

**Media Release – Friday July 23, 2010**

**Conservation Council of Western Australia**

## **Gillard's coal policy opens a window of opportunity for big polluters**

Western Australia's peak environment has group expressed extreme frustration at the lack of leadership on climate change from the Australian Labor Party in response to Prime Minister Julia Gillard's announcements on climate change.

Conservation Council Director, Piers Verstegen said "let's call a spade a spade – Labor's climate policy is actually a coal policy and shows all the hallmarks of being written by the coal industry."

"Julia Gillard's proposal to delay any concrete action on climate change for at least 12 months is nothing more than a window of opportunity for big polluters."

"In this time frame we could see a massive expansion of the coal industry in WA locked in, among other projects that would see WA carbon pollution increase by 75%"

"If this pollution expansion is allowed to go ahead it will become near impossible to meet Australia's international obligations to radically reduce carbon pollution."

"Australia's next government must draw a line in the sand and prevent any new coal power stations in Australia"

"A carbon price must also be introduced by 2011 to begin the transition away from fossil fuels and instead see the renewable energy industry flourish."

"The 2007 election result gave the ALP the mandate and responsibility to act on climate change, and current polling reinforces the continued level of community support to take urgent action."

Julia Gillard's 'people's assembly on climate change' is more talk and delays when we need action and leadership."

"Julia Gillard claims to be taking the country forward, however today's announcement is clearly a step backwards for Australia on climate change." Concluded Mr Verstegen