

Wednesday 27 July 2022

Unions welcome Government action on climate change

Unions welcome the Albanese Government's Bill introduced into parliament today to reduce emissions by 43 per cent by 2030 and to reach net zero emissions by 2050.

Extreme heat, more frequent and intense climate-induced disasters, and increasingly uninhabitable land means that all workers in all workplaces and sectors are being impacted by climate change.

The Australian union movement supports carbon pollution reduction and the transition to a clean energy economy. Workers are critical to every step in this change, and we need to ensure that good, safe and secure jobs are wired into the plan.

The division and inaction of past Coalition Governments have made Australia an international climate laggard. Today's Bill puts Australia back on the path to becoming a clean energy superpower that meets and beats these targets on the way to delivering a safer climate and good, secure jobs.

Last year the ACTU with the BCA, ACF and WWF developed a blueprint for Australia to create clean export industries that deliver 395,000 new jobs and \$89 billion in clean exports by 2040. Unions look forward to once again working with business, climate groups and government to work towards a just transition.

Today's Bill will also bring back honesty and integrity in how we measure our progress - things sorely lacking under the last Government.

Quotes attributable to ACTU President Michele O'Neil:

"All workers are being impacted by the planet becoming less habitable and safe with more frequent and extreme disasters and heat. We welcome the Albanese Government taking this critical step to ensuring climate action.

"There doesn't have to be a fight between jobs and climate action, we can and must have both. Last year unions came together with business and climate organisations to develop an ambitious clean energy blueprint – which was sadly ignored by the former Morrison government. With the Albanese Government and a new Parliament, we can finally work towards the future.

"Australians resoundingly voted for greater climate action at the federal election, it's time Dutton's Coalition listen and stop their divisive climate action denial.

"A 43 per cent emissions reduction target is just the beginning – unions will work with government, business, and climate organisations to ensure Australia becomes a renewables superpower with good, secure union jobs and makes a strong contribution to a safer climate.

"There is more urgent work to do to support the jobs required for workers affected by the transition to net zero. We look forward to working with the Albanese Government and industry on a comprehensive national plan to support all workers and communities undergoing the transition to a clean energy economy."

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