



Protecting Our Planet

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INTRODUCTION

The Labour movement and environmental movement are natural allies. We are fighting for the same thing: for society to be run in our collective interests and in the interests of our protecting our planet.

Promoting the well being of our planet, its people and ecosystems must be at the heart of the Labour Party's vision of a fairer, more prosperous future.

There is an electoral dimension. To win, we must show we have a modern vision of an innovative country that has a new idea of prosperity and success. Our collective aspirations must lie with a greener vision of Britain. And we must reach out to those voters who care deeply about the environment if we are to build the electoral alliance we need.

Climate change is a threat to our very existence. Tackling climate change will only be effective if social justice is at the heart of the solutions we propose. Pope Francis recently said:

“We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature.”

Despite claiming to lead the “greenest government ever”, David Cameron's Conservatives have reverted to protecting the entrenched short-term interests of the minority that have benefited through the unsustainable exploitation of the Earth's resources and people.

It is a scandal that six million households are seriously struggling to pay their energy bills. 29,000 people die early every year because of polluted air. Already 5 million people are at risk of their homes being flooded. Children are growing up without contact with nature or access to green spaces that are so important for development.

The things we need to do to protect the environment also protect people and enhance our lives.

As Labour leader I would bring together a coalition of the majority, to move on from wasteful, polluting and unequal economic approach to our environment and instead democratise our economy to reduce inequality and promote sustainable development within the Earth's resource limits.

Our campaign will prioritise our planet and stand for:

- Britain providing international leadership on climate change and the socialisation of our energy supply leading an end to the era of fossil fuels
- A modern, green, resource-efficient economy - creating 1 million new climate jobs
- Ensuring everyone has access to a decent home that is low-carbon and affordable to keep warm
- Putting people and planet first - tackling the cost of living and climate crisis together
- Cleaner air - tackling the air pollution crisis in our big cities and committing to full independent public inquiry into levels of air pollution.
- Protecting our ecosystems, wildlife habitats and a compassionate approach to animal welfare
- An international approach - support internationally agreed, universal standards of regulation of emissions and pollution.
- A healthy, safe, environment, where people and nature thrive together

CLIMATE CHANGE

For four decades scientists have known that emissions from fossil fuels are causing the climate to change in a dangerous way. The world has already warmed 0.8 degrees causing hundreds of thousands of people to suffer food shortages and extreme weather, from increased droughts in the Sahara, to typhoons in the Philippines and floods in Britain.

Without urgent action to get off fossil fuels, the world is on track for at least 4 degrees of warming by the end of the century, which would see millions of climate refugees as large parts of the world become uninhabitable, with increased conflict not just for oil, but for food and freshwater.

The science is clear. To have a chance of remaining under the 2 degree 'tipping point', 80% of the world's known fossil fuel reserves must stay in the ground. Global emissions must start to decline within the next 5 years – by 2020.

Institutions from the Rockefeller Foundation to the Norwegian Sovereign Wealth Fund have started divesting:

Instead of shifting Britain's energy supply from the fuels that are driving climate change, the Tory Government has committed the UK in law to "maximise the economic exploitation of fossil-fuels" – a position previously backed by Labour. In the last Parliament, the Tories spent £3 billion on fossil fuel subsidies and blocked renewable energy targets for Europe. George Osborne said the Government is going "all out for fracking" and has recently introduced regulation that would allow fracking in national parks and through aquifers, risking contaminating the water we drink.

We in the Labour Party must stand for a different Britain that would play a leading role internationally - committed to cutting our fair share of carbon emissions and driving international support for a fossil-fuel-free future. We must fundamentally challenge a Conservative government that is already racing in pursuit of an environmentally devastating agenda. As the Paris Summit approaches, this Conservative government's approach must be challenged.

With London's air quality already at damaging levels, regularly exceeding EU legal limits, the government has made it £1,000 more expensive to buy a low-carbon car than a more polluting one. Despite the UK having the highest levels of fuel poverty in Europe, the government has proceeded with dumping the Green Deal, in favour of no deal at all. With the world demanding we find ways of 'leaving carbon in the ground', this Government has cut renewables investment while supporting fracking and offering new incentives to offshore oil.

While continuing to fund tax allowances for energy companies, the government has levied a carbon tax on the only sources of energy not emitting carbon. The IMF has reported that Britain throws 7 times more subsidies at the fossil fuel industry than it puts into renewable energy (£26 billion last year, as against £3.5 billion going to renewables).

Urgent, meaningful action to address climate change is long overdue. Labour must put policies for sustainability at the heart of everything we do. We must put forward a Labour vision of a more prosperous, fairer and greener future.

OUR VISION

LEADING THE ENERGY REVOLUTION

At the core of our environmental pledge is a radical restructuring of Britain's dated, inefficient and polluting energy market. My over-arching commitment will be for Britain to take the lead in developing the clean energy economy of the future.

