



Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

Fossilfool.com.au

FFB 4:01 • 24 NOVEMBER 2020

Activist has onerous bail conditions overturned in Qld Supreme Court

Environmental activist Ben Winch has successfully had numerous bail conditions removed, allowing him to return to Camp Binbee, an environmental campaigning hub near Bowen, Queensland.

Winch recently requested to have his bail conditions amended in the Bowen Magistrates Court, which was denied. It was then taken to the Supreme Court and won.

In October 2020, Winch took part in direct action by attaching himself with a chain to a cattle grid near Adani's Carmichael coal mine, where he has since been on bail after being arrested.

(Adani has since re-branded itself as Bravus.)

These onerous conditions restricted Winch from being able to visit one private property in particular, known as Camp Binbee, a well-known environmental campaigning hub.

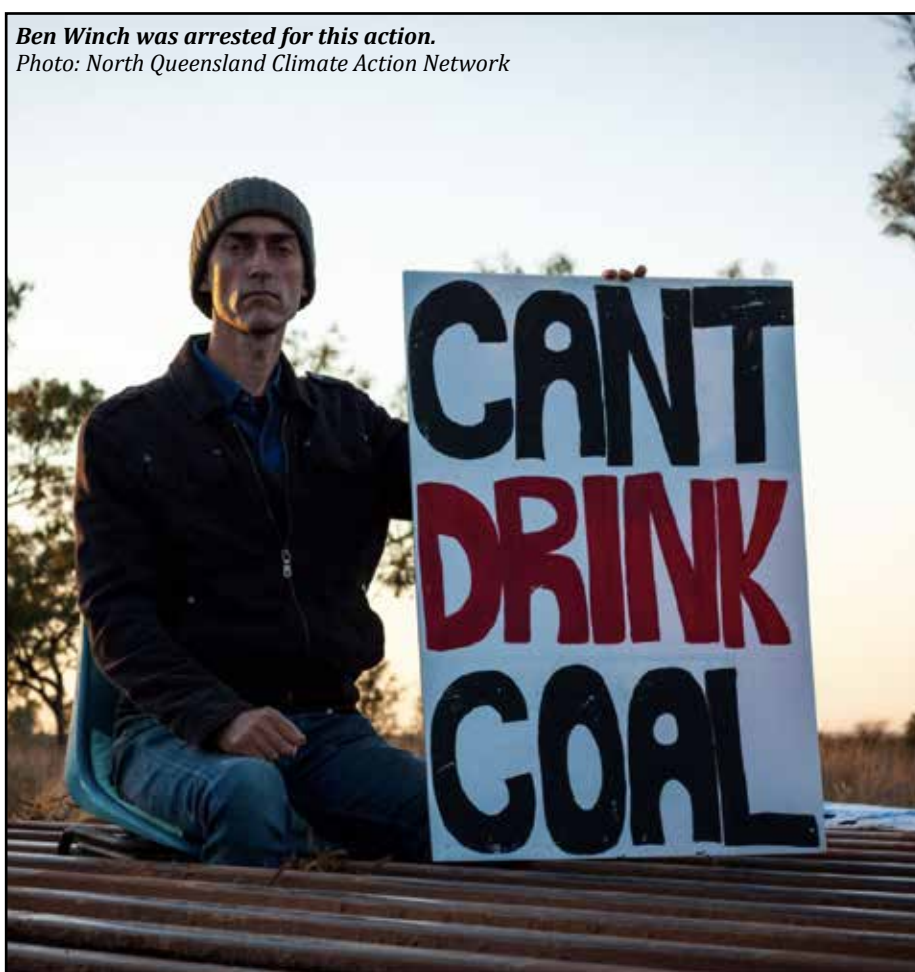
Another condition disallowed him from going within 100 metres of any QR Railway or rail infrastructure. Both of these conditions were completely removed.

Yet another condition was amended which originally restricted Winch from going within 20km of the Adani Carmichael Mine Complex and is now only a 1km radius whilst he is on bail.

Civil liberties infringed by conditions

The removal of the Camp Binbee condition was based on it being a direct infringement on Winch's civil liberties, and there being no real legal

*Ben Winch was arrested for this action.
Photo: North Queensland Climate Action Network*



basis to preclude him from going to the property.

The removal of the QR Railway condition was based on it infringing on Winch's liberty to catch public transport, specifically, trains.

In response to this win, Winch states, "These bail conditions that have been

given to activists in this region for years are completely unfair, and I thought it was time to change them."

Winch's win comes after dozens of activists have incurred the same conditions that have now been considered an infringement of civil liberties in Ben's case.

F

• **P2: Adani's rehab bond inadequate**

• **P3-4: Reports on futility of COVID gas**

• **P5: Renewed call for fossil fuel levy**

Adani's rehab bond "grossly inadequate"

New documents obtained by Lock the Gate Alliance under Right To Information Laws and via the Public Register reveal Adani has paid a grossly inadequate rehabilitation bond to the Queensland Government, worth about 0.5% of its estimated revenue after five years of operation.

The documents also once again show the company wants to scale up the Carmichael mine to at least 55 million tonnes of coal per annum, plans recently backed up by comments from Adani staff when they thought no one was listening.

Lock the Gate Alliance has obtained Adani's most recent Later Development Plan (LDP) via RTI application, which shows the company expects to rake in just short of \$5B from its Carmichael coal mine by year five of operation.

Separately, documents obtained through the Queensland Public Register show the state's Department of Environment and Science requested Adani pay an Estimated Rehabilitation Cost (ERC) of just \$26.4M. That ERC covers the five year period from 14 July 2020 and 14 July 2025.

That means the rehabilitation bond to be held during this period is just 0.5% of the mine's predicted revenue. This amount is significantly less than the \$1.2B to \$1.5B bond previously estimated that would be required to protect Queenslanders from having to foot the rehabilitation bill for the Carmichael Mine.

That detailed analysis was undertaken using publicly available documents regarding the planned rehabilitation and closure strategy proposed by Adani Mining and applying the 2017 version of the Queensland Government's standard financial assurance calculator plus a contingency.

Cost of rehab underestimated

"The \$26.4M clearly underestimates the cost of rehabilitation. According to the LDP Adani would have cleared the equivalent of 4,985 hectares and moved 372.45 million tonnes of overburden by year five of operation," said Lock the Gate Alliance rehabilitation

spokesperson Rick Humphries.

"There is simply no way that amount covers the cost of rehabilitating this level of disturbance as well as all the mine infrastructure.

"Just 0.5% of Adani's expected revenue will be held as financial surety for a coal mine that Adani would like to be the largest in Australia's history.

"This is a miniscule amount, given Adani plans to leave behind massive unrehabilitated mine pits after mining, which will drain Central Queensland groundwater aquifers.

"Queenslanders should not be left to live with the huge mess Adani plans to leave behind, and certainly shouldn't pay for it.

"These documents also show that while Adani was publicly spruiking a downsizing of the Carmichael mine to 10Mtpa in 2018, it had just sought and got approval for a Later Development Plan sticking to the original mega mine of at least 55mtpa.

Adani shouldn't be trusted over water

"This is a stark reminder that Adani can't be trusted – the company hasn't been straight with the people of Queensland about the size of this mine and it shouldn't be trusted with our water resources.

"We're calling on the Queensland Government to provide full transparency about Adani's rehabilitation requirements – including whether the company has been required to pay an upfront cash bond, or whether it has got away with a lesser form of security.

"There's been too much secrecy around the financial risk assessments for mine rehabilitation in Queensland.

"We're calling for the Queensland Government to provide full disclosure on the risk rating for Adani, because there's too much at stake to have it hidden away from Queenslanders."

F

ACF: Drop nuke dump

The Australian Conservation Foundation says the federal government should drop its plans for a national radioactive waste facility in regional South Australia after One Nation joined Labor, the Greens and others on the Senate crossbench in rejecting the government's proposal for a site near Kimba.

One Nation confirmed it will not support the federal government's bill to remove the right of affected communities to legally contest the decision to make Kimba the site for a radioactive waste facility and is instead seeking 'to make the right decision for future generations'.

With Labor, the Greens, other crossbenchers and now One Nation opposed, the government appears to lack the numbers in the Senate to advance the plan.

"The federal plan is politically divisive, technically deficient and increasingly uncertain," said the Australian Conservation Foundation's nuclear campaigner Dave Sweeney.

"It has failed the test in the broader community and now also in Canberra.

"The government's proposal is based on excluding people from consultation and review processes. It is based on the heavy handed overriding of legal principles and the unnecessary double handling of long-lived intermediate level waste.

"Access to a day in court is a fundamental democratic right that should not be jettisoned – especially on an issue with such significant and lasting impacts as radioactive waste.

"Many state and national civil society groups, Aboriginal and professional groups, the South Australian Upper House, SA Labor and Unions SA opposed the government's approach.

"The government should now stop playing politics and start paying attention.

"This waste lasts longer than any politician and needs to be responsibly managed.

"We need a new approach that is based on evidence, inclusion and respect."

F

Reports snuff out flame of PM's gas-fired recovery

Grattan: Flame out

Far from fuelling the recovery from the COVID recession, natural gas will inevitably decline as an energy source for industry and homes in Australia, according to a new Grattan Institute report.

Flame out: the future of natural gas shows that a combination of economics and environmental imperatives imperil the industry.

Australia must reduce emissions over coming decades to meet our international climate change commitments. Gas is a fossil fuel, so the gas sector is no exception.

The east coast has already burned most of its low-cost gas and will not go back to the good old days of low prices, so gas will become an increasingly expensive energy source.

Over time, gas will decline, economically and environmentally. Rather than indulging in wishful thinking or living in denial, the Federal Government and the gas industry – and its customers – should start planning now for a future without natural gas, or at least with a dramatically reduced role for natural gas.

