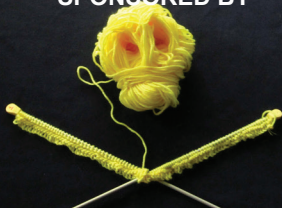


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Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

Published by Eve Sinton • fossil.fool.bulletin@gmail.com

FFB 1:20 • 17 APRIL 2018

Linc Energy: project should never have been approved, says LTG

EDO Queensland puts spotlight on Linc prosecutions

By EDO Qld solicitors Jane Dillon and Kate Grudzinskas

Liquidated energy company, Linc Energy Pty Ltd was recently found guilty of five charges of causing serious environmental harm. They are additionally involved in a number of other legal actions in Queensland, which the Environmental Defenders Office Qld is watching closely.

EDO has not been involved in these actions, however the decisions may have wide reaching effect in holding companies and directors to account for environmental damage.

Liquidated energy company Linc Energy Pty Ltd (Linc Energy) and its directors are currently involved in a number of legal matters relating to its underground coal gasification (UCG) plant 20km south-west of Chinchilla in the western Darling Downs, and the resultant environmental damage. While community legal centre EDO Qld has not been involved in any of the legal matters, we are watching closely as the decisions may have wide reaching impacts for how companies and directors will be held to account for environmental damage, and mining operations

On 9 April 2018, Linc Energy was found guilty of causing serious environmental harm at the Chinchilla plant.

After a 10 week trial in the District Court in Brisbane, heard by Judge Michael Shanahan, the jury re-

• continued p2



Linc Energy's UGC plant at Hopeland on the Darling Downs

Lock the Gate has slammed a weak regulatory regime which allowed Linc Energy to get away with serious environmental harm at its underground coal gasification plant on Queensland's Western Downs.

The Alliance has also raised concerns that Queenslanders will continue to lose out as it remains to be seen whether any money will be recoverable from Linc Energy or its former executives, given Linc is in liquidation.

"Linc Energy's guilty verdict should ring alarm bells around the country - this is a dangerous, toxic industry that never should have been approved in the first place" said Lock the Gate's Carmel Flint.

"As well as causing serious health concerns for workers, Linc Energy's underground coal gasification plant has contaminated water, soil and air on the Western Downs, which is an agricultural powerhouse for Queensland and Australia.

"This is a terrible outcome for landholders who have been left to live with the mess created by this risky industry that should never have been approved in the first place.

"The Court heard that Linc Energy was aware of the damage it was causing but put its profits first. Linc is now in liquidation and it is unclear if, or how, they will pay if a large penalty is imposed.

Complete disregard for community

"The Linc case continues a pattern of mining companies showing complete disregard for the communities they harm, and cutting and running when they get exposed for bad practices.

"It's crucial that Linc faces a very significant penalty to send a message to other mining and gas companies and that the former executives are also held to account through Queensland's chain of responsibility laws" she said.

• P 3: "Meaningless bullshit" – Linc boss

• P 4: Shell's climate change greenwash

• P 4: Karen Auty talks about CSG impact

Linc Energy found guilty of serious environmental harm at Hopeland

• continued from p1

turned a guilty verdict on the five charges of wilfully and unlawfully causing environmental harm between 2007 and 2013. Sentencing will take place on 11 May 2018, where Linc stands the chance of being fined up to \$9 million.

In addition to the serious environmental harm charges against the company, Linc Energy directors have been separately charged over the plant's operations in a matter which is expected to come before the Court mid this year. Further, commercial law firm Slater and Gordon is investigating a potential class action on behalf of landholders who may have suffered contaminated lands around the plan; and the company has been before the courts twice about fulfilling the terms of an Environmental Protection Order (EPO).

Background to Linc Energy from court documents

Court documents show that in 1999 Linc Energy established an underground coal gasification (UCG) pilot 20km south-west of Chinchilla in the western Darling Downs. Around 35,000 tonnes of coal was gasified at a depth of 120m below the surface during a 30-month test period, with the produced synthetic gas being flared into the atmosphere.

Between 1999 and 2013 five gasifiers were conducted on the site, where oxygen is pumped through a well directly into a coal seam and then ignited, creating synthetic gas. During the second gasifier in 2007, the high level of pressure fractured the rock beneath the land and released chemicals into the air, soil and groundwater.

Gasifer 2 was decommissioned in 2007, around which time the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection [allege](#) Linc Energy allowed contaminants to escape as a result of the operation. During the period 2007-2012 the plant was the subject of some complaints from staff ranging from gas leaks causing [illness](#) to witnessing bubbling of groundwater around the site. Following a nine month investigation, the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection filed charges against the company.

The site was decommissioned in 2013, and in 2016 then Environment Minister Steven Miles said UGC would be banned by Queensland, which was



Linc Energy produced diesel at its UGC plant on the Darling Downs

legislated by the Palaszczuk Government in August 2017.

Criminal litigation against Linc

On March 11 2016, Linc was [committed](#) to trial on five criminal charges pertaining to allegations of wilfully damaging the environment. The prosecution was brought by Qld Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) alleging that fugitive gases from the site - including carbon monoxide, hydrogen and hydrogen sulphide - polluted an area more than two metres underground from approximately 2007 to 2013. The Department is [continuing](#) to monitor soil contaminants around the area.

The directors of Linc have additionally had criminal [charges](#) laid against them by the Queensland Department of Public Prosecutions. The matter has yet to be heard by the court. A committal hearing is expected mid-2018.

Environmental Protection Order (EPO) enforcement

[Court documents](#) reveal that on 15 April 2016 the company was placed in voluntary administration.

On 13 May 2016, DEHP issued an Environmental Protection Order (EPO) to Linc Energy, ordering it to comply with its environmental duty, specifically to "take all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent or minimise the harm" when undertaking activities in its experimental underground gasification project at Hopeland, near Chinchilla in the western Darling Downs.

The EPO obliged Linc to comply with

the conditions of its Environmental Authority (EA) including a general duty of care not to harm the environment. The EPO was not issued under the new Chain of Responsibility Amendments (CoRA) to the Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld), which came into effect two weeks later.

On 23 May 2016 Linc Energy creditors unanimously voted to liquidate the company.

30 June 2016 saw liquidators give notice disclaiming the Chinchilla land, mineral development license (MDL309), Petroleum Facility Licence 5 ("PFL5") and the EA, under s 568(1) of the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth). The net effect of disclaiming the land, licenses and EA was that Linc Energy shed itself of any current and ongoing liabilities that may delay the liquidation, meaning the Crown resumed the lease and any costs for remediation for the land. The liquidators then sought directions from the Court confirming that Linc Energy would not be compelled to comply with the EPO issued in May 2016.

At first [instance](#), Queensland Supreme Court Judge, Justice Jackson held that the liquidators would be liable for any clean-up and remediation costs, and that insolvent companies in Queensland would not be able to avoid costs associated with repairing environmental damage through disclaimer.

However, the liquidators appealed the decision, and the Court of Appeal [decision](#) overturned Justice Jackson. The Court of Appeal decision turned on a complicated assessment of whether a

• continued p3

Linc: EDO calls for resource sector to pay for clean-up and rehabilitation of mine sites

• continued from p2

state law could prevail over a Federal law, and whether the EA was “property” that could be disclaimed, with the Court of Appeal ultimately finding that Linc Energy could legitimately disclaim its obligations to comply with the terms of the EA and the general duty not to harm the environment.

As a result, the current position in Queensland is that insolvent companies may be able to divest themselves of the cost of environmental clean-up and rehabilitation if they disclaim the lands and licenses requiring remediation.

Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Act 2016 (Qld) (CoRA)

In 2016, the Queensland Government introduced amendments to the Environmental Protection Act 1994 (Qld), which broadly speaking provide the Government with expanded powers to oblige companies and related parties to bear the cost of cleaning up and rehabilitating sites.

The new powers do not change the ability of the Government to issue an EPO, but they provide expanded [scope](#) regarding to whom the EPO can be issued, allowing the Government to oblige parent companies, landowners and persons with a “relevant connection” to the company to bear the costs associated with environmental clean-up.

