

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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Knitting Nannas a hit in Tamworth stitching up booties for Barnaby



Knitting Nannas outside LNP MP Barnaby Joyce's Tamworth office. Photo: Jo Holden

By EVE JEFFERY

Slap bang in the middle of Australia's most iconic country music festival, and slap bang in the middle of town, the just as iconic Knitting Nannas Against Gas (KNAG) created a stir as they staged an event of their own for the Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce on his home turf.

As thousands lined the streets of Tamworth for the annual Country Music Festival, members and supporters of KNAG lined the street outside Australia's 2IC's hometown office in Peel Street and sat down for a yarn.

Duty of care to future generations

KNAGs from all around the countryside converged, aglow in their yellow splendour, from loops as far as Lismore, Drake, Gloucester, Taree, Sydney and Elands – with one purpose in mind: to support the New England loop in their quest to send a strong and clear message to Barnaby Joyce about his role in office and his duty of care to farming, indigenous cultures, our wilderness areas and future generations.

The area in Minister Joyce's electorate around Tamworth is under direct threat from gas and coal mining and the Nannas have come together to highlight this to the member for New England.

The Knitting Nannas say the threat to the Great Artesian Basin from both coal and gas mining is enormous and irreparable and they are calling on Minister Joyce to take immediate federal action to protect this important resource from further damage.

To this end, the Nannas did sit and knit outside the minister's office for almost four hours after asking for an appointment to meet with the man himself. Strangely, though the country's biggest country music festival was right on his doorstep, in his home town, Mr Joyce was not in the office.

Every year Nannas spend a small fortune travelling and educating communities about what they see as vandals who are laying waste to the country, but they believe it's a small price to

Gas advocate APPEA swamps media with health hazard denial

Mainstream media reports on the alarming rise in hospital admissions, coinciding with massive coal seam gas (CSG) activity on the Darling Downs, were replaced within hours by a version emphasising derisive comments from industry body APPEA.

The initial reports, written by an Australian Associated Press reporter and published in several Newscorp outlets, had been picked up from *Fossil Fool Bulletin's* story (which was also published nationally in *Crikey*).

The story covered Dr Gerylne McCarron's peer-reviewed scientific research that showed people of the Darling Downs experienced huge increases in health problems, especially cardio-vascular disorders which increased their hospital admissions by up to 142%.

Dr McCarron called for further investigation, as the health problems described are all known to be associated with pollutants reported by the CSG industry which had risen by hundreds, even thousands, of percentages during the same period.

Industry, govt stayed silent

At the initial time of publication, APPEA (Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association), Queensland Health and the Department of Environment & Science all declined to comment.

Dr McCarron's research had appeared in the reputable *International Journal of Environmental Studies*.

However, once the story surfaced in *The Australian* and other Newscorp publications, APPEA's Qld director Rhys Turner weighed in. Newscorp

Gas advocate APPEA swamps media with hazard denial

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obediently replaced their original story with a version giving greater emphasis to APPEA's comments.

Repeat of 2016 attack

This replicates the turn of events in late 2016 when the *Chinchilla News* reported health figures aired by Dr McCarron at a public meeting in the town. Within the day, the report disappeared, later replaced with one giving APPEA's spin considerably more space than Dr McCarron's research.

APPEA attempted to write her off as an activist with a long history of opposition to CSG.

That may explain why the *Chinchilla News* – now part of the *Newscorp* stable – didn't touch the latest story, despite it coming from its readers' heartland.

APPEA's statement also included a claim that McCarron's declaration in the journal of the study's limitations, generally a routine element of scientific publishing, was evidence of the "pseudo science" involved.

When the industry is more concerned with attacking the messenger than addressing public health concerns, it's time for health authorities to step up and take responsibility. Dr McCarron said:

"The striking rise in emissions of air pollutants in the Darling Downs between 2007 and 2014 and an alarming spike over the same years in hospital admissions raises significant questions — not only over the safety of coal seam gas, but also how industry responds to safety concerns.

Findings in line with US research

"While I do not suggest that the figures directly 'prove' that the CSG activities are causing this increase, my findings are in line with the scientific research on the known health effects of many air pollutants emitted by the industry, as well as with those of many studies in the United States where millions of people are now living close to gas and oil wells.

"The statement that my paper is completely at odds with countless research studies carried out both in Australia and overseas is simply untrue.

"The majority of published studies support a link between the unconventional gas industry and a wide range of health problems.



"Furthermore, almost no similar studies have been conducted in Australia, apart from the work of University of Queensland researcher, Dr Angela Werner.

Cancers, blood/immune diseases

"Dr Werner found that hospital admission rates for some cancers and blood/immune diseases increased more quickly in coal seam gas study areas compared to study areas without any CSG activity in Queensland.

Dr McCarron said that APPEA's response was silent on the Darling Downs emissions data submitted by the coal seam gas industry to the National Pollutant Inventory and reported in the study.

"As a general practitioner and member of the medical group Doctors for the Environment Australia, I am proudly active in communicating research-based evidence for the protection of human health and wellbeing.