The Prime Minister has talked up a gas-fired recovery for manufacturing, raising expectations of big price reductions. But the report shows that eastern Australia faces inexorably more expensive gas. If the Government tries to swim against this tide by directly intervening in the market, taxpayers



will pay the price via big subsidies.

Even if the Government could significantly reduce gas prices, the benefits to manufacturing are overstated. The companies that would benefit most contribute only about 0.1% of gross domestic product, and employ only a little more than 10,000 people. And much of this gas-intensive industry is in Western Australia, which has low gas prices already.

The Government's best role is to support the development and deployment of the low-emission alternatives that can replace natural gas in manufacturing, such as renewables-based hydrogen and renewables-based electricity.

Nor does gas stack up as a 'transition fuel'. As Australia's coal-fired power stations retire over coming decades, it would be more expensive to replace them with gas than to switch to more

renewable energy such as wind and solar.

Gas will play an important backstop role in power generation when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing, but this does not require large volumes of gas.

In the home, too, Australia must either replace natural gas with low-emissions substitutes such as biomethane or hydrogen, or switch to electricity, for heating and cooking.

It is already clear that households would save money and Australia would reduce emissions if new houses in NSW, Queensland, South Australia, and the ACT were all-electric. Governments in those places should impose a moratorium on new gas connections.

• **Download the report here:**

<https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Flame-out-Grattan-report.pdf>

F

TAI: On the make

Research released The Australia Institute shows that the Federal Government's "gas-fired recovery" will not assist Australia's manufacturing industry. Increasing gas production is likely to benefit gas exporters, not manufacturers.

Australian manufacturing used just 373 petajoules (PJ) of gas, while more than 4,500PJ went to exports in 2018-19. Just 56PJ, or 1% of Australian gas is used as feedstock in manufacturing.

The gas industry also uses more gas just processing gas for export as Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) than the entire

manufacturing industry and twice as much as is used by Australian households.

Key findings of 'On the Make':

- 82% of Australian gas production goes to exports. Only 1% of gas produced in Australia is used for feedstock in Australian manufacturing.

- The LNG export industry used 12 times as much gas as the entire manufacturing industry.

- More gas is used just running gas export terminals than used by Australia's entire manufacturing industry, more than twice the amount used by Australian households.

- The LNG export industry uses forty times the amount of gas as used by the chemical, polymer and rubber manufacturing industry.

- LNG exports employ only 4 workers for every petajoule of gas used, compared to around 760 workers per petajoule used in chemical and mineral processing manufacturing.

- Most manufacturing workers work in sectors that use little if any gas. Three quarters of gas used in Australian manufacturing is used by sectors that employ only 17% of the manufacturing workforce. 60% of manufacturing jobs are in sectors that use

• Continued p4

TAI: industry “on the make”

• Continued from p3

just 10% of total manufacturing gas consumption.

● Australian manufacturing employment has declined since the mid-1980s when Australia had cheap abundant gas and have continued to decline as gas production has tripled over the last decade.

“The Government claims it is trying to create jobs in manufacturing by giving money to the gas industry. In fact, they are just giving money to the gas industry,” said Richie Merzian, Climate & Energy Program Director at The Australia Institute.

“There is no shortage of gas for manufacturing in Australia. The problem is governments are allowing a few global oil and gas giants to export vast quantities of Australia’s more affordable gas, leaving only more remote expensive gas for Australian manufacturers.

“Manufacturing jobs declined for decades when Australia had cheap abundant gas, then continued to decline when gas production tripled over the last ten years. It’s hard to think of a less effective way to create manufacturing jobs than giving money to the gas industry.”

• Download the report here:

<https://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/P938%20On%20the%20make%20-%20gas%20and%20manufacturing%20%5BWeb%5D.pdf>



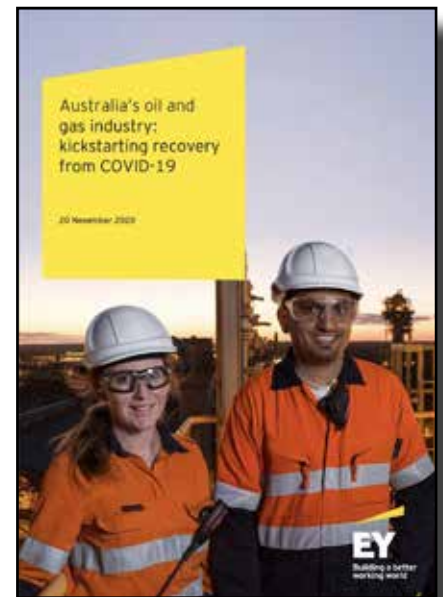
APPEA mounts kickstart call from industry

Following the release of two reports snuffing out the rationale for the Coalition’s gas-lead economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association has come out in support of the government’s stance.

Gas industry body APPEA claims Australia’s upstream oil and gas industry “is playing a vital role in continuing to support the nation’s economic recovery from COVID-19, and there is opportunity to secure a new phase of long-term investment and growth, creating jobs and helping repair public finances.”

A new EY report commissioned by APPEA details the role the industry can play in economic recovery and the benefits that can flow from “unleashing the industry’s full economic potential”.

The report calls for investment in new exploration and active steps to



improve Australia’s competitiveness through “effective policy settings”.



[knitting-nannas.org](https://www.knitting-nannas.org)

DESMOG
CLEARING THE PR POLLUTION THAT
CLOUDS CLIMATE SCIENCE
<https://www.desmogblog.com/>

COALWIRE

CoalWire is a weekly bulletin of coal-related news published by Global Energy Monitor:

[globalenergymonitor.org](https://www.globalenergymonitor.org)

RENEW ECONOMY

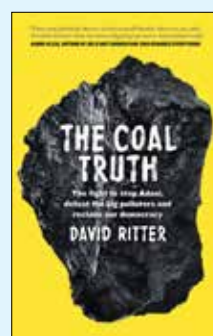
Renew Economy provides clean energy news and analysis in a daily newsletter available at

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/>

The Coal Truth: the fight to stop Adani, defeat the big polluters and reclaim our democracy (\$29.99)

A timely and colourful contribution to one of the most important struggles in our national history – over the future of the coal industry.

Contributors include Tara Moss and Berndt Sellheim, Adrian Burragubba, Lesley Hughes, John Quiggin, Hilary Bambrick, Ruchira Talukdar and Geoffrey Cousins. Lead author is David Ritter, CEO, Greenpeace Australia Pacific.



Toxic reputation leads to Adani re-branding

The Hindu reports that, after a decade of growing global campaign to ensure no financial institution is involved in the Carmichael thermal coal mine and rail development plan, the Adani Group confirmed it was unable to secure investor interest, and so had to resort to ‘self-financing’.

In September, it was revealed that Adani Ports and SEZ Ltd, the Group’s port unit, has agreed to set up a new Australian subsidiary to undertake rail haulage for the Carmichael project.

Branded the ‘Bowen Rail Company’, the new entity has no reference to its parent company, a clear indication of the brand damage the Carmichael proposal has inflicted on the wider Adani Group.

In October, the Adani family-owned Adani Abbot Point Coal Terminal Ltd was re-branded as **North Queensland Export Terminal Pty Ltd**.

In November, the Group re-branded its Australian mining business as **Bravus Mining & Resources**.

FFB notes activists opposed to the company’s coal activities in Australia still refer to ‘Adani’.



Renewed calls for climate levy on fossil fuel exports

In the lead-up to Summer, the Australia Institute, emergency leaders, and bushfire survivors have renewed calls for a Climate Levy on fossil fuel exports to help pay for increasing disasters due to climate change.

The call follows estimates that the Black Summer bushfires cost Australians over \$50 billion, which represents a step change in disaster costs. The previous most costly climate related disasters in Australia were the 2011 Queensland floods which are estimated to have cost \$14 billion, followed by the Victorian Black Saturday bushfires in 2009 which cost \$7 billion.

Key Findings:

- Natural disasters exacerbated by climate change such as fires, floods and heatwaves already cost Australians tens of billions of dollars per annum. This damage bill is rapidly increasing as climate change accelerates.
- Ordinary Australian households and businesses, either as a direct expense or via taxpayer dollars, currently pay all the costs of climate disasters.
- Fossil fuel consumption remains the largest contributor to climate change and fossil fuel producers pay virtually none of the costs climate disasters.
- Australia is the third largest exporter of fossil fuels in the world and these exporters pay little if any local tax.
- The Australia Institute is proposing a National Climate Disaster Levy initially set at \$1 per tonne of embodied carbon on all fossil fuel exports from Australia.
- Such a levy would:
 - Raise around \$1.3 billion per annum to be used entirely to assist communities to respond to and recover from climate disasters
 - Create over 5,000 jobs in disaster response and recovery.
 - Have no effect on energy prices in Australia as the levy is only on fossil fuel exports (which make up three quarters of fossil fuel production).



Photo: ABC/Marcus Dirnberger

● According to the Australia Institute's 2020 Climate of the Nation report, the majority of Australians (65%) support a levy on fossil fuel exports to pay for climate disasters, with only 21% opposed.

● These funds could then be used to address the growing cost of climate disasters, such as: assisting businesses to recover, fund more fire-fighting equipment, including more water-bombing planes, or help fund paid leave for volunteer fire-fighters. Grants could also be made to at-risk households and businesses to assist with fire prevention measures.

Burden shifted to coal and gas co's

"Last summer's unprecedented Black Summer bushfires exposed just how unprepared all levels of government are to meet the costs of bushfire crises. Currently, the burden of natural disaster costs falls almost entirely on ordinary Australian households and businesses. Whether it's through higher rates and taxes, property damage, higher insurance premiums, disruption to our lives or impacts on our health. This is neither fair nor equitable," said Richie Merzian, climate & energy program director at the Australia Institute.

