



# Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

Published by Eve Sinton • fossil.fool.bulletin@gmail.com

FFB 2:5 • 18 DECEMBER 2018

## Qld gives secret subsidies to Adani

*The Queensland Government is offering major financial subsidies to Adani's coal project, including a secret deal on royalties worth hundreds of millions and a free access road worth \$100 million, shows a new report from The Australia Institute.*

The report estimates the royalty deal will lend Adani between \$215 million to \$385 million, on terms the Government is still keeping entirely secret.

"The Queensland Government has said repeatedly that it will not provide taxpayer funds to Adani, but Queenslanders are on the hook for hundreds of millions of dollars because of these deals," says Tom Swann, Researcher at The Australia Institute and report author.

### Govt agreed to 'non-financial support'

"Documents released to The Australia Institute under Right to Information law show in 2015 Queensland cabinet agreed to give "non-financial support" to coal mines in the Galilee Basin.

"Then last year the Government rushed through a "transparent royalties framework" to give Adani the royalties deal.

"At the time this deal was, in the Government's own words, "not much beyond the press release", which needed to be "kept tight".

"This royalty deal is a subsidised loan just like the \$1 billion loan the Queensland Government vetoed from the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF).

"The Queensland Government has effectively set up a subsidised loan facil-



Adani's Townsville HQ. Photo: Yasuko Kuroshima

ity to give beneficial arrangements to mining companies. No other industries can get a deal like this. Queenslanders can't get cheap loans for their mortgages through this framework.

### Deal documents kept secret

"The Government claims the deal won't impact on the state budget, but that is contradicted by their refusal to release hundreds of pages of documents about the deal, which officials claim relate to budget processes.

"There are also new doubts Adani's smaller rail connection to the Aurizon network is eligible for the deal, even on the Government's own terms.

"Additional documents released under Right to Information show the gov-

ernment is also considering funding the "Galilee Basin Access Road", worth \$100 million. This is despite Adani promising to pay for this road, which they admit would almost exclusively benefit themselves.

"Adani has not yet accepted the offer and it must still be signed off by cabinet.

"Ultimately the Queensland Government should be working towards a moratorium on new coal mines. It certainly should not be subsidising their construction. These subsidies should be ruled out immediately."

Download the report here:

<http://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/P567%20Not%20Adani%20Deal%20%5BWEB%5D.pdf>

FFB

• P2: Knitting Nannas Christmas tidings

• P3: WA fracking emissions under-estimated

• P4: Commissioners linked to Wambo mine

## *Nannas Christmas Tidings*

*It was nearly the last Christmas  
The planet was cooking  
but the 3 very Unwise men  
set off to follow their own star,  
They demurred on Climate Change, spoke  
instead with forked tongues  
and went on and on led by Scott weilding  
a Big Stick  
bearing gifts for the kiddies  
of Coal, Fracknonsense and Mahem  
saying*

*"Let them all work in Mines"*

*Soon they fell into  
a very deep black hole  
of their own making  
and were never seen again The kiddies all rejoiced !*

*Wishing you Joy  
Love*

*Knitting Nannas*



# WA fracking emissions figures rejected by top scientists

*A joint statement by 41 of Australia's top scientist and experts, published today by The Australia Institute, has "strongly rejected" the WA Fracking Inquiry's analysis of potential greenhouse gas emissions that the Government relied on to lift the fracking moratorium.*

Signatories to the joint statement include many of Australia's leading climate scientists, unlike the Fracking Inquiry which included no climate scientists.

## Complete failure to understand science

The misleading assumptions of the Inquiry that led to the "seriously underestimated" potential climate impacts of fracking include:

- Complete failure to understand the scientific implications of the Paris Agreement for greenhouse gas mitigation or awareness of the implications of the IPCC Special Report on 1.5oC.
- Ignoring combustion emissions which are by far the largest category of emissions (70-80%).
- Assuming fracking would be small scale and not exported without any economic or gas market analysis, and

in direct contradiction of government and industry statements and experience elsewhere.

- Only considering the marginal difference between emissions from fracked and conventional gas rather than the actual lifecycle emissions.

"This is a damning indictment of the Inquiry's findings on the global warming impacts. The findings from the Fracking Inquiry cannot be relied upon when assessing the risks of fracking or making policy on this issue," says Mark Ogge, Principal Advisor at The Australia Institute.

"The Fracking Inquiry has used highly questionable assumptions to systematically understate potential climate impacts. The reality is that fracking is likely to result in large emissions that are totally unacceptable in the current circumstances. The Government should take the responsible course and ban fracking in Western Australia," says the Premier's Scientist of the Year, Professor Peter Newman.

"Climate Analytics undertook detailed rigorous analysis of potential emissions and found fracking could result in many billions of tonnes of emis-

sions. The Inquiry's assertion that it would produce just 0.4 million tonnes of additional emissions is simply absurd and based on demonstrably erroneous assumptions. The report clearly suffered from an absence of climate science expertise and from there being no scientific peer review," says Dr Bill Hare, globally recognised emissions expert and CEO of Climate Analytics.

"To unlock this very large potential source of greenhouse gas emissions without any carbon budget analysis, when we know that any additional fossil fuel development is completely inconsistent with keeping global warming at safe levels, is grossly irresponsible," says Professor Will Steffen, leading Australian climate scientist.

Download the statement here:

<http://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/Joint%20Statement%20WA%20fracking%2020181215%20%5BWEB%5D.pdf>



## STOP WATER MINING THE NEXT RESOURCES BATTLE



## Friends of Felton

How a small farming community stood up to Big Coal and won

The story of the successful community campaign to stop Ambre Energy's coal-to-liquids operation at Felton, on Queensland's Darling Downs.

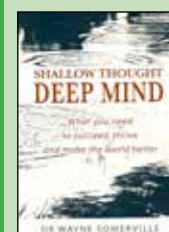


On sale via the facebook page:

**Rob McCreath** author (S21 + P&P).

<https://www.facebook.com/mccreathrob/>

## Shallow Thought, Deep Mind



What you need to succeed, thrive and make the world better

<https://www.dr-waynesomerville.com>  
\$24.99 inc. postage

E-book on Amazon.

## Climate action: Fossil fuel free zones

*A new report released by The Australia Institute explores how Fossil Fuel Free Zones (FFFZs) could contribute to action on climate change.*

Written by Fergus Green of the London School of Economics and Political Science, the paper draws on the history of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones that helped limit the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

"Action on climate change needs not just policies to reduce emissions, but also to control the supply, transport and use of fossil fuels," said Mr Green.

### 25 countries pledge to phase out coal

"Twenty-five countries have pledged to phase-out coal-fired power.

"France and New Zealand are phasing out offshore oil and gas, and gas 'fracking' is banned in numerous jurisdictions.

"Fossil Fuel Free Zones would build on and help to integrate these ef-

forts, while providing a platform for countries and regions to cooperate in phasing-out fossil fuels.

"Initially, zones could cover only certain fossil fuel activities. For instance, a jurisdiction without coal mining could declare itself to be a Coal Supply Free Zone. And zones could be declared at different levels, from a local footy club to a regional grouping of countries.

