

SPONSORED BY



KNITTING NANNAS AGAINST GAS

Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

Fossilfool.com.au

FFB 3:27 • 14 JULY 2020



From Market Forces

Despite repeated pledges and policies to the contrary, Australia's big four banks have once again increased funding to the expansion of the fossil fuel industry over the past year.

The figures mean fossil fuel lending has topped \$35.5 billion since January 2016, shortly after the banks publicly championed the Paris Agreement, with Commbank, ANZ, NAB and Westpac collectively enabling the release of an additional 9 billion tonnes of CO₂, enough to cancel out Australia's planned emissions reduction (2021-2030) 21 times over.

These findings are part of a comprehensive analysis of Australian banks' 2016-19 lending to the energy sector by environmental finance group Market Forces.

"Australia's banks committed to support the Paris Climate Agreement in 2015. Half a decade later they are wrecking its chances of success by continuing, year-in-year out, to funnel billions into new polluting projects and companies dragging us in the wrong direction," said Jack Bertolus, Research Coordinator at Market Forces.

"As recently as May, they called for stimulus measures consistent with Paris. Yet they seem singularly unable to get their own houses in order. No amount of sustainability bluster can mask lending \$7 billion to new or expanded fossil fuel projects that are entirely inconsistent with limiting global warming to 1.5°C, and \$6 billion to companies whose business plans rely on the failure of the Paris Agreement. Unlike the spin, the numbers don't lie."

Key points from the analysis:

- The big four banks have provided finance for 33 new or expanded fossil fuel projects since January 2016, shortly after the signing of the Paris Agreement;
- At just under \$8bn per year, the level of lending to fossil fuels has remained broadly consistent year-on-year since 2016;
- 2019 saw an increase in lending to projects which expand the fossil fuel sector compared to the previous year;
- In 2019, Commbank was the worst offender, both in terms of overall and expansionary lending to the fossil fuel industry;
- Total fossil fuel lending by the big four has topped \$35.5 billion since January 2016;

• Continued p2

• **P2: Fossil projects in funding pipeline**

• **P3: Adani boss mysteriously quits**

P4: New report on gas-free future for VIC

How the big four banks are funding climate crisis

• Continued from p1

• The big four have loaned nearly three times as much to fossil fuels as renewable energy since 2016.

100 new projects on the books

Despite warnings that billions could be wiped off the value of local oil and gas firms following BP's decision to write off up to US\$17.5 billion from its oil and gas assets, including up to 70% (US\$10 billion) of its US\$14.2 billion early-stage oil and gas exploration, the analysis also reveals companies are currently pursuing at least 100 new and expansionary fossil fuel projects in Australia that would cost almost \$150 billion.

"It's widely recognised the risks from climate change are as financially material as they are environmentally catastrophic. This makes it all the more remarkable banks appear unable to resist saddling themselves with the additional risk," said Bertolus.

"With 100 new or expansionary fossil fuel projects soon to be sitting in their in-trays, it's time for the banks to live up to their own rhetoric and genuinely back a clean transition in Australia."

Fossil projects in the pipeline

Coal mines

New Acland Stage 3 (New Hope Coal)

The New Acland Stage 3 coal mine in south-east Queensland, proposed by publicly listed Australian coal mining company New Hope, would involve three new mine pits (named Manning Vale West, Manning Vale East and Wileroo) and is expected to produce 80.4 million 'product tonnes' of coal.

Winchester South (Whitehaven Coal)

According to Whitehaven Coal, there are 430 million tonnes of 'coal resources' at Winchester South, which it states "is our first major investment in Queensland's coal industry and will entail approximately \$1 billion in expenditure, inclusive of the mining fleet".

Olive Downs (Pembroke Resources)

Pembroke states "Fully developed, the Olive Downs Coking Coal Project will be among the largest metallurgical



Clive Palmer's \$6.4 billion Galilee coal and rail project is amongst 100 new or expansionary fossil fuel projects soon to be sitting in the banks' in-trays.

Photo: Clive Palmer, Twitter

coal mines in the world, producing up to 15 million tonnes of metallurgical coal per annum for almost 80 years".

In May 2019, ABC News reported that Olive Downs 'may impact koala habitat the size of Sydney Harbour'.

Galilee Coal and Rail Project (Waratah Coal / Clive Palmer)

Clive Palmer's giant \$6.4 billion proposal to mine up to 1.4 billion tonnes of thermal coal at a rate of up to 56 million tonnes per year. As of December, Waratah Coal (owned by Clive Palmer) reportedly planned to haul the coal to Adani's Abbot Point coal port, where it would be shipped to China.

In May 2020, EDO announced it was heading to court on behalf of young Queenslanders and landholders, bringing a human rights challenge against the mine.

Alpha Coal Project (GVK, Hancock)

The Alpha Coal Project is a joint venture between Indian conglomerate GVK (79% ownership) and Gina Rinehart's Hancock Prospecting (21% ownership) who describe the mine as the "jewel in the crown of the Galilee". This 'jewel' would produce around 7.9 billion tonnes of thermal coal at a rate of up to 32 million tonnes per year over 30 years

South Galilee Coal Project (AMCI, Bandanna)

The South Galilee Coal Project is a 50-50 joint venture between subsidiaries of AMCI Group and Bandanna

Energy. The \$4.2 billion project plans to mine 447 million tonnes of thermal coal at a rate of up to 17 million tonnes per annum for over 33 years. The project received final state and federal approvals in 2014 and 2015.

