



Fossil Fool Bulletin

Fossil fools in the spotlight this week: A resource for people working to end the fossil fuel era in Australia

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FFB 3:7 • 21 JANUARY 2020

Shenhua pushing forward with destructive coal plans at Breeza

By Eve Sinton

Chinese coal company Shenhua is pushing along with exploratory and environmental management plan works to have all its assessments done, and its Watermark mining lease application submitted, by the June 30 deadline of its current two-year extended exploration lease.

Located in the middle of a sensitive area for koalas and on the fertile Breeza Plain, the project has the farming community worried about long term impacts on the water upon which the local cropping industry is so dependent.

Lock the Gate Alliance is calling on the NSW Government to show political leadership and seize the upcoming opportunity to stop the destructive Liverpool Plains coal mine.

Under the terms of Shenhua's coal exploration licence, which was renewed in 2018, the NSW Government created an opportunity to cancel the licence if the multinational mining company failed to apply for a mining lease by 30 June 2020. The company is yet to make an application for a mining lease and is required to pay the NSW \$200 million when it does so.

The company is also yet to complete eight vital environmental studies needed before the mine can be approved.

Lock the Gate NSW spokesperson Georgina Woods urged the government to listen to farmers and Gomerioi

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Site of Shenhua's Watermark coal mine.
Photo: Shenhua

• P3: Report debunks 'clean' LNG myth

• P4: Too hot for Santos cyclists

P5: Inside the news – your quick guide

Shenhua pushing forward with destructive coal plans

• Continued from p1

people on the Liverpool Plains and cancel Shenhua's proposal.

"This project should never have been approved by this government. It is incompatible with the agricultural future of one of the most important food bowls in the country," she said.

Koalas likely to perish

"The mine would also displace a significant koala population and that poor species needs all the protection we can give it after so many have perished in the bushfire crisis.

Caroona Coal Action Group president Susan Lyle said the Shenhua coal mine's threat to koalas was often reduced to a side issue, but it should take centre stage.

Shenhua proposes to relocate the koalas from the mine site, but experts point to the high mortality rate of translocation.

The company planted 2,500 trees at the end of 2019, to create a tree corridor for koalas.

Lyle said the trees were currently only six inches high and would struggle to survive the drought.

"That doesn't pass any sort of pub test; they're just ticking a box," she said. "If they were really concerned about koalas, they should've planted trees five years ago."

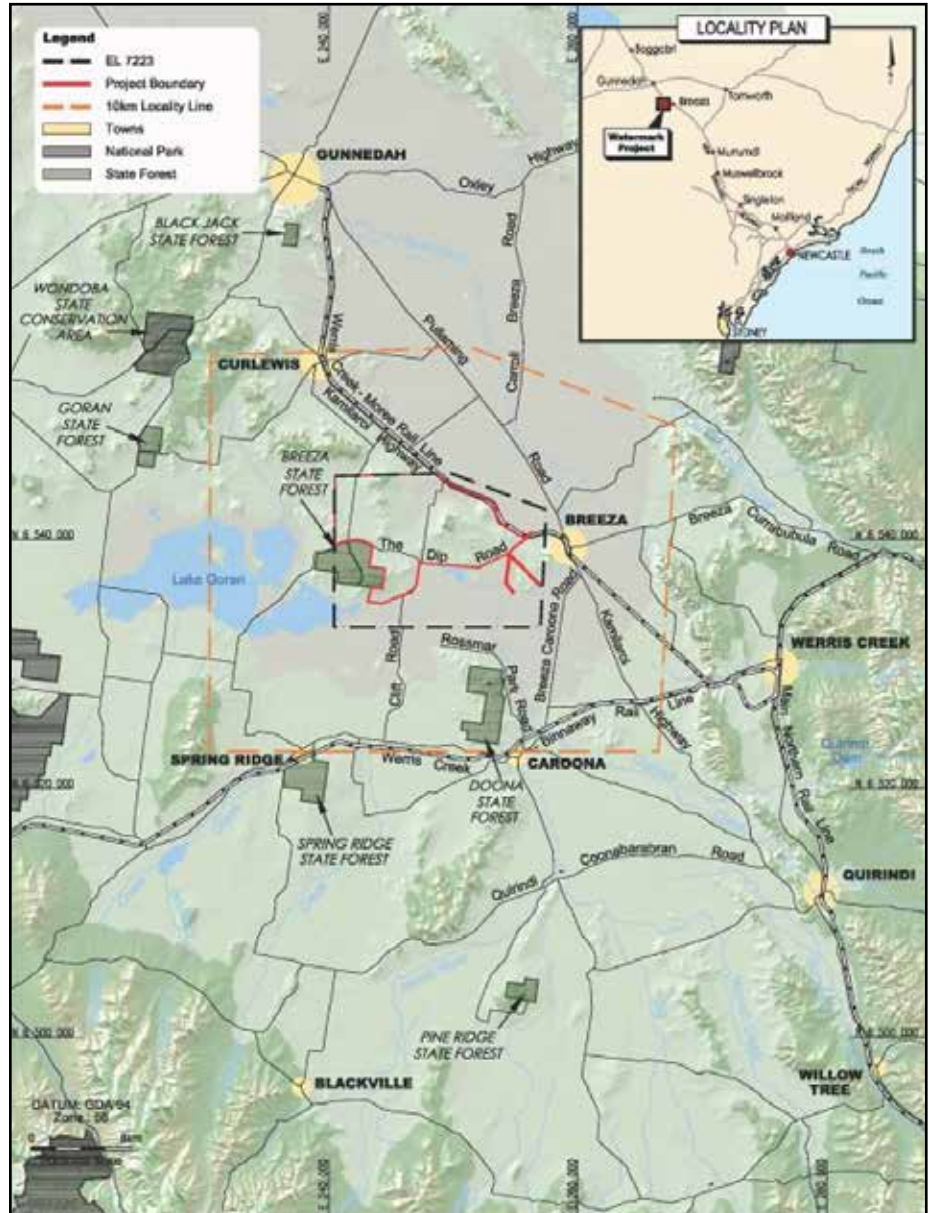
Water wars erupt

Competition for scarce water has intensified since Shenhua was first awarded its exploration licence in 2008, especially as other nearby mines have been outbidding farmers.

Over the past 12 months there have been cease and desist orders and investigations by the Natural Resources Access Regulator, as competition for water emerged between farmers and Whitehaven (the operator of Maules Creek and Tarrawonga mines and the planned Vickery mine extension).

Around Shenhua, south of Gunnedah, farmers' main concerns are the potential drawdown of the water table due to the planned depth of the pit.

Farming newspaper, *The Land*, said: "When the government makes its decision later this year, it won't just be making a decision about whether



*Location map of Shenhua's Watermark mine, near the town of Breeza.
Map: Shenhua*

to give the go ahead to a new mine, but also a decision about the future of agriculture on the Breeza Plain."

Lock the Gate's Georgina Woods said, "This was always the wrong place for a new thermal coal mine, but now it is very obviously the wrong time. This mine will contribute to the disastrous impacts of climate change such as the bushfires that have swept across the country."

The mine is expected to produce up to 10 million tonnes of coal each year over its 30-year lifetime.

Shenhua playing with livelihoods

Woods said Shenhua was playing with the livelihoods of NSW communities that would be impacted by its pro-

posed mine. "For fifteen years, local farmers and Gomerai people have fought to protect this region and stop this destructive coal mine on the Liverpool Plains," she said.