### Fossil fuel supply-free zones

"In fact, most local councils have no coal mines, oil wells or gas wells, so they could already call themselves Fossil Fuel Supply Free Zones. South Australia, the Northern Territory and Tasmania are already close to being Coal Free Zones, since they don't mine coal and use little in their electricity.

Download the report here:

<http://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/P660%20Fossil%20Free%20Zones%20%5BWEB%5D.pdf>



# Govt quietly releases devastating Galilee Basin water report: Irreversible impacts from mining

*A recently released Federal Government assessment used to measure the future impact of coal mining in the Galilee Basin showed major impacts on groundwater, creeks and rivers.*

The report analyses the impact of seven out of 17 proposed coal and gas projects, including the Adani mine.

The *'Bioregional Assessment of the water impacts of coal mining in the Galilee Basin'* is further evidence projects like Adani must not be allowed to proceed, according to Central Queensland graziers and water experts.

## Farmers call for rejection of Adani plan

It has led to calls by farmers, experts and community groups for the Queensland Government to reject Adani's water management plan which the company is seeking to have approved by the end of the year.

Central Queensland grazier Bruce Currie said: “

This new assessment predicts potential impacts from proposed Galilee Basin coal mines across a vast area - up to 1.4 million hectares of land and 6,285 km of streams.

“This Bioregional Assessment makes it very clear that the impacts on water resources from the planned coal mines extend much farther than was previously predicted by mining companies in their environmental assessments.

“As this gruelling drought continues, accompanied now by heatwaves and catastrophic fires, it would be beyond reckless to proceed with these dangerous coal projects.

“Graziers and communities in Central Queensland need assurances that governments will act now following this assessment and stop the Adani coal mine.”

Former manager of water allocation with the Qld Government, Tom Crothers, said: “It's clear from this analysis that mining the Galilee Basin will have a very significant and irreversible impact on our water resources.

“The assessment in predicted potentially widespread impacts to the nationally significant Doongmabulla



*The Carmichael River is amongst water systems in over 14,000 square kilometres of land in the Galilee Basin that have more than a 95% chance of negative impact from planned coal and gas mines in the area. Photo: Lock the Gate*

Springs, a network of almost 190 wetlands which are a vital refuge in times of drought. We should not be putting at risk precious wetland refuges like these which provide permanent water in times of drought.”

Carmel Flint from Lock the Gate Alliance said: “The Queensland Government needs to respond immediately to this new research and reject Adani's water management plan given the severe and unacceptable water impacts that have been identified.”

## Quotes from the assessment:

Despite only 7 of the 17 additional coal resource developments identified having sufficient information available to enable modelling, the Bioregional Assessment found that:

- Cumulative hydrological changes in the Belyando river basin are very likely (greater than 95% chance), and extend farther than previously predicted from impact assessments of individual mines.
- The zone of potential hydrological change covers an area of 14,030 km<sup>2</sup> and includes 6,285 km of streams.
- Drawdown in the near-surface aquifer due to modelled additional coal resource development occurs in two areas near clusters of coal mines in the east, with an area of 2820 km<sup>2</sup> very likely to experience greater than 0.2 m drawdown.

- There is a 50% chance that 1034 km of streams will experience an increase of at least 3 additional zero-flow days per year. A further 1781 km of streams are potentially impacted by increases in zero-flow days.

- The most substantial modelled surface water changes are for increases in zero-flow days, and these mostly affect the main channel of the Belyando River, and the Suttor River downstream of its junction with the Belyando River.

- Of 241 potentially impacted ecological assets, 148 are relatively 'more at risk of hydrological changes.

- Two alternative groundwater model conceptualisations applied in this assessment predict that 181 of the 187 springs in the Doongmabulla Springs complex both have a 5% chance of experiencing additional groundwater drawdown in excess of 0.2 m.

See the government report here:

<https://www.bioregionalassessments.gov.au/assessments/5-outcome-synthesis-galilee-subregion>

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## SACRIFICE ZONE

Cloudcatcher Media's feature-length film: battle to save the Pilliga

<https://vimeo.com/257444267>

# Planning commissioners had links to Wambo mine

*Lock the Gate Alliance has renewed its call for a Special Commission of Inquiry into the NSW mining sector following the sudden removal of two Planning Commissioners from a panel considering the controversial United Wambo coal mine project.*

Their removal due to conflicts of interest meant the community was given just two hours notice that a public meeting about the project had been cancelled.

## Two commissioners linked to the mine

Commissioner Alice Clarke stood down from the panel considering the mine last week because her spouse holds options in Glencore, one of the two proponents of the mine.

Days later her replacement, Commissioner Geoffrey Sharrock, stood down from the panel because he used to be a managing director at Wambo Mining Corporation. An Independent Planning Commission spokesman said Mr Sharrock was only appointed to the panel on Tuesday and advised chairwoman Mary O'Kane of the conflict at the first available opportunity.

The two resignations came just days after a Commissioner tasked with considering the Vickery coal mine expansion in NSW's northwest also stood down over a conflict of interest.

Lock the Gate Alliance spokesperson Georgina Woods said the public could not be expected to have any confidence in the planning system as it relates to mining.

"We have now seen three Commissioners step down in four days from two different mine project panels. Why are people with these types of conflicts even on the Commission?"

## Community angry and confused

"Cancelling this public meeting with two hours notice left community members angry and confused. The public is being treated with contempt.

"Other aspects of the planning portfolio are also in disarray after four whistleblowers raised major issues with the administration of mining titles by the Department of Planning.

"Communities are being ripped apart by mining projects being considered

by a planning system that is not operating objectively and which has lost the confidence of NSW residents. We urgently need the NSW Government to return the rights of communities to test resource projects on their merits in court and to immediately create a Special Commission of Inquiry into the mining sector in NSW.

"All mining projects that are currently being assessed should be put on hold until this process is complete."

Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association president John Krey told the *Newcastle Herald* the apparent difficulties finding a genuinely independent commissioner, combined with the concerns raised by Department of Planning whistle blowers, made it unlikely the project would ever be impartially assessed.

"The assessment of every mining project should be put on hold until the allegations raised by the four whistleblowers are resolved. We are also very concerned about the process used to check the CVs of those people who are appointed to the panel", Mr Krey said.

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# Call to stop Wambo mine as Hunter air deteriorates

*The Hunter Valley is on track to record its worst air quality since monitoring began, due to increasing levels of harmful particulate matter from coal mines.*

Five towns and villages in the Hunter are so far tracking this year to record particulate pollution PM10 levels exceeding national standards, according to data from the Office of Environment and Heritage.

## Worst year on record

So far, 2018 has been the worst recorded year for air quality since the Upper Hunter air quality monitoring network started measurements in 2012.

The concerning revelation comes at a time when the Independent Planning Commission is being asked to approve a new mine in the central Hunter Valley where air pollution is worst.

The United Wambo project, near Jerrys Plains, was the subject of a public meeting of Independent Planning Commission in Singleton last week.

