



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 3:28 • 21 JULY 2020

Gas pressure mounts in Narrabri

The Knitting Nannas have made their presence felt in Narrabri, NSW, as the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) holds a week of hearings into the Santos Narrabri Gas Project.

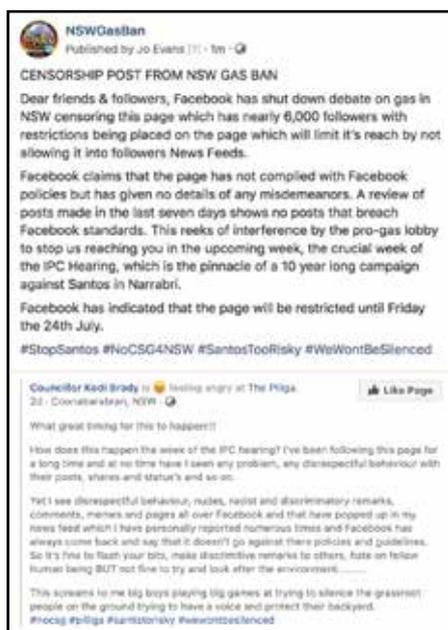
The Nannas received a brief visit from police when they mounted an action outside Santos' premises, but were left to continue their peaceful protest.

Another community group opposed to the gasfield – North West Protection Advocacy – has had its Facebook page blocked until Friday, conveniently covering the exact period of the IPC hearings. Facebook has issued a standard explanation about community standards, yet the page shows no evidence of offending material (see screenshot).

The hearings – being held on-line – will continue through this week, while people have until the end of July to make a written submission.



Police check out the Knitting Nannas at Santos HQ in Narrabri. Photo: Gwilym Summers



Opening highlights of IPC hearings

Daniel Pedersen of *The Land* covered the first days of hearings, and highlights included:

- Narrabri Mayor, Cathy Redding, spoke in favour of the development.
- Newcastle City Councillor John Mackenzie labelled the notion of making glass with salt waste from the project as “far-fetched” and said Santos has no viable waste management strategy for the 430,000 tonnes of salt waste to be produced during the project’s life. Eleven landfill sites have been identified as capable of taking salt, but there were many unanswered questions about their suitability.
- Gilgandra Councillor Lindsay Mathieson said his council had closed four landfill sites, leaving only one for the shire and that would not be able to take the salt.

- Dubbo Regional Councillor Stephen Lawrence said it was “widely expected” that the IPC would approve the project, but urged commissioners to accept the Narrabri Gas Project had no social licence. Cr Lawrence was concerned that pipelines and gasfields would intrude into the Dubbo region.
- Lock the Gate’s Georgina Woods said if the NSW Chief Scientist’s recommendations from 2013 had been adopted “we wouldn’t be here today”. She said the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment’s assessment had not considered the principle of ecologically sustainable development.
- Structural geologist Julian Mackinlay-King, from Free CSG North West, said there was great danger of gas wells breaking into aquifers.
- Narrabri District Chamber of Commerce president Russell Stewart said

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Opening highlights Narrabri of IPC hearings

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he and his organisation overwhelmingly supported the project.

• Simon Pockley, a Warrumbungles resident for 45 years, said he had a spring on his property which had never stopped running, even in drought. "When Santos speaks of depressurising aquifers I believe I will lose that spring."

• Rod Campbell from The Australia Institute said the institute had been following the Narrabri Gas Project for 10 years. He said the project's potential economic benefits had been overstated and Santos had the project on its books as being worth nothing, yet the company's Environmental Impact Statement suggested it would be worth \$1.5 billion. "They (the claims) can't both be right."

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Planning Dept ignores water supply

Farmers east of the Pilliga fear they have been "erased" from the NSW Planning Department's assessment of the Santos Narrabri gas field.

Fifteen bores, which connect to the deep water of the Gunnedah Oxley Basin, were referenced in Santos' original Groundwater Impact Assessment.

But there is no mention of them in the Planning Department's assessment of the project.

What's more, warnings from the Water Expert Panel convened to advise on the project say the crude model used by Santos has "poor predictive capacity in relation to the impact of production of the surrounding impacted water sources," meaning these water users may be left high and dry.

The Department of Planning's Water Division has made clear that the model being used by Santos cannot predict impacts on landholder's bores and has said "limited information about water

supply works is available for the Gunnedah-Oxley Basin."

Much of the attention of the assessment has so far focused on the productive shallow aquifers of the region which most farmers use – the Namoi Alluvium and the Pilliga Sandstone and the degree to which these will be affected by depressurisation and dewatering deep below.

But Gunnedah Oxley Basin water user Mal Donaldson said the Planning Department had totally overlooked the threat the gasfield posed to his and other nearby farmers' water supplies.

There are naturally occurring high levels of methane in one of Donaldson's bores.

He said this indicated a likely connection between the coal seams Santos was targeting, and the basin.

"I am seriously concerned that should Santos' destructive gas field go ahead, my water bore will become a gas bore," Donaldson said.

"My father had this bore drilled over nine months in 1953-54, yet the Planning Department behaves like it doesn't exist.

"This is an insult to farmers in this region. We exist. Our farms exist and they rely on this water. If the Planning Commission ignores us too, it could have far reaching, negative implications for us."

