ZONTA INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 23
EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY

ZONTA SAYS NOW

To gender equality and climate action

Zonta Says NOW News - APRIL 2022
Election Edition



Questions, questions!

This federal election is our three-yearly opportunity to ask questions of candidates on what steps they will take to progress gender equality and reduce global warming. These may seem like simple questions, but it is often difficult to find the answers in today's world of soundbite media coverage, greenwashing, and personality politics.

The social disruption caused by the Covid pandemic may have put global gender equality back 36 years. By mid-century, over a billion people could be displaced by extreme weather events caused by climate change. Social disruption at this scale will put gender equality back further. Taking climate action today is essential to maintain any hope of closing the gender gap and achieving gender equality in the future.

This edition of the Zonta Says NOW News explains where Zonta stands politically and empowers us to get the most from this election by applying the five-pronged approach from our Framework for Action: get the facts, lead by example, add our voice, advocate, and collaborate.

This election provides a small window of opportunity to turn things around, so please act now to empower your candidates to work for a gender-equal, sustainable world. Every action counts, so please don't sit on the sidelines; get involved!

Carole
Carole Theobald
District 23 Futurist/Leadership Coordinator



Where does Zonta stand politically?

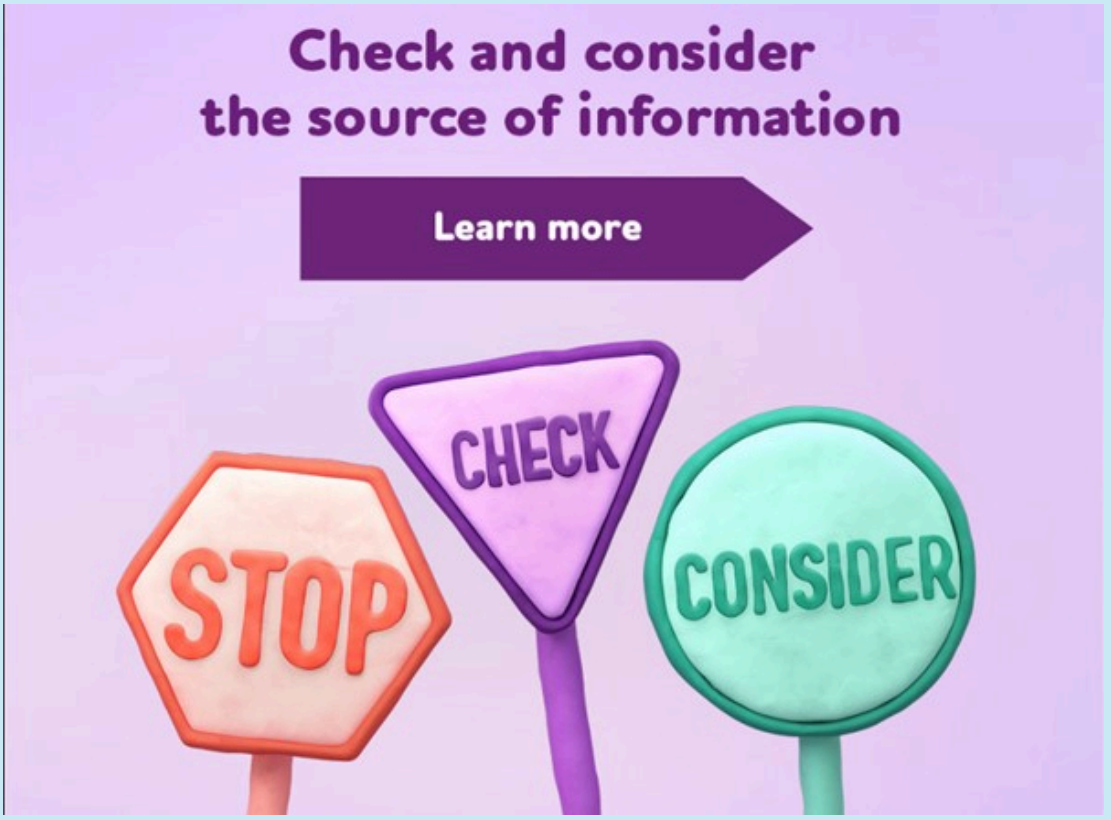
Zonta advocates for issues and policies that achieve our vision. This video shows that we speak up and take a stand. We don't sit on the sidelines or promote a particular candidate or party. We are political and non-partisan.

We work to promote Zonta's vision to create a world where:

- women's rights are recognized as human rights
- every woman is able to achieve her full potential
- women have access to all resources and are represented in decision-making positions on an equal basis with men, and
- no woman lives in fear of violence.

Zonta International's *Statement on Climate Change* shows that climate change disproportionately impacts women and girls. As Mary Crooks, Executive Director of the Victorian Women's Trust, put it at last year's District 23 Conference – if we don't stop the planet from burning, there will be no need for gender equity (see video 38:40).