It follows a letter that was sent in September, signed by more than 100 people from the Hunter region, including 30 doctors, to the Ministers for Health and Environment asking them to visit and take action to improve air quality in the region.

Lock the Gate NSW spokesperson Georgina Woods said the United Wambo expansion should not be allowed to go ahead because it would further threaten the health of residents in the region.

"People are already getting sick from sheer volume of air pollution the coal mines are creating in the Hunter," she said.

"Lock the Gate told the Independent Planning Commission on Wednesday that cumulative air pollution already being experienced in the central Hunter is chronic and causing population harm.

"We urge the Commission to refuse approval to the United Wambo project which will substantially add to the overall load of particulate pollution in the area."

Ms Woods said the way particulate matter was measured in the Hunter was also flawed.

## Measuring method is flawed

"The air quality assessment being considered by the IPC uses 2014 as the year against which changes in air quality, as a result of the new United Wambo super-pit, are measured," she said.

"But data from the Office of Environment and Heritage shows that for eight of the nine nearby air quality monitoring stations, PM10 pollution concentrations were lower in 2014 than the average of the last seven years."

Recent Reachtell polling showed 84.2 per cent of Singleton and Muswellbrook residents who were questioned agreed that Hunter locals should not be subjected to air pollution levels from coal dust that exceed national thresholds. Close to 70% were strongly in agreement.

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## Hume coal gets flick

*The proposed Hume Coal mine near Berrima in the Southern Highlands has been given the flick by the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).*

Last week, the Department recommended against mine's approval, but a final decision rests with the Independent Planning Commission.

The coal mine would be located in Sydney's drinking water catchment and independent experts have identified major impacts on groundwater and community health.

The DPE stated: "There is currently considerable scientific uncertainty about the level of environmental damage to both groundwater and surface water resources. The predicted drawdown impacts on the groundwater aquifer would be the most significant for any mining project that has ever been assessed in NSW."

The DPE received almost 13,000 submissions, most of which objected to the mine. The DPE's recommendation will now be forwarded to the Independent Planning Commission who will make a final determination on the project.

### LTG welcomes decision

Phil Laird from Lock the Gate Alliance said: "We want to heartily congratulate the community of the Southern Highlands for their extraordinary determination to protect their water resources and their community from such a damaging coal project.

"Unfortunately, it has required many years of hard work, numerous legal challenges and extensive research by independent experts to get this recommendation against a mine that never should have been proposed in the first place.

"All credit to the many, many people of the Southern Highlands who have put their lives on hold and volunteered their time to expose this mine as a dangerous proposal that has no place in NSW.

"We're now calling for the NSW Government to ... take action now to protect the Southern Highlands and other key farming areas across the state."

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## KNITTING NANNAS NEEDLE POLITICIANS



*Knitting Nannas Against Gas in the Northern Rivers found plenty of politicians to annoy last week.*

**ABOVE:** Knitting Nannas, Lismore Loop, set up outside their National candidate, Austin Curtin's new Lismore office.

**LEFT:** Knitting Nannas, Byron Loop, had morning tea outside their Labor Federal member, Justine Elliot's Tweed Heads office.

*"We annoy all politicians equally," the Nannas said.*

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## Wide Bay-Burnett fracking fight continues

*The fight to stop fracking in the Wide Bay Burnett is ramping up with an ad campaign featuring local growers underway, and a beach rally held last weekend.*

Blue Energy holds petroleum licences across more than 40,000 hectares in the Wide Bay, covering some of the most productive agricultural land in the country and adjacent to World Heritage listed Fraser Island.

Two of the company's exploration licences are due to expire on the 31st of this month, while the third and final is due to expire in March next year.

Lock the Gate Wide Bay Burnett spokesperson Vicki Perrin called on Blue Energy to abandon the leases once they expired, and for Mines Minister Anthony Lynham to then cancel the leases permanently.

"The Wide Bay Burnett is a nationally significant foodbowl and a gateway for thousands of tourists each year travelling to Fraser Island and the Southern Great Barrier Reef," she said.

"Fracking companies have no social licence to operate in this region - 20

local communities have declared themselves gasfield free."

### 500 letters to Blue Energy

The ad campaign comes after more than 500 letters from Traditional Owners, farmers, tourism operators, and business owners in the Wide Bay Burnett opposing fracking were sent to Blue Energy executives and Mr Lynham last month.

"We will not sit idly by and watch our beautiful region be transformed into a dust bowl just so a fly by night industry can make a quick buck," Ms Perrin said.

"Agriculture and tourism are industries that are sustainable but they cannot coexist with the fracking industry.

"We want to make sure farmers and tourism operators can continue to operate in this region for generations to come."

The ad campaign, through newspapers and local television channels, will run until December 21.

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



## FFB to publish on Fridays in 2019

*In order to facilitate a social life on weekends, Fossil Fool Bulletin will publish on Fridays, starting with the first 2019 issue, on January 11.*

This issue, **FFB 2:5**, is the last until after the Christmas/New Year break. **FFB** wishes all readers a happy festive season!

From January 11, **FFB** will publish with a Friday date, and land in email boxes early Saturday morning. While **FFB** herself joins in weekend activities!

The next year will be critical if Australia is to come to grips with a sensible energy policy and a serious effort to keep global warming under 1.5°C to stay alive!

This means we need what the major parties will **not** be offering in the 2019 Federal and NSW elections: Ban new coal, oil or gas, and a full-on effort to shut down the fossil fuel industry.

We must transition to renewables over the next decade – you can imagine the fury of the fossil fools towards any independents or minor parties brave enough to promote such policies.

The fossil fuel lobby has enormous financial clout. Only a Federal ICAC and



the prohibition of political donations from the fossil fuel oligarchy will get policy development out of their clutches – but the old parties are reluctant to support effective anti-corruption measures.

It is encouraging to see our young

people making their feelings about the planet's future known through the school strike and major demonstrations all over the country. Their energy and convictions give hope for a change of direction before we are all fried.

**FFB** has a wishlist for 2019, including the establishment of a dedicated website. But, for now, party!

**FFB**


Fossil Fool  
Bulletin

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

## Inside the news

**Adani** believes justice is only for the rich, as it tries to have the **Wangan & Jagalingou** Traditional Owners' native title challenge thrown out of court (p8). Adani's lawyers have discovered the **five people leading the challenge own no property**. So the lawyers want \$160,000 up-front from the 'impecunious' W&J people, or have the case thrown out – with costs. **FFB** has provided the W&J account number at the bottom left of p8, and hope readers will be inclined to make a donation.

The **NSW Planning Department debacle** goes on, with **four whistleblowers sacked** in a matter of weeks. **Three Planning Commissioners** have also been **stood down** from assessing mine projects due to conflicts of interest. One Commissioner was a former MD of the company whose mine he was to look at (p8-9)! The Department needs to **halt all current assessments** until it tackles corruption and poor processes.

To its credit, the Department did, this week, recommend the **Hume coal mine not proceed**. Let's hope the **Independent Planning Commission**, which has the final say, agrees.

**Australia** put up a **cringeworthy performance** last week at the **COP24** talks in the Polish city of Katowice (p14-16).