"Shenhua seems ambivalent about going ahead with this mine, but public opposition to it has not abated and is stronger than ever in the wake of the devastating fires of this summer.

"We are calling on the Berejiklian Government to cancel Shenhua's coal exploration licence when its time expires in July and make clear laws to protect New South Wales' productive farmland and water resources from coal mining."

LNG: New physicians' report debunks clean fuel myth

A full LNG tanker carries the energy equivalent of 55 atomic bombs. Photo: APLNG



Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), an American group, has released a 12-page report on the health impacts of liquid natural gas (LNG).

Australia is currently the world's top exporter of LNG, and the comments in PSR's assessment apply similarly in Australia, which uses the same technology and the same contractors as the American industry.

Climate health emergency

LNG contributes heavily to the health emergency created by climate change. LNG is primarily methane, a greenhouse gas 86 times more potent at trapping heat than carbon dioxide over its first 20 years in the atmosphere.

In addition, LNG may be more carbon-intensive than piped gas. To be liquified, the gas is stripped of any carbon dioxide (CO₂) it may be carrying; that CO₂ is then generally released through venting to the atmosphere. Furthermore, the liquefaction process itself requires a high amount of energy. This, in combination with gas releases and leaks from the gas wellsite and the compressor stations that keep gas flowing through the pipelines, results in an estimated 12-13% of the original fuel being lost or consumed throughout the entire LNG supply chain.

Extreme heat and weather

The 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report on climate change documents that human activities, primarily the use of fossil fuels, have already increased the earth's temperature by 1°C compared to pre-industrial levels.

The 2018 *Lancet* Countdown outlined the health impacts at the then-cur-

rent levels of warming. In the US, 24 million more Americans were exposed to extreme heat in 2011 than in 2010, and 12.3 million more in 2016 when compared to the same baseline. Heat exposure can cause potentially lethal heat stroke.

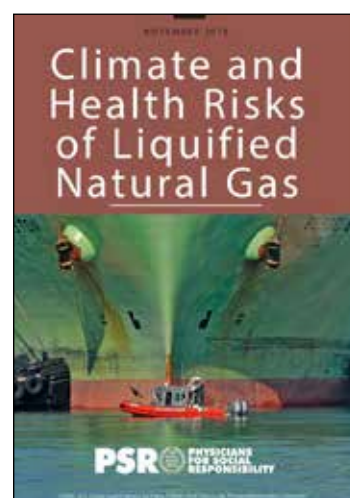
Extreme weather events like hurricanes resulted in damage to healthcare infrastructure and increases in waterborne illnesses and mental health illnesses. Wildfires increased mortality. Coastal areas saw an increase in *Vibrio* bacteria due to warmer oceans, as other regions experienced an increase in mosquito- and flea-borne illnesses. The IPCC, the US Global Change Research Program and the *Lancet* have all called for a rapid, unprecedented shift away from all fossil fuels in order to prevent potentially catastrophic climate change effects.

LNG is not a clean fuel

LNG and methane in general are marketed as a "clean" fossil fuel. But this is a relative term and applies only when comparing combustion emissions of methane to combustion of coal, a notorious polluter.

A full assessment of LNG's pollution impacts must consider the upstream effects of methane extraction, processing and transport.

The hydraulic fracturing extraction process injects a slurry of chemicals and millions of gallons of water thousands of feet underground at high pressure. Many of the chemicals used in fracking are not disclosed, but of the ones that are known, many have significant health effects. In 2016, a Yale study found that of the 1,021 chemicals identified in fracking fluids, only 241 had toxicity information



available. Of these, 157 were deemed toxic to the reproductive system or human development, and of those, 67 had federal guidelines regulating them.

However, due to passage of the "Halliburton loop-hole" in the 2005 Energy Policy Act, fracking operations are exempt from meeting the federal standards set in the Safe Drinking Water Act and Clean Water Act. Regulation is left to the states, and restrictions on fracking chemicals are weak to non-existent.

The fracked gas itself, like any other fossil fuel, is a source of pollutants, some of which are major health concerns. Fracked gas as it comes out of the ground is a mixture containing methane, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), particulate matter, and nitrogen oxides (NO_x).

Among the VOCs are the BTEX group, consisting of benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene. Benzene has been classified as a carcinogen and major human health concern with no safe levels of exposure. Meanwhile, tolu-

LNG: New physicians' report debunks clean fuel myth

• Continued from p3

ene and xylene both have detrimental impacts on the nervous system, and long-term exposure to ethylbenzene may lead to blood disorders.

Particulate matter, especially PM 2.5 and smaller particles, contributes to heart disease and is implicated in strokes, asthma, and cancer.

Nitrogen oxides are a reactive chemical that can combine with VOCs to form ground-level ozone, which contributes to lung diseases and asthma attacks and can aggravate pre-existing heart diseases. Nitrogen oxides also contribute to the formation of nitric acid vapor, acid rain, particulate matter and other harmful chemicals.

Toxic leaks at every stage of production

Emissions of methane and toxic gases can occur when fracked gas is transported via pipelines, which are subject to leaks and explosions. Leaks also occur from compressor stations and pipelines. To be liquified, the fracked gas must undergo a process that removes CO₂, mercury and some heavy hydrocarbons to create an end product that is primarily methane, which is then supercooled into a liquid.

Little public research has been conducted as to where the by-products of the "purification" process go.

These chemicals may cause serious harm. Mercury is a well-known neurotoxin; exposure in utero can result in lifelong impairments in cognitive thinking, memory, language, and attention.

The presence of LNG terminals also leads to poorer air quality. Loading and offloading tankers results in fugitive emissions of methane as well as NO_x, VOCs, ozone and particulate matter. In addition, the increase in traffic from trucks and tankers, often fuelled by diesel, adds to air pollution.

With LNG terminals often sited in areas that fail to meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards, these extra air pollutants exacerbate the health risks that already face heavily burdened communities.

Finally, when LNG is returned to a gaseous form in the importing country, it can again leak into the atmosphere, and, when used to generate electricity, can displace the development of clean, safe, renewable forms of energy.

Safety & security threats

LNG is a volatile and potentially explosive material, so plants pose challenges to safety.

In 2014 in Plymouth, Washington, LNG processing equipment exploded, injuring five employees while leaking enough gas to prompt the evacuation of residents within a two-mile (3.2km) radius.

The incident highlights serious gaps in oversight of the LNG industry: The injuries were not reported, since the employees were able to leave the hospital the same day.

Shrapnel from the explosion pierced multiple storage tanks causing LNG leaks. However, these leaks went unreported. Why? The accidents are not in

the reportable category because, when LNG comes in contact with the air, it evaporates. Thus, the leaks are never reported as "spills".

As LNG plants are located in coastal areas, they are vulnerable to the impacts of extreme weather events such as hurricanes and coastal flooding – events made more frequent and stronger due to climate change.

LNG also poses grounds for concern in regard to national security. A full LNG tanker carries the energy equivalent of 55 atomic bombs, making it a potential target for terrorist attacks, especially when at port near population centers.

Environmental injustice

LNG contributes to environmental justice problems, as liquefaction and export facilities often have disproportionate impacts on minority and sensitive populations.

These facilities are often placed in areas that are predominantly home to African American, Native American and Hispanic families and families of lower socioeconomic status, and may be sited close to schools and nursing homes.

