



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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Carbon co's should compensate for climate harm, says report

A new report from the University of NSW finds that Australia is the world's 16th biggest greenhouse gas (GHG) emitting country. But within Australia's borders there is a larger contributor to climate change: the companies that extract coal, gas and oil and sell them worldwide. These huge companies are the carbon majors.

The Australia's Carbon Majors report lists Australia's top 10 carbon emitters:

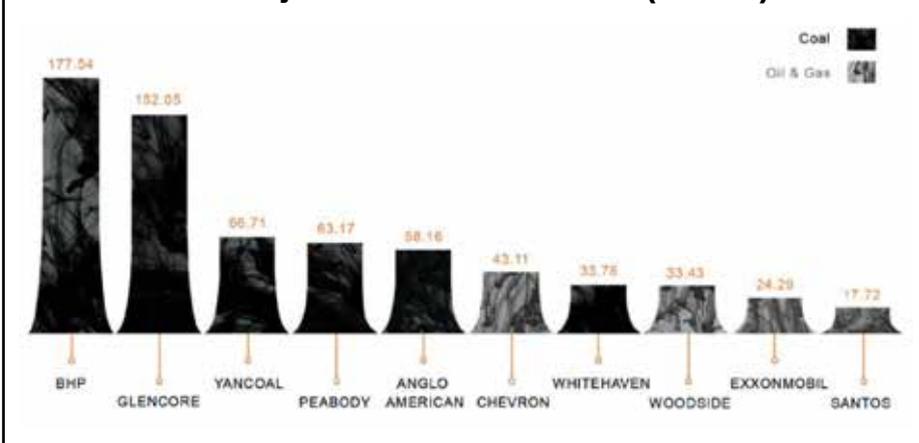
BHP Billiton, Glencore, Yancoal, Peabody, Anglo American and Whitehaven (coal miners) and Chevron, Woodside, ExxonMobil and Santos (oil and gas miners) produce more GHG emissions than Canada. If they were a country, they would sit eighth in the world on the list of highest emitters.

The report's lead author, Jeremy Moss from the UNSW Practical Justice Initiative and a professor of political philosophy, said there was a clear case that big emitting companies, which the report calls "carbon majors", should be held responsible for the consequences of their products.

Key findings

- In 2018 emissions produced from the coal extracted by Australia's top six coal producers (551Mt CO₂-e), were greater than the whole of Australia's projected domestic emissions (534Mt CO₂-e) for 2018.
- The ten largest Australian carbon majors produced the equivalent of 669.71 Mt CO₂-e in 2018, which is

Australia's Carbon Majors and GHG emissions 2018 (MtCO₂-e)



around 75% of the emissions from global air traffic or around 28 million flights (895Mt CO₂-e 38 million flights).

- Together, the top ten Australian carbon majors produce more GHG emissions than Canada. If they were a country, they would sit eighth in the world on the list of highest emitters.
- In the last 15 years the emissions from BHP's Australian coal, oil and gas have produced the equivalent of 2,361Mt CO₂-e in emissions and just one year the indirect GHG emissions by their global operations produced 596Mt CO₂-e (BHP 2019), more than the projected emissions of 25 million Australians for the same period.
- The Australian carbon majors are complicit in climate harms and ought to bear some of the liabilities for climate harms.

Key recommendations

1. No sales of mine assets as going concerns

- Fossil fuel mines to be retired, not on sold to other companies

2. Carbon major sites to be restored

- Funds to be set aside for rehabilitation
- Rehabilitation costs to take precedence over shareholder returns
- Profit sharing ought to occur from 'clean' parts of the business

3. Compensation for contribution to past harms

- Compensatory mechanisms must address past emissions at least since 1990
- Affected workers and communities to be assisted

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• P2: Gas industry invades area size of Belgium

• P4: IMARC protesters brutalized by cops

• P5: Journalist booted for climate question to PM

Carbon majors must phase-out, compensate:

• Continued from p1

4. Compensation should not only be domestic

• Compensation should address the needs of those harmed globally

5. No new mines

• No new exploration

6. Political influence

• Carbon majors should cease political lobbying

• Carbon majors should not fund third party campaigns in favour of fossil fuels

7. Phase-outs

• Carbon majors should phase out their fossil fuel operations in line with IPCC evidence

• Download the report here:

<https://climatejustice.co/carbon-majors/>



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Qld gas industry to invade land area the size of Belgium



A gas processing plant under construction in Queensland. Photo: Lock the Gate

Queensland farmers are appalled after the Palaszczuk Government announced it would open an area almost as big as Belgium to unconventional gas exploration.

“If the Premier thinks this is going to shore up votes for her ahead of next year’s election, she is sorely mistaken,” said Chinchilla landholder, Glen Beasley.

“Despite recent rains many farmers are still facing extreme drought conditions, and we know from the State Government’s own research that the coal seam gas industry has a devastating impact on groundwater levels.

“It is hard enough to find water at the moment. With the expansion of this insidious industry, it will only become more difficult.

15m tonnes of toxic salt

“My property is currently under threat because the CSG industry wants to dump 15 million tonnes of its toxic waste at the headwaters of a nearby creek which forms part of the Murray Darling Basin catchment.

“The threat is not just the depletion of underground aquifers, but there is the added aspect of biosecurity issues posed by the toxic waste this industry produces.

“At a time when the State Government is asking primary producers to take on added responsibility dealing with the increasing risks posed to agricultural from biosecurity risks, it is fostering an enormous biosecurity risk itself by encouraging this industry.

“There is a huge, unresolved risk to ground and surface water due to how the CSG industry disposes of its contaminated waste.

“This is not just a local threat – it has serious implications for primary industry right down the already beggared Murray Darling system.”

The Queensland Government’s own Surat Basin Underground Water Impact Report, released mid this year, found 127 water bores used for farming had already experienced drainage due to CSG mining.

The report also found that if allowed to continue expanding at its current rate, a total of 574 bores would eventually be drained.

“With this new land release for CSG, the scale of this damage will only increase,” said Lock the Gate Alliance spokesperson Carmel Flint.

“The Queensland Government has failed to respond to this dire warning, and it seems farmers and communities will bear the brunt of this failure.

“Agricultural water users are now facing restrictions on groundwater use due to drought, but CSG groundwater use is effectively a permanent use, that cannot be increased or decreased in response to conditions, which means more pressure on farmers.

“Lock the Gate Alliance calls on the Queensland Government to urgently reverse its position on CSG industry and introduce a moratorium on this water-hungry industry.”

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More gas won't reduce prices

Gas consumers in Queensland are currently paying 51% more than export parity prices according to the ACCC, while recent gas developments have brought short term booms but resulted in massive wealth destruction for small towns.

IEEFA gas analyst Bruce Robertson spoke at an event attended by locals at the Bundaberg Civic Centre in Queensland on October 29 about the increasing cost of gas for consumers and how further development of Queensland's fracking and gas industries will not reduce prices while bringing marginal long-term benefits for locals.

"Queensland gas consumers are paying 51% more for their gas than consumers of Queensland gas produced locally and shipped directly overseas are paying much less, according to the ACCC," says Robertson.

"And since gas sets the price for electricity in Australia, every electricity consumer is feeling the heat of blown-out bills."

The federal government commissioned the ACCC to produce a spot gas price series designed to compare domestic prices to those of Australia's customers in Asia while allowing for the increased costs of exporting gas.

The spot gas price series shows that as at 25 October 2019 when the most recent data was released, the ACCC "netback" price – calculated by taking the delivered price of LNG and subtracting the costs of liquefying natural gas and shipping it to the destination port – was just \$5.19 a gigajoule (GJ) yet Queensland customers were paying \$7.82/GJ for their gas.

"Queensland's gas industry has a proven track record of price gouging consumers and destroying wealth, while fracking coal and shale to export LNG has negative economic consequences for locals," says Robertson.

"Prior to 2015, Queenslanders had a stable domestic market for gas with reasonable prices of \$3-4/GJ.

"With the advent of the construction of the six trains at Gladstone, domestic gas prices increased rapidly to peak at \$21/GJ in early 2017. Contract prices now stand at between \$8-12/GJ according to the ACCC.

"That makes Queensland gas prices globally uncompetitive."

Robertson says there are other destructive costs affecting locals, using the Gladstone Liquefied Natural Gas Project as a case study.

"There was a five-year construction period at Gladstone then the first shipment of coal-seam LNG left Gladstone bound for Asia in 2015," says Robertson.

