

Environment Tasmania

Joint Tasmanian Environment Groups' 2010 Environment Policy Agenda

This document outlines the key policy asks of Tasmanian environment groups, for state politicians, candidates and political parties to consider as part for the 2010 state election.

As a broad principle, Tasmanian environment groups are looking for a positive, constructive and proactive approach from ALL Tasmanian politicians, political candidates, and political parties on the environment. We would like to see all politicians & public representatives working to constructively engage with community environment organisations to protect Tasmania's natural environment and build a sustainable and prosperous future for Tasmania.

Conservation & environmental issues have divided Tasmanians for too long. We are looking for politicians and political representatives to take on a positive leadership role in healing the divisions in our community, and building a Tasmania that is united behind a vision of environmental stewardship and sustainable prosperity.

The following are the key environment policy areas & ideas that we would urge politicians, candidates & parties to consider:-



Marine

Our diverse marine environment supports the livelihoods and lifestyles of all Tasmanians. It also supports a vast number of unique and threatened species. In order to secure the future of our marine assets the Tasmanian Government must act quickly to:

1. Implement a public education campaign on the significant values of Tasmania's marine environment and the benefits of marine national parks, in line with the objectives of the Tasmanian Marine Protected Areas Strategy;
2. Establish a scientifically-based, comprehensive, adequate and representative system of marine national parks to protect marine biodiversity and ecosystem processes in Tasmanian state waters, in consultation with local communities and resource users;
3. Substantially increase resources for the management and scientific monitoring of marine national parks across Tasmania to increase their effectiveness;
4. Implement ecosystem based management and increase public research and resources to ensure a holistic, strategic and sustainable future for Tasmanian marine resources and the fishing industries and communities dependant on them;
5. Save Recreational Fishing –improve the general recreational fishing license system and associated monitoring and management program, and ban gillnetting, the most indiscriminate and damaging form of recreational fishing.



Coasts

Tasmania's coasts are some of the world's most remote, pristine and inspiring. They are also vitally important for a high diversity of flora and fauna. It is our responsibility to ensure the natural beauty and ecological health of the Tasmanian coast is maintained and where necessary restored. The coast is highly valued by all Tasmanians and has significant cultural heritage value to Aboriginal Tasmanians. The Tasmanian government should act to:

1. Finalise an updated strengthened state coastal policy and strategy based on ecological principles, that deals with the new threats of climate change, and the issue of coastal population growth. Tasmania needs one consistent coastal policy, with prescriptive planning scheme clauses adopted by all councils;
2. Implement a coastal policy that adopts the precautionary approach in regards to allowable future development in the coastal zone in terms of the latest sea level rise and storm surge predictions;
3. Introduce prescriptive planning regulations which prohibit ribbon development and urban sprawl between defined urban zones;
4. A limitation of infrastructure expansion into unserved coastal development areas unless there are significant environmental benefits & no alternatives;
5. Increase Parks and Wildlife Service funding for coastal protection and management. Upgrade the conservation status of existing coastal reserves and establish management plans for coastal reserves, particularly for activities that have negative impacts on coastal values, (such as off-road vehicle use, dogs in areas where there is important shore-bird habitat and inappropriate fire regimes);
6. Clarify protection of Ralph's Bay and endorse the Tasmanian Planning Commissions draft recommendation to reject the proposed Lauderdale Quay Canal Estate development as well as banning canal estate developments in Tasmania;
7. Include Aquaculture in the Land Use Planning Act; and
8. Conduct rigorous cost benefit analysis of coastal engineering projects (e.g. groynes, barways etc) to fully assess their ecological impact and economic cost.



Forests & Landscapes

Tasmania's native forests provide us with clean air, clean water and are a vital part of safe climate solution. They also act as a crucial storehouse for biodiversity and an irreplaceable part of our natural landscapes & heritage.

It is time for us to heal the rifts in the Tasmanian community by solving the conflict over forestry, creating a secure timber industry that all Tasmanians can be proud of, and creating new opportunities out of the protection & restoration of Tasmania's native forests. The Tasmanian government should act to:

1. Protect Tasmania's high-conservation value forests in dedicated reserves;
2. Solve Tasmania's forest conflict by implementing a transition plan that shifts industrial-scale wood production out of native forests into existing plantations and increase resourcing of restoration projects, that creates an ecologically sustainable timber industry that is economically viable, internationally renowned and one that all Tasmanians can be proud of;
3. Establish sustainable and socially acceptable plantation management;
4. Remove Forestry Tasmania's conflict of interest by re-structuring its role so that its focus is on commercially accountable wood production, and its land management/tourism role is shifted to the proposed Environment agency;
5. Remove native forests from the pulp-mill wood-supply deal;
6. End to land-clearing through native vegetation protection legislation; and
7. Rule out the current proposal for a native forest fed, chlorine bleaching Tamar Valley pulp mill.