Such proximity, often reflecting these communities' lack of political power, intensifies the impact on vulnerable populations and people with pre-existing health conditions.

• Download the report here:

<https://www.psr.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/LNG-WHITE-PAPER-11262019.pdf>

Fossil fuel-sponsored race exposed to increasing heat problems

The organisers of Australia's premiere road cycling event, the Tour Down Under, should consider starting race stages earlier in the day – or even move the tour away from mid-summer – to help protect cyclists from increasingly extreme heat driven by climate change.

That's one of the suggestions in a new assessment of the impact and exposure of Australian cycling to global warming by the Monash Climate Change Communication Research Hub.

Ironically, the race's major sponsor is oil and gas miner Santos, which is pushing for approval of its Narrabri gas project.

ON THE STEPS 2020

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• See more here: https://www.facebook.com/onthesteps2020/?hc_location=ufi



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Inside the news

For a red-hot, passionate look at the **Adani** mine, in the context of a burning planet, do click the link and read the whole **'Put another koala on the barbie'** story on p6. **FFB's** summary gives you the idea, but for an absolute roast, don't miss the whole story. And don't miss the associated cartoon on p7.

The glitch in **Falcon** and **Origin's Kyalla 117** frack well would have been buried by the **NT government** (p9), and only emerged into the public domain from an obscure **stock exchange** announcement in London. The drilling failure featured in last week's **FFB**.

Police in the UK have listed groups such as **Extinction Rebellion** and **Greenpeace** alongside **Nazis** in an anti-terrorism booklet (p10). This has also happened in the US and no doubt security goons want environmentalists dealt with like **terrorists** in Australia.

James Murdoch has broken ranks with his arch-conservative family to denounce **News Corp's** ongoing platform for climate denial (p10). You wouldn't know if you get your news from the *Oz*, the *Daily Terrorist* or *Sky*. Non-Murdoch publications have spread the development gleefully.

The climate wars have escalated, with attacks on the **Morrison** government's **denialist hubris** coming from former fire and rescue commissioner **Greg Mullins** (p10-11) and former Prime Minister **Malcolm Turnbull** (p13-14).

Morrison's own science minister **Karen Andrews** has called for people to accept climate science and address the issues (p12). But Morrison has doubled down on his response to the climate-induced fire emergency. He attacked NSW Liberal environment minister, **Matt Kean**, who has called for climate change action. Morrison says most of the federal cabinet wouldn't even know who Kean was, and that the man **"doesn't know what he's talking about"** (p14).

FFB's positive page does not appear this week. **No positive news was found.** The page will be revived when there's something cheerful to tell you about. Meanwhile, chins up!



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f GreenPigeonGraphics gpg@bordnet.com.au

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Fossil Fool Bulletin

Published by Eve Sinton
PO Box 555, Mullumbimby,
NSW 2482, Australia

f Fossil Fool Bulletin

M fossil.fool.bulletin@gmail.com
evesinton@gmail.com

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In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 22,200 words of news for your convenience. [Click on the links](#) to view original articles. (Subscriptions may be required)

THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au/news/adani-donates-to-lnp-ahead-of-qld-election/3921333/>

Adani among donors to LNP ahead of Qld election

Sonia Kohlbacher, *Fraser Coast Chronicle*, 15/01/2020

Mining firm Adani is among the donors splashing cash on Queensland's political parties ahead of a state election in October.

The company, which is building a new thermal coal mine in central Queensland, gave \$4,000 to the Liberal National Party in December.

That's on top of the \$25,000 they've donated to the LNP since April 2017, according to the Electoral Commission of Queensland's electronic disclosure system.

Labor got \$5,500 from multinational mining company Anglo American.

<https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/exclusive-put-another-koala-on-the-barbie-scott.13489>

Put another koala on the barbie for Adani, Scott

Tess Lawrence, *Independent Australia*, 17/01/2020

Put another koala on the barbie, Scott.

Why not a cow or two? How about a couple of million sheep? Would you like fries with that?

While you're at it Scotty, why not chuck a piece of that heart-warming «good for humanity» lump of Adani coal on the fire?

Australia's indecent collusion with Adani simply enshrines us as part of the problem of toxic emissions – and not the solution. It is the old story of First World nations imposing their environmental filth upon the Fourth World. For money.

Here's the ugly truth about Prime Minister Scott Morrison's cancellation of his taxpayer funded safe passage to India.

It wasn't simply because against the apocalyptic vision of this climate denier dilettante's inferno, it wouldn't have been a good look for ScoMo to go Bollywooding, especially after his pathetic Hawaiian hula hooping



Demonstrators outside Siemens' Mackay office in recent days. Photo: Galilee Blockade

escapade that will forever define his tenure. No.

And yes, we all knew that talkies about coal was high on the agenda.

There was a more insidious reason for post phoning the trip – a scheduled clandestine tryst with the notorious political influencer Gautam Adani, founder and supremo of the behemoth Adani group.

As with his Hawaiian escapade, Morrison's office and advisers wanted to keep the meeting secret, knowing full well the media storm it would provoke back home.

Gautam is big daddy to the Galilee Basin's Adani coal mine – poised to be the world's biggest. This means that Australia will host the world's biggest coal polluter and, oops, I nearly forgot, Adani is a bestie of India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Indian sources say Modi was relieved when Morrison cancelled his trip, because the latter's Muslim citizenship ban has triggered national riots and protests.

Modi's Gujarat State Government has sold extraordinary tracts of State land to Adani for ridiculously cheap prices.

Whilst Modi was Gujarat's CM that Adani had the good fortune to take control of operations of the gargantuan Mundra Port in Gujarat.

Now, whilst Modi was relieved at Morrison's cancelled visit, Gautam Adani was not.

It's fair to say Adani has tickets on himself and is peeved he has missed out on a photo opportunity with Australia's Prime Minister Morrison, to show off Mundra Port – especially its coal ferrying capacity.

Insiders say Adani is of the belief Morrison should have continued with his trip to India and would surely have been able to delegate others to "handle" the bushfires apocalypse at home.

The Adani brand has proven it simply cannot be trusted and, sadly, neither can the Morrison Government. Or any government, frankly. Adani is Badani for the Great Barrier Reef and the world, insofar as its fossil fuel mining is concerned.

Virtually hours before Morrison cancelled the trip to India, he got the nod that Adani was yet again to face more allegations; this time it was shonky tax dodging.

Sources in India and Australia have confirmed there has been feverish contact between the Prime Minister's office, various officials and intermediaries, Modi and Adani himself. He's very hands on, is Gautam.

When the blood red fog of our unwinnable coal war with nature subsides a little, Scott Morrison, and you stand amongst the ashes and charred



This Mark David cartoon has now been set to music: if you have a Spotify account see

<https://open.spotify.com/album/1rDRu88njshchPhPzN7YTj>

corpses, I hope you have the political courage to call a halt to Adani Mining's Carmichael coal mine. Pay them out. It would be less costly to the world than the alternative.

COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.afr.com/companies/financial-services/black-rock-dumps-thermal-coal-20200114-p53rd0>

BlackRock dumps thermal coal

Tony Boyd, AFR, 14/01/2020

BlackRock, the world's largest fund manager, is dumping more than half a billion dollars in thermal coal shares from all of its actively managed portfolios, as part of a more active global stance on climate change driven by chief executive Larry Fink.

The coal ban, which includes any company earning 25 per cent of its revenue from thermal coal, will apply to BlackRock's \$US1.8 trillion (\$2.6 trillion) in actively managed equity portfolios.