"With construction finished, locals today are witnessing a very active mortgagee in possession market and an oversupply of dwellings, townhouses and apartments, with value declines in some cases of up to 75%.

"The gas industry has created more destruction than boom."

Robertson asserts Queenslanders are seeing a fraction of the royalties promised by the gas industry for existing fields, and despite earlier promises, gas companies are paying zero corporate tax.

"The Queensland government is still courting gas production with an eye on developing coal seam gas in the Galilee and Bowen basins in Queensland," says Robertson.

"The coal seam gas sector however is also not going to give back to Queensland."

Robertson explains new fracking fields are high cost. Instead of producing gas between A\$2.20 and A\$2.70 a gigajoule as the operators expected, they produce gas between A\$3.65 and A\$6.40 a gigajoule, making it very expensive gas.

The fracking industry has misjudged the costs, both in terms of capital – as it is very expensive to build and operate the plants – but also in terms of what the fields actually produce. Operators are discovering the wells decline more quickly than expected, and fields produce less gas and more water, increasing costs.

"Domestically, gas is no longer a competitive fuel for electricity production in Queensland and its usage is falling," says Robertson.

"To support a loss-making industry that has failed to supply Queensland consumers with gas at a reasonable price or pay its fair share of royalties and tax is total policy failure."

Origin to frack NT in high-risk wet season

Protect Country Alliance is alarmed to learn gas company Origin Energy has plans to frack one of its Northern Territory wells during the high-risk wet season.

The company's environmental management plan also indicates the company wants to keep waste fluid in open tanks, in direct contrast to the recommendations of the Pepper Inquiry.

Local Mudburra Traditional Owner Raymond Dixon lives downstream from the project and said, "The wet season is a special time for us and for country, and nature.

"Everything comes back to life. And if that fracking goes ahead through the wet season we will have all that poison chemical waste from the waste tanks. It's not safe for us, for our water, for this country.

"It's going to rain and it's going to fill that tank up, it could overflow, and once the big wet comes it could push all that water down to our area. Pollution could be pushed into the creek bed, and that runs down our way to all the little water holes that go through our land."

Protect Country Alliance spokesperson Graeme Sawyer said Origin's decision to frack during the wet season showed the level of arrogance the company had for NT communities and the environment.

"How dare this company suggest it is ok to keep fracking waste fluid in open air tanks during the highly volatile wet season, when cyclones can flood water catchments in minutes," he said.

"Justice Pepper was very specific in recommending that fracking waste fluid not be kept in open air storage units, yet the NT Government, at the behest of industry, has chosen to ignore this recommendation.

"What happens when that fracking fluid enters the rivers and creeks that people get their drinking water and fish from?"

The well is on Origin's Exploration Permit 76, approximately 300km south-east of Katherine.

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IMARC protesters subjected to police violence

By Eve Sinton

The International Mining and Resources (IMARC) conference in Melbourne last week attracted about 7,000 attendees and up to 300 protesters who were out-numbered by hyped-up police with a heavy-handed attitude.

Despite most protesters adhering to principles of non-violence, conflict erupted on all three days of the conference, with at least one protester hospitalised after being trampled by a police horse.

Even journalists attempting to report on events were pepper-sprayed and man-handled as they were accused of failing to respond to police instructions.

Ailish Hallinan of *Farrago* (a Melbourne University magazine) was pepper-sprayed.

“If I can applaud Victoria Police stationed outside IMARC this week on anything, it’s how indiscriminate they’ve been in dishing out absurd levels of violence,” she said.

“Today, it didn’t matter who you were – young or old, protester or observer – no one was exempt from the tyrannical-style of brutality displayed by Victoria Police.

“Half an hour after arriving, myself and another *Farrago* reporter were pepper sprayed by police. And before you ask; no, neither of us were involved in the protest.

“If you’ve never had the experience of being pepper sprayed before, all I can say is that’s it’s immeasurably worse than I ever imagined. What ensued in the moments after I was sprayed was an unbearable sensation of feeling like someone had lit a match on my skin before shoving it in my eyes. It took me at least five minutes to regain my sight, but even at the time of writing this – nearly eight hours later, my vision is still blurry and my skin still burns.

“I wasn’t the only journalist injured today. Reporters from Channel 7, Channel 9 and apparently Sky News also experienced varying degrees of violence of their own, including being pushed by police and subjected to pepper spray,” Hallinan said.

“The pathetic attempt to pass blame on to journalists like myself as well as



ABOVE: Victoria Police used capsicum spray and heavy-handed arrest tactics against a largely non-violent crowd of protesters outside the International Mining and Resources Conference (IMARC) in Melbourne last week.

All photos: Eastern Melbourne Climate Alliance

BELOW: A policeman makes a ‘white power’ hand gesture, while a colleague has his body-cam lens covered with a sign reading EAD (eat a dick) Hippy.



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IMARC protesters brutalized

• Continued from p4

protesters didn't rattle me as much as the press conference held by Commander Libby Murphy.

"This afternoon, after protesters were doused in pepper spray, Murphy applauded police at the blockade for showing 'much restraint' and affirmed that the use of the chemical agent 'complied with Victoria Police policy'.

"These displays of grotesque and unjustifiable violence must serve as a wake-up call," the *Farrago* reporter said.

Protester Seth Rothery said, "At about 10.30am Tuesday I was assaulted and arrested by Victorian Police while standing outside IMARC.

Protester choked, brutalized

"I was standing still in a nonviolent protest line, arms linked with the protester next to me. With no warning and completely unprovoked, I felt both hands of one of 'Victorias finest' close around my neck, completely cutting off my air supply.

"A total of four officers forced me to my knees and shoved my head into the pavement. My arms were twisted behind my back and thick white cable ties were fastened around my wrists all while the cops screamed in my ears 'stop resisting'. After about six or seven seconds my neck was released and I could breathe.

"At no point did I resist this overwhelming, disproportionately violent assault," said Rothery.

"The cable tie on my left wrist was so tight I was experiencing excruciating lightning sharp pain radiating into my hand and up my arm. My fingers were going numb and I felt the tingling get stronger. I knew that meant nerve damage if not released so asked repeatedly, 'Please loosen my left hand!' I was ignored for the first 15 or so requests till finally one of the officers realised I wasn't lying and pushed me to my knees and tried to cut them off. The ties were sunk so deep into my flesh that it took three cops over two minutes to free me, even with a special tool designed for this exact task.

"The rest of my arrest and processing at Melbourne West Police Station was relatively standard," Rothery said.

Except of course for this delightful interaction:

Cop: 'So what do you do for a living?'

Me: 'No comment' (standard response recommended by legal counsel).

Cop: 'Yeah you're probably a fuckin' dole bludger aren't ya?'

Alt-right influence amongst police

True Crime Weekly reported that a police officer photographed menacingly flashing a suspected 'white power' sign at a young woman of Asian heritage at the IMARC protest is also a fan of well-known Alt-Right and fascist memes.

Senior Constable Travis Gray has been named as the officer responsible for flashing the OK hand sign in a menacing manner.

True Crime Weekly revealed that Senior Constable Gray is a "self-declared fan of well-known Alt-Right and fascist memes like Pepe the Frog and NPC Wojak, if his own social media accounts are any guide.

"Racist and fascist memes that are used by Alt-Right trolls had pride of place on Senior Constable Gray's personal Facebook page which, has now been shut down."

Gray was also spotted striking a woman on the head, a move defended by police as a 'palm strike' used to move crowds along.

Another Victoria Police officer was photographed with a handwritten note on his body camera that read "EAD (Eat A Dick) Hippie".

Protester Kate Thomson posted pictures on Facebook which showed the officer wearing the small white sticker on his bodycam.

Thomson said she believed officers were deliberately covering their cameras and ID badges during the protests, and this demonstrated a 'problematic culture amongst the police'.

She said the sticker over the officer's camera demonstrated prejudice against hippie protesters and an intention to keep the camera off.

"From what I saw it is clear to me that there is a culture amongst police to conceal their badges and support other officers in doing so," Thomson said.

Journalist booed as PM promises crack-down

Scott Morrison had an enthusiastic audience at a Queensland Resources Council nosh-up on November 1, where he promised to crack down on 'apocalyptic' climate protesters.

Science and technology blogger, Ketan Joshi, watched the presentation and said a journalist from the UK's Channel 4 News asked the Prime Minister: "Given the efforts that other nations are making to reduce their carbon emissions, and given the places like the great barrier reef are, we know, under threat from climate change ..."

"Halfway through her question, precisely after she mentions climate change, a single loud moaned 'boooo' rings out in the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre," Joshi said.