Over the next few decades 8 countries, 55 cities and 60 regions are aiming to have 100% renewable electricity, heating/cooling and/or transport systems.

This is what a sustainable future will look like. Britain must be a part of it.

Socialising our energy supply

A typical household in Germany can choose to buy its energy from over 70 different suppliers (out of a national total of over 1,100).

Half of German energy suppliers are owned by local authorities, communities and small businesses.

There are now over 180 German towns and cities taking over their local electricity grids, selling themselves cleaner (and cheaper) electricity they increasingly produce for themselves. It would (currently) be illegal to do so in the UK.

While Britain has over 95% of our electricity market controlled by the Big 6, Germany has almost 2 million electricity generators. Germany's Big 4 control just 5% of their clean energy market. The majority is owned by households, farmers, communities and localities.

In the three decades since privatisation, the big energy companies have failed to invest in the energy infrastructure we need, and have instead sweated the public assets they were handed. They have made record profits while energy bills have been driven sky high.

Britain needs an energy policy for the Big 60 million not the Big 6.

I pledge, if elected Leader of the Labour Party, to meet the challenge of climate change with 10 energy pledges to reform our broken, dated and polluting energy market.

ENERGY PLEDGES

- 1) My over-arching commitment will be for Britain to take the lead in developing the clean Energy Economy of the future.
- 2) As leader I would establish an **Energy Commission to draft a fundamental shift in UK energy thinking.**
- 3) The Commission will be tasked to produce a **route-map into tomorrow's 'smart energy' systems** that will:
 - Deliver more, but consume less
 - Use clean energy before dirty
 - Put energy saving before more consumption
 - Use smart technologies to run localised storage, balancing and distribution mechanisms,
 - Shift the costs of grid access and grid balancing from clean energy across to dirty
 - Be open, democratic, sustainable and accountable (in ways that today's market is not).
- 4) The Commission will be charged with **bringing new partners into energy policy making.** These will include local authorities, communities, energy co-operatives, and 'smart' technology companies that are already working on tomorrow's 'virtual' power systems and new energy thinking.
- 5) As leader I will conduct **a root and branch review of energy market subsidies;** moving away from the notion of everlasting hand-outs; instead, using public support as '*transition funding*' that transforms Britain's energy infrastructure.
- 6) I will expect **the energy industry, not the public, to meet the costs of their own clean-up.**
- 7) I will look to **re-define of the roles of Ofgem, National Grid and the Competition and Markets Authority,** to promote a more genuinely open, competitive and sustainable energy market; one in which there are more players and more clean energy choices than we have today.
- 8) I will examine ways to **allow communities to be owners of local energy systems,** with the right (as in other parts of Europe) to have first use of the energy they generate themselves.
- 9) We must socialise our energy supply and move toward breaking-up the failing energy cartel. Instead, I want to look at the role of **the state as guarantor of last resort; with more direct responsibility for the nation's back-up generation, high voltage grid and interconnectors;** directly ensuring that Britain's 'lights never go out'.
- 10) I would commit Britain to **binding international climate change commitments; making national targets, local ones too, and devolving both the necessary powers and duties to meet these obligations.**

This is now a necessity, not a utopian dream.

Britain must lead the way in developing the energy systems of the future.

TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE

If we are going to make meaningful progress in tackling climate change, we must make meaningful, bold commitments to doing so.

Britain should commit to playing a leading role in getting the world on track to climate safety – with the UK cutting our fair share of carbon at home.

We must take action now to keep fossil fuels in the ground – end dirty energy handouts, ban fracking and set a target date to end new fossil fuel extraction, and begin to phase out high polluting coal power stations with support for workers to re-train.

Britain should scrap the ‘capacity market’ which subsidises coal, gas and nuclear power at greater expense.

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE: A GREEN INVESTMENT BANK

Germany’s equivalent Development Bank loans money (at 1% interest) to support their Transformation programme - including energy efficient homes. They also simplify and de-risk the shift into clean energy living. If Germany can do this, so too can Britain.

We need a National Investment Bank, with the power to borrow to boost our green economy, supporting the green jobs, homes and infrastructure of the future.

Britain has the largest renewable energy potential in Europe. Using just one-third of our offshore wind, wave and tidal energy potential would make Britain a net exporter of electricity.

275,000 people already work in renewable energy in Britain, and renewables already generate nearly a fifth of our electricity. Under Tory cuts to solar, wind and home insulation programmes, green projects are being scrapped along with their potential for jobs.

Investment in a green future could re-establish a manufacturing base of the future, rebalance our economy and create a million high-skilled jobs.

Renewable energy supports more jobs than fossil fuels. With the right support, we could develop the new high-tech manufacturing hubs of the future across Britain that build on the expertise of our universities.

We should boost support for renewable energy - setting out a road map to a million climate jobs and new green high-tech manufacturing hubs in all parts of Britain.

