

## Save old forests by making a huge national park: The Great Forest National Park

National parks are areas of nature that are protected by laws to stop people doing things that damage the environment.

In Victoria, we have some very important mountain ash forests. Some people want the government to make a huge park in the middle of Victoria to protect these forests.

*The Great Forest National Park might get a **GREEN LIGHT** because...*

The mountain ash trees are very old. They suck up more carbon than any other kind of tree in the world, and this helps to control global warming.

The forests are home to some of Australia most endangered animals, including the Leadbeater's Possum. Creating the Great Forest National Park would protect these animals from losing their home when loggers chop down trees.

*The Great Forest National Park might get a **RED LIGHT** because...*

A lot of money is made from cutting down the mountain ash trees and selling the wood to make things like paper. If the Government creates the Great Forest National Park, people who have jobs or businesses in the logging industry would lose their jobs and profits. If people lose their jobs or earn less money, life would become difficult for them and their families.

Cut here .....

## Build a port to ship in gas that we can burn to make electricity: AGL Westernport Bay

AGL is a company that wants to bring big ships into Westernport Bay. The ships would carry huge barrels of liquid natural gas. The gas would then be pumped through long pipes to a storage place. This would give people a more reliable supply of gas for heating and cooking.

*Building a port at Westernport Bay might get a **GREEN LIGHT** because...*

People in Victoria need a more reliable supply of energy in their homes, for heating, cooking, and other needs. The current gas supply is running low. The port at Westernport Bay would bring in gas from Queensland and other places.

*Building a port at Westernport Bay might get a **RED LIGHT** because...*

Imported gas puts a lot of methane into the atmosphere. Carbon in the atmosphere is bad for global warming, but methane is even worse. In fact, methane is about 50 times as bad as carbon when it comes to global warming.

## Force companies to close coal power stations like Yallourn

Yallourn is a brown coal-fuelled power station in the Latrobe Valley. It provides lots of electricity: about a fifth of all the electricity used in Victoria.

If we are going to reduce our carbon emissions, Yallourn will need to be shut down. But some people want to keep it open as long as possible to make sure that we don't run out of electricity when we most need it.

The company that owns Yallourn says that it will close down the power station in ten years. Some people say that is much too late, and that we can should be making the change to renewable energy sooner.

Yallourn might get a **GREEN LIGHT** because...

Yallourn gives electricity to 2 million people. It also provides jobs for 500 people.

A coal power station like Yallourn is very expensive to build and run. The company has invested a lot of money in the station, so they deserve to make as much profit from it as they can.

Yallourn might get a **RED LIGHT** because...

Brown coal power plants are the dirtiest form of electricity that exists. Of all the things that humans do right now that add to global warming, burning coal is one of the most damaging.

We already have renewable energy solutions that can replace coal for generating electricity. Renewable energy solutions are wind energy, solar energy, and large batteries for storing that energy for when it's needed.

## Declare a Climate Emergency

Local councils and state governments around the world have been declaring a Climate Emergency. This alone doesn't slow or stop global warming, but it makes it harder for those governments to do nothing about it. After all, once you acknowledge that your house is on fire, you must do whatever you can to put out the fire and get everyone to safety!

Victoria has not declared a Climate Emergency. The Victorian Premier, Daniel Andrews, said that he thinks Victoria is doing enough without having to declare an Emergency.

*Declaring a Climate Emergency might get a **GREEN LIGHT** because...*

If Governments declare an emergency, but then they don't do enough to address it, they risk losing the support of their voters, and they might lose their power.

Declaring a Climate Emergency is also an important step to getting everyone to understand the problem. A government won't be able to convince citizens, businesses and organisations to make the necessary changes if they don't understand why they need to make those changes.

*Declaring a Climate Emergency might get a **RED LIGHT** because...*

Declaring a Climate Emergency is just a way to make yourself look good without actually doing anything. It might turn out to be an empty gesture: all talk and no real action.

## Make it possible for every Victorian to put solar panels on their roofs

Solar roof panels can power our homes. They make electricity greener *and* cheaper. But they are still very expensive to buy and install, so lots of people can't afford them. What's more, people who rent their homes are not allowed to put solar panels up without permission from the property owner.

Some people want to start a program to make property owners promise to make homes environmentally-friendly for renters. This could include installing solar panels, which the property owner and the government would help to pay for.