As part of a new sustainable investment policy, BlackRock will help clients screen out fossil fuels from passive portfolios.

Fink announced the coal ban in his annual letter to the chief executives of global companies BlackRock is invested in.

This year the letter was almost entirely devoted to climate change and its potential impact on the global allocation of capital.

"Climate change has become a defining factor in companies' long-term prospects," Fink wrote.

<https://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/6581916/one-third-of-nsw-koalas-gone-in-fires-ours-must-be-saved-from-shenhua/>

'One-third of NSW koalas gone in fires, ours must be saved from Shenhua'

Jamieson Murphy, Northern Daily Leader, 15/01/2020

Protecting the region's koalas from the Shenhua coal mine has become more important than ever, environmentalists say, with up to one-third of the state's population killed in the horror bushfires.

A wave of localised koala extinction has been sweeping across state's far west, and coastal populations have been decimated by the bushfires, leaving the region's koalas as one of the few unaffected populations.

Concerns have once again been raised about Shenhua's proposal to relocate the koalas from its proposed mine site on the Liverpool Plains, with experts pointing to the high mortality rate of translocation.

Caroona Coal Action Group president Susan Lyle said the Shenhua coal mine's threat to koalas was often reduced to a side issue, but it should take centre stage.

As part of Shenhua's interim koala habitat plan, the company planted 2,500 trees at the end of last year, to create a tree corridor for koalas.

Lyle said the trees were currently only six inches high and would struggle to survive the drought.

"That doesn't pass any sort of pub test; they're just ticking a box," Lyle said. "If they were really concerned about koalas, they should've planted trees five years ago."

Shenhua documents concede the "conditions are difficult at present due to the drought", but go on to say "the trees will be monitored".

<https://www.crikey.com.au/2020/01/16/australia-coal-free-future/>

Most Australians 'would hardly notice' if we went coal free, say experts

Georgia Wilkins, Crikey, 16/01/2020

Prime Minister Scott Morrison launched a strident defence of coal last week, saying the industry was worth \$70 billion a year to the economy and vital to many communities around the country.

But experts say most Australians would "hardly notice" if we went coal-free, and that the transition was already well underway.

"Life would go on as usual," said Paul Burke, an economist working on energy, the environment and transport at the Australian National University's Crawford School of Public Policy.

"We're just talking about one input into the economy, and fossil fuels are substitutional for renewables, especially given they are now much cheaper and reliable than before."

Burke said despite the polarisation of the climate change debate in Australia, the shift away from fossil fuels was not in fact a radical one, and "could happen in a way that most of us would hardly notice".

While the transition away from coal might require political leadership and policy change, it's happening already.

"The lights will still go on and we will continue to live our lives, and most of us will not even notice," Burke said.

<https://www.gladstoneobserver.com.au/news/acland-applies-to-disturb-priority-agricultural-land/3922538/>

Acland applies to disturb priority ag land for expansion

Matthew Newton, Gladstone Observer, 17/01/

Lock the Gate Alliance has accused New Hope Group, the owner of New Acland Coal Mine, of allowing "highly productive agricultural land" it owns on the Darling Downs to degrade so it can be mined.

In November, New Acland Coal Pty Ltd applied for a Regional Interests Development Approval to disturb 2995 ha of land classed as a Priority Agricultural Area for its Stage 3 expansion. Of that land, 2700 ha is classed as Strategic Cropping Area.

A Priority Land Use Assessment prepared by SLR Consulting Australia for New Acland as part of its application found of the 33 paddocks within the PAA study area, “all were found to qualify as non-Priority Agricultural Land Use, having not been cultivated a minimum of three years in the past ten”.

The report said New Hope Group planned to rehabilitate the land post-mining.

<https://www.theland.com.au/story/6580904/breezas-ag-future-hangs-with-govt-decision/>

Exploration, mining licence deadline looms for Shenhua

Andrew Norris, *The Land*, 17/01/2020

Chinese coal mining company Shenhua is cranking up exploratory and environmental management plan works to have all its assessments done – and its mining lease application submitted – by the June 30 deadline of its current two-year extended (and somewhat controversial) exploration lease.

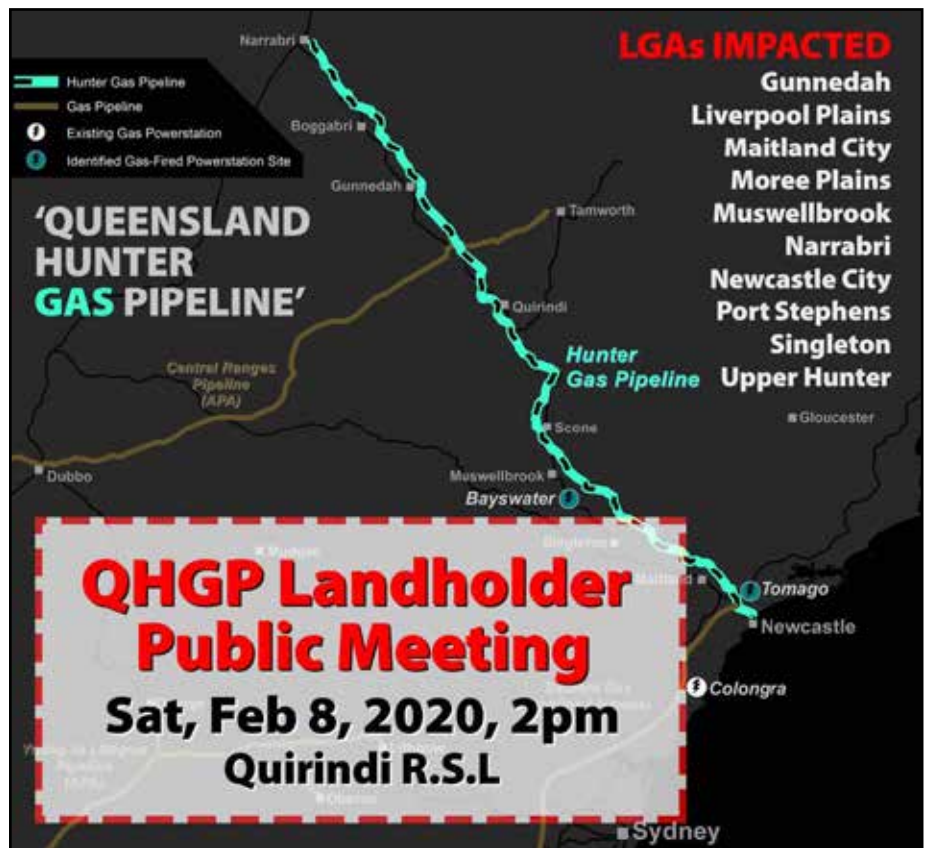
Smack bang in the middle of a sensitive area for koalas and amid the super fertile Breeza Plain, the project has the farming community worried about long term impacts on the water upon which the local cropping industry is so dependent.

Water is key, especially in such an extreme, dry season. Across the Breeza Plain right now, the only productive paddocks, despite the good soils, are where there is still irrigation.

The most concerning issue for farmers is the competition for water that’s emerged between farmers and Whitehaven (the operator of Maules Creek and Tarrawonga mines and the planned Vickery mine extension).

Back at Shenhua, south of Gunnedah, among farmers’ main concerns was the potential drawdown of the water table due to the planned depth of the pit.

