

Failure to Quit Coal undermines Beazley's climate election gambit

Tuesday 7 March 2006 Greenpeace cautiously welcomed Federal Opposition Leader Kim Beazley's commitment to action on climate change, while warning that the policies announced today would be worthless unless the ALP commits nationally to quit coal.

Greenpeace campaigns manager, Danny Kennedy, said "By launching this policy blueprint today, Mr Beazley has differentiated the Federal ALP from the Howard Government, ensuring that climate change will be an election issue in 2007.

"However, because both major parties leave coal front and centre of Australia's future, voters will see that they both continue to favour the interests of coal companies over the interests of the community and the environment."

The blueprint commits an ALP Government to voluntarily reducing greenhouse pollution by 60% by 2050, a target that environment groups have long been calling for. However, Greenpeace looks forward to seeing interim targets and a clear pathway to achieve these cuts set out before the 2007 election.

"When talking about deep cuts in greenhouse pollution, Mr Beazley must understand that achieving those cuts is not compatible with his party's continuing addiction to coal.

"All recent analysis shows that it is not possible to achieve deep cuts while using coal, even with as-yet unproven geosequestration technologies. Putting a cost on greenhouse pollution with emissions trading, and ratifying the Kyoto Protocol, are certainly positive steps, but we cannot tackle climate change by continuing to rely on the fuel that is causing it in the first place.

"We look forward to hearing the details of the ALP's renewable energy target. If it is to take Australia into a leadership position and bring the economic and jobs benefits as well as clean energy, it must be set at least at 10% by 2010 and 20% by 2020.

"If Mr Beazley is serious about tackling climate change, he must also challenge his NSW ALP counterparts to stop the expansion of the state's coal export infrastructure.

"This morning, Greenpeace joined with Hunter Valley residents, coal miners and environmentalists, to launch the Anvil Hill Alliance, dedicated to stopping the development of this massive new mine as a first step in tackling climate change and moving the Hunter Valley towards a sustainable future."

Contact:

Greenpeace communications officer **Tim Hollo** on **0411 032 375**