*A program like this might get a **GREEN LIGHT** because...*

Making it affordable to put solar panels on rented homes would mean that *lots* more homes in Victoria could generate clean, renewable energy that doesn't put greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

Also, a program like this would make electricity much cheaper for people who rent their homes. Saving money on electricity would really help people who don't have much money.

*A program like this might get a **RED LIGHT** because...*

It would cost the Government a lot to contribute money to solar panels for hundreds of thousands of rented homes. This would be an expensive project, and it would take money away from other things that the Government pays for.

It shouldn't be up to the Government to pay for solar panels. If somebody wants to make their home more environmentally-friendly, they should pay for it themselves.

## Make it illegal for supermarkets, restaurants and shops to throw out food

Enough food is grown to feed everyone in the world, but there are still people who go hungry every day. That's partly because one-third of all food we grow in the world gets thrown out. That's more than a billion tons of food wasted every year!

Food waste isn't just a problem because some people are hungry; it's also an environmental problem because it adds to greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

A lot of food is thrown out before it even reaches homes. Supermarkets, shops and restaurants throw away almost half of the fruit and veg they receive because it doesn't look perfect. But families are guilty, as well. We throw away almost half of all the food we buy, either because it goes off before we get to eat it, or because we prepare more than we can eat, and throw out the leftovers.

The Government could make it illegal for supermarkets, restaurants and shops to throw out the food they can't sell. Those businesses could instead donate that food to people who can't afford to buy food at normal prices.

*Making it illegal for food businesses to throw out food might get a **GREEN LIGHT** because...*

There are too many people in Victoria who go to bed hungry every night because they can't afford a good meal, even though enough food is produced to feed everyone. By stopping food waste and encouraging businesses to give unsellable food to people who need it, we can help to reduce hunger and greenhouse gas emissions.

*Making it illegal for food businesses to throw out food might get a **RED LIGHT** because...*

We have strict laws that stop shops from giving away unsellable food. The laws need to be strict to make sure that all the food in the community is healthy and disease-free. If we loosen those laws, the food that's given away might be bad or contaminated.

## **Make Naarm (Melbourne) city roads only for bikes, walking and trams: no cars or trucks!**

Carbon dioxide from cars and trucks make up quite a bit of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions, but a lot of these emissions come from making car trips that we could all easily do by riding, walking or taking public transport.

Some people think that we should ban all cars and trucks from the streets in the city centre.

*Banning cars and trucks from the city might get a **GREEN LIGHT** because...*

We need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to stop global warming. And it's already easy for most people to get around the city without cars.

Also, without cars and trucks, the city streets would be safer and more fun to ride, skate and play in. We would have lots more outdoor public spaces to hang out in.

*Banning cars and trucks from the city might get a **RED LIGHT** because...*

Restaurants need to use trucks to get their food delivered from farms.  
Ambulances need to be able to drive on city streets to get sick and injured people to inner-city hospitals.

Also, banning cars from the city centre would make it much more expensive to live close to the city, and this would push poorer people even further away from good jobs and from participating in community events.

**Protect Aboriginal sites of significance, even if this means changing or stopping plans for development:**

## **Western Highway expansion vs. Djab Wurrung Sacred Trees**

VicRoads has plans to widen the Western Highway connecting Ararat to Melbourne. But these plans include destroying many trees that are sacred to the Djab Wurrung Aboriginal people, who are the traditional owners of that land. The sacred trees include an ancient Birthing Tree, where women have been giving birth to their babies for hundreds of years.

*Continuing with highway expansion might get a **GREEN LIGHT** because...*

The plans for the highway were already approved in consultation with a group of Aboriginal people. They didn't mention that the land was sacred during that consultation, so it should be ignored now.

The highway expansion would make the drive to and from Ararat a few minutes shorter for drivers. A shorter drive would make more people want to live and work in Ararat, and that would be good for the local community.

Changing the plans now would cost the Government a lot of money.

*Continuing with highway expansion might get a **RED LIGHT** because...*

The sacred trees are vitally important to the Djab Wurrung people's culture.

We need to listen to Aboriginal people because they have been caretakers of the land for over 60 thousand years.

We must begin to show proper respect for Aboriginal people whose land was taken from them by our ancestors.

It would not be hard to find a different route for the highway. A couple of extra minutes of driving time would be a tiny price to pay for saving something that is so important to our fellow Australians.