The journalist continued, asking how Australia could justify opening new coal mines in the Galilee basin.

"As she finishes, the entire room breaks out into a loud chorus of angry discontent. The same low and loud moan as before, but this time emitted from hundreds of men, who are each one over-filled glass of white wine away from hurling chunks of coal at the woman who dared mention what happens when the product they pull from the ground is burnt," Joshi said.

"Theatrically, Prime Minister Scott Morrison (no stranger to threatening people with chunks of coal) comes to the rescue. 'Because we have the best mining industry in the world!', he weirdly responded.

"When Morrison delivered his very motivational-coach-at-corporate-retreat reply, the moans turn to relieved, roaring cheers, and you can't see the audience, but I'm guessing they punched the air, high-fived each other and took hearty bites out of the coal chunks like they were fresh green apples.

"That moment was a mile marker. These men felt okay loudly shaming a journalist who mentioned climate change. It wasn't a private event. It was live-streamed nationally. It was a marker of power and confidence," Joshi said.

No wonder *Fossil Fool* didn't get an invite!

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Study casts doubt on carbon capture

By Taylor Kubota, Stanford News Service

*One proposed method for reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) levels in the atmosphere – and reducing the risk of climate change – is to capture carbon from the air or prevent it from getting there in the first place. However, research from Mark Z Jacobson at Stanford University, published in *Energy and Environmental Science*, suggests that carbon capture technologies can cause more harm than good.*

Research by Jacobson, professor of civil and environmental engineering, suggests that carbon capture technologies are inefficient and increase air pollution. Given this analysis, he argues that the best solution is to instead focus on renewable options, such as wind or solar, replacing fossil fuels.

“All sorts of scenarios have been developed under the assumption that carbon capture actually reduces substantial amounts of carbon. However, this research finds that it reduces only a small fraction of carbon emissions, and it usually increases air pollution,” said Jacobson. “Even if you have 100% capture from the capture equipment, it is still worse, from a social cost perspective, than replacing a coal or gas plant with a wind farm because carbon capture never reduces air pollution and always has a capture equipment cost. Wind replacing fossil fuels always reduces air pollution and never has a capture equipment cost.”

Jacobson, who is also a senior fellow at the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment, examined public data from a coal with carbon capture electric power plant and a plant that removes carbon from the air directly. In both cases, electricity to run the carbon capture came from natural gas. He calculated the net CO₂ reduction and total cost of the carbon capture process in each case, accounting for the electricity needed to run the carbon capture equipment, the combustion and upstream emissions resulting from that electricity, and, in the case of the coal plant, its upstream emissions. (Upstream emissions are emissions, including from leaks and combustion, from mining and transporting a fuel such as coal or natural gas.)

Common estimates of carbon capture technologies – which only look at the carbon captured from energy produc-

Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) is a costly pipe-dream. Graphic: Euractiv.com



tion at a fossil fuel plant itself and not upstream emissions – say carbon capture can remediate 85-90% of carbon emissions. Once Jacobson calculated all the emissions associated with these plants that could contribute to global warming, he converted them to the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide in order to compare his data with the standard estimate. He found that in both cases the equipment captured the equivalent of only 10-11% of the emissions they produced, averaged over 20 years.

This research also looked at the social cost of carbon capture – including air pollution, potential health problems, economic costs and overall contributions to climate change – and concluded that those are always similar to or higher than operating a fossil fuel plant without carbon capture and higher than not capturing carbon from the air at all. Even when the capture equipment is powered by renewable electricity, Jacobson concluded that it is always better to use the renewable electricity instead to replace coal or natural gas electricity or to do nothing, from a social cost perspective.

Given this analysis, Jacobson argued that the best solution is to instead focus on renewable options, such as wind or solar, replacing fossil fuels.

Efficiency and upstream emissions

This research is based on data from two real carbon capture plants, which both run on natural gas. The first is a coal plant with carbon capture equipment. The second plant is not attached to any energy-producing counterpart. Instead, it pulls existing carbon dioxide from the air using a chemical process.

Jacobson examined several scenarios to determine the actual and possible efficiencies of these two kinds of plants, including what would happen if the carbon capture technologies were run with renewable electricity rather than natural gas, and if the same amount of renewable electricity required to run the equipment were instead used to replace coal plant electricity.

While the standard estimate for the efficiency of carbon capture technologies is 85-90%, neither of these plants met that expectation. Even without accounting for upstream emissions, the equipment associated with the coal plant was only 55.4% efficient over six months, on average. With the upstream emissions included, Jacobson found that, on average over 20 years, the equipment captured only 10-11% of the total carbon dioxide equivalent emissions that it and the coal plant contributed. The air capture plant was also only 10-11%, on average over 20 years, once Jacobson took into consideration its upstream emissions and the uncaptured and upstream emissions that came from operating the plant on natural gas.

Due to the high energy needs of carbon capture equipment, Jacobson concluded that the social cost of coal with carbon capture powered by natural gas was about 24% higher, over 20 years, than the coal without carbon capture. If the natural gas at that same plant were replaced with wind power, the social cost would still exceed that of doing nothing. Only when wind replaced coal itself did social costs decrease.

Renewables beat CCS

• Continued from p4

For both types of plants this suggests that, even if carbon capture equipment is able to capture 100% of the carbon it is designed to offset, the cost of manufacturing and running the equipment plus the cost of the air pollution it continues to allow or increases makes it less efficient than using those same resources to create renewable energy plants replacing coal or gas directly.

“Not only does carbon capture hardly work at existing plants, but there’s no way it can actually improve to be better than replacing coal or gas with wind or solar directly,” said Jacobson.

“The latter will always be better, no matter what, in terms of the social cost. You can’t just ignore health costs or climate costs.”

This study did not consider what happens to carbon dioxide after it is captured but Jacobson suggests that most applications today, which are for industrial use, result in additional leakage of carbon dioxide back into the air.

Focusing on renewables

People propose that carbon capture could be useful in the future, even after we have stopped burning fossil fuels, to lower atmospheric carbon levels.

Even assuming these technologies run on renewables, Jacobson maintains that the smarter investment is in options that are currently disconnected from the fossil fuel industry, such as reforestation – a natural version of air capture – and other forms of climate change solutions focused on eliminating other sources of emissions and pollution. These include reducing biomass burning, and reducing halogen, nitrous oxide and methane emissions.

“There is a lot of reliance on carbon capture in theoretical modelling, and by focusing on that as even a possibility, that diverts resources away from real solutions,” said Jacobson. “It gives people hope that you can keep fossil fuel power plants alive. It delays action. In fact, carbon capture and direct air capture are always opportunity costs.”

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New mine rehab law kicks in



A mine in Queensland's Bowen Basin. Photo: Lock the Gate

Lock the Gate Alliance is calling on the Queensland Government to reaffirm its commitment to appoint an independent mine rehabilitation commissioner as new rehabilitation laws came into effect on November 1.

Last year, during the parliamentary debate around the new laws, the Government committed to establish a rehabilitation commissioner within 12 months to ensure best practice standards were applied to mine rehabilitation in Queensland.

The Alliance is also calling on the Queensland Government to initiate a review of the legislation and tighten what are now extremely broad exemptions which allow mining companies to avoid new stricter rehabilitation requirements.

During the drafting of the legislation, last-minute concessions made to the mining industry went way beyond what was originally considered.

This created loopholes which have led to a scramble by some companies to lodge their Environmental Authorities before November 1, potentially in a bid to be exempt from key aspects of the rehabilitation laws, such as prohibitions on leaving open pits on floodplains.

Lock the Gate mine rehabilitation coordinator Rick Humphries cited the Baralaba South coal project as a prime example of how companies were avoiding the new stricter requirements.

“Baralaba South hasn’t even completed its initial environmental impact study, yet it applied for an environmental au-

thority four days before the November 1 deadline, thereby potentially allowing it to leave unrehabilitated voids on the Dawson River floodplain.

“The existing Baralaba Coal mine levees broke in 2010 which led to toxic waste water being washed into the river system and eventually being released into the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.”

According to Humphries, a mine rehabilitation commissioner will ensure that companies such as Adani and Clive Palmer’s Waratah Coal are required to meet recognised rehabilitation standards which are currently not being properly applied.

“The appointment of an independent Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner as promised by the Queensland Government last year is crucial to complete the reform process started several years ago” Humphries said.

“Without the appointment of a Commissioner, Queenslanders will continue to be left with permanently degraded landscapes and polluted waterways due to poor mine rehabilitation.