"A National Climate Disaster Levy would help to begin shifting the

economic burden of climate disasters from our at-risk regional communities to the global coal and gas companies that are creating the problem in the first place.

"It is clear there is growing community concern for how we as a community pay for the costs of climate related disasters. The Australia Institute's Climate of the Nation 2020 report found that support the introduction of a fossil fuel levy to pay for the impacts of climate change is growing, with 65% of Australians now supporting such a levy and only 21% opposed.

"A modest \$1 levy would at least begin to raise revenue from those profiting from climate change. Industries that face enormous costs as a result of climate change, including agriculture and tourism could then benefit from the national fund assisting with disaster recovery and building resilience. If we continue with the status quo, businesses and everyday Australians will continue to pay the high price for the impacts of climate change that are being fuelled by fossil producers.

"It is a fundamental principle of economics that companies profiting from activities that cause damage to others should pay the costs of that damage."

David Rowe reproduced with permission: <https://www.facebook.com/david.rowe.5070>



Fossil Fool marks three years' work

Fossil Fool Bulletin has now documented the battle to end Australia's fossil fuel era for three years.

The first edition was published on November 20, 2017.

The lead story was about the Australian Tribunal into the human rights impacts of unconventional gas in the Darling Downs.

Another story reported that 63% of Queenslanders surveyed by The Australia Institute were opposed to any federally subsidised loan to Adani for its Carmichael coal mine.

Since then, the unconventional gas industry has continued to invade Queensland and is firing up a 'gas-lead recovery' for the COVID-19 crisis.

It has Australia-wide plans to drill, pipe, burn and export enough gas to blow the place up.

Adani has forged on, although much more slowly than it planned. It has yet to dig a lump of coal in the Galilee Basin, but has bankrupted a Traditional Owner of the land and is working hard to bankrupt a Brisbane-based opponent of the mine.

We've had the Black Summer bushfires, yet still the fossil fuel industry proposes new mines and gaswells as if the climate crisis didn't exist.

The political class has intensified culture wars around our climate emergency and continues to try and block a transition to renewables at many levels.

Party leaders have been rolled and internal divisions amplified.

The work of witnessing the fossil fuel battle has a long way to go.

Many environmental activists have experienced burn-out and despair over the past three years.

When FFB started this project, she thought it might only be needed for a couple of years until common sense stopped Adani in its tracks.

Sadly, it will be some time until that happens, and meanwhile it's important that activists have accurate information to inform their efforts. FFB will continue the work.

fossilfool.com.au

PHICS GREEN PIGEON GRAPHICS GREEN

PROUD SUPPORTER OF
THE FOSSIL FOOL BULLETIN

GreenPigeonGraphics gpg@bordnet.com.au

Print ✓ Mailchimp ✓ Social ✓ Web ✓

Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

To subscribe free, click here:
<https://knitting-nannas.org/bulletins.php>

Focus Publications

Fossil Fool Bulletin is free to read, but not free to produce. The editor works un-waged, but costs include news subscriptions, computer, software, internet and office expenses.

Donations to publisher Focus Publications are invited.

Whether a one-off or regular, \$5 or \$500, you can help keep this publication in action.
(Note: donations are not tax deductible.)

Bank details: Focus Publications
BSB: 062 578
Account number: 10343666
ABN: 24857882603

In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 29,680 words of news for your convenience.

Click on the [links](#) or copy and paste to browser to view original articles. (Subscriptions may be required)

THE ADANI SAGA

<https://7news.com.au/news/qld/rockhampton-mayor-resigns-over-adani-trip-c-1552258>

Rockhampton mayor resigns over Adani trip, Chris 'Pineapple' Hooper is set to take over

Marty Silk, 7News, 10/11/2020

A quirky local bloke is likely to become the new Mayor of Rockhampton after Margaret Strelow announced her shock resignation.

Chris 'Pineapple' Hooper is set to take the position after being the runner-up in this year's local government elections.

The anti-Adani activist will take office by default, after new changes to state legislation came into effect in October.

Strelow resigned after being found guilty of misconduct over her visit to an Adani solar plant in India two years ago.

Strelow had served for 16-and-a-half years as mayor.

"After months of silence the Councillor Conduct Tribunal has decided that I am guilty of misconduct.

"I absolutely refute their finding.

"I acted at all times in accordance with my own conscience and on the advice of senior legal practitioners as well as on the advice of officers from the Department of Local Government."

The outgoing mayor declared hospitality gifts from Adani including \$1600 in flights, food and transport while visiting Mumbai with Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk's entourage in 2017.

Strelow and Townsville Mayor Jenny Hill later announced their councils would fund a \$30 million airport for Adani's Carmichael coalmine.

In return, the Indian-owned company now known as Bravus would guarantee that a majority of FIFO miners and construction workers would come from both cities.

Strelow said her visit to the solar plant was in an official capacity and the itinerary was drawn up by the premier.

"My refusal to agree that I may have been compromised in some way by the visit is a matter of personal integrity for me," she said.



"If we hadn't stood in the way of Adani's plans, they'd have already shipped over 100 million tonnes out through the Great Barrier Reef and burnt it."

MANJOT, FORMER SCHOOL STRIKER & CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTIVIST



The Stop Adani campaign continues its work on Facebook. Graphic: Stop Adani

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/nov/11/adani-documents-reveal-plan-for-twice-as-much-coal-production-as-estimated-in-2018>

Documents suggest Adani retained long-term plan to build Australia's biggest mine

Ben Smee, Guardian, 11/11/2020

Documents released by the Queensland government suggest Adani never scrapped its plans to eventually build one of the world's largest coalmines in central Queensland, despite the company's public statements the Carmichael project had been drastically scaled back.

The current version of the "later development plan" for the Carmichael mine – a document required to be filed with Queensland mining authorities under state law – clearly says that Adani's long-term plan is to ramp up production to 55m tonnes per year.

Adani had initially planned a massive 60m tonne mine but in late 2018 the company announced it would build a much smaller version – initially exporting 10m tonnes a year, with annual production ramping up "over time" to 27m tonnes.

All of Adani's approvals are issued on the basis it is building a 60m tonne mine.

Another document shows Adani was required in July to pay \$26.4m to cover rehabilitation costs for the first five years of work at the Carmichael mine – about 2% of the cleanup amount previously estimated by the environmental group.

"This is a minuscule amount, given Adani plans to leave behind unrehabilitated mine pits after mining, which will drain central Queensland groundwater aquifers," he said.

"Queenslanders should not be left to live with the huge mess Adani plans to leave behind, and certainly shouldn't pay for it."

While Adani insists its operation is efficient enough to withstand coal price "cycles", analysts say the documents show signs its business plan is in stress.

Tim Buckley, energy analyst from the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, said the notion the coal price would now return to a boom-bust cycle was "extreme wishful thinking".

STOP WATER MINING THE NEXT RESOURCES BATTLE



https://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/adani-rise-fuels-criticism-of-concentration-of-capital-in-few-hands-report-120111300419_1.html

Adani rise fuels criticism of concentration of capital in few hands: Report

Business Standard, 13/11/2020

Gautam Adani's mushrooming empire has become a focus of criticism for those who believe that capital is being concentrated in the hands of a few favoured corporate titans at the expense of India's middle class.

The Adani Group's total outstanding debt came to more than \$30 billion as of November 11, according to data from Dealogic, including \$7.8 billion worth of bonds and \$22.3 billion in loans. High debt is nothing new among Indian conglomerates but the Adani Group's rapid expansion has raised concern.

Credit Suisse warned in a 2015 "House of Debt" report that the Adani Group was one of 10 conglomerates under "severe stress" that accounted for 12% of banking sector loans.



David Rowe's cartoon accompanied this AFR article.

<https://www.afr.com/world/asia/gautam-adani-the-man-behind-the-mine-20201116-p56f08>

Gautam Adani: the man behind the mine

Stephanie Findlay & Hudson Lockett, AFR, 20/11/2020

Adani is today one of the most visible tycoons in the country, whose prominence has accelerated in the years since Narendra Modi was elected prime minister in 2014. Like both Modi and Ambani, Adani comes from the western state of Gujarat, where he was a key supporter of Modi and his ruling Bharatiya Janata party as it rose to dominate national politics.

When Modi took office, he flew from Gujarat to the capital New Delhi in Adani's private jet – an open display of friendship that symbolised their concurrent rise to power. Since Modi came into office, Adani's net worth has increased by about 230% to more than \$US26 billion as he won government tenders and built infrastructure projects across the country.

The ascent of the Adani Group has been plagued with controversy and allegations

ranging from fraud to environmental abuses. In February, it pleaded guilty to misleading the environmental authorities in Australia over land clearing at the Carmichael mine site and was fined \$20,000.

Along with a group of other companies, it is also being probed by India's Directorate of Revenue Intelligence in connection with allegations of over-invoicing billions of dollars worth of coal imports from Indonesia.

The company has also been dogged by claims that it has been on the receiving end of preferential treatment in regulatory decisions that have made otherwise risky projects much more attractive.

COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-investment-corporation-takes-99pc-stake-in-dalrymple-bay-coal-terminal/news-story/2566fe1884ae1815ffc64677ca24c406>

Queensland Investment Corporation takes 9.9pc stake in Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal

Jessica Marszalek, Courier-Mail, 10/11/2020

The Labor Government will invest around \$150 million into a coal terminal another Labor government sold nearly 20 years ago.

Treasurer Cameron Dick's office have confirmed the government's investment arm – Queensland Investment Corporation – have taken a 9.9% stake in the Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal, which exports thermal and metallurgical coal from Central Queensland's Bowen Basin mines to ports around the world.

