

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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Shenhua in secret negotiations with govt over power to cancel Watermark mine licence

A document released to Lock the Gate Alliance as part of a protracted freedom of information struggle with the NSW Government has revealed that coal mining company Shenhua applied to suspend a key condition which allows the government to cancel Shenhua's mining licence.

The condition gives the Government the power to cancel the exploration licence altogether and prevent the company's Watermark coal mine proceeding.

For more than a year, local farming and community groups and Lock the Gate Alliance have been calling for the government to use the condition to cancel the licence.

Lock the Gate spokesperson Georgina Woods said, "The NSW Government has been playing a double game, claiming it wants to protect the Liverpool Plains from mining while conducting secret negotiations with mining company Shenhua Australia.

"The licence condition Shenhua has applied to suspend for five years is the condition that gives the Government the power to cancel the licence that threatens the Liverpool Plains and end this sorry saga once and for all."

It is not clear whether the Government has agreed to Shenhua's request to suspend the government's power to cancel the licence or whether it is under serious consideration.

The document has been released to Lock the Gate Alliance during the course of proceedings in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal following a freedom of information request that



The Liverpool Plains, a prime agriculture region, under threat from Shenhua's proposed Watermark coal mine. Photo: Lock the Gate

was largely rejected by the government.

The Alliance is attempting to bring to light secret negotiations between the Government and Shenhua over the renewal of its coal exploration licence on the Liverpool Plains and decision last year to give the company \$262 million.

Community kept in the dark

"The community still doesn't know what the Government may have promised Shenhua behind closed doors or what deals have been done.

"It was unnecessary and perverse

for the Government to give this coal mining company a quarter of a billion dollars of public money when they had the power to cancel Shenhua's licence all along. They could have halved the size of the licence for free as the Mining Act says should happen on renewal.

"If the Government is serious about protecting the Liverpool Plains from mining and securing the future of its agricultural production, it will cancel Shenhua's licence and make our state's productive farmland off-limits to mining altogether."

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• P 2: Mining minister's speech draws fire

• P 3: Fighting for a 'beautiful industry'

• P 4: Call for NT frack ban to be extended

Mining minister's pro-coal speech draws fire

Mining Minister Matt Canavan's speech to the National Press Club has reinforced his hard-line pro-coal stance and left environmentalists with the impression he'll use his new Resources 2030 Taskforce to go after them.

"This taskforce is unashamedly focused on ensuring the long-term future of the resources sector and the jobs it supports," Senator Canavan told the Courier-Mail.

"The taskforce will consult widely, and one of its key focus areas will be regional development.

"I anticipate it will want to tackle the issue of activist opportunism that tries to hold up approved projects and prevent people in regional Australia getting a job.

"The Government remains concerned about delays in approval processes, and we intend to progress reforms that can reduce delays and create more jobs."

ACF: Taskforce a govt-funded PR campaign

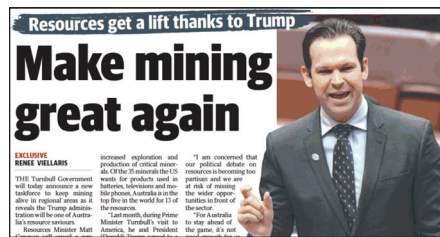
Australian Conservation Foundation CEO, Kelly O'Shanassy, responded: "Minister Canavan's announcement of a resource taskforce to promote dirty fossil fuels like coal and gas while ignoring the impact they have on climate change is hardly surprising, but deeply concerning. Given the taskforce mainly consists of mining executives, it appears the Turnbull Government is using public funds on a public relations campaign for big polluting companies.

"Climate change is already having devastating effects on our planet, including repeated mass bleaching events on the Great Barrier Reef and more frequent and intense dangerous extreme weather.

"If we do not stop exporting polluting coal and gas, Australia will continue to contribute directly to dangerous climate change.

"The Turnbull Government's 'let 'em rip' attitude to coal and gas poses a grave risk to the future of all Australians and the places and wildlife we love.

"It's deeply disappointing to see the Turnbull Government continue its attacks on environment charities which speak up for a fair transition away from polluting coal and gas. Silencing



The Courier-Mail loved Matt Canavan's speech, but environmentalists didn't.

those you disagree with is far from the 'fair go' attitude we have here in Australia."

EDO Qld: Judicial scrutiny uncovers flaws

Environmental Defenders Queensland CEO and Solicitor, Jo Bragg, said: "The claim the legal process is causing delays has been proven false. Australia's environmental laws are rightly being used by the community to scrutinise government decision making and hold industry to account.

"Judicial scrutiny is a central, democratic right. Without scrutiny by Australia's court system the community would not be guarded against corruption, have confidence in our laws or see better environmental assessments and outcomes.

"Court cases brought forward by community groups scrutinising Adani's mine have uncovered important failings in this project."

Ms Bragg says there was many examples of this in relation to Adani's project, with court hearings exposing:

- [Faulty groundwater modelling](#)
- [Exaggerated job creation estimates, with Adani's expert witness economist Dr Jerome Fahrner admitting the mine would create only 1,464 jobs not 10,000 as claimed](#)
- [Overstated economic benefits to the Queensland and national economies](#)
- [Serious flaws in the assessment of impacts on endangered species, particularly the Black Throated Finch.](#)

"The [Queensland Productivity Commission](#) and the [Queensland Land Court](#) confirmed court processes were not being used to delay Adani's project but ensure Australia's environmental laws are upheld. No case against Adani has been held to be frivolous or vexatious by the Courts," Ms Bragg said.

"Minister Canavan has misplaced

blame for delays on the court system, when the reality is the project has stalled because of a failure to find financial backers and a cooling coal market.

"We need legislative reform to protect precious groundwater, prime agricultural land and our climate from the impacts of excessive mining. Not an inquiry aimed at demonising legitimate community legal scrutiny of risky major projects."

Greens: Like advocating fax in internet age

NSW Greens energy and resources spokesman Jeremy Buckingham said: "Pushing coal mining in an age of climate change and cheap, mature renewable energy is not only negligent, but is like advocating fax machines in the age of the internet," said Greens MP Jeremy Buckingham.

"The science very clearly says that 90% of coal must remain in the ground if we are to have even a 50% chance of keeping global warming under the two degree target that Australia signed up to at the Paris climate summit.

"The Greens want coal mining in NSW [phased out within a decade](#). That is the only path to preventing runaway climate change. That's not hyperbole, that is unfortunately the physical reality we face.

"Rather than ignorantly promoting polluting fossil fuels, Australian governments should be working on transition packages to rapidly transition our energy system to renewable energy and to transition mining dependent communities to other economic sectors.

"History is full of disruptive technologies rapidly replacing existing technologies. The motor vehicle and the horse and cart, film and digital cameras, sailing ships and steam ships, mobile phones, computers, and it is clear that renewable energy, which is rapidly decreasing in price and does not pollute the atmosphere is a disruptive technology that is spreading very fast.