"The evidence that chemicals and activities associated with the CSG industry may pose potential risks to human health should not be denied.

"Sadly, the name calling and denial in APPEA's responses suggests that the concerning rises reported in my paper are not likely to be taken seriously by those responsible for the increases in emissions.

"I therefore look to those who do take responsibility for the health of people living in Queensland's gas fields to consider the Darling Downs hospitalisation statistics a wake up call for urgent response.

Valuing health above industry profits

"Until there is a sufficiently large and well resourced study completed to support or refute the proposed link, I also stand by the people of the Darling Downs who, like me, value their health and wellbeing above industry profits."

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Nannas in Tamworth

• CONTINUED FROM P1

pay for a liveable future for their kiddies and grandkiddies.

They want to see fossil fuels phased out in favour of renewable energy and immediate action on climate change.

New England Nanna Pat Schultz wanted to tell Mr Joyce she had big plans for her future. 'Minister, we want to be knitting lots of booties for our grandkiddies well into the future,' she said. 'Our current path needs to change in order for that to happen.'

The Nannas also wanted to speak to Mr Joyce about a recently released peer-reviewed paper written by Queensland doctor GERALYN McCARRON, who raised a red flag to gasfield air pollution west of Brisbane and the correlation between increased hospital admissions.

(See adjacent story.)

Tamworth resident and KNAG, Tania Marshall, hopes that Minister Joyce reads the report and listens to the science. 'Minister, are you willing to sacrifice your constituents to the same fate as what has been documented by Dr McCarron on the Western Darling Downs?'

These and other questions are burning on KNAG lips.

A copy of the report was delivered to Minister Joyce and the New England North West Nannas have requested an appointment to discuss it with him.

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The evidence we won't hear: Origin settles whistleblower case out of court

A year ago, Sydney Morning Herald reporter Adele Ferguson described how "whistleblower Sally McDow, a highly credentialed lawyer and former senior compliance manager at Origin Energy, lodged the first ever case in Australia that tests whistleblower protections under the Corporations Act.

It has come to *Fossil Fool Bulletin's* (FFB) attention that we will not be hearing Sally McDow's evidence, which is disappointing for people trying to expose the lows of the CSG industry's activities on the Darling Downs.

The case has apparently been settled out of court.

FFB was tipped off by a former industry worker. This is confirmed on the Federal Court of Australia's website which lists the case as 'closed' and 'settled'.

Sally McDow must be commended for her brave stand and hopefully she will be able to move on from a dreadful experience.

The *SMH* said she alleged "significant and dangerous compliance breaches, a deliberate cover-up by management and potential breaches of the Corporations Act".

"McDow's statement of claim alleges Origin is a company with serious compliance failures at its gas and oilfields, it has a culture of leaks, spills and explosions, and victimises and intimidates anyone who dares to speak out. ...

"She alleges executives right up to the top, including former chief executive Grant King, who is now president of the Business Council of Australia, covered up some of the compliance failures, some of which were serious and should have been reported to the regulators and the ASX."

FFB notes that settling out of court does not exonerate Origin, it merely shows that vast resources and legal heavy-weights can slam the lid on exposure of bad behaviour.

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The news this week

Debate over Townsville and Rockhampton councils' funding of a remote **Adani airstrip** heated up, with MP **Bob Katter** implying the deal stinks.

The *Townsville Bulletin* gleefully reported discontent over Adani protester actions, prompting the police to warn locals against **vigilante action**.

In Brisbane it was revealed that the **Premier and her Innovation Minister** would have to remove themselves from any decision on a Naif loan to **Aurizon**, for a railway to Adani's mine, due to conflict of interest.

A resource company with a former Labor party figure, **Jim Soorly**, on the board **laughed all the way to the bank** with \$5 million from the government. **TerraCom** scored the money after buying the defunct **Blair Athol** coal mine for \$1. The government re-calculated Blair Athol's rehabilitation bond and returned surplus funds.

Windy weather saw air pollution from coal mines soar in the **Hunter Valley**, as proposed mine expansions and rehabilitation prospects made the news.

Legal firm **King & Wood Mallesons** published an interesting paper on re-inforcing **environmental compliance** in Australian energy, mining and resource projects. It included sections on Linc Energy and former Linc chief Peter Bond. (See P8.)

There were calls for a referendum on fracking in the Northern Territory as a draft report on the issue divided Territorians over the consequences. The federal government wants the **NT frack ban** lifted.

Mike Secombe wrote in *The Saturday Paper* that new analysis of the **Minerals Council of Australia** shows about a third of the council's members are wholly foreign owned, or subsidiaries of foreign-owned companies.

Multinational corporations, which are by far the biggest sources of foreign money in the political process, will be unaffected by the government's proposed restrictions on charities – **GetUp!** would face **audits**, but at the Minerals Council it would be business as usual.

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Greenpeace: govt \$60m won't help reef if Adani mine goes ahead

Government's \$60m Reef plan meaningless without measures to address climate change, says Greenpeace.

