

Greens NSW

Sustainable Land Use and Rural Agriculture Policy



Revised August 2014

Principles

The NSW Greens believe:

1. Access to food and clothing is a fundamental human right;
2. Sustainable agriculture is essential to food security, environmental sustainability, and climate change mitigation and adaptation;
3. Rural land use, including the production of food and fibre, should contribute to biodiverse native landscapes, clean water and clean air and be sensitive to Aboriginal heritage and cultural land use;
4. The implementation of sustainable farming systems is vital for maintaining healthy, productive landscapes and addressing land and water degradation, climate change and resource depletion. Sustainable farming systems are those that apply ecological concepts to the management of agriculture;
5. Government policy should not compromise the primacy of sustainable food and fibre production;
6. Sustainable agriculture cannot be delivered without healthy rural communities and farmers and land managers who play a critical role in maintaining healthy landscapes and ecosystem services;
7. Urban and peri-urban agriculture are important components of sustainable and community food systems in NSW;
8. As the most arid inhabited continent with fragile ancient soils, Australia's productive agricultural land and water supplies are vital national assets which must be protected from competing and unsustainable uses;
9. Sustainable agriculture cannot be delivered without a skilled workforce and an Australian population that understands and values our food systems and ecosystems;
10. Animals are an integral part of farming systems and managers must ensure the physical and psychological wellbeing of animals in their care;

11. Ongoing innovation, research, development and education are essential to maintain and improve the sustainability and prosperity of Australian agriculture and ecosystems;
12. The spread of invasive pests, diseases and weeds is a significant threat to ecological integrity, and agricultural productivity and must be proactively managed;
13. Genetic diversity both within ecosystems and agricultural systems is essential for the health and resilience of these systems and should be protected;
14. The Precautionary Principle, as defined in the Convention on Biological Diversity, must be applied to all new agricultural technologies and the use of their products in the environment;
15. The distance between where food is grown, processed and consumed should be minimised.

Aims

Details

The Greens NSW will advocate that:

16. Productive agricultural land is identified, assessed and protected from extractive industries and urban encroachment to ensure the food security of New South Wales;
17. The likely impacts of climate change and resource scarcity on the sustainability of our current agricultural practices are identified and strategically managed;
18. Appropriate land management practices are adopted, and degraded lands and habitats are restored.
19. Integrated Pest Management that minimises chemical use is supported and encouraged;
20. Standards for the licensing and use of agricultural chemicals are enforced and these standards are equal to or higher than the most rigorous standards for specific chemicals elsewhere in the world;
21. Fertiliser use is appropriate and comes from sustainable sources;
22. Urban and peri-urban agricultural areas are protected from encroachment in planning legislation and policy, and initiatives are developed, where appropriate, to encourage agricultural production in these areas;
23. Land that is unsuitable for farming or of significant ecological or cultural value is protected, and land-holders are adequately compensated;

24. Investment in agricultural education and training, including at tertiary level, provides sufficient opportunities for farmers to develop their knowledge and understanding of sustainable production, and there is an adequate skilled agricultural workforce;
25. The extent and impact of soil degradation is reduced and strategies are implemented to improve the management of our soil resource;
26. An effective, well-resourced and tenure-free biosecurity system protects agriculture and the environment from pests, weeds and diseases;
27. A diversity of land use is encouraged and support is given to small-scale and diversified farming operations;
28. Land managers are supported in the implementation of low-carbon-intensive farming techniques and the sequestration of carbon in soils and vegetation;
29. Travelling Stock Routes (TSRs) are adequately protected;
30. Bushfire risk management is species sensitive and well resourced;
31. Native vegetation/forest corridors exist across all land tenures to link reserves and maintain biodiversity;
32. The quality of our water resources and riparian ecosystems is secured and the efficiency of water use is improved in our agricultural systems;
33. The development and implementation of an effective framework, including financial incentives, pricing mechanisms, education services and regulation to ensure that farmers and land managers are rewarded for the repair and maintenance of ecosystem services;
34. Funding to organisations and programs involved in the restoration, maintenance and protection of high conservation value lands is adequate;
35. Initiatives that increase local production, value-adding, distribution and fair prices for farmers are supported;
36. Broad-scale native vegetation clearing is banned, and native vegetation and biodiversity are protected and restored, including in agricultural systems;
37. The genetic diversity of production species is maintained and not restricted through privatisation of genetic material;
38. Measures to minimise waste in the entire food production system, including production, transport, packaging and consumption, are introduced;
39. Drought assistance and other incentives for land managers encourage long-term risk-reduction strategies including adaptation to likely climate change impacts;

40. Research, development and education to support sustainable agricultural systems, healthy landscapes and resilient rural and regional communities is well resourced;
41. Enforceable Model Codes of Practice in Animal Welfare are adopted by all sectors of livestock production, and there is adequate funding of the authorities responsible for education and ensuring compliance.
42. Inappropriate barriers to the consumption of natural foods are removed, including for hemp products.