The Court of Appeal decision therefore does not test the validity of the CoRA provisions, however it does highlight that the Qld Government may not be in a position to enforce the CoRA provisions in their entirety. Effectively the Court of Appeal decision has given pause to environmental law advocates to “watch this space”.

Related person CoRA

Former Chairman and Managing Director of Linc Energy Limited (Linc), Peter Bond, was one of the first reported cases of a CoRA EPO to be issued under the expanded “related person” provisions.

Court [documents](#) show the EPO obliged Bond, personally, to bear the costs of remediation and rehabilitation of the damaged Chinchilla lands and provide a bank guarantee worth

\$5.5m.

Mr Bond unsuccessfully [appealed](#) the EPO to the Planning and Environment Court (P&E Court), which was unpersuaded by his arguments that he was not a related person and that he was denied procedural fairness. Mr Bond then sought leave from the Queensland Supreme Court to appeal the decision, which was granted, however the appeal was dismissed.

Possible class action for landholders

Slater and Gordon law firm are currently investigating the possibility of a class action representing landholders in the Darling Downs who may be affected by the contaminated emanating from the Chinchilla plant.

Slater and Gordon [allege](#) that up to 320 square kilometres of agricultural land around Chinchilla may be at risk from contamination by chemicals and gases, due to alleged mismanagement of underground burning by Linc Energy.

Landholders wanting more information on the Chinchilla and Hopeland Land Contamination potential class action should go [here](#).

EDO's view on mining rehabilitation reforms

The Queensland Government's responsibility for the environmental harm caused by Linc Energy, following the successful disclaimer of its Environmental Authority, provides further weight to introducing regulatory processes that can protect the taxpayer from footing the bill for potentially millions of dollars in costs for the environmental clean-up of resources sites. The Queensland Government is currently undertaking [Mining Rehabilitation Reforms](#), to improve rehabilitation and financial assurance outcomes in the resources sector.

EDO Qld supports the Government's efforts to introduce much needed reforms shifting responsibility back onto the resources sector to pay for the clean-up and rehabilitation of mines sites for damage caused during mining operations. However, the reforms need to go [further](#). Strict milestones for rehabilitation need to be enforceable and all final land forms need to be rehabilitated by the operator.

• Reprinted with permission. The original article can be found at www.edoql.org.au.

“Meaningless bullshit”: Linc boss



Unrepentant former Linc boss Peter Bond says the case against Linc Energy was “bullshit” and the trial was meaningless.

Bond told *The Australian* the conviction on all five charges was no surprise. “It was an undefended case, the liquidators chose not to defend it, so, of course, there is going to be a guilty verdict,” he said. “It means nothing, there was no one in court to call bullshit and there was a lot of bullshit to that case.

“And it is a total waste of taxpayer money because of the earlier Supreme Court ruling that found that the company didn’t have to pay. It’s all meaningless.”

Bond and other former Linc directors face individual charges in respect to the environmental damage. They are expected to face court in the middle of this year.

New energy venture seeks money

Bond has emerged as CEO and co-founder of a new venture, Kinetic Energy.

“Kinetic Energy’s Infinity Power Cell harnesses energy from beta-particles and high energy light waves emitted by radionuclides,” the company’s website says.

“Utilising proprietary designed and fabricated semi-conductor materials, the Infinity Power Cell converts the radionuclides emitted energy directly into electrical energy. Sustainable every moment of the day, without having to recharge for decades.”

Kinetic Energy’s other co-founder is Steven Whitehead, who claims to have invented the Kinetic Cell for which the pair are seeking investors.

Shell knew about climate change in 1980s

Desmog Blog reports that Shell knew climate change was going to be big, was going to be bad, and that its products were responsible for global warming all the way back in the 1980s, a tranche of new documents reveal.

Documents unearthed by Jelmer Mommers of De Correspondent, published today on Climate Files, a project of the Climate Investigations Center, show intense interest in climate change internally at Shell.

The documents date back to 1988, meaning Shell was doing climate change research before the UN's scientific authority on the issue, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, was established.

See more at:

https://www.desmogblog.com/2018/04/04/here-what-shell-knew-about-climate-change-way-back-1980s?utm_source=dsb%20newsletter

How Shell Greenwashed its Image

By Mat Hope

Shell knew about the relationship between burning fossil fuels and climate change as early as the 1980s. So what did the company decide to do about it? Stop burning fossil fuels?

No. It changed its advertising strategy.

A tranche of documents uncovered last week revealed that Shell knew about the danger its products posed to the

climate decades ago. The company has continued to double-down on fossil fuel investment.

But in the wake of a bribery scandal in Nigeria that resulted in two dozen employees being fired, the company was concerned enough about its dirty image to work out a new PR strategy.

That strategy was presented in a document from 1999 entitled 'Listening and Responding: The Profits and Principles Advertising Campaign'.

And what does it show?

"Greenwashing", Savannah Law School associate professor Judd Sneirson told DeSmog UK — Shell is "misleading consumers about its environmental practices".

And it's easy to find examples of the strategy being deployed right through to today. See more at:

https://www.desmog.co.uk/2018/04/11/how-shell-green-washed-its-image-internal-documents-warned-fossil-fuels-contribution-climate-change?utm_source=dsb%20newsletter

Interview: Karen Auty speaks about CSG on the Darling Downs



Karen talks about the CSG water that goes into the Chinchilla drinking water supply, the health impacts on gasfield residents, the visits by politicians and government reps who then do nothing to help, the buyouts, the make good agreements, the industry and its private health service plus more. Recommended listening!

<https://soundcloud.com/nwpa/karen-auty-interview-150318-in-chinchilla>

News this week

Adani Power is in dire financial strife, says IEEFA, with its share price having fallen by 80% and debts of \$7 billion.

Adani is suing Indian publication, **The Wire**, for defamation. Adani says an article published by the not-for-profit was intended to harm the company and smacks of "distaste, prejudice and malice".

Metgasco, which pocketed \$25 million from the NSW government after its CSG licence was withdrawn, is locked in a struggle for control of the company. It still has about \$5.8 million in cash.

The new South Australian Liberal government is about to **ban fracking** to protect the **Limestone Coast**, a prime agriculture and tourism area.

A methane-spotting satellite is scheduled for launch in 2021. It will document methane leaks from gas wells and even cattle feed-lots. MethaneSAT's information will be made public by the US-based Environmental Defense Fund.

Dr Anthony Ingraffea of Cornell University says the world is on track to hit **2 degrees** of warming in just **10-15 years** – faster than previously thought.

Malcolm Turnbull was in the Latrobe Valley last week to launch a near \$500 million brown coal to hydrogen project. Dubbed the "**brown coal hydrogen horror show**" by *RenewEconomy*, the pilot project will yield just three tonnes of hydrogen and a lot of CO₂. The Victorian and federal governments will throw in \$50 million each.

If the project is viable, continuation will depend on **carbon sequestration** off-shore, a yet unproven technology.

Turnbull's visit came days after **Tony Abbott** and other Monash Forum cyclists rode through the Latrobe Valley **pumping for a new coal-fired power plant** in the valley.

Meanwhile, **New Zealand** has **banned new offshore oil and gas exploration**. The country aims for zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. New Zealand already gets most of its electricity from hydro power stations.

FFB

Fiona Wilson fundraiser

Gas industry whistleblower Fiona Wilson is still battling her incarceration and forced medication by Queensland's Fixated Persons Unit.

Fiona's story was told in FFB1.2 and FFB1.13. She needs to fund about \$30,000 in legal costs. If you can help, click the link below:

<https://www.gofundme.com/barrister-needed-for-fiona-wilson>

SACRIFICE ZONE



<https://vimeo.com/257444267>

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

In the news this week:

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 25,200 words of news for your convenience. Click on the [links](#) to view original articles. (\$) = subscription may be required

THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.echo.net.au/2018/04/adani-struggling-find-home-carmichael-coal/>

Adani struggling to find home for Carmichael coal

IEEFA, 10/04/2018

Adani's proposed Godda Power project, designed to provide power to Bangladesh from Carmichael coal, would prove financially unviable and a poor strategic fit for Bangladesh, concludes a [report](#) published today by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA).