It's understood the investment will equal around \$150 million.

The move will be funded out of the Palaszczuk Government's \$500 million Backing Queensland Business Investment Fund, which was announced during September's economic update to invest in businesses and projects that will generate local jobs through the COVID-19 recovery.

Queensland Resources Council chief executive Ian Macfarlane said it was a "clear vote of confidence" by the government in the role of the resources industry in the COVID-19 recovery.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/mining/supply-shock-hits-coal-market-amid-newcastle-port-damage-20201119-p56g68>

Supply shock hits coal market amid Newcastle port damage

Peter Ker, AFR, 19/11/2020

One of Australia's biggest thermal coal ports is expected to have reduced export capacity for an extended period after wild weather damaged a large and crucial piece of equipment in the Port of Newcastle.

One of the two shiploaders owned by Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group (NCIG) was blown off its rails by strong winds on Monday and is expected to be out of action for weeks and possibly months.

The NSW thermal coal mines of BHP, Yancoal, Centennial Coal, Peabody Energy and Whitehaven Coal all use NCIG's export facilities, and those five companies also jointly own NCIG.

While NCIG was completely halted for just over 24 hours, the bigger issue for coal markets will be how long the terminal is forced to operate with just one of its two shiploaders available.

<https://www.goldcoastbulletin.com.au/news/national/hunter-valley-horse-studs-in-life-or-death-battle-to-stop-coal-mine-proposal/news-story/40e05df376db0db87f7a1d6ef7837a3d>

Hunter Valley horse studs in 'life or death battle' to stop coal mine proposal

Matthew Benns, Daily Telegraph, 19/11/2020

Three years after proving once and for all that coal mines and horse studs should not sit side-by-side, the breeders of some of Australia's top racehorses are being threatened again.

"It's exasperating," Coolmore principal Tom Magnier said.

"We are in this again for the fifth time — it is a life-or-death battle for us."

The proposed Maxwell Underground Coal Mine will stop just 160m from the immaculately fenced, rolling green pastures of the stud that is home to some of the biggest names in racing, including Sunlight and Invincibella, who together this year cost more than \$5 million.

"Australia is the best place in the world to breed fast horses and the industry in Australia is going from strength to strength," he said. "Why put that at risk when demand for coal is dying?"

At stake is the heart of the Hunter Valley horse breeding operation which supports an industry that employs more than 53,000 people in NSW and pumps \$2.6 billion into the state economy.

The Planning Assessment Commission rejected Anglo American's proposal for a giant open-cut coal mine in 2017 because of noise and air quality risks to the horses.

But it did not die.

The rights were bought by Malabar Coal, which relaunched it as an underground coal mine that its owners insist will not have an impact on the studs.

The Independent Planning Commission is expected to deliver its verdict on the project just before Christmas.

Magnier said even though it would be underground the damage the mine would wreak remained exactly the same.

"It's all down to the water, the experts and planning department don't dispute that the water in the Hunter Valley has been affected by mining," he said.

Malabar Coal chairman Wayne Seabrook believes the proposal addresses all of the breeders' and farmers' concerns. "They don't want an open-cut mine across the road, I get that," he said.

"We have de-risked the project 99% because we have taken away all the things that caused the PAC to reject the original proposal by Anglo."

OIL & GAS LEAKS

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-10/nt-fracking-protesters-who-drilled-holes-lawns-found-not-guilty/12867700>

Darwin judge finds anti-fracking protesters not guilty of damaging lawns outside NT Parliament

Sowabiah Hanfie, ABC, 10/11/2020

Two anti-fracking protesters who drilled holes into the lawns in front of NT Parliament House have been found not guilty of causing criminal damage, with a judge saying the prosecution failed to establish the lawns were NT government property.

Lauren Mellor and Conrad Rory were charged after using a bobcat to drill three holes in the lawn.

In a hearing last month, the Darwin Local Court was told the holes took one hour to repair at a cost of \$100.

The protest in April last year by the Protect Country Alliance group involved about 20 people and was in opposition to the Northern Territory Government's decision to lift a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing.

Today Judge John Neill said there was no dispute that both defendants intentionally drilled holes into the lawn but he found the prosecution's case failed to establish the lawn was the property of the NT government, as stated in the charge.

Outside court, Ms Mellor said the decision was a victory for traditional owners fearful of fracking on their country.

"We think the Northern Territory Government should be ashamed of the way it's pursued us through the courts," Mellor said.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/agl-to-press-pause-as-nsw-powers-on/news-story/cc878c2457d2ba239f6535e4a74bb13f>

AGL to press pause as NSW powers on

Perry Williams, Aus, 17/11/2020

AGL Energy has paused its Newcastle gas plant decision and is reviewing a giant battery investment at Liddell, amid uncertainty around the NSW government's controversial energy blueprint, in a move that may also nix Scott Morrison's hopes for 1000 megawatts of new power capacity to be committed in the state by April.

AGL said the state's energy roadmap — which aims to attract \$34bn in private investment spread through renewable energy zones — meant it would have to defer and review the two major NSW projects as it seeks to understand the implications of the policy. The power giant, Australia's largest electricity generator, had been planning a final investment decision by early 2021 on its proposed 250MW Newcastle gas-fired power plant at Tomago.

A plan to convert its Liddell coal power station in NSW's Hunter Valley into a giant battery park is also under review as it moves closer to shutting down the ageing plant in the 2022-23 summer.

<https://www.katherinetimes.com.au/story/7017877/gas-pipeline-plans-cause-alarm-among-landowners-at-katherine-meeting/>

Gas pipeline plans cause alarm among landowners at Katherine meeting

Chris McLennan, Katherine Times, 18/11/2020

A meeting of landowners in Katherine last night expressed alarm they had not been consulted about plans for a gas pipeline between Tennant Creek and Darwin.

The gas pipeline is key to transporting any Beetaloo shale gas to markets.

Pipeline builder Jemena last week unveiled

plans to invest over \$5 billion" to increase the capacity of its Northern Gas Pipeline while also working to extend the pipeline from the Beetaloo Basin to the east coast, at Wallumbilla Gas Hub in Queensland.

Landholders in Katherine said they were surprised a contract had been awarded by the NT Government to plan a route for a pipeline to bring onshore gas from the Beetaloo Basin to Darwin.

The \$327,000 tender was awarded to CNC Project Management Pty Ltd in September.

Landholders resolved to write a letter to Chief Minister Michael Gunner expressing their concern they have not yet been consulted about the proposed pipeline.

It comes the day after the NT Government released tenders for the massive "Gas and Strategic Minerals Precinct for Middle Arm" that would be fuelled by fracked gas taken from the Beetaloo Basin via the Tennant Creek Pipeline.

The decision to release tenders was made despite growing concern from Native Title holders, economists, farmers, and environmental groups over the development of an onshore gas industry.

Protect Country Alliance spokesperson Graeme Sawyer said the Territory landholders who attended the Katherine meeting were understandably concerned.

"Farmers are worried their produce will sustain reputational damage if a giant fracked gas pipeline is ploughed through their properties," he said.

"They are also worried because in the NT, we still do not have laws that protect farmers from third party liability if something goes wrong involving gas company infrastructure.

"Native Title holders along the proposed pipeline route have also raised concerns with the Chief Minister that the pipeline may damage sacred sites in their area.

"We also know the world is quickly moving away from fossil fuels, and there is a serious risk that projects like fracked-gas pipelines will become stranded assets as demand dries up.

<https://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/story/7017098/green-gas-in-the-wallumbilla-pipeline/>

Wallumbilla's renewable methane project outlined

Sally Gall, Qld Country Life, 18/11/2020

Fifty-one years after the Roma to Brisbane Pipeline transporting natural gas 438km between Wallumbilla and Brisbane was opened by then-Premier Joh Bjelke-Petersen, a project is underway to see if it and other pipelines can cope with renewable methane.

The elements involved in producing renewable methane and the technicalities around moving it through existing infrastructure were shared with attendees at a sold-out Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise breakfast at Chinchilla last Thursday.



Protect Country protested fracking by drilling into the Northern Territory parliament's lawn in 2019. Photo: Contributed

The \$2.2m Wallumbilla Renewable Methane Demonstration Project is being jointly developed by Southern Green Gas and APA Group and also aims to prove the commercial viability of moving renewable methane in existing infrastructure.

The project will use solar-generated electricity, water and carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and is described as 'greening' gas pipelines.

"It's an exciting trial," Twist said, explaining the carbon neutral closed circle process of producing the methane.

The demonstration plant will produce approximately 320 kilograms of hydrogen per year, converting it into 32 gigajoules of methane, which will then be injected into APA's gas engine fuel line at Wallumbilla.

<https://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/7016710/councils-being-urged-to-take-a-position-on-coal-seam-gas/>

Gunnedah and Liverpool Plains shire councils to discuss positions on CSG while Lock the Gate members rally

Billy Jupp, Nthn Daily Leader, 18/11/2020

Gunnedah and Liverpool Plains shire councils are being urged by residents to take a stand on coal seam gas.

Both shires will hold council meetings today [Wednesday] and both will feature guest speakers eager to convince councillors to find a position against the industry.

Members of the Lock the Gate Alliance will gather outside each meeting to show their support of a position against CSG.

Local landholders such as Peter Wills and Helen Strang will address councillors during the meetings, outlining concerns regarding proposed CSG projects.

"Farmers feared that the Santos project was a Trojan Horse for gas companies that were holding onto these expired PELs, and now we have proof," Wills said.

"We hope these councils will listen to their residents and understand that sustainable farming and coal seam gasfields simply cannot co-exist.