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull's decision to pay farmers up to \$60 million to reduce sediment runoff to the Great Barrier Reef is the kind of tinkering around the edges approach that has failed in the past and does nothing to address the cause of devastating coral bleaching.

"Coal-fuelled climate change is killing the Reef, but instead of phasing out fossil fuels and pulling support for Adani's Carmichael mine, the PM and Josh Frydenberg are again just dealing with symptoms of the problem," Greenpeace Australia Pacific Climate and Energy Campaigner, Dr Nikola Casule, said.

"The Reef is now in the early stages of an unprecedented third consecutive year of bleaching. The Reef bleached in 2016 and 2017 and the Turnbull government did nothing. The science is clear: dangerous global warming is the biggest threat to the Reef.

"Rather than engaging in piecemeal

exercises that ignore the biggest threat to the Reef, Malcolm Turnbull should place the interests of all Australians ahead of the profits of coal barons by embracing renewable energy and saying no to new coal projects, like Adani's Carmichael coal mine."

Today in Townsville the Prime Minister announced a \$60 million Great Barrier Reef program that includes paying farmers to reduce sediment runoff, increasing the number of vessels targeting the crown-of-thorns starfish and the number of field officers to protect the Reef.

The program also includes \$6 million for science and research, but does not include a single initiative to reduce Australia's support of the coal industry or any serious measures to combat global warming.

"If Mr Turnbull genuinely cared about our precious Reef and the people who depend on it, he would get serious about fighting climate change instead of engaging in fantasy solutions that ignore the real issue," Dr Casule said.

Hopeland class action continues despite 'cynical' government removal of excavation restrictions and deletion of zone map

Last week's move by Queensland's environment department -EHP - to remove the "Excavation Caution Zone" (ECZ) at Hopeland was a cynical attempt to disrupt the landholders' class action, according to lawyers and local residents.

The zone had been imposed two years ago after the collapse of Linc Energy's underground coal gasification project on the Darling Downs.

At that time, EHP told landowners not to dig deeper than two metres underground due to the presence of toxic and flammable gases in a 320 square kilometre area near the Linc site.

When Hopeland landowners started a class action against the company and the government, with law firm Slater and Gordon, the stigma associated with the ECZ formed the basis of the class action.

Action participant Helen Bender said, "But this stigma is no more than a grain of sand when it is compared to the total failure by the Qld Government to do their job!

Now the government has removed a map of the zone and another huge 'investigation zone' from its website, but covered itself with cautionary advice.

"The reported testing that EHP have relied upon to justify the removal of the ECZ is grossly deficient based on expert advice," Ms Bender said.

"EHP's total lack of commitment to transparency and their duty of care to all impacted landholders makes this a dirty and cynical move by them."

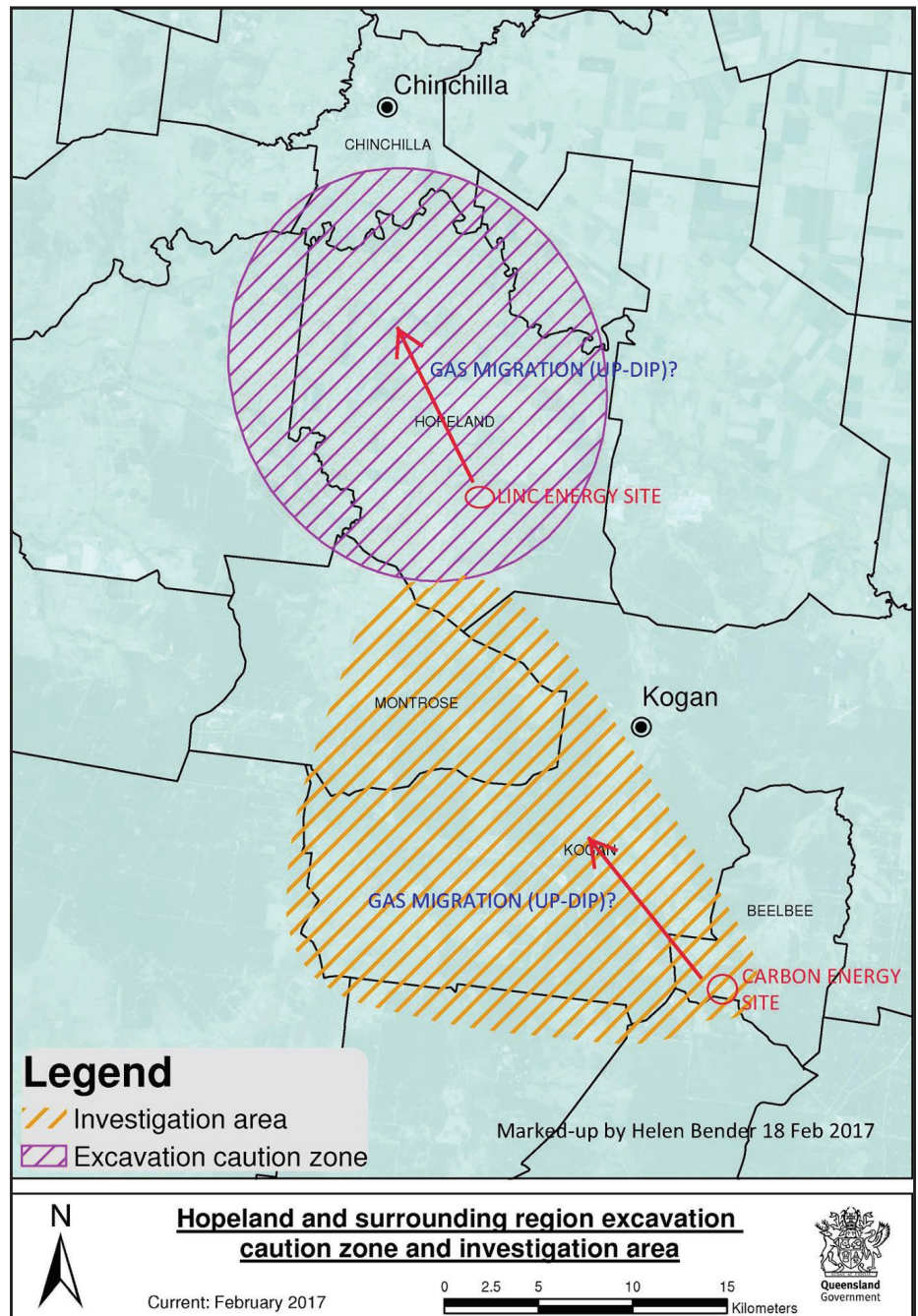
EHP says there may be a flammability risk that exists during excavations that disturb the soil at depths of greater than two metres.