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Farmer forms CRAP

Yet another community group has emerged in the battle to against the Narrabri gasfield and its associated infrastructure: Concerned Residents Against the Pipeline (CRAP).

Founded by Peter Wills, a farmer near Breeza, CRAP aims to stop the Hunter Gas Company from building a pipeline from Narrabri to Newcastle via Quirindi. The pipeline would run within Quirindi's town water supply – the pipe actually being buried in the water.

Hunter Gas Co has revived an old scheme for the pipeline following hostility from the Pilliga community to APA's plan to pipe Narrabri gas to meet the Moomba-Sydney pipeline.

APA representatives and their security detail were run out of town by angry farmers on the pipeline route.

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Santos' cheap gas promise contradicted

The NSW Planning Department's director has contradicted Santos over the impact its unpopular Narrabri gasfield would have on gas prices in the first day of the Independent Planning Commission's public hearings into the project.

The Department's representative David Kitto, Executive Director of Resource Assessments, told the hearing the project would produce a small amount of gas compared to the whole market. "No one is saying and we are certainly not saying in our assessment that the Narrabri gas project will reduce gas prices."

Kitto downplayed community opposition to the Narrabri Gas Project. Of the submissions received, many were form letters and 98% were against the project. He said only 470 were from the local area, and 37% of those were in favour.

"Although the majority of the submissions from the local area did oppose the project, there was still greater support for the project in the local area than there was from the rest of the state and other jurisdictions across Australia and overseas," Kitto said.

Lock the Gate Alliance NSW spokesperson Georgina Woods said Santos'

gasfield would do nothing to bring down the price of gas in NSW or further afield.

"Santos, along with Origin Energy, and Shell, are the architects of the gas price crisis in this country because they built the LNG export terminals in Gladstone and locked in long term fixed price contracts with customers.

"Australia is awash with gas – we have been, at various times over the last year and a half, the world's biggest exporter of LNG.

"But that means nothing for local manufacturers, who still face high prices due to export contracts in place."

Woods said publicly available departmental documents showed gas prices needed to remain high for the project to be economically viable for Santos.

Santos' economic assessment of the gasfield, prepared in 2016, estimated a constant gas price of \$8.70 per GJ, including the cost of transport to Sydney.

Modelling done for the EIS indicated that if the price were 30% lower, at \$6.09 per GJ, the gasfield would have a net negative economic contribution.

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Fracking report labelled misleading

A study purported to be from the CSIRO that showed that fracking was “safe for the environment” was actually overseen by the gas industry, and was based on just six of Queensland’s 19,000 coal seam gas wells, according to new analysis by The Australia Institute.

The report was published by the Gas Industry Social and Environmental Research Alliance (GISERA) but was presented by the industry and Federal Resource Minister Keith Pitt as “CSIRO report confirms CSG fracking is safe for the environment”.

GISERA is an alliance of fracking companies, including Santos, Origin Energy, Shell, China National Offshore Oil Corporation and Tokyo Gas, and the CSIRO.

Key findings:

Australia Institute analysis found that while the GISERA research may be able to provide data about fracking activities at the six Origin Energy wells examined in the research over a six month period, it says nothing about the wider population (99.97%) of wells of Coal Seam Gas (CSG) wells in QLD or even about those six wells before or after that period. That is because:

- The selection of the sites was effectively outsourced to the target company (Origin Energy) and as such is subject to potential selection bias.
- Even if the wells were randomly selected, the small sample of wells studied means that it would have little chance of finding serious cases of contamination and has a 40% margin of error to its findings. (FFB note: Even a 1% of sample 19,000 CSG wells would require a random selection of 190.)
- The research itself acknowledges the design of the study was specific to activity being carried out at those six wells.
- The report highlights the perils of industry funding and overseeing research into its own activities.

Key issues include:

- Gas companies Santos and APLNG (led by Origin) paid 75% of the \$2.26 million research budget of the GISERA air water and soil fracking impacts research.

GISERA should publicly correct the inaccurate claim of Minister Pitt’s media release that the ‘CSIRO report confirms fracking is safe for the environment’. The credibility of GISERA is fatally compromised by having gas company executives on its research management committees.

– Prof Ian Lowe

- Gas industry executives make up almost half of the National Research Management Committee (NRMC) and around 30% of the Queensland Regional Research Advisory Committee (RCAC). These committees oversee the design the methodology and the research.

- GISERA’s conflict of interest policy is inadequate for managing the conflict of interest with proponent companies, requiring only that they self-evaluate and discuss any issues with the GISERA Director.

The concerns have been echoed by leading scientists.

“It is particularly concerning that the gas industry, through GISERA, has influence over the communication of the results,” said Professor Penny Sackett, Former Chief Scientist for Australia.

“The GISERA media release frames the research as finding “little or no impacts” of fracking, while the reports themselves do not use this language. In fact, the reports emphasise that the results are not representative or scalable for Queensland CSG operations as a whole, and express concern about significant adverse effects associated with potential spills of fracking fluids,” Professor Sackett said.

Professor Ian Lowe of Griffith University said, “What the GISERA research shows is that no short-term environmental problems were found at six sites chosen by the operator. It says nothing about either the long-term risks at those sites or the safety of the other sites among the 19,000 operated.”

“GISERA should publicly correct the inaccurate claim of Minister Pitt’s

media release that the ‘CSIRO report confirms fracking is safe for the environment’.

