qualified

Yes but

qualified

No

qualified

WHERE THE PARTIES STA **Environment Questionnaire**

In the life of the next Parliament, will your Party:

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

- ▲ Give a major increase in funding for a comprehensive biological survey of Australia to be completed by 2000?
- A Provide an annual report to Parliament on the state of the Australian environment, including the major threats to its protection and necessary measures to counteract these threats?
- Produce a national strategy which guarantees protection of all Australia's species of flora and fauna, using currently available Commonwealth powers?

AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

A Exclude economic criteria from the evaluation of National Estate listings by

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes but

qualified

Yes

Aust.

Labor

Party

Yes

Yes

Yes

No

No

No

No

Yes

Yes

No

No

Yes

Liberal /

National

Parties

Yes but

qualified

Yes

Yes but

qualified

for Australia along the lines of that done by the Netherlands Government? CONSTITUTIONAL, GOVERNMENT & LEGAL ARRANGEMENTS

▲ Maintain funding, at the current level, of the National Land Management Pro-

gramme/National Soil Conservation Programme for each year of the next

A Reject the option of developing a nuclear industry in Australia, including

▲ Establish a Federal Environment Protection Agency reporting to the Environ-

ment Minister, to be responsible for the setting and implementation of effective

▲ Investigate the options for the development of a 20 year Environment Plan

▲ Legislate, using the trading incorporations power, to regulate the activities of companies prejudicial to the protection of areas of Australia of national or international significance?

▲ Retain the environment portfolio within inner Cabinet?

A Refuse licensing of any new uranium mines?

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

national environmental standards?

enrichment, storage of nuclear waste and reprocessing?

Promote the case for the Commonwealth to be given increased powers to make laws with respect to:

▲ The discharge of substances onto land, air or water, affecting more than one state or territory?

▲ The prevention of land, air or water degradation affecting more than one state or territory?

▲ The use of nuclear fuels, nuclear energy and ionising radiation?

▲ The protection of areas of Australia of national & international significance?

▲ The protection of a species of flora and fauna from extinction?

GREENHOUSE EFFECT AND OZONE DEPLETIONS

▲ Legislate for the regulation, monitoring and control necessary to achieve a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2000 and a 50% reduction by 2015?

▲ Provide significant Commonwealth funding for urban public transport modernisation and expansion through development of a Federal Urban Public Transport Trust Fund, based on a 1.5 cent/litre petrol surcharge?

▲ Undertake a comprehensive assessment of Australia's national rail infrastructure, including equalisation of land transport modal pricing policies to redress the bias against rail?

 Develop a national energy efficiency strategy based on least cost planning principles?

 Establish a Commonwealth Commission of Inquiry under the Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act, into the Very Fast Train proposal and alternative high speed rail options?

ABORIGINAL ISSUES

- Support the Commonwealth's primary responsibility for land rights in the Northern Territory?
- ownership and management of National Parks and conservation areas and maximise their involvement in nature conservation?

Yes	Yes	No		
Yes	Yes but qualified	Yes but qualified		
Yes	Yes	No		
Yes	Yes	?		
Yes	Yes	Yes but qualified		
	Van but	Van hut		

▲ Take all actions necessary to involve Aboriginal communities in the

Yes	Yes	No		
Yes	Yes	Yes but qualified		

qualified

the Australian Heritage Commission?

NATIONAL PARKS & WILDERNESS AREAS

- ▲ Undertake comprehensive land use planning for Cape York Peninsula that gives high priority to protection of key conservation and wilderness areas and areas of significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Institute a moratorium on all major developments including the proposed spaceport, until the land use plan is completed?
- Maintain Uluru National Park and Kakadu National Park under the management of Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service?
- ▲ Use all powers necessary to protect Shelburne Bay wilderness area from mining and inappropriate development?

ANTARCTICA

Support the declaration of the Antarctic as a wilderness park and work to persuade other treaty parties to support the declaration.

WORLD HERITAGE ▲ Prevent mining, mineral exploration, dam building and inappropriate roading and tourist development in World Heritage areas?

Maintain and enhance the powers of the Commonwealth to protect World Heritage areas under the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act?

Support the inclusion of all the Kakadu 'Conservation/Exploration' Zone in

the Kakadu National Park?

TROPICAL RAINFORESTS

Lensure Australia's foreign aid is not used for the destruction of tropical FORESTRY

Establish a national forest management strategy based on the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management including:

▲ The phase-out of large scale clear-felling in native forests?

Lestablishing sufficient hardwood plantations on cleared land to provide the bulk of hardwood in the future?

parsume at other forests of high conservation va	luc?
Using available Commonwealth powers in the national interest to over- ate plans to log the forests in the National Estate?	ride
Phase-out of export woodchipping by 1995?	

Yes	?	Yes
Yes	Yes but qualified	Yes but qualified
Yes	Yes	Yes but qualified
Yes	Yes	No
Yes	Yes but qualified	No

SENATE	Vote 2 Aust. Labor Party	Vote 2 Aust. Labor Party	Vote 1 The Greens (WA) Vote 2 Aust. Democrats Vote 3 Aust. Labor Party	Vote 1 Aust. Labor Party	NEW SOUTH WALES Electorate: Eden Monaro Vote 1 Jim Collins Vote 2 Aust. Democrats Vote 3 Aust. Labor Party Other Electorates: Vote 1 Aust. Democrats Vote 2 Aust. Labor Party	A.C.T. Vote 1 Aust, Democrats Vote 2 Aust, Labor Party	TASMANIA Electorate of Denison: Vote 1 United Tas. Group Vote 2 Aust. Democrats Vote 3 Aust Labor Party Electorate of Franklin: Vote 1 Aust. Democrats Vote 2 Aust. Labor Party	Other Electorates Vote 1 United Tas. Group Vote 2 Aust. Democrats Vote 3 Aust. Labor Party
	Vote 1 Aust. Democrats	- ridac Democrats	Vote 1 Jo Vallentine OR Vote 1 Aust. Democrats	Vote 1 Aust. Democrats	Vote 1 Aust. Democrats	Vote 1 Aust. Democrats	Vote 1 United Tas. Group Vote 2 Aust. Democrats	