

Labour's Green New Deal is a good step in the right dir...

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Labour has reaffirmed its commitment to a Green New Deal [in a document released](#) by Anneliese Dodds and Ed Miliband in their respective roles as Shadow Chancellor and Shadow Business Secretary. which roll covers the environment brief.

In summary, the plan is sound. I would like it to be more ambitious, and believe it could be. But it hits the right targets. That makes it a solid step in the right direction. The principles that it embodies are, I think, appropriate:

Principles for a Green Economic Recovery

The rest of this report indicates a number of actions that Government needs to take in the near term, to support the creation of up to 400,000 additional jobs while meeting the challenge of the climate and environmental crisis. However, a number of consultation responses highlighted essential elements which must form the framework for Government policy towards the green recovery. These included:

1. **Sufficient action to meet the scale of the climate challenge.** The climate and environmental emergency is the greatest threat facing our planet. Actions must be aligned with the global imperative to keep temperature rises below 1.5°C. Green recovery measures must be implemented at a pace and scale which is led by science and international expertise, aiming for deep decarbonisation over the coming decade.
2. **A recovery based on decent work.** As Britain heads for a once-in-a-generation jobs crisis, supporting the creation of the good, low carbon jobs of the future is essential. The growth in precarious work and continued low pay was consistently highlighted as critical by those responding to the consultation. It is therefore imperative that any jobs-rich green recovery involves new roles which are decently paid, and which provide job security and decent terms and conditions. Crucial to this is ensuring a strong voice for trade unions in the industries of the future.
3. **A just transition for a fairer, more sustainable and dynamic economy.** Green recovery measures must be focused on supporting future-facing businesses, be resilient in the face of future economic shocks, address existing inequalities within the labour market and guard against creating new ones, whilst promoting health and wellbeing as well as economic growth.⁴¹ Labour's approach to securing a jobs-rich, green economic recovery will always be rooted in our values as a party.
4. **Change is needed at system, not just sector, level.** Investment in green technologies coupled with business as usual across the rest of the economy will not suffice to tackle the climate and environmental emergency. Green investment must be accompanied by extensive regulatory and institutional change, covering all areas of public policy and across all Government departments. Outside Whitehall, businesses, workers, unions, and communities across the UK will need to work together to find common solutions to support the shift towards a more sustainable and secure economy.

My submission, with Colin Hines, to Labour's call for evidence was on funding. We proposed a national investment bank, of course. It is in Labour's proposal. And we suggested that this bank should be allowed to issue bonds, permitting green QE if need be. In addition, we suggested that those bonds be incentivised for retail saving. Labour has said:

I am pleased Labour has taken note. The proverbial 'how are you going to pay for it' question has been addressed without, I admit, explicitly touching on MMT.

So I can back this plan.

That said, I am aware that some in Labour are angry about it. The suggestion is that Rebecca Long-Bailey's version of the Green New Deal was planned to exclude private sector participation in the process, and so what is being proposed now is not sufficiently socialist. I admit that I think the criticism unfounded. That is firstly because the delivery of a Green New Deal without private sector participation would be nigh on impossible: of course private sector companies would always be involved in the supply process. And second, that is because I consider this an irrelevant argument. We live in a mixed economy and are going to do so. Redrawing the boundaries between sectors may well be important, most especially in many care environments and around education, justice and other issues. And I am not denying, of course, that direct local authority action may have a real role to play in delivering the Green New Deal. But to pretend that the environment is the secondary in concern in the Green New Deal is just wrong.

Labour has a serious policy now, and I welcome it.