



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 2:36 • 16 AUGUST 2019

INPEX gas plant fined for pollution

The Australian arm of global energy giant INPEX was fined \$12,600 by the Federal Department of Environment and Energy for breaching its environmental approval by boiling wastewater containing toxic 'PFAS' chemicals at its Darwin Harbour plant, new documents reveal.

Documents obtained by the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) under Freedom of Information show INPEX boiled toxic wastewater containing PFAS at Bladin Point on Darwin Harbour in September 2018.

This likely released PFAS into the air and allowed it to disperse beyond the site.

The Department's internal advice states that the offence 'may have placed the immediate environment including Darwin Harbour at risk of heightened PFAS levels.'

Under its approved environmental management plan, Inpex was required to store water containing PFAS (per-fluoroalkyl and poly-fluoroalkyl substances) from firefighting exercises held on the site, and then transport the water interstate for treatment at a licensed facility.

Community kept in the dark

The Department issued INPEX with a fine of \$12,600 in April. It is not clear whether the community was notified of the offence beyond a brief reference to the infringement on the Department's website.

Inpex told the ABC that when it tested its firefighting systems a large amount of wastewater, containing a small amount of PFAS, was generated.



INPEX's Bladin Point onshore gas facility in Darwin Harbour. Photo: INPEX

Inpex said that a process called "enhanced evaporation", designed to minimise the load of wastewater it would be required to truck interstate, was then used.

"Enhanced evaporation was used to reduce the amount of wastewater needing to be transported," it said.

The company said that it paid the fine even though it believed it had complied with its environment management plan.

Shar Molloy, Director of the Environment Centre NT said, "INPEX has been caught releasing highly toxic chemicals into the Darwin Harbour environment, which is home to threatened wildlife, yet the fine it has received is nothing but a slap on the wrist.

"Darwin Harbour is home to protected marine animals such as dugongs, rare sawfish, sea turtles and several types of dolphin, along with dozens of native bird species."

PFAS is toxic to human health and is the subject of continuing court cases in Australia and the USA.

Seafood contaminated

The historical release of PFAS from Defence Force bases and airports has raised concern in communities, including Katherine in the Northern Territory, where residents have been found with high levels of the substance and restrictions have been put on eating fish and crustaceans from local rivers.

The Northern Territory government advises people to limit shellfish intake from Darwin Harbour creeks to three times a week.

"The impact of PFAS on the environment is not fully understood, but recent research for the Defence Department finds exposure poses a risk to ecosystems," Molloy said.

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• P2: FFB launches fab website

• P4: Adani blockaded as activists celebrate

• P6: GasHAZ app to tackle gas co's

Fossil Fool Bulletin launches website

Fossil Fool Bulletin, produced by Focus Publications, now has its own crisp, clean, snappy-looking website:

<http://fossilfool.com.au/>

Developed by Johanna Evans of Green Pigeon Graphics, the site contains every edition of **FFB** – which has been in publication since November 2017.

FFB issues are presented in a very readable flip-book style.

The features section presents major stories from **FFB** in a classic web format that will show up in searches.

There are handy connections to environmental organisations and a selection of podcasts for convenient listening.

Fossil Fool Bulletin is edited by Eve Sinton, a journalist with over 35 years of media experience and a passion for protecting the environment from damaging fossil fuel mining.

She found a kindred spirit to construct the website – Johanna Evans of Green Pigeon Graphics – who has been closely associated with the Knitting Nannas and the Bentley Blockade, which ousted coal seam gas development from the Northern Rivers.

“It’s been great working with Jo, as she has excellent web skills and understands where I’m coming from,” Eve said.

Eve has worked for a number of Northern Rivers publications since moving to the region 27 years ago, including the *Byron Echo*, *Northern Rivers Echo*, *Northern Star* and *Permaculture International Journal*.

After joining the Knitting Nannas Against Gas in 2014, Eve appreciated

the need for people opposed to coal, oil and gas projects in Australia to be well-informed.

She came up with the idea of a weekly newsletter summarising events and presenting information not seen in the mainstream media.

She is careful to use only authoritative sources – no fake news or internet myths to be seen here.

Eve’s years of experience in media and graphic art enabled her to come up with an impeccably researched and attractively presented publication that is emailed to subscribers every week.

Researching and compiling **FFB** is a full-time un-waged job. To date, 86 editions of up to 18 pages have been emailed on schedule. Readers include environmental activists, journalists and politicians.

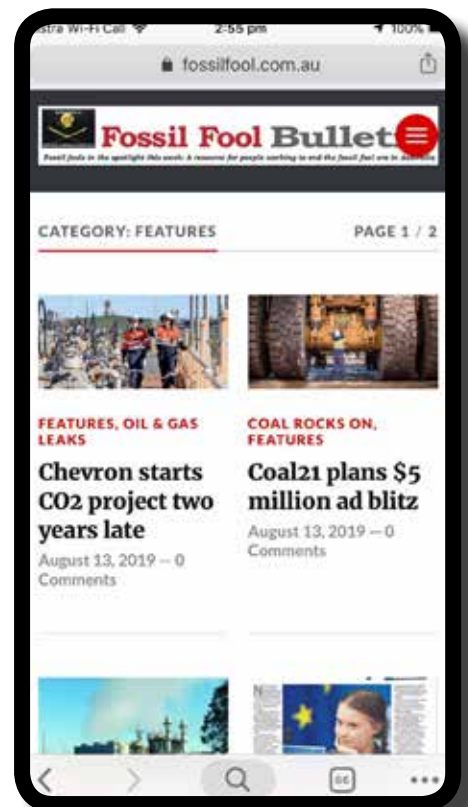
Eve makes a monthly appearance on radio Bay FM Community Newsroom with Mia Armitage, where stories from **FFB** are discussed.

Subscriptions to **FFB** are free. However, Eve invites donations to Focus Publications, to help cover costs such as news subscriptions and computer equipment.

She hopes the venture can expand with more newsletters on other topics, and involve more journalists in this new type of publishing.

Donation details are listed on the website, and on page 7.

It’s easy to subscribe to **FFB**, with a click-through to the subscription page which continues to be hosted on the Knitting Nannas’ website, knitting-nannas.org.



Fossil Fool Bulletin: 86 issues produced and now with its own website.

Looking good on a mobile phone or any device, Fossil Fool Bulletin’s new website

<http://fossilfool.com.au/>

is easily found and easily read.

South west WA regions left exposed to fracking

The Gasfield Free South West Alliance (GFFSWA) says the WA Government has left the door open for fracking to take place in the South West, Peel and Metro regions.

A spokesperson for the group, Kathy Thomson, said the state government's Implementation Plan for Fracking in WA, released quietly by the government last month, had missed a golden opportunity to make the South West, Peel and Metro fracking bans permanent.

Regions left out of legislation

"The state government has said it will amend the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Regulations to include fracking bans in the Dampier Peninsula and in national parks and drinking water areas but has left the South West, Peel and Metro regions out of the legislation," Thomson said.

"It has said it will maintain the bans but has not specifically committed to enshrining them in legislation.

"It is a simple thing to add the existing bans, which are currently only protected at the whim of the mines minister, to the new legislation. Yet the government has not said it will do this.

"We are aware that the fracking industry has been lobbying the government to lift the bans covering the South West, Peel and Metro regions and that the Chamber of Minerals and Energy has been actively surveying the region for support to get the bans lifted.

"We call on the Premier and the Minister for Mines to enshrine the existing fracking bans covering the South West, Peel and Metro Areas into legislation without delay.

"The moratorium preventing fracking in existing petroleum leases is due to

be lifted this month opening the door to fracking across those leases. We have three active petroleum leases in this region and one company about to do a massive aerial seismic survey over our farms, homes and natural areas in the search for gas.

"We are not happy about any form of gas development in our region. We think onshore gasfields are inappropriate for the South West and the existing leases should be cancelled."

Anti-fracking rally next Saturday

Thomson said members of the GFFSWA would be joining regional community representatives from across the state at a Rally Against Fracking WA on Saturday August 24, outside the Labor Party State Conference at the Perth Convention Centre.

FFB

INPEX fined over PFAS

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"That the only public notification of this incident seems to be a one-line statement from the Federal Department of the Environment, shows how deficient the Northern Territory's environmental laws are.

"The NT Government and companies like INPEX that profit from operating here owe it to the NT community to protect us and the environment we love and rely on from toxic industrial pollution."

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Duelling petitions for Acland

A petition to save farmland on the Darling Downs from a coal mine expansion got more than twice the number of Queenslanders' signatures than a counter-petition in favour of the project.

The month-long petition – Save Acland farmers and jobs – received 3,609 signatures.

It was created in response to a petition by the Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce and Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise in support of the controversial Acland Stage 3 project, which only garnered 1,745 signatures.