"To tie the Australian economy to the extraction of fossil fuels and runaway climate change is a shockingly bad move from a government that is failing on climate change and lacks a sensible energy policy."

Resources 2030 Taskforce announced

Matt Canavan announced a new Resources 2030 Taskforce in his recent speech at the National Press Club.

He said it will “identify bold, attainable reforms to ensure the resource sector’s competitiveness and sustainability to 2030”.

The Government will use the proposals put forward by the taskforce as a basis to develop a National Resources Statement by late 2018.

The Department of Industry, Innovation and Science will conduct stakeholder consultation on behalf of the taskforce.

The taskforce will meet four times between March and August 2018.

The Resources 2030 Taskforce members are:

- Andrew Cripps, former Queensland Minister for Natural Resources (Chair)
- Mike Henry, President Operations, Minerals Australia, BHP
- Joyce McCulloch, Mayor, Mount Isa City Council
- Chris Pigram, former CEO of Geoscience Australia
- Will Robinson, Managing Director, Encounter Resources Limited
- Erica Smyth, Chair, NOPSEMA Advisory Board
- Paul Flynn, CEO and Managing Director, Whitehaven Coal
- Marcia Langton, Foundation Chair, Australian Indigenous Studies, Faculty of Medicine, University of Melbourne

Looking for policy reforms

The taskforce will consider potential reforms in line with the following policy areas:

- Investment: business simplification and competitive investment settings
- Communities: regional development and bolstering community support
- Exploration and business development: new basins, markets, minerals and geological sciences
- Innovation and technology: improving productivity, developing METS and supply chains
- Environment: improving environmental performance.

Spruiking ‘beautiful coal’ and gas

MINISTER FOR MINING:

“It has been such an honour to represent the Australian mining sector over the past year.” – Matt Canavan posted, with this photo, on Facebook.



It’s fair enough for a Minister for Resources to be positive about mining, but Matt Canavan certainly goes over the top for the industry which is one of the largest donors to the Coalition government.

Canavan completed an economics degree at the University of Queensland and began his career at the Productivity Commission in Canberra.

Despite having an interest in communism at high school, he joined the Liberal Party and had an ambition to work for Tony Abbott. He was offered a job with Barnaby Joyce instead, and soon joined the Nationals.

Like Abbott and Joyce, Canavan makes much of his Catholic values and his traditional family of five children, with his wife Andrea.

Canavan made a rapid rise from parliamentary staffer to scoring a winnable position on the Nat’s senate ticket in 2013.

It was this good fortune that propelled him to the senate. However, he prefers the line, “I stand on a platform that is unashamedly pro-coal. I got elected on that basis”.

Canavan has a passionate interest in fossil-fuelled energy. He has described coal as “a beautiful industry full of beautiful people who I constantly try and fight for”.

Following his recent Press Club speech, Canavan was asked by *Guardian* writer Katharine Murphy about his views on an orderly transition from fossil fuels to renewables.

Visibly irritated, he said “I find it highly objectionable to talk about people’s loss of jobs and livelihoods as a transition. Let’s be frank, that’s a euphemistic term.

Canavan thinks the magic of carbon capture and storage with new HELE coal generation will fix Australia’s climate emissions problem. Just don’t mention renewables.

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Hand-out for gasco’s

Minister for Resources and Northern Australia Matt Canavan has handed out millions to four gas companies under his \$26 million Gas Acceleration Program (GAP).

The lucky winners are:

- Armour Energy (Surat Basin) Pty Ltd – Kincora Gas Acceleration Project – \$6 million
- Westside Corporation Pty Ltd – Greater Meridian Domestic Gas Acceleration Project – \$6 million
- Beach Energy Ltd (Adelaide Energy Pty Ltd) – Katnook Gas Processing Facility – \$6 million
- Tri-Star Fairfields – four new wells west of Rolleston, Queensland – \$6 million

“The GAP is a significant component of the Australian Government’s \$90 million investment in gas security, reliability and affordability for Australian gas users,” Minister Canavan said.

Call for NT frack ban to be extended

Following the release of the Final Report of the NT Fracking Inquiry, Lock the Gate is calling on the NT Government to extend the moratorium on exploration fracking.

“The NT Fracking Inquiry has shown that there are significant risks that come with the onshore gas fracking industry and a sizable amount of work required before any exploration fracking could be considered,” said Naomi Hogan of the Lock the Gate Alliance.

“The report has also highlights strong community opposition held by the vast majority of Territorians participating in the inquiry, and almost universal concern and opposition to fracking from Aboriginal people from regional NT communities.

“This report’s 135 recommendations and the serious information gaps identified, coupled with the increasing evidence of harm from fracking around the world, should be a wake up call to the NT Government that fracking is simply not worth the risk.

“The NT Government needs to extend

the moratorium on exploration and production until all risks assessments and other studies have been completed, or take the next step and ban fracking permanently.

“First hand experience shared by the boom and bust onshore gas towns in QLD demonstrate communities were left worse off by the gas companies in the region.

“A new collection of international research into fracking released this month by Nobel Prize winning scientists shows that fracking increases the risks of cancer, birth defects and asthma. The US EPA shows fracking has contaminated drinking water.

“Many countries of the world have banned fracking in the interest of protecting their water and their existing industries.

“The gas industry’s own polling shows that Territorians living in at-risk gasfield areas want the moratorium to stay in place, to protect them from the identified impacts and risks fracking will bring.”

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Canavan, Harwin in seismic conflict

Seismic testing for oil and gas off Newcastle has NSW Resources Minister Don Harwin and federal minister Matt Canavan engaged in a war of words.

Assett Energy will begin four days of seismic testing for oil and gas reserves on April 9.

Local fishers fear there will be a massive impact. Previous seismic testing has coincided with fish kills, and is known to disrupt dolphin and whale activities.

The ABC reports Harwin wants Canavan to cancel Assett Energy’s application.

“Because I want him to move to the tougher standards that we’ve got here in the state of NSW, compared to the less stringent approach they’ve got offshore in commonwealth waters,” Harwin said.

He said tougher penalties for companies, better standards and upfront community consultation were needed at a federal level, an idea Canavan said he fundamentally rejected.

“The advice I have is that the company and the regulators have ensured that the timing and the size of the seismic testing has been done to prevent environmental harm, and that’s what we expect the regulator to do,” Canavan said.

Canavan: Don’t lecture me

“I’m not going to take lectures from a NSW Government that basically doesn’t produce any gas in its state at all.

“So I’m not sure how you could benchmark the NSW Government’s gas regulatory system when they’re just not producing anything, and they’re relying on the rest of the country to keep their businesses alive.”

Assett Energy’s testing location is about 30km off the Newcastle coast and partly overlaps one of the area’s best fishing zones.

Many people are opposed to any oil and gas development off the Central Coast, which is looking to a post-coal future for industries like tourism, farming and fishing.

News this week

Adani missed its March **funding deadline** and has declined to nominate another, a set-back of at least a year to 2020.

Bruce Currie’s long *Guardian* article on Adani’s threat to water is recommended reading (see p 5).