National Parks & Reserves

Tasmania's National parks are famous world-wide, but in recent years have been allowed to be run down and neglected. It is time for a change. National Parks generate massive economic benefits for Tasmania. The Tasmanian government should move to give Tasmania's parks & natural environment the pride of place it deserves by:

1. Doubling the core operating budget of the Parks & Wildlife service, for more rangers, staff, conservation research and maintenance costs;
2. Creating a number of iconic new Tasmanian National Parks, including but not limited to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area extensions, the Tarkine, Great Western Tiers, North-East Highlands, and the Bay of Fires (as outlined by ENGOs);
3. Implementing a community-supported strategic tourism plan for the Tarkine that enhances the existing infrastructure, minimizes environmental impact and supports local jobs;
4. Rule out the proposed Tarkine road; and
5. Commit to no commercial development within the boundaries of Tasmania's National Parks.



Matt Newton

Climate Change, Energy & Public Transport

Climate Change is the great environmental and economic challenge of the century. Tasmania is very well placed to take a leading role on climate change. The Tasmanian government should lead locally by:

1. Adopting a clear strategy with timeline to make Tasmania a carbon-neutral economy by 2020, including 100% renewable energy generation by 2020 in Tasmania;
2. Protect native forests and other natural eco-systems as permanent carbon stores;
3. Introduce a premium and substantial gross feed-in Tariff to encourage a rapid take-up of small scale renewable energy generation and associated manufacturing and maintenance jobs in Tasmania;
4. Properly recognize and account for the carbon stored in native vegetation in Tasmania including grasslands, peatlands, and forests, and for the emissions from clearing and logging of native forests;
5. Establish a substantial native vegetation conservation fund for private land, targeting know shortfall in under-reserved vegetation communities and threatened species habitat;
6. Commit to a substantial improvement in Tasmania's public transport systems – by re-directing AT LEAST one third of the more than \$100 million current annual budget allocation for transport in Tasmania towards the planned development of a world-class regional public transport system; and
7. Exclude the burning of native forest and native ecosystem biomass from the accepted sources of renewable energy.



Water, Waste & Sustainable Development

Tasmania's clean natural environment is an inspiration to us all, but needs to be valued and protected. Particularly we need to tackle pollution, waste, build sustainable agriculture, and protect our water. Key measures that need to be taken, include:

1. Commitment to a sustainable long-term agricultural and restoration strategy for Tasmania, with future water use and development to be guided by an Integrated Catchment Management framework (ICM) as well as a comprehensive landscape scale analysis of existing salinity and integrated funding for interlinked landscape scale property management plans based on principles of ecological sustainability;
2. Ban aerial spraying of pesticides in Tasmania, including placing a full ban on the endocrine disrupting triazine group of pesticides that are prohibited in the European Union;
3. Establish an Integrated Catchment Management framework for Tasmania 'Catchments to the Coast', which will protect the water resource for downstream users and ecosystem health, as well as protecting water catchments from pesticide contamination;
4. An ongoing commitment for Tasmania to remain 100% GE Free, with the introduction of mandatory labelling of existing GE-derived products;
5. Develop a number of strategic, regionally based and ecologically sustainable tourism planning frameworks with genuine input from all interested parties; and
6. Establish Container Deposit Legislation and system for Tasmania that includes e-waste and introduce a statewide ban on non-biodegradable plastic bags.



Environmental Governance

There has been a critical erosion of trust in environmental governance processes in Tasmania in recent years, particularly highlighted by the axing of the pulp mill assessment process and the axing of an independent environment agency. It is time for the Tasmanian government to re-build a strong, independent environmental governance system, clean-up inappropriate practices and undue influence, and re-build Tasmanians' confidence in the governance system that manages the protection of our natural environment:

1. Commit to re-establishing and enhancing the core environmental planning and management functions of Tasmania's Resource Management & Planning system, including adequate resources and ensuring environmental planning is ecologically-based and does not include exemptions (forestry, aquaculture etc);
2. Create a stand-alone environment & lands management agency that encompasses all environment related portfolio areas, the management of all public lands, and does not include conflicting resource portfolio areas. The Environment & lands management agency should be supervised by a single Minister with no conflicting portfolio responsibilities;
3. Properly resource the Environment Protection Authority, and broaden its scope to include all environment related policy and review areas, including absorbing the current functions of the Forest Practices Authority under the EPA umbrella;
4. Appropriately resource and empower the Integrity Commission;
5. Re-instate a minimum of 35 members of the lower house of parliament in Tasmania, to improve the functionality and accountability of parliament, and to ensure a big enough pool of Government members to have a stand alone environment minister; and
6. Revoke section 11 of the Pulp Mill Assessment Act and establish an Independent Commission of Inquiry into the assessment & approval process for the proposed pulp mill.

For more information, please contact

[Environment Tasmania](#)
The Conservation Council

P:03 6224 6319
PO Box 1073
Hobart Tasmania
Australia 7000
www.et.org.au