"The degree of risk may be increased when activities involve the creation of confined spaces and where potential ignition sources are involved. Anyone engaged in such activities is advised to exercise caution and consider undertaking site specific risk assessment prior to carrying out those activities to identify measures to minimise the risk" the department advised.

Ms Bender says the class action against Linc Energy and the Queensland government is still proceeding.

Secret report leaked

The ABC originally disclosed the leak of a secret report commissioned by the



government into possible widespread contamination from the Linc's demonstration facility.

The report, by consultants Gilbert & Sutherland, is said to allege that, among other things:

- Linc's mismanagement of the underground burning of coal seams caused the release of contaminants into the soil, air and water;
- 'Bulk' gases, which at sufficiently high levels can cause health and safety risks, have been found in an area of up to 320 square kilometres around the plant;
- Experts found abnormal amounts of methane and concentrations of hydrogen at explosive levels in the soil; and

- The contamination is, "widespread, of high impact and, in part, irreversible".

The potential consequences for landholders included:

- The surrounding land may no longer be classified as strategic cropping land, due to permanent acidification of the soil, as a direct result of Linc's alleged activities;
- There are potentially far reaching consequences for livestock in the area; and
- Government-imposed restrictions (now lifted) on digging holes deeper than two metres in an "excavation exclusion zone", due to the health and safety risks presented by the presence of particular gases.

In the news this week:

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 17,860 words of news for your convenience. Click on the [links](#) to view original articles. (\$) = subscription may be required

THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/jan/23/bob-katter-says-there-is-unpleasant-odour-to-adani-linked-airport-carmichael-coalmine>

Bob Katter says there is an 'unpleasant odour' to Adani-linked airport

Michael McGowan, *The Guardian*, 23/01/2013

Outspoken federal MP Bob Katter has questioned why two Queensland councils are paying \$34m to build an airport to service a massive Adani coalmine, saying there is an "unpleasant odour" to the deal.

Parts of the deal are now subject to an investigation by Queensland's local government department, and last week the Guardian revealed that despite previously claiming they were paying to own the airport, the two councils will merely lease it from Adani.

A spokesman for Townsville council said there were "conditions in place to make sure the fifo jobs, and positions in Adani's headquarters, go to people living in Townsville".

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/national/anti-adani-activists-shut-down-townsville-city-council-meeting-and-occupy-chambers/news-story/bda6e483a661c4cf064b80810bfa8b93>

Anti Adani activists shut down Townsville City Council meeting and occupy chambers

Clare Armstrong, *Townsville Bulletin*, 23/01/2018

About ten people stood up during official proceedings and started in protest of the council's decision to co-fund Indian miner giant Adani's \$18.5 million Galilee Basin airstrip.

Mayor Jenny Hill called the protesters to order but they ignored her and she was forced to adjourn the meeting.

Spokeswoman for the protesters Elena Jeffreys said she was a local resident concerned about the "secrecy" behind the airport deal. \$

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/turnbull-s-millions-won-t-save-the-reef-if-adani-mine-goes-ahead-greenpeace>

Turnbull's millions won't save the reef if Adani mine goes ahead: Greenpeace

Natasha Christian, *SBS*, 22/01/2018

Greenpeace says Malcolm Turnbull's \$60 million to help the Great Barrier Reef is wasted money if it is not directed at climate change threats.