Gas fields

Burrup Hub (Woodside Energy)

Woodside Energy is Australia's largest gas producer whose sights are set on extracting 20 to 25 trillion cubic feet of gas, primarily for export as LNG, through its Burrup Hub projects in north-west Western Australia.

Beetaloo Basin (Origin Energy)

Origin Energy plans to frack the Beetaloo Gas Field, approximately 180km south-east of Katherine in the Northern Territory. The project is opposed by Traditional Owner advocates such as SEED, Australia's first Indigenous youth climate network.

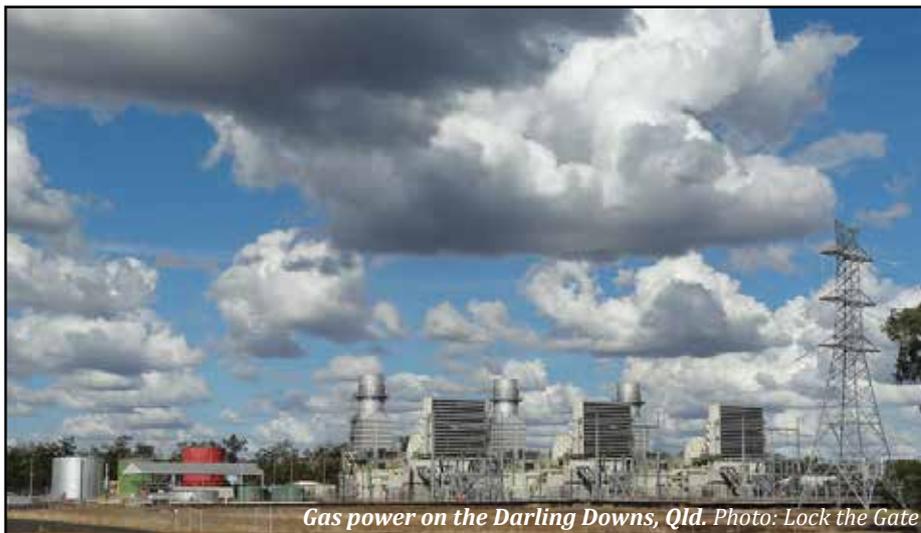
In March 2020, Origin announced a pause to its Beetaloo exploration program, stating it plans a "resumption of activities later in the year".

Narrabri Gas Project (Santos)

Santos is one of Australia's largest gas producers and is focused on developing its \$3.6 billion Narrabri Gas Project, based in northern New South Wales. Santos could extract up to 200 terajoules (TJ) of gas per day over 20 years through unconventional gas extraction known as fracking.

• Continued p3

How the big four banks are funding climate crisis



Gas power on the Darling Downs, Qld. Photo: Lock the Gate

• Continued from p2

Expert reviews of the project's Environmental Impact Statement detail significant and unaddressed issues with the project. These range from impacts to groundwater and local bushland to Aboriginal cultural heritage and the project's financial viability.

Surat Gas Project (PetroChina, Shell)

Arrow Energy, a joint venture between Royal Dutch Shell (50%) and PetroChina (50%), is developing the Surat gas project. The \$10 billion project is based 160km west of Brisbane in the Surat Basin and is expected to produce 5,000 petajoules (PJ) of coal seam gas for LNG export and domestic gas sales over its 35 year lifespan.

Barossa gas field (Santos)

Santos is majority owner of the Barossa project, an offshore gas field located 300 km north of Darwin. Santos reports the field contains over 5 trillion cubic feet of gas which it intends to supply to Darwin LNG facilities. The project would involve a floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) facility, up to nine subsea production wells, and gas export pipeline to coastal gas facilities.

Greater Sunrise gas field (Woodside, Osaka Gas)

The Greater Sunrise gas field is based in the Timor Sea, between Australia and Timor-Leste. The project sparked diplomatic tensions as Australia and Timor-Leste tussled over claims to the 5 trillion cubic feet of gas reserves.

After years of negotiation, the countries signed a treaty in 2018 to clarify resource sharing arrangements. At the time of writing, the project was owned

by state company Timor GAP (57%), Woodside Energy (33%) and Japanese energy company, Osaka Gas (10%).

Coal and gas-fired power

According to data from the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO), as of April 2020 there was 135 MW of upgraded and 151 MW of proposed coal-fired power on the horizon, along with 3.4 GW of gas-fired generation, across a combined 18 projects.

This is despite there being no room for new fossil fuel generation if we're to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, according to leading economists at Oxford University and the head of the International Energy Agency.

Emerging coal and gas power threats include:

- Hunter Energy's planned recommissioning of the 150 MW Redbank coal-fired power station in NSW that was shut down 5 years ago. Westpac and BankWest (a subsidiary of Commonwealth Bank) funded the plant back in 2004.
- EnergyAustralia's proposal to build a new 600-800 MW combined cycle gas-fired power plant in Marulan near Goulburn in New South Wales. All big four banks have made loans to EnergyAustralia.
- AGL's proposed Tarrone Power Project, a 500-600 MW open cycle gas-fired power plant near Macarthur, Victoria. All big four banks made loans to AGL as recently as September 2019.

• More info:

<https://www.marketforces.org.au/pariahprojects/>

Adani boss quits



Adani's Australian CEO, Lucas Dow, has unexpectedly quit his job, although he will continue with the company as a non-executive director.

Dow, reputed to be a 'head-kicker', got the Carmichael Mine through its final approvals from the Queensland and federal governments.