“Improving mine rehabilitation not only protects our local environments but it can also create hundreds if not thousands of jobs in regional Queensland.

“Having made a clear commitment to appoint a commissioner by November this year, the government now needs to urgently deliver and equip the position with the powers and the resources to really hold both the industry and the regulator to account.”

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



Inside the news

Adani has raised eyebrows by deferring payment of \$18.5 million for a **water licence** for two years. The company blames legal challenges to its water scheme for the delay. Adani has also discussed an unusual sort of “**vendor finance**” with prospective **contractors**, that would effectively delay payments for work by up to two-and-a-half years, until after the mine was operational (p9).

Power barons and Coalition donors **Trevor St Baker** and **Brian Flannery** have scooped a \$30m dividend from the **Vales Point** power station they bought for \$1m from the NSW government, and now they want a favour from the feds. They want the Clean Energy Finance Corporation to give them a multi-million-dollar loan to help buy and install **batteries** at the 40-year-old plant (p10).

Australian company **AJ Lucas** probably regrets its venture into UK fracking, through part ownership of fracker **Cuadrilla**. Constant earthquakes caused by fracking operations at a site near Blackpool, eventually prompted the government to **ban** the technology. Locals who have spent years opposing Cuadrilla are overjoyed (p12).

Renew Economy says **AGL's** plan to install batteries at the **Lidell Power Station** site, prior to the coal clunker's scheduled 2023 closure, is massive because it heralds the era of **battery storage** as a cost-effective option for the main grid (p13).

Coal devotee **Matt Canavan** has admitted yelling at **Scott Morrison** as he desperately tries to get support for a new coal-fired power station at **Collinsville**. People down the corridor reported the **f-word** was involved (p14).

Labor is moving steadily to back the **Coalition's** support for coal. **Joel Fitzgibbon** has become a big fan of the black rock, and arranged – with the **Minerals Council of Australia** – for four Labor MPs to tour Queensland coal mines (p14). Reacting to photos of the four all dressed up in miners' costumes, the The Greens' **Adam Bandt** said they were setting Australia on a unity ticket towards climate catastrophe.

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THE ADANI SAGA

<https://thewire.in/business/the-adani-juggernaut-is-expanding-on-all-fronts-australian-coal-need-not-be-one-of-them>

The Adani juggernaut is expanding on all fronts, Australian coal need not be one of them

Tim Buckley, The Wire, 28/10/2019

The Adani Group is today one of the most powerful business conglomerates in India, spanning six listed entities across a growing multitude of activities.

The group is unusual in that it is entirely sensibly, almost entirely focused on one country, India.

Internationally, this conglomerate operates only two businesses of any note – one thermal coal mine in Indonesia and a massively leveraged and likewise under-performing coal export terminal in Australia.

In contrast to [a] general track record of domestic success, international expansions for the Adani Group have been costly and difficult to implement.

Opening up for development the world's largest new thermal coal basin – a truly enormous carbon bomb of up to 300Mtpa of low-quality thermal coal for export for many decades – has proven unbankable and unviable for a clear reason, the world can't afford it. Far better Adani acquire an existing export thermal coal mine to secure immediate import supply to India and immediate cashflows for as long as it is needed.

• *Tim Buckley is Director, Energy Finance Studies South Asia, IEEFA.*

<https://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/news/townsville/work-reportedly-stopped-at-haughton-river-construction-site-by-antiadani-protesters/news-story/>

Work reportedly stopped at Haughton River construction site by Anti-Adani protesters

Michael Thompson, Townsville Bulletin, 31/10/2019

Anti-Adani activists say they have disrupted work at a construction site near the Haughton River

A group of 25 protesters blocked the gates to BMD's rail line construction site on the Haughton River floodplain, saying they want the construction



Frontline Action on Coal protesters outside the office of MP for Townsville, Scott Stewart, on November 1. Photo: FLAC

company to cut ties with the Adani's Carmichael mine project.

<https://www.cairnspost.com.au/news/queensland/100m-adani-solar-farm-can-power-23000-homes/news-story/>

\$100m Adani solar farm can power 23,000 homes

Michael Wray, Courier-Mail, 31/10/2019

Adani boss Lucas Dow says opening the company's first Australian solar farm today proves it can deliver major projects when given a "clear run to get on with the job".

Mr Dow said the Rugby Run solar farm in central Queensland – which cost over \$100 million and will produce enough electricity to power 23,000 homes – showed Adani "understood climate change".

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/oct/31/adani-deadline-for-185m-water-licence-payment-pushed-back-until-mid-2021>

Adani deadline for \$18.5m water licence payment pushed back until mid-2021

Ben Smees, Guardian, 31/10/2019

Adani has sought to delay significant upfront expenses for its Carmichael coalmine by another two years, raising questions about the company's claims its Indian parent has allocated the required finance.

Adani was granted a reissued water licence to take up to 12.5bn litres a year from the Suttor River by the Queensland government on 29 May. The deadline for the \$18.5m outstanding payment has now been pushed back until mid-2021.

Adani says the reason for the delay is because the company is working through the implications of "legal challenges by activist groups" to its water scheme, and will pay when those matters are finalised.

The energy finance expert Tim Buckley said Adani's attempts to progress the Carmichael mine were "debt on debt on debt" and that was a good indication the Indian parent had at least some hesitation about the project, given the risks that remain from environmental activism, the diving price of thermal coal and additional regulatory hurdles, such as negotiating access to the Aurizon rail network.

Guardian Australia has spoken to contractors who previously discussed working with Adani, and who said the company had proposed an unusual sort of "vendor finance" arrangement that would effectively delay payments for work by up to two-and-a-half years, until after the mine was operational.

COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/richlisters-trevor-st-baker-brian-flannery-reap-30m-dividend-from-coal-plant-they-bought-for-1m/news-story/>

Rich-listers Trevor St Baker, Brian Flannery reap \$30m dividend from coal plant they bought for \$1m

Perry Williams, Aus, 31/10/2019

Power barons Trevor St Baker and Brian Flannery have scooped a \$30m dividend from the NSW coal plant [Vales Point power station] they bought for \$1m from the state's government, although its annual profit eased after the collapse of an adjacent mine forced the duo to pay premium prices for coal.

<https://www.cairnspost.com.au/news/national/delta-electricity-seeks-clean-energy-finance-corporation-funds-for-vales-point-coal-fired-plant/news-story/>

Delta Electricity seeks Clean Energy Finance Corporation funds for Vales Point coal-fired plant

John Rolfe, Daily Telegraph, 31/10/2019

Delta Electricity wants to install giant batteries at its coal-fired Vales Point power station using money from the federal government's green energy bank.

The company will mount a controversial challenge to its exclusion from the Clean Energy Finance Corporation's (CEFC) new \$1 billion grid reliability fund by requesting a multimillion-dollar loan to help it buy and install batteries at the 40-year-old plant.

Assisted by the state government's Coal Innovation NSW, Delta has already begun exploring the potential for using batteries in place of the existing governor controls that maintain the station's desired system frequency.

<https://www.illawarramercury.com.au/story/6469135/freeze-on-new-coal-mines-announced-for-water-catchment/>

Coal mine approval in water catchment frozen until State Government works out policy response

Ben Langford, Illawarra Mercury, 31/10/2019

Bids to expand the Dendrobium and Russell Vale coal mines will be on hold until after the NSW Government determines its response to a major new scientific study on mining in the water catchment.

Planning Minister Rob Stokes said, "The Panel made 50 detailed recommendations which the NSW Government will review and respond to in due course."

"In the interim, no new development

applications for mining in the Special Areas will be determined."

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/nov/01/six-biggest-coalminers-in-australia-produce-more-emissions-than-entire-economy>

Six biggest coalminers in Australia produce more emissions than entire economy

Adam Morton, Guardian, 01/10/2019

Coalmining in Australia by the nation's six biggest coal producers ultimately results in more greenhouse gas emissions each year than the entire domestic economy.

Researchers from the University of New South Wales calculated the total emissions from the coal and gas produced by Australia's top carbon companies, from extraction to the resources being burned for energy, mostly overseas.

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/business/qld-resources-industry-pumps-1b-a-week-into-state/news-story/94f56b15226714cb5da4a5e0403e1bf0>

Qld resources industry pumps \$1b a week into state

Renee Viellaris, Courier-Mail, 01/11/2019

Queensland's economy has been turbocharged by the resources sector, which is reaching a near-record boom, pumping over \$1 billion a week in value into the state.