Action: Use the ideas in this newsletter to plan how you will speak up and speak out for gender equality and climate action this election.



Get the facts

The Australian Electoral Commission reminds us all to check and consider the source of information – it is very easy to find that what we thought was fact was really opinion.

It has been a lousy year for Australia with regard to climate.

- Australia 'won' the Colossal Fossil Award at COP26 for our 'appalling' climate performance.
- The UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called out Australia for 'holding out' on making a meaningful emission reduction target for 2030.
- In the global *Climate Change Performance Index 2022 Rating Table* (page 7) Australia ranked 59 out of 64 countries and has gone down five places since 2020. Australia scored zero for its climate policy.

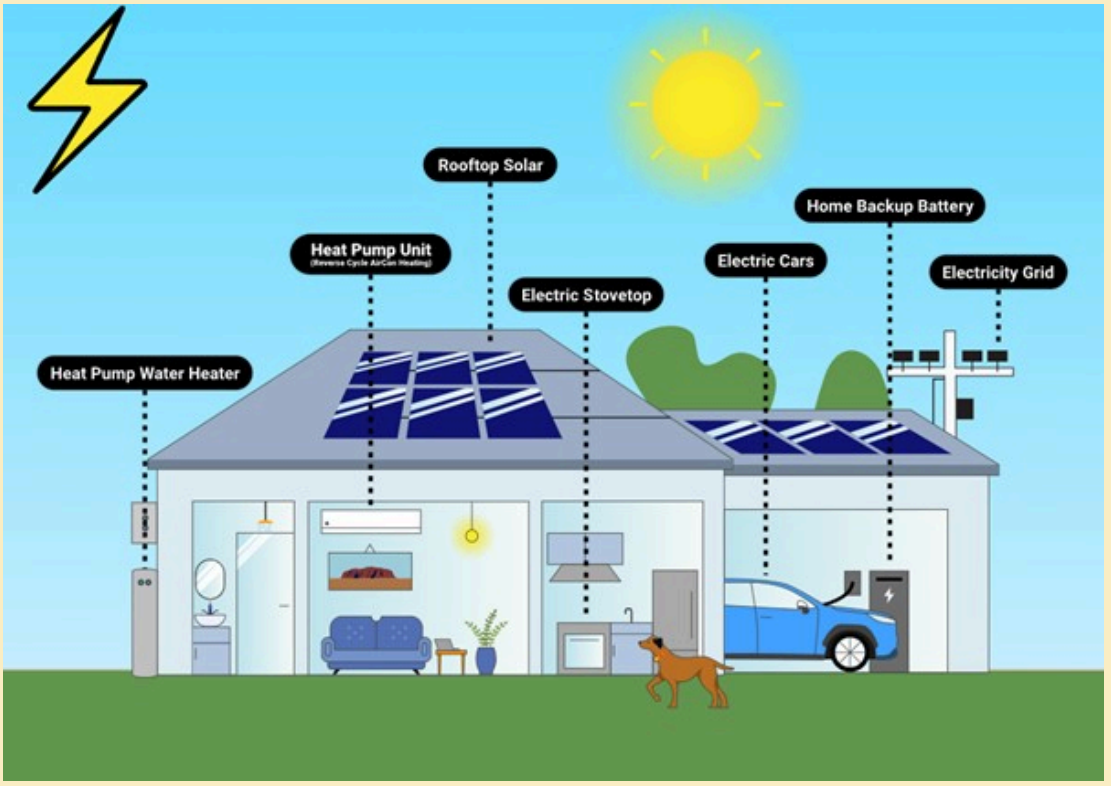
The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) produces Assessment Reports every seven years. These are delivered in three parts covering climate science, impacts (including a chapter on Australasia) and mitigation. The mitigation part of *Assessment Report 6* came out in March 2022 and is discussed in this Climate Council webinar. In summary, climate change is happening more quickly than initially thought and we are unlikely to achieve the Paris Climate Agreement targets without urgent action. Every country must step up its ambition and actions.

It has also been a year in which gender equality has been in the headlines.

- The *Global Institute for Women's Leadership* survey found that Australian men are among the most misogynistic in the Western World.
- The alleged raped of Brittany Higgins in Parliament House triggered the *Women's March 4 Justice* in 40 Australian cities. The marches aimed to end gendered violence and sexual harassment.
- Australia's international ranking for women in the lower house of parliament has fallen from 15th in 1999 to 57th in 2022. On the plus side, we did achieve gender equality in the Senate!
- In the World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Index 2021* (page 10), Australia ranked 50 out of 156 countries and has gone down six places since 2020.

The independent review (Jenkins Review) into parliamentary workplaces resulted in the *Set the Standard* report that found over one-third of people working in parliament have experienced bullying or sexual harassment. It lists 28 recommendations that will make parliament a safer place for women to work if implemented.