The *Australian Financial Review* speculated that Dow's abrasive style had started to wear thin with the parent company in India and he was pushed to the side. But the same article quoted another anonymous source as saying Dow was being rewarded for a job well done.

In Queensland said, "Dow, who served as CEO for two years, left with a parting shot at the activists who have delayed the project for years with legal action, claiming their campaign of bullying and intimidation had failed.

"He also leaves a tattered relationship with the State Government after he began an all-or-nothing campaign to shame the Government into approving the mine, which it eventually did following Labor's poor showing in Queensland in the federal election, during which Adani was a key issue.

"However, Adani is now facing a new legal threat from landowners in Godda, India, where Adani Power is building a power plant which will use coal from the Carmichael Mine. It also still faces an appeal in the Federal Court from the Australian Conservation Foundation relating to the approval of Carmichael."

His role will be taken by David Boshoff, who has been the Townsville-based project director of the Carmichael project and was previously the general manager of Mt Arthur Coal.

A Gas-free recovery? New report shows how phasing out gas will benefit all Victorians

Switching Victorian households and businesses from gas to electric and replacing ageing gas heating systems are among a raft of simple measures that would dramatically reduce Victoria's dependence on gas and avoid issues caused by declining supply from Bass Strait, the analysis has found.

Environment Victoria, the state's peak environment body which commissioned the report *Victorian Gas Market – Demand Side Measures to Avoid Forecast Supply Shortfall* says the findings pave the way for simple measures by the Andrews government that would also provide significant economic stimulus as we emerge from the coronavirus pandemic.

The report demonstrates that in the next ten years gas supplies in Victoria will decline considerably, but if the Andrews government makes changes now there is time to shift to clean energy sources. These changes could include banning new household gas connections and incentivising the replacement of old gas heaters with efficient reverse-cycle air-conditioners.

“Any talk of a gas-led recovery from the pandemic is dangerously misguided. It would serve only to lock households and businesses into an expensive and polluting fuel,” Environment Victoria Campaigns Manager Dr Nicholas Aberle said.

“The cheapest and cleanest way for Victoria to avoid any future gas shortage is by getting smart with demand reduction measures.

“Victorians are the biggest gas consumers in the country – half of our gas usage is in residential heating and hot water alone.

“We need to shift our thinking: the question is how do we shift our energy needs away from gas, not how we get more of it out of the ground.

“The Andrews government's recent decision to allow onshore conventional gas is a disappointing example of how this old thinking persists.

“Gas is not a ‘transition fuel’: it's an increasingly expensive fossil fuel that is a significant contributor to Victoria's greenhouse emissions. The Andrews government needs to start transition-

Heat Pump solves gas problem

Environment Victoria's report shows that replacing household space heating and water heating with electric heat pump technologies will reduce the state's gas consumption.

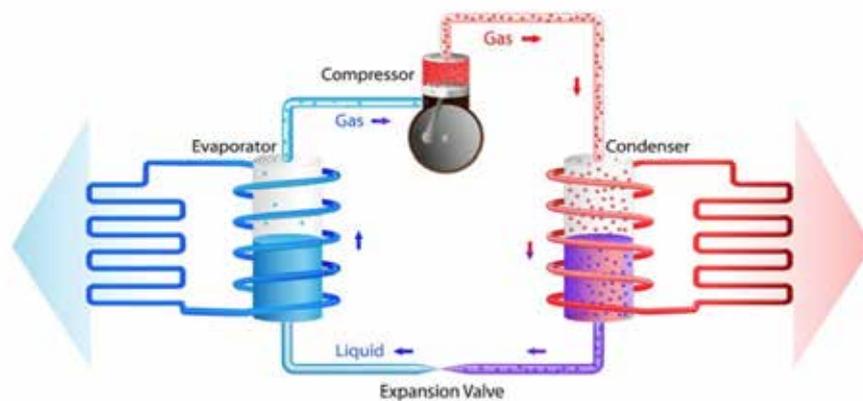


Diagram: designua/Energy Efficiency Council

ing away from gas if it's serious about playing our part in tackling climate change.

“The evidence is clear that it is cheaper for new homes to be all-electric. Connecting new homes to the gas network just locks those households into higher energy bills, forever.

“A simple first step the Andrews government could take tomorrow to start reducing Victoria's dependence on gas is banning gas connections for new homes.”

Key findings

The report *Victorian Gas Market – Demand Side Measures to Avoid Forecast Supply Shortfall*, prepared by energy efficiency consultants Northmore Gordon, found:

- Victoria does not face a gas shortfall until 2027 – the shortfall is caused primarily by declining supplies from Bass Strait fields;

- The anticipated annual shortfall of 26-85 petajoules (PJ) can be avoided through the implementation of cost-effective measures to reduce gas demand;

- Measures identified by the analysis (including replacing gas heating and hot water systems with reverse-cycle air-conditioners and heat pumps; low-cost industrial energy efficiency

measures; heat pump space-heating in commercial buildings) could reduce • Victoria's annual gas consumption by 98 to 113 PJ by 2030;

- Residential gas consumption would be reduced by 73%, contributing to significantly lower winter peak demand;

- These measures will support households, business and industry to transition to a low carbon economy and access lower cost energy;

- These conclusions draw into question the need for additional Victorian gas supplies, including new onshore fields and proposed LNG import terminals, such as AGL's Crib Point project.

“Replacing Victoria's 600,000 20-year-old ducted gas heaters would not only slash energy bills, it would provide significant economic stimulus as we emerge from the pandemic, employ tradies across the state and give a shot in the arm to appliance retailers,” said Dr Aberle.