“The credibility of GISERA is fatally compromised by having gas company executives on its research management committees. The way GISERA operates does not pass the pub test,” Professor Lowe said.

Mark Ogge, principal adviser at the Australia Institute said, “Our research demonstrates why it is simply not good enough to have the fracking industry funding and overseeing investigations into its own impacts.”

“If the asbestos industry funded research into the health impacts of its products and had James Hardy executives involved in designing the methodology and overseeing the research it would not be considered credible. This is no different.

“The CSIRO has built a global reputation for independent and impartial science. It should reconsider lending its brand to this kind of compromised research.”

Call for public correction

The analysis of GISERA air, water and soil fracking report, by Mark Ogge, principal advisor at The Australia Institute, made the following recommendations:

- GISERA should publicly correct the inaccurate claim of Minister Pitt’s media release that the “CSIRO report confirms fracking is safe for the environment”;
- GISERA should remove all gas company executives from its research management committees;
- Future research into the impacts of unconventional gas should be independent research groups at Australian universities;
- Commonwealth or state governments should levy gas companies to fund necessary research and commission independent research bodies at Australian universities to carry out the research. This will remove the problematic link between gas funding and research.

• **Download the report here:**

<https://www.tai.org.au/content/csir-who-closer-look-recent-research-coal-seam-gas-environmental-impacts>

G20 analysis: Australian Covid stimulus spending four times more on fossil fuels than clean energy



Photo: John W Banagan/Getty

Ahead of the G20 Finance Ministers' meeting this month, 14 expert organisations from around the globe, including the Australia Institute, have launched a COVID-19 tracker of fossil fuel and clean energy stimulus.

The Energy Policy Tracker shows that the world's 20 richest countries, who together account for 80% of global greenhouse gas emissions, have committed more than US\$150 billion of public money to support fossil fuels since the start of the COVID-19 crisis this year.

The new research reveals as of late June 2020, Australian Governments have committed almost four times as much public funding to fossil fuel projects than clean energy.

Key Finds

- Total commitment from G20 governments in support of fossil fuels since the beginning of the pandemic: USD 151 billion; of them, only 20% make financial support conditional on green requirements, such as setting climate targets or implementing pollution reduction plans.
- Total commitment from G20 governments in support of clean energy: at least USD 89 billion, 81% of this support is unspecific about the appropriate environmental safeguards.
- At least USD 479.51 million has been committed by Australian governments in unconditional fossil fuel support through seven policies.
- Only USD 121.67 million has been committed by Australian governments for clean energy through eight policies.

"A growing number of coalitions of investors and real economy stakeholders are advocating for a recovery aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement. But many have still not got the message," stated United Nations Secretary General António Guterres in a message to the International Energy Agency, foreshadowing the launch of this report.

"New research on G20 recovery packages released this week shows that twice as much recovery money – taxpayers' money – has been spent on fossil fuels as clean energy. Today I would like to urge all leaders to choose the clean energy route."

Aus govts continue to prop up coal, gas

"Australian governments continue to prop up the coal and natural gas sectors with fee waivers, fast-tracked projects and direct investments, further entrenching Australia's position as the third largest exporter of fossil fuels in the world," says Richie Merzian, Director Climate & Energy Program at The Australia Institute

"It will be disappointing but not surprising if Australia misses the opportunity to lever the economic recovery from COVID-19 to address the climate crisis that only a few months earlier contributed to unprecedented bush fires across the country.

"Australia is worse than the United States in proportional support for fossil fuels over clean energy and should look to the United Kingdom as an example of how to prioritise the energy systems of the future, versus entrenching those of the past."

NT goes for gas

Protect Territory Alliance has slammed the NT Gunner Government's illogical obsession with fracking following the announcement it would adopt all 15 recommendations in the gas-baron led Territory Economic Reconstruction Commission's interim report.

"Sadly, this is what we expected would happen when the Gunner Government named two frack fans, Andrew Liveris and Paul Henderson, as head of the Commission," Protect Country Alliance spokesperson Graeme Sawyer said.

Sawyer said alarmingly, the report made reference to "liquids" that could be tapped in the Beetaloo Basin.

"We know that for many of these fracking companies, oil and gas liquids are part of their plan, and this report further proves it," Sawyer said.

"But the Pepper Inquiry never even looked into the extraction and transport risks for liquids from the Beetaloo.

"To see the Gunner Government pushing ahead with plans for a gas led economy is also especially ironic as it coincides with the release of the scathing Samuels Report into the failings of the EPBC act, which found 'Australia's environment was getting worse under the laws designed to protect it'.

"This all makes it even more alarming given Mr Gunner wants to do away with due process and important checks and balances to 'fast track' assessment processes."

Sawyer said a clearer example of EPBC's failure could not be found than the fracking in the NT.

"The Gunner Government is encouraging the fracking industry to lay waste to Territory communities and the environment without even going through the necessary checks and balances," he said.

"We cannot allow this to happen, particularly for a destructive, polluting industry that has so far leached around \$100 million of taxpayer dollars and hasn't produced anything in return."

Political coal mine push condemned

Farmers have condemned a recent push from a small fringe minority of federal Labor Party politicians to have the destructive New Acland coal mine expansion approved.

Dairy farmer David Vonhoff, who lives just four kilometres from where the new mine's border would be if approved, said he feared there would be serious draining of the groundwater he relies on to water his 200 cows if the expansion went ahead.