The IEEFA study—'[Adani Godda Power Project: Too Expensive, Too Late, and Too Risky for Bangladesh](#)'—finds also that the project is being promoted at least in part by Adani to justify its struggling Carmichael coal project in Australia. ...

[IEEFA's report](#) also highlights the dire financial state of Adani Power.

'The company is in clear financial distress with net debt of over US\$7 billion, and its share price has fallen almost 80 per cent now to a near 10-year low,' Mr Buckley said. 'The company has given no indication of how it will secure funding for this proposal, and Adani Power itself is in no financial position to undertake a major new US\$2.1 billion greenfield project.'

Adani Power has not made the full cash deposit required to secure land for the Godda project, and its loss-making 4.6-gigawatt Mundra plant has recently ceased supplying electricity to the state of Gujarat in breach of its contracted power purchase agreement. ...

<https://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/news/state-refused-relief-for-failing-to-comply-with-environment-laws/news-story/3d94da12915d0dcb5fc2f6135ac122ed>

State refused relief for failing to comply with environment laws

Tony Raggatt, Townsville Bulletin, 12/04/2018

An application by the Queensland Department of Environment seeking relief from noncompliance with the legislation it administers has been refused.

The case relates to the alleged contamination of wetlands by Indian energy



The campaign against Adani's mine continues. Photo: Frontline Action on Coal

giant Adani outside its Abbot Point coal terminal near Bowen last year in the aftermath of Cyclone Debbie. ...

The department was required to provide Abbot Point Bulkcoal with written notice of an internal review decision within 10 days and was found to have sent the notice 12 hours late. ... \$

<https://www.themorningbulletin.com.au/news/govt-hoses-down-farmers-adani-groundwater-fears/3385877/>

Govt hoses down farmers Adani groundwater fears

Zhanae Conway-Dodd, Rockhampton Morning Bulletin, 12/04/2018

Gathering for a forum at the Grace-mere CQLX sale yards on Wednesday night, more than 80 local graziers listened and voiced their opinions on the potential groundwater impacts of the development of nine mega mines in the Galilee Basin, including Adani's.

Central Queensland organic beef producer Mick Alexander said agriculture played a big part in the region's economy and the impacts on groundwater could risk that.

'Agriculture employs nearly 60,000 Queenslanders, we export more than \$9 billion worth of agriculture products every year and are the backbone of this region,' he said. ...

Former general manager of water allocation and planning with the Queensland Government, Tom Croth-

ers, said he was extremely disappointed in the policy framework the Queensland and Federal governments had used to process approvals for the Adani mine. ...

http://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/court-issues-summons-to-the-wire-in-defamation-case-filed-by-adani-group-118041101077_1.html

Court issues summons to The Wire in defamation case filed by Adani Group

Press Trust of India, Ahmedabad, 11/04/2018

A court here has issued [summons](#) to [The Wire news](#) portal on a criminal [defamation](#) petition filed by the [Adani](#) Group for an article published by it last December.

Summonses were issued yesterday to seven respondents in the case, including the [author](#) of the article as well as five editors and the not-for-profit organisation that publishes [The Wire](#). ...

In its petition, filed under sections 499 and 500 of the IPC, alleging criminal defamation, the [Adani](#) Group said that the article in question was published on December 11, 2017 "with the sole intention of harming the reputation of the complainant ([Adani](#) Power Maharashtra Limited)".

The article is intended to create "cheap publicity", smacks of "distaste, prejudice and malice against the complainant", and is a result of a "well-thought-out conspiracy" to tarnish the image.

COAL ROCKS ON

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/09/why-liddell-is-likely-to-close-in-2022-and-why-you-shouldnt-care?CMP=share_btn_fb

Why Liddell is likely to close in 2022, and why you shouldn't care

Simon Holmes a Court, The Guardian, 09/04/2018

Out of respect for wishes of the RSL and the family of an Australian energy pioneer, [the newly formed](#) bomb-throwing “ginger group” needs a new name. Since they’re not approaching the task with any apparent alacrity, I propose we go with the initials of Joyce, Abbott, Andrews, Abetz, Canavan and Kelly: JAAACK.

As in, “you don’t know JAAACK about energy”.

Last week JAAACK threw [what’s known as a dead cat](#) on the table, essentially demanding that government subsidise the construction of a new coal power station – a position so preposterous that the disunity in the party would be front and centre this week.

What JAAACK might not know, or care to know, is that two Australian attempts to build coal power stations already failed this decade. ...

• *Simon Holmes à Court is senior adviser to the [Energy Transition Hub](#) at Melbourne University*

<http://www.theherald.com.au/story/5334202/coal-mines-warned-of-unannounced-night-time-inspections/?cs=305>

Department of Planning says it will work ‘under cover of darkness’ to catch mines over high dust emissions

Joanne McCarthy, Newcastle Herald, 10/04/2018

The NSW Department of Planning will start “unannounced” night-time inspections of Hunter coal mines after years of community dust complaints – and has issued a media release to let the mines know.

“During these unannounced inspections we will be undertaking our work under the cover of darkness,” said department director of compliance Ben Harrison in a statement on Tuesday acknowledging the move [followed community concerns](#) about “mines’ poor environmental management at night”. ...

But Hunter environmental activist Bev Smiles said she would have more confidence in the move if there had been no media release to warn mines of the “unannounced” night-time inspections. ...

<https://independentaustralia.net/environment/environment-display/the-accs-and-liddell-just-opinion-and-no-facts.11383>

The ACCC and Liddell: Just opinion and no facts

David Shearman, Independent Australia, 10/04/2018

AGL’s Andy Vesey is filling the role abdicated by the Turnbull Government and the ACCC by recognising the disastrous effects of coal on human health and acting accordingly. ...

The continuation of Liddell as advocated by the ACCC will result in an estimated 80 premature deaths and hundreds of cases of cardio-respiratory disease from air pollution during the five years to closure. These harms could be reduced if air quality standards [recommended](#) by the World Health Organisation were adopted, but in Australia this reform is glacial. ...

The health costs from pollution for the Sydney area are reported to be [up to \\$8 billion](#) per annum and Liddell contributes to this; it also has prodigious greenhouse emissions [acknowledged](#) by Mr Vesey. ...

<https://www.themorningbulletin.com.au/news/cq-mine-road-saga-continues-no-result-is-sight/3385677/>

CQ mine road saga continues, no result in sight

Vanessa Jarrett, Rockhampton Morning Bulletin, 12/04/2018

An alternative route to the controversial Gibihi Rd appears no where in sight now six months after a mine blast split the haul road. ...

Cracks stretching 60 to 90 metres emerged in the the Dawson Mine road, Moura, on November 9 after vibration from the routine blast triggered “rapid rock movement and subsequent cracking”.

Third-party consulting engineers GHD independently assessed the damage and declared it impossible re-open or create an alternative within the current Gibihi Rd reserve, according to a Banana Shire Council. ...

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5341337/it-is-imperative-that-we-plan-for-remediation-of-those-lands-before-mining-is-begun/?cs=305>

Newcastle mine rehabilitation conference hears of industry progress towards ecological best practice

Ian Kirkwood, Newcastle Herald, 14/04/2018

The coal industry knows it has to lift its game on rehabilitation, although good progress was being made, an internationally attended conference on the subject in Newcastle heard.

The eighth annual “best practice ecological rehabilitation of mined lands” conference, hosted by the Tom Farrell Institute, was held at Wests West Lambton on Thursday, with inspection tours of the Westside and Donaldson mines taking place the day before.

Institute director Tim Roberts said about 270 people attended the conference, meaning it had doubled its size in attendance over the years. ...

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5331287/both-sides-slam-state-over-mine-rehab-plan/>

Lock The Gate and Minerals Council both unhappy with mine rehab plan

Ian Kirkwood, Newcastle Herald, 10/04/2018

A state government discussion paper on final voids and other rehabilitation issues in coal mining has been slammed by the industry as “simplistic and inconsistent” while environmentalists say it does not go far enough.