Australia reaffirmed its **commitment to coal** – and its unwavering support for the United States – by appearing at a US government-run event in Katowice, promoting the use of **fossil fuels**. **Patrick Suckling**, Australia's ambassador for the environment, and the head of the country's negotiating delegation at the climate talks, spoke on the panel. His **nameplate bore a US flag**.

Environment Minister **Melissa Price** spoke to the summit, even as the country earned a "**fossil of the day**" award for its poor climate policies.

Richie Merzian, a climate researcher with **The Australia Institute**, said Minister Price's speech "relied almost entirely on **policies her government tried to kill-off or water down**".

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# In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 29,000 words of news for your convenience. [Click on the links](#) to view original articles. (Subscriptions may be required)

## THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/dec/11/adani-met-with-environment-department-40-times-in-six-months>

### Adani met with environment department 40 times in six months

Lisa Cox & Ben Smees, *The Guardian*, 11/12/2018

The federal environment department had 40 meetings in six months with Adani representatives to discuss the Carmichael coalmine project, according to responses to a Senate estimates committee.

The department met Adani executives in person at the company's Brisbane offices, as well as conducting teleconferences, on matters including Adani's groundwater management plans, the mine's progress and proposals for the management of the threatened black-throated finch.

The environment minister, Melissa Price, and energy minister, Angus Taylor, met the company once each in Canberra. ...

Greens senator Larissa Waters said on Tuesday the number of meetings suggested the department was "holding Adani's hand through the approvals process". ...

The Mackay Conservation group released polling of marginal central Queensland electorates on Tuesday that showed 60% of people oppose any form of government subsidy. Only 22% supported subsidies, and 18% were unsure.

An Australia Institute report has found a potential royalties deferment deal would effectively be a low-interest loan to Adani, worth up to \$385m.

The report also looked at \$100m in road upgrades being considered by the Queensland government. It analysed approval plans for the Carmichael mine and found Adani's vehicles "would be nearly all of the traffic on the road". ...



*W&J Traditional Owner, Adrian Burragubba (centre) with supporters. Adani wants the W&J people's land claim thrown out of court because they are 'impecunious'.*

Photo: W&J

[https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-14/adani-aim-quash-traditional-owner-challengers-over-mon-ey/106167322?fbclid=IwAR1v\\_VXoa5ADG\\_94YcrzRq-sx-s3oCfvWhYGAwobPivfs5c9svQDVOTSyQY](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-14/adani-aim-quash-traditional-owner-challengers-over-mon-ey/106167322?fbclid=IwAR1v_VXoa5ADG_94YcrzRq-sx-s3oCfvWhYGAwobPivfs5c9svQDVOTSyQY)

### Adani aims to quash traditional owner challengers, tells court they're 'impecunious'

Josh Robertson, *ABC*, 14/12/2018

Adani has asked the Federal Court to throw out a legal challenge to its Queensland coal mine unless five traditional owners with little money can stump up more than \$160,000. ...

Adani wants the W&J mine opponents to be given two weeks to pay \$161,000 into the court by cash or Australian bank guarantee, according to the application filed last month.

It proposed that "if the security is not given within 14 days of the court's order, the appeal be dismissed with costs".

Adani's lawyers searched through property databases in every Australian state and territory to check the assets of the five Aboriginal people who are spearheading the appeal.

They found none of them own property. ... In documents filed on Wednesday, Adani's lawyers said the challengers "admit they are impecunious".

"Adani is not the cause of the appellants' impecuniosity," the submission said. ...

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/national/queensland/adani-promises-land-the-size-of-moreton-island-to-protect-rare-finch-20181207-p50ky6.html>

### Adani promises land 'the size of Moreton Island' to protect rare finch

Tony Moore, *Brisbane Times*, 09/12/2018

Adani has set aside an area of land larger than Moreton Island as an offset habitat to protect the endangered black-throated finch at its Carmichael Mine in the Galilee Basin.

However, this plan has not been approved – by either the Queensland or federal governments – and is awaiting evaluation before any mining can begin. ...

## COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5801266/there-are-problems-at-the-coalface/?fbclid=IwAR1m-Vtyaun6X8RtlJP93jWldAA2o2uQbnMBpUJM-DR4Ak9z-9MEe7HyFFRdo>

### Four senior Department of Planning whistleblowers in a matter of weeks is not a good look

Editorial, *Newcastle Herald*, 10/12/2018

As is clear now, after four executives or senior managers have spoken to the *Newcastle Herald* since November 20, the end is sudden, no explanations are given, and they follow periods during which the employees have raised serious issues about alleged corruption, maladministration and risks.

The department insists there is no connection between the employees raising concerns and them being shown the door, but it is hard to escape the idea there is a connection. ...

**HELP W&J PEOPLE GET JUSTICE:  
MAKE A DONATION**

**Wangan Jagalingou Traditional Owners  
Aboriginal Corporation**

**BSB: 034-003  
Account number: 278038**



People of principle do not stay quiet when they suspect something might be wrong. And the unfortunate recent state history of corruption and coal mining means the community is right to be on the alert. ...

[https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5800795/department-used-me-up-and-then-spat-me-out-fourth-whistleblower/?fbclid=IwAR005\\_674F1krsNtVOgaTj3pGP6PDpgeCJmkoXMa2o9eRNfLTCnqRlerU8](https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5800795/department-used-me-up-and-then-spat-me-out-fourth-whistleblower/?fbclid=IwAR005_674F1krsNtVOgaTj3pGP6PDpgeCJmkoXMa2o9eRNfLTCnqRlerU8)

### **An intelligence analyst is on workers compensation after one year with the Department of Planning**

*Joanne McCarthy, Newcastle Herald, 10/12/2018*

A whistleblower who warned the Department of Planning it was “regulating blindly” a day before his employment was terminated by email is on workers compensation after telling government insurers that “The department used me up and then spat me out”.

Systems analyst Mitch Stitt was granted workers compensation in November after insurers accepted he suffered a psychological injury on June 14 when he was emailed by a department executive to say his services were no longer needed. ...

On June 13 Mr Stitt emailed Department Secretary Carolyn McNally to allege that senior staff gave her incorrect information about a database overhaul of mining title conditions that left the department “regulating blindly” because of “gaps” he had identified, but which he alleged the department did not address. ...

Mr Stitt, Ms Connor, a former professional standards director and former chief risk officer have spoken out since November 20 of a “be silent or be sacked” culture in the department, prompting a Labor commitment to hold an inquiry into mining administration if it is elected in the March state election. ...

<https://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/5802437/where-has-all-the-water-gone-at-maules-creek/?cs=12&fbclid=IwAR1meX-g8IDGgDMSJEkVOXLpOs-0A712M-rUMG90ddwx415K0eQ-lp2rbBu4>

### **Bores dry up at Maules Creek as farmers and mine dispute cause**

*John Ellicott, Northern Daily Leader, 10/12/2018*

The Bradshaws have been farming at Maules Creek for over 100 years but they’ve never seen a bore run dry before, even in the worst drought of ‘65. ...

