

# Your guide to crucial environmental policies of the main political parties

The Queensland State election will be held on March 21st. As Queenslanders we are fortunate to enjoy a wonderful environment and lifestyle. Yet economic and climate change pressures continue to grow. We need leadership on the environment and protecting our wilderness, free-flowing rivers and unique animals and plants must become an even greater priority. If we don't choose to protect them now, our future prosperity is at great risk.

The outcome of this election could be of critical importance for our natural environment and voters deserve to know what the major parties saying about our environment.

The Wilderness Society wrote to each of the major parties in the first week of the election presenting our policy priorities and seeking their response. Both the Greens and Labor have provided detailed responses, the LNP did not reply. We have also met with senior representatives from the Greens and Labor but again the LNP did not offer such an opportunity. Finally, we conducted an extensive review of the parties' published policies and their performance over the life of the last Parliament. We have analysed all of the information collected to compile this guide.

## SUMMARY

TWS PRIORITY ISSUES	GREENS	LABOR	LNP
Keeping our wild rivers flowing freely	✓	1/2	✗
Heritage protection on Cape York Peninsula	✓	✓	✗
Protecting our forests and woodlands	✓	✓	✗
Protecting wildlife and special natural places	✓	✗	✗
Banning toxic uranium mining	✓	1/2	✗

This information was correct at 14 March 2009



- Shows commitment



- Some commitment



- Little or no commitment

## THE POLICY DETAILS

### 1. KEEPING OUR WILD RIVERS FLOWING FREELY

GREENS	LABOR	LNP
<p>The Greens have committed to declare the remaining 13 of the first 19 Wild Rivers identified for protection by the government in February 2004.</p> <p>They will nominate further rivers throughout the state which meet the criteria for listing as Wild Rivers.</p> <p>They will establish a fund for the protection and management of each declared Wild River, including the employment of Indigenous rangers.</p> <p>The Greens will commit additional resources to support genuine consultation and engagement as part of the Wild River declaration process.</p> <p>The Greens will stop the construction of any new large scale dams including Traveston Crossing.</p>	<p>Labor has committed to declare the remaining 13 of the first 19 Wild Rivers identified for protection in February 2004.</p> <p>They will nominate a further 3 rivers - Cooper Creek, Georgina and Diamantina rivers in Western Qld. They will also examine the need to create a second category of Wild Rivers under the legislation.</p> <p>Labor remains committed to employ 100 Wild River Rangers with preference given to indigenous people.</p> <p>However, Labor continues to support major dam developments including Traveston Crossing, Wyaralong, Nathan, Connors and Nullinga dams.</p>	<p>The Liberal National Party failed to respond to our requests for information.</p> <p>The previous Liberal National Party policy was to scrap Wild Rivers legislation. This has not been updated or reversed by the LNP.</p> <p>While the LNP have opposed the dam at Traveston Crossing their position on other proposed dam developments is unclear. They have previously supported a program of new dams throughout rural and regional Queensland.</p>

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## 2. HERITAGE PROTECTION ON CAPE YORK PENINSULA

GREENS	LABOR	LNP
In collaboration with the federal government, Traditional Owners and the local community, and dependent upon Traditional Owner consent, The Greens will progress a World Heritage nomination for suitable areas of Cape York Peninsula.	Labor will undertake all work at the state level for a World Heritage nomination within the next term of government. This will enable a nomination to proceed with the consent of Traditional Owners within the next term of the Commonwealth government.	The Liberal National Party failed to respond to our requests for information. No position on the protection of Cape York Heritage has been identified.

## 3. PROTECTING OUR FORESTS AND WOODLANDS

GREENS	LABOR	LNP
<p>The Greens' believe that <i>'Protected areas and vegetation are vital to the preservation of Queensland's biodiversity, and therefore to the health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders'</i>.</p> <p>They will protect endangered, of concern and high conservation value regrowth vegetation, all remnant vegetation in urban areas, and vegetation in riparian and wildlife corridors.</p> <p>They will provide resources for compliance programs and enforcement of all natural resource legislation, especially for illegal clearing.</p> <p>They will place an emphasis on the carbon sequestration potential of vegetation, to encourage deep cuts in greenhouse emissions consistent with their Climate and Energy policy.</p>	<p>Labor's ban on broad scale land clearing took effect in December 2006.</p> <p>They have recently confirmed that the clearing of regrowth vegetation in rural areas will be subject to consultation to determine whether legislative changes are required to protect rare and/or vulnerable vegetation.</p> <p>Labor is committed to finalising work under the SEQ Forest Agreement. The Agreement protects the last remaining old growth forests in that region and prohibits wood chipping of native forests.</p> <p>Labor also seeks to make further progress on protecting western hardwoods and commencing work on protecting cypress forests.</p>	<p>The Liberal National Party failed to respond to our requests for information.</p> <p>The LNP believes the current SEQ Forest Agreement is inadequate, raising serious questions about what it would do.</p> <p>While vague references have been made to keeping the Vegetation Management Act in place, Lawrence Springborg has described land clearing legislation as "repugnant".</p>

## 4. PROTECTING WILDLIFE AND SPECIAL NATURAL PLACES

GREENS	LABOR	LNP
<p>The Greens' have many policies that will help to protect our biodiversity and special places, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• expansion of protected areas to 20% by 2020, including 15% in national parks.</li> <li>• an annual increase in the budget for protected area creation and management by 10% until 2020.</li> <li>• the development of a statutory biodiversity strategy and adequately funded implementation and enforcement program</li> <li>• amendments to the <i>Nature Conservation Act 1992</i> to recognise Indigenous Protected Areas.</li> </ul>	<p>Labor's policy framework includes a target to protect 50% more land for nature conservation and public recreation by 2020. However, Labor has consistently failed to move beyond the promise to delivery.</p> <p>While Labor also has a program of acquiring properties that are of high conservation value and at risk of development in the Daintree, no additional resources have been committed for this.</p>	<p>The Liberal National Policy failed to respond to our requests for information.</p>

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## 5. BANNING TOXIC URANIUM MINING

GREENS	LABOR	LNP
The Greens will legislate for a ban on uranium exploration and mining.	Labor has reaffirmed its opposition to uranium mining but does not prevent uranium exploration.	The Liberal National Party supports uranium mining and exploration.