Coal remains king in Queensland, but metals such as copper, zinc and bauxite are also bankrolling the economy and keeping people in jobs, as revealed by new Queensland Resources Council economic data.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/mining/peabody-s-north-goon-humiliation-grows-20191031-p53694>

Peabody's North Goon humiliation grows

Matthew Stevens, AFR, 31/10/2019

Peabody Energy has finally accepted the smoking obvious.

The cyclically vulnerable American coal company run by a quietly successful Australian named Glenn Kellow has finally confirmed that it will never return to rich northern seams at the North Goonyella mine that management, with the apparent co-operation of the Queensland mine inspectorate, managed to set on fire just over a year ago.

North Goonyella has been a study in miscalculation, wishful thinking and artful obfuscation pretty much from the moment management withdrew miners from the underground oper-

ation on September 1 last year after warning systems identified high levels of methane.

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/queensland/queensland-farmers-lose-fight-against-coal-mine-20191101-p536k9.html>

Queensland farmers lose fight against coal mine

Sonia Kohlbacher, Brisbane Times, 01/11/2019

Queensland farmers crippled by drought have lost their legal fight to stop a coal project they fear will suck their water supply away.

The fate of the New Acland coal mine's expansion plans now lies in the hands of Mines Minister Anthony Lynham after a decision by the Brisbane Court of Appeal on Friday.

Graziers behind the Oakey Coal Action Alliance secretary Paul King said, "Farmers can't afford to see groundwater drained away.

"The mine still doesn't have an associated water licence or planning interest approvals, and we don't believe they should be granted either, given the severe impacts it will cause."

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-11-03/coal-mining-csiro-exscan-3d-laser-scanner-invention/11649104>

CSIRO 3D laser scanner invention set to revolutionise mining, industry says

Lexy Hamilton-Smith, ABC, 03/11/2019

CSIRO engineers have developed a world first "flameproof" 3D laser scanning device that can "see things our eyes cannot" by transmitting a full panoramic view of an underground coal mine in real time.

Called the ExScan, the device is set to revolutionise the industry, allowing miners to leave the coal face and manage longwall operations remotely from a control centre above ground.

Glencore currently has 16 ExScans underground but will have 50 in place by Christmas.

Glencore said when the project went "live" no-one would lose their jobs as they were still needed for maintenance programs and some would be retrained.

Five different mines in New South Wales and Queensland are now trialling the ExScan.

OIL & GAS LEAKS

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/bhp-s-plan-to-turn-shipping-green-20191029-p535f5>

BHP's plan to turn shipping green

Matthew Stevens, AFR, 30/10/2019

BHP has put out the world's first tender for LNG-powered shipping, enough to carry 27 million tonnes of iron ore from Port Hedland to the miner's regional markets.

BHP's initiative is the most meaningful product so far of The Green Corridor joint venture that has seen Woodside, BHP, Rio Tinto and Fortescue Metals working in partnership to develop a design for LNG-fuelled bulk carriers capable of running iron ore to Asia.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-31/blood-tests-samples-work-privacy-laws-shell-qgc-snc-lavalin/11655098>

Job applicants forced to give blood tests, waive privacy rights to work on Shell's QGC project

George Roberts, ABC, 31/10/2019

A company working on the Shell-owned Queensland Gas Corporation (QGC) project has told job applicants they will not be accepted until they submit to blood tests to check if they are at risk of heart attack, high cholesterol and other conditions.

The recruitment subcontractor, SNC Lavalin, has made potential employees sign a waiver that potentially allowed the company to send their data, medical records and blood samples overseas to countries that do not comply with Australia's privacy laws.

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/annastacia-palaszczuk-announces-more-gas-exploration-export-hub-investment-for-queensland-regions/news-story/>

Annastacia Palaszczuk announces more gas exploration, export hub investment for Queensland regions

Sarah Vogler, Courier-Mail, 30/10/2019

Annastacia Palaszczuk has announced more land will be opened up for gas exploration across regional Queensland as she spruiked her bush credentials in her annual State of the State address.

The Premier pledged one third of the gas would be preserved for the domestic market.

"Today I can announce that my government is going out for tender for another 30,000 square kilometres of land for gas exploration mostly across the Surat, Bowen and Galilee basins –



Molliwell offers services supporting farmers and community members in the Downs and wider area impacted by unconventional gas as well as traditional Health, Safety & Environment issues. Photo: Molliwell

an area almost size of Belgium – with 30% of gas preserved for the Australian market protecting and creating local jobs," Ms Palaszczuk told the CEDA lunch.

<https://themarket Herald.com.au/real-energy-awarded-prospective-surat-basin-gas-acreage-2019-10/>

Real Energy awarded prospective Surat Basin gas acreage

Elisha Hammond, Market Herald, 30/10/2019

Oil and gas explorer Real Energy, has been awarded a prospective Coal Seam Gas (CSG) acreage at the Surat Basin by the Queensland Government.

The company, operates in a joint venture with Colorado-based Strata X Energy.

The 153 square kilometre 'Project Venus' plot is considered a highly prospective CSG deposit, situated just nine kilometres from the town of Miles.

<https://m.chinchillanews.com.au/news/downs-farmers-have-a-new-support-service-gashaz-ap/3867416/>

Downs farmers have a new support service & GasHaz app in their corner with Molliwell opening an office in Chinchilla

Zoe Bell, Chinchilla News, 23/10/2019

People impacted by unconventional gas on their land walking down the main street of Chinchilla have had no where to go, but that's all about

to change. Molliwell offers services supporting farmers and community members in the Downs and wider area impacted by unconventional gas as well as traditional Health, Safety & Environment issues.

Great support has been shown for these services and this has led to the opening of a new office for Molliwell.

Shay Dougall announced the opening of the new office in Chinchilla's main shopping precinct.

"Many offices in the area are house businesses that service the Gas Industry so finally the farmers and locals have a little corner of the community dedicated to them and their interests in this field.

"Farmers and the community are the forgotten part of the gas supply chain. They are required to host the industry.

"What that really means is a lot of the time, research, preparation and ongoing management on the farmer's behalf, Dougall said.

Wanting the office to be a place where affected farmers and members of community were they feel come in, have a chat and a coffee, get moral support the office is fitted with a kitchen and kids play room.



Cuadrilla's fracking site at Preston New Road is being dismantled after fracking-induced earthquakes resulted in a government ban on the technology. Photo: Cuadrilla

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-11-02/british-moratorium-on-fracking-due-to-earth-tremor-concerns/11666176>

Britain bans fracking due to earthquake fears, says it will only resume once there's evidence it's safe

ABC, 02/11/2019

The British Government is imposing an immediate moratorium on fracking, saying the industry risks causing too much disruption to local communities through earth tremors.

"Exploratory work to determine whether shale could be a new domestic energy source in the UK ... has now been paused – unless and until further evidence is provided that it can be carried out safely here," the Business and Energy Department said in a statement.

The decision follows a report on an incident at a site run by British energy company Cuadrilla near Blackpool, north-west England, where a magnitude-2.9 tremor shook houses in August.

<https://www.afr.com/companies/energy/aj-lucas-bet-on-cuadrilla-turns-sour-as-britain-halts-fracking-20191102-p536v0>

AJ Lucas bet on Cuadrilla turns sour as Britain halts fracking

Hans van Leeuwin, AFR, 03/11/2019

Mining services company AJ Lucas's big bet on British shale gas exploration looks to have backfired, after the UK government on Saturday slapped a fresh and seemingly indefinite moratorium on fracking.

Cuadrilla Resources, the British explorer that AJ Lucas half-owns, now faces a hugely uncertain future. The company has reportedly spent £270 million

(\$506 million) on developing the Preston New Road site.

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/british-governments-move-to-halt-fracking-after-earthquake-wont-impact-nsw-operations/news-story/>

British government's move to halt fracking after earthquake won't impact NSW operations

Edward Boyd, Daily Telegraph, 03/11/2019

The British government's move to halt fracking after a drilling rig caused a 2.9 magnitude earthquake in August has been dismissed by the Australian oil and gas lobby as having little impact on coal seam gas operations in NSW.

The head of the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association Andrew McConville said hydraulic fracturing has been used in Australia for more than 60 years and repeated scientific inquiries have confirmed that when properly regulated it is safe.

NSW Greens MLC Abigail Boyd said the British government's decision to halt fracking was a "timely announcement", occurring less than two weeks before a NSW Upper House inquiry into the implementation of the Chief Scientist's recommendations on CSG in NSW.