Another *Guardian* story about a farming family hemmed in by **Big Coal** is also well worthwhile (click the link on p 6).

A **Bloomberg** report has found that the economics of energy from **fossil fuels** is rapidly deteriorating. Plunging costs mean that renewables will be cheaper, world-wide, in five years. **Renewables** are already **cheaper** than fossil fuel generation in China and India.

Rio Tinto has read the writing on the wall and has sold off its last Australian coal mine.

NSW Labor leader **Luke Foley** said a Labor state government **will not approve CSG** projects and a pipeline in the Pilliga. He made the promise at a meeting of 150 people near Coonamble.

The NT’s long awaited **fracking report** came out in favour of the industry, but stipulated all 135 of its recommendations must be implemented to achieve acceptable risk management.

APPEA’s NT chief, **Matt Doman**, wasted no time in calling on the government to give fracking the green light.

However, an Australia Institute poll found **most Territorians** still support a **frack ban**.

Andrew Bolt leapt into the NT fracking fray, with a spew of abuse directed at **greenies** in general and **Jeremy Buckingham** in particular.

Bolt raged at “organised ignorance”, “stupid or gutless” politicians and “green unreason”.

He accuses “media cheerleaders” of orchestrating opposition to fracking.

That’s a bit rich when his **Murdoch masters** have a clearly orchestrated campaign of support for fracking, coal and uranium mining, coal and nuclear power across their nationally dominant media platforms.

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In the news this week:

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 23,500 words of news for your convenience. Click on the [links](#) to view original articles. (\$) = subscription may be required

THE ADANI SAGA

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/adani-activists-offer-students-travel-subsidies-to-join-frontline-in-queensland/news-story/5fe226b48e9d084d51bd9f58783fe6eb>

Adani activists offer students travel subsidies to join frontline in Queensland

Daryl Passmore, *Courier-Mail*, 25/03/2018

Students are being offered cheap flights to the Whitsundays to protest against the Adani mine.

“Extreme green activists have stooped to a new low in selling the benefits of the Whitsundays to attract protesters despite the Carmichael mine being 300km away,” Queensland Resources Council chief executive Ian Macfarlane said.

“It’s extremely worrying protesters are being offered financial benefits to encourage them to break the law and rob Queenslanders of jobs.”

The travel subsidies of up to \$200 are being offered by the Australian Student Environment Network, which has groups on university campuses around the country. \$

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/mar/26/as-a-grazier-i-rely-on-water-adanis-latest-plans-put-our-future-at-risk?CMP=share_btn_tw

As a grazier I rely on water. Adani’s latest plans put our future at risk

Bruce Currie, *The Guardian*, 26/03/2018

It’s dry country up here, west of Emerald in Central Queensland. Free standing water is like liquid gold to us.

Luckily for graziers like me, we have the Great Artesian Basin, our greatest inland water resource, which covers 22% of Australia. Sometimes the Basin expels water from deep underground up to the surface, in the form of natural springs. ... But they’re under threat.

More than 81% of Great Artesian Basin springs are now inactive, and I’m the first to acknowledge that a lot of that harm was caused by water extraction by graziers and farmers. In the past, we didn’t understand the impacts that our water extraction was having on the Great Artesian Basin, or how to fix it. ...

Now, the very same governments that spent so much time and effort working with graziers to cap bores and install pipes, are [handing out unlimited](#)



‘Liquid gold’ – cattle farmer Bruce Currie warns of the danger Adani’s mine poses to central Queensland’s water supply. Photo: Lock the Gate

[quantities of water](#), including Great Artesian Basin water, to coal and gas companies.

[Last week we’ve heard that](#) Adani’s Carmichael coal mine could threaten the magnificent Doongmabulla Springs – a sequence of 160 separate wetlands that stretches across a large area inland of Clermont. Scientists have pointed to new information which raises greater concerns that the Carmichael mine will drain these ancient Great Artesian Basin springs. ...

Put simply no water means no business, no food production, no communities, just a toxic wasteland to be suffered by future generations.

• *Bruce Currie runs a cattle grazing enterprise with his family in Central Queensland*

<https://www.themorningbulletin.com.au/news/adani-wants-cqs-coal-to-lift-millions-out-of-poverty/3371530/>

Adani wants CQ’s coal to lift millions out of poverty

Leighton Smith, *Rockhampton Morning Bulletin*, 27/03/2018

Speaking at the launch of Brisbane Energy Club at Tattersalls on Thursday, Adani Australia chief Jeyakumar Janakaraj said Adani had signed a 25-year

contract to supply electricity to 65 million Bangladeshi people currently lacking power, to help lift them out of poverty.

<https://www.echo.net.au/2018/03/byron-mother-daughter-activists-fined-adani/>

Byron mother-daughter activists fined more than Adani

Chris Dobney, *Echonet Daily*, 27/03/2018

A Byron mother and her daughter have been fined a combined \$16,000 for their part in an action that stopped Adani’s Abbot Point coal loading facility for about eight hours in January.

The Indian corporation was fined just \$12,000 last year after releasing more than eight times the amount of sediment it was licenced for in the wake of Cyclone Debbie. The company has vowed to fight the fine.

Juliet, Luca and the three other activists were slapped with fines for trespass, non-compliance with a police order and a new charge, which was the first time it had been used in Australia, ‘interfering with the operations of a coal port’.

<https://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/news/townsville/adani-remains-100-per-cent-committed-to-carmichael-project/news-story/83663784bc87cd81a0d4052250a-b15c3>

Adani remains 100 per cent committed to Carmichael project

Tony Raggatt, Townsville Bulletin, 28/03/2018

The company proposing the huge Carmichael coal project says it remains “100 per cent” committed to its development despite recent setbacks.

But the company is unwilling to say when financial close and construction can occur.

Supporters, including the Bowen Chamber of Commerce, believe resolution of native title and a land use agreement over the mine site is key. \$

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/adani-carmichael-mine-export-deadline-pushed-back-from-2020/news-story/9ab9de578051311c6237fbbf637c93a1>

Adani Carmichael mine export deadline pushed back from 2020

John McCarthy, Courier-Mail, 29/03/2018

Adani has scrapped its 2020 target for shipping its first coal from its Carmichael mine in central Queensland and is changing course on how it will fund the \$6 billion first stage of the controversial scheme, according to reports.

It now appears the project could be delayed by another year after already losing more than two years through legal challenges from activists. The project was first proposed in 2010. \$

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-03-28/adani-is-said-to-delay-australia-coal-shipment-eye-export-deals>

Billionaire's Mega-Mine Misses Coal Deadline on Funding Headache

Perry Williams & Ruth Carson, Bloomberg, 20/03/2018

The billionaire Gautam Adani-backed company has abandoned a 2020 target date to begin mining coal from the Carmichael project in Australia's northeastern state of Queensland after failing to obtain up to A\$3 billion (\$2.3 billion) of funds from lenders by a March [deadline](#), according to a person with knowledge of the matter. The company now expects first production to be delayed by up to a year, said the person, who asked not to be identified because the details are private. ...