“We always had water though the property, we have three creeks including Maules Creek and that water runs

down from Mt Kaputar. We only had floods two years ago. But now several bores and the creeks have run dry and I don’t believe it’s just because of the drought.” ...

Lock the Gate spokesman Phil Laird in a briefing note says: “The Maules Creek groundwater source is a permanent source of water; the Maules Creek alluvial aquifer has dropped significantly over a short period of time starting in October, 2017.

“Whitehaven’s Maules Creek coal mine is de-watering coal seams with large pumps. Anecdotal evidence from mine workers is that the company was pumping large amounts of water starting in November. We are concerned that the alluvial aquifer drawdown is due to connectivity between the coal seams and the alluvial aquifer.” ...

But Whitehaven says the Lock the Gate claims are entirely spurious ...

Whitehaven says bores haven’t recharged simply because of the drought. ...

<https://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/5807710/vickery-independent-commissioner-resigns-due-to-conflict-of-interest/?cs=159&fbclid=IwAR2ms3rFlaNF822Bz-r8CXr-6pz12rd00YTFaUdP3D2B1-ckpGYMaA3aZr4Y>

### **Vickery independent commissioner resigns due to conflict of interest**

*Jamieson Murphy, Northern Daily Leader, 12/12/2018*

One of the independent commissioners considering the proposed Vickery coal mine has resigned due to a conflict of interest with a charity he’s involved with.

Peter Duncan stood down from the three-member Independent Planning Commission (IPC) panel appointed to review the Whitehaven Coal proposal,

when he found out the mining company was a major sponsor of the Westpac Rescue Helicopter.

Mr Duncan is on the charity’s board of directors. ...

[https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5810079/mine-opponents-believe-it-is-impossible-to-get-a-fair-hearing/?src=ss&fbclid=IwAR2vFGW70XNtWVhw80MRN6Hy-GR4uT3RD\\_qZY\\_HY5kgYVWV5MBwVW11801zGo](https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5810079/mine-opponents-believe-it-is-impossible-to-get-a-fair-hearing/?src=ss&fbclid=IwAR2vFGW70XNtWVhw80MRN6Hy-GR4uT3RD_qZY_HY5kgYVWV5MBwVW11801zGo)

### **Wambo open cut conflict of interest raises questions about the Independent Planning Commission’s ability to act impartially**

*Matthew Kelly, Newcastle Herald, 14/12/2018*

Opponents of the proposed Wambo open cut mining project believe they are unlikely to get a fair hearing even after the Independent Planning Commission appoints a new commissioner to the panel considering the project.

Geoff Sharrock was forced to stand down from the panel because of a conflict of interest two hours before a public meeting about the project at Singleton on Wednesday. ...

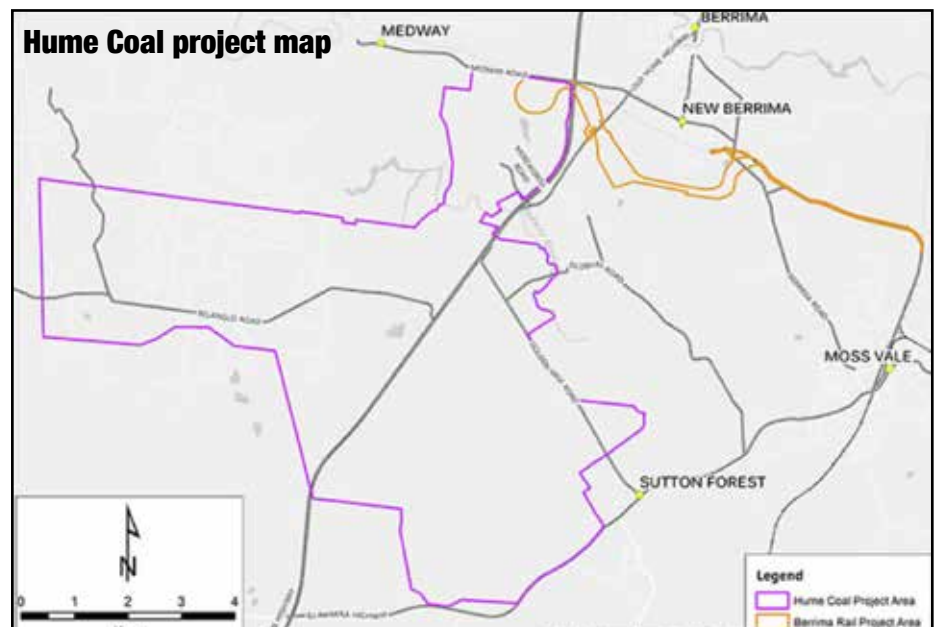
The public meeting has been rescheduled for February 2019 when a new panel will be appointed to consider the project.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-11/major-coal-mine-proposed-for-nsw-receives-damning-assessment/10606308>

### **Hume Coal mine gets damning assessment from NSW Government department over groundwater fears**

*Gavin Coote & Mick McLaren, ABC, 12/12/2018*

A NSW Government department has raised grave fears about plans for a new coal mine south of Sydney, predicting groundwater impacts that are



unparalleled in the state.

The Hume Coal project would involve mining up to 3.5 million tonnes of coal a year over 19 years, near Berrima in the Southern Highlands.

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment received almost 13,000 submissions, the vast majority of which objected to the mine on environmental grounds.

Cold Chisel frontman Jimmy Barnes, Archibald Prize-winning artist Ben Quilty and singer Leo Sayer were among high-profile local residents who voiced their opposition to the project.

The department has now recommended that the mine, and an associated \$37 million rail project, be refused. ...

<https://www.theleader.com.au/story/5805613/hume-coal-project-not-in-public-interest/?cs=9397&fbclid=IwAR3Vp9XU6s00EYs599T3WqSy4ZhcTi450aH0tE-juqEV91IY9jcsjctYQ>

### Department of Planning and Environment recommends Hume Coal Project not be approved

*Lauren Strode and Olivia Ralph, St George & Sutherland Shire Leader, 11/12/2018*

Following an assessment of the Hume Coal Project, the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) has recommended it not be approved.

DPE has completed its comprehensive assessment of the Hume Coal Project and associated Berrima Rail Project and the Minister for Planning has referred the projects to the Independent Planning Commission (IPC) for a public hearing. ...

At this stage, based on the information available, the department does not consider that the economic benefits of the projects outweigh the likely adverse impacts on the community and environment.

Therefore, the department has found the projects are not in the public interest and should not be approved. ...

[https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5806745/its-time-to-plan-for-the-transition-from-coal/?fbclid=IwAR2DKdIZ6mYhd6l1XFShx0xA0hvkCT60s880mCO\\_6tC-gCQcJFzk5tq8](https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5806745/its-time-to-plan-for-the-transition-from-coal/?fbclid=IwAR2DKdIZ6mYhd6l1XFShx0xA0hvkCT60s880mCO_6tC-gCQcJFzk5tq8)

### The Hunter region can be smart about the future, or have sudden change thrust upon it: Lock the Gate

*Georgina Woods, Newcastle Herald, 13/12/2018*

The World Energy Outlook 2018, released this month by the International Energy Agency and described by it as the “gold standard of long-term energy analysis”, paints three potential futures.