He said he had struggled to feed his cattle during the recent drought, and if groundwater was compromised, it would have a massive impact on his, and the surrounding four other dairy farming operations.

Collectively, the farms produce more than 10 million litres of milk annually.

"During the drought I would cut the grass on the roadside, rake it up to the fence and walk along with a pitchfork just to feed the yearlings," Mr Vonhoff said.

"It was a really stressful time to operate and now we're dealing with what the future could be for our underground water.

"Each stage of this mine has dug deeper coal, and Stage Three has so much more potential for drainage of underground water because it's lower.

"The land they're mining is top prime agricultural land. A big proportion of it would be 10/10."

Farmers on the Darling Downs have long suspected existing activities at New Acland coal mine could be draining water from aquifers, and last year an expert report raised further questions about the coal mine's impact on groundwater.

Oakey Coal Action Alliance secretary Paul King urged the politicians arguing in favour of the mine to meet with the dairy farmers to see what was truly at stake.

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Call to halt assessment of AGL gas terminal while Covid-19 rages

A floating regasification and storage unit (FRSU) at left takes a delivery of liquefied natural gas from an LNG tanker at right. This is what AGL has planned for Crib Point, Westernport Bay, VIC. Photo: Hoegh/Engie



AGL's application for the environmental assessment of a proposed gas terminal in Westernport Bay opened for public feedback last week, with community groups digesting an 11,000 page Environmental Effects Statement.

The project is be a recipe for environmental disaster and disrespectful to the local community, Environment Victoria and Save Westernport said.

"After a summer of weather extremes and fires, now is not the time to be pushing through a new fossil fuel project on Melbourne's doorstep," said Victor Komarovskiy, Environment Victoria community organiser.

"The EES consultation will make clear what is already obvious to us – that AGL's proposal risks destroying much of what we love about the Bay, that it's going to hamper, not help the local economy, and that the vast majority of the local community outright rejects it,"

The groups have also pointed out that but the opportunity for proper public consultation is unfairly limited by Covid-19 restrictions.

Julia Stockigt, spokesperson for local group Save Westernport, said that while the Victorian government has been willing to delay other planning processes owing to Covid restrictions, local community groups are still expected to participate in the complex Environment Effects Statement (EES) process in semi-lockdown.

"40 business days is not enough to properly scrutinise a plan that has taken several years to put together and is thousands of pages long, especially during the coronavirus pandemic that means the opportunity for proper public consultation is severely limited," said Stockigt.

"Nevertheless, this is the public's best opportunity to have their voices heard by making a submission."

Too close to community and wetland

"No country in the world has ever approved a floating gas terminal like AGL's close to a residential community, or in an environmentally sensitive wetland protected by international wildlife conventions."

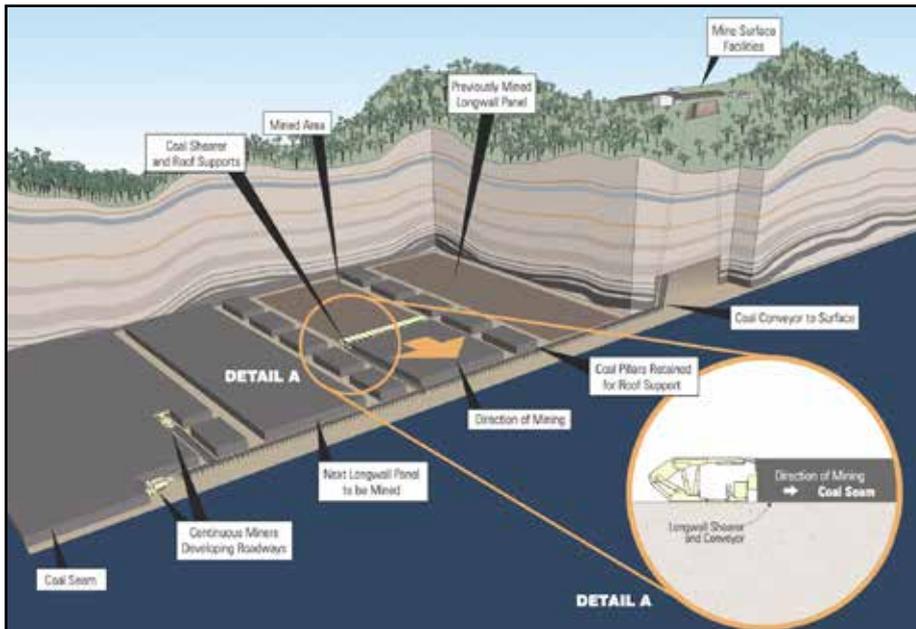
"What the state government does with one hand, like supporting the endangered orange bellied parrot to make Westernport its home, will be taken away with the other hand if this project is approved."

"Westernport communities have fought and stopped bad ideas for 50 years. And AGL thought we'd accept a massive gas import terminal on our beach? This community expects better," Stockigt said.

People are urged to email politicians such as Premier Daniel Andrews or Minister Richard Wynne, asking them to suspend the EES process until Covid-19 restrictions are eased.

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Failing coal company raises alarm bells for taxpayers as operations stall



Wollongong Coal is pursuing plans to expand its Russel Vale Colliery despite de-listing from the ASX amid concerns about its financial viability. Graphic: Wollongong Coal

Wollongong Coal's application to have itself removed from the ASX due to the company's ongoing dire financial situation should ring alarm bells for all NSW taxpayers, given its stalled coal mining operations and current inability to cover its rehabilitation liabilities.