As Adani's Australia arm explores new funding avenues, it's also considering deals in China, Vietnam and Taiwan as it seeks more customers for its coal to bolster revenue for the project. A sizeable chunk of Adani's targeted

27.5 million tons of coal from the first phase of production could be supplied to buyers in those three countries, according to the person.

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/business/adani-says-plans-to-ship-coal-by-2020-are-still-on-target/news-story/475251e3d6d0cdf3037f4c541610db0b>

Adani says plans to ship coal by 2020 are still on target

John McCarthy, Courier-Mail, 31/03/2018

Adani's plans to ship its first coal by 2020 were still on target, the company said yesterday.

It rejected reports that its inability to access funds to develop the Carmichael mine had forced a change in its timetable. ...

The mining taskforce was established this week with the goal of securing the competitiveness of Australia's resources sector, but Resources Minister Matt Canavan admitted activists would also be investigated. \$

COAL ROCKS ON



Hemmed in by big coal: 'A bad feeling is constantly hanging over us'

With seven coalmines and a gas company surrounding their cattle property, a Queensland family is battling to stay put

THEGUARDIAN.COM

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/mar/25/hemmed-in-by-big-coal-bad-feeling-is-constantly-hanging-over-us>

Hemmed in by big coal: 'A bad feeling is constantly hanging over us'

Paula Heelan, The Guardian, 25/03/2018

With seven coalmines and a gas company surrounding their cattle property, a Queensland family is battling to stay put.

The homestead, which sits on top of the world's highest-quality coal deposits, has been under threat for more than 15 years. A proposed underground mine at the family's adjoining property, Red Hill, is likely to cut through to Riverside and under the house.

“That's the hardest part for us,” Jeanette [Williams] says. “We are dreading the day they tell us we have to leave. At the end of the day, the landowner is without rights. Apparently the coal is very fractured and we're

hoping it will be too expensive to dig out – but it's quality coking coal used for steel, so they'll try hard – they want it.” ...

To stay on top of mining expansion and its impact on their land and business, the Williams family must negotiate separately with several mining companies. These include BHP Billiton, Anglo American, Peabody Energy, Vale, New Hope Group, Pembroke Resources, Carabella Resources and the gas company, Arrow Energy. ...

Supersized mines are now so far in excess of the original approvals and expectations that they can never achieve pre-mining land use again. As Gavin Mudd, associate professor in environmental engineering at RMIT University and author of *The Sustainability of Mining in Australia*, says, “They are now whopping great open cuts which will be left as they are to become pit lakes. ...

Mudd believes the government is far too close to industry and puts mining companies ahead of public interest. “It's a phrase we call ‘regulatory capture’ – the regulators think like industry, act like industry and in effect become part of industry. They are therefore captured and fail in their duty to protect the environment, public interest and other landholders.”

<https://www.themorningbulletin.com.au/news/solution-to-cqs-blasted-hole-in-road-has-long-delay/3370012/>

Solution to CQ's blasted hole in road has long delay

Kerri-Anne Mesner, Rockhampton Morning Bulletin, 26/03/2018

The solution to the problem with a hole in a Central Queensland mining community road has a delay time stamp of 15 months attached.

Vital haulage route and local thoroughfare, Gibihi Rd, was torn up during a routine mine blast on November 9, to the peril of locals whose detour via Kianga Rd is four times the distance.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/mar/27/plans-to-mine-62bn-tonne-queensland-coal-deposit-quietly-revived>

Plans to mine 6.2bn tonne Queensland coal deposit quietly revived

Ben Smee, The Guardian, 27/03/2018

Plans to mine a 6.2bn-tonne coal deposit in north [Queensland](#) have been quietly revived, despite the failed sale of the project last year and the collapse of an associated company. ...

Wilton is wholly owned by Coal of Queensland, which no longer appears to have employees or its former East Brisbane headquarters. The company's phone number has been disconnected. An associated company, Coal of Queensland Holdings, collapsed last year.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/mar/26/renewables-generated-more-electricity-than-brown-coal-over-summer-report-finds>

Renewables generated more electricity than brown coal over summer, report finds

Michael Slezak, *The Guardian*, 27/03/2018

Renewable energy generated more electricity than brown coal during Australia's summer for the first time in 2017-18, according to a new report by Green Energy Markets.

Continued growth in solar pushed renewable generation in Australia to just under 10,000 gigawatt hours between December 2017 and February 2018. With the [Hazelwood plant knocked out of the system last year](#), brown coal's output in the same period was just over 9,100 GWh.

Renewables produced 40% more than gas over the period and was exceeded only by black coal.

<http://www.theherald.com.au/story/5310273/merit-within-wambo-expansion-plan-if-honed-independent-review/?cs=5951>

Merit within Wambo expansion plan if honed: independent review

Matt Carr, *Newcastle Herald*, 27/03/2018

Plans to expand the Wambo mine west of Singleton to join with Glencore's United mine "have merit" but require more work, an independent planning review has found.

The Independent Planning Commission on Tuesday announced the project would go back to the state's planning department after the three-man panel conducted a public hearing in Singleton, examined public submissions and met with the applicant.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-28/rio-tinto-sells-last-coal-mine-kestrel/9597352>

Rio Tinto completes its exit from coal with sale of Queensland mine

Stephanie Chalmers, *ABC*, 28/03/2018

Mining giant Rio Tinto has struck a deal to sell its last coal mine — its third asset sale in just over a week.

The long-anticipated coal exit leaves Rio Tinto focused on metals.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-29/failings-identified-after-wall-of-fire-rushes-over-miners/9602176>

Failings identified after wall of fire sparked by gas ignition rushes over underground miners

Giselle Wakatama, *ABC*, 29/03/2018

An incident in which a gas ignition sent a wall of fire over underground miners could have been deadly, the NSW Resources Regulator says.

The regulator began investigating after the incident at the Chain Valley Colliery in January, and issued a prohibition notice.

A group of underground workers were on a shift when methane gas was ignited.

LakeCoal, the operator of the Lake Macquarie mine, said it had boosted operating protocols at the mine south of Newcastle.

<http://ieefa.org/report-the-economic-case-for-building-new-coal-and-gas-capacity-is-crumbing/>

Report: 'The economic case for building new coal and gas capacity is crumbling'

IEEFA.org

The economics of generating electricity from fossil fuels are deteriorating rapidly as renewable energy technology plunges in costs.

That's the conclusion of a Bloomberg New Energy Finance report on the levelized cost of energy, a measure that takes into account the expenses from buying equipment, servicing debt and operating power plants using each technology. In most places, wind and solar will work cheaper than coal by 2023, the research group said.

The cheapest solar and wind costs can now be found in China and India, which are also among the worst polluters. The tumbling costs will continue until at least until 2040 for both renewable energy sources worldwide and they'll become cheaper than coal and gas within five years.