<https://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/6469946/farmers-fear-eight-years-of-silence-on-recently-renewed-gas-pipeline/?src=rss>

Farmers fear eight years of silence on recently renewed gas pipeline

Jamieson Murphy, Northern Daily Leader, 04/11/2019

Farmers in the pathway of a proposed \$1-billion gas pipeline are disappointed they haven't heard from the com-

pany behind the project in more than eight years.

Several landholders in the Gunnedah and Liverpool Plains shires said it had been years since they heard anything from Hunter Gas Pipeline, the company behind the project that stretches 700km from the Queensland border to Newcastle.

It was first granted approval in 2009, but in October it was granted a five-year extension, after failing to get underway during the past decade.

Quirindi farmer Peter Wills was shocked to find his property was in the pipeline's pathway.

Hunter Gas Pipeline managing director Garbis Simonian confirmed the last time landholders had been spoken to was April, 2011, but defend the lack of consultation.

"Up until recently, there had been no significant development in regards to the project," Simonian said.

IMPORT INSANITY

<https://www.reuters.com/article/australia-lng-imports/japanese-backed-australian-lng-import-project-faces-delay-idUSL3N279181>

Japanese-backed Australian LNG import project faces delay

Sonali Paul, Reuters, 04/11/2019

Plans for a Japanese-backed project to import liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Australia have hit a hurdle as the group struggles to lock in customers, including Australia's top gas retailer, Origin Energy.

Potential buyers are holding off signing contracts after a drop in local gas prices, industry observers and sources said, leaving the A\$250 million (\$171 million) project well behind its initial schedule of delivering gas in late 2020.

The delay risks Australian Industrial Energy's (AIE) aim of opening a gas terminal in Port Kembla in New South Wales state ahead of a rival project by Australia's AGL Energy, while both projects are racing to meet a looming gas shortage.

HYDROGEN HYPE

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-31/hydrogen-strategy-fossil-fuels-versus-renewables/11653336>

Why the coal sector is so excited about Australia's move to 'clean' hydrogen

Jack Snape, ABC, 31/10/2019

Japan might be endowed with many beautiful things but reliable and cheap sources of energy are not among them.

Key points:

- Australia's national hydrogen strategy is due for completion by the end of the year
- Hydrogen can be made using fossil fuels or renewables but it will be cheaper to use coal and gas for at least a decade
- Japan's demand has been inflated in official government materials, overstating the short-term export potential

CLIMATE CRISIS

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-29/queensland-urged-to-abandon-coal-and-expand-renewables-rollout/11650966>

Queensland must rapidly ditch coal-fired power if Great Barrier Reef is to survive, report finds

Josh Robertson, ABC, 29/10/2019

Queensland's current carbon emissions would "virtually guarantee the extinction of most of the Great Barrier Reef" within 12 years if replicated worldwide, according to a new report.

The report by Climate Analytics, a leading science institute funded by the World Bank, recommends Queensland stop burning coal for power by 2030 to play its part in keeping global heating to 1.5 Celsius under the UN's Paris Agreement targets, agreed to by Australia in 2016.

The report found the Palaszczuk Government's goal to achieve 50 per cent renewable power generation by 2030 – considered ambitious in comparison to other state and federal targets – still does not go far enough.

A "Paris-compatible benchmark scenario" would instead require Queensland to shift to 64 per cent renewables, 1 per cent oil and no coal by 2030.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-10-29/queensland-urged-to-abandon-coal-and-expand-renewables-rollout/11650966>

Queensland must rapidly ditch coal-fired power to meet Australia's emission targets, report finds

Josh Robertson, ABC, 29/10/2019

Queensland's current carbon emissions would "virtually guarantee the extinction of most of the Great Barrier Reef" within 12 years if replicated worldwide, according to a new report.

Key points:

- Climate Analytics predicts rapid renewable rollout will lower power costs

- Its report finds Queensland must abandon its reliance on coal
- The state's peak tourism body says the report demands urgent action

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/agl-signs-huge-battery-storage-deal-hails-dawn-of-battery-age-32169/>

AGL signs huge battery storage deal, hails "dawn of battery age"

Giles Parkinson, Renew Economy, 30/10/2019

Australian energy giant AGL has signed a major deal for battery storage that will see four large-scale batteries – each of 50MW/100MWh – developed in NSW by the Australian renewable energy company Maoneng.

The batteries are expected to be installed by 2023, in time for the anticipated closure of the ageing Liddell coal-fired generator. It is a massive announcement because it heralds the arrival of battery storage as a cost-competitive option for the main grid.

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/police-clash-with-climate-activists-outside-mining-conference-in-melbourne/news-story/3426da4225b27a15848edbeb1019193c>

Mining conference delegates tell of abuse by climate change protesters

Nick Evans, Tess Akerman & Scott Henry, Aus, 29/10/2019

Conference delegates have told of being abused by protesters on their way into International Mining and Resources Conference at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre on Tuesday.

Some attendees, which included thousands of global delegates, reported being chased by individual protesters filming delegates entering amid shouts of "shame" and "murderer".

Victoria Police have now arrested 50 people at the protest outside the conference with Acting Commander Tim Tully saying police have "shown a hell of a lot of discretion, a hell of a lot of tolerance".

Just after 7am, police deployed horses to protect the entrance to the conference. Two people were arrested in relation to cruelty to animal offences for assaulting a police horse.

[fossilfool.com.au](https://www.fossilfool.com.au)

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/state/vic/2019/10/29/melbourne-mining-protest-arrests/>

Dozens arrested as Melbourne mining protest erupts into violence

New Daily, 29/10/2019

A climate protester has been taken to hospital and up to 50 others arrested after violent clashes with police outside a mining conference in Melbourne on Tuesday.

About 250 protesters linked to numerous groups were met by 300 police, including at least eight mounted on horses, outside the conference venue about 6am on Tuesday.

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/10/29/matt-canavan-scott-morrison-coal/>

Scott Morrison and Matt Canavan in heated ruckus

Samantha Maiden, New Daily, 29/10/2019

Scott Morrison has copped the f-bomb in a 20-minute spray from a Nationals frontbencher – and the unrepentant MP has declared he is "guilty as charged".

Matt Canavan is accused of confronting the Prime Minister during a closed-door meeting over a new coal-fired generator at Collinsville, in central Queensland.

According to some reports, the blow-up was so loud that the Resources Minister could be heard down the hallway.

Morrison is accused of being on a go-slow over the feasibility study for a coal-fired generator in Collinsville, a project Senator Canavan believes is vital.

"Without coal we will lose Australian manufacturing jobs," Senator Canavan said.

Morrison said it was a good project but the government wanted to apply due diligence and a proper process.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/mining-gas-key-in-poverty-fight-says-matt-canavan/news-story/>

Mining, gas key in poverty fight, says Matt Canavan

Joe Kelly, Aus, 29/10/2019

Resources Minister Matt Canavan has made a moral case for the expansion of Australian coal and gas exports, noting that fossil fuels have been critical to poverty alleviation and the pursuit of human development goals in the Asia-Pacific.

In a speech to the International Mining and Resources Conference in Mel-

bourne – which was blockaded by climate protesters on Tuesday – Senator Canavan will seek on Wednesday to expose the electoral impotence of the radical green movement, saying it failed to appeal to ordinary Australians at the May 18 election.

<https://www.theage.com.au/politics/federal/canavan-desperate-for-coal-fired-power-in-pledge-to-back-projects-20191030-p535x0.html>

Canavan 'desperate' for coal-fired power in pledge to back projects

David Crowe, Age, 30/10/2019

Resources Minister Matt Canavan has promised approval “soon” for major work on a new coal-fired power station after reports of a war of words with Prime Minister Scott Morrison over the slow progress on the controversial plan.

“The specific proposal at Collinsville is not bankable at this stage – it needs work to find contracts and work up customers, so that’s the work we need to do,” he said.

“I am desperate to get that going as soon as possible. In my view, we needed a coal-fired power station yesterday.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/oct/29/review-of-federal-environment-laws-will-cut-green-tape-and-speed-up-approvals>

Review of federal environment laws will cut 'green tape' and speed up approvals

Adam Morton, Guardian, 29/10/2019

The Morrison government has promised a review of national environmental laws will “tackle green tape” and reduce delays in project approvals that it said costs the economy about \$300m a year.

Hundreds of scientists have asked the government to use a legally required review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) to strengthen the legislation so it could be used to stem a worsening extinction crisis.