“Ultimately we need a plan to phase out the use of gas, to help us avoid future shortages, keep energy bills down for homes and businesses, and to cut our greenhouse gas emissions.”

• **Download the report here:**

<https://environmentvictoria.org.au/category/reports/>

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



fossilfool.com.au

PHICS GREEN PIGEON GRAPHICS GREEN

PROUD SUPPORTER OF
THE FOSSIL FOOL BULLETIN

f GreenPigeonGraphics gpg@bordnet.com.au

Print ✓ Mailchimp ✓ Social ✓ Web ✓

Inside the news

Thanks in part to the government's **Covid-19** stimulous payment and some welcome donations from readers and the Knitting Nannas, **FFB's** computer problems are about to be solved. Next week's edition will be produced on a new machine.

Last week's edition had numerous dud links, due to disruptions as the old laptop **crashed** in and out of action. Apologies to frustrated readers who couldn't click through.

This week the **ABC** has an interesting story this week about the legal stoush over **Adani's Godda power plant** – the destination for Carmichael coal (p6). Adani and its agents are accused of using "coercion, fraud [and] undue influence" to illegally exclude thousands of people affected by the development from a required social impact assessment.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reports that residents of **Wollombi** are furious that the NSW government has opened their region for **coal exploration** (p7). Any miners venturing into the area can expect stiff opposition from the community.

The hazardous nature of coal mining was underlined recently with a **methane explosion** in a Queensland mine (p7).

The planned expansion of **New Hope's New Acland mine** has triggered an internal **Labor** party stoush, as some MPs come out in support of the expansion. The *Courier-Mail* says **Anthony Albanese** has forbidden discussion of the issue, but Albanese contradicts their anonymous source (p7-8).

Santos wants to cash in on the future for hydrogen power, with plans for '**blue hydrogen**' production in the Cooper Basin (p8). Blue hydrogen will be generated from **fossil gas with carbon capture and storage** – an expensive and so far quite dodgy technology for which Santos wants support from the **Emissions Reduction Fund**.

Australia now has the dubious distinction of being the world's biggest exporter of climate change emissions (p9). **Ship-loads of coal and gas** make us the biggest source of carbon dioxide exports on the planet.



Fossil Fool Bulletin

Published by Eve Sinton
PO Box 555, Mullumbimby,
NSW 2482, Australia

f Fossil Fool Bulletin

M fossil.fool.bulletin@gmail.com
evesinton@gmail.com

To subscribe free, click here:
<https://knitting-nannas.org/bulletins.php>

Focus Publications

Fossil Fool Bulletin is free to read, but not free to produce. The editor works un-waged, but costs include news subscriptions, computer, software, internet and office expenses.

Donations to publisher Focus Publications are invited.

Whether a one-off or regular, \$5 or \$500, you can help keep this publication in action.
(Note: donations are not tax deductible.)

Bank details: Focus Publications
BSB: 062 578
Account number: 10343666
ABN: 24857882603

In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 11,180 words of news for your convenience.
Click on the [links](#) to view original articles. (Subscriptions may be required)

THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.australianmining.com.au/news/adani-as-signs-coal-handling-plant-works-contract-to-local-company/>

Adani assigns coal handling plant contract to G&S Engineering

Nickolas Zakharia, *Australian Mining*, 09/07/2020

Adani has awarded G&S Engineering with a contract to design and build its coal handling plant at the Carmichael coal project in Queensland.

As a subsidiary of DRA Global, G&S Engineering is based in Mackay, where the contract is expected to enhance opportunities for locals.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-10/adani-godda-power-plant-threatened-by-land-owner-court-action/12439624>

Adani power plant and coal plans threatened by land owner court action

Stephen Long, *ABC*, 10/07/2020

Villagers around Godda in the state of Jharkhand, north-eastern India are opposed to a thermal coal-fired power plant owned by Adani Power Limited, which has a contract to supply electricity to neighbouring Bangladesh.

It is more than 8,000 kilometres from Godda to the Galilee Basin in Queensland.

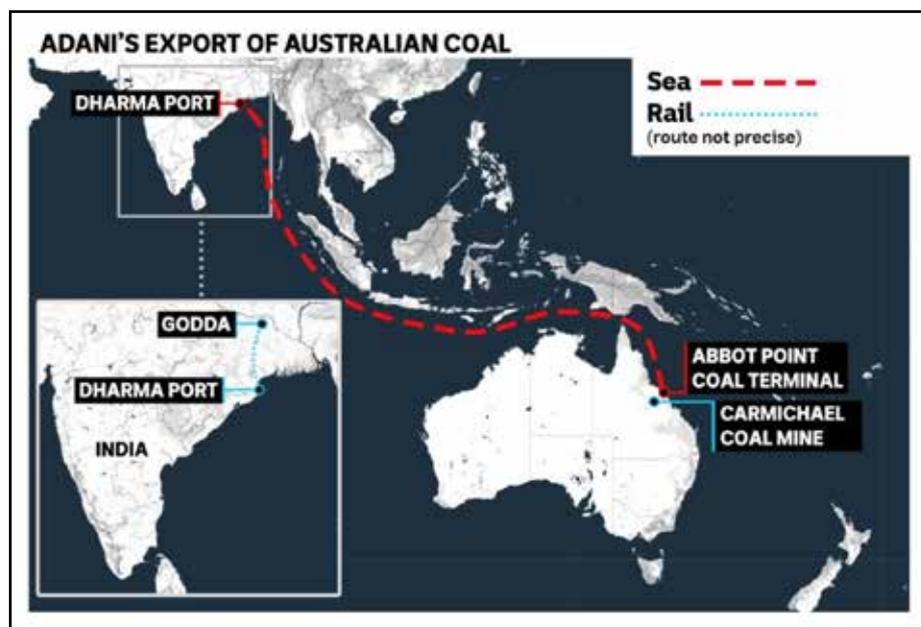
Yet the two districts are entwined: coal from Adani's Carmichael mine, currently being built in Australia's last untapped coal region, is expected to supply fuel for the power plant at Godda.