GAS, GAS, GAS

<https://www.gladstoneobserver.com.au/news/meet-gladstones-first-lng-apprentices/3368936/>

Meet Gladstone's first LNG apprentices

Hannah Sbeghen, *Gladstone Observer*, 23/03/2018

Four lucky Gladstone apprentices have been selected from a pool of more than 1000 eager applicants to start a career in the liquefied natural gas industry this year. The QGC apprentices are a first for Gladstone's LNG industry.



Curtis Island's three LNG plants.

Photo: Google Earth

<https://www.gladstoneobserver.com.au/news/industry-analysts-warning-to-curtis-island-lng-exp/3373658/>

Industry analyst's warning to Curtis Island LNG exporters

Tegan Annett, *Gladstone Observer*, 29/03/2018

An independent gas industry analyst has warned Gladstone liquefied natural gas exporters would struggle to reap the rewards of China's gas imports boom.

The warning for the \$70billion Curtis Island industry, which provided Gladstone's largest industrial boom, was from Bloomberg New Energy Finance's Global LNG outlook for 2018.

Head of Asia Pacific LNG analysis Maggie Kuang said APLNG, QCLNG and GLNG would struggle to benefit from China's gas growth because of agreed domestic contracts.

She said Australia would face further gas shortage concerns by 2030 due to the depletion of conventional gas. She said to solve the problem projects would need to drill more coal seam gas, start importing LNG or build gas transmission from Western Australia.

<http://www.coonambletimes.com.au/no-pilliga-csg-no-pipeline-thats-commitment-labor/>

"No Pilliga CSG and no pipeline – that's a commitment from Labor"

Lisa Wheeler, *Coonamble Times*, 28/03/2018

The fight to stop coal seam gas mining in the Pilliga and the gas pipeline is set to become a fight for the electorate of Barwon, with the NSW Opposition leader Luke Foley stating that the Pilliga coal seam gas mining and gas pipeline projects would not be approved

under a Labor government.

The NSW ALP policy was confirmed by Luke Foley NSW Leader of the Opposition at a meeting held at 'Tyrone' Coonamble last week. Over 150 people gathered on the property of Row and Adam Mcrae to meet Luke Foley and members of his shadow ministry, to voice their concerns about the proposed coal seam gas mining in the Pilliga and the gas pipeline.

<http://www.cairnspost.com.au/news/national/territory-antifrackers-ramp-up-efforts/news-story/f9c7b3b6ac-f940433ac13d1f2e961d3a?csp=611c518beeaff0450e-30caf3509fdcd6>

Territory anti-frackers ramp up efforts

Hayley Sorensen, NT News, 27/03/2018

Anti-frackers stepped up their efforts last week, staging protests inside and out of Parliament. Frack Free NT spokeswoman Pauline Cass said a number of petitions, with about 5000 total signatories, had been handed to Territory MLAs.

"The fracking inquiry sought the views of people all across the Territory and overwhelmingly, the majority of participants were strongly against fracking, so we're optimistic that would be included in the report," Ms Cass said. ...

Modelling from different consultancy firms have returned wildly different estimates of how much revenue fracking will bring to the Territory, from just \$29 million each year to \$460 million each year. \$

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/sa/a/39643891/inquiry-backs-fracking-in-nt/>

Inquiry backs fracking in NT

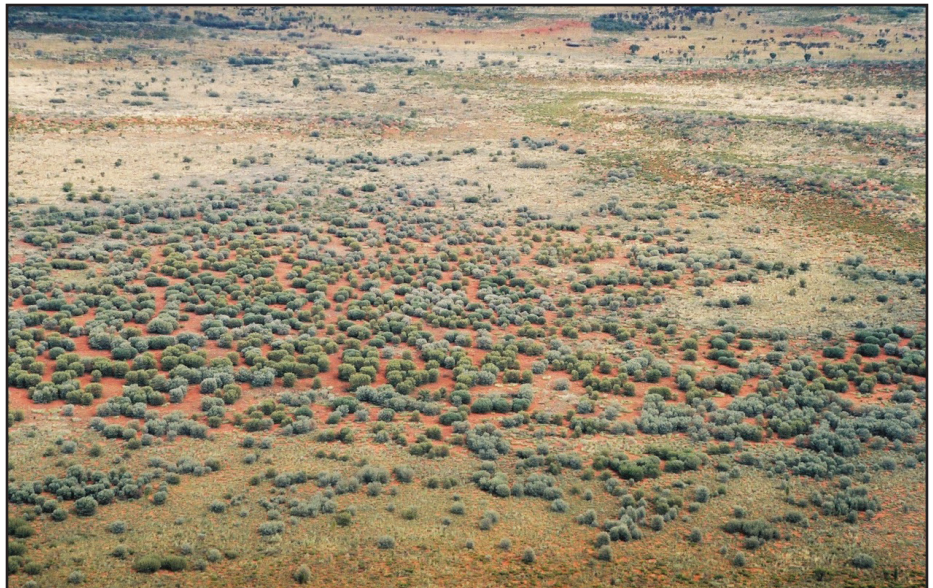
Tim Dornin, AAP, Yahoo.com, 27/03/2018

An inquiry into fracking in the Northern Territory has ruled that the risks associated with gas extraction can be managed.

Justice Rachel Pepper has handed down the inquiry's final report in Darwin along with 134 recommendations which she says are a "package deal" the Territory government should implement in full. ...

Justice Pepper said it was not for her inquiry to recommend whether or not to lift the moratorium on fracking.

"The decision whether or not to retain the ban on hydraulic fracturing in the Northern Territory is a political decision that rests with the government alone," she said.



Fracking target – Amadeus Basin near Uluru, NT. Photo: Eve Sinton

<http://www.news.com.au/national/breaking-news/inquiry-backs-fracking-in-nt/news-story/fd349fddbaf-434f686394e98796bb9fb>

Inquiry backs fracking in NT

Tim Dornin, AAP, News.com.au, 27/03/2018

The Northern Territory government has vowed not to put jobs at risk in the fishing, farming, tourism and cattle industries in a rush to lift a ban on fracking.

An inquiry into hydraulic fracturing in the Territory has ruled that the risks associated with gas extraction can be managed. ...

Chief Minister Michael Gunner said once the final report had been carefully considered the government would either ban fracking or allow it in highly regulated circumstances in tightly prescribed areas.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-03-27/nt-government-told-risks-can-be-mitigated-if-hydraulic-fracking/9592056>

NT Government told risks can be mitigated if hydraulic fracking moratorium is lifted

Emily JB Smith, ABC, 27/03/2018

The Northern Territory Government is expected to soon decide if it will lift a moratorium on hydraulic fracking, after an 15-month inquiry concluded the risks associated with the industry could be managed.

If all 135 recommendations it contained were implemented, the inquiry determined that "the challenges and risks associated with any onshore shale gas industry in the NT can be appropriately managed".

Justice Pepper described the recommendations as "a complete package",

and said it was critical each one was implemented in full, if government decided to lift the ban. ...