But in only one of them, the “Sustainable Development Scenario”, are we on a path to meet the Paris Climate Agreement goal of keeping global warming to well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The agreement also aims to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

NSW Minerals Council chief executive Stephen Galilee cited the “New Policies Scenario” in his Newcastle Herald opinion piece on December 11 as evidence there will be continued demand for Hunter Valley coal.

But this scenario is consistent with catastrophic levels of global warming. ...

Under the IEA’s “Sustainable Development Scenario” global thermal coal use would decline by more than 50 per cent over the next two decades. Under that scenario we would be on a pathway to avoiding catastrophic climate change and ensuring sustainable energy access for all. ...

The Hunter needs a transition authority and the authority needs scope to help Singleton and Muswellbrook diversify economically and start the shift from unbalanced reliance on coal. ...

• *Georgina Woods is a spokesperson for Lock the Gate Alliance.*

[https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/big-coal-wants-you-to-pay-to-fix-its-problem-20181212-p50lmg.html?fbclid=IwAR1zZiF50eNGA2W5j2Fy\\_J5YbiZSaeU-1vieHLN8KAKDFQb7cEi09k0C08](https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/big-coal-wants-you-to-pay-to-fix-its-problem-20181212-p50lmg.html?fbclid=IwAR1zZiF50eNGA2W5j2Fy_J5YbiZSaeU-1vieHLN8KAKDFQb7cEi09k0C08)

### Big coal wants you to pay to fix its problem

*Jeremy Hodges, SMH, 12/12/2018*

Some of the world’s biggest fossil-fuel producers are calling on taxpayers to help them kick their pollution habit.

The world’s biggest oil, natural gas and mining companies are stepping up their campaign to deploy carbon capture and storage, or CCS, as way to slow global warming. But with a potential price tag of \$US90 billion (\$125 billion) a year, it’s too rich for them to do it on their own. ...

For all its potential, CCS raises unpalatable questions for policymakers about how to fund it, and nobody in the industry has worked out a solution beyond either direct subsidies or much higher carbon taxes. Either of those measures would make burning fossil fuels much less economical. ...

Industry needs to capture 2.3 billion tonnes a year by 2040. That suggests CCS would need \$US92 billion a year in support to work at scale - more than

the entire coal industry took in investment last year. ...

“CCS is a get-out-of-jail card and a great business opportunity,” said Michael Liebreich, founder of the Bloomberg NEF research group in London now owned by Bloomberg.

“Not only would it allow them to keep on doing what they do, but also it offers the prospect of being paid to clean up their own pollution. I just can’t see it ever happening at scale.” ...

Developers are reluctant to take on the liability for looking after sequestered carbon for more than a few decades. That means governments usually need to step in with guarantees to make projects work. ...

“Most of the talk about carbon capture and storage is not serious talk about reducing emissions,” Lauri Myllyvirta, an air-pollution expert at Greenpeace.

“It’s meant to lull investors, plant operators and politicians into believing you can keep running coal-fired power plants or even build new ones and avoid having your investment stranded in the future.”

## NUKE MADNESS

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-11/ranger-uranium-mine-rehabilitation-cost-blowout-jabiru/10601696>

### Ranger Uranium Mine rehabilitation costs blow out by \$296m amid fears over long-term monitoring

*Felicity James, ABC, 11/12/2018*

The cost of rehabilitating a uranium mine surrounded by a World-Heritage-listed national park will be almost \$300 million higher than previous estimates, uranium producer Energy Resources of Australia (ERA) has conceded. ...

The clean-up is now predicted to cost \$808 million – \$296 million more than ERA’s initial \$512-million estimate – according to an update released to the Australian Securities Exchange. ...

ERA’s rehabilitation costs have always been underestimated, according to associate professor Gavin Mudd, an environmental engineering researcher at RMIT University. ...

One of the major concerns for ERA is negotiating the Top End wet season and any extra water treatment needed to properly rehabilitate the site. ...

There is still uncertainty about how the site will be monitored beyond 2026, which Dr Mudd said should continue for decades beyond rehabilitation.



<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/batteries-could-spell-end-for-gas-peaking-plants-by-2025/news-story/9193016b89e414375c36a78fea5798d5?csp=3fe3b0c3b12fceb2f35f4ff6b8c39c66>

## Batteries 'could spell end for gas peaking plants by 2025'

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 09/12/2018*

Australia's multi-billion-dollar fleet of gas "peaker" power plants may be forced to shut down as cheaper fast-response batteries force the fuel out of the nation's power market, while the closure of AGL's Liddell coal plant will contribute to a 20 per cent jump in east coast prices by 2025, consultancy WoodMackenzie warns.

Amid a 25 per cent slump in gas use for electricity generation in the September quarter, batteries are set to render many gas plants redundant as soon as 2025 by smoothing out volatility and supplying to the grid at cheaper prices. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/the-economy/new-gas-slated-for-queensland-and-victoria-could-lift-looming-shortage-20181213-p50m0z.html>

## New gas slated for Queensland and Victoria could lift looming shortage

*Cole Latimer & Nick Toscano, SMH, 14/12/2018*

Gas-starved eastern states have received a double boost with the opening of a new pipeline to the Northern Territory and the announcement a fresh field will be developed off the Victorian coast.

Pipeline company Jemena will on Friday open a new link to Northern Territory gas fields, sending new gas into the east coast, while ExxonMobil and BHP have pushed forward on a Bass Strait project that will bring more supply into Victoria by 2021.

Regulators and major users have warned of a looming supply crunch sparking proposals for gas import terminals around the country.

Jemena chief executive Frank Tudor called the new Northern Territory "the missing link in the gas pipeline network". ...

The 622-kilometre pipeline connects the Northern Territory gas hub of Tennant Creek with Queensland's Mt Isa ...

The pipeline opens up the potential to source gas from the Northern Territory's major on- and offshore gas fields and feed it into the east coast domestic market. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/exxonmobil-approves-new-bass-strait-field-as-gas-reserves-decline/news-story/ee169c71e5ce431694e2d7cf8d4347b>

## ExxonMobil approves new Bass Strait field as gas reserves decline

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 13/12/2018*

BHP and ExxonMobil have approved the \$550 million development of the offshore West Barracouta gas field in Victoria's Bass Strait as it seeks to offset declining fields and maintain supplies to the squeezed east coast market.

First production is due in 2021 with the two-well project to be tied back to the Barracouta platform, which started producing gas in 1965 and was the first offshore field discovered in Australia. ...

The two companies entered court-enforceable undertakings to market gas from their Gippsland Basin Joint Venture so that customers will have a choice of competing and different offers from the largest supplier to the southern states.

The scrap between the regulator and the energy majors stemmed from a 2015 inquiry into east coast gas amid mounting concerns about the price and supply of the fuel as exports from the \$60 billion Gladstone export facilities increased. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/jemena-has-big-plans-to-supply-national-grid-with-northern-gas/news-story/7958ee3f1135fdd5a93ac9ab0378fac>

## Jemena has big plans to supply national grid with northern gas

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 13/12/2018*

Pipeline operator Jemena is looking to boost capacity from its Northern Gas Pipeline tenfold to 700 terajoules a day in a potential \$4 billion investment to supply the stretched east coast market and link gas from the Northern Territory's Beetaloo Basin to the national grid.

