

Australia: Fight the climate change disaster, become an SEP electoral member

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The Socialist Equality Party (SEP) urges all readers in Australia to sign up as electoral members of the party and take up the fight for international socialism, which is the only way to address and halt the accelerating climate crisis created by capitalism.

The impacts of global climate change, long predicted by scientists, are already upon us. The latest UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report for 2023 described “widespread adverse impacts” from extreme weather events that have become more frequent and intense.

The *World Socialist Web Site* has reported on World Weather Attribution studies that have demonstrated the exacerbating impact climate change has had on recent extreme events, such as the disastrous Amazon River Basin drought and a dangerous heatwave in West Africa.

Every continent is being affected by massive wildfires, heatwaves and air pollution, while the global melting of the ice caps and glaciers is speeding up. The IPCC report noted that the Australian Black Summer bushfires of 2019?20, which were responsible for almost 500 deaths, originated from extreme drought conditions that were exacerbated by climate change.

Such events are a forewarning of what is in store for humanity if warming trends continue. The average global temperature is rapidly approaching 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and is currently on track for 3 degrees C of warming. Each additional increment of warming brings with it more climate-related disasters that will negatively impact millions of people worldwide, particularly the working class and the most vulnerable.

The science is beyond dispute. To stave off the worst of the climate catastrophe, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must be drastically cut immediately, with a

corresponding mass funding and expansion of renewable energy.

In the light of the dire warnings by the scientists, the political response to the climate crisis by the ruling classes around the world has been nothing short of criminal. For decades now, fossil fuel corporations have been permitted to continue raking in profits, despite the suffering they are causing globally.

ExxonMobil, one of the largest global contributors to GHG emissions, has spent tens of millions of dollars promoting climate change denial and opposing the well-established link between fossil fuel burning and climate change. British Petroleum (BP) coined and popularised the concept of the “carbon footprint” in 2004 to offload responsibility for the climate crisis onto consumers and ordinary people.

For decades, treaties and talks between national capitalist governments, supposedly with the aim of global cooperation on climate change, have done nothing to curb GHG emissions to the level needed.

Global emissions after the 1997 Kyoto Protocol—which consisted of mechanisms that allowed big polluters to avoid cutting emissions—continued to rise substantially. The 2015 Paris agreement was similarly bogus, setting targets that would not limit warming to a safe level, with no penalties for countries that did not achieve those targets.

More recently, the 28th UN Conference of the Parties (COP28) meeting, held at the end of 2023 in the United Arab Emirates, was presided over by the CEO of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, Sultan Al Jaber. The conference was attended by almost 2,500 fossil fuel lobbyists representing some of the largest GHG emitters in the world, such as Shell, BP and Exxon.

The fact that an oil executive presided over the global talks between governments to supposedly mitigate

climate change exposes the indifference of the ruling classes to the health and wellbeing of the working people and youth around the world.

It also shows that the fundamental characteristics of world capitalism block any genuine global climate plan. On climate change, as on the lurch into war, the ongoing COVID-19 disaster and soaring social inequality, world capitalism is dominated by the profit interests of giant corporations and the super-rich, and the conflicting strategic interests of rival nation-states.

Australian governments have been no exception. While elements of the Liberal-National Coalition engage in outright climate change denial, the Albanese Labor government has continued to approve new coal and gas projects by some of the world's worst corporate polluters.

The Greens represent no genuine alternative. As a capitalist party, they defend the profit system that generated the climate crisis in the first place. That was demonstrated again in 2022, when the Greens supported the Labor government's patently inadequate climate targets. Those targets aimed for a 43 percent reduction of GHG emissions by 2030, far short of the Climate Council's recommendation of a 75 percent reduction in the same period. The Labor-Greens legislation contained no penalties for corporations that continue to emit and provided no mechanisms for achieving even these targets.

The SEP warned of the role played by the Greens as a defender of the capitalist system following the 2022 federal election results, and explained that "climate change is fundamentally a product of the capitalist profit system itself, based upon the subordination of every aspect of social life to profit, and the irrational division of the world into antagonistic nation-states. The only realistic solution lies in the abolition of capitalism and the reorganisation of social and economic life on a global scale."

Vast developments in science and technology make it possible to limit climate change to manageable levels while providing a high standard of living for all. But this necessitates a rational economic plan coordinated on a global level.

That is impossible while the world economy is controlled and operated in the interests of corporate profit. Instead, trillions of dollars are being poured into military spending as the plunge into war intensifies.

What is required is the struggle for socialism, based on a turn to the working class, the social force whose fundamental class interests align with reconstructing society to address the climate crisis.

That is the fight being conducted by the SEP and its sister parties in the International Committee of the Fourth International.

We do not harbour any illusions that the crises of capitalism, including climate change, can be resolved through parliament by electing our candidates. However, by registering our party and putting our name on the ballot at the next federal election, we can provide the working class a genuine socialist voice and campaign for our program of world socialist revolution.

To ensure that the SEP has the elementary democratic right to have its name on ballot papers, and that workers and young people can vote consciously for this essential socialist program, we urge all our readers and supporters to join up as electoral members of the SEP, using the form below.

At the same time, we invite all our readers and existing electoral members to study the SEP's program and apply to become full members of the party in order to help build the urgently-needed socialist leadership in the working class.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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