The final version of the report recommended "that NT and Australian governments seek to ensure that there is no net increase in the life cycle greenhouse gas emissions in Australia from any onshore shale gas produced in the NT".

<http://www.ntnews.com.au/news/fracking-can-be-done-safely-according-to-findings-of-a-scientific-inquiry/news-story/4107c4cca9d05b3dff8a5f090c1284da>

Fracking can be done safely according to findings of a scientific inquiry

Hayley Sorensen, NT News, 27/03/2018

Fracking can be done safely according to the findings of the 15-month long, \$3 million scientific inquiry — but Chief Minister Michael Gunner has reserved indefinitely his decision on the future of the practice in the Territory.

Mr Gunner acknowledged the need to give certainty to both gas companies and anti-fracking groups, but said he wouldn't set an "artificial timeline" on when his Government would make a final decision on whether to ban fracking.

"We're not going to rush this and stuff this," he said.

Oil and gas lobby group APPEA NT director Matt Doman said a fast decision was critical to give certainty to the industry and other players.

Mr Doman said the gas industry was ready to invest "billions" in the NT as soon as the green light is given to resume exploration. Exploration has been banned since September 2016

when Labor put in place its moratorium.

One of the new recommendations is the development of a NT fracking industry must not lead to a net increase in Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

The report recommended gas companies be charged for water extraction licences. \$

<http://www.ntnews.com.au/news/frack-ban-would-win-votes-poll-shows/news-story/ac8073bece718358fd0c214e0816bd42>

Frack ban would win votes, poll shows

Hayley Sorensen, NT News, 29/03/2018

Keeping its fracking moratorium in place would likely be a vote-winner for the Labor Government – a small phone poll of 615 people has shown.

Policy think tank and anti-frackers the Australia Institute was behind the ReachTel survey, which started just hours after the fracking inquiry's final report was handed to the Labor Government by chairwoman Justice Rachel Pepper.

About 53 per cent of respondents said they supported the ban staying in place, while 38 per cent said it should be lifted. The remainder were undecided.

Those results contradict an earlier poll conducted by Crosby Textor on behalf of gas industry lobby group APPEA, which showed 48 per cent of Darwin respondents were in favour of lifting the ban while 38 per cent were opposed. The final fracking report gave 135 recommendations, which Justice Pepper said must be implemented in full to mitigate the risks associated with fracking.

The ReachTel poll showed 58 per cent of respondents didn't trust the NT Government or gas companies to implement and enforce those recommendations. \$

<http://www.ntnews.com.au/business/pressure-mounting-on-gunner-government-fracking-decision/news-story/77c82c07ad5cc214af01d2da2b7161a2>

Pressure mounting on Gunner Government fracking decision

Gary Shipway, NT News, 30/03/2018

Pressure is mounting on the Gunner Government to make a speedy decision on whether fracking will go-ahead in the Northern Territory.

NT Property Council executive director Ruth Palmer said she believed the Gunner Government would make a

decision next week.

"We believe that with appropriate and manageable oversight, onshore hydraulic fracturing is an industry that the Territory must be allowed to develop," she said.

The Chamber of Commerce NT has ramped up its support for fracking, taking out full-page newspaper advertisements.

The advertisements, authorised by the Chamber's chief executive Greg Bicknell and the Darwin Major Business Group chairman Ian Kew, said the fracking inquiry clearly said all the risks associated with the practice were manageable.


Opposition Leader Gary Higgins drew fire from the Territory Environment Minister Lauren Moss for saying that on the back of a 20-month delay, he would expect that exploration activity would commence this Dry season.

"We would be concerned if the NT government did anything to the contrary," he said.

Ms Moss said calls from Mr Higgins to rush to approve fracking were irresponsible and would put the Territory environment at risk. \$

Greens' fracking lies

From NSW to the Northern Territory, opportunistic populists and superstitious Greens have teamed up to kill what should be one of our greatest sources of energy



ANDREW BOLT

How many times will the Greens and populists deny the science that insists fracking is safe?

What more must scientists do to defeat this organised ignorance that has left us so short of gas, with east coast prices last year soaring 40 per cent?

The week a hand scientific review this time in the Northern Territory confirmed the findings of the previous two fracking, done properly is perfectly safe.

"The identified risks associated with any onshore gas industry can be mitigated or reduced to an acceptable level and in some cases the risks can be eliminated," it concluded.

Yet week governments around the country have caved to the lies and fears spread by green campaigners about fracking – a technique to unlock gas and oil reserves by pumping water, sand and with chemicals deep underground to break up rock.

Fracking has already put the United States from a dangerous dependence on imported oil and gas. Its 2 million wells have made the US the world's biggest gas supplier, driving down prices and helping the economy to thrive.

Half of America's oil production is now from fracking, and the US is tipped to become a net energy exporter in decades.

But in Australia we have been cursed with politicians too stupid or gutless to stand against the green liars and their media cheer-

leaders who have panicked so many Australians into thinking fracking will poison groundwater, destroy their crops and send flames jetting from their taps.

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<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/opinion/andrew-bolt-andrew-bolt-where-is-the-fracking-logic-in-denying-the-science/news-story/83cf234f75041ea6b7f1013e31490472>

Andrew Bolt: Where is the fracking logic in denying the science?

Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun, 28/03/2018

How many times will the Greens and populists deny the science that insists fracking is safe?

What more must scientists do to defeat this organised ignorance that has left us so short of gas, with east coast prices last year soaring 40 per cent? ...

We have been cursed with politicians too stupid or gutless to stand against the green liars and their media cheer-

leaders who have panicked so many Australians into thinking fracking will poison groundwater, destroy their crops and send flames jetting from their taps. ...

This kind of green unreason has already had us needlessly banning nuclear power stations, restricting uranium mining, initially banning genetically modified crops, and killing off coal-fired power stations. \$

<https://www.gladstoneobserver.com.au/news/14-new-gas-wells-in-cq-to-boost-national-supply/3374883/>

14 new gas wells in CQ to boost national supply

Jessica Powell, Gladstone Observer, 30/03/2018

Two Central Queensland gas projects near Moura and Rolleston are being primed to boost east coast gas supply through funding from the Australian Government's \$26 million Gas Acceleration Program (GAP).

The Greater Meridian Domestic Gas Acceleration Project by Westside Corporation Pty Ltd will receive a \$6 million grant towards its \$14.3 million project to drill 10 additional single lateral wells.

The other CQ based project by Tri-Star Fairfields to develop four new wells west of Rolleston, Queensland will receive a \$6 million grant for a \$16.3 million project.

Minister for Resources and Northern Australia Matt Canavan said the projects would supply an extra 12.4 petajoules of new gas to the East Coast market by 30 June 2020 and an extra 27.6 petajoules over five years.