The review, a once-a-decade examination required under the 1999 act and expected to take a year, is headed by Graeme Samuel, a businessman, Monash University professorial fellow and former chairman of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

The expert panel working alongside Samuel is: Wendy Craik, the chair of the Climate Change Authority and a former National Farmers’ Federation chief; Erica Smyth, a geologist with decades of experience in the minerals



Pro-coal unity ticket to climate catastrophe: Labor MPs Mike Freeland, Meryl Swanson, Milton Dick and Kimberly Kitchen on a Minerals Council-sponsored tour of Queensland coal mines. Photo: MCA

and petroleum industry; Bruce Martin, a Wik Ngathan man and community leader from Cape York peninsula; Andrew Macintosh, an environmental law and policy expert at the Australian National University.

Environment groups noted the panel did not include anyone with a history of working to save endangered species.

Green groups, academics and lawyers want tougher laws overseen by an independent environment protection authority, but business, minerals industry and farming representatives want the development approval process to be streamlined and fast-tracked.

<https://www.afr.com/politics/federal/labor-hits-the-coal-road-as-coalition-clashes-on-climate-20191029-p535f8>

Labor hits the coal road as Coalition clashes on climate

Phillip Coorey, AFR, 30/10/2019

A delegation of Labor MPs has embarked on a tour of Queensland coal mines as the party seeks to reconnect with the blue-collar voters who abandoned it at the May 18 federal election.

On the same day Labor leader Anthony Albanese used a headland speech to issue reassurances that coking coal had a critical role to play in the transition to renewable energy, a delegation of backbenchers began a three-day tour of Queensland mines, courtesy of the Minerals Council of Australia.

Meryl Swanson, Mike Freeland, Milton Dick and Kimberly Kitching – as well as Heidi D’Elboux, the deputy director of the Federal Labor Business Forum, and Georgia Tree, a policy adviser to shadow trade minister Mad-

eleine King, embarked on a three-day tour of mines and refineries as well as the Adani Renewables Rugby Run Solar Farm in Moranbah.

Frontbencher Joel Fitzgibbon, who was given a scare in his coal seat of Hunter at the election and has been most vocal ever since, helped organise the trip.

Minerals Council of Australia chief executive officer Tania Constable said the trip “reinforces the strong and positive relationship between the mining industry and the Labor Party”.

Acting Greens leader Adam Bandt said Labor was joining the Liberals by supporting thermal coal, “setting Australia on a unity ticket towards climate catastrophe”.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/oct/30/labor-accused-of-sucking-up-to-coal-lobby-as-mps-go-on-the-road-with-minerals-council>

Labor accused of 'sucking up to coal lobby' as MPs go on the road with Minerals Council

Sarah Martin, Guardian, 31/10/2019

Labor MPs have been accused of “sucking up to the coal lobby” as they embark on a three-day tour of Queensland mines hosted by the Minerals Council of Australia.

Greens’ environment spokeswoman Sarah Hanson-Young said the decision of a group of Labor MPs to embrace the coal lobby would cause despair among Labor voters.

Over the next two days, the group will visit BHP’s Peak Downs coal mine and the Adani Renewables Rugby Run solar farm in Moranbah, Rio Tinto’s Yarwun alumina refinery and Orica’s Yarwun manufacturing plant in Gladstone.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/coalition-turns-to-fossil-fuel-lobby-to-lead-secret-review-of-climate-policy-46242/>

Coalition turns to fossil fuel lobby to lead “secret” review of climate policy

Michael Mazengarb, *Renew Economy*, 30/10/2019

The Morrison government has quietly formed an ‘expert panel’ to review the government’s climate policies, tasked with finding additional emissions reductions from the government’s underperforming emissions reduction policies, in a process that will be conducted behind closed doors.

The panel is stacked with representatives of Australia’s fossil fuel industry set to oversee a review of the Morrison government’s emissions reduction policies.

It also appears the panel will only consult with an unknown, pre-selected, group of industry representatives and interest groups, with the panel writing to a hand-selected group of industry members to seek responses to a consultation paper.

The panel will consist of two government representatives and two representatives from industry, with the panel to be chaired by retiring Business Council of Australia president, and former Origin Energy managing director, Grant King.

King has had long ties with the fossil fuel industry, having held numerous positions with oil and gas companies, and during his time at the helm of Origin Energy, King was one of the strongest critics of the Renewable Energy Target.

King will be joined by the Chair of the Clean Energy Regulator, David Parker, with the other government representative being the head of the Emissions Reduction Assurance Committee, Andrew Macintosh.

The panel will be rounded out by Susie Smith, the chief executive of the Australian Industry Greenhouse Network (AIGN), which has been the long-time front for the Australian fossil fuel lobby. Members of the AIGN are a collection of Australia’s largest fossil fuel users and producers, and have self-styled themselves as the ‘greenhouse mafia’.

Smith has previously held positions with oil and gas producer Santos and the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/scott-morrison-1bn-clean-energy-bet/news-story/>

Scott Morrison’s \$1bn clean energy bet

Geoff Chambers, *Aus*, 30/10/2019

An extra \$1bn will be pumped into the Clean Energy Finance Corporation to turbocharge development of next-generation electricity production and upgrade the transmission network to future-proof the grid and drive down prices.

The first new capital provided to the CEFC since it was established in 2012 will seek to unlock private sector investment by backing pumped hydro, battery and gas projects, and upgrades of storage and transmission infrastructure.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/coalition-gives-1bn-to-cefc-for-24-7-reliable-renewable-power-48803/>

Coalition gives \$1bn to CEFC for 24/7 reliable renewable power

Sophie Vorrath, *Renew Economy*, 30/10/2019

The federal Coalition government has injected another \$1 billion into the \$10 billion Clean Energy Finance Corporation – the same Labor-established green bank his party tried for years to abolish and hamstring – to underwrite renewables integration and grid stabilisation technologies.

The Liberal National government said that it would establish a \$1 billion Grid Reliability Fund to support investment in new energy generation, storage and transmission infrastructure, including projects shortlisted for its Underwriting New Generation Investments (UNGI) program.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-11-01/scott-morrison-environmental-groups-targeting-businesses-boycott/11660698>

Scott Morrison to slam environmental groups ‘targeting’ businesses with ‘selfish’ secondary boycotts

Nour Haydar, *ABC*, 01/11/2019

Prime Minister Scott Morrison has vowed to outlaw the “indulgent and selfish” practices of environmental groups who campaign against Australian businesses that work with companies and industries they are opposed to, such as coal.

Morrison said whilst he accepts the Government cannot force one company to provide services to another, the Coalition is looking at ways to prevent such boycotts from spreading to other sectors that have a significant carbon footprint – including gas projects,

abattoirs, airlines and the sugar cane industry.

“The right to protest does not mean there is an unlimited licence to disrupt people’s lives and disrespect your fellow Australians,” Morrison said.

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/scott-morrison-blunt-warning-to-climate-change-activists/news-story/f3877f24b-448837ccee6016f80437860>

Scott Morrison’s blunt warning to climate change activists

Renee Viellaris, *Courier-Mail*, 01/11/2019

Scott Morrison will forcefully signal a crackdown on a new breed of “apocalyptic” climate activists who are crueing the economy, and will needle big business for buckling to noisy protesters.

Drawing a line in the sand in Brisbane today, the Prime Minister will publicly unleash his strongest views to date about bullying activists, and forewarn them they are testing the limits of the right to protest.

In a speech to a 1000-strong audience attending the Queensland Resources Council’s economic contribution launch, Morrison discuss challenges faced by the industry and the Queensland economy directly because of aggressive activism.

“New threats to the future of the resources sector have emerged. A new breed of radical activism is on the march,” Morrison will say.

“Apocalyptic in tone, it brooks no compromise. It’s all or nothing. Alternative views are not permitted. It’s a dogma that pits cities against regional Australia.

“One that cannot resist sneering at the wealth creating industries of regional and remote Australia.

“Let me assure you this is not something my Government intends to allow to go unchecked.”

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/national/2019/11/01/scott-morrison-selfish-activists/>

Prime Minister flags crackdown on ‘selfish’ activists

Daniel McCulloch, *New Daily*, 01/11/2019

Scott Morrison has signalled a crackdown on “selfish, indulgent and apocalyptic” environmental activists.

In a speech to the Queensland Resources Council on Friday, the Prime Minister urged companies to ignore rowdy protesters waging “economic sabotage”.

Instead, Morrison wants businesses to listen to their “quiet shareholders”.

For his part, Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton wants activists to cover the costs of police responses to protests.

Dutton, who has previously called for protesters to be publicly shamed and stripped of their welfare payments, called on the states to act after a week of anti-mining demonstrations in Melbourne.