The push comes after Dubbo and Moree Plains councils took a hard stance on petroleum licences earlier this year and the NSW Nationals' Boggabri branch passed a motion that called on the NSW Government to extinguish the expired zombie licences.

<https://www.nvi.com.au/story/7019255/farmers-frustrated-as-council-rubber-stamps-decade-old-csg-policy/>

Gunnedah coal seam gas policy motion struck down, majority vote reaffirms 2009 policy

Jessica Worboys, Namoi Valley Independent, 19/11/2020

Local landholders are unhappy Gunnedah Shire Council hasn't taken a definitive stance on coal seam gas (CSG) and have reaffirmed a policy that's more than 10 years old.

Lock the Gate Alliance members took to the Gunnedah council chambers with placards and signs, and members Peter Wills and Helen Strang presented before the meeting began, to try and persuade councillors to consider the formulation of a new dedicated CSG policy.

However, their efforts were in vain as four councillors shot down the motion to consider this, with mayor Jamie Chaffey using his deciding vote to break the tie.

Cr Owen Hasler fought hard for a revised policy, and was backed by Cr David Moses, Cr Colleen Fuller and Cr Ann Luke.

"The fact that we've got a policy does not mean to say that we can't replace it," Cr Hasler said before the vote.

"Policies get reviewed and it's time we review this policy and put into place a policy that has had good consultation with the community and truly reflects what the community is telling us at the time.

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/cultural-site-be-destroyed-gas-project-indigenous-fears-223730349.html>

'Making us sick inside': Gas project will destroy sacred site, Indigenous elders fear

Michael Dahlstrom, Yahoo!news, 19/11/2020

Australia is on track to destroy an Indigenous nation's sacred cultural asset, if a controversial coal seam gas project goes ahead, community leaders warn.

Members of the Gomeri nation say energy company Santos's gas drilling at Narrabri, in northwest NSW, poses an unacceptable risk to the country's largest underground water source, the Great Artesian Basin.

Native title applicant Polly Cutmore has been vocal in her opposition to the plan.

"Our artesian is not up for sale and neither are we," Cutmore said.

"We don't know what this mob is up to, we don't trust them.

"It's colonialism coming back again."

Cutmore is supported by her sister Toni Wright and traditional owner Sheryl Nichols who have come to meet at the Pilliga Bore Baths.

The location remains an important meeting place for Gomeri people, and the surrounding paddocks contain scar trees which were once used to make coolamons for carrying newborn babies.

Water is women's business, and Nichols says protecting country is causing stress to her and other women in the community.

"It's also ruining our hearts, it's making us sick inside," Nichols said.

"We can't let them keep doing it."

Cultural practitioner Steven Booby explains that the Namoi river is literally referred to as a breast in Gamilaraay language, as it sustains those living in and around it.

Country, he says, functions the same as a body does, with many of the springs

around the Pilliga referred to as hearts. He argues that releasing waste water from coal seam gas extraction would not be tolerated in Sydney's waterside suburbs like Cronulla or Bondi.

"What do you think would happen if I dumped it in Manly Beach, Coogee Beach, the Shire?" he said.

"It would probably kill everything. They wouldn't do it there, why are they doing it here? What's the difference?"

Amid the gas debate, Shooters Fishers Farmers MP Roy Butler ended 69 years of National Party rule, winning the Seat of Barwon in 2019.

In January he said the risk from the gas project may be small, but the consequences if anything goes wrong are enormous.

"We can't put the Genie back in the bottle if we compromise groundwater," he said.

Butler argues that the wider Gomeri community, as well as other Indigenous nations downstream have "not been given a voice in this".

"Aboriginal people who rely on bore water at Coonamble, Walgett, Bourke, all of those places, have an interest in this too and they should have a say in it."

• *Second of a four-part series on the community impact of the Narrabri gasfield.*

HYDROGEN HYPE

<https://www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au/news/the-industry-set-to-bring-8000-jobs-11-billion-for/4140327/>

The industry set to bring 8000 jobs, \$11 billion for economy

Matthew Killoran, Fraser Coast Chronicle, 16/11/2020

Hydrogen is set to be a major employer in a post-COVID world, if it can overcome technical challenges.

Energy Minister Angus Taylor will make the claim today as he spruiks the industry has the capability to create 8000 jobs and \$11 billion for the economy by 2050.

Interest in the cutting edge energy technology has been gaining steam, with Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk appointing a Minister for Hydrogen.

Gladstone is also being eyed off as a potential "hydrogen hub" for the nation.

CLIMATE CRISIS

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/nsw-renewables-plan-marks-a-major-new-moment-for-climate-action-in-australia-80628/>

NSW renewables plan marks a major new moment for climate action in Australia

Ketan Joshi, Renew Economy, 10/11/2020

That the states of Australia are stepping well ahead of the federal government on climate action is no mystery. As the Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the federal energy and "emissions reductions" minis-

ter Angus Taylor stall, distract and obfuscate, the problems get deeper. Yesterday, federal MP Craig Kelly issued an anxious pre-emptive strike to the federal leadership, presumably after seeing China, South Korea, Japan and (probably) the US get on track to net zero by 2050. "Net zero would cause a lot of pain to a lot of people in a lot of electorates," Kelly told Guardian Australia, definitely referring to very specific people in very specific electorates.

As this unending, self-repeating and utterly exhausting federal pantomime continues, every single state in the country has established a 2050 net zero emissions reduction target, and to varying degrees, each have begun the actual policy and practical steps to create this change on a scale that gets the country where it needs to be in the next few decades.

On November 9, New South Wales' state government released a detailed and relatively beefy 'roadmap' for new energy infrastructure over the coming decades. There is plenty to dig into, but it's important first to note how weird this moment was. This was essentially a climate policy for guiding investment in clean energy that was supported by:

- The NSW Liberal party (centre-right)
- The NSW Nationals party (hard right) ("The stimulus the Renewable Energy Zones will provide to regional communities will unlock over 9,000 new jobs and will be a huge boost to farmers and land owners")
- The NSW Greens ("This is BIG!")

Support and interest came from a very wide range of the big climate groups and people in Australia, like the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Climate Council, WWF Australia, The Australia Institute, the Smart Energy Council, Atlassian CEO and renewable investor Mike Cannon-Brookes, Environment Victoria, GetUp!, the Clean Energy Council, Beyond Zero Emissions and quite a few others. It's a big, endless list. The sole exception to this was One Nation NSW, whose NSW MLC Mark Latham, who said the policy was a "massive scandal of rent seekers, perverted markets and Liberal factional politics", though One Nation's recent collapse in QLD polls suggests they can be reasonably dismissed.

The 'roadmap' comprises a collection of investment intentions, targeting regional NSW, and focusing on energy storage, 'renewable energy zones' (REZ) (in which wind and solar growth are concentrated and optimised), grid reliability and cheaper provision of electricity. An 'Electricity Infrastructure Investment Safeguard' provides investor certainty in the provision of REZs, deep storage and other integration technologies.

The report shies away from language around climate, and talk mostly about jobs, regional benefits, economic benefits and industry, but explicitly highlights the fact that the best, cheapest pathway for new energy technologies is, inarguably, renewable energy. Green steel, green aluminium,

hydrogen and environmental horticulture are all major selling points in these documents. It is an aspirational vision, but these infrastructure plans are also tied to the planned shutdowns of NSW's massive, dominating coal-fired power stations over the coming two decades:

• *Article continues with a detailed analysis and a number of graphs.*

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/nov/10/immense-potential-of-renewable-energy-could-propel-australia-to-net-zero-2050-target>

'Immense' potential of renewable energy could propel Australia to net zero 2050 target

Graham Readfern, Guardian, 10/11/2020

Australia could become a carbon neutral economy by 2050 thanks to an abundance of cheap solar and wind energy but will need a more ambitious 2030 climate target to get there, according to a report from international climate policy experts.

The report, from Climate Action Tracker (CAT), used two different models covering climate policies and energy systems to find out how the country could reach net zero emissions by 2050.

Reaching net zero means that a country's greenhouse gas emissions from activities such as fossil fuel burning and mining are balanced by the uptake of carbon in soils, forests or by technologies like carbon capture and storage.

A lead author on the CAT report, Ursula Fuentes Hutfilter, a senior climate policy adviser at Climate Analytics, told Guardian Australia: "The biggest missing piece [for Australia] is to have a consistent approach across the economy.

"That means setting a net zero target for 2050 and then working backwards to see how fast each sector needs to transition.

"Once you have a 2050 target and you look at how you get there, what you then see is that you have to then enhance the 2030 target."

The Morrison government has flagged a gas-fired recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, saying the fossil fuel compliments renewables by "keeping the lights on when the sun isn't shining and the wind isn't blowing".

But the CAT report says technologies including battery storage and pumped hydro, as well as better management of electricity demand, would mean gas-fired electricity would not be needed.

An essential component to reach net zero, the CAT report finds, is to end deforestation by the year 2030.

Stopping deforestation and allowing trees and soils to take up more carbon would reduce reliance on other technologies, such as carbon capture and storage, to balance the country's carbon budget.

Allowing deforestation to continue and relying instead on CCS did not have the

co-benefit of delivering benefits for biodiversity, the report said.

One of the most challenging industries to decarbonise would be Australia's export-focused LNG sector, and carbon capture and storage may be needed there to meet a net zero target.

The report found current policies would create 25,600 direct jobs in power generation, but shifting to policies in line with the Paris goals that emphasised local manufacturing would deliver 62,300 direct jobs.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/nov/11/australia-should-cut-emissions-quickly-and-lead-world-in-renewable-energy-incoming-chief-scientist-says>

Australia should cut emissions quickly and lead world in renewable energy, incoming chief scientist says

Graham Readfern, Guardian, 11/11/2020

Australia's incoming chief scientist wants the country to be a global renewable energy leader and "bold and ambitious" in rapidly cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

Physicist Dr Cathy Foley, who will replace Dr Alan Finkel in January, said she believed the Morrison government was serious about rapidly shifting the country to a low-emissions economy.