The Save Acland farmers and jobs petition was uploaded to the Queensland Parliament website, so only Queenslanders were able to sign it.

The opposing petition was uploaded to a private website, so it is not clear whether there were geographical restrictions on signatories.

Oakey Coal Action Alliance spokesperson Paul King said clearly, Queenslanders understood the need to protect prime agricultural land and the jobs it supports from New Hope's expansion at New Acland.

"The farming land around Oakey is classed in the top 1.5% in Queensland. It is madness that it should be de-

stroyed for the sake of a temporary coal mine," he said.

"I want to congratulate Queenslanders on taking the time to sign this petition, which will now go before Queensland Parliament, so our elected leaders can hopefully understand that Oakey's economy will be devastated if the New Acland Stage 3 expansion goes ahead.

"This coal mine expansion also poses an unacceptable threat to the underground water resources relied upon by farmers and their families in the Acland area.

"Farmers' water allocations have already been cut by up to 50%, yet the proposed expansion is slated to produce a further drawdown of 900 million litres a year from surrounding aquifers.

"Businesses in Oakey and surrounds rely on these farms to keep going – if the farms go, so will the local economy."

The petition follows revelations New Hope has recently reneged on a promise to move its massive coal dump and rail load-out facility from the township of Jondaryan, with the Coordinator General now assessing a submission for the coal dump to remain at the site for another five years.

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Adani beware: coal is on the road to becoming completely uninsurable

By John Qiggin

The announcement by Suncorp that it will no longer insure new thermal coal projects, along with a similar announcement by QBE Insurance a few months earlier, brings Australia into line with Europe where most major insurers have broken with coal.

US firms have been a little slower to move, but Chubb announced a divestment policy in July, and Liberty has confirmed it will not insure Australia's Adani project.

Other big firms such as America's AIG are coming under increasing pressure.

Even more than divestment of coal shares by banks and managed funds, the withdrawal of insurance has the potential to make coal mining and coal-fired power generation businesses unsustainable.

As the chairman and founder of Adani Group, Gautam Adani, has shown in Queensland's Galilee Basin, a sufficiently rich developer can use its own resources to finance a coal mine that banks won't touch.

But without insurance, mines can't operate.

(Adani claims to have insurers for the Carmichael project, but has declined to reveal their names.)

Why are insurers abandoning coal?

By the nature of their business, insurers cannot afford to indulge the denialist fantasies still popular in some sectors of industry. Damage caused by climate disasters is one of their biggest expenses, and insurers are fully aware that damage is set to rise over time.

Even so, a sufficiently hard-headed company might choose to work both sides of the street – continuing to do business with fossil fuel companies, while also writing more expensive insurance against climate damage.

The bigger problem insurers face is the risk of litigation holding fossil fuel companies responsible for climate-related damage. For the moment, this is a potential rather than an immediate risk.



Digging has begun at Adani's Carmichael Mine site. Photo: Adani Australia

As US insurer AIG, yet to announce a divestment policy, has observed:

Based on our monitoring, while the overall volume of litigation activity has increased, past litigation seems to have largely been unsuccessful on numerous grounds including difficulties in determining and attributing fault and liability to a particular company, and the judiciary's deference to the political branches of government on questions relating to climate change.

Recent development suggest these difficulties will be overcome.

It's becoming easier to finger climate culprits ...

Until recently, the most immediate problem facing potential litigants has been demonstrating that an event was the result of climate change as opposed to something else, such as random fluctuations in climatic conditions.

Scientific progress on this "extreme event attribution problem" has been rapid.

It is now possible to say with confidence that climate change is causing an increase in both the frequency and intensity of extreme weather and weather-related events such as extreme heatwaves, drought, heavy rains, tropical storms and bushfires.

The *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society* has highlighted three extremes in 2016 that would not have occurred if not for the added influence of climate change:

- a persistent area of unusually warm water that lingered off the Alaskan coast, causing reduced marine productivity and other ecological disruptions;
- the extreme heatwave that happened in Asia, killing hundreds and destroying crops;
- the overall global atmospheric heat record set that year.

... and to allocate liability

The second line of defence against climate litigation that has held so far is the difficulty of imputing damage to the companies that burn fossil fuels.

While it is true that all weather events have multiple causes, in many circumstances climate change caused by the burning of fossil fuels has been a necessary condition for those events to take place.

Courts routinely use arguments about necessary conditions to determine liability.

For example, a spark from a power line might cause a bushfire on a hot, dry, windy day, but would be harmless on a wet cold day. That can be enough to establish liability on the part of the

Activists blockade Adani mine site, celebrate 40 years of action

A climate activist this morning (August 16) locked herself to a drill rig on Adani's Carmichael mine site, disrupting work on the controversial project.

Heather Simpson locked herself to the drill, while supporters gathered around to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Australia's first environmental blockade at Terania Creek.

The Terania Creek blockade began near Nimbin, NSW on August 16, 1979.

Frontline Action on Coal spokesperson Andy Paine said "Australia's history of environmental blockades is a wonderful tradition that has changed the way we relate to this country.

"These blockades were all the result of brave and creative people making personal sacrifices. Each of them were at the time accused of being trouble-makers and costing jobs, but history has vindicated them and their legacy is the national parks we all enjoy."

FFB



Heather Simpson from Stanthorpe locked herself to Adani's drill rig at 6:30am by the Gregory Highway; while a group of supporters gathered around to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Australia's first environmental blockade at Terania Creek. Photo: FLAC

Adani beware: coal is on the road to becoming completely uninsurable

• Continued from p4

company that operates the power line.

These issues are playing out in California, where devastating fires in 2017 caused damage estimated at US\$30 billion and drove the biggest of the power companies, PG&E, into bankruptcy.

As a result, there has been pressure to loosen liability laws, leaving the cost of future disasters to be borne by Californians in general, and their insurers.

Lawyers will be looking for someone to sue.

Adani is a convenient target

The question facing potential litigants is whether any single company contributes enough to climate change to make it meaningfully liable for particular disaster.

Adani's Carmichael mine provides a convenient example.

Adani says the 10 million tonnes of coal it plans to mine will produce only 240,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide, but this is semantic trickery. The firm is referring only to so-called 'scope 2' emissions associated with the mining process itself.

When the coal is burned it might produce an extra 30 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, amounting to about 0.05% of global emissions.

A 0.1% share of the damage associated with the California fires is US\$15 million, enough to be worth suing for. Other similarly-sized mines will face similar potential liabilities.

Once a precedent is established, any company in the business of producing or burning fossil fuels on a large scale can expect to be named in a regular stream of suits seeking substantial damages.

When governments are successfully sued ...

The remaining line of defence for companies responsible for emissions is the history of courts in attributing climate change to decisions by governments rather than corporations.

In the Netherlands, a citizen action group called Urgenda has won a case against the Dutch government arguing it has breached its legal duty of care by not taking appropriate steps to significantly restrain greenhouse gas emissions and prevent damage from climate change.

The government is appealing, but it has lost every legal round so far.

Sooner or later, this kind of litigation will be successful. Then, governments will look for another party that can be sued instead of them.

... they'll look for someone else to blame

Insurance companies are an easy target with deep pockets. Despite its hopeful talk quoted above, AIG would find it very difficult to avoid paying up if Californian courts found the firms it insured liable for their contributions to a climate-related wildfires or floods.

This is not a message coal-friendly governments in the US or Australia want to hear.

But the decision of Suncorp to dump coal, just a couple of months after the re-election of the Morrison government, makes it clear that businesses with a time horizon measured in decades cannot afford wishful thinking. They need to protect themselves against what they can see coming.

• John Quiggin is a professor with the School of Economics at The University of Queensland. This article first appeared on The Conversation.

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Polluting the Pilliga



A short video shows how the Pilliga forest in NSW is being impacted by de-gassing of Whitehaven Coal's underground mine.

Aerial footage reveals the surface impact looks like CSG on steroids. The Pilliga is also impacted by Santos's gas exploration activities and will become an 850-well gasfield if the company and politicians get their way.

• See the video here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igv-9EWdK5M&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0NYQRtGDvaGyqpUxRrqb_qHmimNr9p1SfjwHE5EQPudeP81FIMJWK4eA8



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

GasHAZ app helps people stand up to gas industry invasion



Shay Dougall. Photo: contributed

Molliwell has launched of a new free app: GasHAZ, developed by Chinchilla community advocate and safety consultant Shay Dougall.

This app allows people impacted by the gas industry to record issues, take pictures of hazards and request support to resolve issues or environmental testing.

The app also acts as a compliance diary for landholders to track their experiences dealing with the industry in the event of a complaints process.

Each entry will be sent directly to a Molliwell advocate and consultant. The sender will receive one-on-one support and a record will be established with a private password-protected web page to ensure reliable access to records.

