

## ENVIRONMENT

### Desalination plant

Greens MPs campaigned strongly against Sydney's proposed desalination plant, including initiating an Upper House inquiry into a sustainable water supply for Sydney and compelling the release of documents exposing the desalination debacle. The mounting pressure forced the government to shelve the proposal, which was a huge victory for the environment. The campaign continues for a more sustainable water supply for Sydney, using alternatives such as demand management, recycling and stormwater harvesting.

### No nuclear waste dump

Greens MPs stood up for communities concerned nuclear waste would be driven past their front doors. While the NSW Government lay down, Greens MPs fought federal plans to build a new nuclear waste dump in NSW.

### Conserving electricity

Greens MPs supported the campaign to reduce demand for electricity. The campaign forced the Government to respond by setting up the Energy and Water Savings Fund, which will reduce demand through incentives to use electricity and water more wisely.

### Brigalow Belt woodlands saved

Greens MPs helped force the NSW Government to deliver on its promise to protect large areas of the remaining woodlands of the Brigalow Belt Bioregion South. This was an important victory for conservation in NSW, with almost 350,000 hectares of woodland protected from further logging.

### Integrity of wilderness protected

Greens MPs stood on the front line with protesters to stop a B-Grade Hollywood movie being made in the Heritage listed Grose Wilderness in the Blue Mountains.

### Sandminers held at bay

Greens MPs joined with local community protesters to save Stockton Bright, north of Newcastle, from sand mining, and campaigned to stop the expansion of sandmining in the Blue Mountains wilderness area.

### Protecting our rivers from mining

Greens MPs have used Parliament to support the campaign to place a 1km buffer zone between rivers and underground coal mines. Subsidence is cracking river beds, destroying creeks and collapsing cliffs.

Ian Cohen out on a limb supporting Bob Brown's *Save the Styx* campaign.



### Dealing with waste

Greens MPs campaigned strongly for new targets to reduce waste to landfill, while also working in Parliament to lobby for a container deposit scheme.

### Animal rights

Greens MPs worked with animal rights groups to try and overturn the *Game Bill*. They campaigned to stop the import of four Thai elephants, which have undergone cruel treatment to be domesticated, and lobbied the Government to use the new rainforest enclosure at Taronga Zoo as a retirement home for circus elephants.

### Old growth forests protected

Greens MPs made sure Labor delivered on its promise to protect remaining areas of old growth forest in north east NSW, saving 65,000 hectares from logging.

### Climate change

Greens MPs use every opportunity in Parliament to promote a robust renewable energy sector in NSW. They have challenged Government plans to build new dirty coal-fired power plants and stood up against the might and greed of the coal industry.

## INAPPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT

### Putting the community back in charge

Greens MPs have used the NSW Parliament to campaign against bad development. We have asked hundreds of questions, made speeches, moved motions, introduced Private Members Bills and called for inquiries on behalf of community groups and individuals fighting some of Australia's most powerful developers.

### Callan Park saved

Greens MPs were very proud to work with the community to save Callan Park. Community pressure and the Greens' *Save Callan Park Bill* forced Labor to reverse its position.

### Overdevelopment kit

The Greens have developed a detailed kit for communities fighting overdevelopment, to empower communities to work together at the grassroots level for a common cause.

### Bad developer awards

Greens MPs set up an inaugural awards night to expose bad developers and honour community campaigners.

### Greens Urban Strategy

The Government's Metropolitan Strategy was nothing more than a series of press releases with no funding or legislation to back it up. Greens MPs have taken the initiative and are creating their own Urban Strategy, setting out a 30 year vision to make Sydney more sustainable.

### Reining in mobile phone towers

Greens MPs developed a campaigning kit that helps communities fight a proposal by a mobile phone company to install a mobile phone tower in a residential area without council consent.

### Local Government saved from amalgamations

A concerted campaign by Greens MPs challenged the Government's unpopular regime of sacking and amalgamating councils. Greens MPs worked with local communities to stop a number of forced amalgamations.

## HOUSING

### Support for residential park tenants

Greens MPs have worked closely with residents to secure better compensation for residents forced to move because a park owner wishes to redevelop. The Greens have supported residents who want to set up co-operatively-owned residential parks and remove landlords and developers from the equation.



Sylvia Hale addresses a protest against the war in Iraq.

### Affordable Housing Legislation

The Greens are proposing a Private Members Bill to amend the planning laws in order to mandate at least 10% affordable housing in all new residential developments in high housing cost areas of NSW.

### Social housing

Greens MPs have consistently advocated for an expansion of social and community housing and opposed the government's harsh Reshaping Public Housing agenda because of its unfair impacts.