With public opinion hardening against coal mining, and with environmentalists saying there are too many loopholes in the government’s mine closure policies, rehabilitation – especially in relation to final voids – is viewed as a major issue for the industry.

The 18-page discussion paper was issued in November by the Department of Planning and Environment as part of a government push to “strengthen operational rehabilitation requirements for all mining projects in NSW”.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-14/coal-industry-in-transition/9644812>

Coal industry grapples with change and the challenges of transition

Ben Deacon, ABC, 14/04/2018

When AGL CEO Andy Vesey announced a [new project to convert brown coal to liquid hydrogen](#) in Victoria’s Latrobe Valley this week, transition was on his lips. ...

To put domestic and export coal volumes in perspective, AGL’s Liddell power station burned about 4 million tonnes of coal last year, judging by emissions figures.

Australia exports that much coal about every four days. Australia exports nearly 400 million tonnes of coal a year. ...

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GAS, GAS, GAS

<https://www.chinchillanews.com.au/news/senex-gas-lease-approved/3382771/>

Senex gas lease approved

Brooke Duncan, Chinchilla News, 09/04/2018

Domestic-only gas production is set to begin just 20km from Wandoan by the end of next year.

Gas company Senex gained a petroleum lease in the Surat Basin at the end of March, allowing it to produce gas at its Project Atlas site for the Australian market only. ...

The announcement comes after two other Australian producers, Central Petroleum and Armour Energy, won tenders to begin exploring for gas for the Australian market at the start of March.

The two producers are set to explore a total of almost 400ha outside Miles and Surat.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/latest-news/scientists-urge-nt-to-ban-all-fracking/news-story/c91b12103d8321d47148ace156e6306b>

Scientists urge NT to ban all fracking

AAP, The Australian, 10/04/2018

A group of Australia's top scientists have written to the Northern Territory government calling for a permanent ban on fracking.

An independent report handed down last month cleared the way for a moratorium on hydraulic fracturing of gas deposits to be lifted, ruling that any risks associated with the process could be managed.

But the group, which includes the Climate Council's Will Steffen, say the environmental impact would be unacceptable.

"Opening up huge new sources of fossil fuels like shale gas is completely incompatible with Australia's commitments under the Paris Agreement (on climate change)," Professor Steffen said on Tuesday.

The group said any suggestions that extra emissions could be offset were false.

"Most existing reserves of fossil fuels need to remain in the ground, and certainly no new reserves like NT shale gas can be developed if we are to avoid the worst impacts of climate change," Professor Steffen said. ...

<https://thewest.com.au/business/oil-gas/steve-tobins-terrex-held-back-by-wa-fracking-bans-ng-b88802327z>

Steve Tobin's Terrex held back by fracking bans

Peter Williams, West Australian, 11/04/2018

The founder of oil and gas contractor Terrex Seismic says WA's fracking moratorium is constraining development even of conventional onshore gas prospects.

Steve Tobin made the comments as private equity-controlled Terrex attempts to trade out of the longest industry slump of his career, made worse by fracking bans. ...

The McGowan Government has imposed the moratorium while a scientific inquiry into the practice is carried out.

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/peter-bond-dumps-linc-stink-turns-over-a-green-leaf-20180410-p4z8pb.html>

Peter Bond dumps Linc stink, turns over a green leaf

Colin Kruger, SMH, 10/04/2018

Peter Bond's failed coal gasification company, Linc Energy, may have been found guilty this week of causing catastrophic environmental damage in the agricultural areas surrounding its Queensland plant – but CBD can exclusively reveal that Bondy himself has turned over a new leaf.

He still sees a future in energy, but this time it is green energy. None of that messy coal-related stuff. ...

Isn't it a pity that Bond is still dealing with the fallout from the Linc collapse, including the contamination which has been described by the Palaszczuk government as "the biggest pollution event in Queensland's history".

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-09/court-linc-energy-guilty-serious-environmental-harm-ucg-plant/9632964>

Linc Energy guilty of serious environmental harm at UCG plant in southern Queensland

Ellie Sibson & staff, ABC, 09/04/2018

Gas company Linc Energy has been found guilty of causing serious environmental harm at its underground coal gasification (UCG) plant on Queensland's western Darling Downs.

Linc Energy was charged with five counts of wilfully and unlawfully causing environmental harm between 2007 and 2013 at Chinchilla. ...

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/09/linc-energy-guilty-of-causing-serious-environmental-harm?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Linc Energy guilty of causing serious environmental harm

AAP, The Guardian, 09/04/2018

A failed Queensland energy company has been found guilty of causing serious environmental harm by polluting the Darling Downs with hazardous contaminants despite warnings from scientists.

[Linc Energy's] operations left water polluted to the point it was unfit for stock to consume. ...

Sentencing has been listed for 11 May.

<https://www.northernstar.com.au/news/linc-pollution-mega-trial-company-guilty-all-charge/3382528/>

Linc pollution mega-trial: Company guilty on all charges

John Weekes, NewsRegional/Northern Star, 09/04/2018

Energy company Linc Energy has been found guilty of all charges of causing environmental damage.

Linc Energy has been found guilty of Queensland's biggest pollution event.



Jurors delivered their verdicts at Brisbane District Court on Monday.

Linc, in liquidation, was not in court to defend the charges of causing serious environmental damage at Chinchilla. ...

The trial came after the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection claimed Linc allowed methane, hydrogen, carbon monoxide and hydrogen sulphide to leak from the site.

Last year, it was reported the clean-up bill for environmental contamination could reach almost \$80million - and taxpayers would have to fork out. ...

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/linc-energy-found-guilty-of-polluting-part-of-darling-downs/news-story/1641e2ad2f85e9fc0a4cd32fc3898e59>

Linc Energy found guilty of polluting part of Darling Downs

Courier-Mail, 09/04/2018

A failed Queensland energy company caused serious environmental harm by polluting the Darling Downs with hazardous contaminants despite warnings from scientists. ...

Crown prosecutor Ralph Devlin QC said Linc CEO Peter Bond was aware of guidelines to safely manage UCG operations but had never directed staff to follow mandated practices.

“Bond prioritised Linc’s commercial interests over the requirements of operating its mining activity in an environmentally safe manner,” Mr Devlin said.

“Linc did nothing to stop, mitigate or rehabilitate the state of affairs that Linc itself had caused.” ... \$

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/linc-energy-guilty-verdict-meaningless-peter-bond/news-story/43dde816c2672b56f5f8b85f73cfd3ea>

Linc Energy guilty verdict meaningless: Peter Bond

Michael McKenna, The Australian, 09/04/2018

Failed entrepreneur Peter Bond has scoffed at the guilty verdict against his now-defunct company, Linc Energy, for contaminating farming land, saying the trial was “meaningless and a waste of taxpayer money”. ...

Once valued at more than \$1 billion, the company will be sentenced on May 11 and faces fines of up to \$9 million. But Mr Bond said he doubted any fine would have to be paid by the company.

It follows a ruling in March that upheld an appeal by the liquidators against an earlier order holding them liable for

the environmental clean-up. The state government last Friday filed an application to the High Court to overturn the appeal decision and force Linc to cover a rehabilitation bill, estimated at up to \$78m.

Mr Bond, who once held \$600m in Linc shares, said the conviction on all five charges was no surprise. “It was an undefended case, the liquidators’ chose not to defend it, so, of course, there is going to be a guilty verdict,” he said. “It means nothing, there was no one in court to call bulls**t and there was a lot of bulls**t to that case.

“And it is a total waste of taxpayer money because of the earlier Supreme Court ruling that found that the company didn’t have to pay. It’s all meaningless.” ... \$

<https://www.chinchillanews.com.au/news/what-a-fracking-mess-linc-energy-guilty-on-all-cha/3382910/>

What a fracking mess: Linc Energy guilty on all charges

John Weekes, Chinchilla News, 10/04/2018

After jurors delivered their verdicts on Monday, a conservation and farmers alliance said Linc should never have been allowed to operate. ...

