



ENERGY DOOMED PLANET

green sheep

Shades of Green and Orange

ALAN MORAN SEP 25 2026

The mainstream media last declared the “climate wars” over in 2022, following the Glasgow Climate Change Summit. Back then, the Biden administration was undoing all the market-based energy reforms of the Trump Mark I administration and promoting a Green New Deal under the cover of its propagandistically misnamed “Inflation Reduction Act”. The EU was already hurtling towards its renewable energy date with deindustrialisation its destiny, and Boris Johnson in the UK had shed his conservative pretensions to follow the renewable energy track pioneered by David Cameron and Theresa May. Right now, the UK chemical industry, with

energy prices running at eight to ten times those of its US and Chinese rivals, is **the latest industrial domino** about to fall.

Although Australia appeared to have dodged a bullet when Scott Morrison replaced Malcolm Turnbull, Morrison cravenly followed the Borisonian path by embracing Net Zero, claiming on public service advice that to do otherwise would see Australian imports being forced to face carbon border tariffs. As the surge in energy prices became apparent and the global warming scare receded, electorates around the world have shifted. One Nation's climb from a 6% polling minnow to a 30% electoral shark has brought all parties to dilute their enthusiasm for policies that have brought increased energy prices. For the Greens, abandoning Net Zero is impossible, so the party has deflected its policy agenda into trans, housing and Palestine.

Labor's ideology is also too rusted-on to retreat beyond ingenuous claims that it was never all that thoroughly wedded to the whole enchilada, citing the disavowal a once-favoured green hydrogen nirvana as proof of its purported energy realism.

As for the Coalition, leadership changes have brought in climate sceptics and energy realists in Angus Taylor and Matt Canavan. Taylor's natural pragmatism – some would say Machiavellianism – is reinforced by a party membership that remains green-tinctured, seats that are vulnerable to Teals, and politicians heavily reliant on funding from green commercial interests.

Perhaps to circumvent vetoes from Canberra, Queensland Premier David Crisafulli is promoting AI using coal-generated electricity (in this respect, state government ownership of coal power stations is a useful card to play against an ALP ideologically in support of public ownership). But extending the life of Queensland coal is pressed under an umbrella of “all of the above” energy sources, which, as well as direct renewable subsidies, entails forging ahead with the renewable-supportive \$14 billion **Copperstring transmission line**. That said, Queensland has amended its transmission line planning laws in ways that are already causing renewable projects to be cancelled.

For the Liberals, Dan Tehan's eight-point plan seeks to rebalance energy in favour of efficiency and reliability. But while it includes watering down the wind/solar subsidies implicit in the "safeguard mechanism" (an additional tax on major firms), it does not explicitly remove *other* subsidies. Moreover, presumably to pander to local Liberal Party preferences, the subsidised wind-zone transmission lines in Victoria and Tasmania are to remain.

The Liberals' policy appears to have been cobbled together to avoid falling too far behind One Nation. But it also reflects different views within the party, and the tentativeness of its policies gives rise to some uncertainty about how forcefully the Liberals would prosecute a retreat from Net Zero. This is particularly concerning because a Coalition government would face a supposedly neutral public service bombarding it with difficulties in dismantling Net Zero. Add to this the renewable lobby, the media **and the courts**, those efforts driven by interests such as **Future Group** and **Sunrise Australia**, which have greater funding than either the ALP or the Coalition. A powerful tool of the green lobby will be the argument that superannuation funds have over-committed to renewables (some also contributing to pro-renewable lobbying) and would incur losses if the subsidies are removed – losses that would show up in superannuants' pensions.

One Nation has the clearest policies in abandoning Net Zero and all the current policies' subsidies. Even so, some in the party are hostile to permitting fracking for gas, the ostensible objection being fears that the chemicals involved may penetrate the groundwater. This opposition is despite the technology's 70-year history never having seen such a mishap.

State government elections over the next few months will be important guides to whether Australia will cleanse itself of the self-imposed penalties incurred in Net Zero and its assault on low-cost, reliable energy. The Liberals in both Victoria and New South Wales, while rescinding some support for renewables – especially transmission lines – remain Net Zero fans. If an impetus to finally defeat the subsidy-seeker/alarmist partnership is to be maintained, unless the state Coalition's policies undergo some metamorphosis, One Nation has to perform strongly.

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