When the government makes its decision later this year, it won’t just be making a decision about whether to give the go ahead to a new mine, but also a decision about the future of agriculture on the Breeza Plain.



OIL & GAS LEAKS

<https://www.theland.com.au/story/6578947/gas-pipeline-true-route-buried-at-the-bottom-of-the-approval-process/>

Hunter Queensland gas pipeline’s true route ‘buried at the bottom of the approval process’

Jamieson Murphy, *The Land*, 14/01/2020

Farmers on the Liverpool Plains were shocked to discover the proposed route of a \$2 billion gas pipeline runs straight through valuable irrigation land.

The planning system has been blamed for the confusion, with old maps displayed prominently and the correct maps “buried at the bottom of the approval process”.

The route of the Hunter Queensland Gas Pipeline was revised three times between the first and last steps of the planning process.

Many farmers are only just discovering what they originally negotiated in 2009 with Hunter Gas Pipeline, the company behind the project, is not what was approved by the state government.

Liverpool Plains farmer Peter Wills said much of what was negotiated with the region’s farmers “was not acted upon”.

One farmer negotiated for the pipeline to run over a small amount of cattle country, however, the approved route

goes straight through the property’s pivot irrigation paddocks.

With many farmers unaware the maps were changed late in the planning process, Wills said they were unable to raise concerns at the time.

<https://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/6589305/more-questions-raised-with-queensland-part-of-gas-pipeline-on-hold/>

More questions raised with Queensland part of gas pipeline on hold

Jamieson Murphy, *Northern Daily Leader*, 21/01/2020

Farmers on the Liverpool Plains are concerned the purpose of the \$1 billion Queensland Hunter Gas Pipeline has changed, given the Queensland section of the project has been put on an indefinite hold.

In 2017, the company behind the development, Hunter Queensland Pipeline, “voluntarily suspended” its environmental authority, which was granted by the Queensland government.

Mullaley farmer Margaret Fleck questioned if Hunter Queensland Pipeline actually intended to construct the Queensland section, as planning documents are yet to be lodged with the Queensland government.

The project’s website states the development would occur in stages, with the Narrabri to Newcastle section to be constructed first.



“That seems at odds with the overall purpose of the project,” Ms Fleck said.

“It makes me think the whole purpose has changed and is another ploy to open up the North West to widespread coal seam gas mining.”

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/business/companies/woodside-boss-laments-lng-black-eye-amidst-climate-debate-20200115-p53rrh.html>

Woodside boss laments LNG ‘black eye’ amidst climate debate

Hamish Hastie, Bris Times, 15/01/2020

The boss of Australia’s biggest LNG company has said the sector had copped an unfair ‘black eye’ in the climate change debate that had amped up in the wake of some of the worst bushfires the country has ever seen.

Speaking at the International Petroleum Technology Conference in Saudi Arabia this week Woodside chief executive Peter Coleman said liquefied natural gas wasn’t the ‘cigarette industry’ and needed to show the company was serious about climate change.

Coleman revealed climate change had soared up to top spot of the business risk list and was putting pressure public perception of the product, long term financing and attracting talent.

WA’s LNG sector is one of the biggest contributors to Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions with Woodside and Chevron alone contributing 22 million tonnes of carbon to Australia’s 336 million tonnes in 2017-18, according to the Clean Energy Regulator.

Anti-Woodside sentiment amongst climate groups in WA has grown to such a pitch that they plan on protesting the company’s sponsorship of Fringe World, a hugely popular arts and culture festival that runs over the back end of summer across Perth.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/unions-manufacturers-keep-up-pressure-for-more-gas-20200115-p53rkn>

Unions, manufacturers keep up pressure for more gas

Angela Macdonald-Smith, AFR, 15/01/2020

Trade unions and manufacturers are warning that bushfire-inflamed animosity towards fossil fuels and a softening in east coast gas prices should not be used as excuses by state governments to drag their heels on lifting restrictions to onshore gas, saying hundreds of thousands of jobs are at risk.

Daniel Walton, national secretary of the Australian Workers Union, said

that progressing local gas projects such as Santos’ Narrabri venture in NSW remained hugely important to help secure long-term supplies of gas for manufacturers.

East coast gas prices have softened markedly in recent weeks.

<https://www.cairnspost.com.au/news/national/antifracking-protesters-rally-outside-minister-eva-lawlers-office/news-story/5635aac9463f10bbbaa859e56f043f5>

Anti-fracking protesters rally outside Minister Eva Lawler’s office

Natasha Emeck, NT News, 16/01/2020

A crowd of anti-fracking protesters rallied outside the Environment Minister’s office on Thursday to protest her signing off on a Beetaloo Basin agreement over Christmas.

About 30 angry protesters, including traditional owners from Marlinja, gathered outside Lawler’s electorate office in Palmerston at 4.30pm on Thursday.

Protect Country Alliance NT spokesman Dan Robins said they wanted to raise concerns about Lawler signed off on Origin’s environmental management plans on December 23.

“Two days before Christmas the Environment Minister signed off on Origin to frack,” he said.

“I think the timing was deliberate to avoid any questions from the community on this approval.”

Lawler said, “There is a statutory requirement that I must grant or refuse an environmental approval within 90 days and all statement of reasons are put online to ensure that there is transparency and accountability.”

<https://www.katherinetimes.com.au/story/6583455/dont-keep-secrets-from-the-public-on-fracking-progress/>

Don’t keep secrets from the public on fracking progress

Chris McLennan, Katherine Times, 16/01/2020

It has been suggested the Northern Territory public did not need to know about the partial well failure at Kyalla 117 this week. The claim was made by an NT Government official, not the gas companies themselves.

Origin and its joint venture partner Falcon Oil and Gas have tried to allay public disquiet once the information was made public, though not by the government.

This is the showpiece well, the Government itself made a big song and dance about Kyalla 117 last year as it

looks to onshore gas as a way out of its economic mire.

For the first well to strike problems of any sort is cannon fodder to the anti-frackers but worrying to those sitting on the fence as well.

Origin and Falcon reported the “operational problem” to the NT Department of Primary Industry and Resources as it is required to do but there was no plan to tell the public about it.

Falcon is headquartered in Dublin but is listed on several stock exchanges, including London’s, and as is legally required, reported it had struck some minor trouble thousands of kilometres away in the remote outback of Australia.

The trouble it reported was less about the integrity of the work, but the delay it was going to cause.

Company officials face jail if they don’t disclose operational issues which may impact on the bottom line of projects, even those a long, long way away.

That’s how the information got out.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/sims-questions-out-of-kilter-gas-prices-20200117-p53shn>

Sims questions ‘out of kilter’ gas prices

Angela Macdonald-Smith, AFR, 20/01/2020

Competition chief Rod Sims has warned gas producers on the east coast that he expects them to lower prices to customers, to eliminate what appears to be an unreasonable gap between what they are paying and slumping international tariffs.

Sims said the further softening in international gas prices, as measured by LNG “netback” prices from Australia, has left them sitting “extremely oddly” with the higher prices that local gas users are paying.

“I think that does send a pretty important message about the pricing of gas in Australia,” the ACCC chairman said.

“The average price in 2020 is \$5.35, the average price for 2021 delivery is \$7, so the forward markets are pretty soft not just for one year but for two years, and I think beyond,” Sims said.

“So yes, you’d want to make sure those things are reflected [in Australian contract prices] otherwise Australian consumers are paying for the market power of the gas providers, which have given an undertaking that they will keep prices pretty much at international levels.”

