



Leon Bignell MP

State Member for MAWSON

Working hard for our area



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Thank you for your email regarding the Australian Conservation Foundation's Climate and Biodiversity Statement and request for a meeting.

I have enclosed a copy of SA Labor's policy for Biodiversity Protection for your information.

As the Member for Mawson, I am proud to have been involved in several important environmental issues affecting our local area and have worked hard to protect our region it during the past 16 years.

In 2020 and 2021 I led a community campaign against the proposed dumping of PFAS toxic waste at the Southern Waste ResourceCo site. The dump is less than four kilometres from schools, homes and businesses and aquifers that run under the dump site feed wells right across the area. People can easily and unwittingly be poisoned by PFAS contaminated soil that then passes through eggs, vegetables, fruit and other food.

The Liberal Party voted against important legislation I introduced which would have prevented PFAS from being dumped in metropolitan Adelaide, within five kilometres of towns and regional cities in SA and within 50km of production land.

I was also a strong advocate in the Fight for the Bight campaign which was successful in convincing Equinor not to drill for oil in the Great Australian Bight. I met with the Norwegian government and gave them letters and petitions from locals which pleaded with them to leave our pristine coastline alone.

I have always been a fierce advocate for the moratorium on Genetically Modified crops which was sadly overturned by the Marshall Liberal Government in 2020. This was just another example of the government's disregard for protecting our environment and primary industries.

As one of the architects of the Character Preservation Legislation which prevents gutter-to-gutter housing from being built on agricultural land within the McLaren Vale region, I remain ever vigilant at attempts to undermine the protections.

We pushed for the protection of the Aldinga Washpool as the Aldinga Scrub Conservation Park. Last year we announced Labor's commitment to consolidate these land holdings forever.

We only have one environment and it is vital the government is there to protect it. I look forward to a new fresh Malinuaskas Labor Government which will protect our environment. Susan Close MP will make a fantastic Minister for Environment if Labor is elected on March 19.

Climate change, habitat destruction, biodiversity loss, increased water consumption, pollution and invasive species are all combining to put enormous stress on our natural world.

Alongside health and education, Labor has made the environment one of the three pillars of our plan for the future of South Australia. Outlined below is the core of that plan.

Labor's Plan for the Environment

Funding for Environment Centres:

Labor understands the value of community led programs, especially in the regions.

The volunteers who have poured their hearts and souls into these invaluable community assets have every right to feel betrayed by the Marshall Liberal government. A Malinauskas Labor Government will fix this mess and give financial assurance to these centres so they can continue their important work.

Labor will require the Green Adelaide Landscape Board to continue to fund the environment centres that were severed from financial support by the Marshall Liberal government's changes to natural resources management boundaries.

Protecting Our Parks:

A Malinauskas Labor Government will provide \$3 million for Friends of Parks groups to help restore our state's national parks and other precious areas.

Labor's plan for National Parks also includes:

- Repealing regulations that exempt private tourism developments from standard native vegetation protection rules.
- Commissioning an update of the wilderness inventory to ensure iconic intact nature is protected.
- Support World Heritage Status for the Great Australian Bight.
- Establishing an Aboriginal Ministerial Advisory Group.
- Employing 15 Aboriginal National Parks rangers.

Growing Nature:

A Malinauskas Labor Government will work with landholders, community groups and not-for-profit organisations to maintain and revegetate our environment.

Initiatives include:

- Additional funding of \$6 million for heritage agreements on privately managed properties.

- Provide Landcare SA with \$1 million to help coordinate on ground activities.
- Increase funding to the Pastoral Board by \$1m to assist with the land condition assessments needed to give certainty to pastoral leaseholders

Biodiversity:

Labor will also introduce a new Biodiversity Act, adding legislative teeth to biodiversity conservation across the state.

The plan includes:

- A \$2 million Citizen Science Fund to harness the power of South Australians who contribute to the knowledge we collectively have about environmental conditions.
- Increase funding to the Conservation Council of South Australia by \$1million to ensure community voice is properly heard when decisions affecting the environment are being made.
- Establish a \$3 million Biodiversity Coordination Unit in the Department for Environment and Water to work with university researchers on management of the environmental impact of pests, weeds and abundant species.

Save the Murray:

A Malinauskas Labor Government will appoint a Commissioner for the River Murray and prepare for High Court action to defend our state's water rights against upstream states' greed.

Repeal the Electric Vehicle Tax:

A Malinauskas Labor Government will axe Steven Marshall's Electric Vehicle Tax to help encourage more South Australians to buy an electric car.

Animal Welfare:

Labor will provide the RSPCA with an extra \$1m to help the not-for-profit organisation enforce animal welfare laws. Labor will also update the Animal Welfare Act to ensure it reflects community expectations to protect animals and ban puppy factories.

Thank you for contacting me with your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me again if I can help further with this issue or assist with any other matter.

Yours sincerely



Hon Leon Bignell MP
MEMBER FOR MAWSON

March 15 2022