The power plant is subject to a legal challenge before the High Court of Jharkhand.

The case filed with the court accuses Adani and its agents of using "coercion, fraud [and] undue influence" to illegally exclude thousands of people affected by the development from a required social impact assessment.

In a highly unusual move, Adani posted this statement on Twitter in answer to the ABC's questions at roughly the same time as it sent it to the ABC, well ahead of publication.

"Today we received a media inquiry from ABC's [Stephen Long] who has written a number of stories about Adani. Stephen has often omitted facts



Adani's coal route from Queensland to India. Graphic: ABC

provided to him by Adani to create a negative perception of our business. We have decided to share our response to his questions below ...

The court case also challenges the forced takeover of land for the development by the State Government on behalf of Adani.

Under Indian law, a government can only acquire land for a private company if the project is for "public purpose".

The claimants argue the project does not meet the definition of "public purpose" under the law.

Part of their argument is that the power plant will have few local benefits, since the electricity will all be exported and the coal used to generate the power will all be imported – largely from Australia.

"It is crystal clear from the various documents of Adani Power Limited that the power which shall be generated from this private project shall be exported to Bangladesh [while] the coal shall be imported from Australia ... to Dharma Port and transported to the project covering a distance of around 700km causing immense pollution in transportation.

"Thus, there is not even a semblance of public interest."

Critics argue the electricity will be expensive – far higher than Bangladesh would pay if it simply purchased electricity from India on the open market.

"The contract is costs plus, plus, plus," says Tim Buckley, the head of energy research at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, a think tank that supports a transition to clean energy.

"Adani is able to pass through the costs of expensive coal from Australia, infrastructure and transport to the price.

"It will be delivering power at about double the normal price and triple the current price that they [Bangladesh] could have bought it for wholesale on the Indian power market."

<https://www.afr.com/companies/mining/adani-mining-ceo-lucas-dow-steps-down-20200710-p55ayf>

Adani Mining CEO Lucas Dow steps down

Mark Ludlow, *AFR*, 10/07/2020

Adani Mining chief executive Lucas Dow has suddenly stepped down from the top job only a year before the first coal is expected to be exported from the controversial \$2 billion Carmichael mine in Central Queensland.

Dow, who was appointed in April 2018 to get the high-profile coal mine across the line, will stay with Adani Mining as a non-executive director.

Current project director and former BHP general manager David Boshoff will take over as chief executive, based in Adani's Townsville office.

<https://inql.com.au/business/2020/07/10/adani-ceo-quits-with-mine-still-a-year-away-and-legal-battles-to-come/>

Adani CEO quits with mine still a year away and legal battles to come

John McCarthy, In Queensland, 10/07/2020

Lucas Dow has mysteriously stood aside as the Adani chief executive with the controversial Carmichael coal project still about a year away from production.

The company said the decision came as the Carmichael mine development was well underway. Dow will become a non-executive director of the company's Australian mining division.

COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/like-throwing-a-grenade-historic-town-braces-for-coal-mining-threat-20200709-p55a1b.html>

'Like throwing a grenade': historic town braces for coal mining threat

Peter Hannam, SMH, 11/07/2020

Residents of a historic village in the Hunter Valley have vowed to resist plans for mining in their region after a new government map designated the Wollombi region for coal exploration.

Wollombi, which means the "meeting place of the waters" in the local Indigenous language, is a popular destination for Sydneysiders coming up the convict-built Great North Road through the Wollemi National Park.

The release last month of the Berejiklian government's Future of Coal statement identified a region just to the north of the village as one of NSW's 13 exploration zones for the fossil fuel.

In launching the report, Deputy Premier John Barilaro said coal mining directly employed 28,600 people and in the wake of drought, bushfires and the coronavirus pandemic, coal's role "has never been more important".

"It's like throwing in a grenade to get people angry," said Simone Smith, president of the Wollombi Valley Progress Association, which has fought off previous threats to the town's heritage values, from coal seam gas to a proposed army training area. "We want to stop [coal mining] before it gains any momentum."

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/hunter-valley-ponders-a-future-of-dwindling-coal-20200712-p555bag.html>

Hunter Valley ponders a future of dwindling coal

Peter Hannam, SMH, 13/07/2020

Hunter Valley councils and unions are preparing for a future without coal but say curbs on the Port of Newcastle imposed after the privatisation of ports near Sydney and Wollongong will hold back the transition.

Coal-dominated Singleton and Muswellbrook are among 10 councils in the Hunter Joint Organisation that are stepping up efforts to promote farming, renewable energy and tourism to wean the local economy off fossil fuels.

Singleton mayor Sue Moore says her region sends \$340 million a year in royalties to the state's coffers, with about half the economy reliant on the 17 active coal mines there.

"It's not so much about replacing coal, it's about diversification," Cr Moore said, noting some mines are getting approval for 20 years more or longer. "The mining industry's not going to shut down tomorrow."