Lock the Gate’s Carmel Flint said Linc’s activities spawned a “terrible outcome for landholders who have been left to live with the mess”.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-10/gas-company-court-ruling-sounds-a-warning-lawyer-says/9637874>

Rare win against Linc Energy for serious harm sounds warning to Queensland industry, lawyer says

Jess Lodge, ABC, 10/04/2018

The pursuit of Linc Energy for serious environmental harm sounds a loud warning to Queensland industry that any large company doing the wrong thing will be rigorously pursued, an environmental lawyer says.

But the Opposition said the Government was merely cleaning up a mess of its own making. ...

Brisbane-based lawyer Martin Klapper, who has advised on some of Queensland’s most significant mining and public infrastructure projects, said the successful prosecution was “very rare”.

“I’m not aware of any case that has had a similar profile or concerning such a range of alleged conduct for which the company has not been found guilty,” Mr Klapper said.

“The Government wants to send a message that, in the most serious cases it won’t step back from prosecuting, and it’s done that.” ...

Steven Miles, who was environment minister when the Government banned UCG in Queensland, said it was a serious issue “and we took it very seriously”.

“This is certainly the biggest pollution event in Queensland’s history,” he said.

Dr Miles said lessons had been learned from the Linc case.

“We’ve changed the laws, the Environment Department itself has learned a lot and put in place many new initiatives, including how to keep a community informed when they are faced with an event like this,” he said.

“Contamination outside of the site, as I understand it, has subsided and that is good news and good news for residents.

“Contamination at the site was far more serious and far more toxic, and cleaning that up is a challenge that our scientists are working on.”

A spokesperson for the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy said the Government was investing \$22 million to rehabilitate the former Linc site and ensure public safety.

Mr Klapper said the prosecution of Linc set a precedent in a practical sense, if not in a legal sense. ...

[He] suggested compensation for landowners may become a State Government responsibility.

<https://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/news/politics/south-australia-plans-clamp-on-fracking/news-story/b08f8c95e2a8671b1a58aa88cd6649e8>

South Australia plans clamp on fracking

Natalie Kotsios, Weekly Times, 05/04/2018

South Australia’s new Liberal Government will introduce a moratorium on fracking for coal-seam gas in the state’s South East as soon as possible.

The move will make South Australia the sixth state or territory with a ban or restriction on the controversial technique — and comes as the Federal Government continues to implore states to lift their moratoriums in the face of escalating gas prices and dwindling supply. ...

The ban would cover the Limestone Coast area, including the Mt Gambier and Naracoorte Lucindale council regions, which share borders — and the Otway Basin — with Victoria. ...

The Federal Government last week repeated its call for states to lift their fracking bans or moratoriums after the Australian Energy Market Operator predicted a 19 petajoule gas shortfall in Victoria in 2022, equivalent to about 400,000 homes. ...

Resources Minister Matthew Canavan last week told the National Press Club in Canberra that coal-seam gas wells should not be on prime agricultural land.

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/the-economy/lng-to-drive-record-230b-in-energy-exports-20180406-p4z88n.html>

LNG to drive record \$230b in energy exports

Cole Latimer, SMH, 06/04/2018

Australia will reach a record \$230 billion in energy exports this financial year driven by an LNG and oil boom. ...

LNG will become Australia's biggest resources export by 2022, generating \$39 billion, up from the \$30 billion this year, "driven by higher export volumes and, to a lesser extent, higher prices," a report stated. ...

At the end of last month, the Turnbull government called a snap review of Australia's mining industry - the first in nearly three decades - in a bid to find new reserves, attract more investment and end bitter political debate over the future of the lucrative resources sector.

In a major speech defending coal as a "great and beautiful industry," Resources Minister Matthew Canavan declared the "mining boom is not over" and call for big business to go beyond "high profile campaigns on tax policy" and publicly back the resources sector.

<http://www.theherald.com.au/story/5333852/seismic-testing-vessel-on-way-to-newcastle-after-cyclone-delay/?cs=305>

Seismic testing vessel on way to Newcastle

Lisa Allan, Newcastle Herald, 10/04/2018

Seismic testing off the coast of Newcastle will begin on Sunday after a nearly week-long delay due to an inability for the required vessel to travel to the region, the company behind the controversial survey has said.

The Greens have slammed the timing of the survey, saying it coincides with the start of the school holidays when more recreational fishers will be on the water. ...

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-12/decade-long-fracking-ban-may-not-need-law-change/9642876>

Fracking ban in SA's south-east may not need legislation, Steven Marshall says

Nick Harmsen, ABC, 12/04/2018

South Australian Premier Steven Marshall has revealed he is still considering whether to enshrine in law a moratorium on fracking for natural gas in the state's south-east.

On a visit to Mount Gambier, Mr Marshall told ABC Radio his cabinet had already implemented the [10-year moratorium](#) by issuing a direction to the public service. ...

But Mr Marshall indicated the 10-year ban may not be enshrined in law, in a bid to prevent future governments from overturning it. ...

Mr Marshall's visit came as the federal Energy Minister Josh Frydenberg lashed state governments for [imposing bans on gas extractions](#), warning they would drive up the price of electricity.

"I am on the record saying it is my preference that all governments adopt an evidence [and] scientific-based approach to conventional and unconventional gas extraction, regardless of their political hue — Liberal, Labor, National," Mr Frydenberg said. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/new-zealand-halts-new-offshore-oil-and-gas-exploration/news-story/092fe6a5768b20def39775792ce9308f>

New Zealand halts new offshore oil and gas exploration

AFP, The Australian, 12/04/2018

New Zealand is halting all new offshore oil and gas exploration as part of its efforts to deal with climate change, the centre-left government announced.

"(We are) taking an important step to address climate change and create a clean, green and sustainable future for New Zealand," Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern said. ...

Confirming a [move flagged last month](#), Ms Ardern said existing drilling and exploration permits would not be affected, meaning no existing jobs would be lost. ...

Industry group Petroleum Exploration and Production NZ (PEPANZ) said it had been blindsided by the announcement and had not been consulted by the government.

Chief executive Cameron Madgwick said a well-managed trading scheme was the way to reduce New Zealand's emissions, not "arbitrarily banning" certain fuel types. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/companies/metgasco-eyes-proxy-votes-as-day-of-judgement-postponed/news-story/c5eac5dd9f794cc3694aa755917cce89>

Metgasco eyes proxy votes as day of judgement postponed

Ben Butler, The Australian, 12/04/2018

The day of judgment has been postponed in a showdown over control of listed cashbox Metgasco that has drawn in a Malaysian logging tycoon and banned corporate raider Nicholas Bolton. ... At stake is about \$5.8m in cash held by Metgasco, much of it the result of compensation after the NSW government canned its fracking license in 2015. ... \$

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/oil-search-says-key-png-lng-field-upgraded/news-story/1087fd3d52311b5953c36350ccbaf49>

Oil Search says key PNG LNG field upgraded

Paul Garvey, The Australian, 12/04/2018

Oil Search and its partners have taken another step towards an expansion of the Papua New Guinea liquefied natural gas project, unveiling a big jump in the resource base of one of their key gas fields.

Oil Search ([OSH](#)) and PNG LNG's operator, oil giant ExxonMobil, announced today that the so-called "1C" contingent resource base of the P'nyang gas field had more than tripled to 3.51 trillion cubic feet of gas. ...

An expansion of PNG LNG would double the size of the plant, adding another 8 million tonnes to the project's capacity.

While the PNG LNG project is still in the process of being restarted following the March earthquake that devastated the PNG highlands, the proposed expansion is seen as arguably the best-placed LNG growth option in the Asia-Pacific region. ... \$

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/12/new-satellite-to-spot-planet-warming-industrial-methane-leaks>

New satellite to spot planet-warming industrial methane leaks

Damian Carrington, The Guardian, 13/04/2018

Methane leaking from oil and gas facilities around the world – a major contributor to global warming – is set to be spotted from space.

The Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) has announced it aims to launch a satellite called MethaneSAT by 2021 to scan the globe and make major leaks public. That information will then

enable governments to force action, EDF hopes. Building and launching the satellite will cost tens of millions of dollars, but EDF says it has already raised most of the money. ...

“Cutting methane emissions from the global oil and gas industry is the single fastest thing we can do to help put the brakes on climate change right now,” said Fred Krupp, EDF president. Only 3% of oil and gas companies currently report quantitative methane emissions, according to EDF. “By providing reliable, fully transparent data on a worldwide scale, MethaneSAT will help transform a serious climate threat into a crucial opportunity,” he said.

Plugging methane leaks is widely seen as a fast, cheap way to tackle climate change. The International Energy Agency (IEA) estimates [half of the gas leaks could be stopped at zero cost](#), because the cost of doing so is offset by the value of the extra gas captured and then sold. But currently public information about the leaks is scarce and near-absent in regions where scrutiny is unwelcome. ...

Some existing government-run satellites do measure methane, but not at high enough resolution to identify specific sites clearly. MethaneSAT is intended to provide a new level of precision and to regularly monitor about 50 major oil and gas regions, accounting for more than 80% of global production. Cattle and other [livestock are also big methane emitters](#) as they digest their fodder and EDF says the new satellite will be able to measure emissions from feedlots.

<https://www.desmogblog.com/2018/04/11/climate-change-two-degree-warming-fracking-natural-gas-rush-ingraffea>

World May Hit 2 Degrees of Warming in 10-15 Years Thanks to Fracking, Says Cornell Scientist

Sharon Kelly, *Desmog Blog*, 11/04/2018

In 2011, a Cornell University research team first made the groundbreaking discovery that leaking methane from the shale gas fracking boom could make burning fracked gas worse for the climate than coal.

In a sobering lecture released this month, a member of that team, Dr. Anthony Ingraffea, Professor of Engineering Emeritus at Cornell University, outlined more precisely the role U.S. fracking is playing in changing the world's climate.

The most recent climate data suggests that the world is on track to cross the

Deafening impact on whales and dolphins:

The vessel PMG Pride will conduct seismic testing for oil and gas off Newcastle for Asset Energy, despite objections from NSW's energy minister.



two degrees of warming threshold set in the Paris accord in just 10 to 15 years, says Ingraffea in a 13-minute lecture titled “Shale Gas: The Technological Gamble That Should Not Have Been Taken,” which was posted online on April 4. ...

Ingraffea's lecture, part of the Spring Creek Project's Bedrock Lectures on Human Rights and Climate Change series, can be viewed below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGfijCG-zB4>

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/oil-search-and-exxonmobil-restart-png-lng-ahead-of-schedule-20180413-p4z9ey.html>

Oil Search and ExxonMobil restart PNG LNG ahead of schedule

Cole Latimer, *SMH*, 13/04/2018

ExxonMobil and Oil Search have restarted operations early at PNG LNG after a devastating earthquake in February shut down production.

In February, a 7.5 magnitude earthquake hit Papua New Guinean highlands destroying the local area and shutting down Oil Search, Santos and ExxonMobil's joint venture PNG LNG operation. ...

The group has already restarted one LNG processing facility at Port Moresby with the second train expected to start up production from the Hides field soon.

During the shutdown, the joint venture partners also took the opportunity to carry out maintenance that was previously scheduled for April and October

and also brought forward planned modifications to the Hides Gas Conditioning Plant.

Santos CEO Kevin Gallagher thanked ExxonMobil, joint venture partners and the PNG Government for all their efforts in safely resuming production.

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/nsw-riled-by-lack-of-fit-and-proper-for-offshore-gas-exploration-20180413-p4z9hr.html>

NSW riled by lack of 'fit and proper' for offshore gas exploration

Peter Hannam, *SMH*, 13/04/2018

Companies exploring for energy off the NSW coast should be subject to the same “fit and proper person test” as those on land, the Berejiklian government says, underscoring tensions between Sydney and Canberra over the approval of seismic testing in waters near Newcastle.

Don Harwin, NSW resources minister, told Parliament this week that he had been advised of legal concerns related to MEC Resources, the parent company of Asset Energy that is due to seismic testing on Sunday in a region about 30 kilometres south-east of Newcastle. ...

Jeremy Buckingham, a NSW Greens MP, asked Mr Harwin in Parliament [whether legal writs for unpaid debts](#) issued to MEC and other action to remove the company's board meant the firm would fail to meet the state's “fit and proper person test”.

Mr Harwin replied that while some concerns were “certainly of interest

to me”, the administration of offshore exploration permits were under the Commonwealth’s offshore petroleum act, which had no such test.

“That is one of the reasons why as Minister for Resources I have not been giving my support to the seismic testing that is taking place off the NSW coast at present,” he said.

However, his federal counterpart, Matt Canavan said he rejected “the assertion that the Commonwealth offshore oil and gas regime is less stringent than in NSW”. ...

John Mackenzie, a Newcastle City councillor, said the council had voted unanimously in February to oppose the testing.

The lack of a “fit and proper person” requirement for approving offshore mining exploration and development meant the Commonwealth regulations were “way out of step with community expectations”.

Mr Mackenzie noted the offshore exploration licence extended from Port Stephens all the way down to Wollongong. Given the presence of coal under much of the onshore region, it was likely fossil fuels would also be found in much of the region of the coast, he said.

Given the area hosts tourism and fishing, and in the path of whale migration – which will soon begin – there “really aren’t any” circumstances that the development of oil and gas reserves could proceed, Mr Mackenzie said. ...

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/abbott-plays-coy-in-the-coalfields-as-turnbull-gets-burned-for-30th-time-20180409-p4z8hq.html>

Abbott plays coy in the coalfields as Turnbull gets burned for 30th time

Tony Wright, SMH, 09/04/2018

Tony Abbott, saddling up to ride his bicycle through the brown coal and power plant-heavy Latrobe Valley to emphasise his differences with Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull over power generation, said no one should obsess over political polls. ...

Abbott is taking part in his 21st long-distance Pollie Pedal, a bicycling event that has raised millions of dollars for returning soldiers. He chooses the route himself, and cheerfully admitted to Fairfax Media that he deliberately chose the highway through the Latrobe Valley coalfields to help underline his views about the

On a roll, Abbott’s spruiking coal, not polls

SIMONE FOX KOOB

Riding through Victorian coal country, with the smoke from Yallourn power plant billowing overhead, Tony Abbott sent a clear message yesterday as he led the third peloton of riders travelling across the state for charity.

“If it’s right and proper to export coal, surely it’s right and proper to use it in this country and continue to be a country that makes things,” the former prime minister said before the start of day two of the Pollie Pedal charity event.

“We should continue to make the most of our natural advantages and abundant coal and gas.”

As Malcolm Turnbull was digesting his 30th consecutive Newsprint loss yesterday – a metric he used in 2015 to oust Mr Abbott – his Lyrcrad predecessor downplayed suggestions he felt vindicated by the result and instead focused on energy policy in a region known for its rich coal resources.

“We shouldn’t obsess over polls. I never did,” he said.

“It’s not about me. It’s about our country, what’s best for our country. We should be the party of lower power prices and that means we should not just be exporting coal, we should be using it here because coal gives us the most affordable and reliable baseload power.”



Tony Abbott and Kevin Andrews lead the peloton past Yallourn power station in Victoria’s Latrobe Valley yesterday

need to continue producing power by burning coal. ...

As to the call from the Monash family for members of the new pro-coal ginger group to stop calling it the Monash Forum, Abbott said he wasn’t the forum’s leader, but he had huge respect for Sir John Monash both as a military leader and as the man who chose brown coal to power Victoria.

Asked whether the group should ditch Monash’s name out of respect for the family, Abbott walked away without answering.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/tony-abbott-says-its-time-government-forcibly-bought-liddell/news-story/fbd2d06af80b87a61a3c2ea59a2deaaa>

Tony Abbott says it’s time government forcibly bought Liddell

Reg Brown, The Australian, 09/04/2018

Tony Abbott says the government should consider forcibly buying the Liddell coal power station in the NSW Hunter Valley.