On July 10 Wollongong Coal applied to de-list from the ASX, citing "low levels of liquidity and investor interest" and that the compliance costs of remaining listed on the ASX "are a significant burden".

The company also has zero revenue, negative shareholders funds, and huge debts.

Bizarrely, the financially stricken company is still pushing ahead with plans to proceed with its Russell Vale Colliery Underground Expansion Project and continue mining underneath the Greater Sydney water catchment area for another five years.

In the company's latest Annual Report, Wollongong Coal advised shareholders it expected the Russell Vale application to be referred to the Independent Planning Commission for a final decision by June 2020. Like most things this company has forecast, this has not occurred.

The company's Underground Expansion Project has also been put into further jeopardy by the imposition of

their obligation to realign Bellambi Creek at a cost of \$7.5m.

Wollongong Coal's latest move also comes after it was reported the company's estimated cost of rehabilitating the Russell Vale colliery is \$215M, while the NSW Government holds just \$7.6M in financial assurance.

The Resources Regulator, meanwhile, estimates the clean up cost at \$12,354,410, but it is not clear whether this difference has been paid by the company.

Lock the Gate Alliance NSW spokesperson Nic Clyde called on the Berejiklian Government to rule under the Mining Act that Wollongong Coal is not a "fit and proper person" to hold mining titles, particularly when they extend underneath NSW's critically important water catchment and there is a long history of failed environmental protections.

Independent financial analyst Tim Buckley of IEEFA said, "This company should have had the receivers appointed years ago. Australia's regulators are yet again taking a very lax view in failing to enforce directors duties regarding trading while insolvent."

People keen to save energy

The Facebook page 'My Efficient Electric Home', administered by energy researcher Tim Forcey, now has 17,000 members.

The group shares knowledge on switching off fossil fuels – for example, switching from gas heating to reverse-cycle air conditioners, or from gas water heating to heat pump technology.

The page also shares advice on household solar electric systems, home insulation and energy efficient design. It's a great resource for home improvement.

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Plans to frack the Kimberley

Plans by multinational gas company Black Mountain Energy to frack the iconic and beautiful Kimberley will put the region's lucrative tourism industry, its unique environment, and locals' way of life in danger.

The announcement by the company also comes on the same day serious doubt has been cast over the safety of fracking.

US EPA studies of the impacts of fracking for shale gas, as is proposed in the Kimberley, show evidence that water contamination has occurred due to the drilling and fracking activities.

Kimberley Frack Free Coordinator Shaun Clark said the Kimberley's water and communities should not be put at risk when so many questions remained over the safety of fracking.

"Around the world and in Australia, we have seen this dangerous and destructive industry implicated in multiple water and environmental contamination events," he said.

Lock the Gate Alliance WA spokesperson Simone van Hattem said the west-east pipeline mooted by Black Mountain Energy was likely to be economically unviable.

"This pipeline is an expensive idea that has been roundly criticised, including by gas industry figures and analysts," she said.

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Inside the news



Here it is! **FFB's** mighty new production unit with lots of screen space to run publishing software, InDesign. Thanks to readers for the support which helped buy the new laptop.

Some readers have experienced problems when clicking on **links** in the newsletter. It seems that some links get corrupted while being imported from Microsoft Word. I try and correct them, but if clicking on the link gets you an error message, try typing it into your browser.

I plan, in future, to put a short version of the news summary onto **fossilfool.com.au** which will provide more functional links. I'm still learning the web stuff, so be patient!

As is the case during the **Covid-19** pandemic, most of the news stream for the past week has concerned quarantine, amorous security guards, masks and contact tracing.

Behind the scenes, the fossil fools on the federal government's **National Covid-19 Coordination Commission (NCCC)** are working on plans for a **gas-lead recovery**. Industrialist and gas fan **Andrew Liveris** is an advisor to the NCCC and also to the **Northern Territory** government, which has come up with a predictably gas-fuelled economic recovery plan discussed on page 4. The main-stream media has yet to pay much attention.

Meanwhile, people trying to stop two ugly gas projects – **Santos' Narrabri gasfield** and **AGL's Crib Point gas import terminal** – are struggling with on-line hearings for Narrabri, and an 11,000-page environmental statement from AGL, all during Covid-19 restrictions. Don't give up!



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In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 13,070 words of news for your convenience. [Click on the links](#) to view original articles. (Subscriptions may be required)

THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.nasdaq.com/articles/column-adani-claims-carmichael-coal-win-but-its-a-pyrrhic-victory-built-on-subsidies>

Adani claims Carmichael coal win, but it's a pyrrhic victory built on subsidies

Clyde Russel, Nasdaq, 13/07/2020

Lucas Dow, the outgoing chief executive of Adani Enterprises' Australian operations, signed off with a vigorous defence of the company's controversial Carmichael coal mine, and a spray at the venture's numerous opponents.

Many thought that Adani would be forced to abandon the project in the face of unrelenting opposition by environmental and community groups, the lack of lenders willing to finance the development and a series of legal challenges.