Dougall said, "Landholders critically need a strong and independent voice to give them information and support without fear.

"Landholders, individually and collectively currently have no otherwise unconflicted group that will represent

them and their needs specifically in this overwhelmingly politically biased industry of CSG that is marching unfettered across our agricultural heartland."

Molliwell says it will provide these services directly to the landholder, by the landholder, and for the landholder.

"This service is a specialty service just like the accountant or agronomist," Dougall said.

"GasHAZ fills a gap – the landholder does not necessarily have the time to undertake the work themselves and therefore by default the CSG companies are taking advantage of them.

"Molliwell will help landholders to gouge back power, legitimacy and urgency to the Landholder, their businesses, their properties, their families and homes and their lifestyle."

GasHAZ can be downloaded from Google Play or Apple's App Store.

• For more information, visit molliwell.com.au.



China New Energy's Vincent Wang and Leigh Creek Energy's Justyn Peters.
Photo: LCK

Controversial Leigh Creek Energy heads to China

Leigh Creek Energy has signed a Heads of Agreement to begin underground coal gasification in China with China New Energy.

In addition, LCK has been invited to apply for admission as a member of the Shanghai International Energy Exchange.

The agreement follows a pre-commercial demonstration and gas production at Leigh Creek in South

Australia. The project was opposed by local residents and traditional owners due to its similarity to the disastrous Linc Energy project that caused Queensland's worst ever pollution incident. Underground coal gasification is now banned in Queensland.

The joint venture in China will focus on fertiliser and hydrogen production from stranded Chinese coal assets.



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



Inside the news

Australia's performance on climate crisis at the **Pacific Islands Forum** was a disgraceful exhibition of **denialism and intransigence** (p14-16).

The Morrison government sent confirmed climate denier **Alex Hawke** to start the dirty work, bullying Pacific Islanders who face an existential threat from rising sea levels. He told them Australia would not stop using coal-fired energy or opening new **coal mines**. It was a '**red line issue**'. And there was to be no acknowledgement of '**climate crisis**' in the forum's Tuvalu Declaration.

Scott Morrison flew in, walked past protesting children, and completed the dismal picture during a discussion so distressing that **Tonga's** Prime Minister **shed tears**.

Then we had shock jock **Alan Jones'** misogynist rant about New Zealand Prime Minister, **Jacinda Ardern**, who advocated for meaningful climate action at the forum.

Jones screamed that Ardern was a joke, an absolute and utter lightweight, a swallower of the climate change hoax. And then he called for PM Scott Morrison to "**shove a sock down her throat**".

It could not be more obvious that Australia's government, including both major parties, rules on behalf of the **fossil fuel industry**. The level of **bullying, vitriol and violent threats** amounts to outright thuggery. Utterly shameful.

The *Courier-Mail* added to the mood with a vicious attack on **Extinction Rebellion** activists (p9) and called for more repressive legislation and penalties to protect the fossil industry.

Adani enjoyed some head-kicking, by **bankrupting** Wangan & Jagalingou traditional owner, **Adrian Burragubba**, in an act of revenge for his opposition to their Carmichael Mine.

People standing up to coal can expect **escalating abuse**, persecution and violence.

Fossil fools run the country, and they are rushing to destroy the place with coal mines and gaswells wherever they can **shove** them.



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In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 36,000 words of news for your convenience. [Click on the links](#) to view original articles. (Subscriptions may be required)

THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/news/firms-in-fear-of-latest-greenie-tactic/>

Firms in fear of latest greenie tactic

Renee Viellaris, *Courier-Mail*, 12/08/2019

An extreme green “dob-in-a-contractor” campaign is forcing businesses to turn down work from Adani or keep it secret because of emboldened anti-mining protesters.

Federal Member for Dawson George Christensen slammed the campaign website, saying law-abiding mum-and-dad businesses, and other contractors, should not have to feel unsafe just doing their jobs.

The website, set up by activists Market Forces, lists businesses that are doing business with Adani or “at risk” of working for the company.

Christensen said: “I have already told the Prime Minister, Attorney-General and the whole Government party room that I think we should have similar laws against damaging, destructive and disruptive activism for other businesses just like we now have for farmers and agribusiness.”

Member for Hinkler Keith Pitt called the protesters “green-collared criminals.”

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/adani-mine-protesters-target-sydney-engineering-company/news-story/5e6d801c4bc02f36335ed54ce9e70e82>

Adani mine protesters target Sydney engineering company

Mitchell Van Homrigh, *Daily Telegraph*, 13/08/2019

The radical climate change protest group which has caused havoc and pestered Queensland with extreme acts like glueing themselves to the road has descended on Sydney.

The protest was co-ordinated by The Socialist Alliance and Extinction Rebellion, the same group which caused commuter chaos in Brisbane.

The Sydney group invaded GHD’s lobby, sat on the floor and began singing anti-Adani songs once more protesters arrived outside the building.



Protesters from Extinction Rebellion and Socialist Alliance took over the Sydney foyer of Adani contractor GHD. Photo: Screenshot from XR

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/queensland/anti-adani-protesters-crash-mines-minister-s-address-20190813-p52gm8.html>

Anti-Adani protesters crash Mines Minister’s address

Felicity Caldwell, *SMH*, 13/08/2019

Protesters have crashed an address by Mines Minister Anthony Lynham in Brisbane to call for the Adani mine to be shut down.

Two protesters stood up from their table and walked onto the stage only minutes into Lynham’s address at the Queensland Media Club on Tuesday.

The pair unfurled banners reading “Lynham is lying to you” and “Adani or the Reef. Which do you choose for your children’s future”.

Lynham, who was speaking about the “future of the resources and energy sector in Queensland” briefly commented on the disruption, saying people on the street told him the Adani mine was the biggest in the world.

“Well, it’s not even the biggest mine in Queensland, not by a long way,” he said.

“The biggest mine in the world is 13 times as large as Adani.

“People tell me that it’ll affect climate change; the world burns 8000 million tonnes of coal per annum, Adani will produce 10 million tonnes per annum.

“I think that’s lost, from what the protesters, when you ask them what it really means, they really have no real idea or comparison for what the mining industry and resources sector does for our state and what it provides.”

Resuming his speech, Lynham said social licence was becoming just as important as profit.



The Courier-Mail attacked Adani protesters on Monday with a front page headline and a double-page spread supporting industrialists' calls for more laws and harsher penalties to stop mining disruptions.

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/adani-protests-john-wagner-warren-ebert-take-on-activists/news-story/>

Adani protests: John Wagner, Warren Ebert take on activists

Renee Viellaris, *Courier-Mail*, 12/08/2019

Self-made Queensland titans have urged businesses to stand up to shouty climate change activists as Scott Morrison faces new pressure from his back bench and the resources industry to crack down on green protesters.

In a sign of growing frustration, Queensland Resources Council chief Ian Macfarlane is today urging the Prime Minister to widen new laws targeting vegans storming farms – with jail terms of up to 12 months – to include the “anarchists” who block coal trains and target resources-aligned businesses.

Cement king John Wagner and Sentinel Property baron Warren Ebert – who are collectively worth over \$1 billion and proud supporters of Adani – are throwing their support behind Macfarlane’s legal push. And Australia’s largest rail freight operator, Aurizon, is also backing the plan, saying the activism has become too dangerous.

North Queensland MP George Christensen said he had lobbied Morrison and his colleagues for the changes Macfarlane was urging.

Christensen will move a motion to have the plan adopted as official National Party policy at federal council in September.

Macfarlane said: “There should be no tolerance of this type of behaviour from activists, who are nothing more than anarchists obsessed with disrupting people’s lives.

“We’re calling on the Federal Government to broaden the Bill to cover all legitimate businesses, including mining, rail and port infrastructure.”



<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/adani-bankrupts-traditional-owner-in-queensland>

Adani bankrupts traditional owner in Queensland

SBS, 15/08/2019

Mining giant Adani has bankrupted an indigenous traditional owner opposed to its central Queensland coal mine in a bid to make him pay \$600,000 in legal costs.

Self-represented Wangan and Jagalingou man Adrian Burragubba wasn’t present in the Brisbane Federal Court on Thursday to hear the order pass.

Registrar Katie Lynch backdated the bankruptcy to 10 December, the day Adani served court documents on Mr Burragubba while he was performing in Brisbane’s Queen Street Mall.

It follows the court case to hear Mr Burragubba’s claim that the land-use agreement between his people and Adani was invalid because the company failed to explain that once the native title was relinquished, it cannot be reclaimed.

He lost the case and was ordered by the Federal Court to pay costs last year.

COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.newcastleherald.com.au/story/6317004/korean-government-backed-mining-company-silent-about-legal-advice-on-bylong-mine/>

KEPCO legal advice shows it knew about critical expired “gateway” consent before June 2

Joanne McCarthy, *Newcastle Herald*, 10/08/2019

A Korean Government-backed mining company knew a critical “gateway” document for the controversial Bylong coal mine proposal had expired at least

six weeks before a NSW planning commission raised it as an issue.

Documents show KEPCO received legal advice on June 2 about the expired Gateway Certificate but appears not to have advised the NSW Independent Planning Commission, which first raised it with KEPCO in a letter on July 18 as it prepared to make a final decision on the mine project.

It followed questions about the expired Gateway Certificate from environment group Lock the Gate in mid-July, which prompted the IPC to write to KEPCO on July 18 questioning whether it could make a final decision without a current certificate, as required under a clause of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/new-bidder-for-liddell-power-station-new-bidder-for-power-station/news-story/f22e8958a06ea1b6803b68d-9cde77a4d>

New bidder for AGL Energy’s Liddell coal plant

Perry Williams, *Aus*, 12/08/2019

Power baron Trevor St Baker has emerged as a second potential buyer of AGL Energy’s Liddell coal plant in NSW as a joint government taskforce weighs replacing or delaying its exit to avoid a supply squeeze for electricity users.

With Alinta Energy open to rekindling last year’s rejected bid for Liddell in an attempt to keep the 1680-megawatt generator open for longer, St Baker has also weighed in, declaring his interest in rebooting the plant beyond its 2023 exit.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/hunter-coal-mine-denied-extension/news-story/11e533cdb8d596bb23acee19f48de4f0>

Hunter coal mine denied extension

Paul Garvey, Aus, 12/08/2019

Australia Pacific Coal, once backed by former billionaire Nathan Tinkler, yesterday had a proposal for a five-year extension of its Dartbrook mine knocked back by the NSW Independent Planning Commission.

APC's plans attracted strong opposition from the powerful horse studs, which argued another coal mine could damage the thoroughbred industry.

While the request to extend the Dartbrook operation approval beyond the current expiry date of December 5, 2022 was denied, the planning commission did approve plans to switch from a longwall mining method to a bord-and-pillar approach.

But it remains to be seen whether the scaled-back approval will be enough to convince APC to push ahead with the reopening, given the company had previously stated the five-year extension was needed to justify the capital expenditure for the mine's restart.

<https://www.newcastleherald.com.au/story/6320430/hazardous-dust-leads-to-complaints-and-investigations-in-to-hunter-coal-mines/>

Photos show trucks operating at a Hunter coal mine during extreme conditions

Joanne McCarthy, Newcastle Herald, 12/08/2019

BHP'S Mount Arthur coal mine is being investigated for alleged breaches of its operating conditions after trucks continued to work on high overburden sites last week as severe winds pushed dust levels in Muswellbrook to extreme.

Department of Planning representatives inspected a number of Upper Hunter mines after complaints of blasting and operations after 2pm on August 8, before coarse particle PM10 dust levels were recorded in the hazardous range of up to 275 microns per cubic metre by 4pm.

The department confirmed it was investigating complaints of blasting contrary to consent conditions at Mount Arthur and Bengalla mines near Muswellbrook, poor dust management during the extreme weather and spontaneous combustion at Mount Arthur.

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/energy-giant-alinta-flags-early-coal-shutdown-in-victoria-20190812-p52gdz.html>

Energy giant Alinta flags early coal shutdown in Victoria

Benjamin Preiss & Nick Toscano, SMH, 12/08/2019

The future of one of Victoria's biggest coal-fired power stations is in doubt as energy giant Alinta warns it is "unlikely" that its Loy Yang B generator in the Latrobe Valley will see out the full length of its licence.

Discussing the wider transition to renewable energy sources, Alinta chief executive Jeff Dimery said the national energy market was in the midst of a "significant transition" that would diminish the role of coal-fired power generation in coming years, including Loy Yang B, which has a licence to run until 2047.

By the early 2030s, Dimery said coal-fired energy assets in general would "really struggle to be around".

Environment Victoria campaigns manager Nick Aberle said burning coal was the largest source of climate pollution in the state with Loy Yang B producing almost 10 per cent of Victoria's carbon dioxide emissions.

"Pretending that coal power will exist much after 2030 only serves to delay the construction of the renewable energy and storage that will inevitably replace it," he said. "The sooner we start building the replacement clean energy solutions, the smoother the transition beyond coal will be."

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/aug/13/coal-mine-increases-greenhouse-gas-emissions-without-penalty-foi-reveals>

Queensland coalmine increases greenhouse gas emissions without penalty, FOI reveals

Adam Morton, Guardian, 13/08/2019

An Australian coalmine has nearly doubled its greenhouse gas emissions in two years without penalty under a Coalition climate policy that promised to put a limit on industrial pollution.

Mining company Anglo American was given the green light to increase emissions at its Moranbah North mine, in central Queensland, twice since 2016.

The pollution increase was approved under a scheme known as the "safeguard mechanism", which promised to ensure cuts paid for by taxpayers through the government's "direct action" emissions reduction fund were not just wiped out by rises elsewhere.

The Australian Conservation Foundation said the failure to impose a hard pollution cap on big companies was the main reason national emissions were rising each year at odds with the government's pledge at the Paris climate summit.

The documents show Anglo American exceeded its safeguard limit of 1.30m tonnes in 2016/17 and would have been required to buy carbon credits to make up the difference but applied to the Clean Energy Regulator, which administers the scheme, to have its baseline retrospectively set at 1.36m tonnes. The change was approved in January 2018.

In 2017/18, emissions from the site jumped to 2.33m tonnes, a 71% increase in a year. The company was granted a new baseline, confirmed in February this year, that allows it to emit 6.7m tonnes over the three years to June 2020.

An earlier analysis by consultants RepuTex found heavy industrial sites covered by the safeguard mechanism had, in total, been approved emissions limit increases of nearly a third.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-14/glen-core-high-court-paradise-papers-ruling/11410228>

Mining giant Glencore loses High Court Paradise Papers fight to force ATO to return documents

Elizabeth Byrne, ABC, 14/08/2019

Australia's biggest coal producer, Glencore, has lost a High Court bid to have documents linked to its offshore financial arrangements kept out of reach of the Australian Tax Office (ATO).

Lawyers for Glencore argued the documents were prepared by lawyers in Bermuda and were therefore subject to legal privilege and out of bounds to the ATO's investigation.

The court ruled that legal professional privilege was not a legal right after the fact. Glencore may have been better able to protect the documents through breach of confidence laws.

<https://www.geelongadvertiser.com.au/news/malabar-coal-lodges-environmental-impact-statement-for-proposed-coal-mine/news-story/>

Malabar Coal lodges Environmental Impact Statement for proposed coal mine

Edward Boyd, Daily Telegraph, 14/08/2019

An Australian company has unveiled a plan to go underground to mine coal in the Hunter Valley in a compromise

which would create hundreds of jobs and also protect the area's famed thoroughbred studs and farmland.

Multinational mining giant Anglo American tried four times to build an open cut coal mine at the same site near Muswellbrook but was knocked back by the Planning Assessment Commission due to concerns over the noise, threat to air quality and visual impact the mine would create.

Anglo American gave up in 2017 and sold the site to Australian company Malabar Coal, which has lodged a 4600-page Environmental Impact Statement, which weighs 26kg, for the Maxwell Underground Project designed to appease the horse studs, farmers and residents.

<https://www.singletonargus.com.au/story/6328438/opinion-dartbrook-mine-approval/>

Opinion: Dartbrook mine approval

Dr Bob Vickers, Singleton Argus, 14/08/2019

The NSW Independent Planning Commission recently decided on the underground coal mine Dartbrook. They are sitting on a few more decisions about upcoming open cut thermal coal projects.

In its decision, they approved the mine to continue operations until 2022, but did not support a 5-year extension recommended by the NSW Department of Planning.

The justification of the decision and reasons for not supporting the five-year extension are essential reading for everyone in the Hunter Valley.

Air pollution in Singleton and Muswellbrook is currently at levels never seen since the monitoring network was established. Whilst this tends to bring the usual excuses of dust from inland, sea salt and bushfires, we actually know from research that over half of our air pollution in the Singleton and Muswellbrook region is created from fossil fuel combustion processes, diesel exhaust and activities associated with open cut thermal coal mining. We also know from research that there is a measurable and direct negative effect on our health when the air pollution increases.

If Singleton and Muswellbrook are to survive the transition away from a thermal coal energy generation future, we need to start diversifying our workforce.

We should be proud of what we've contributed to the state, but it's time to move on, for not just our sake, but

as the IPC put it, for intergenerational equity.