Foley, who is currently the chief scientist at CSIRO, will enter the role at a time when a global pandemic has pushed the importance of scientific advice to new heights.

She said her role would be to make sure the voices of environmental science were heard, but to also "bring them to the other parts of the argument to see why an outcome has landed where it has".

"I think pragmatic is not the right word. It's about being a boundary spanner ... that's what's tricky in the chief scientist role."

Foley is a multi-award winning physicist specialising in the use of super-conductors to locate mineral deposits. She has worked at CSIRO for 36 years.

<https://www.northweststar.com.au/story/7009306/woolworths-commits-to-green-energy-by-2025/>

Woolworths commits to green energy by 2025

North West Star, 12/11/2020

Supermarket giant Woolworths has committed to sourcing 100% of its electricity needs from renewable sources by 2025.

Australia's largest retailer, consumes around 1% of the nation's electricity.

It's the latest Australian company to join the global RE100 movement, bringing together businesses around the world to commit to 100% renewable power.

Woolworths has 1,000 supermarkets and metro stores, and 3,000 stores including Big W and Dan Murphy's, employing more than 215,000 people.

The 14 Australian members of RE100 include: Woolworths Group, Westpac,

Suncorp, QBE, NAB, Mirvac, Macquarie, Interactive, Dexus, Commonwealth bank, BINGO Industries, Bank Australia, Atlassian and ANZ.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/nov/18/victoria-pledges-797m-for-australias-biggest-household-energy-efficiency-drive>

Victoria pledges \$797m for Australia's biggest household energy efficiency drive

Adam Morton, *Guardian*, 18/11/2020

Victorians have been promised Australia's biggest household energy efficiency drive, with the Andrews government pledging \$797m to programs it says will cut power bills and greenhouse gas emissions.

Measures include a \$1,000 rebate for low-income households to replace old heaters with modern split-systems, upgrades to 35,000 social housing properties and a new requirement that landlords keep rental properties at a minimum efficiency standard.

The state government said it would also extend existing incentive schemes for home solar and battery systems and offer a one-off \$250 payment for concession card holders to help with bills.

Social welfare and environment groups said the commitments were likely to have an immediate impact, particularly for vulnerable households. They followed the government's weekend announcement that it would spend \$5.3bn building more than 12,000 public and community homes with a 7-star energy efficiency standard.

Luke Menzel, the chief executive of the national Energy Efficiency Council, said it was a "transformative investment" that would create thousands of local jobs, help the climate and save lives. He cited evidence that a similar New Zealand program led to \$7 in benefits for every \$1 spent, mostly through reductions in health costs and deaths.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/wa-pays-business-to-consume-surplus-solar-power-20201102-p56aww>

WA pays business to consume surplus solar power

Aaron Patrick & Brad Thompson, *AFR*, 20/11/2020

Western Australia is generating so much solar power that the state-owned distribution network is paying customers to use electricity.

Solar power is now Western Australia's largest source of electricity.

Solar-panel owners are paid 3¢ or 10¢ per kilowatt hour to supply the grid, depending on the time of day, according to the West Australian government.

The standard charge for business customers to buy electricity is 30¢ per kilowatt hour. Western Power is paying businesses 8¢ per kilowatt hour to consume electricity, according to a source.

Independent MP for Warringah, Zali Stegall.



The paid-to-consume scheme illustrates how solar-power subsidies have been so popular that they are undermining the stability of power grids by producing huge amounts of electricity during the middle of the day instead of afternoons and evenings when demand is greatest.

The University of Western Australia, which is participating in the program, said it had switched electricity usage from days to evenings as part of the scheme. One example it cited was cooling water during the day and using it in the evening to operate air conditioners.

Business will be paid to consume about 48 megawatts of electricity-generating capacity, according to Western Power, which refers to the scheme as buying "flexibility services".

Examples cited by the company include abattoirs that would change their refrigeration times and brick makers that would operate at weekends.

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://theconversation.com/zali-steggalls-new-climate-change-bill-comes-just-as-economic-sectors-step-up-149728>

Zali Stegall's new climate change bill comes just as economic sectors step up

Anna Malos & Amandine Denis-Ryan, *The Conversation*, 10/11/2020

Yesterday (November 9), Zali Stegall, the independent member for Warringah, introduced her long-awaited climate change bill to the Australian parliament.

Much of the debate around the bill centres on what needs to be done for Australia to reach net zero emissions by 2050. That's a crucial discussion — but it's equally vital to recognise what's already been committed.

Our project, the Net Zero Momentum Tracker, monitors Australia's journey

towards net zero emissions, tracking climate commitments and progress in key sectors of the economy.

We've found progress is, in general, going well. Sectors are increasingly making more climate-active commitments, which means the moment is right for precisely the kind of pivot Stegall's bill seeks to facilitate.

Steggall has garnered huge support outside of politics. In a joint letter this week this week, more than 100 Australian businesses, industry groups and community organisations endorsed the bill as a critical step in the recovery from the pandemic.

This included Oxfam, the Business Council of Australia, the ACTU, the Australian Medical Association and our organisation, ClimateWorks Australia

Along with the 2050 target, the bill proposes the establishment of an independent Climate Change Commission. It also adopts the government's low emissions technology roadmap and would require the government to introduce risk assessment and adaptation plans.

To reach the 2050 target, the bill calls for a process to review the target every five years, and ensure independent advice on five-yearly emissions budgets.

Across the country, all the state and territory governments have made net zero commitments ... It's time for the federal parliament to get on board.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-10/joel-fitzgibbon-quits-shadow-labor-cabinet/12866738>

Labor MP and resources spokesman Joel Fitzgibbon quits Shadow Cabinet

Georgia Hitch, *ABC*, 10/11/2020

Labor frontbencher Joel Fitzgibbon has quit the Shadow Cabinet amid an ongoing disagreement about how the party should



Joel Fitzgibbon. Photo: ABC

approach climate change and energy policies.

- Fitzgibbon says he decided to quit the Shadow Cabinet after the 2019 election;
- He says ambitious climate policies will damage Labor's chance of an electoral victory;
- The Labor Party's policy is a target of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Fitzgibbon was the shadow minister for agriculture and resources, and is the Member for Hunter in the New South Wales Hunter Valley where coal mining is a major industry.

He supports the Opposition's target for net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, but is worried that being too ambitious in the short term will damage Labor's electoral chances.

Last year, he said his party should adopt the Government's climate change targets, saying Labor's had "confused and scared" voters.

Fitzgibbon said to win government, the Labor Party needed to make sure it was also appealing to regional voters whose workforce relies on traditional energy sources.

He said he made the decision to quit Shadow Cabinet after the 2019 election, but decided to stay on until now to try and rebuild the party and "make it electorally more competitive".

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/joel-fitzgibbon-to-quit-labor-frontbench-amid-growing-climate-fight-20201110-p56d4g.html>

Joel Fitzgibbon quits Labor frontbench amid growing climate fight

Rob Harris, SMH, 10/11/2020

Labor frontbencher Joel Fitzgibbon has quit the opposition shadow cabinet, arguing he doesn't think the party can win

the next federal election unless it adopts his views on climate change and energy policies.

Fitzgibbon told caucus colleagues on Tuesday morning he will sit on the backbench, vowing to again contest his NSW seat of Hunter, warning he would speak up for the ALP's blue-collar which he said had been alienated over the past decade.

He said the only way for Labor to act on climate change was to win government and if it was to win an election it needed a climate change policy that "can be embraced by a majority of the Australian people."

He suffered a 14% swing in his own seat in May last year, with his One Nation opponent's 21% of the vote pushing the result to preferences against the Nationals.

Several Left faction sources said that Monday night's national caucus was «scathing» of Fitzgibbon's weekend comments and annoyed that his constant interventions were damaging Labor's credibility on the issue.

Among those to heap criticism on Fitzgibbon, sources said, were his shadow cabinet colleagues Tanya Plibersek and Linda Burney.

<https://www.crikey.com.au/2020/11/11/joel-fitzgibbon-coal-multinationals/?ins=QnZwWXNEZ0VqW:jIBTW9qU09YSkwwZz09>

Joel Fitzgibbon takes a stand – to defend coal multinationals

Bernard Keane & Glenn Dyer, Crikey, 11/11/2020

While the planet continues to heat up – 2020 may yet be the hottest year ever and will be in the top five hottest years – and the government continues to deny climate change and the need for climate action, Labor is busily demonstrating that the Coalition isn't the only side torn between basic science and the demands of fossil-fuel donors.

Joel Fitzgibbon isn't the only pro-fossil-fuel figure within Labor. He's backed by key Labor donors, the Australian Workers' Union and the CFMEU, both of which oppose effective climate action in the name of looking after fossil-fuel-industry jobs.

Labor also receives generous donations from fossil-fuel companies like Santos, Origin and Woodside, advocates of gas and the myth of carbon capture and storage.

And while press gallery coverage of the stoush between Fitzgibbon and the Labor leader Anthony Albanese (and advocates for effective climate action within Labor) is framed in the terms Fitzgibbon prefers — that climate action is inimical to the interests of working-class voters — the real beneficiaries of Fitzgibbon's activism would be fossil-fuel companies, especially large, mainly foreign-owned multinational mining companies.

Glencore is one of the biggest miners in the Hunter Valley, not to mention one of the world's biggest tax dodgers and a routine user of transfer pricing to avoid tax obligations in developing countries. It is currently embroiled in a major fight with the ATO over transfer pricing.

