

THE NATIONALS

WATER

... A State in Crisis



**A Report from your State Member THOMAS GEORGE MP
FEBRUARY 2007**

Climate change and water critical issues

NEVER before in living memory has New South Wales experienced such a dramatic water crisis.

The situation is now critical. We are in grave danger of the State's major water storages falling to record low levels as drought and the effects of global warming continue to grip the nation.

Climate change is a major issue which needs to be addressed. Unless urgent action is taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, Australia can expect to suffer under the prolonged impact of global warming.

Water is a vital and highly valued resource. This country's prosperity and future rely on sensible water management – the well-being of this nation, both now and in the future, is dependent on a water-wise society which is aware of environmental concerns confronting us all.

The time to act is now.

NSW needs a Government which is prepared to make the tough decisions and take the lead on addressing climate change and environmental issues.

Strategies need to confront the immediate crisis as well as define a positive and sustainable future on water management.

The NSW Nationals/Liberal policies support a renewable energy target but it needs to be one which stimulates investment in new projects in

this State. Policies such as the Nationals/Liberal plan to subsidise the installation of smart meters in homes progressively across the State, which will monitor (and reduce) the amount of power used in a household, are important steps forward. Reducing demand in energy can slash greenhouse gas emissions.

There is also great need for the State to invest in clean coal technology. Clean coal technology is important for NSW but equally importantly it is exportable and could help reduce global carbon emissions dramatically.

It is Nationals/Liberal Coalition policy to rescue NSW from the threat of water mis-management which has culminated under 12 years of hard Labor.

I have included some of the Coalition's water and environmental initiatives in this newsletter for your information and consideration.

These are policies I believe would benefit the State right now and also bring positive outcomes to this terrible water dilemma facing us all.

**Thomas George MP
Member for Lismore**

Coalition policies for a positive future

THE Coalition recognises the people of New South Wales want action when it comes to addressing the water crisis.

Nationals/Liberal key water and environment policies include:

- Initiatives to be funded through the \$1 billion Drought Proofing NSW Water Infrastructure Fund
- Assess and improve State's dams and major water storages
- Focus on recycling water
- Harvest stormwater
- Increase rainwater tank rebate to rural and regional areas
- Increase funding to fix leaking water pipes
- Declare a State of Emergency to fast-track work to address water crisis
- Fix the backlog on Country Town Water Supply and Sewerage Program
- Install rainwater tanks in Government buildings
- Pave the way for cleaner fuels, such as ethanol, to improve air quality
- Subsidise the installation of smart meters in homes progressively across the State. These monitor (and reduce) the amount of power used.
- NSW public schools to become solar powered





Caring for our future ... Thomas George MP is keen to pursue climate change issues to ensure a positive future for younger generations.



An aerial view of Lismore shows the continued growth of the city and surrounding rural areas. Thomas George MP is highlighting the need to look after rural and regional areas in the climate change debate.

Rebates for rainwater tanks

RESIDENTIAL rainwater tanks are an effective way to reduce water consumption in homes. Water savings are greatest when plumbed into a toilet and/or washing machine.

The Nationals/Liberal Coalition policy would introduce a \$1500 rebate for all rainwater tanks installed and plumbed to toilets and/or washing machines for country people.

Extending the rebate to people in rural and regional NSW is a major step forward in the plan to harvest more stormwater and focus on water recycling and conservation.

The Coalition would require all State Government owned buildings have rainwater tanks installed and connected to toilets and/or irrigation systems.

Clean, green NSW schools

SOLAR energy would supply power to public schools across NSW under Nationals/Liberal Coalition climate change policy.

Creating greener playgrounds and promoting a healthy school environment are also components of Coalition policy. Planting native trees, learning about water conservation, being active outdoors and developing these interests under the guidance of mentors form the basis of the policy.

Under the solar power policy, all 2240 schools would have lighting and water heating powered by solar panels installed on the roof.

Secure water for regional NSW

WATER infrastructure in regional NSW is badly run down.

The Country Towns Water Supply and Sewerage Program (CTWSS) provides technical and financial assistance to local councils and water utilities to help them provide water supply and sewerage services to their local communities.

Over nearly 12 years Labor has failed to properly manage or fund

the CTWSS program and now plans to scrap the program completely.

Labor's failure has put local water infrastructure at risk and will leave a long backlog of projects needing funding for completion.

It is Nationals/Liberal policy to clear the backlog of projects and fund new projects.

It is Coalition policy to:

- Commit \$100 million a year to

the CTWSS budget; and

- Make the CTWSS priority list publicly available and transparent.

This is part of the Coalition's approach to securing New South Wales' water future and follows the Nationals/Liberal recent policy announcement to increase the water tank rebate for residents of Sydney and country and coastal NSW.



INITIATIVE: Thomas George discusses The Southern Cross Group's enterprising proposal for stewardship support to private native forests in NSW with forest researchers and practitioners (from left) Alex Jay, Dr Jerry Vanclay and Lismore resident David Cameron.

Do your bit to save the world

HERE are some easy, everyday ways you can help save our planet.

- Turn off appliances at the wall instead of leaving them on standby mode. This will save 20kg of carbon dioxide emissions a year from the TV, 66kg from the stereo and 44kg from the DVD.
- A desktop computer used five hours a day generates 22kg of greenhouse gases a year.

Laptops save up to 90%.

- Set the fridge temperature to 5°C. Having it 1°C lower than necessary generates another 50kg of greenhouse gas per year. Set the freezer to between -15°C and -18°C and defrost regularly.
- Insulate. Up to 70% of cooling air (and heating) is lost through uninsulated ceilings, walls and floors.

- Shorter showers can save up to ½kg of emissions per minute.
- Turn off your hot water system when you go on holidays.
- Replace incandescent light globes with fluorescents which use 75% less power and last about eight times longer. If you choose a 20-watt compact fluorescent instead of a 100w standard bulb, you will save about \$80 and 65kg of greenhouse gas over five years.



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