The news that Adani is now pushing ahead with construction of the mine and its associated rail infrastructure, at a cost estimated at more than A\$2 billion (\$1.4 billion), will no doubt be seen by the coal industry as evidence the polluting fuel has a viable future despite increasingly cheaper renewable energy.

"The reality is that coal and renewables are needed to provide a sustainable energy mix," Dow wrote in the article.

It's here where Dow's arguments start to fray, and the more Adani's Carmichael mine is examined, the more it becomes apparent that it is likely to be an outlier, rather than a template for future developments.

Much of the Carmichael mine's finances are shrouded in secrecy, but it appears clear that it can only work with a variety of subsidies from three different governments.

The government of Queensland state is believed to be considering a holiday of some sorts on royalty payments

The Indian government is allowing Adani to build a new coal-fired power plant, known as Godda, where the coal from Carmichael is slated to be burned.

The plant will be located in a special economic zone, meaning Adani will be exempt from certain charges and taxes, and coal import duties.



Machinery has arrived to rip up the ground and expose Adani's coal.

Photo: Cameron Laird

The bulk of the power from Godda is to be sold to neighbouring Bangladesh at a price believed to be well in excess of the rates that Bangladesh could buy power from India on the open market.

What the Carmichael mine shows is that if enough subsidies are granted, even projects that shouldn't be viable can be sustained.

Given the coal mine is unlikely to be profitable at current prices, or indeed at any future higher coal price, as Adani will be able to claim deductions for much of its life, it's also unlikely Carmichael will ever pay much in the way of federal company tax.

Of course, Lucas Dow didn't mention any of the subsidies in his farewell article, nor did he explain how the economics stack up and who benefits beyond the relatively modest number of workers employed to build the mine.

But it's more likely that Carmichael turns out to be a pyrrhic victory for the coal industry, as opposed to the harbinger of future success.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/jul/16/samsung-investment-in-adanis-australian-coal-operation-prompts-call-for-boycott>

Samsung investment in Adani's Australian coal operation prompts call for boycott

Ben Smees, Guardian, 16/07/2020

A company in the Samsung Group invested in Adani's Australian coal operation last year in a deal that has prompted environmental activists to call for a boycott of the Korean conglomerate's flagship electronics products.

Samsung Securities, a publicly-traded brokerage and part of the broader group of affiliated companies that includes Samsung Electronics, purchased a share of \$120m of debt in the Adani-owned Abbot Point coal terminal last year with another Korean firm.

The Adani investment by Samsung Securities has placed the consumer tech arm of the group firmly in the sights of an activist movement that has led boycotts of financial institutions, insurers, engineering firms and other businesses that have dealings with Adani in Australia.

This is despite Samsung Electronics not having made any investment in Adani.

Members of the school climate strike movement held a first protest outside a Samsung store in Sydney on Wednesday, including a pledge to boycott Samsung products, including its



Renew Economy provides clean energy news and analysis in a daily newsletter available at

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/>

market-leading televisions and smart-phones, until the affiliate company ends its relationship with Adani.

Other Australian activist groups, including Market Forces and Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action, have written to Samsung and other Korean investors urging them to provide no additional funding or support to Adani or Abbot Point.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/jul/17/samsung-securities-pledges-no-further-financial-backing-for-adani-coal-after-protest>

Samsung Securities pledges no further financial backing for Adani coal after protest

Graham Readfern, Guardian, 17/07/2020

A company in the Samsung group will not provide any further financial backing for Adani's coal port in Queensland or any of the company's coal projects just days after protests targeted the group's electronics brand.

In an email to campaigners, Samsung Securities said it would not provide any further financing for the Adani Abbot Point Terminal or "any of Adani's coal projects."

Campaign group Market Forces had written to Samsung Securities in early June asking the company to end its relationship with the Adani coal port, expressing concerns the mine's development would open up the Galilee Basin to further coal developments that would fuel global heating.

On July 15, 15 young people who are part of the School Strike 4 Climate Australia campaign group held a protest outside a Samsung store in Sydney. The group had called for a boycott of Samsung's products.

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/politics/queensland/adani-on-track-for-first-carmichael-mine-coal-exports-in-2021-20200716-p555cnh.html>

Adani on track for first Carmichael mine coal exports in 2021

Tony Moore, Brisbane Times, 16/07/2020

Adani Australia says it is still on track to export the first coal from its Carmichael mine, west of Rockhampton, from 2021.

Excavation equipment arrived this week to begin removing the overburden rock and soil – the natural rock and soil that sits above and around the ore body.

{Adani says} there are now more than 700 people working on the mine and rail project construction and numbers

are growing as more contractors arrive to build the coal handling plant and to work on the railway.

Their first five mining trucks and excavator have arrived on site and are working.

The assembly of their second excavator will commence in the coming weeks and they will add more than a dozen mining trucks to their fleet over the coming months.

The coal trucks will be assembled in Mackay, with each taking a team of about 40 men and women up to 10 weeks to put together.

They are then transported more than 300 kilometres west from Mackay to the Carmichael coal mine site.

OIL & GAS LEAKS

<https://www.echo.net.au/2020/07/planet-watch-the-madness-and-corruption-of-unconventional-gas/>

Planet Watch: the madness and corruption of unconventional gas

David Lowe, Echonet Daily, 14/07/2020

The people of the Northern Rivers of NSW breathed a big sigh of relief when they stopped the unconventional gas industry at Bentley. But the industry didn't stop when it hit resistance – it simply went around us, and left the region in a false bubble of security.