Action: Get the facts, so you understand the problems and the solutions!



Lead by example

We can lead by example through our life choices. Many of us are already aware of our personal carbon footprint and using the 5 Rs Guide to reduce it. However, the Climate Council webinar included an interview with Dr Saul Griffiths from *Rewiring Australia* talking about his book The Big Switch. This shows how Australia can decarbonise and improve its standard of living by:

- governments focussing on transitioning the electricity grid to run on renewable energy and
- households planning to replace major household appliances/vehicles when they break down with electric versions.

For example, homes can reduce their emissions by 40 per cent if they transition to rooftop solar, install backup batteries, use heat pumps for water heating and air conditioning, replace gas heaters and stoves with electric, and drive electric vehicles (see picture above).

We have the tools, space, climate, and technology to lead the world in renewable energy. We can also be leaders in new green heavy industries such as green steel made from our iron ore. We just need the determination to do it!

Now is the time to get out of our comfort zone and step up for gender equality and climate action. Speak up and speak out using ideas in the following sections of this newsletter.

Action: Make a plan to electrify your home/vehicles in the next 5-10 years.



Add our voice

When we have the facts, we need to share them, so here are some tips on discussing gender equality and climate change. This summary of climate change politics in Australia provides some context and shows that until around 2010, the major parties worked together on this issue. We need parties to work together again today!

These sites will help you to engage with your local candidates:

- They vote for you – shows the issues that your MP voted consistently for and against and their recent voting record.
- Who are my candidates – shows who is running in your electorate.
- Political party sites – show their policies and plans – check them out on Google.

Another helpful site is Vote Compass. By answering a range of questions, your responses are mapped against those of the major parties to see which party is most closely aligned with your views. You may be surprised by the result!

Action: Be sure you know the candidates in your electorate and where they stand on gender equality and climate action.



Advocate

Actions speak louder than words, but sometimes our words are our actions. How about signing a pledge or a petition and encouraging others to do the same? Here are some individual pledges/petitions to consider during this election:

- 1 Million Women – for individuals to pledge to vote for climate action
- Oxfam – for individuals to petition for a green, equal future now
- Climate Council – for individuals to petition the government for urgent climate action.

There are probably many more, so share those that you find!

Nothing beats direct contact with your candidates. Meet with them, write to them, call them, email them, Zoom them, contact them in any way you can - just don't ignore them. Find out what actions they will be taking on climate, gender equality and ending violence. Be persistent!

Many Zonta Clubs have used proforma letters to write to parliamentarians, so check with your club president or area advocacy representative for details on how to do this. Let the candidates know that their responses will be shared widely.

Action: Sign onto pledges/petitions that support causes you are personally aligned with and make personal contact with your candidates.



Collaborate

Matters that Count is a national campaign managed by Mary Crooks of the Victorian Women's Trust. It seeks to find out where candidates stand on eight key 'matters':

1. Action on climate change
2. A First Nations Voice enshrined in the constitution
3. Wage justice for women
4. Stop men's violence
5. Affordable childcare for all families
6. Affordable housing for older women
7. Ending the cruel treatment of asylum seekers
8. Integrity and accountability

Get a group together (could be family members or a couple of friends) and ask your candidates to commit to various actions on each matter. Full instructions are available showing how to contact candidates and complete a simple table of results that is forwarded to *Matters that Count.* The information about candidates will be shared nationally before the election. Easy!

We can also learn more about the issues and make our voice go further by joining the campaigns of other like-minded organisations such as 1 Million Women, Climate Council, Rewiring Australia, Plastic Free July, UN Women, and Women's Agenda and Victorian Women's Trust.

Action: Don't get mad; get involved!



Right Here, Right Now

Natalie Isaacs from 1 Million Women has just completed her second book called Right Here Right Now, and this will be available from 7 July and can be pre-ordered.

The book focuses on how women can lead the way in the climate emergency – sounds right up our street!

Action: Look out for the book.



What is your Present for the Future?

This election will shape Australia's future for the next three years. However, we need to prepare the next generation of leaders today!

You can support our future leaders by giving a Present for the Future.

Zonta's education and advocacy programs educate girls, support women's participation in decision-making processes and inspire them to take on leadership roles in their communities.

Every dollar you contribute to the Zonta Foundation for Women's Endowment Fund will help us create a more gender-equal, sustainable world.

Action: *You can celebrate a birthday or special event by giving a Present for the Future to support Zonta's Endowment Fund and send a colourful e-card to acknowledge the occasion.*

Zonta Says NOW
www.zontasaysnow.org.au
zontasaysnow@gmail.com

This email was sent to {{ contact.EMAIL }}
You received this email because you are registered with Zonta Says NOW

Unsubscribe here

Sent by sendinblue

© 2022 Zonta Says NOW, Zonta International District 23