CLIMATE CRISIS

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jan/10/xr-extinction-rebellion-listed-extremist-ideology-police-prevent-scheme-guidance>

Terrorism police list Extinction Rebellion as extremist ideology

Vikram Dodd & Jamie Grierson, *Guardian*, 11/01/2020

[British] counter-terrorism police placed the non-violent group Extinction Rebellion (XR) on a list of extremist ideologies that should be reported to the authorities running the Prevent programme, which aims to catch those at risk of committing atrocities.

The climate emergency campaign group was included in a 12-page guide produced by counter-terrorism police in the south-east titled Safeguarding young people and adults from ideological extremism, which is marked as “official”.

XR featured alongside threats to national security such as neo-Nazi terrorism and a pro-terrorist Islamist group. The guide, aimed at police officers, government organisations and teachers who by law have to report concerns about radicalisation, was dated last November.

The disclosure that XR has been listed alongside proscribed groups such as National Action and Al-Muhajiroun is likely to be deeply embarrassing for counter-terror chiefs. They have for years faced claims that Prevent can cross the line to stifle legitimate free speech, thought and dissent.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/jan/17/greenpeace-included-with-neo-nazis-on-uk-counter-terror-list>

Greenpeace included with neo-Nazis on UK counter-terror list

Vikram Dodd & Jamie Grierson, *Guardian*, 18/01/2020

A counter-terrorism police document distributed to medical staff and teachers as part of anti-extremism briefings included Greenpeace, Peta and other non-violent groups as well as neo-Nazis.

The guide, produced by Counter Terrorism Policing, is used across England as part of training for Prevent, the anti-radicalisation scheme designed to catch those at risk of committing terrorist violence.

The list of groups viewed as a potential concern contained in the new 24-page document includes Extinction Rebellion, Greenpeace, Sea Shepherd and Stop the Badger Cull.

They appear alongside a number of extremist rightwing groups including Combat 18 and the National Front, as well as National Action.

Non-violent groups featured in the document were furious at their inclusion. “Tarring environmental campaigners and terrorist organisations with the same brush is not going to help fight terrorism,” said John Sauven, the executive director of Greenpeace UK. “It will only harm the reputation of hard-working police officers ... How can we possibly teach children about the devastation caused by the climate emergency while at the same implying that those trying to stop it are extremists?”

Among the groups listed with no known link to terrorist violence or known threat to national security are Stop the War, the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, vegan activists, anti-fascist groups, anti-racist groups, an anti-police surveillance group and campaigners against airport expansion. Communist and socialist political parties are also on the list.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/james-murdoch-breaks-ranks-over-climate-change-denial-20200115-p53rie.html>

James Murdoch breaks ranks over ‘climate change denial’

Matthew Knott, *SMH*, 15/01/2020

James Murdoch has accused his family’s global media empire of promoting climate denialism in a stunning attack on News Corporation’s climate coverage.

The comments represent a rare public dispute among members of the Murdoch family about News Corp’s editorial direction.

They come as the bushfire crisis ravaging Australia has focussed attention on the climate coverage in News Corp mastheads such as *The Australian*, *The Daily Telegraph* and the *Herald Sun*.

“Kathryn and James’ views on climate are well established and their frustration with some of the News Corp and Fox coverage of the topic is also well known,” a spokesperson for Murdoch and his wife said.

“They are particularly disappointed with the ongoing denial among the news outlets in Australia given obvious evidence to the contrary.”

Rupert Murdoch recently denied that there were any climate change deniers working at News Corp despite several

of the company’s best-known columnists, such as Andrew Bolt and Piers Akerman, being long-time sceptics of the link between human activity and global warming.

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2020/jan/15/the-australian-says-it-accepts-climate-science-so-why-does-it-give-a-platform-to-outright-falsehoods>

The Australian says it accepts climate science, so why does it give a platform to ‘outright falsehoods’?

Graham Readfearn, *Guardian*, 15/01/2020

In an editorial on Saturday, the *Weekend Australian* defended the News Corp paper’s climate coverage in response to criticism that it had underplayed the bushfire crisis and chosen to highlight concerns about arsonists and hazard reduction rather than explain the climate change drivers of the horrendous season.

The editorial said: “In our coverage, the *Australian’s* journalists report facts about how to tackle bushfires and about how to deal with the impact of climate change. Second, we host debates reflecting the political division that exists in Australia about how to address climate change without destroying our economy.”

It said its coverage of the bushfires had been “wilfully and ineptly misrepresented by the *New York Times* and *Guardian Australia* as climate denial”.

But its defence of its bushfire coverage ignores its prolonged willingness to expose readers to a regular diet of misrepresentations on climate change science on its opinion page, as well as outright denial of the breadth of science linking fossil fuel burning to dangerous climate change.

Mining industry figure and geologist Prof Ian Plimer, “climate scientist” Dr Jennifer Marohasy, former Tony Abbott adviser Maurice Newman and coal industry figure Viv Forbes are some of the climate deniers regularly given space by News Corp.

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/jan/20/i-tried-to-warn-scott-morrison-about-the-bushfire-disaster-adapting-to-climate-change-isnt-enough>

I tried to warn Scott Morrison about the bushfire disaster. Adapting to climate change isn’t enough

Greg Mullins, *Guardian*, 20/01/2020

Together with 22 former fire and emergency service chiefs from every state and territory I had tried from April 2019 to warn the prime minister about what veteran firefighters,

climate scientists and meteorologists all identified as a looming bushfire disaster. We were ignored and trivialised: the government inferred that we were criticising the efforts of current fire chiefs and told us via the media that we could be assured that the “new breed” of chiefs “had it under control”. Of course, this missed the point entirely. We were trying to say things that the existing hard-pressed, hard-working chiefs could not. Our suggestions about better using the military and freeing up processes to allow them to be used in non-firefighting support roles, our request for approval of additional funding for large firefighting aircraft, and better national coordination (following the hollowing out of Emergency Management Australia, which has now been absorbed into the huge Home Affairs bureaucracy) were ridiculed. Until, of course, the disaster worsened, and the media and public called for action. Then the government “took the initiative”.

There has been an appalling failure in national leadership from Canberra. Failure to recognise and prepare for what was coming. Failure to accept briefings from experts. Failure to understand and accept the government’s national support role to the states and territories. Failure to provide funding certainty for critical equipment requested by fire agencies in a detailed business case but stalled in Canberra since May 2018.

And the government is failing again by now suggesting that our primary focus should be on adapting to climate change rather than upping our efforts to tackle the root cause: the burning of fossil fuels. Continuing to burn coal, oil and gas is sending us down a pathway to an even hotter, drier Australia where conditions will get worse and worse.

• *Greg Mullins is a former commissioner of Fire and Rescue NSW and a climate councillor*

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/rba-told-to-mobilise-all-forces-to-save-the-economy-from-climate-change-20200120-p53szi.html>

RBA told to ‘mobilise all forces’ to save the economy from climate change

Shane Wright & Eryk Bagshaw, SMH, 20/01/2020

The Reserve Bank has been warned it may have to buy up coal mines and fossil-fuel power stations as part of extraordinary actions to save the economy from climate change-induced financial disaster.

As Australian business leaders grow

increasingly worried climate change will hit their bottom lines and the International Monetary Fund warns global warming is now a major financial risk, a new warning issued by the world’s top central bank says the RBA could be forced into rescuing the economy and the environment.

