

Preferences policy for national, state and local government elections

29 August 2013 (Version: operational version 4)

Save the Planet shall not make preference deals with other parties or candidates and instead shall decide its election preferences on the basis of the following rules:

1. These preference policy rules are to be used for national, state and local government elections.
2. All candidates in each electorate for which the Save the Planet Party prepares a preference ticket shall be assessed for preference ranking by the national executive, advised by a preference assessment sub-committee.
3. Candidates shall be allocated, in accordance with rules 4 to 10, to one of the following seven categories (which are in broad preference order, from highest to lowest):
 - (i) Climate emergency
 - (ii) Core solutions
 - (iii) Other
 - (iv) Going backwards
 - (v) Undermining
 - (vi) No climate information
 - (vii) Denialist.
4. Candidates shall be placed in the “Denialist” category if they express views that deny or are sceptical on an ill-informed basis about the existence of human-forced climate change, or if they are members of a party that does the same.
5. Candidates shall be placed in the “No climate information” category if they provide no public (accessible on an ongoing basis) information on their climate policies or views or actions, unless they are standing on a specialised platform focused on a solution of one sort or another that Save the Planet judges to be core to restoring a safe climate. (In the latter case see rule 9.)
6. Subject to rule 4, candidates shall be placed in the “Undermining” category if their policies and actions have the effect of clearly undermining government and community commitment to a proactive response on climate change.
7. Subject to rule 4, candidates shall be placed in the “Going backwards” category if their policies and actions are significantly worse for climate than those implemented by the most recent government¹ (ie. they intend to take action backwards); and policies that could qualify as a trigger for inclusion in this category include, but are not limited to the following examples:
 - a. Reducing any greenhouse gas reduction and CO₂ drawdown target by any amount;
 - b. Delaying any existing greenhouse gas reduction and CO₂ drawdown target date by any amount of time;

¹ Defined by change of leader or by a clear overall repositioning of climate policy regime.

- c. Removing any existing greenhouse gas reduction and CO₂ drawdown mechanisms without a well developed and costed proposal that would, in any reasonable analysis, be likely to achieve the same results or better;
 - d. Reducing the capacity of the public service to deliver climate change mitigation and adaptation programs;
 - e. Weakening government messaging and education programs about climate change.
 - f. Significantly reducing government support for existing programs that contribute to greenhouse gas reductions such as renewable energy, or public transport;
 - g. Taking actions in any climate relevant policy field that is likely to significantly increase emissions for example by supporting the expansion of fossil fuel exploration or extraction.
8. Subject to rule 4, candidates shall be placed in the “Climate emergency” category if they publicly support safe climate emergency transition policies and actions (defined at the end of this document, provided that neither of the following conditions apply:
 - a. they were a member of a party in the last term that was committed to a safe climate emergency transition policy but failed to actively pursue it;
 - b. they had a personal safe climate emergency transition policy in the last term but failed to actively pursue it.
 9. Subject to rule 4, candidates shall be placed in the “Core solutions” category if they are standing on a specialised single issue policy platform that is advocating a major solution that is critical to the achievement of a safe climate and sustainability restoration.
 10. All other candidates shall be placed in the “Other” category.
 11. The national executive shall place candidates within each category, in accordance with rules 4 to 10 and will then place candidates within each category in a rank order in accordance with rules 12 to 15, and if the national executive lacks the information needed to distinguish between some candidates they shall be given equal rank and their relative order with respect to each other shall be determined through a separate process in accordance with rule 16.
 12. All candidates who are sitting members (whether government, opposition or on the cross benches), who are standing for election to the chamber that determines the formation of the government, and who are listed in the “Other”, “Undermining”, “Going backwards” or “No climate information” categories, shall be penalised, for the purposes of gaining leverage to drive the rapid evolution of climate policy and action, by being placed last within their category, unless they are granted a “Rising star” exemption under rule 13. (Note: Rule 12 does not apply to any candidate in the “Climate emergency”, “Core solutions” or “Denialist” categories.)
 13. Only in the case of candidates affected by the rule 12 sitting member penalty, the national executive may, after receiving advice from the preference assessment sub-committee, grant a candidate a “Rising star” exemption from the ‘sitting member penalty’ if the candidate has, judged by public or private but verifiable information, performed outstandingly on climate policy and action, but this exemption shall only be granted for one election while the candidate remains in their current category and shall not be granted if the candidate moves to a lower category. (Note: Rule 13 does not apply to any candidate in the “Climate emergency”, “Core solutions” or “Denialist” categories.)

14. Unless affected by a sitting member penalty, candidates shall be ranked within their category from highest (judged by the degree of benefit of their climate policies and actions) to lowest (judged by the degree of disbenefit or denialism of their climate policies and actions), that is in merit order.
15. Where there is more than one sitting member within a category who has been given a penalty ranking under rule 12, those candidates shall be ranked in merit order (at the bottom of their category) determined by their personal strengths and weaknesses on climate policy and action.
16. Where candidates have initially been given equal ranking by the national executive under rule 11, the relative ranking of these candidates shall be determined:
 - a. by the local branch covering the electorate, if it exists, subject to sub-rule (c), using one of the following methods to be selected by the branch executive:
 - (i) by an open meeting of branch members, or
 - (ii) by a decision of the branch executive, or
 - (iii) by the local electorate campaign committee or team;
 - b. if no branch exists, by the local candidate in consultation with their campaign team, subject to sub-rule (c);
 - c. by the relevant highest-level election campaign committee (national, state or local government) if neither the branch nor the candidate have taken action under sub-rules (a) or (b) prior to two days before the required date for the submission of preferences to the electoral commission.
17. The rationale for this preferencing policy is to provide strong political leverage on all political parties and candidates to rapidly move their policies and actions up to ideal performance in the “climate emergency” category, while avoiding egregious impacts on “Rising star” candidates; with this leverage strategy being applied most strongly to electoral contests for the chambers that determine the formation of governments.

Safe climate emergency policies means policies designed:

Preferred:

- (a) to restore preindustrial global average temperatures and ocean acidity and ocean heat content at emergency speed. or

At the worst:

- (b) to cool the earth, reduce ocean acidity and heat content below 1990 levels and reduce atmospheric CO₂ below 350 ppm;

— through global net zero greenhouse gas emissions technology, massive CO₂ drawdown from the atmosphere and possible deployment of solar radiation management if this will have a net benefit for the survival and wellbeing of people and nature (ie. other species) globally

— where the physical economic transition is (**preferred**) completed within 10 years, or (**at worst**) not longer than 25 years.

Safe climate emergency action means action in support of safe climate emergency policies, such as government program implementation, advocacy and organising in electorates and in the candidate’s party and in society’s elites.