Jemena, an \$11bn company owned by Chinese and Singaporean interests, will open the first phase of a 622km pipeline this month to connect a processing plant in NT's Tennant Creek to compressor stations at Mount Isa in Queensland. ...

Once sufficient supply is proven, Jemena plans to build a further link connecting Mount Isa to the Galilee Basin and eventually to the Wallumbilla hub in Queensland. ...

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-14/northern-gas-pipeline-opens-for-business-in-red-centre/10620202>

## Northern Territory on cusp of becoming gas centre of Australia as gas pipeline opens

*Katrina Beavan, ABC, 15/12/2018*

A flagged expansion of a major new gas pipeline running from the Northern Territory outback to Queensland could meet the gas demands in Brisbane, Sydney and Adelaide, say officials.

Asian conglomerate Jemena began construction on the \$800 million, 622 kilometre Northern Gas Pipeline, to run from Tennant Creek to Mount Isa about 18 months ago, and today it was officially opened in the NT. ...

Currently the gas is being sourced from conventional gas resources, the Black Tip Point reserve and the Meree Field in Central Australia.

However, the expansion of the pipeline was contingent on the NT's fracking moratorium being lifted, which happened earlier this year. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/apa-managing-director-and-ceo-mick-mccormack-to-announce-retirement/news-story/9a4bad1a80bde0f7a71cb00e91437b32>

## APA managing director and CEO Mick McCormack to retire

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 13/12/2018*

The boss of pipeline giant APA Group, Mick McCormack, expects a new takeover bid may emerge for the gas operator and says the Australian government's decision to block a \$13 billion bid by CK Group helped trigger his decision to step down from the top role next year. ...

Mr McCormack will retire no later than the end of 2019, saying he had decided to "call time" after leading the company since 2005 with his 12-year tenure making him one of the longest serving chief executives of an ASX-listed company. ...

The pipeline boss joined APA in 2000 when it was spun out of parent company AGL and listed on the ASX. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/call-for-10pc-royalty-on-offshore-gas-amid-boom/news-story/17d961033480d0b14d122be2b8bf956a>

## Call for 10pc royalty on offshore gas amid boom

*Ben Butler, The Australian, 13/12/2018*

The petroleum resource rent tax should be expanded by introducing a 10 per cent royalty on offshore gas to capture more revenue from Australia's

booming oil and gas industry, says left-wing think tank the McKell Institute.

Australian Taxation Office statistics released yesterday show the PRRT brought in \$946 million last year and is set to top \$1 billion this financial year, as Australia's oil and gas sector moves towards eclipsing Qatar's as the world's biggest. ...

The McKell Institute said a 10 per cent royalty on offshore gas projects could bring in \$2.8bn in revenue a year – in stark contrast to Senate testimony by multinational groups Chevron and Exxon that they did not expect to pay any PRRT on the mammoth Gorgon and Wheatstone projects until the mid-2030s.

The think tank said it was possible Chevron and Exxon might never pay PRRT on the mega-projects. ...

[https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/dec/13/two-new-chemical-plants-under-consideration-near-was-burrup-rock-art?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw&fbclid=IwAR2iQjqRPGh4QsWPYyiwz74BRUn6Oa8l6GijtIcvRY-48swZa5n-tNkmlQs](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/dec/13/two-new-chemical-plants-under-consideration-near-was-burrup-rock-art?CMP=share_btn_tw&fbclid=IwAR2iQjqRPGh4QsWPYyiwz74BRUn6Oa8l6GijtIcvRY-48swZa5n-tNkmlQs)

### **Two new chemical plants under consideration near WA's Burrup rock art**

*Calla Wahlquist, The Guardian, 13/12/2018*

Regulators in Western Australia are considering proposals for two new chemical plants on the Burrup peninsula that would increase air pollution near the world's largest collection of rock art.

The news comes three months after the WA government announced it was preparing to nominate the site for a world heritage listing, for the 1m petroglyphs throughout the area and its surrounding islands, some of which are more than 60,000 years old.

It also follows a Senate report that warned emissions from heavy industry on the peninsula could damage the carvings, prompting rock art experts to call for a halt to new industry approvals until both the baseline emissions figures and an accurate picture of the damage being done to the images could be established.

The Perdaman urea project, which proposes to manufacture 2m tonnes of the compound used in fertiliser each year on a site adjacent to the Murujuga national park, and the Wesfarmers downstream processing chemical production facility, which would manufacture 5,000 tonnes of methanol a day on nearby land, were this month referred to a public environmental review by WA's Environmental Protection Authority.

The EPA also ordered a public environment review on a proposal by Woodside to extend to 2070 the operation of the North-West Shelf gas project, which has been operating on the Burrup peninsula for more than 30 years.

All three projects raised potential damage to the rock art caused by increased emissions ...

## **LEIGH CK STINK**

<https://www.proactiveinvestors.com.au/companies/news/210750/leigh-creek-energy-to-develop-large-scale-infrastructure-projects-with-chinese-multinational-in-sa-210750.html>

### **Leigh Creek Energy to develop large-scale infrastructure projects with Chinese multinational in SA**

*Proactive Investors, 07/12/2018*

The CCCC is ranked as the largest Chinese enterprise in terms of revenue from overseas projects.

Leigh Creek Energy Ltd has developed a deal with China Communications Construction Company Ltd (CCCC) to invest in large-scale infrastructure projects beyond in-situ gasification in South Australia.

CCCC committed to providing Leigh Creek with a draft heads of agreement (HoA) allowing the companies to cooperatively develop projects such as ports and railway. ...

Leigh Creek is making significant progress at the pre-commercial in-situ gasification demonstration facility at its Leigh Creek Energy Project in South Australia, with gas flows continuing for 53 days. ...

<https://smallcaps.com.au/leigh-creek-energy-exceptional-environmental-results-syngas-demonstration/>

### **Leigh Creek Energy reports 'exceptional' environmental results at syngas demonstration**

*Danica Cullinane, Small Caps, 12/12/2018*

Junior gas developer Leigh Creek Energy has announced "exceptional" environmental results from the ongoing pre-commercial demonstration at its Leigh Creek synthesis gas project in South Australia.

The company today updated the market with initial environmental monitoring data, confirming that the pre-commercial demonstration was "operating as expected, in line with scientific modelling".

According to Leigh Creek Energy, the results support the company's claim that the in situ gasification (ISG) process can be done in a "safe, regulated and controlled manner".

It also endorses the project site, situated in the former Leigh Creek coalfields in northern SA, as being "ideally suited" to the ISG process. ...