Farming, from mushrooms to medicinal cannabis, will underpin the transition, said Cr Moore, who runs Angus cattle on her nearby farm. Education and clean energy will also drive new jobs.

One obstacle, though, will be curbs imposed on the Port of Newcastle's ability to develop its container operations to a level that would rival Port Kembla and Port Botany, following their \$5 billion privatisation in 2013.

<https://www.amsj.com.au/gas-explosion-at-fitzroy-resources-carborough-downs-mine/>

Gas explosion at Fitzroy Resources Carborough Downs mine

Australasian Mine Safety Journal, 12/07/2020

A methane gas ignition has occurred at the Fitzroy Australia Resources Carborough Downs underground coal mine near Copabella in Central Queensland.

Mine owner Fitzroy Resources has confirmed the ignition occurred in the rib line of a longwall development area on Friday night [July 10].

A company spokesman said no one was injured in the "localised" incident. The flame was quickly and safely extinguished by the crew in that area of the mine," he said.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/anthony-chisholm-breaks-labor-ranks-to-back-new-acland-coal-mine/news-story/0b344d56700965675fd75fe8e093206b>

Anthony Chisholm breaks Labor ranks to back New Acland coal mine

Michael McKenna, Aus, 13/07/2020

The architect of Anastacia Palaszczuk's election as Queensland Premier has called on her government to show "boldness" and approve the stalled extension of the New Acland coalmine or face further job losses.

Queensland Labor senator Anthony Chisholm, the former ALP state secretary who ran Ms Palaszczuk's successful 2015 election campaign, says the \$900m expansion of the depleted mine on the Darling Downs should be given the green light even before a challenge to the project is heard in the High Court.

Senator Chisholm is now the third federal Labor MP, behind opposition frontbenchers Shayne Neumann and Joel Fitzgibbon, to break ranks with the state Labor government over the past week in demanding an immediate end to the impasse over the project.

Palaszczuk has repeatedly stated the government won't make a decision until the final challenge is determined by the courts.

The Oakey Coal Action Alliance secured special leave last month to appeal to the High Court.

<https://www.thechronicle.com.au/news/activists-slam-federal-labor-mps-over-acland-mine-/4054755/>

Activists slam Federal Labor MPs over Acland mine support

The Chronicle, 11/07/2020

Activists who oppose the New Acland Coal Mine stage three expansion have slammed some Federal Labor MPs who this week came out in support of the mine.

Labor frontbenchers Shayne Neumann and Joel Fitzgibbon broke ranks with their State Labor colleagues on Thursday, calling on the expansion to be approved.

The State Labor Government has so far refused to issue final approvals for the project, which has been in a protracted legal battle since the middle of the 2010s.

Oakey Coal Action Alliance secretary Paul King took specific aim at Fitzgibbon, a New South Wales-based MP.

"Southerner Joel Fitzgibbon should let Queenslanders make their own decisions," he said.

“Even in his own state of NSW, the State Government is now saying there will be a decline in thermal coal exports because around the world, and here at home, renewable energy projects are the cheaper, cleaner, and less invasive way to generate power.

“Rather than supporting New Hope, Mr Fitzgibbon should instead stand up for coal workers in Queensland and NSW by supporting a long-term plan to ensure their job security as global coal demand declines.”

King said automation would lead to job losses at the New Acland Coal Mine.

<https://www.frasercoastchronicle.com.au/news/albos-gag-order-on-queensland-mine/4056480/>

Albo's gag order on Queensland mine

Michael Wray, Courier-Mail, 14/07/2020

Opposition Leader Anthony Albanese has tried to silence his team from discussing a controversial coal mine expansion on the Darling Downs.

The *Courier-Mail* has been told Mr Albanese's office attempted to muzzle Labor polities yesterday over a push from colleagues to pressure the Queensland Government into urgently approving a \$900 million expansion of the New Acland mine, near Oakey.

The stalling recently led a ginger group of senior Federal Labor figures to speak out, including Queensland frontbencher Shayne Neumann and Senator Anthony Chisholm.

The *Courier-Mail* yesterday asked the remaining seven Queensland federal Labor MPs and senators if they backed the call to quickly approve the mine.

Three MPs responded however none backed the position of the rebel group.

Senators Murray Watt and Nita Green as well as environment spokeswoman Terri Butler declined to comment.

Oxley MP Milton Dick did not respond before deadline.

Sources said there had been an “edict” from Mr Albanese's office to avoid questions about the mine.

A spokesman for Mr Albanese denied anyone had been told not to talk, saying it was “really a matter for everyone to decide what they want to do in terms of getting back”.

<https://www.newcastleherald.com.au/story/6830299/push-to-introduce-coal-ash-dumping-levy-for-power-stations/>

Hunter Community Environment Centre floats plan for coal ash dumping levy

Matthew Kelly, Newcastle Herald, 14/07/2020

Introducing a levy for the dumping of coal-ash would result in a significant reduction in the volume of the pollutant across the region, environment advocacy group Hunter Community Environment Centre believes.

Coal-ash, a by-product of coal-fired power generation, makes up about 20 per cent of Australia's national waste-stream and takes up large tracts of land around Lake Macquarie and the Upper Hunter.

The region's power stations have been repeatedly fined for the poor management of coal ash.

Hunter Community Environment Centre Spokesperson Jo Lynch said, “The government should apply levy on the dumping of coal-ash so energy companies have an incentive to deal with this mounting waste issue.

“Coal-ash can be used as a substitute for limestone in cement and in a range of building products and is exempt from regulations that apply to all other types of waste dumped in NSW to encourage its reuse rather than disposal.