## HEALTH

### Mental health funding

Greens MPs have campaigned for increased funding for mental health. They pushed for better treatment and services for people with a mental illness.

### Disability funding restored

After the Government cut funding for training programs for young people with a disability, pressure from the Greens and the public caused the Government to back down and restore funding to disability programs. Greens MPs will keep the pressure up to increase funding for community run programs.

### Drug law reform

Greens MPs developed a Private Members Bill to treat cannabis use as a health and social issue, not a crime. They introduced a Private Members Bill to allow safe injecting room trials in Kings Cross and extend the trial to other areas in NSW.

### Dental health

Greens MPs have campaigned for better rural public dental health services.

## RURAL/REGIONAL

### Protecting non-GM farmers

Greens MPs campaigned for a moratorium on the release of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and to indemnify non-GM farmers from prosecution if their crops are contaminated. They stood up for farmers against big agribusinesses trying to make quick millions off their backs.

### Fight for river health

The future health of NSW rivers has been placed in doubt by over extraction, particularly by large irrigation businesses. Greens MPs have supported the campaign for critical environmental flows to be preserved to allow natural flooding and river systems to function.

### Saving mighty Murray Red Gums

Greens MPs have pressured the Government to act to save red gum forests along the Murray River from being decimated.

### Greening rural assistance

The Rural Assistance Act, which assesses natural disaster assistance for farmers, now has a green tinge thanks to a Greens amendment that considers ecological sustainability principles when judging applications for assistance.

### Keep rural rail branch lines open

Greens MPs have worked with the NSW Farmers Association, toured the state's disused rail lines, met with farmers and community leaders and spoken at rallies. The campaign had a partial win with the Government committing a multi-million dollar boost to rail repairs.

### Supporting coal affected communities

Greens MPs have hosted coal issues forums and visited regional communities to help protect local communities and the environment from damaging methods of coal mining.

### Pacific Highway upgrades

Ignored by the RTA and Government, north coast communities have been strongly supported by Greens MPs to modify Pacific Highway upgrades to protect agricultural land and residents.



Lee Rhiannon protested at mining river damage

## PUBLIC EDUCATION

### Schools saved

A strong community campaign, an Upper House Inquiry and numerous questions and speeches in Parliament from Greens MPs forced Labor to backdown on plans to sell off Hunters Hill, Dulwich Hill and Marrickville High Schools and Erskineville Public School.

### Supporting teachers

On the eve of a mass meeting of public sector teachers at Parliament House in 1999, the Greens MPs moved a successful motion to support striking teachers. In 2004, they moved another motion and spoke in Parliament to support further pay related industrial action by teachers.

### Tackling funding inequality

Acting on a 1999 election promise to curb public funding of the wealthiest private schools, the Greens moved the *Education Amendment (Reduction of Financial Assistance to Wealthy Non-Government Schools) Bill*. Labor and the Coalition parties teamed up to defeat the Bill.

### Reducing class sizes

Greens MPs worked hard to make class sizes a political issue. They asked questions in Parliament to expose the Government's appalling ignorance of actual class sizes. Together with teachers, their union and parents, the Greens were successful in reducing the size of Kindergarten to Year 2 classes.

### TAFE defended

After a long campaign that included a Greens "Save TAFE" Private Members Bill in 2000, the Government agreed to a new staffing formula for TAFE. Greens MPs continued the campaign to restore funding cuts with motions, questions and speeches in Parliament.

### English as a second language (ESL) teachers

A Greens motion to increase the number of ESL teachers was successful, with the support of the Cross Benchers and the Opposition but not Labor.



Lee Rhiannon worked with the community to prevent the sale of public schools



Ben Kishony/Sydney Morning Herald

Ian Cohen protests Australian troops leaving to fight in Iraq

## TRANSPORT

**Cross City Tunnel deal exposed**  
Greens MPs used Parliament to get privileged documents released to the public that told the true story of the Government's ill-fated deal with the private sector.

**End motorway madness**  
Every time the Government introduces a major road building project, Greens MPs argue for a better funded public transport network to meet Sydney's future transport needs.

**Better rail services**  
Greens MPs have campaigned for increased rail funding and improved services, the restoration of the Casino to Murwillumbah line, to save the railway line into Newcastle and to extend Sydney's light rail network.

**Save CountryLink campaign**  
Greens MPs have fought service cutbacks and line closures, travelling on CountryLink trains across NSW and bringing the voices of regional rail passengers into the Parliament via petitions, questions and debate.

**Better deal for bike riders**  
A better deal for cyclists is at the core of the Greens' transport policy, and the Greens MPs have been strong supporters of improved cycling facilities and increased funding for local and major bicycle projects.