The prime minister said on Monday the reef was "alive" and "resilient" as he revealed funding to tackle crown-of-thorns starfish and incentives for farmers to reduce their pollution.

But Greenpeace Australia's pacific climate and energy campaigner Dr Nikola Casule said the biggest thing that would help the reef right now was not to build Adani's Carmichael coal mine in central Queensland.

Turnbull on Monday said the Adani mine and the health risks towards the Great Barrier Reef were "not directly connected".

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-24/adani-indigenous-groups-call-for-bigger-share-of-jobs/9353042>

Adani jobs in high demand as Indigenous groups call for a bigger share

David Chen, *ABC*, 24/01/2018

Traditional owners say they deserve

better than Adani's current promise to hire Indigenous workers for its multi-billion-dollar coal mine in central Queensland.

The Indian mining giant has agreed that at least 7 per cent of its workforce will be made up of Indigenous people. But Jangga elder Colin McLennan said he wanted that figure to be higher.

Townsville resident Sonya Hirvonen, who has been unemployed for six months, said the training was a good opportunity for her community.

"They can't guarantee us a job, but at the end of the day it's up to us to do what we want to do," she said

"[It's proving] to the wider community and the whiter community that we don't like to be dole bludgers.

Some of the Wangan and Jagalingou people are continuing to oppose the development.

The group's Murrawarra Johnson said the compensation being offered was not enough.

"Thirty jobs, minimum wage, driving buses in a mine is not something we believe our people should aspire to; we believe we deserve better," she said.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/prospect-of-vigilante-action-against-adani-potesters-has-bowen-police-worried/news-story/ca36e18eba83c1d5e228a7992a67544a>

Prospect of vigilante action against Adani protesters has Bowen police worried

Charlie Peel, *The Australian*, 23/01/2018

A high-ranking police officer in north Queensland has urged frustrated Bowen residents not to take vigilante action against Adani mine protesters.

Mackay Superintendent Bruce McNab called a special media conference on Monday to address "underlying currents throughout the community" against the protesters, who some locals believe could be threatening the Carmichael mine project seen as an answer to their economic pain.

He said it was understandable that people in Bowen were supportive of the mining industry but was concerned by "conversations and statements on social media" threatening vigilante action.

Supt McNab said police had charged protesters who had broken the law but



Protesters shut down Townsville Council meeting. Photo: Frontline Action on Coal

were also prepared to do the same to “vigilantes”. \$

<http://ieefa.org/ieefa-update-adani-stumbles-toward-last-chance-saloon/>

Adani stumbles towards the Last Chance Saloon

Tim Buckley & Simon Nicholas, IEEFA, 19/01/2018

Adani is increasingly being “cut off” by its enablers much as a besotted customer is denied service by fed-up barkeeps.

That said, one should never underestimate a billionaire, particularly one as politically well-connected as Gautam Adani, who saw his net wealth more than double in 2017. The Adani family—if it chose to do so—could fund Carmichael with its own capital but has chosen not to for obvious reasons. The project is fraught with stranded-asset risk.

If Adani has one last roll of the dice, it will likely involve coal rail-freight company Aurizon on a rail link from mine to port.

Given that the company has so much invested—financially, ego-wise and perhaps emotionally—in Carmichael, it’s easy to see why it may well be angling for one last chance to slake its ill-advised thirst to push forward.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/state-politics/two-ministers-conflicts-hit-review-of-loans-helping-adani-coal/news-story/ab777a4280a6396a44b341a7b1166371>

Two ministers’ conflicts hit review of loans helping Adani coal

Sarah Elks, The Australian, 25/01/2018

Two of the four ministers in Annastacia Palaszczuk’s high-level cabinet budget review committee will be forced to remove themselves because of conflicts of interest if it considers a federal loan that would benefit Adani’s Galilee Basin coal project.

The Queensland Premier and her Innovation Minister, Kate Jones, will absent themselves from any committee meeting that considers whether the state government should facilitate or veto a federal concessional loan to rail carrier Aurizon that would assist Adani’s proposal.

That would leave Deputy Premier and Treasurer Jackie Trad and State Development Minister Cameron Dick. \$



Protesters condemn Townsville Council’s airport gamble. Photo: Frontline Action on Coal

<https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/corrupting-influence-adani-spreads>

Corrupting influence of Adani spreads

Margaret Gleeson, Green Left Weekly, 27/01/2018

Since the 2010 declaration of the Anna Bligh state Labor government that Adani’s proposed Carmichael coalmine and rail project in Central Queensland was being assessed as a “significant project”, opponents have raised the shady dealings of the company on its home turf, India.

The continued support for the project by Labor and Coalition forces in Queensland and Canberra, in the face of the growing likelihood of the project achieving “stranded asset” status as sources of financing dry up, raises the question: “What is in it for the polities?”