• *Dr Bob Vickers is a Singleton GP.*

<https://www.newcastleherald.com.au/story/6328195/coal-confusion-contradictions-and-consequences/>

Coal: confusion, contradictions and consequences

Richard Denniss, Newcastle Herald, 14/08/2019

No one knows when the last shipload of coal will depart the Port of Newcastle but virtually everyone knows that day is coming.

The weasel words Australian politicians use are that coal will 'be a part of the energy mix for decades to come', but those words conceal a simple truth: coal is already a shrinking proportion of the energy mix and that proportion will shrink to zero in decades to come.

Diversification via container terminals is key to both the Port and the Hunter's economic futures. If the people who own a coal port can plan for the end of coal why won't the federal or state governments?

A world that needs less coal needs less coal mines. Luckily for the Hunter coal industry the first step Australia needs to take towards this reality is to stop building new coal mines in regions that currently employ no coal workers. The next step is to invest in the industries and infrastructure that will inevitably grow in the coming decades. Container and cruise terminals at the Port of Newcastle are two such projects.

But instead of planning for the future, the federal and state governments are working desperately to lock in the past.

• *Dr Richard Denniss is chief economist at independent think-tank The Australia Institute and has previously worked as a strategy adviser to the Port of Newcastle.*

OIL & GAS LEAKS

<https://www.moreechampion.com.au/story/6320014/council-ban-on-coal-seam-gas-set-to-continue/>

More Plains Shire Council coal seam gas moratorium to continue

Sophie Harris, Moree Champion, 09/08/2019

More Plains Shire Council has reaffirmed its position on coal seam gas, with councillors unanimously voting to continue the long-standing ban on exploration and extraction activities in the shire.

The revisiting of the moratorium, which has been in place for nearly

a decade, comes after gas company Comet Ridge requested a meeting with council in relation to its investigation into reactivating an exploration licence that covers the majority of the region.

Comet Ridge and Santos have joint ownership of three Petroleum Exploration Licences (PELs) which cover the Moree and Coonamble, Walgett and Warrumbungle shires

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-12/multi-billion-dollar-oil-project-using-fracking-west-kimberley/11389046>

Fracking, ports and oil pipeline project worth \$77b proposed for west Kimberley

Ben Collins, ABC, 12/08/2019

A network of oil wells that involve fracking in the Great Sandy Desert, connected by pipelines to new and existing ports, may become Australia's biggest oil-producing project.

Documents on the website of privately-owned Theia Energy, some of which have since been removed, say they have found as much as 57 billion barrels of oil in the desert location 150 kilometres south-east of Broome.

The oil find is described as "unconventional", meaning it is locked in dense rock that will need hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, to allow the oil to flow to the surface.

Theia Energy is in negotiations with the Karajarri traditional owners of the area to gain permission to confirm commercial flow rates of oil by fracking rock over a kilometre underground.

Karajarri Traditional Lands Association chairman Thomas King said: "It will probably end up being the biggest oil project in Australia. I envisage there will be a huge benefit in such a huge project like this, but whether Karajarri people feel that is something they want to entertain still remains to be decided."

Theia Energy's chief operating officer, Jop van Hattum, was more cautious about the potential of the project to progress to this scale.

He said a document that had been removed from the company website, which included a graphic showing new ports, pipelines and roads, was not a proposal.

"That picture is really to invite people to come along and think about how the project could be developed in the future," he said.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/cooper-energy-ceo-warns-on-price-intervention-20190812-p52g72>

Cooper Energy CEO warns on price intervention

Angela Macdonald-Smith, AFR, 12/08/2019

A set gas price on the east coast would stop investment in new fields in its track, the opposite of what is needed to bring down prices, according to Cooper Energy CEO David Maxwell.

He said it would stymie the investments being made by companies including Cooper, Mitsui, Esso and Beach Energy in finding and developing more gas.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/chemical-makers-renew-calls-for-cheaper-gas-20190812-p52g5t>

Chemical makers renew calls for cheaper gas

Angela Macdonald-Smith, AFR, 13/08/2019

The chemical industry has issued a fresh call for government intervention to bring down east coast gas prices, backed by new findings that every petajoule of gas used by chemical makers supports 80 times more jobs and creates 33 times more economic value than the LNG sector does.

The report, which is supported by Orica, plastics maker Qenos and other Chemistry Australia members, found that every petajoule of gas used by the country's chemical makers supports more than 1600 jobs. That's 80 times more than the LNG industry and 150 times more than in gas-fired power generation.

For each petajoule of gas used, the chemical industry also adds \$286 million of value, 33 times more than LNG and 68 times more than gas-fired power generation, according to the report by ACIL Allen on behalf of the industry association. A petajoule equals 1 million gigajoules.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-14/inpex-pfas-environment-animals-at-risk-darwin-harbour/11412180>

Gas company Inpex fined \$12,600 for evaporating water containing PFAS over Darwin Harbour

Jane Bardon, ABC, 14/08/2019

Gas company Inpex has been fined after it was found to have released PFAS from its new \$37 billion LNG processing plant site on Darwin Harbour.

The Federal Government found Inpex evaporated PFAS water at its plant instead of trucking it away; Inpex was fined \$12,600 for infringing its environmental management plan; Inpex



Left: gas storage tanks as they look to the naked eye. Right: An infrared camera shows methane gas being vented from the tank. Photos: Robert Howarth, Biogeosciences

says it paid the fine even though it believed it had complied with the plan.

<https://www.chinchillanews.com.au/news/an-app-standing-up-for-farmers-safety/3805528/>

An app standing up for farmers' safety

Brooke Duncan, Chinchilla News, 14/08/2019

A new app allowing community members and farmers to report potential gas industry hazards has been launched across the Western Downs and beyond.

The free GasHAZ app, developed by Chinchilla advocate and consultant Shay Dougall, was born out of her professional experience and Masters studies into the workplace health and safety gap farmers experienced when CSG activity came onto their properties.

<https://cosmosmagazine.com/geoscience/fracking-blamed-for-all-that-methane>

Fracking blamed for all that methane

Nick Carne, Cosmos, 15/08/2019

Robert Howarth, from Cornell University, says in the journal *Biogeosciences*, shale-gas production in North America alone over the past decade "may have contributed more than half of all of the increased emissions from fossil fuels globally and approximately one-third of the total increased emissions from all sources globally over the past decade".

The evidence is in the chemical fingerprint, Howarth says.

"This recent increase in methane is massive. It's globally significant. It's contributed to some of the increase in global warming we've seen, and shale gas is a major player."

While methane emissions are often referred to as "leaks", some of the emissions include purposeful venting, including the release of gas during the flowback period immediately

following hydraulic fracturing, the rapid release of gas from blowdowns during emergencies but also for routine maintenance on pipelines and compressor stations and the steadier but more subtle release of gas from storage tanks and compressor stations to safely maintain pressures.

• Download the paper here:

<https://www.biogeosciences.net/16/3033/2019/>

IMPORT INSANITY

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/agl-may-be-waiting-for-power-policy-certainty-analysts/news-story/e30c1ec5203ebbd937d673179770dce>

AGL may be waiting for power policy certainty: analysts

Perry Williams, Aus, 09/08/2019

AGL Energy's \$2 billion project pipeline is under the spotlight, with analysts cautioning the power giant may be waiting for some time to receive sufficient certainty on energy policy to sanction developments.

The pipeline of uncommitted opportunities spans AGL's \$450m Wellington North solar farm in NSW, the \$250m Crib Point LNG import terminal in Victoria and South Australia's \$400m Kanmantoo pumped hydro scheme.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/second-nsw-gas-terminal-critical/news-story/d96fd21a02c6211b520b44658f99734e>

Second NSW gas terminal 'critical'

Perry Williams, Aus, 14/08/2019

NSW has given critical status to a second LNG import terminal as it seeks to avoid potential gas shortages hitting the state on peak demand days from 2023.

A proposed \$590 million gas plant on Newcastle's Kooragang Island, which could supply up to 80 per cent of NSW's gas needs, will today be declared critical state significant infrastructure as NSW scrambles to ensure it has access to sufficient supplies

ahead of the Liddell coal plant closure in early 2023.

The Newcastle plant being developed by EPIK – a South Korean LNG project development company – was only proposed last December and remains behind a rival Port Kembla terminal backed by iron ore billionaire Andrew Forrest which is due online in late 2020, and which won critical status in mid-2018.

While the Newcastle facility still needs to move through a full environmental assessment, its backing by the NSW government signals its willingness to develop new sources of supply ahead of the shutdown of AGL Energy's Liddell.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/newcastle-port-could-import-gas-for-liddell-replacement-20190813-p52gq3>

Newcastle port could import gas for Liddell replacement

Angela Macdonald-Smith, AFR, 14/08/2019

A \$589 million Korean-backed project to import LNG through Newcastle could bring in gas that could be used in a power station to replace AGL Energy's Liddell generator, according to NSW Acting Premier John Barilaro.