Dutton, a former Queensland cop, said many of the protesters “don’t even believe in democracy”.

“This is not about free speech, it’s not about the ability to protest. These people are completely against our way of life,” he said.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/morrison-s-boycott-plan-sparks-free-speech-furore-20191101-p536o1.html>

Morrison’s boycott plan sparks free-speech furore

David Crowe, SMH, 02/11/2019

Prime Minister Scott Morrison has sparked a furore over free speech by vowing to draft new laws to ban protesters from boycotting companies, prompting claims his “feverish” talk would curb the rights of all Australians.

NSW Council for Civil Liberties president Nicholas Cowdery said Mr Morrison’s plan was “totally contrary” to the right to freedom of expression and that existing laws could deal with unruly conduct or assault.

Environmental campaigners have put pressure on banks to halt lending to the Adani coal mine in Queensland, while other companies supplying the project with goods and services have also been subject to consumer activism.

But Atlassian co-founder Mike Cannon-Brookes said the government plan was “selfish and indulgent” because it promoted the wants of “coal barons” rather than the many people who wanted action on climate change.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/victoria/police-officer-faces-disciplinary-action-over-crude-ead-hippy-sticker-20191101-p536lu.html>

Police officer faces disciplinary action over crude ‘EAD Hippy’ sticker

Simone Fox Kppb & Sumeyya Ilanbey, SMH, 01/11/2019

A police officer is facing disciplinary action after an image emerged of him wearing a sticker with the phrase “EAD

Hippy” – slang for “eat a dick” – while patrolling this week’s anti-mining protests.

“We have identified the police officer who was photographed at this week’s protest with a comment on his body-worn camera and can confirm the image is real,” Victoria Police said in a statement late on Friday.

A protest organiser said, “He has a sticker over his camera reading ‘EAD hippy’, meaning ‘eat a dick hippy’, demonstrating prejudice against hippie protesters and an intention to keep his camera off.”

“From what I saw it is clear to me that there is a culture amongst police to conceal their badges and support other officers in doing so.”

Senior police have repeatedly defended the force’s tactics this week, saying officers exercised “fine restraint” in the face of protesters who were harassing and spitting on mining delegates as they entered the conference.

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6470618/morrison-doesnt-like-it-when-the-quiet-australians-start-to-speak-up/>

Morrison doesn’t like it when the quiet Australians start to speak up

Ebony Bennett, Canberra Times, 02/11/2019

In his government’s latest free-speech crackdown, Prime Minister Scott Morrison has vowed to outlaw civil society groups campaigning against Australian businesses that work with companies with dubious environmental, human rights or ethical records.

Scott Morrison doesn’t like it when quiet Australians break their silence and take aim at dodgy companies or those who choose to provide services to them – especially when they’re in his favoured industries, like the coal industry. While the Coalition government rolls out the red carpet for the coal industry, it can’t pull up the drawbridge fast enough when it comes to renewables.

• *Ebony Bennett is deputy director at independent think tank the Australia Institute.*

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/labor-at-war-over-state-gas-ban/news-story/ff85c35cd8f8707293800180d0192f59>

Labor at war over state gas ban

Greg Brown, Aus, 04/11/2019

Joel Fitzgibbon has slammed Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews’s ban on fracking, declaring the policy makes “neither economic nor environmental sense” and undermines Australia’s

push to reduce carbon emissions.

Federal Labor’s resources spokesman has also urged the Andrews Labor government to immediately lift its moratorium on conventional gas exploration, which will be reviewed next year.

Fitzgibbon, who has moved to reshape federal Labor’s image as being unashamedly pro-resources since taking over the portfolio after the election, urged Mr Andrews to drop plans to put a ban on coal-seam gas mining in the state’s constitution.

The Hunter MP also took aim at the NSW Liberal government over its delay in approving the \$3bn Narrabri coal-seam gas project, which energy giant Santos is vying to develop.

Victorian Resources Minister Jaclyn Symes said the Andrews government would follow through with its pre-election promise to embed the fracking ban into the state constitution.

“We make no apologies for backing our farmers and banning fracking,” Symes said.

A NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment spokeswoman said the Narrabri gas project was “no different to any other major resource project in NSW”. It had attracted more than 23,000 objections from the public, the most of any project in NSW.

“While there are significant benefits associated with developing more gas resources in NSW, the department also needs to ensure that the project is subject to an appropriate level of scrutiny before any decision is made,” the spokeswoman said.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/protests/peter-dutton-accused-of-dictator-rhetoric-over-call-for-mandatory-sentences-for-climate-protesters>

Peter Dutton accused of ‘dictator’ rhetoric over call for mandatory sentences for climate protesters

SBS News, 04/11/2019

Home Affairs Minister Peter Dutton has been criticised for calling for mandatory sentences for people who break the law while protesting, and for suggesting protesters on welfare should have their payments cancelled.

Dutton has taken aim at magistrates who impose “slap on the wrist” penalties on protesters after the Brisbane CBD endured a spate of recent traffic-stopping demonstrations.

But using mandatory sentencing to crack down on protesters would be extreme and populist, Queensland Law

Society president Bill Potts said. “Mandatory sentencing, more often than not, straight-jackets the courts.”

“There is a complete difference between occupying an intersection for 10 minutes opposed to chaining yourself to a 44-gallon drum full of concrete and holding up a coal train for five hours.”

The Greens have seized on the suggestion, slamming it as undemocratic and “entirely inappropriate”, with Greens leader Richard Di Natale telling ABC there were already laws in place to deal with protesters.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/environment-minister-ley-flags-softening-rules-in-another-move-to-protect-coal-64381/>

Environment minister Ley flags softening rules in another move to protect coal

Michael Mazengarb, Renew Economy, 04/11/2019

Federal environment minister Sussan Ley will use a statutory review of the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) to revive a campaign against ‘green tape’ and ‘environmental lawfare’, ignoring the calls from hundreds of scientists to focus on the looming species extinction crisis.

Ley has appointed former ACCC chief Graeme Samuel to head the review into the EPBC Act and has said that the practice of the EPBC Act being used as the basis for legal challenges to development proposals, particularly coal mining projects, needs to end.

When Ley announced the review, she said the priority of the review was to “tackle green tape and deliver greater certainty to business groups, farmers and environmental organisations”.

In reality, this means the outcome of the review is likely to be a set of recommendations and ways to make life easier for big business and to stymie legal challenges, a fact the environment minister was happy to acknowledge.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-11-04/trump-threatens-to-pull-california-fire-aid-in-twitter-spat/11670666>

Donald Trump threatens to pull California fire aid in Twitter spat with state’s Governor

ABC, 04/11/2019

US President Donald Trump has threatened to cut federal funding for the wildfires raging across California, in a Twitter spat with the state’s Governor.

In his first recent comments on the California fires, Trump tweeted on Sunday that Democratic Newsom had done a “terrible job of forest management”.

Several of this year’s major fires had burned in unforested areas.

Mr Trump tweeted that when fires rage, the Governor comes to the Federal Government for help.

“No more,” the President tweeted. “Get your act together Governor. You don’t see close to the level of burn in other states.”

In a tweet of his own, Newsom replied: “You don’t believe in climate change. You are excused from this conversation.”

<https://theconversation.com/attorney-general-christian-porter-targets-market-forces-in-push-against-environment-groups-126357>

Attorney-General Christian Porter targets Market Forces in push against environment groups

Michelle Grattan, The Conversation, 04/11/2019

The government has the activist group Market Forces squarely in its sights as it considers ways to stop environmental organisations persuading financial and other businesses to boycott companies in the mining sector.

It is also targeting funders of class actions, in its proposed crackdown on those running climate change campaigns that hit firms.

Attorney-General Christian Porter singled out Market Forces in a Monday statement that said he was co-ordinating advice across several portfolios on what could be done to protect resource businesses from such activism.

Market Forces was launched in 2013, and is affiliated with Friends of the Earth. The organisation’s website says it “exposes” institutions, such as banks, superannuation funds and governments that are financing environmentally destructive projects.

Market Forces has lobbied heavily against Adani’s proposed Carmichael mine in central Queensland. Its website lists the companies it says have links to the project, and asks supporters to contact those companies to demand they cut ties.

The organisation’s chief executive Julien Vincent hit back at the government on Monday, saying that where it saw something it did not like “its response is to get it shut down”.

“We simply allow people to make informed decisions on who they do business with,” Vincent said.

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A graphic of a yellow flower with two crossed sticks behind it, set against a dark background.