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/science-minister-says-climate-denial-a-waste-of-time-in-wake-of-fires-20200114-p53rev.html>

Science Minister says climate denial a waste of time in wake of fires

Mike Foley, SMH, 14/01/2020

Australia’s bushfire crisis has prompted a blunt warning from Science Minister Karen Andrews to those she says are wasting time arguing about whether climate change is real.

Andrews will convene a roundtable meeting of top scientists on Wednesday to kickstart work in response to the “devastating and surprising” bushfires this summer.

“Every second we spend discussing if climate change is real is a second we don’t spend addressing these issues. Let’s move on and get over this,” she said.

The roundtable meeting will include scientists from the CSIRO, Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation, the Bushfire Co-operative Research Centre and Science & Technology Australia.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison flagged a focus on resilience and adaptation to the changing climate.

“The longer, drier and warmer seasons that we’re seeing are a reality and so while you take your actions as part of a global effort on emissions reduction, the practical thing that actually can most keep you safe during the next fire or the next flood or the next cyclone are the things that most benefit people here and now,” he told reporters in Canberra.

“People have said it’s not just about emissions reduction, it’s about hazard reduction.

Former Australian chief scientist, Australian National University Adjunct Professor Penny Sackett said the science community would need a funding boost to complete the “herculean task” of documenting the causes and impacts of this summer’s bushfires.

She said the fires had created risks to a range of factors critical to human

survival, wreaking havoc on pollinator species such as bees that are required by agriculture to propagate a wide range of crops, burning significant urban catchments, threatening water security, and creating unprecedented risks to infrastructure.

“Imagine trying to answer the question about what has happened to all the species in the millions of hectares that have burnt, and not just for the species which have perished, but on the future of species that survived,” Professor Sackett said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/commentisfree/2020/jan/14/the-government-has-been-forced-to-talk-about-climate-change-so-its-taking-a-subtle-and-sinister-approach>

The government has been forced to talk about climate change, so it’s taking a subtle – and sinister – approach

Greg Jericho, Guardian, 14/01/2020

The impact of climate change over the past five months across Australia has caused climate change deniers within the media and governments to quickly update their tactics to a new, sinister position.

Gone are the plans to just keep lying for the next decade that activists such as Greta Thunberg are predicting that the world is going to end in 2030, or to continue to flub and fudge the science – no real warming since 1998, 2005, 2010, 2016! Solar activity! Volcanoes! Greenland!

Rather than suggest no connection with climate change, they have shifted to arguing there is no connection between any particular climate change policy and bushfires.

Scott Morrison argued last week on ABC’s 7.30: “You cannot link any individual single emissions reduction policy of a country – whether it’s Australia or anyone else – to any specific fire event. I mean, that’s just absurd.”

Yes, it is absurd, because no one is actually arguing that. But the prime minister is very good at defeating arguments no one is making.

He is also very good at giving false hope. Right now columnists and journalists are writing articles expressing belief that maybe Morrison is about to shift the government’s climate change policy.

Three times David Speers asked him on Sunday if the government would increase its emissions targets. Morrison responded with: “Well, the cabinet and the government will continue to

evolve our policies.” Then he added: “What I’m saying is I’m not going to put someone’s job at risk, a region’s, town’s future at risk.” And finally: “What I’m saying is we want to reduce emissions and do the best job we possibly can and get better and better and better at it.”

What he is saying is “no”. Nothing he has said suggests any change in policy that will actually involve emissions reductions.

Instead he has quickly adopted the new go-to response of climate change deniers – that of the need to adapt and “improve resilience”.

The new argument is that, yes climate change is probably to blame, but we can’t do anything about it, and anyway it’s too late now, so let’s “adapt”. And what does that adaptation involve? According to Morrison: “Building dams is key to that. Native vegetation management is key to that. Land clearing is key to that.”

In other words doing the very things conservatives have been desirous of for the past century – building dams, reducing national parks and increasing land clearing.

And of course emissions will rise while they suggest they are actually being reduced.

The current figures from [Morrison’s] own government show that rather than reduce emissions in 2030 by 26% below 2005 levels, we are on track to cut them by just 16%.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reported in 2018 that to keep global temperatures from rising above 1.5C, CO2 emissions needed to “decline by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero around 2050”.

Forty-five per cent, not 26%.

And so we enter the next stage of climate change politics – a subtle and sinister shift – the talk will be about practical measures of adaptation rather than of reducing emissions: gone will be direct action, in its place will be “direct adaptation”.

It is a stage that, if successful, will signal the end for our planet.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jan/16/there-is-no-link-the-climate-doubters-within-scott-morrison-s-government>

There is no link: the climate doubters within Scott Morrison’s government

Amy Remeikis & Josh Taylor, Guardian, 16/01/2020

The science minister, Karen Andrews, has said it’s “time for everyone to move on” from ideological debates on climate change.

“Every second that we spend discussing if climate change is real is a second we don’t spend addressing these issues,” she told Nine Newspapers. “Let’s move on and get over this.”

Yet the seconds members of her party have spent denying the climate emergency and its impacts not only stretch into hours, they have derailed Australia’s attempts at a coordinated response for a decade.

Doubters continue to exist within the government. Morrison said “every member of Parliament ... has a right to speak their mind.”

Prominent denialists include Craig Kelly, George Christensen, Matt Canavan, Barnaby Joyce, Gerard Rennick and Sam McMahon.

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2020/01/15/coal-blackrock-scott-morrison/>

Prime Minister defends coal as more businesses pull out of industry

Killian Plastowe, New Daily, 15/01/2020

The Coalition’s unwavering support for the coal industry has been met with sharp criticism as more businesses distance themselves from the controversial commodity.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison delivered a spirited defence of coal mining in Canberra after the world’s largest fund manager, US-based company BlackRock, revealed it will cut its investment in the other black rock – thermal coal.

“Our resources industry is incredibly important to Australia,” Morrison said.

He said the industry is worth “about \$70 billion dollars” and is vital to many communities around the country, and transitioning away from coal could “[pull] the rug from regional communities”.

Will van de Pol, asset management campaigner with investor advocacy group Market Forces, said that Morrison’s approach will hurt small towns, not help them.

“What they’re doing is really dangerous for those communities and workers that are currently relying on fossil fuel production by giving them this false hope of the future of their industry,” he said.

Taking too long to act could mean those communities lose out on jobs with more sustainable long-term prospects, he said.

But Minerals Council of Australia acting chief executive Gavin Lind disagreed.

“The International Energy Agency (IEA) forecasts a steady increase in demand for Australia’s world-class coal from Asia,” he said.

Instead of transitioning away from coal, Lind said carbon capture, utilisation and storage could be used as “a viable path to long-term large-scale emissions reduction”.

BlackRock is the latest in a growing number of financial institutions to extricate itself from coal, with ANZ, Commonwealth Bank, and multiple super funds also cutting down their investment holdings.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/former-minerals-council-spinner-poised-for-national-party-top-job-20200116-p53rwwq.html>

Former Minerals Council spinner poised for National Party top job

Kylar Loussikian & Rob Harris, SMH, 16/01/2020

Long-time political operative Jonathan Hawkes is poised to become the new federal director of the National Party.

A former Liberal Party official and current media director of the Australian Forest Products Association, Hawkes will be rubber-stamped by the party’s federal management committee, several sources have confirmed.