The other two projects being funded are the Kincora Gas Acceleration Project by Armour Energy in the Surat Basin and Beach Energy Ltd by Adelaide Energy Pty Ltd in the Otway Basin, South Australia.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/27/texas-sinkholes-oil-gas-scientists-report?CMP=share_btn_fb

Texas sinkholes: oil and gas drilling increases threat, scientists warn

Tom Dart, The Guardian, 27/03/2018

Oil and gas activity is contributing to alarming land movements and a rising threat of sinkholes across a huge swath of west Texas, a new study suggests.

According to geophysicists from Southern Methodist University, the ground is rising and falling in a region that has been "punctured like a pin cushion with oil wells and injection wells since the 1940s".

There were nearly 297,000 oil wells in Texas as of last month, according to the state regulator. Many are in the Permian Basin, [described](#) in a Bloomberg article last September as the “world’s hottest oil patch”.

But the Southern Methodist report warns of unstable land and the threat of sinkholes.

“These hazards represent a danger to residents, roads, railroads, levees, dams, and oil and gas pipelines, as well as potential pollution of ground water,” Zhong Lu, a professor, said in a statement. ...

Injection of wastewater and carbon dioxide increases pore pressure in rocks, a likely cause of uplift. Lu told the Guardian that cracks and corrosion from ageing wells may help explain the sinking.

Another Southern Methodist University study last year indicated that wastewater injection, often a byproduct of fracking, is a likely cause of recent earthquakes in Texas – with the Dallas-Fort Worth area, one of the most populous in the country, a hotspot.

NUKE MADNESS

<https://www.northernstar.com.au/news/nuclear-power-plants-still-on-the-cards-for-north-/3374502/>

Nuclear power plants still on the cards for North Coast

Jasmine Burke, Northern Star, 30/03/2018

The debate on a nuclear power industry in NSW has once again reared its head.

NSW Labor Opposition has called on the Premier to intervene and put an end to the ongoing push by her Deputy, National Party Leader John Barilaro, to establish a nuclear power industry in NSW.

Media reports reveal Mr Barilaro is undertaking a taxpayer funded trip to the United States, and it is being speculated that he is drumming up interest in US investors to build nuclear reactors in NSW.

The Nuclear for Climate Australia website identifies 18 possible sites for nuclear power plants in NSW - including a 250km stretch of coast from Port Macquarie to north of Grafton.

The plan envisages the 18 reactors being constructed in NSW by 2040.

FOSSIL POLITICS



Julian Burnside QC. Photo: Vicbar

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/everyday-heroes-compelled-to-break-the-law-when-government-fails-to-protect-us-20180325-p4z64n.html>

Everyday heroes compelled to break the law when government fails to protect us

Julian Burnside, SMH, 26/03/2018

What does it say about the state of our democracy when it falls upon everyday people to stop a billionaire building the largest coal mine in the southern hemisphere?

And what does it say about our politicians that they will let Adani’s mine proceed when the vast majority of Australians don’t want it, and scientists are urging us to keep coal in the ground to avoid more dangerous climate change?

This month, nine people - many of them first-time offenders - were collectively fined more than \$70,000 for their efforts in January to keep Adani’s coal in the ground.

They were each fined \$8000 for their peaceful action at the Abbot Point coal terminal. These are extraordinarily high fines for civil disobedience actions. ...

Yet our national political debate focuses on scandal; our leaders toss lumps of coal around in parliament. The battle for our future barely rates a mention, let alone serious debate in parliament. Our lawmakers are failing us when ordinary people are compelled to break the law to protect us from disasters like Adani’s mine. ...

They are the unsung heroes of our democracy: standing up for the future of all Australians where our political leaders will not. They deserve respect, not punishment.

When we look back on this period of

our history, these are the people to whom we will give thanks for having the courage to fight for justice, even when that required them to break the law.

• Julian Burnside QC is a barrister and human rights, refugee and climate change advocate.

<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/news/article.cfm?id=3&objectid=12020890>

NZ gov't planning 'long transition' away from fossil fuel, Minister tells oil conference

Patrick Smellie, NZ Herald, 27/03/2018

New Zealand’s government expects moving away from using fossil fuels will take several decades so the economy and affected industries have time to adjust, the Minister of Energy, Megan Woods, told the country’s main annual oil and gas conference in Wellington.

Speaking to an audience that required police intervention to run a gauntlet of protesters outside the capital’s TSB Events Centre, Woods’s speech was anxiously awaited after Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern last week announced the government is considering discontinuing the previous government’s annual Block Offer programme, which invites bids for new onshore and offshore oil and gas exploration.

“Our job in the twenty-first century is to ensure that our industries and workforce currently employed in high-emission industries are not consigned to the scrap heap as we respond to the shocks of unplanned and urgent economic upheaval.”

Led by the soon-to-be-created Climate Commission, the government would lay out “a step-by-step plan to take us right through until 2050”, which would give the oil and gas industry the “certainty and stability” it said was paramount for its own planning.

<http://www.armidaleexpress.com.au/story/5306517/armidale-rider-joins-thousands-of-farmers-as-they-rally-for-sustainability/>

March on Parliament House puts state politicians on notice

Chris Bath, Armidale Express, 26/03/2018

Farmers on horseback joined over 5000 fellow protesters in Sydney’s CBD over the weekend taking the message of environmental sustainability to the door of the Berejiklian Government.

While the protest was led by a large

group of First Nations people, including Gomeri, [Glenn] Morris led the horse brigade at the back as the march moved down Elizabeth Street to Parliament House.

<https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/country-and-city-unite-demand-renewable-energy-future>

Country and city unite to demand a renewable energy future

Pip Hinman, Green Left Weekly, 27/03/2018

"If we want to look after people and the land as we repower NSW [with renewable energy] we have to fight for it", George Woods from [Lock the Gate](#) told a large rally of First Nations people, farmers and city dwellers who took over Martin Place near NSW Parliament on March 24.

The rally, initiated by Lock the Gate Alliance and six months in the planning, drew up to 10,000 people from across NSW. It involved long-standing community networks including the North West Alliance, Hunter and Central Rivers Alliance, the Gasfield Free Northern Rivers and the Gomeri, Wonnarua, Ngemba, Biripi, Darug, Bundjalung and other First Nations people. The rally was also supported by the Nature Conservation Council, 350.org, The Wilderness Society, the Knitting Nannas and Stop Coal Seam Gas Sydney.

<https://www.nvi.com.au/story/5307081/were-not-alone-in-this-liverpool-plains-farmers-and-gomeri-people-make-a-stand/>

Gunnedah shire flocks to Time2Choose rally in Sydney

Vanessa Höhnke, Namoi Valley Independent, 26/03/2018

Liverpool Plains farmers and Gomeri representatives were among thousands who united under one banner on Saturday to deliver a strong message to NSW politicians.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/mar/28/matt-canavan-announces-mining-task-force-to-help-increase-exploration>

Matt Canavan to accuse Labor of taking down 'beautiful' coal industry

Paul Karp, The Guardian, 28/03/2018

Matt Canavan has announced a resources taskforce to help the government increase exploration, improve the "social licence" for mining and increase coal exports to Asia.

