Greens MPs

History

The Australian Greens is a federation of eight state and territory parties which grew out of Australian environment movements in the 1970s and 1980s. The campaign to save Lake Pedder led to the formation of the United Tasmania Group in 1972. This was the first ‘green party’ in the world.

The 1980s were a time of enormous growth and professionalism in green movements, resulting in the election of Australia’s first green member of parliament. In 1984 a national conference was called and Greens parties were formed in Queensland and New South Wales. The NSW Greens stood candidates in the 1984 state election. In the same year Jo Vallentine was elected to the Senate for Western Australia as a member of the Nuclear Disarmament Party, before leaving to form her own. In 1990 this group merged with others to form the WA Greens.

Throughout the 1980s forest campaigns in Western Australia, Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania strengthened and developed the green movement. At the end of the decade, the Wesley Vale Pulp Mill campaign saw three more Greens (Christine Milne, Di Hollister and Lance Armstrong) elected to the Tasmanian Parliament in 1989. With Bob Brown and Gerry Bates (who had been elected in 1986) they formed an alliance called The Green Independents. They held the balance of power, and the ALP governed with their support as a minority government until 1992.

The 1990s began with serious efforts to form a national Green political party. By the end of 1992, both the Australian Greens and a Victorian Greens party were established. In the national parliament, Jo Vallentine retired in 1992 and Christabel Chamarette filled her WA Greens Senate seat. In the 1993 federal election another WA Greens senator, Dee Margetts, was elected to the Senate, and she and Christobel held the balance of power in the Senate. Bob Brown was elected to the Senate for Tasmania in the 1996 election, while Christobel was not re-elected. Dee also lost her seat in the 1998 election, leaving Bob as the lone Green in the Senate.

The new century brought increasing promise. The 2001 federal election saw Bob re-elected and joined by Kerry Nettle for New South Wales. In a federal by-election in 2002, Michael Organ from Illawarra, NSW, became the first Greens member of the House of Representatives, but he lost the seat at the next general election.

In 2004, the Greens increased their Senate representation to four when Bob Brown and Kerry Nettle were joined by Christine Milne from Tasmania and Rachel Siewert from Western Australia.

At the 2007 Federal election, more than a million Australians voted Green. Bob Brown was resoundingly re-elected, but Kerry Nettle was not, despite an increase in her vote. Sarah Hanson-Young from South Australia and Scott Ludlam from Western Australia joined Bob, Christine and Rachel in the Senate, bringing the total number of Senators to five and therefore achieving official Parliamentary Party status. This new make-up of the Senate also put the Australian Greens into shared balance of power with two independents.

To read more visit http://www.biostim.com.au/sustainable-agriculture.html