He also worked in public affairs roles for the Minerals Council of Australia and the Australian Automobile Association.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/bushfires-no-more-carbon-cuts-scott-morrison-warned-by-coalition-mps/news-story/fc9b15807613dd7c65c9b-04c36c54fd4>

Bushfires: no more carbon cuts, Scott Morrison warned by Coalition MPs

Rosie Lewis, Aus, 15/01/2020

Scott Morrison has been warned by Coalition MPs to avoid major changes to emissions reduction targets and revisiting Malcolm Turnbull’s failed national energy guarantee, as an anon-

ymous cabinet minister said that Morrison must maintain Coalition unity on climate and emissions targets.

“If we go back to talking about climate or targets or anything, the only climate that will change will be the climate in the partyroom. It’ll blow the place up,” the senior MP said.

Queensland Nationals MP Keith Pitt said the government’s policies would evolve as technologies such as carbon capture and storage and hydrogen developed.

He wanted the chief focus to be on resilience projects such as dams, water infrastructure, better communications and hazard reduction. Former Nationals leader Barnaby Joyce was sceptical Morrison could reduce emissions “even further” without impacting on jobs or the economy and said Australia should develop nuclear power and the world’s best technology for coal-fired power.

https://www.vice.com/en_au/article/dygvjv/who-to-blame-for-australia-coal-mining-lobbyists-fires-bushfires-bullshit-approach-to-climate-change

Who to blame for Australia’s bullshit approach to climate change

Look these coal lobbyists in the eye. Remember their names.

Royce Kurmelovs, Vice, 16/01/2020

The CO2 humanity had been pumping into the atmosphere for decades is now affecting our seasons in precisely all the ways we were warned. For Australia, that means hotter summers with less rainfall, which is exactly what 2019 delivered.

But even if the science is clear, the reality seems lost on those who hold the country’s highest political offices. When confronted with the suggestion his government was not acting in a meaningful way on climate change, Prime Minister Scott Morrison has simply said he “did not accept that” and insisted, like his Minister for Emissions Reduction Angus Taylor, that Australia has been “doing its part”.

The truth is that Australia is the fourth largest coal producer in the world, and has relied on tricky accounting practices to book progress toward reducing its carbon emissions while actually doing the bare minimum.

The story of how we got here is one of money, mates, and mines. The influence of the resources industry in Australian politics over the last two decades is no secret. When the mining boom flooded the country with dumb



Fossil fuel lobbyists: Dr John Kunkel, Chief Of Staff, Prime Minister’s Office; Helen Coonan, Chair of the Minerals Council of Australia; Ian “Chainsaw” Macfarlane, CEO, Queensland Resources Council. Graphic: VICE

money last decade, those who owned the mines became untouchable. A rising ocean of dollars meant they could buy the loyalties of their workforce with six-figure salaries – along with the nation’s media companies – gain access to politicians keen to appear “business-friendly”, and run expensive advertising campaigns. Figures like Gina Rinehart, Twiggy Forrest, and Clive Palmer became household names, with two out of the three joining forces to rail against the mining tax. They would triumph, helped along by friends in high places from both Labor and the Coalition.

Though there are many former politicians who have taken jobs in the fossil fuel sector, the current conservative government has seemingly taken its talking points from the industry with a unique enthusiasm. Of them all, there remain three figures who are by far the most influential.

And to be clear, VICE is not blaming these three people for the fires. Australia has always had bushfires and it always will. We are blaming these three people for continuing to stall meaningful action on climate change and for hindering Australia’s ability to prevent future climate-powered disasters – all the while pulling salaries in the multiple six-figures.

They are: Ian “Chainsaw” Macfarlane, CEO, Queensland Resources Council; Helen Coonan, Chair of the Minerals Council of Australia; Dr John Kunkel, Chief Of Staff, Prime Minister’s Office.

<https://time.com/5765603/australia-bushfires-prime-minister-essay/>

Australia’s bushfires show the wicked, self-destructive idiocy of climate denialism must stop

Malcolm Turnbull, Time, 16/01/2020

In most countries, asking people whether they believe in the science of climate change is like asking them whether they believe in gravity. It is a simple matter of physics. The more greenhouse gases are in the atmosphere, the hotter our climate will become.

But in Australia, as in the US, this issue has been hijacked by a toxic, climate-denying alliance of right-wing politics and media (much of it owned by Rupert Murdoch), as well as vested business interests, especially in the coal industry.

As Prime Minister, I tried to ensure that our climate and energy policies were governed by engineering and economics, not ideology and idiocy. Tragically, the climate-denying political right in Australia has turned what should be a practical question of how to respond to a real physical threat into a matter of values or belief.

Even as the fires rage, Murdoch’s News Corp newspapers and television networks have been busy arguing that arsonists or a lack of controlled burning are the real causes of the fires. This has been refuted point-blank by the chief of the fire service in New South Wales, but the misinformation campaign continues in both mainstream and social media.

Climate change denial has also infected our politics. Australia is currently governed by a center-right coalition of the Liberal Party and the National

fossilfool.com.au

Party. I led the coalition twice – first as opposition leader from 2008 to 2009 and then as Prime Minister from 2015 to 2018. Both times, my efforts to take concerted action on climate change were followed by my losing my job.

These fires show that the wicked, self-destructive idiocy of climate denialism must stop. The world must drastically cut its greenhouse-gas emissions. Above all, we have to urgently stop burning coal and other fossil fuels.

Australians no longer need to sacrifice economic growth to reduce emissions. We must not waste this climate crisis. There are no excuses and not much time left. Australia and the world need a Green New Deal now.

• *Malcolm Turnbull was Prime Minister of Australia 2015-2018*

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jan/19/anthony-albanese-says-labors-45-emissions-reduction-target-a-mistake>

Anthony Albanese flags ‘ambitious’ emissions target but won’t recommit to 45% reduction

Paul Karp, Guardian, 19/01/2020

Anthony Albanese has described the decision to recommit to a 45% emissions reduction target by 2030 as “a mistake” and declared Labor would not take the same franking credits policy to the next election.

Albanese promised Labor would “take climate change seriously” and had a “very strong” policy that aimed to be “as ambitious as possible” but did not commit to outbid the Coalition because he hoped the Morrison government would take action before the next election.

The Labor leader suggested he would have a proper shadow cabinet and caucus process to determine new policies before the next election, which he expected to fall between October 2021 and March 2022.



Meme from the Facebook page Lee Lin Chin for Wentworth – Prime Chinister.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/prime-minister-slaps-down-nsw-environment-minister-over-climate-change-comments-20200120-p53swj.html>

Prime Minister slaps down NSW Environment Minister over climate change comments

Lisa Visentin, SMH, 20/01/2020

Prime Minister Scott Morrison has publicly rebuked NSW Environment Minister Matt Kean after he claimed conservative federal frontbenchers were among a “widespread” group of Liberals wanting stronger policies on climate change.

In a series of media appearances on Monday morning, Morrison rejected the claims as a “beat-up” and said most federal ministers “wouldn’t even know who Matt Kean was”.

“Matt Kean doesn’t know what he’s talking about. He doesn’t know what’s going on in the federal cabinet. Most of the federal cabinet wouldn’t even know who Matt Kean was,” Morrison told ABC radio.

In a separate interview on the Nine Network, the Prime Minister said no cabinet members had approached him with their concerns.

“I don’t know what he’s talking about,” Morrison said. “I think Matt can focus on hazard reduction and I will focus on emissions reduction.”



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