**Buses in Western Sydney**  
Greens MPs forced amendments to a Bill to better manage Sydney's buses, requiring more public consultation, better job conditions and greenhouse standards.



Greens MPs support community groups in Parliament and on the street.

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE



Sylvia Hale addresses a refugee support rally

**Equal rights for same-sex couples**  
Greens MPs moved amendments to the *Adoption Bill 2000*, to allow same sex couple adoption rights, but Labor, the Coalition and Fred Nile voted for ongoing inequality. They also campaigned for same sex marriage rights in NSW.

**Closing anti-discrimination loopholes**  
The Greens introduced a Private Members Bill to close loopholes in the Anti-Discrimination Act that allow private schools and small business employers to discriminate on the basis of sexuality, age, gender and disability.

**Equity for refugees**  
The Greens campaigned for refugees on Temporary Protection Visas to have the same access to health, education and housing services as other residents.

**Supporting Indigenous rights**  
Greens MPs have given long-term support to native title claimants, resulting in precedent-setting negotiations for an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with the Arakwal people in Byron Bay. They moved a stolen wages motion that forced the Government to recognise the tens of millions of dollars stolen from Aboriginal people over many decades.

**Sticking up for injured workers**  
Labor's outrageous attack on workers' compensation in 2001 was challenged both inside and outside Parliament. Labor and Coalition collusion left it up to the Greens to move more than 100 amendments to the legislation.

**Confronting racism**  
Greens MPs have consistently spoken out against Labor and Coalition attempts to racially stereotype crime.

**No War in Iraq**  
Greens MPs attempted to get the NSW Parliament to debate Australian involvement in the war, believing it to be a matter of public importance. Labor and the Coalition refused to agree to a debate.

**Just conditions on the way for outworkers**  
Creative campaigning by Fairwear and the union that covers textile workers and supported by Greens MPs pushed Labor to legislate against the appalling exploitation of outworkers.

**Voluntary euthanasia**  
Greens MPs advocated for voluntary euthanasia in the NSW Parliament with the *Rights of the Terminally Ill Bill 2002*. Although the Bill was ultimately defeated, the debate and interest it provoked served to remind the Government that this issue has community support.

**Defending the rights of the injured**  
Greens MPs led the Parliamentary opposition to the Carr Government's changes to public liability laws, which profited insurance companies at the expense of injured people's rights.

**Standing up for industrial rights**  
Greens MPs have worked closely with the union movement to protect workers' rights and organised a major forum exploring the damaging impact of the Howard Government's changes to industrial relations.



Ian Cohen helps to unload tsunami relief supplies in Hikkaduwa, Sri Lanka.

## DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

**Reining in polities' perks**  
Since 1999, the Greens have been campaigning to end politicians' perks such as the overly generous MPs' superannuation package. In 2005 MPs' superannuation payouts were finally brought in line with community expectations. They also published MPs' pay and perks on the web.

**Banning developer donations**  
Greens MPs moved a Private Members Bill to ban developer donations to political parties, to make sure that Government decisions are free from improper influence. They built a Greens donations website - [www.democracy4sale.org](http://www.democracy4sale.org).

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**Policy before politics**  
Greens MPs are committed to making communities safer with solutions that deliver positive outcomes rather than exploiting the community's fears and insecurities through 'law and order' scaremongering.

**Making justice fair**  
Greens MPs have opposed Labor's law and order bills that have extended police powers unnecessarily, placed unfair restrictions on prisoners and curtailed people's ability to collect details on corrupt police.

**Exposing excessive terrorism laws**  
In the NSW Parliament Greens MPs led the campaign against Labor's various anti-terrorism bills exposing the excessive and unnecessary increase in police powers.

**Reforming sexual assault laws**  
Working with women's groups, Greens MPs helped establish a review of NSW sexual assault laws.

**Pushing for gun control**  
The major parties gagged Upper House debate on a Greens motion calling for the banning of semi-automatic handguns, to bring them into line with semi-automatic long arms.

**Sniffer Dogs**  
Greens MPs opposed the expansion of random sniffer dog drug searches, which encourage discriminatory policing.

# Making a Difference



Ian Cohen, Sylvia Hale and Lee Rhiannon

## Achievements in the NSW Parliament

*Ian Cohen was the first Greens representative elected to the NSW Parliament in 1995.*

*In 1999, Lee Rhiannon joined the Greens team, followed by Sylvia Hale in 2003.*

*The three Greens MPs are seen by many as the true opposition in the NSW Parliament. With their unique combination of Parliamentary and public action, they are advancing an agenda of social and economic justice, environmental protection and democratic values.*