

## Government “missing in action” as climate security threats land on Labor’s radar

The Australian Government is failing to address the biggest security threat to our nation, climate change, according to former Defence Force Chief Admiral Chris Barrie AC (Retd) and a founding member of the Australian Security Leaders Climate Group (ASLCG), following Labor’s new climate policy announcement that includes measures to address climate-security threats to Australia.

“The Australian Labor Party are facing up to the threat that climate change poses to our future safety and well-being, but the Government remains missing in action on climate-security risks” Admiral Barrie said.

“Our closest allies, including AUKUS partners the USA and UK, have recognised and are acting to mitigate the impacts of climate change on the security of their people and on peaceful relations between nations, yet our own government is falling behind.

“Following the release of ASLCG’s [Missing In Action Report](#) in September and the group’s recent engagement with Parliamentarians, I am pleased that the existential security threats presented by climate change are showing up on Labor’s radar.

“It is encouraging that, as part of Labor’s recently announced climate policies, they have adopted key climate and security recommendations from [ASLCG’s policy proposals](#), including committing to an urgent climate risk assessment, which the Group has been strongly advocating for.

The ALP’s new climate policy commits to:

- Commission the Director General of National Intelligence and the Secretary of Defence to lead the development of an urgent climate risk assessment;
- Build an Australian National Prevention and Resilience Framework; and
- Include a new annual climate report to Parliament.

The policy notes that “the Australian Security Leader Climate Group argues that Australia has repeatedly ignored the risks and is ill-prepared for the security implications of devastating climate impacts at home and in the Asia-Pacific, the highest-risk region in the world”.

ASLCG welcomes these specific commitments from Labor as credible first steps in coming to grips with the very real and present climate and security risks to Australia and our region. Labor’s commitments mean that the spotlight is now squarely on the government, said Admiral Barrie.

“Climate change remains the most significant threat to our security and we must now act accordingly with the necessary scale and speed of action.

“It is perplexing that a government that claims to be strong on security issues is weak, and even silent, on the greatest threat to the future security, safety and wellbeing of all Australians.”

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*The [Australian Security Leaders Climate Group](#) is a new non-partisan network of Australian security and policy professionals that is working to reframe the climate debate and make climate an immediate security priority in Australia, through assessing the full level of risk posed by climate change and building resilience for local and global protection.*