When it comes to gas, 'unconventional' includes coal seam gas (or coal bed methane, as the Americans call it), tight sands, and shale.

• *Long and well-research article on the history of unconventional gas.*

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-15/csiro-fracking-research-does-not-pass-pub-test-expert-says/12454942>

CSIRO fracking research 'doesn't pass the pub test', expert says

George Roberts, ABC, 15/07/2020

The CSIRO has been accused of having a conflict of interest with the coal seam gas (CSG) industry after releasing a report that says it found fracking has little to no impact on the environment.

An environmental scientist from Queensland's Griffith University, Emeritus Professor Ian Lowe, said that sample size "doesn't pass the pub test".

"Six [wells] is just too small a sample out of 19,000 wells to have any confidence in the results," Professor Lowe said.

Queensland farmer Russel Bennie, from Cecil Plains near Toowoomba on

Queensland's Darling Downs, said "it's very obvious that six wells is a joke to any stretch of imagination".

"When you start to selectively sample populations, you can prove anything," Mr Bennie said.

After Bennie bought his property 10 years ago, he discovered there was a plugged and abandoned exploration well that had not been rehabilitated.

"About nine years ago, we had a visit from the gas companies," he said.

"They were operating on neighbouring properties and they told us that that water bore that had been in existence [on my property] for 100 years ... was going to start spewing gas as a result of their operations next door.

"There is a risk — the very real risk is obviously methane escaping in large quantities."

Bennie chose not to enter into an agreement to have the bores fixed because he would be locked into a confidentiality agreement and not be allowed to speak publicly about the problems with CSG.

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/coal-gas-leading-to-quiet-dramatic-increases-in-methane-emissions-20200714-p555bzp.html>

Coal, gas leading to 'quite dramatic' increases in methane emissions

Peter Hannam, SMH, 15/07/2020

Fossil fuel developments are rapidly increasing emissions of methane, led by the opening of coal mines and gas fields, some of which are in Australia.

An international team of researchers say agriculture formerly provided about two-thirds of non-natural methane emissions – with fossil fuels making up the remainder – until the early 2000s. Since, the gap has begun to close with the growth of emissions of the gas from fossil fuels double those from farming.

"Methane emissions have continued to rise over the past decade and are tracking concentrations most consistent with the warmest marker scenario of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change," according to the paper, published on Wednesday in the Environmental Research Letters journal.

As a greenhouse gas, methane is second only to carbon dioxide in terms of warming the planet, contributing to about 23 per cent of the heating since 1750. The average methane concentration in the atmosphere has risen about 2.5 times over the period.

Proponents of the gas industry had long dubbed it a “transition fuel” to lean economies off coal, citing its lower warming impact when burnt. However, leakage of methane can nullify any advantage, given the potency of the gas in the atmosphere.

<https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/6829180/theres-enough-questions-around-csg-that-it-makes-sense-to-turn-it-off/>

Coal seam gas: There's enough questions about CSG it makes sense to turn it off

David Shearman & Melissa Haswell, Canberra Times, 15/07/2020

The evidence that gas mining operations can harm those living near to the wells, processing plants and compressor stations has been accumulating since 2012. Of particular concern are impacts on the unborn and infants.

Unfortunately this may seem a minor issue when humanity is assailed by the relentless progression of COVID-19, and the realisation that the calamitous effects of the environmental and climate crises will soon be upon us.

If the Australian government similarly prioritised our health, the widely accepted Wingspread Precautionary Principle would be applied - as simply stated by the Australian Medical Association since 2013 - “if in doubt, turn CSG [coal seam gas and shale gas] off”.

• *Dr David Shearman is Emeritus Professor of Medicine at Adelaide University. Dr Melissa Haswell is the Professor of Practice in Environmental Wellbeing, Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services) at University of Sydney*

<https://www.nvi.com.au/story/6836771/planning-dept-overlooks-deep-water-bores-in-santos-assessment/>

Gunnedah-Oxley Basin deep water bores overlooked in Department's Santos assessment

Jamieson Murphy, Namoi Valley Independent, 16/07/2020

Farmers east of the Pilliga fear they have been “erased” from the NSW Planning Department's assessment of the Santos Narrabri coal seam gas field.

The 15 bores, which connect to the deep water of the Gunnedah-Oxley Basin, were referenced in Santos' original Groundwater Impact Assessment.

But there is no mention of them in the Planning Department's recent 392-page assessment of the project.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/delayed-lng-exports-add-pain-to-low-prices/news-story/7242ff7d1ecc560ad28ff03abfb163e4>

Delayed LNG exports add pain to low prices

Perry Williams, Aus, 16/07/2020

Over a third of Australian LNG exports in June suffered delays being shipped to buyers in Asia amid a supply glut and low prices, while export revenues plunged by nearly a quarter last month, consultancy EnergyQuest said.

Some 33 of the 85 gas export cargoes from Australia were delayed, with ships either remaining at port or going round in circles before reaching their destination, compared with 41 delayed cargoes in May.

LNG export revenue fell 23% to \$2.87bn in June from \$3.74bn in May with income down 17% on the same period a year ago.

