

# Prescription for a Healthy Australia

Australia is fortunate to have a diverse natural environment and a vibrant healthy community with good access to healthcare. However, air pollution, drought, extreme weather and bushfires threaten our health and livelihood<sup>1</sup>.

At the 2019 Federal election we call for bold measures to protect and promote health.



## Climate Change

Climate change is a health emergency. Australia needs to address climate change as an issue threatening the health and wellbeing of present and future generations. We need a “whole of government and civil society” approach to deep greenhouse emission cuts. A safe climate protects health.<sup>2</sup>

- ✓ Include respected climate science in all government policies and decisions
- ✓ Prompt action to reduce national emissions with a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2050<sup>2</sup>



## Rapid Transition from fossil fuels

Energy derived from fossil fuels contributes to toxic air pollution which damages health, causing increased mortality and rates of lung and heart disease, stroke and cancer<sup>3</sup>. Renewable energy sources are cheaper and are safe for human health<sup>4</sup>.

- ✓ Strong Renewable Energy Targets – at least 50% by 2030

We require a rapid transition from fossil-fuel (coal and gas mining and combustion) to a mix of renewable energy sources; DEA does not support any new coal or gas<sup>5</sup> mining.

- ✗ No new coal or gas for Australia



## Reduce Pollution

Air pollution is an invisible killer which contributes to over 3000 deaths per year and as well as extensive illness.<sup>7</sup> We need to ensure that air pollution from coal fired power and vehicles is alleviated by improved air quality standards in keeping with international scientific opinion.

- ✓ Best practice technology for current coal-fired power plants to prevent pollution<sup>7</sup>
- ✓ Strong national controls on air pollution standards via NEPM



## Natural environment

Our health is absolutely dependent on our natural environment. We require a New Generation of Environmental Laws<sup>8</sup> which will protect the environment and biodiversity, including an independent Sustainability Commission and a national EPA. In the meantime, legislative powers must be used to prevent environmental degradation and protect against climate change.

- ✓ Demand legislation for a New Generation of Environmental Laws

Take prompt action to stop land clearing and logging of old growth forests<sup>9</sup>. Reform of the agricultural sector is required to ensure sustainability of this important Australian industry.

- ✓ Moratorium on land clearing and logging of old growth forests



## Sustainable Health Sector

Hospitals and healthcare use copious resources and energy and produce significant waste and greenhouse gases. Australia needs a national Healthcare Sustainability Unit to significantly reduce greenhouse emissions, pollution and waste from the health sector.<sup>10</sup>

- ✓ Create a national Healthcare Sustainability Unit (HSU) to help reduce emissions, pollution and waste from the health sector.

**Doctors for the Environment Australia** (DEA) is an organisation of doctors and medical students focused on promoting human health through care of the environment.

Our vision is "**Healthy planet, healthy people**".

Contact us for more information or a visit: [admin@dea.org.au](mailto:admin@dea.org.au) and [www.dea.org.au](http://www.dea.org.au)  
Full references available at: [www.dea.org.au/dea-prescription-for-healthy-australia](http://www.dea.org.au/dea-prescription-for-healthy-australia)

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