Another Hunter Valley multinational, Peabody, the world's largest coal producer, has revealed it is facing bankruptcy again – for the second time since 2016 – in the face of slumping coal revenues and massive debt. Peabod has already slashed jobs at its NSW and Queensland mines this year and suspended operations. There's now a concern taxpayers will be left on the hook for the cost of remediating Peabody's mines.

All this has happened in the complete absence of any serious climate action policy. It's been driven by the collapse in demand for thermal coal.

If Fitzgibbon wants any more evidence that thermal coalmining has no future he can look north to the results reported by Queensland state electricity generators.

The two companies – Stanwell and CS Energy – own two-thirds of Queensland's power stations and just reported losses for 2019-20 of \$240 million for Stanwell and \$77.6 million for the smaller CS Energy.

Who's investing in rooftop solar? Many of the blue-collar workers Fitzgibbon claims Labor has lost touch with. In Queensland households solar penetration is about 33%.

Perhaps Fitzgibbon, the AWU and the CFMEU ought to have a word to them and tell them to get behind coal again and help out the likes of Peabody and Glencore.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/were-not-all-the-way-with-usa-on-climate-energy-minister-angus-taylor/news-story/9195130685760a275ab0d46d5e389f4f>

We're not all the way with USA on climate: energy Minister Angus Taylor

Greg Brown & Richard Ferguson, Aus, 10/11/2020

Energy Minister Angus Taylor says an Australian 2050 net-zero emissions

commitment would require an “aggressive” short-term target and the Morrison government will not necessarily follow the US into adopting climate policies that harm carbon-intensive export industries.

Taylor said he expected the incoming Democratic administration of Joe Biden to promote new technologies as a key means of reducing emissions, arguing this was “exactly the approach we (Australia) are taking”.

Biden went to the election promising to rejoin the Paris Agreement, hit net-zero emissions “no later than 2050” and achieve an emissions-neutral electricity sector by 2035.

Scott Morrison told question time on Monday that the government would like to meet net-zero emissions “as quickly as possible” but argued the public needed to be informed of the costs involved.

Labor climate change spokesman Mark Butler accused Taylor on Monday of “running another tired old scare campaign against climate action” after claiming the opposition’s effective 2030 target was 43%.

Labor is in a heated internal debate over climate change, with resources spokesman Joel Fitzgibbon pushing for the party to go to the election without specific targets for 2030 or 2035.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-11-10/gas-led-recovery-likely-to-be-a-mirage/12843276>

Gas-led recovery likely to be a ‘mirage’ and lead to ‘stranded assets’

Andy Park & Alex McDonald, ABC, 10/11/2020

The Federal Government’s planned gas-led recovery could turn out to be a mirage, according to energy experts who question the economic case for investing in gas infrastructure when fossil fuels are being rapidly replaced by renewable energy sources.

In September, Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced a plan to “reset the east coast gas market” by “unlocking gas supply” and “delivering an efficient pipeline and transportation market” to drive the nation’s economic recovery.

Morrison also issued a warning to electricity companies.

“To ensure affordable, reliable power, we need the market to deliver 1000 megawatts of new dispatchable capacity,” he said.

The Prime Minister said the government-owned Snowy Hydro company would build a gas generator in the Hunter Valley if the electricity sector failed to meet the energy shortfall left by the scheduled closure of the coal-fired Liddell power plant in New South Wales.

Yet the energy market operator has revealed that several planned projects in the state would exceed the interim reliability shortfall.

Tony Wood, energy director at the Grattan

Institute, told 7.30 that promoting a gas-led recovery was “quite an extraordinary step and almost certainly unnecessary”.

“The wish that gas prices would one day be as cheap as they used to be, is almost certainly doomed,” Wood said.

“Building long-term gas infrastructure, it almost certainly will be a stranded asset at some point in the future.

“A gas-led recovery is likely to turn out to be a mirage, to be honest.”

Jillian Broadbent, former chair of the Clean Energy Finance Corporation, described the Government’s planned intervention as “reckless” and “a dangerous decision”.

Santos chief executive Kevin Gallagher said the project would access an “abundant energy source” to increase manufacturing and industrial capacity, and that “no gas project could lead to higher gas prices”.

However, local landholder and one-time Greens candidate Peter Wills has concerns about the approval process.

“I don’t believe Santos or the IPC would have had enough time to go through all the tens of thousands of submissions, with proper due diligence,” he said.

A proposed high-pressure underground pipeline connecting the Narrabri gas field to the Hunter Valley has NSW Government approval to cross Wills’ land near Quirindi.

Farmers like Wills have objected to giving workmen access to their properties.

“We hope our initial refusal of access to our paddocks is sufficient for them not to be able to prove to the Government they can gain the easements in the first instance,” he said.

The pipeline will run right through the Hunter electorate of Labor MP Joel Fitzgibbon.

Fitzgibbon said he supported the pipeline because it would provide “economic opportunity for my people”.

But retirees Susan and Roland Johnson, who knew the pipeline had approval to cross their land when they bought their property at Stanhope in the Hunter Valley, are worried the pipeline will become a white elephant.

The pipeline’s expected route was changed and is now closer to their home.

“Why spend billions of dollars on what will become a stranded asset?” Johnson asked.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/nov/15/benefits-of-coalitions-gas-led-recovery-overstated-and-declining-usage-inevitable-report-finds>

Benefits of Coalition’s ‘gas-led recovery’ overstated and declining usage inevitable, report finds

Adam Morton, Guardian, 15/11/2020

The gas industry will inevitably decline as an energy source for industry and homes due to both economic and environmental issues, and will not deliver the Morrison

government’s promised “gas-led recovery”, a new report finds.

The analysis by the Grattan Institute said most of the cheap gas on the east coast had already been burned and what remained would become increasingly expensive, undermining the case for its increased use as a “transition fuel” on the path to a low-emissions future.

It is one of two reports released on Sunday that challenge claims by Scott Morrison and the energy minister, Angus Taylor – backed by some in Labor, including vocal outgoing frontbencher Joel Fitzgibbon – that extracting and using more of the fossil fuel will be central to the economic recovery from recession.

The prime minister has announced \$52.9m for planning to increase gas supply and transportation infrastructure, and quoted a gas industry estimate that 225,000 manufacturing jobs were heavily reliant on the energy source.

Rather than 225,000, only about 10,000 people were employed in gas-intensive manufacturing. Most were in Western Australia, which already had low gas prices.

Tony Wood, the Grattan Institute’s energy program director, said Australia must cut greenhouse gas emissions to meet its international commitments, and that would mean reducing gas use.

A separate report by the Australia Institute, a progressive think tank, also challenged the idea that attempts to spark a gas-led recovery could help manufacturing industries.

It found less than 1% of Australian gas is used as a manufacturing feedstock. The overwhelming majority – 82% – is either exported or used by the liquified natural gas (LNG) export industry in processing.

The report said manufacturing jobs were not historically linked to a cheap gas supply, having been in long-term decline before the LNG export industry expanding and led to a tripling of the gas price over the past decade. It said the gas industry used more gas in processing LNG for export than the entire manufacturing sector.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/morrison-still-wants-to-turn-up-the-gas-despite-the-critics-20201114-p56en1>

Morrison still wants to turn up the gas, despite the critics

Jennifer Hewett, AFR, 15/11/2020

The Grattan Institute is not as succinct as Malcolm Turnbull in dismissing the Morrison government’s plans for a gas-led recovery. In Grattan’s hands, Turnbull’s description of the policy as “piffle” is instead a 73-page report into the future of natural gas called “Flame Out”. But it comes to much the same conclusion.

Not that the report is suggesting no continuing role for gas in the Australian energy market. It’s more that authors Tony Wood and Guy Dundas see that role as limited to temporary bursts of “back-up” power when renewables are not available.

Grattan also argues that even if the government could significantly reduce gas prices, the benefits to manufacturing are overstated.

Scott Morrison and Energy Minister Angus Taylor remain firmly committed to the role of gas as a major transition fuel. Taylor says the Grattan report fails to comprehend the dramatically changed international gas market due to new US gas exports to Asia. This has driven down prices globally and will increasingly flow through to Australian domestic prices for gas.

Nor does he believe the need for gas will dissipate. So the federal government is pressing the states, with limited success, to open up new gas fields and end restrictions on gas development. It is vowing to step up itself to fund a new gas-fired power station in NSW next year if the private sector does not. And it is promising the return of a reliable, affordable and plentiful gas supply to revitalise East Coast manufacturing industry and save hundreds of thousands of jobs.

This also translates into rejecting the growing clamour for a commitment to zero net emissions by 2050. But the Morrison government will remain resolutely uncommitted to a 2050 timetable.

<https://www.crikey.com.au/2020/11/16/gas-led-recovery-jobs-grattan-institute/>

A gas-led recovery won't create jobs, so who benefits?

Georgia Wilkins, Crikey, 16/11/2020

The evidence is in: gas won't pull Australia out of a recession.

Former prime minister Malcolm Turnbull has already called the government's gas-led recovery "BS" and "political piffle."

Now two reports raise even more questions about the claims being made about Scott Morrison's gas-led recovery, particularly the ability for gas to create manufacturing jobs.

A report by the Grattan Institute reveals that, far from creating a much needed economic stimulus, gas will decline as an energy source for homes and industries in Australia.

And another report by The Australia Institute reveals a gas-fired recovery will not assist Australia's manufacturing industry, with the biggest benefits going to companies that export gas, not local manufacturers.

Gas was elevated to the centre of the government's energy strategy earlier this year with Angus Taylor's proposed "technology roadmap" retaining and expanding the role of fossil fuels in the economy.