“The introduction of a fee or levy, under the Load-Based Licencing scheme for every tonne of coal-ash dumped would see drastic reduction in the volume of coal-ash dumped in the first place and provide a real incentive for energy companies to make use of the growing market for their coal-ash waste.”

OIL & GAS LEAKS

<https://www.begadistrictnews.com.au/story/6825534/nsw-government-tells-nsw-farmers-it-will-implement-csg-rules/>

Narrabri Gas Project to be subject to recommendations from 2014 report by NSW Chief Scientist

Andrew Messenger, Bega District News, 09/07/2020

The state government will implement years-old recommendations of a 2014 report into coal seam gas development by the NSW Chief Scientist, NSW Farmers have been told.

The 16 recommendations include that landholders and residents receive “fair and appropriate” compensation for any negative effects above threshold levels caused by the industry.

In the six years since, fewer than half of the recommendations have been legislated, a parliamentary committee found earlier this year.

NSW Farmers' State President James Jackson revealed he has received an “undertaking from a junior government Minister” it will implement the remaining ones.

Jackson said the most important recommendation was that farmers be “indemnified against third party impact and indeed the water, the impact on the water table and ensuring that that's minimised.

The 2014 report also recommended adopting a “robust and comprehensive” insurance policy for the industry, that the sector pay for its own regulation, that government establish an expert advisory body into the industry and that data about the industry be shared publicly through an online repository.

A spokesperson for the Department of Regional NSW said they had responded to 15 or 16 of the Chief Scientist's recommendations in the NSW Gas plan.

“Good progress is being made on the outstanding response to Recommendation Four, regarding the recovery of costs from industry,” they said.

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/gas-giant-santos-studies-blue-hydrogen-expansion-20200713-p55bo2.html>

Gas giant Santos studies 'blue hydrogen' expansion

Nick Toscano, SMH, 14/07/2020

Santos is exploring the potential to produce hydrogen out of natural gas at its operations in the Cooper Basin, becoming the latest gas giant to eye an expansion into the fuel that many believe is primed to play a crucial role in the world's future energy mix.

Santos said it had engaged prominent consultancy firm GHD to conduct a study for a pilot program in its Cooper Basin operations for the production of “blue hydrogen”. Blue hydrogen is hydrogen created from natural gas that also uses carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology to capture the emissions caused in the conversion process.

Santos' carbon capture and storage project at the Moomba Gas plant, which would capture 1.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide each year, is subject to the methodology being approval by the federal government's Emissions Reduction Fund. Santos

and GHD aim to complete the concept study on hydrogen by the year's end.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/narrabri-struggling-with-delays-to-santos-csg-project/news-story/a6e4088a474a0cd3186f34353ffc9384>

Narrabri struggling with delays to Santos CSG project

Perry Williams, Aus, 13/07/2020

The NSW town of Narrabri may struggle to accommodate workers building Santos's \$3.5bn coal-seam gas project and a local section of the commonwealth's \$10bn Inland Rail line should the energy development be further delayed, the Narrabri Shire Council has warned.

The NSW Independent Planning Commission met with the council in Narrabri on July 7, discussing a range of issues concerning the project.

If "the Santos project gets stalled again, we will be having major concerns", Narrabri shire deputy mayor Cameron Staines told the IPC. "We'll be having two big significant projects happening at the same time."

The Inland Rail route runs through the region's Pilliga Forest and bypasses Santos's Leewood water treatment plant, according to the council, which voted in favour of the major gas project at a November meeting.

IPC panel chair Steve O'Connor and commissioners John Hann and Professor Snow Barlow took a two-day tour of the Narrabri project last week, including a full-day site inspection in the Pilliga Forest with Santos staff and a small number of "independent community observers" selected by the IPC to join the visit because of their submissions on the gas development.

The Narrabri council was also asked for its opinion over whether it preferred Santos to opt for APA to build a pipeline to deliver gas to market or an alternative \$1.2bn Hunter pipeline.

"I think we'll take that one on notice, please, commissioner, because we would like – we've got some fairly strong views on that, and we'd like to make sure we put that on the record," Narrabri shire executive manager of planning and environment Daniel Boyce told the IPC.

The fairness of expecting local landowners to track any decline in water availability from another resources project in the region was also raised by the council, arguing it would be difficult for a family-owned farm to navigate the process.

CLIMATE CRISIS

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/news/2020/07/09/australia-export-fossil-fuels/>

Passing the pollution: Australia becomes world's biggest exporter of coal and gas

Cait Kelly, New Daily, 09/07/2020

Australia is now the biggest exporter of climate change, leading the world in selling coal and gas, a new report reveals.

Emissions from nations which bought our gas, coal and oil increased by 4.4 per cent between 2018 and 2019, with Australia now the world's biggest coal and gas producing country, the report from UNSW says.

Our exported emissions are now greater than the domestic pollution of Germany, Canada, Turkey and the UK.

"Not only is Australia a laggard in meeting its UN Paris emission reduction targets, but it is also now the world's largest exporter of coal and gas," the authors wrote.

Australia has been on track to become the world's bigger carbon dioxide polluter for a while, with a report from The Australian Conservation Foundation last year warning we would hit the milestone soon.