<https://www.theage.com.au/business/the-economy/sailing-around-in-circles-lng-tankers-idle-at-sea-as-buyers-delay-cargoes-20200716-p55cou.html>

Sailing around in circles: LNG tankers idle at sea as buyers delay cargoes

Nick Toscano, SMH, 16/07/2020

One in three tankers loaded with cargoes of Australian liquefied natural gas last month is either anchored at sea or taking a longer-than-usual journey to its destination as coronavirus prompts more buyers to delay deliveries.

Australia's producers of liquefied natural gas (LNG), have been hit hard by the pandemic, which has gutted global demand for fuel and sent prices crashing to multi-year lows. LNG producers including Woodside, Origin Energy and Oil Search have announced severe write-downs, slashing the value of their assets and warning investors that effects of the downturn could last for years.

The number of tankers loaded in June fell from 93 to 85, and of those, one third had their deliveries delayed. Energy consultancy EnergyQuest said 33 cargoes were still either anchored offshore, sailing around in circles or travelling at slower speeds while awaiting destination instructions.

<https://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/6838564/gas-or-water-you-decide-but-ill-be-locking-the-gate/>

Gas or water? You decide but I'll be locking the gate

Peter Wills, Canberra Times, 18/07/2020

The highly contentious Santos Narrabri Gas project is currently before the

Independent Planning Commission this month, with speaker requests overwhelming the hearings scheduled five days, with online hearings now being extended out longer each day, and now over seven days.

You have your right to have a say over this project, online via a simple written submission process until the end of July, to voice your concern and agitation over this development in our region.

Search online: ‘Narrabri gas project have your say’ and write your strong objection to this unnecessary development in our region.

• *Peter Wills is a farmer from Breeza, near Gunnedah*

HYDROGEN HYPE

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/hydrogen-the-great-energy-hope-or-a-whole-lot-of-hype-16691/>

Hydrogen: The great energy hope, or a whole lot of hype?

David Leitch, Renew Economy, 15/07/2020

Hydrogen has some very large difficulties to overcome if it is to be successful as an export fuel for electricity production in Asia.

Offshore wind, and particularly, offshore floating wind is likely to represent a very competitive threat. Right now, hypothetically, exported hydrogen would require about A\$280/MWh (US\$196/MWh) to earn its cost of capital as electricity in Japan.

By contrast, by 2030 offshore floating wind may be around US\$60/MWh – less than one-third of the hydrogen price.

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jul/15/coalition-yet-to-pay-33m-grant-for-collinsville-coal-power-station-as-negotiations-with-company-stall>

Coalition yet to pay \$3.3m grant for Collinsville coal power station as negotiations with company stall

Ben Smees, Guardian, 15/07/2020

The federal government has not yet paid a \$3.3m grant for a feasibility study on the proposed Collinsville coal-fired power station in north Queensland – more than a year after the study was first announced – because negotiations to establish a formal funding agreement with the proponent have stalled.

The federal Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources told Guardian Australia it had not reached

a funding agreement or provided any money to the tiny company Shine Energy for the study on the power station proposal, which was announced in March 2019 as a concession to pro-coal Queensland Nationals.

Shine's chief executive, Ashley Dodd, a Birriah traditional owner, accused the Morrison government of using the company as a pawn to win support at the federal election, and of attempting to "white clad" the company by pressuring him to step aside.

The government denies this. However, Guardian Australia understands that some MPs have expressed concern that money has been promised to a company that has never completed a project of any kind, has no apparent source of income, no office, and no in-house energy expertise.

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/clive-palmer-charged-with-fraud-director-breaches-20200717-p55d1j.html>

Clive Palmer charged with fraud, director breaches

Sarah Danckert & Matt Dennien, SMH, 17/07/2020

Clive Palmer faces up to five years in jail after being charged with fraud and dishonest use of his position as a company director over the funding of his political party.

Palmer was charged following an investigation by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) into the activities of Palmer's businesses and his political party the Palmer United Party.

The corporate watchdog alleges that between August 5, 2013 and September 5, 2013, Palmer dishonestly obtained a benefit or advantage for Cosmo Developments Pty Ltd and/or the Palmer United Party and others by authorising the transfer of \$10,000,000 from his company Mineralogy despite the money being held by the mining group for other purposes.

It is alleged that he dishonestly used his position as a director of Mineralogy to obtain that advantage.

ASIC also alleges that more than \$2 million was dishonestly obtained by Palmer to the benefit of now defunct public relations firm Media Circus, which ran the 2013 election campaign. Media Circus was sold to another company in 2016 and is no longer in operation.

It is alleged that Mr Palmer dishonestly used his position as a director of Mineralogy in obtaining that advantage as well.

The maximum penalty for an offence is \$340,000 or imprisonment for five years, or both.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-07-18/coronavirus-queensland-parliament-coal-election-issue/12466246>

Will the LNP try to wedge Labor on the Acland coal mine in this year's election campaign?

Peter McCutcheon, ABC, 18/07/2020

In its search for a cut-through issue in these extraordinary times, the Queensland Opposition could be returning to an old favourite.

This time, it involves the stalled expansion of the New Acland coal project in the agricultural heartland of the Darling Downs.

The problem for the LNP is that the coal mine controversy is a double-edged sword, with a troubled history for both major parties.

The New Acland Mine, operated by the New Hope Group, employed around 300 people directly and a further 500 indirectly.

For more than a decade, an alliance of local farmers and environmentalists have been trying to stop the coal mine from expanding, arguing it will destroy the region's agricultural values.



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