By setting a bold target of carbon-free electricity by 2030, reversing the Tories’ ideological restrictions on renewable energy projects (onshore wind and large solar), investing in low-emission transport and establishing a National Investment Bank, we can deliver the changes needed to secure the future prosperity of our people and planet.

A CLEANER, MORE EFFICIENT MODEL: TACKLING THE COST OF LIVE & THE CLIMATE CRISIS TOGETHER

Too many people are struggling to pay their energy bills and have no choice but to spend too much of their income on travelling.

It is a national scandal that each year people are suffering and dying from cold-related illnesses due to living in a cold home they could not afford to heat. 29,000 people died prematurely because of air pollution primarily caused by transport fumes.

This is not acceptable and we must therefore pledge to both reduce carbon emissions and bring down the cost of living.

The cost of solar has fallen 70% since 2009, and onshore wind is even cheaper. It is estimated carbon-free power would cost bill payers £23 billion less than relying on gas.

Zero carbon homes must become the norm, not the exception. To achieve this requires both higher energy efficiency standards on all new builds, while maintaining planning regulations protecting our greenbelt, as well as a national home insulation programme that would save the average household £250 on their energy bill, and cut carbon emissions.

Half a million households now benefit from free energy provided by solar panels, thanks to the last Labour Government's scheme to support household and community solar. This should be extended. A radical commitment to energy efficiency policies would both create jobs and save lives. It can be driven, in part by regulation and taxation, but also by energy market reform; allowing localities to 'sell' energy saving in preference to more consumption.

Investment in public transport will both reduce fares and reduce car use, as well as halting the rise of asthma and other preventable air pollution diseases, potentially saving the NHS £18 billion in treated illness caused by air pollution.

PROTECTING OUR ECOSYSTEMS: A HEALTHY & SAFE ENVIRONMENT WHERE PEOPLE & NATURE THRIVES

Nature is in trouble. The Earth has lost half of its wildlife in the last 40 years. Species across land, rivers and seas are being decimated by pollution, habitat loss, the impacts of climate change, and being killed in unsustainable numbers for food.

The British bee population is in crisis, and England has the greatest decline of anywhere in Europe. Banning neonicotinoid pesticides that are harmful to bees and pollinators must be a priority as part of a multi-faceted approach to protecting our bee population and ecosystems more broadly.

Equally we must protect our oceans, tackling water pollutions and revisiting legal limits of fish extraction and fishing protections.

People must also be protected from the climate change we cannot avoid. The winter floods of 2013/14 took place in the wettest winter since records began 250 years ago - with devastating flooding affecting huge swathes of the country.

Without action, research shows that the impact of climate change and population growth would mean a million more people in the UK could be at significant risk of flooding by the 2020s. Flood defences should not be cut, flood plains should be protected, and the non-permeable paving of permeable spaces must be looked into.

I am opposed to fracking and to new nuclear on the basis of the dangers posed to our ecosystems.

Fracking will accelerate climate change, carries significant pollution risks and deepen our dependency on polluting fossil fuels as well prevent 'investment' in the clean energy sources we need.

New nuclear power will mean the continued production of dangerous nuclear waste and an increased risk from radioactive accident and nuclear proliferation. In May, Sellafield nuclear waste site in Cumbria was granted permission to exceed legal limits for the amount of hot radioactive waste it can keep in tanks, following an accident that has led to a backlog of waste. The government plans to subsidise new nuclear power plants to the tune of £77 billion, despite the cost of cleaning up the existing nuclear waste reaching £100 billion.

Instead we should be looking at more sustainable solutions to the ways in which we deliver answers to the transport, heating, cooling and power needs in a society that must live more lightly on the planet. It is the only one we've got. We must clean up our act, clean up our air and clean up our mess all at the same time.

Internationally, differing standards of emissions and pollution regulations have led to the effective out-sourcing of pollution and emissions to countries with more lax environmental enforcement. We as an international community must bring an end to this practice and work towards universal standards of pollution and emissions regulations in order to protect our planet. This also means rejecting the TTIP agreement.

CONCLUSION

A sustainable and compassionate approach to protecting our environment must be at the heart of everything we as a Labour party propose the British electorate.

Some 200 years ago Britain led the world into the last energy revolution. Our first 'public' energy company was formed in Manchester back in 1817. Having led the way into the last energy revolution we are now lagging behind in the current one.

Technologies that have revolutionised the telecommunications sector are about to do the same to energy; making energy systems more open and competitive, *and* more sustainable and democratic.

It isn't too late for Britain to catch up, and even lead, this energy revolution.

Until 1947, most of Britain's energy companies were municipal ones; with utility services providing local councils with 50% of their total income. Tomorrow's smart towns, cities and regions are already looking at using today's technologies (of energy generation storage, sharing and saving) to do the same.

This is the Britain I want to build: a future that is innovative, inclusive and sustainable.