Links revealed between Coalition and Labor officials, campaign strategists and the public relations firm that was lobbying the Queensland government on behalf of Adani, fuel this question. The former Queensland state secretary of the Labor Party was present—in his role as Adani lobbyist—during the discussions that led to the Queensland government announcing a \$320 million royalty holiday for Adani.

COAL ROCKS

<http://www.theherald.com.au/story/5182041/doctors-say-hunter-air-pollution-regime-trivial-ineffective/?cs=305>

Windy weekend weather pushed dust levels in the Hunter above national exceedance levels

Joanne McCarthy, Newcastle Herald, 23/01/2018

Doctors have slammed the Hunter’s air

quality regime as “trivial”, “sloppy”, “inadequate”, “ineffective” and “failing to protect human health” after a weekend of national air quality standard exceedances linked to dust from coal mines.

Doctors for the Environment members said NSW Government assurances of rigorous conditions and monitoring of Hunter coal mines were exposed as empty words after hot, windy conditions left Jerrys Plains with coarse particle pollution figures that breached national 24-hour standards on Saturday.

<http://www.theherald.com.au/story/5183407/mining-company-tells-nsw-government-new-coal-mine-critical-to-korea/?cs=305>

Korean Government-backed KEPCO has spent more than \$702 million on a controversial Bylong mine proposal

Joanne McCarthy, Newcastle Herald, 23/01/2018

A Korean Government-backed mining company has assured the NSW Government of the “criticality” of an Upper Hunter coal mine proposal to Korea over the next 25 years in a bid to get the project over the line after a scathing Planning Assessment Commission assessment.

Coal from the proposed Bylong mine between Denman and Mudgee was critical to the company “and the South Korean people more generally”, government-backed KEPCO said in a response released on Tuesday to a 2017 PAC assessment.

But Lock the Gate spokesperson Georgina Woods said the Bylong proposal was a test for the NSW Government and whether it was committed to coal for Korea or agriculture in Bylong to feed the people of NSW.



Blair Athol coal mine, 2016. Photo: Lock the Gate

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-24/blair-athol-company-given-millions-in-surplus-enviro-funding/9353802>

Company given millions in 'surplus' enviro funding after buying Blair Athol coal mine for \$1

Peter McCutcheon, ABC, 24/01/2018

The Queensland Government late last year transferred nearly \$5 million from an environmental assurance fund to the controversial new owners of the Blair Athol coal mine, five months after they bought the mine for a token \$1.

The Department of Environment and Science has confirmed to 7.30 it transferred "surplus" funds to the small resource company, TerraCom.

There is no dispute over the legality of the transfer — as the holder of the environmental authority, TerraCom was deemed to be owner of the \$80 million financial assurance even though it was paid by the Rio Tinto consortium.

Lock the Gate spokesman Rick Humphries, a former Rio Tinto adviser on land rehabilitation, said the environment department was allowing TerraCom to game the system at taxpayers' expense.

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/politics/queensland/almost-5-million-transferred-for-blair-athol-mine-bought-for-1-20180124-p44yt6.html>

Almost \$5 million transferred for Blair Athol mine, bought for \$1

Felicity Caldwell, Brisbane Times, 24/01/2018

The Blair Athol mine, in central Queensland, was shuttered in 2012 by Rio Tinto but returned to operation last year after being bought by a former Rio Tinto executive for \$1.

The deal to buy the mine included Rio Tinto paying \$80 million into a trust fund to pay for required rehabilitation works.

The Blair Athol mine was brought back into operation in August last year, with TerraCom announcing plans for site rehabilitation while bringing the mine back into production.

TerraCom board non-executive director Jim Soorley said the organisation was entitled to a payment when the financial assurance was recalculated.

Mr Soorley, a former Labor Lord Mayor, said 50 hectares had already been rehabilitated at Blair Athol, with that work to continue.

<https://independentaustralia.net/environment/environment-display/the-ieas-world-energy-outlook-and-its-coal-bias.11132>

The IEA's World Energy Outlook and its coal bias

Jonathan Moylan, Independent Australia, 24/01/2018

People who watch energy markets often claim the International Energy Agency's (IEA) regular World Energy Outlook (WEO) repeatedly gets it wrong.

The same claims of bad forecasts are also occasionally made about the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis — an independent group of highly experienced analysts, who argue that the coal industry is in structural decline. One way of resolving this tension is to assume that the truth lies somewhere in the middle. But, of course, a far better way is to check their past predictions against observed reality and, by this measure,

IEEFA is consistently very close and IEA is somewhere out in the outer rings of Saturn.

Which begs the question: why is the IEA so far off the mark? The answer might lie in their Coal Industry Advisory Board ... made up exclusively of [coal] CEOs and very senior managers.

The Australian coal industry has four representatives on the advisory board: Greg Everett, from Sunset Power; Peter Freyberg of Glencore; James Palmer of BHP Billiton and Jeyakumar Janakarij, CEO, Adani Australia.