NSW Planning Minister Rob Stokes will declare the proposed \$589 million Newcastle GasDock a project of critical state significance on Tuesday, providing it with a streamlined approvals process. The plant could supply up to 80 per cent of the state's gas needs.

The Newcastle project, which could import 110 petajoules a year of gas, would be located at a site at Kooragang Island and include a pipeline to connect into the existing NSW gas grid.

The NSW government and the federal government last week announced a taskforce to consider options to handle the impact of AGL Energy's planned closure of the Liddell coal-fired generator in April 2023 and try to prevent a spike in power prices.

AGL, which is considering a gas-fired power plant in Newcastle as a partial replacement for Liddell, is also seen as a potential customer for Santos' Barrabri gas, if it gets the go-ahead.

NUKE MADNESS

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/environment/2019/08/10/the-pipe-dream-nuclear-power/15653592008587>

The pipe dream of nuclear power

Royce Kurmelovs, Saturday Paper, 10/08/2019

When the federal energy minister, Angus Taylor, announced a new parliamentary inquiry into what it would take for Australia to get into the nuclear power business, he might have expected a bigger headline.

Taylor, himself a long-time advocate for nuclear power, made the announcement on the heels of a recent campaign by Coalition MPs and the Australian Minerals Council to consider the economic benefits of going nuclear.

Queensland MP Ted O'Brien, chair of the standing committee on the environment and energy, will oversee the inquiry.

The dream of a nuclear industry – and the money it would bring – has been kept alive by advocates including former Liberal senator Sean Edwards and nuclear advocate Ben Heard.

In April this year, the Institute of Public Affairs, a libertarian think tank with strong ties to members of the Coalition government, published a 15-point wish list of policy proposals the organisation said would "fix Australia".

Overturning the moratorium on nuclear power was listed at No.15.

University of Queensland economist John Quiggin, who made a submission to the 2015 royal commission on the nuclear fuel cycle, said: "It's highly unlikely that we'll get nuclear power. An absolute condition is a carbon price high enough to make nuclear power competitive with coal. And the people promoting this have no interest in a carbon price, so it's not going to happen."

"[The announcement] is essentially culture-war stuff. This is trolling the greens. I don't regard it as a serious exercise."

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/when-mining-royalties-become-radioactive-for-local-communities-20190808-p52f1i.html>

When mining royalties become radioactive for local communities

Richard Baker, SMH, 11/08/2019

Some Adnyamathanha people are pushing hard for their native title representative body, the Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association (ATLA), to open up its books so they can see

how the community's mining royalties have been distributed.

No one really knows the true amount received by ATLA from Beverley uranium mine's owner, Heathgate Resources, which is a fully-owned subsidiary of US corporate giant, General Atomics.

Estimates based on the uranium produced since the mine opened in 2001 and the spot price across 18 years suggests a figure of at least \$30 million. Millions of dollars more in royalties have also come from the smaller Four Mile uranium mine.

Concerns over the distribution of the Beverley royalties are at the forefront of a broader push in South Australia for a judicial inquiry into the impact of native title, with a particular focus on governance standards at Indigenous corporations and expenditure on legal advice and action.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-12/jervis-bay-once-considered-for-pristine-beaches-of-jervis-bay/11371296>

Nuclear reactor and steelworks plan once considered for pristine beaches of Jervis Bay

Nick McLaren, ABC, 12/08/2019

In the late 1960s, a plan was launched to transform an idyllic section of the New South Wales coast into a major industrial hub, complete with the country's first nuclear power plant.

A steelworks, petrochemical plant and an oil refinery were also slated for the site at Jervis Bay, but what was not announced was a plan to generate weapons-grade plutonium that could have seen Australia become a nuclear power.

In February 1970, the *Illawarra Mercury* proclaimed:

"The power station will be the first of 20 atomic plants costing more than \$2,000 million to be built in Australia by 1990. The reactor will use 500,000 gallons of sea water a day for cooling purposes."

There was a darker side to the Jervis Bay reactor too, with evidence revealed in a 2002 ABC documentary, *Fortress Australia*, that the 500-megawatt fast breeder reactor was chosen due to its ability to generate weapons-grade plutonium for use in an Australian nuclear weapon.

STOP WATER MINING THE NEXT RESOURCES BATTLE





The pretty town of Nyonoksa was ordered to evacuate after a deadly nuclear incident which has killed seven scientists. Photo: Kharim Andrey

<https://www.smh.com.au/world/asia/russia-says-small-nuclear-reactor-blew-up-in-deadly-accident-20190813-p52gfm.html>

Russia says small nuclear reactor blew up in deadly accident

Jake Rudnitsky & Stepan Kravchenko, SMH, 13/08/2019

The failed missile test that ended in an explosion killing five scientists last week in Russia's White Sea involved a small nuclear reactor, according to a top official at the institute where they worked.

[**FFB Ed** – the death toll has now risen to seven.]

The institute is working on small-scale power sources that use “radioactive materials, including fissile and radioisotope materials” for the Defence Ministry and civilian uses.

The blast occurred on August 8 during a test of a missile that used “isotope power sources” on an offshore platform in the Arkhangelsk region, close to the Arctic Circle, Russia's state nuclear company Rosatom said.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-14/russian-nuclear-explosion-mystery/11411470>

Russian town of Nyonoksa near White Sea evacuated as mystery deepens following explosion that killed five nuclear scientists

ABC, 14/08/2019

Secrecy surrounding an explosion that killed five [now seven] nuclear scientists and caused a spike in radiation levels has raised fears of a cover-up as Russian authorities call on residents of Nyonoksa to leave their village.

After a spike in radiation levels was reported, Rosatom conceded the accident involved nuclear materials.

On Tuesday, Russian authorities urged residents of Nyonoksa, which is closer to the site of the explosion and has a population of around 500, to leave their village while work is carried out in the area.

US experts said they suspected the cause was a botched test of a nuclear-powered cruise missile commissioned by President Vladimir Putin.

The scientists who died were buried in the closed city of Sarov – which houses a nuclear research facility and is surrounded by fences patrolled by the military.

Medics who treated the victims of an accident were sent to Moscow for medical examination. The medics sent to Moscow have signed an agreement promising not to divulge information about the incident, TASS cited the source as saying.

RENEWABLES RISE

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/clean-energy-regulator-slams-murdoch-solar-scare-campaign-68141/>

Clean Energy Regulator slams Murdoch solar scare campaign

Sophie Vorrath, Renew Economy, 12/08/2019

Australia's Clean Energy Regulator has called out the Murdoch media for “inaccurate” reporting on the standard and safety of rooftop solar installations, following the release of its latest national data on solar panel inspections in 2018.

The CER last month released the rooftop PV data as part of its Renewable Energy Target 2018 Administrative Report, revealing a small year-on-year rise in the number of “sub-standard” and “unsafe” installations.

At the time, the CER stressed in its statement accompanying the data that a substandard rating did not mean the whole system was substandard, but rather was based on “one or two relatively minor defects” in the installation that did not affect performance.

Nonetheless, the findings were reported, first in The Australian as “One in five solar units defective,” and then two weeks later in the Daily Telegraph under the headline “Complaints rise to one a day, as report reveals a quarter of home installations are faulty.”

CLIMATE CRISIS

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/11/pacific-islands-forum-tuvalu-children-welcome-leaders-with-a-climate-plea>

Pacific Islands Forum: Tuvalu children welcome leaders with a climate plea

Kate Lyons, Guardian, 11/08/2019

As the leaders of Pacific countries step off their planes at Funafuti airport this week for the Pacific Islands Forum, they are being met by the children of Tuvalu, who sit submerged in water, in a moat built around the model of an island, singing: “Save Tuvalu, save the world.”

The welcome sets the tone for a Pacific Islands Forum meeting that will not only have climate change at the top of the agenda – as it has been for many years – but is being hosted by a country that the UN says is one of the most vulnerable to rising sea levels, which could render it uninhabitable in the coming century.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-12/australia-must-listen-to-the-pacific-on-climate-crisis/11403712>

Australia must listen to its Pacific neighbours on climate crisis

Rajeli Nicole, ABC, 12/08/2019

In the Pacific, the climate crisis is a matter of survival for our most vulnerable nations.

Right now, Australia's rising pollution and burgeoning fossil fuel exports are undermining our future.

In Tuvalu the human toll and grave injustice of the climate crisis is clear for all to see. Nowhere does the land rise more than a few metres above sea level. At some points, the main island

is barely 20 metres wide. Sometimes, waves wash right over the island from the ocean to the lagoon, destroying houses and crops and contaminating scarce water supplies.

