

## Gillard to ask the people on climate change

By Tim Leslie

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**A re-elected Labor government would ask a new "citizens' assembly" for climate change advice, under a key part of the ALP's new climate change policy set to be launched by Prime Minister Julia Gillard today.**

The ABC understands Ms Gillard will outline plans to set up a committee of scientists to advise the Government on climate change.

The committee will be paired with a citizens' assembly, consisting of 100-200 volunteers who will gauge feeling of the community on its attitude towards putting a price on carbon, and feed it back to the Government.

The policy launch comes two-and-a-half months after the Federal Government decided to shelve its emissions trading scheme.

Ms Gillard has signalled climate change as one of the key issues for the Government to address during the election campaign.

The decision to delay the ETS until 2013 is thought to be the main reason behind former prime minister Kevin Rudd's slide in the polls, which led to him being dumped by the party.

Ms Gillard is also expected to unveil a boost to efficiency and renewable energy programs.

The Government says it is still committed to a market mechanism for putting a price on carbon, but at present the Greens are the only party proposing such a policy for the next term of government.

Opposition Leader Tony Abbott has repeatedly ruled out introducing a carbon price, saying his government would only charge for carbon in the event of a global system.

The Coalition has instead promoted a direct action plan to address climate change, centred on carbon sequestration and rebates for businesses who cut their emissions.



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The Coalition claims this policy will cut greenhouse gas emissions by 5 per cent by 2020 and only cost \$3.2 billion.

Mr Abbott says this policy will be funded by cuts to government spending and that no consumer should carry the burden of a carbon price.

Shadow Environment Spokesman Greg Hunt says Julia Gillard's proposed "citizens assembly" will fail to produce action.

He says the Opposition is promising a \$2.5 billion fund to battle emissions.

"It's a recipe for endless Rudd-type talks," he said.

"Kevin Rudd himself would be proud of the 2020 summit meets Copenhagen.

"Our approach is real action, direct action to clean up power stations to reduce emissions."

But former leader Malcolm Turnbull, who was rolled over the issue, said the Coalition policy was "less than ideal".

"The Coalition's policy is not the ideal from my point of view I grant you that, I'd like to see a market-based solution, but I'll tell you this, it does have the potential to meet the emissions reductions targets by 2020," he said.

"The real question is the policy. Everyone knows where I stand, I've stuck to my principles on it. But the fact is, we have got a policy, Labor has nothing."

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