<http://www.theherald.com.au/story/5184618/the-river-that-stood-in-the-way-of-a-coal-mine/>

More than 30 years after it was diverted to a mine's boundaries, the Goulburn River is being remediated

Joanne McCarthy, Newcastle Herald, 27/01/2018

The Goulburn River stood between mining company Felix Resources and coal in the ground at Ulan, west of Denman, in the early 1980s.

When mining finishes at Ulan the Goulburn River ... will remain a "canyon" shape ... with straight sides up to 20 metres deep in places, thick reed beds to stabilise sediment and some remediated sections to reduce erosion and soften the appearance of a river reduced to a deep mine ditch.

"The approval and sign-off on diversion of the Goulburn River was a travesty and example of mining at its worst," said long-time Goulburn River campaigner, environmental scientist and Goulburn River property owner Julia Imrie.

Lock the Gate spokesperson Georgina Woods said the river "is illustrative of the larger environmental challenges the Hunter is going to face in the coming decades, managing dozens of mining voids, altered streams and rivers and disturbed soils".

GAS, GAS, GAS

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/latest-news/warning-zone-lifted-from-qld-contamination/news-story/5ad2539ebdc382774d294b4ef18062a0>

Warning zone lifted from Qld contamination

Stuart Layt, The Australian, 23/01/2018

Queensland's environment department has lifted a warning zone from a contaminated site on the Darling Downs linked to former underground coal gasification project.

However, landholders excavating soil more than two metres deep are being

encouraged to continue risk-minimisation practises.

Restrictions were put in place in February 2015 after Linc Energy's UCG plant in the area was allegedly found to have caused widespread contamination of the surrounding farmland.

High concentrations of hydrogen, as well as methane and cancer-causing benzenes were found in the soil. \$

<https://www.thechronicle.com.au/news/state-government-removes-linc-energy-caution-zones/3317321/>

State Government removes Linc Energy caution zones

The Chronicle, 23/01/2018

The State Government has removed its controversial "Excavation Caution Zone" and "investigation area" surrounding the defunct Linc Energy underground coal gasification site near Chinchilla.

In a statement from the newly-named Department of Environment and Science, the government said recent testing had shown a decline in hazardous soil gas contaminant levels in the Hopeland area, near Chinchilla.

<https://www.gladstoneobserver.com.au/news/senators-bid-to-reassure-major-curtis-island-lng-c/3318392/>

Senator's bid to 'reassure' major Curtis Island LNG customers

Tegan Annette, Gladstone Observer, 25/01/2018

Minister for Resources Northern Australia Matt Canavan will visit major LNG customers and investors in Japan and Korea next week.

The visit is off the back of the Federal Government's new gas policy, which

caused concern for the companies operating LNG plants on Curtis Island.

On the agenda during Mr Canavan's five-day Asia visit are discussions about the LNG sector, Northern Australia and coal.

<https://croakey.org/queensland-authorities-urged-to-act-on-health-concerns-about-coal-seam-gas-emissions/>

Queensland authorities urged to act on health concerns about coal seam gas emissions

On 8 January, the International Journal of Environmental Studies published a study showing an association between increases in hospital admissions for circulatory and respiratory conditions in Queensland's Darling Downs area between 2007 and 2014 and increases in coal seam gas (CSG) emissions over the same period.

Within hours of the paper being reported in the media, however, peak industry body Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (APPEA) tried to undermine [author, Dr GERALYN McCARRON'S] reputation, and making 'sweeping and misleading statements' about the paper.

<https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=47e2e26a-d099-47ee-8850-4e8622e60c45>

Re-enforcing environmental compliance in Australian energy, mining and resources projects

King & Wood Mallesons, 23/01/2018

This alert looks at the key learnings from various legal proceedings determined in 2017 ...

Linc Energy Ltd (in Liq) v Chief Executive Department of Environment & Heritage Protection [2017] QSC 053

(Linc Energy Case)

Bond v Chief Executive, Department of Environment and Heritage Protection [2017] QCA 180 – (Bond Case)

<https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/south-australia-looks-trial-underground-coal-gasification>

South Australia looks to trial underground coal gasification

Kerry Smith, Green Left Weekly, 27/1/2018

The South Australian government has begun a public consultation on whether to hold a trial of underground coal gasification (UCG). The practice was banned in Queensland after it caused "irreversible" damage to hundreds of square kilometres of valuable Darling Downs farming land.

<http://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/5187516/nannas-knit-barnaby-booties-while-spinning-coal-seam-gas-yarn/>

Nannas knit Barnaby booties while spinning coal seam gas yarn

Jamieson Murphy, Northern Daily Leader, 24/01/2018

Knitting Nannas from across the state gathered out the front of Barnaby Joyce's office on Wednesday, to spin a yarn with the Deputy Prime Minister about coal seam gas.

While the New England MP wasn't around to chat, the nannas set up shop and began making Mr Joyce some gifts to articulate their views – baby booties.

The booties symbolised Mr Joyce's responsibility to protect land and water for future generations.