As Prime Minister Scott Morrison heads to Tuvalu, we urge the Australian Government, and all Australians, to listen to those on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

• *Raijeli Nicole is regional director of Oxfam in the Pacific.*

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/12/labor-lashes-scott-morrison-for-ignoring-pacific-islands-climate-concerns>

Labor lashes Scott Morrison for ignoring Pacific Islands' climate concerns

Sarah Martin, Guardian, 12/08/2019

Labor has lashed the prime minister for ignoring the climate change concerns of Pacific Island nations, saying a push to crack down on ocean plastics still leaves a "giant hole" in the Coalition's environment policy.

Labor's shadow minister for the Pacific, Pat Conroy, told Guardian Australia that while the opposition welcomed more action on plastic waste, it paled in comparison to the existential threat facing island nations as a result of rising sea levels.

Pacific leaders have also called on Australia to abandon plans to use carry-over credits, last month warning that developed nations were not doing enough about the climate crisis, despite the grave consequences for the region.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/canberra-applies-pressure-for-region-to-stay-quiet-on-coal/news-story/fc729d7890ac1665f9e77110b9c0e96a>

Canberra applies pressure for region to stay quiet on coal

Ben Packham, Aus, 14/08/2019

Pacific Minister Alex Hawke says he does not want Scott Morrison's talks this week with Pacific Island leaders to break down over Australia's support for coal, but warns it is a "red line issue."

The Morrison government is lobbying hard behind the scenes at the Pacific Islands Forum to keep a transition from coal-fired power out of the final communique to be signed by regional leaders, calling it a "red-line" issue for Australia.

The government has argued in preliminary meetings that any reference to coal in the final communique would be a step too far because it could place

obligations on Australia to wind back the \$26 billion thermal coal industry.

Hawke held discussions with several Pacific Island countries on Monday, presenting them with a table showing Australia had just 20 of the world's 2459 operating coalmines, while 126 were in China and 33 in India. Of 359 coalmines in pre-construction, Australia had just two.

It is understood Australia's negotiating team – led by Hawke and the Head of the Office of the Pacific Ewen McDonald – are arguing Australia is the largest contributor to climate change funding in the region and its economic interests should not get in the way of Pacific relationships.

Tuvalu Prime Minister Enele Sopoanga delivered the stark message after a meeting of the forum's eight smallest members called for an immediate ban on the construction of new coal plants and the opening of new coalmines, as well as an urgent boost to global efforts to fight climate change.

But Sopoanga – whose island is facing worsening storm surges as temperatures rise – said island nations wanted to see a deeper commitment from Australia on climate change.

"No matter how much money you put on the table it doesn't give you the excuse not to do the right thing, which is cutting down your emissions, including not opening your coalmines," he said.

<https://au.news.yahoo.com/jacinda-ardern-puts-pressure-on-australias-climate-change-approach-084124555.html?guccounter=1>

'Australia has to answer': Jacinda Ardern's subtle sledge at Aussie Prime Minister

AAP/Yahoo, 14/08/2019

New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has found herself caught in the middle of the Pacific island nations, who are calling for a tougher stance on addressing climate change, and Australia – her country's greatest ally.

She has urged for greater action on climate change and made a thinly veiled criticism of Australia's defence of its rising greenhouse gas emissions.

"We will continue to say that New Zealand will do its bit and we have an expectation that everyone else will as well. Australia has to answer to the Pacific, that is a matter for them."

Although regional security issues are bubbling under the surface, Pacific

leaders are dedicated to focusing on climate change, which is threatening their survival.

Minister for the Pacific Alex Hawke, who now has the prime minister by his side, earlier admitted Australia was trying to remove the mention of phasing out of coal in the final communique.

He described it as a "red line issue" for Australian negotiators.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-13/pif-pacific-islands-forum-tuvalu-morrison-fiji-climate-change/11406868>

Scott Morrison offers \$500 million to fight climate change ahead of Pacific showdown in Tuvalu

Melissa Clarke, ABC, 13/08/2019

Prime Minister Scott Morrison is seeking to head off criticisms of Australia's climate change policies by promising hundreds of millions of dollars to tackle the issue ahead of his arrival at a meeting of Pacific leaders in Tuvalu on Wednesday.

He outlined \$500 million over five years, starting in 2020, to help Pacific nations invest in renewable energy and 'climate and disaster resilience'.

But the money will be re-directed from existing aid programs, and is not additional support for the region.

Fiji's Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama spoke at the climate change 'Sautalaga' (open discussion) held yesterday, seeking much stronger action from Australia, including phasing out coal-fired power generation.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/australia-demands-paris-targets-be-removed-from-pacific-islands-queue-36291/>

Australia demands Paris targets be removed from Pacific Islands communique

Giles Parkinson, Renew Economy, 15/08/2019

Australia appears to be walking away from long-term Paris climate targets after insisting that key measures be removed from a declaration on climate change at a meeting of Pacific Island leaders on the island of Tuvalu.

The Pacific Island Forum is shaping up as a significant test for Australia, as it seeks to boost its influence over the Pacific nations in the face of growing Chinese influence, and as it seeks to try to convince a highly doubtful Pacific that it takes climate change seriously.

Australia set the tone for the event by sending junior minister Alex Hawke –

one of the many climate skeptics in the Coalition's ranks – to do the preparatory work ahead of the forum.

Hawke has a history of quoting climate science deniers.

He has described pro-climate action politicians as “amateur scientists, wannabe weather readers... people who like to come in here and make the most grandiose predictions about all sorts of scientific matters without even a basic understanding of the periodic table.”

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/08/15/alan-jones-jacinda-ardern/>

'Shove a sock down her throat': Alan Jones unleashes about New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern

New Daily, 15/08/2019

Sydney radio broadcaster Alan Jones has described New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern as “a joke” and urged Prime Minister Scott Morrison to “shove a sock down her throat”.

The extraordinary stream of abuse unfolded on Nine's 2GB radio on Thursday morning, in response to Prime Minister Ardern questioning Australia's climate change credentials at the Pacific Islands Forum.

“She's a clown, Jacinda Ardern; a complete clown,” Jones said.

“I just wonder whether Scott Morrison is going to be fully briefed to shove a sock down her throat.”

During his broadcast on Thursday morning, Jones also complained about “this Pacific Island mob” telling Australian to ban coal.

“These people are an absolute joke and Jacinda Ardern is the biggest joke.”

Jones also described her as “a swallower” of the climate change “hoax”.

“She is a joke, this woman; an absolute and utter lightweight. If you want wind and solar... When it comes to wind and solar, she's in love with them.

“There's a headline story today where this lightweight New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, is challenging Scott Morrison over climate change,” Jones said on social media.

“This is this Pacific Leaders' Forum, where the cargo cult mentality is alive and well.

“Now I don't have a problem with carbon dioxide. It's only these swallowers of the hoax that seem to be worrying.”

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/australia-left-in-the-shade-over-coal-20190815-p52hmv.html>

Australia left in the shade over coal

Rob Harris, SMH, 15/08/2019

Pacific leaders have left Australia isolated over the future of coal in the region after a marathon summit meeting on Thursday night, as fears grow that China will seek to exploit diplomatic differences in the region over climate change.

Scott Morrison went into the meeting warning against any condemnation of coal and that calls for new mines to be banned would be a “red-line issue” in the final statement.

Australia has also pushed back on attempts from smaller island states to include a strong statement urging the world to speed up its transition away from coal towards renewable energy.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-15/no-endorsements-come-out-of-tuvalu-declaration/11419342>

Pacific leaders, Australia agree to disagree about action on climate change

Melissa Clarke, ABC, 16/08/2019

Australia has stymied efforts by small island states to get Pacific-wide consensus on their declaration for stronger action on climate change.

This means no country has fully committed to endorsing the Tuvalu Declaration

They could not reach agreement on the Tuvalu Declaration made by smaller Pacific countries, instead drafting a separate Kainaki II Declaration, with different terms on coal use and emissions reduction.

Negotiations were heated, particularly between Tuvalu's Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga and Scott Morrison.

“We expressed very strongly during our exchange, between me and Scott [Morrison], I said: ‘You are concerned about saving your economy in Australia ... I am concerned about saving my people in Tuvalu,’” Sopoaga said.

“That was the tone of the discussion. Please don't expect that we come and bow down ... we were exchanging flaring language — not swearing — but of course expressing the concerns of leaders.

“The Prime Minister of Tonga actually cried in the meeting ... shed tears in front of the leaders, such is the passion.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/aug/11/extinction-rebellion-hitting-a-nerve-at-australias-climate-flashpoint>

Extinction Rebellion: hitting a nerve at Australia's climate flashpoint

Ben Smees, Guardian, 11/08/2019

The Extinction Rebellion protesters think you should be angry. They want politicians and opinion columnists to be angry. The more people they upset stopping traffic in the Brisbane city centre – the louder the car horns, the more vicious the insults – the more certain it is they'll be back.