The resources and minister for northern Australia will unveil the Resources 2030 taskforce at the National Press Club on Wednesday and warn that en-

vironmental groups are abusing laws to delay major projects.

Canavan spells out a number of challenges for the resources sector including the need to "improve the timeliness of approvals for major projects".

He warns Australia's environmental laws are "being abused by well-funded groups with a wider agenda than the protection of the environment".

Canavan accuses environmental lobbyists of opposing coal exports for "dubious and self-serving reasons" and Labor of "talking down a great and beautiful Australian industry" by questioning the economics of new coalmines.

The resources taskforce will be chaired by Andrew Cripps, the former Queensland minister for natural resources, and includes the mayor of Mount Isa, Joyce McCulloch, the Indigenous leader Marcia Langton and representatives from BHP, Whitehaven Coal, the Association of [Mining](#) and Exploration Companies and NOPSEMA, the offshore oil and gas safety regulator.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/mar/28/matt-canavan-castigates-fossil-fuel-opponents-for-using-highly-objectionable-term-just-transition>

Matt Canavan castigates fossil fuel opponents for using 'highly objectionable' term 'just transition'

Paul Karp, The Guardian, 28/03/2018

Matt Canavan has backed greater exploitation of resources such as an expansion in oil and gas drilling, including in the [Great Australian Bight](#), and land-clearing to develop agriculture in northern Australia.

At the National Press Club on Wednesday, the resources and northern Australia minister gave an at-times [fiery defence of coal](#), lashing opponents of burning fossil fuels for using the "highly objectionable" term of "just transition", which he said was a euphemism for destruction of jobs.

He suggested offshore oil and gas developments were important because there would not be "coal seam gas wells popping up around major cities, nor should we try" and, similarly, coal seam gas should not be developed on prime agricultural land.

Canavan – who [has said he represents the mining sector](#) – argued he was elected on an "unashamedly pro-coal" platform and his support for the resources sector and the Adani mine reflected Queensland voters' will.



Minister for 'beautiful coal', Senator Matt Canavan. Photo: Facebook

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/resources-get-a-lift-thanks-to-donald-trump-says-matt-canavan/news-story/2979397ce1374f693fb-c22573f49468?login=1>

Resources get a lift thanks to Donald Trump says Matt Canavan

Renee Viellaris, Courier-Mail, 28/03/2018

The Turnbull Government will today announce a new taskforce to keep mining alive in regional areas as it reveals the Trump administration will be one of Australia's resource saviours.

In a wide-ranging speech to the National Press Club today, Senator Canavan will say that he and US Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke had agreed to develop a memorandum of understanding between Geoscience Australia and the US Geological Survey to co-operate on increased exploration and production of critical minerals. Of the 35 minerals the US wants for products used in batteries, televisions and mobile phones, Australia is in the top five in the world for 13 resources. \$

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/mar/29/majority-of-australians-support-phasing-out-coal-power-by-2030-survey-finds>

Majority of Australians support phasing out coal power by 2030, survey finds

Katharine Murphy, The Guardian, 29/03/2018

A majority of Australians would support phasing out coal power by 2030, including half the people in a sample identifying as [Coalition](#) voters, according to a survey by a progressive thinktank.

The research funded by the Australia Institute says 60% of a sample of 1,417 Australians surveyed by online market research firm Research Now supported Australia joining the Powering Past Coal Alliance to phase out coal power by 2030.

News this week ... from previous page

The survey suggests there is a core level of support across Australia's partisan divide for signing on, with 50% of Coalition voters supportive as well as 67% of ALP voters. The significant dissenters were One Nation voters, with only 36% supportive.

A majority of Australians also supported increasing ambition on cutting greenhouse gas emissions, with 58% support, including 47% of Coalition voters in the sample.

The research follows [a declaration on Wednesday at the National Press Club](#) by the resources minister Matt Canavan that he was not interested in contemplating a discussion about a just transition for workers displaced by any phase out of coal consistent with Australia's international climate obligations.

Canavan also declared in response to a question about balancing his portfolio responsibilities to boost the resources sector with his responsibilities to the Queenslanders who elected him that he had been elected to parliament "on a platform that is unashamedly pro-coal".

While Canavan was elected because he was given a winnable position on the LNP's [Queensland](#) Senate ticket, the resources minister said: "I got elected on the basis I will support the resources sector."

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/coalition-mps-in-push-to-nationalise-liddell-coal-fired-power-station-20180328-p4z6rm.html>

Coalition MPs in push to nationalise Liddell coal-fired power station

Michael Koziol, SMH, 29/03/2018

A group of Coalition MPs are so intent on propping up AGL's ailing Liddell power station they are calling on the Turnbull government to forcibly acquire the coal-fired power plant.

But Energy Minister Josh Frydenberg

all but ruled out the idea on Thursday, insisting the federal government was not going to start nationalising assets.

The charge for intervention is being led by Nationals MP George Christensen, but other MPs are said to have a degree of support for the idea, including former prime minister Tony Abbott and former deputy prime minister Barnaby Joyce.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/mar/31/sorry-matt-canavan-no-one-believes-coal-magic-means-everyone-wins>

Sorry, Matt Canavan, no one believes coal magic means everyone wins

Katharine Murphy, *The Guardian*, 31/03/2018

Canavan, like every other resources minister I've seen before him, is an unabashed champion of the mining sector. Boosterism comes with the territory, and the current occupant of the portfolio doesn't disappoint.

Given every major business sector in the country is pursuing a "please like me" soft advertising campaign of some type – the Business Council of Australia [launched one](#) this week, BHP urges us on high rotation to Think Big, the banks have ads specifically to tell customers they aren't that awful – it was unsurprising to hear Canavan flagging (among other things) efforts to "bolster the community support for the resources sector" including through an "ongoing campaign" to inform people of its benefits.

All just as you'd expect, right down to Stop Adani protesters bursting into the room to puncture his remarks. Where things took an unexpected turn was in the questions, when Canavan raised a balled fist of protest against the future.

Asked whether as federal resources minister (as well as a democratically elected parliamentarian in a representative democracy) he felt an obligation to help Australian communities face

up to the inevitability of a carbon-constrained future – Canavan suggested the world needed to stay as it is. ...

If Canavan thinks there should be no adjustment for coal communities, then he's actually arguing that Australia should quit the Paris agreement – except of course he doesn't argue that, because that would be problematic for Liberals trying to hold urban seats.

The resources minister attempts to tip-toe through the obvious contradictions by arguing that high-efficiency coal will help reduce reduce emissions and help Australia meet its Paris target. In this happy story, we can reduce our emissions and boost the coal industry too. ...

Empathy is fine from politicians, welcome in fact, but truth is better, because these communities aren't stupid, and they won't be bought off by facile storytelling that suggests coal magic means everyone wins, and no one has to pick up the tab.

They want to know that someone in elected office is thinking about a new pipeline of blue-collar jobs.

These communities need a plan, and they need political representation with the foresight to give them one, and to do that, our elected representatives have to be very clear about why they are in public life, and who it is they actually represent.

FFB



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