<https://www.echo.net.au/2018/01/nannas-knag-deputy-pm-tamworth/>

Nannas KNAG Deputy PM in Tamworth

Eve Jeffery, Byron Echo, 25/01/2018

Slap bang in the middle of Australia's most iconic country music festival, and slap bang in the middle of town, the just as iconic Knitting Nannas Against Gas (KNAG) created a stir yesterday as they staged an event of their own for the Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce on his home turf.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-27/scientists-question-nt-fracking-inquiry-environmental-findings/9345710>

NT fracking inquiry's key environmental findings questioned by scientists

Jane Bardon, ABC, 27/01/2018

One of Australia's top legacy mines researchers has questioned the scientific accuracy of some of the Northern Territory fracking inquiry's key environmental findings.



LNG tanker Maran Gas Olympias departed Gladstone on the weekend with a load of LNG for Zhejiang, a voyage of about 10 days. Photo: Maran Gas Maritime Inc.

News this week ... from previous page

The panel's headline conclusion appears much too "optimistic", said Gavin Mudd, Associate Professor at RMIT University's school of engineering.

"The constant emphasis on risks being low and manageable just shows too much confidence," Dr Mudd said.

"We need to be much more realistic and mindful of examples [of contamination] like PFAS, like McArthur River Mine, Rum Jungle and Red Bank Copper Mine."

Dr Mudd said the industry's record in Queensland, and the lack of data, were grounds for concern.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-01-28/fracking-referendum-katherine-tourism-operators-fear-businesses/9346996>

Call for fracking referendum as Katherine tourism operators fear for businesses

Jane Bardon, ABC, 28/01/2018

As the Northern Territory nears the final deadline for a fracking inquiry that could see a moratorium lifted or a permanent ban instated, a business owner has called for a referendum on the controversial gas extraction practice.

But a Katherine engineer has urged the NT Government to avoid making an emotional decision rather than one based in science.

Concerned tourism business owners are calling on the NT Government to reject the draft conclusion of its fracking inquiry that risks "could be mitigated ... to acceptable levels".

The Chief Minister is also under intense pressure from engineering and service businesses to allow fracking to resume in order to kickstart a flagging economy once his government's fracking inquiry reports in March.

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/minerals-council-of-australia-backs-low-emissions-coal-power/news-story/fbad7db6eabf941eefd955e3f962add>

Minerals Council of Australia backs low-emissions coal power

Ben Packham, The Australian, 25/01/2018

The Minerals Council of Australia has warned the Turnbull government not to play favourites when finalising its new energy blueprint, saying low-emissions coal must not be discriminated against.

MCA executive director for coal Greg Evans says high-efficiency, low-emissions coal-fired power — or HELE coal — makes economic sense and will pave the way for carbon capture and storage technology. \$

<http://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/story/5186470/canavan-wont-let-co2-storage-compromise-water/?cs=4785>

Minister Matt Canavan and state member Colin Boyce fight to save Wandoan water from CO2

Lucy Kinbacher, Queensland Country Life, 25/01/2018

New State Member for Callide, Colin Boyce, has pledged to help stop a carbon dioxide capture and storage project at Wandoan inviting Federal Resources Minister Matt Canavan to visit the area on Monday.

Carbon Transport and Storage Company (CTSCo), a subsidiary company of Glencore, plan to trial injecting large amounts of carbon dioxide into the Precipice aquifer of the Great Artesian Basin in the coming years with local producers fearing it will compromise the major water source.

Mr Boyce said with the company due to make an environmental proposal at the end of 2018 when they will also be seeking more funding, it was important for Mr Canavan to gain as much information from the ground as possible.

"Matt has given us commitment to make sure that our water isn't compromised in anyway," he said.

[Mr Canavan] said "My message to Glencore is a simple one, they have got to get these guys on side."

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2018/01/27/exclusive-minerals-council-one-third-foreign-owned/15169716005713>

Exclusive: Minerals Council one-third foreign owned

Mike Secombe, The Saturday Paper, 27/01/2018

We knew about the foreign antecedents and dubious practices of some of the more prominent members of the Minerals Council of Australia already, of course. Peabody... Glencore... Gautam Adani...

But new analysis of the ownership of the member companies of the Minerals Council of Australia shows about a third of the council's members are wholly foreign owned, or subsidiaries of foreign-owned companies.

Which is the point GetUp! is seeking to make in its analysis of the membership of the minerals council: that multinational corporations, which are by far the biggest sources of foreign money in the political process, will be unaffected [by proposed restrictions on charities]. GetUp! would face audits, but at the Minerals Council it would be business as usual.

Even if the government does ultimately manage to get its changes through the Senate, a number of civil society groups, including GetUp!, have flagged their preparedness to take the issue to the High Court, to argue the government's muzzling of dissent breaches Australia's implied freedom of political expression. A number of respected constitutional lawyers suggest they would have a strong case.

FFB

Fossil Fool Bulletin

CHANGE OF PUBLICATION DAY

From next week, publication day will be

TUESDAY
(from February 6)

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