Seventy-two people were arrested and charged by police during “rebellion day” protests in the heart of Brisbane on Tuesday.

They have been stopping commuter traffic in the city for months. As outrage grows, so does the sense that climate change is finally subject of the anger it deserves.

A day after the chaotic Extinction Rebellion protests in Brisbane, the group Frontline Action on Coal (Flac) issued a long-awaited “red alert” – a call for activists to head to central Queensland and to join physical efforts to stop Adani's Carmichael coalmine.

As the disruptions in Brisbane become more frequent, the backlash has amped-up in volume and vitriol.

In News Corp newspaper the *Courier-Mail*, protesters have been described variously as “ferals”, “ratbags”, “idiots”, “twerps”, “selfish, conceited, misguided ... ideological zealots”, “unemployed thugs” and more.

Fuelling the anger is the way the state crackdown on environmental protesters compares to its treatment of corporations who break environmental laws.

Last month, a thermal coalmine in the Darling Downs region, New Acland, committed a “major” breach of the state's environmental protection act by drilling 27 illegal bores. The company was fined \$3,152.

Queensland courts have given activists fines almost 20 times that amount for staging protests. Al Wicks was fined \$61,000 earlier this year for blocking coal trains. Others face aggressive civil damages claims launched by corporate interests.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/the-wall-street-journal/carbon-credits-now-proving-an-investments-winner/news-story/c9c9a21f1e195f3158c3bee-a54e94ba6>

Carbon credits now proving an investments winner

David Hodari, *Wall St Journal*, 12/08/2019

Carbon-emission credits, long shunned by traders, are now one of the world's best-performing investments.

The price of the credits, doled out by governments in Europe to polluting power plants and steel mills to curtail the production of greenhouse gases, has soared more than fivefold over the past two years.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/aug/12/climate-crisis-heat-trapping-gases-broke-records-2018-report>

Heat-trapping gases broke records in 2018, climate crisis report finds

Emily Holden, *Guardian*, 13/08/2019

The gases heating the planet in 2018 were higher than humans have ever recorded, according to an authoritative new report from the American Meteorological Society and the US government.

Greenhouse gas levels topped 60 years of modern measurements and 800,000 years of ice core data, the study found.

The report finds 2018 was the fourth-warmest on record since the mid-to-late- 1800s.

Sea levels were the highest on record, as global heating melted land-based ice and expanded the oceans. Sea surface temperatures were also near a record high.

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/resources-minister-laughs-off-citizens-arrest-by-climate-change-activists>

Resources minister laughs off 'citizens arrest' by climate change activists

Adam Marsters, *SBS*, 09/08/2019

Australia's Resources Minister Matt Canavan is playing down accusations of being a "climate criminal" after he was subjected to a "citizen's arrest" on a Far North Queensland street.

Members of the environmental activist group Extinction Rebellion confronted the minister while he sat at a café in Cairns where the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting is being held.

Canavan said: "It was great to catch up with my friends from Extinction Rebellion, who are continuing the great



Extinction Rebellion activists interrupted Matt Canavan's coffee break in Cairns.

Photo: XR

work of Bob Brown in their totally rational campaign of yelling at people and stopping them going about their day".

"Worked wonders at the Federal Election - keep up the good work!"

Extinction Rebellion spokesperson Greg Sorenson said, "We don't have a planet B, Extinction Rebellion for the most part won't give up, we can't give up. Matt Canavan, George Christensen, Scott Morrison and Angus Taylor are holding on to 20th century tech, it's going to set us up for catastrophe."

<https://www.newcastleherald.com.au/story/6316450/comments-prove-climate-denial-is-king/>

Climate denial continues to dictate government and industry thinking

Ian Dunlop, *Newcastle Herald*, 10/08/2019

The first priority of any government is the security of its people.

The greatest threat to that security today is human-induced climate change.

Because of the refusal of political and corporate leaders over the past two decades to take climate change seriously, it now represents a threat that will wipe out civilisation as we know it, unless we move to emergency action.

We have left it too late to make a gradual transition to a low-carbon world.

Unfortunately the comments by Matt Canavan and Stephen Galilee at the recent NSW Minerals Council conference demonstrate that climate denial continues to dictate government and industry thinking. This is extremely dangerous for the future of the Hunter Valley and its coal mining communities.

The attitude of Canavan and Galilee in refusing to face reality and plan for a

sensible transition away from coal is extremely irresponsible, particularly when they have access to the best possible scientific knowledge on climate impact, and choose to ignore or misrepresent it.

The federal government and coal industry bodies have too much invested in denial to ever lead on climate change.

Community organisations, coal companies themselves, unions and regulators, all in their own self-interest, must now start to plan the transition, otherwise many people will be badly hurt, particularly in the coal industry itself.

• Ian Dunlop was formerly an international oil, gas and coal industry executive, chair of the Australian Coal Association and CEO of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He is a senior member of the advisory board of Breakthrough National Centre for Climate Restoration.

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6320806/matt-canavan-the-night-watchman-for-coal/>

Matt Canavan: The night watchman for coal

Joanne McCarthy, *Newcastle Herald*, 11/08/2019

Bryan Canavan built a full-length concrete cricket pitch in his backyard in the 1980s where his young son worked towards his "true calling" - wearing the baggy green cap for Australia.

He didn't make it. Instead Matt Canavan became an economist, worked at the Productivity Commission and was elected a Senator in 2013.

He was clear about coal from day one.

"I want to put on the record my admiration and support for our fossil fuel industry and the thousands of jobs it supports, including my brother's," he

said in that speech. He was Australia's Resources Minister by 2016.

Canavan selectively quotes the International Energy Agency, which he said predicted growth in thermal coal to at least 2040. He also argued coal was the best path for about one billion people around the globe denied access to electricity that "we all enjoy here in the Western world".

I haven't heard Canavan quote another IEA conclusion, readily found in the 2018 World Energy Outlook document, saying "Renewable energy technologies provide the main pathway to the provision of universal energy access".

Last year Canavan described his cherry-picked coal figure from a scenario the IEA warns we shouldn't follow as a "short, sharp shock for those who have set out to destroy confidence in our world-class coal industry".

It wasn't. It just made clear who was fielding for the mining industry at silly mid on.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/qld-admits-ambitious-renewables-target-will-squeeze-out-coal-but-not-until-2030-20190813-p52gk>

Qld admits ambitious renewables target will squeeze out coal, but not until 2030

Mark Ludlow, AFR, 13/08/2019

Queensland Energy Minister Anthony Lynham said the Palaszczuk government's ambitious 50% renewable energy target would squeeze coal-fired power stations out of the state's energy mix, but not until after 2030.

It comes as Lynham revealed he had sought legal advice whether states could "go it alone" on national energy policy without the Commonwealth.

Lynham said the predicted loss of profitability for Queensland's coal-fired power stations – as more renewable energy comes into the market – could be absorbed because they were mostly state-owned.

"I want to get to 2030 where people

are sitting around the dinner table and no one notices we've got to 50 per cent renewable energy."

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/aug/13/angus-taylor-s-department-ignored-advice-not-to-run-24m-energy-ad-blitz-before-christmas>

Angus Taylor's department ignored advice not to run \$2.4m energy ad blitz before Christmas

Christopher Knaus, Guardian, 13/08/2019

Angus Taylor's department ignored advice warning not to run a \$2.43m taxpayer-funded ad blitz spruiking the government's energy policies in the lead-up to Christmas, internal documents show.

The multimillion-dollar "Powering Forward" campaign boasted of the government's efforts to bring down power prices, using ads in newspapers and on digital news sites, social media, television and radio.

Documents obtained by *Guardian Australia* under freedom of information show the government's advertising contractor, UM, spent about \$2.43m on media for Powering Forward in December, when the fourth phase of the campaign ran.

A separate FOI request shows UM had previously warned against running the fourth phase in December, because audiences would have little interest in energy issues in the lead-up to Christmas.

The department denied it had ignored advice from UM. It said UM had recommended not running the campaign past 15 December, which it adhered to.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/miners-under-attack-for-mansalughter-opposition/news-story/5df4dd9c11210e6dfb85c64391302127>

Miners under attack for mansalughter opposition

Sarah Elks, Aus, 15/08/2019

Queensland's mining lobby has been criticised for "unconscionable" op-



position to the introduction of a new criminal offence of industrial manslaughter, in the wake of six fatalities in the state's coalmines and quarries.

Queensland Resources Council chief executive Ian Macfarlane said this week such a law could become a "lawyers' feast" and prompt companies to call their lawyers before they called a killed worker's family.

After the six deaths in 12 months, Queensland Mines Minister Anthony Lynham said the government was committed to introducing the new offence, after being thwarted by the resources sector in the last term of government.



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