The former prime minister, who is [cycling near the coal plants in Victoria’s Latrobe Valley](#) this morning, said the jawboning of AGL may have to escalate into a compulsory acquisition. ...

Mr Abbott said the Hazelwood coal mine should never have closed and warned the government against allowing AGL to put its profits ahead of the national interest. ...

The former PM was chased and accosted by anti-coal protesters after arriving in southeast Victoria on the Pollie Pedal charity ride.

Voices of the Valley president Wendy Farmer approached Mr Abbott as he met with RSL members.

She handed him a red football and de-

clared “Stop playing political football with our community”.

“There’s a whole community outside waiting to speak to you,” she yelled, following Mr Abbott.

“It’s a bit of an insult you’re not actually talking to them.” Club officials told Ms Farmer to leave and Mr Abbott carried on, speaking to a gathering of the club’s women’s auxiliary and apologising for his outfit. \$

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/on-a-roll-tony-abbotts-spruiking-coal-not-polls/news-story/f60441ec65f1fc79be2e6e2c6d24c0d8>

On a roll, Tony Abbott’s spruiking coal, not polls

Simone Fox Kooib, The Australian, 10/04/2018

Riding through Victorian coal country, with the smoke from Yallourn power plant billowing overhead, Tony Abbott sent a clear message yesterday as he led the third peloton of riders travelling across the state for charity.

“If it’s right and proper to export coal, surely it’s right and proper to use it in this country and continue to be a country that makes things,” the former prime minister said before the start of day two of the Pollie Pedal charity event. ...

While visiting Morwell RSL for morning tea, Mr Abbott was confronted by anti-coal protesters ...

Wendy Farmer, speaking for activist group Voices of the Valley, handed Mr Abbott a red football and declared: “Stop playing political football with our community.”

She was escorted out after heckling Mr Abbott and urging him to speak to community members. \$

<http://www.latrobevalleyexpress.com.au/story/5331556/abbott-dodges-media-in-morwell/?cs=1462>

Abbott dodges media in Morwell

Michelle Slater, Latrobe Valley Express, 09/04/2018

Former Prime Minister and now Coalition backbencher Tony Abbott dodged the media today, when he made a brief stop at the Morwell RSL as part of the Pollie Pedal bicycle ride.

The MP secretly slipped into the venue via the front door, while the waiting media, and around a dozen protesters who were pushing for renewable energy, were waiting around the back. ...

Voices of the Valley president Wendy Farmer entered the RSL to hand the PM a football with the words “stop playing political football with our community” written on it, before she was ejected.

“We are extremely disappointed he didn’t front the community. He snubbed the community and used the other door so no one could talk to him,” Ms Farmer said.

The Voices of the Valley president was out the front with Greens and Latrobe Valley Sustainability Group representatives, who were dismayed about last week’s backbench Monash Forum manifesto plans for a new coal-fired power station in the Valley.

Ms Farmer said she had invited Mr Abbott to the Valley in 2014 during the Hazelwood mine fire, but he declined to meet with her. ...

<http://www.latrobevalleyexpress.com.au/story/5337813/hydrogen-pilot-plant-to-deliver-jobs-boost/>

Hydrogen pilot plant to deliver jobs boost

Jarrod Whittaker, Latrobe Valley Express, 12/04/2018

The Latrobe Valley is set to benefit from a jobs boost as a result of a world-first project to produce low-emissions hydrogen in the region headed by a Japanese consortium.

The Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain pilot project is expected to be announced today and will initially create 400 local jobs and potentially more in the future.

As part of the half-a-billion dollar project, liquefied hydrogen will be produced from Latrobe Valley brown coal for transportation to Japan where it will be used in fuel cell electric vehicles and power generation.

The project has the backing of the state and federal governments ...

The consortium comprises Japanese energy and infrastructure companies led by Kawasaki Heavy Industries and has the support of the Japanese government.

Other consortium members include J-POWER, Iwatani Corporation, Marubeni Corporation and Loy Yang A owner AGL.

<http://www.latrobevalleyexpress.com.au/story/5339698/hydrogen-investment-critical-prime-minister/?cs=12>

Hydrogen investment critical: Prime Minister

Michelle Slater, Latrobe Valley Express, 12/04/2018

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has described a world-first coal-to-hydrogen project in the Latrobe Valley as playing a critically important role as the fuel of the future.

The prime minister was at Loy Yang A power station today to launch the trial of the Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain project, in partnership with Australia and Japan. ...

The PM spoke in front of around 200 people including Jobs Minister Michaelia Cash, and a gathering of representatives from the Japanese consortium behind the project, which is led by Kawasaki Heavy Industries.

The HESC project will use Loy Yang coal to create low-emissions hydrogen at an adjacent site, and then transport the gas to Japan via Port Hastings. ...

The project will create 400 jobs in its first stage, before it progresses into a commercial phase pending the success of the pilot, where it could potentially generate thousands more jobs.

If it proceed to the commercial phase, it will use carbon capture and storage technology to sequester emissions created during the process, which would be stored depleted gas reserves in Bass Strait.

Both the Victorian and federal governments will contribute \$50 million each toward the half-billion dollar project.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/turnbulls-brown-coal-by-drogen-horror-show-500m-for-3-tonnes-70932/>

Turnbull’s brown coal hydrogen horror show: \$500m for 3 tonnes

Giles Parkinson, RenewEconomy, 12/04/2018

Australia’s Victoria and federal governments have promised to pump \$50 million each into a near \$496 million project to gassify brown coal in Victoria and produce just three tonnes of

hydrogen, in what is being dubbed a world-first pilot project.

Yes, that’s right: \$500 million to build a pilot plant that will operate for just 12 months and produce a grand total “up to” three tonnes of hydrogen over the whole year. I had to read that 10 times and get on the phone twice to check.

World-first perhaps, because it is hard to imagine another country that would think of turning brown coal into hydrogen, and at such an outrageous cost – least of all one with such rich wind and solar resources, and which already has some cheaper renewables-fuelled hydrogen projects of its own. ...

You can find more of what Turnbull had to say, including his predictions of an \$8 billion brown coal export industry, [in this press release](#). ...

The media material says the project will involve the production of gas using gasification technologies adapted specifically for Victorian brown coal.

“The hydrogen gas will then be transported via truck to a liquefaction and loading terminal at the Port of Hastings. The hydrogen gas will be liquefied then shipped to Kobe in Japan by a ship carrier specifically developed for the task.”

It won’t need to be a big ship. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/communities-on-the-coal-face-need-certainty-about-energy-policy-not-political-warfare-20180411-p4z917.html>

Communities on the coal face need certainty about energy policy – not political warfare

Sam Johnson, SMH, 11/04/2018

When the Northern coal station in my home of Port Augusta was slated for closure by Alinta Energy in 2015, the end came rapidly, with only a year for workers, the community and the energy sector to prepare.

Despite missing out on a smooth transition, Port Augusta is now creating a new future in renewable energy and storage. That’s why it’s maddening to watch [politicians scramble over the Liddell coal-fired power station in NSW](#) – putting at risk a fair transition for working families who deserve better. ...

Communities at the coal face do not benefit from political culture wars about coal closure. AGL has committed to a renewable and storage-focused replacement of Liddell and no forced redundancies for the workforce. These are the ingredients we called for for years in Port Augusta.

The evidence that renewable energy with storage and reducing pollution is the best outcome for consumers mounts daily. In Port Augusta, this isn't an ideological debate, we are living it. Since coal closed here, we've had solar thermal with storage, battery storage, solar PV, wind and pumped hydro projects get underway or be proposed on our doorstep. National policy should encourage this investment, not threaten to slam the breaks on, like the NEG does. ...