At the same time, it became front and centre of the government's COVID-19 recovery plan, with the appointment of senior oil and gas executives to the National COVID-19 Commission (NCC).

As Crikey has pointed out, the NCC is

stacked with energy industry heavyweights. The group is led by former Fortescue boss and Strike Energy director Nev Power and receives advice from former Dow Chemical boss Andrew Liveris, who also sits on the board of Saudi Aramco.

Grattan Institute energy program boss and author of the report Tony Wood said the government's gas-led recovery appeared to be driven by politics more than economic analysis, in particular the agenda of the NCC.

The gas industry has deep political connections in Australia beyond the NCC. Senior adviser to Scott Morrison, Yaron Finkelstein, worked for Crosby Textor when it was an adviser to gas lobby group the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (APPEA). The Coalition's pivot to gas is the same strategy being pushed by APPEA in 2011, and positions gas as the bridge from coal to renewables.

Then there are the donors. Crikey has already written extensively about how the prime minister's energy policy is built around the interests of the government's biggest fossil fuel donors — Santos, Origin, Woodside — under the guise that gas is a "transition fuel" to be added to the mix alongside renewables.

This also plays to a political argument that gas, like coal, appeals to the Coalition's base.

"Their favourite fossil fuel has become political poison," Merzian said. "This is their next fossil fuel of choice. And it comes with better marketing — imagine if we could call coal natural coal."

<https://www.maitlandmercury.com.au/story/7015390/federal-mps-including-resources-minister-and-labor-leader-anthony-albanese-in-hunter-after-fitzgibbon-blow-up/>

Coal, energy policy and climate change bring Canberra heavyweights to the Hunter Region

Maitland Mercury, 17/11/2020

The Hunter is the centre of national and international political attention over coal, renewables and climate change after Joel Fitzgibbon's explosive exit a week ago from the federal Labor opposition front bench.

A number of Coalition heavyweights are either in the region or planning to visit, while Labor opposition leader Anthony Albanese will tour Tomago Aluminium today, promoting his party's Rewiring the Nation policy — a \$20 billion promise to rebuild and modernise the grid.

The Morrison government's Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia, Keith Pitt, began a two-day visit yesterday with a tour of Glencore's Bulga open-cut in the Liddell open-cut.

Pitt, Liberal MP for the Bundaberg region seat of Hinkler, was accompanied by National Party NSW Senator Perin Davey.

Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack said he would be in the Hunter "soon".

<https://www.jimboombatimes.com.au/story/7014428/on-coal-and-gas-australia-is-becoming-more-isolated/>

On coal and gas, Australia is becoming more isolated

John Quiggin, Canberra Times, 18/11/2020

Following the pattern of Australian political commentary, the resignation of Labor's resources spokesman Joel Fitzgibbon has been discussed almost entirely in terms of domestic politics. As its name implies, though, global warming is fundamentally about our relationship with the world as a whole. As in all matters of foreign policy, little scope exists for unilateral action, or inaction.

Contrary to Scott Morrison's blustery claim — "I tell you what, our policies will be set here in Australia" — most of the important decisions about our energy future will be made elsewhere, by governments in Washington, Beijing and Brussels, and by energy companies and financial institutions headquartered in New York, London, Frankfurt and Tokyo.

Their decisions are reflecting the widening realisation that the world must abandon coal sooner rather than later, that our reliance on oil must also end and, increasingly, that gas is part of the problem rather than the solution. As many commentators have noted, commitments to net-zero emissions by China, Japan, South Korea and other major emitters, as well as the election of Joe Biden in the United States, have left the Australian government increasingly isolated.

At this stage, indeed, it is only China that is keeping the global coal industry afloat.

Labor needs to make a choice between following the government's line — according to which we have already done everything we need to — or committing to a policy framework consistent with the Paris Agreement's goal of holding the increase in mean global temperatures well below 2 degrees. Until now, the policy has been as non-committal as possible — an attempt to satisfy the majority of the party's supporters, who want strong action, as well as those who pretend inaction is a serious option.

Joel Fitzgibbon's resignation gives Labor a chance to resolve the issue. By proposing to align Australia with Biden's pro-climate position, it can regain the initiative and avoid the prospect of global isolation.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/i-m-a-coal-miner-and-i-can-t-see-how-fitzgibbon-represents-me-20201119-p56g73.html>

I'm a coal miner and I can't see how Fitzgibbon represents me

Grant Howard, SMH, 19/11/2020

What's going on with Joel Fitzgibbon? The federal Labor MP quit shadow cabinet last week, apparently because he believes Labor is "demonising coal workers" through pursuing a net-zero emissions policy by 2050. I have worked in the coal industry for 38 years and I have been try-

ing to understand in what way the federal Labor MP represents my colleagues, or how he is acting in our best interests.

In my almost four decades working in the mining industry, one of the starkest things I've noticed is how precarious employment as a coal miner is, and always has been. Employment in the resources industry is always tied to the global market and in my case the market's demand for coal.

Thermal coal is the most significant element of our undoing. It doesn't matter where it is mined or burnt, thermal coal dumps pollution into our common atmosphere.

I am a coal miner. I know there is no such thing as "clean coal". Fitzgibbon appears to be the latest federal politician looking to exploit a political opportunity, as our country, state by state, otherwise responds in a positive way to our challenging future.

State governments across the nation have all committed to net-zero emissions by 2050.

The writing is on the wall. A transition is clearly happening. Coal miners should not be left out of this shift. They should have a voice in developing plans and be in a position to understand the changes, so they can make the best decision for their future.

That seems obvious, but it is not happening. Coal miners, including employees in fickle arrangements with labour hire companies, and the coal communities that they are a part of, deserve a properly planned and implemented transition which is just and fair.

To make that happen politicians need to be honest and tell the truth. Australia is fed up with waffle and denial. The Prime Minister should make a clear, empathic statement about the causes and effects of climate change and develop a clear and constructive plan for our transition to a zero-carbon economy. If we can't get that from the Prime Minister then we could at least get it from Fitzgibbon, a person who wants to back blue-collar workers.

What Australians, including coal miners, don't need are politicians who try to distract and delay the inevitable.

• *Grant Howard is a coal miner working in the Bowen Basin.*

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/one-nation-s-latham-pushes-249-amendments-to-stymie-nsw-energy-bill-20201119-p56g7b.html>

One Nation's Latham pushes 249 amendments to stymie NSW energy bill

Peter Hannam, SMH, 20/11/2020

NSW One Nation leader Mark Latham has lodged almost 250 amendments to the Berejiklian government's landmark energy bill in a bid to prevent its passage this year despite overwhelming parliamentary support.

Latham, who has described the Electricity Infrastructure Investment Bill as akin to Soviet-style five-year plans, submitted 249 amendments that the Berejiklian government estimated would need at least 83 hours of debate to work through. With 78 clauses to the bill, about 327 votes would be required.

The government remained confident the bill would eventually pass given cross-party support, including from Labor and the Greens.

Many of Latham's amendments involved omitting or changing individual words in various clauses, including altering the bill to make it "Electricity Infrastructure Investment, Reliable Supply and Technological Neutrality Act 2020".

Other additions would insert comments such as "recognising the particular importance of coal mining and coal-fired power stations to jobs, manufacturing and the economic and social viability of the Hunter Valley".

"These amendments to block the bill are just a stunt by an increasingly irrelevant minority of angry old men in this Parliament who cannot see that the renewable future is here," David Shoebridge, the Greens energy spokesman, said.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/nov/23/nsw-energy-plan-wont-drive-early-coal-closure-minister-says-amid-spat-with-angus-taylor>

NSW energy plan won't drive early coal closure, minister says amid spat with Angus Taylor

Katharine Murphy, Guardian, 23/11/2020

The NSW energy minister, Matt Kean, has shrugged off criticism from his federal

counterpart, Angus Taylor, of his \$32bn renewables roadmap, saying the state policy has been extensively modelled and won't drive early coal closure.

On Monday Taylor told an energy summit organised by the Australian Financial Review he wanted to see the modelling behind the state roadmap, which aims to support 12 gigawatts of wind and solar and 2 gigawatts of energy storage.

Taylor declared participants in the energy market needed to avoid "reactionary schemes that appease vested interests and ignore the interests of customers" – adding "the triumph of hope over reality and reason must be avoided".

But Kean told the same forum the outlook in Australia's energy market had changed fundamentally. A decade ago, he said, Australia risked reducing national economic growth if it moved too quickly to embrace low emissions technology. But now, if Australia failed to reduce emissions "we will miss the chance to underwrite our prosperity".

The state scheme involves the government awarding long-term contracts for three types of technology: wind and solar farms to be built in three regional renewable energy zones; long-duration storage that can provide back-up power for eight hours or more, likely to come from pumped hydro or batteries; and fast-start "firming" generation that ensures grid stability in a grid that increasingly runs on variable renewables, likely to come from batteries or gas.

The state roadmap had been extensively modelled and "it will not bring forward the early closure of coal, in fact what this is all about is making sure we have the replacement of infrastructure before existing infrastructure closes".

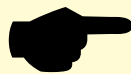
The energy company AGL has expressed some reservations about the scheme, and the business community is concerned that the ongoing lack of a transparent national policy is encouraging the states to go their own way. But Kean hit back: "I'm not here to support vested interests, I am here to support community interests, and that's what this policy does."

F

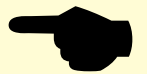
fossilfool.com.au

FOCUS
Publications

Fossil Fool Bulletin is published Tuesdays (in your email Wednesday).



<https://knitting-nannas.org/bulletins.php>



SIGN UP for your FREE subscription
Past issues available to download

**SAVING THE LAND, AIR AND WATER
FOR THE KIDDIES**

www.knitting-nannas.org

