



Think Forward ▶

Tax and the Wellbeing Economy



ABOUT THINK FORWARD

Think Forward is led by a group of younger people committed to securing tax and economic reform for intergenerational equity.

We founded Think Forward in response to dismissive attitudes towards younger people, which suggested that we should simply find a better job or save more to get ahead. Instead, we wanted to highlight how structural barriers prevent younger Australians from achieving economic security.

Since founding Think Forward, the issues surrounding intergenerational inequality are now widely recognised, but action is still lacking. Today, Think Forward continues to conduct research, but we also focus on advocacy and education to raise public awareness, build support for reform, and empower our political leaders to take act.

We are non-partisan, and our work does not favour support for any particular party—just good policy.



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF OUR TAX SYSTEM?



OR



THE PROBLEM WITH HOW WE SEE TAX

- Dominant narrative: tax = burden, cost, revenue tool.
- Those who find loopholes rewarded / tax minimisation celebrated as smart
- Consequence: policies protect profit & capital accumulation over wellbeing.
- Result: crises and fragmentation - reactive spending on disaster, disease, housing.

THE ALTERNATIVE?

TAX AS A DESIGN TOOL FOR WELLBEING

- Tax should reflect our values and aspirations and the fact that we live in community.
- It can incentivise what we want: care, creativity, regeneration - raising revenue to invest in things that can't or shouldn't be provided by the market.
- It can disincentivise what we don't: harm, hoarding, extraction.

TAX AND THE 4 P'S

- Purpose (growth of what, where and for whom?)
- Prevention, not patch-up (invest early, avoid bigger costs later).
- Predistribution, not just redistribution (design fairer systems upfront).
- People Powered (Equity, sustainability, collective security and trust in the system for people as guiding outcomes)

PURPOSE

“It’s ridiculous that the system incentivises you to buy another investment property rather than start a small business that might employ someone or provide a needed service or good.” - Sonia Arakkal, Co-founder of Think Forward.

- TashInvests (182k followers) regularly commentates on how our system encourages investment in property over anything else.
- The Community Investment Tax Relief Scheme (UK) encourages private investment into disadvantaged communities - particularly those underserved by mainstream finance (e.g. low-income areas, social enterprises, community projects)



PRE-DISTRIBUTION

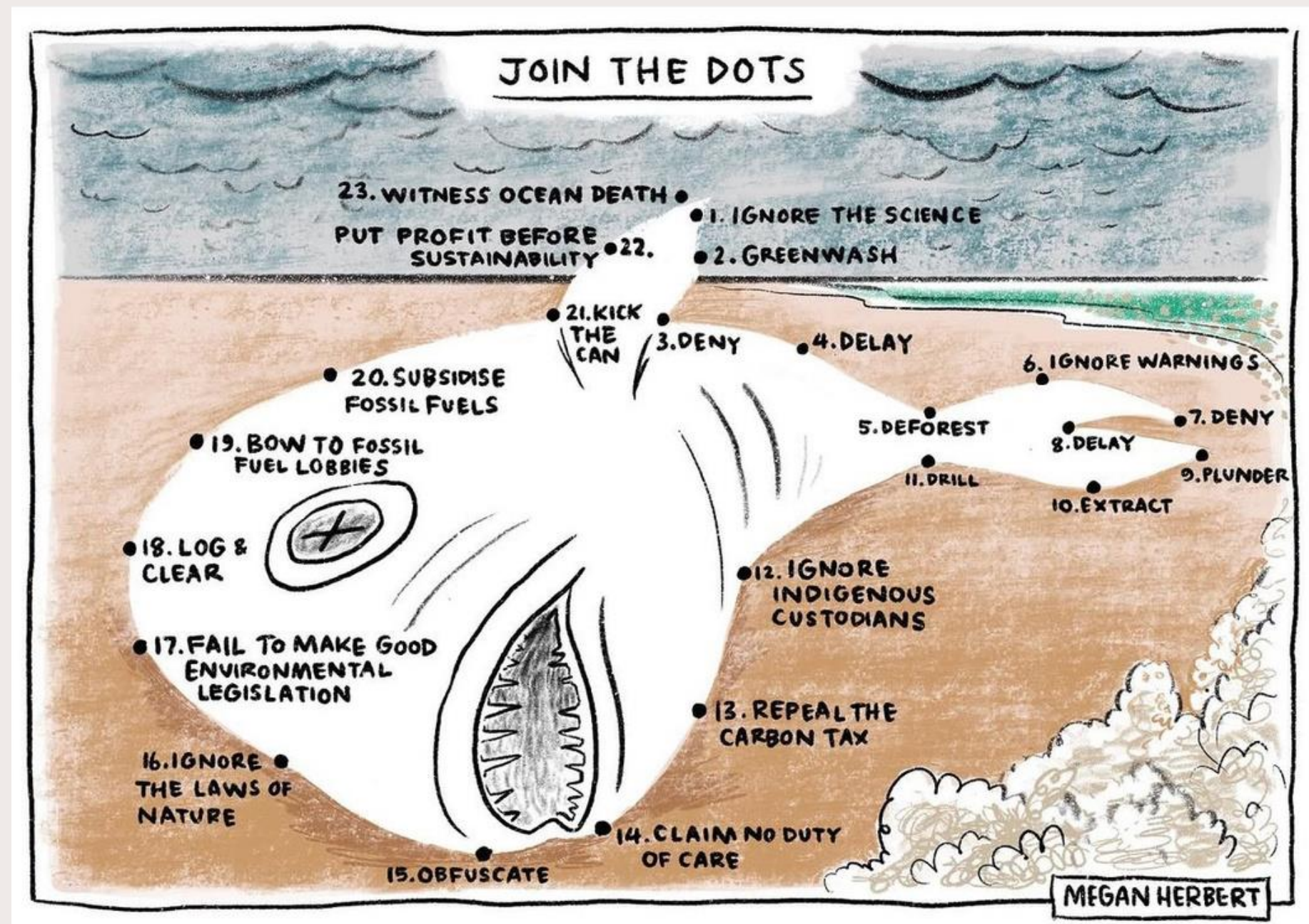
instead of re-distribution

- Portland introduced a CEO pay gap tax that charges an additional surcharge on any tax bill if the CEO's pay is more than 100 times the median worker's pay.
- Swap stamp duty for land tax. Unlike redistribution (e.g., subsidies for first-home buyers after the fact), this tax structurally shapes incentives toward fairer access to land and housing.

PREVENTION

Not patch up

- Mexico's sugar tax cut sugary drink sales by 10% in two years preventing chronic illness before it hit the hospital system.
- Sweden reduced their GST equivalent on repairs preventing waste, reducing emissions and supporting small repair businesses.



PEOPLE POWERED

- The cost-of-living crisis is a mental health crisis, stopping almost 90% of Gen Z and Millennials from pursuing their dreams and ambitions.
- Policy makers must act to make the tax system work for us, not against us. Democracy is at risk.
- We should never lose sight of how important hope for the future is.

Our Think Forward Kiosk opening feat: a room full of people still holding on to hope.





**Want to know more?
get in touch!**

**thinkforward.org.au
jane@thinkforward.org.au**

**Think
Forward▶**