Lead researcher and professor of political philosophy Jeremy Moss said the report calls for fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty, removal of the \$47 billion worth of subsidies for the fossil fuel industry and phasing out production constant with climate goals.

https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jul/10/nsw-government-says-renewable-energy-zone-in-new-england-could-power-35m-homes?CMP=Share_i0-SApp_Other

NSW government says renewable energy zone in New England could power 3.5m homes

Lisa Cox & Adam Morton, Guardian, 10/07/2020

The NSW government aims to back renewable energy plants in the New England region with the capacity to power 3.5m homes, with the state's environment minister saying enough will be built to replace most of the state's coal-fired power stations earlier than scheduled.

Matt Kean, the minister for energy and the environment, will on Friday announce a second renewable energy zone for the state, following a previously planned designated area in the state's central west.

He said the latest announcement – that the government would look to attract investors to build 8,000 megawatts of wind and solar in the New England region in the state's north – was effectively "a huge, modern-day power station".

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.goulburnpost.com.au/story/6824253/costumed-protesters-dance-in-streets-and-bag-out-gas/>

Extinction Rebellion stages protest outside Angus Taylor's office

Louise Thrower, Goulburn Post, 08/07/2020

Protesters dressed in quirky, cone-shaped outfits, big hats and waving placards paraded Goulburn's main street on Wednesday morning.



Photo: Goulburn Post

Twenty members of the group, Extinction Rebellion, gathered outside Hume MP Angus Taylor's office as part of a protest about gas projects. Earlier they had draped the former AMP building with a sign – 'Now we're cooking with gas.'

Spokesman Josh Winestock said the group, which backed action on climate change and halting biodiversity loss, wanted to "put the focus on Angus Taylor."

"We certainly don't think he's doing a good job in reducing carbon emissions," he said.

"...He is totally supporting gas-led projects despite the fact scientists don't support them and they will drive up emissions."

https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/jul/09/us-push-to-ease-global-energy-controls-as-it-hands-fossil-fuels-3bn?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

US push to ease global energy controls as it hands fossil fuels \$3bn

Fiona Harvey, *Guardian*, 10/07/2020

The US has argued for less regulation of the world's energy systems, speaking out against the policy interventions promoting clean energy that are central to a "green recovery" from the coronavirus crisis.

Dan Brouillette, the US energy secretary, told a global summit of energy ministers, focused on sustainable recovery, that democracies should choose the free market over policies such as taxes, regulations and climate risk assessments on companies that would "steer people away from some energy sources and in the direction of others".

The US has devoted at least \$3bn in coronavirus bailout cash to more than 5,600 fossil fuel companies, according to an analysis by the *Guardian* and Documented.

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/the-economy/mystifying-minister-backs-coal-as-super-fund-vows-to-exit-20200709-p55ako.html>

'Mystifying': Minister backs coal as super fund vows to exit

Nick Toscano, *SMH*, 10/07/2020

Federal Resources Minister Keith Pitt has spoken out against the superannuation sector's latest move to divest coal miners because of climate risks, saying Australian coal would remain highly sought after by power generators and an attractive investment for decades.

The nation's second-largest superannuation fund, First State Super, on Wednesday pledged to divest its holdings in miners that earn more than 10% of their revenue from thermal coal – the heaviest-polluting energy source – as part of a push to shield its members' retirement savings from the threat of global warming.

In response, the Morrison government cited International Energy Agency forecasts that coal would remain a key player in global energy generation for at least another 20 years, with Mr Pitt questioning the rationale behind First State's decision.

While the \$130 billion fund did not specify which stocks will be dumped in October, its portfolio includes ASX-listed coal miners such as Whitehaven, New Hope and Washington H. Soul Pattinson.

Dan Gocher, head of climate at the Australasian Centre for Corporate Responsibility, a shareholder activist group, said First State's new climate plan was a "solid commitment" and "another sign that everybody is seeing the end of coal".

Australia is the second-largest producer of thermal coal after Indonesia. Last year, thermal coal exports accounted for \$26 billion in export income. However, the federal government forecasts earnings will shrink to \$19 billion by 2020-21 as lower prices offset higher export volumes.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jul/11/how-australia-state-energy-ministers-are-turning-the-tables-on-angus-taylor>

How Australia's state energy ministers are turning the tables on Angus Taylor

Simon Holmes a Court, *Guardian*, 11/07/2020

Matt Kean, the newly minted NSW energy minister, made it clear his government would respond to the climate science and embrace the opportunities presented by decarbonising the economy.

"To those vested interests and ideologues who want to stand in the way of this transition, I say enjoy your Kodak moment," he said.

Undeterred by attacks from the Murdoch media and even the prime minister, Scott Morrison, over the following months, Kean set about turning the tables in NSW.

Under Kean's Rez plan, the state is stepping in to facilitate the development of infrastructure to support 11 gigawatts of new renewables – 3GW in the central west, near Dubbo, and 8GW in the New England region. Both Rezs have excellent wind and solar resources, and opportunities for pumped hydro energy storage.

Angus Taylor, the federal minister for energy and emissions reductions, is famously no fan of renewable energy or of setting meaningful emissions reduction targets. On electricity, the state energy ministers – right across the political spectrum – are charging ahead without him, which is perhaps as it should be, given that electricity is the states' responsibility.

Every state and territory has now formally signed on to a net-zero emissions target by no later than 2050, a target backed by business, unions and the opposition – yet the federal government and its donors stand in the way.

F

fossilfool.com.au

FOCUS
Publications

Fossil Fool Bulletin is published Tuesdays (in your email Wednesday).



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



SIGN UP for your FREE subscription
Past issues available to download

**SAVING THE LAND, AIR AND WATER
FOR THE KIDDIES**

www.knitting-nannas.com