• *Sam Johnson is the mayor of Port Augusta, South Australia.*

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/sustainability/energy-debate-heats-up-in-a-tale-of-two-priorities-20180411-p4z91c.html>

Energy debate heats up in a tale of two priorities

Peter Hannam & Cole Latimer, SMH, 11/04/2018

Brown coal will get a \$100 million lifeline as the federal and state governments invest in an ambitious project to convert one of Australia's most polluting energy sources into hydrogen. ...

However, in Melbourne, Victoria's energy minister Lily D'Ambrosio will steer a different path, telling a lunch at the Committee for the Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) her government had received a "fantastic" response to its auction to supply 650-megawatts of new wind or solar power. ...

While the federal government is expected to trumpet the potential for a new multibillion-dollar industry emerging in the Latrobe region, creating an estimated 400 jobs, Ms D'Ambrosio will be announcing her government's auction will attract as much as \$1.3 billion of investment, create 1250 construction jobs over two years, and 90 ongoing jobs – mainly in regional Victoria.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-04-12/new-zealand-no-longer-issuing-oil-and-gas-exploration-permits/9645092>

New Zealand bans new offshore oil and gas exploration in quest for net zero emissions

ABC, 12/04/2018

Permits for offshore oil and gas exploration will no longer be issued by the New Zealand Government as part of its commitment to a clean energy future.

The decision under Labour Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern is a change in direction after nine years of conservative leadership which favoured expanding the industry.

Ms Ardern, who was elected Prime Minister last year, has pledged to reduce the country's net greenhouse gas emissions to zero by 2050.

Her Government also plans to plant 100 million trees each year and ensure the electricity grid runs entirely from renewable energy. ...



<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/research-chief-constable-to-lead-minerals-council-of-australia/news-story/ef2dd0bcf81c76a9405d010515e29f67>

Research chief Constable to lead Minerals Council of Australia

Matt Chambers, The Australian, 11/04/2018

The Minerals Council of Australia has appointed Tania Constable, a former senior bureaucrat now heading a carbon-capture research group backed by big resources companies, as its CEO.

The appointment comes after the group's biggest member, BHP, forced former MCA chief Brendan Pearson out last year over his strong lobbying for coal-fired power in Australia. ...

Ms Constable is chief executive of the Co-operative Research Centre for Greenhouse Gas Technologies, or CO2CRC, which runs a \$100 million gas storage demonstration plant in Victoria's Otway region, near Warrnambool.

She has previously worked as a chief adviser to federal Treasury and ran the resources division at the Industry Department. ... \$

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/craig-kelly-slams-reneweconomy-shameless-propaganda-arm-of-green-rent-seekers-99670/>

Craig Kelly slams RenewEconomy: Shameless propaganda arm of green rent-seekers

Giles Parkinson, RenewEconomy, 12/04/2018

Craig Kelly, the chairman of the Coalition's backbench energy committee, clearly doesn't think much of wind and solar, and it appears he thinks even less of this website.

A reader this week sent Kelly a link to a story we published on Monday – or, more to the point, republished from *The Conversation* – which was co-authored by ANU researchers Andrew Blakers and Matthew Stocks, and which predicted a rapid switch from fossil fuels to renewables.

It was titled: [Solar PV and wind on track to replace all coal, oil and gas within two decades.](#)

Kelly and/or his office erupted, and he or his minders promptly responded with [an email]. It was only a few paragraphs long, but it was Biblical in its bending of the truth. ...

"The fact that *RenewEconomy* can publish an article titled 'Solar and wind on track to replace coal oil and gas' is just another example of how *RenewEconomy* lack a even a shred of credibility."

This from a man who once said that renewables would cause children to drown.

As mentioned above, this was a reprint from *The Conversation* and an article written by two highly respected university researchers. But no matter, we would have been happy to print it on its own merits, as we have with Sanford University's [Tony Seba's predictions of the death of fossil fuels by 2030.](#)

"...and are nothing other than the shameless propaganda arm of green rent seekers ..."

Aw, shucks. We just note that fossil fuel subsidies, as noted by both the IMF and the IEA, far outstrip subsidies for renewable energy. ...

Kelly's position is a disgrace, and so are those who defend, tolerate and even promote his views. 2GB. Murdoch press. Sky News. Prime minister Malcolm Turnbull.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/millions-flow-to-antiadani-green-groups/news-story/3cfec8563917871f217358d2e4c60861>

Millions flow to anti-Adani green groups

John Ferguson, The Australian, 14/04/2018

A coalition of anti-Adani mine green groups generated nearly \$25 million in income last financial year, raising more questions about charity status and the use of the environment to mask political activism.

Analysis of financial statements of seven of the country's most vocal anti-Adani groups shows money is flooding in amid intense debate about whether politically active organisa-

News this week ... from previous page

tions should be registered as charities and the transparency of other lobbyists such as the left-leaning GetUp!

The Australian Conservation Foundation's gross income climbed to \$13.3m in 2016-17, making up more than half of the revenue generated by the Adani seven. ...

Resources Minister Matt Canavan yesterday warned of the need for transparency from the green groups, but said the ACF and others had every right to be involved in the democratic process. "They should be upfront about where their money comes from and how they intend to use it," Senator Canavan said.

A GetUp! spokeswoman said the organisation would send Senator Canavan a copy of its annual report, which showed where its money went. ...

"While you can freely access the scope and scale of donations flowing in to GetUp! in real time, the undue influence of corporations on our elected officials — millions of dollars of dark money — goes unchecked." \$

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5330543/the-town-that-once-hated-agl-is-now-in-its-corner/>

Federal Government pressure on AGL to sell Liddell power station is 'outrageous', says Gloucester group

Joanne McCarthy, Newcastle Herald, 10/04/2018

The woman who led the campaign to stop a controversial Gloucester coal seam gas project has backed AGL's refusal to break under government pressure to sell Liddell power station, and revealed the key role played by AGL chief executive Andy Vesey in stopping the Gloucester project.

Groundswell Gloucester founder Julie Lyford said the Turnbull Government's public campaign to pressure the Liddell sale to AGL rival Alinta was "outrageous", but her two meetings with

Mr Vesey in 2015 showed he was "not the kind of chief executive who would buckle under government pressure".

In a new book about the coal seam gas campaign, *The Town That Said No to AGL*, Gloucester barrister John Watts reveals how Mr Vesey agreed to meet with Groundswell Gloucester shortly after taking up the chief executive's position, and by February, 2016 announced AGL's withdrawal from CSG.

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/business/the-economy/reality-check-on-a-half-billion-dollar-brown-coal-hydrogen-project-20180412-p4z98n.html>

Reality check on a half-billion-dollar brown coal hydrogen project

Cole Latimer, Brisbane Times, 12/04/2018

The half-a-billion-dollar pilot brown coal to hydrogen project has been launched on Thursday to much fanfare. But is it another white elephant for the government, creating a new source of carbon emissions, or will it help make Australia a new energy world leader?

The CSIRO believes that despite the infancy of coal to hydrogen programs, the technology is – for the most part – proven in the field. ...

However, capturing the emissions produced when the brown coal is turned into gas will be a sticking point. ...

Environment Victoria's energy advisor Erwin Jackson said the project can't go ahead without carbon capture. ...

Simon Holmes à Court, a senior energy advisor, believes the future of the project should rest on its ability to safely capture carbon emissions.

"While hydrogen itself is a clean fuel, using brown coal to produce hydrogen fuel is highly polluting. Unless and until this project captures and stores its emissions, the project will produce some of the dirtiest fuel possible," Mr Holmes à Court said.



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New book shows how Gloucester defeated energy giant's plans

Two years ago the Gloucester community's battle against CSG in the region was won, when AGL pulled out of the project.

Barrister John Watts has documented the struggle in his book, launched last week at NSW's Parliament House.

The book reveals how the impact of the coal seam gas project and a separate proposal for a coal mine close to the town split the Gloucester community and leaves scars that remain to this day.

The Town That Said No to AGL is available for \$25 plus \$9 postage to anywhere in Australia.

Contact gloucesterbookorders@gmail.com to order a copy.



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<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B01H4WU0L0> <https://itunes.apple.com/au/book/gasfield-free-nsw-northern-rivers>

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