<https://www.proactiveinvestors.com.au/companies/news/211021/leigh-creek-energy-proves-no-environmental-impacts-at-syngas-demonstration-facility-in-sa-211021.html>

### **Leigh Creek Energy proves no environmental impacts at syngas demonstration facility in SA**

*Proactive Investor, 12/12/2018*

Leigh Creek Energy Ltd has provided data showing no environmental impacts at its pre-commercial in-situ gasification (ISG) demonstration facility in South Australia. Environmental monitoring data from the ISG operation at the former Leigh Creek coal

*Leigh Creek Energy's underground coal gasification site, South Australia.*



field confirmed the pre-commercial demonstration (PCD) was operating as expected, in line with scientific modelling. ...

The results align with expected monitoring observations of:

- No change in pressure in the green zone (greater than 100 metres radius);
- Minor decrease in pressure and no change in temperature in the amber zone (less than 100 metres radius); and
- No change in temperature and decreased pressure after ignition in the red zone (less than 15 metres surrounding the gasifier), with inward flow towards the gasifier contained.

The data indicates there are no gas leakages or water contamination and all contents of the demonstration's gasifier are completely contained.

Pressure and temperature monitoring data has been published on the South Australian Department of Energy and Mines website as required under Leigh Creek's regulatory obligations. ...

<https://www.transcontinental.com.au/story/5806257/leigh-creek-energys-infrastructure-plans/>

### Leigh Creek Energy's infrastructure plans

*Marco Balsamo, Transcontinental, 11/12/2018*

Leigh Creek Energy (LCK) has formed a partnership with Asia's largest international contractor, China Communications Construction Company (CCCC), to enable investment in development projects such as ports and railway.

CCCC has made the commitment to support large-scale projects in South Australia beyond the Leigh Creek Energy Project (LCEP), providing a draft Heads of Agreement (HoA) to LCK.

The collaboration between the two companies includes project consultation, investment in LCK and its project financing, and construction and operation. ...

The Leigh Creek community remains divided over the LCEP, with Lock the Gate Alliance Director Sarah Moles recently visiting the town to support local protests against the controversial ISG process.

## FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/dec/09/exxonmobil-house-democrats-must-investigate>

### If Democrats want to seek the truth, they must investigate ExxonMobil

*Julian Brave NoiseCat, The Guardian, 09/12/2018*

If Pelosi and House Democrats are sincere about restoring integrity to Congress, uncovering threats to democracy and seeking the truth, they should also investigate a corporation that has done long-term and probably irrevocable damage to our politics and planet: ExxonMobil.

Our era is defined by interlocking crises of truth, democracy and ecology. ExxonMobil is a major actor at that intersection.

Internal and external documents compiled by InsideClimate News, the Los Angeles Times and researchers at Harvard University reveal that ExxonMobil, the world's largest fossil fuel corporation, knew as early as 1977 – and potentially as early as the 1950s – that its business activities could wreak havoc on the climate. ...

In 1988, an Exxon public affairs manager wrote that the company should “emphasize the uncertainty” of climate science. This became the “Exxon position” – and so began one of the greatest conspiracies of our time. ...

<https://www.northweststar.com.au/story/5800584/australias-fossil-future-hangs-in-the-balance/>

### Australia's fossil future hangs in the balance

*Mike Foley, North West Star, 08/12/2018*

A rush is on to get new resources projects rolling.

The threat of disruption from a new Labor government appears to be motivating the movement, as the Coalition trails in the lead up to a federal poll due by May 18 next year.

Landholder rights, environmental impacts and economic returns are increasingly controversial and the Coalition and Labor's internal divisions are on show.

Labor's national conference in Adelaide on December 16 will showcase debate between MPs and unions who support the industry and its jobs and those who oppose fracking due to the impact on water resources and the contribution of gas to carbon emissions. ...

[https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/dec/11/australia-only-nation-to-join-us-at-pro-coal-event-at-cop24-climate-talks?CMP=soc\\_567&fbclid=IwAR0F-CARkXdt7jCNRz3uk5XUPtAm3XIVgPnm5\\_5NHf47WzTjg-skjzRu4qo](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/dec/11/australia-only-nation-to-join-us-at-pro-coal-event-at-cop24-climate-talks?CMP=soc_567&fbclid=IwAR0F-CARkXdt7jCNRz3uk5XUPtAm3XIVgPnm5_5NHf47WzTjg-skjzRu4qo)

### Australia only nation to join US at pro-coal event at COP24 climate talks

*Ben Doherty, The Guardian, 11/12/2018*

Australia has reaffirmed its commitment to coal – and its unwavering support for the United States – by appearing at a US government-run event promoting the use of fossil fuels at the United Nations climate talks in Poland.

Australia was the only country apart from the host represented at the event, entitled “US innovative technologies spur economic dynamism”, designed to “showcase ways to use fossil fuels as cleanly and efficiently as possible, as well as the use of emission-free nuclear energy”. ...

Patrick Suckling, Australia's ambassador for the environment, and the head of the country's negotiating delegation at the climate talks, spoke on the panel. His nameplate bore a US flag. ...

Suckling said Australia would continue to invest in low-emissions innovations, including doubling its innovation investment by 2020. But he said carbon capture and storage – “a proven technology” – was important in any model for emissions reduction, and that the technology had broad applications across industries.

But Simon Bradshaw, Oxfam Australia's climate change policy adviser, said it was “extremely disappointing” to see Australia line up behind the US in pushing a pro-coal ideas. ...

Wells Griffith, a Trump administration adviser speaking alongside Suckling on the panel, said the US would continue extracting fossil fuels, and warned against “alarmism” about climate change. ...

Also at the UN climate talks in Poland, two new reports have cast Australia as a global laggard on addressing climate change.

The Climate Change Performance Index, compiled by the Climate Action Network, ranked Australia 55 out of 60 countries for its actions on climate change. ...

Separately, the Climate Action Tracker has updated its assessment of Australia's efforts, saying the country's “climate policy has further deteriorated in the past year, as it focuses on propping up the coal industry and ditches efforts to reduce emissions”.

“The Australian government has turned its back on global climate action by dismissing the findings of the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5C and announcing it would no longer provide funds to the Green Climate Fund,” the assessment said. ...

[https://thewest.com.au/business/energy/premier-mark-mcgowan-accused-of-fracking-about-face-ng-b881047428z2utm\\_campaign=share-icons&utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=social&tid=1544649467539&fbclid=IwAR2XsQH0gdLAZDEtMg8tDDBG0xGleSRJPtVKIL71cqt1ow-K9eQNHhCY8](https://thewest.com.au/business/energy/premier-mark-mcgowan-accused-of-fracking-about-face-ng-b881047428z2utm_campaign=share-icons&utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&tid=1544649467539&fbclid=IwAR2XsQH0gdLAZDEtMg8tDDBG0xGleSRJPtVKIL71cqt1ow-K9eQNHhCY8)

## Premier Mark McGowan accused of fracking about-face

Peter Milne, *West Australian*, 12/12/2018

A group of scientists has accused the McGowan Government of reneging on an election commitment to take climate change fully into account before deciding to lift its moratorium on the use of fracking to produce oil and gas.

Before last year’s election, then Opposition leader Mark McGowan said fracking would not be approved unless a public inquiry, which included a full analysis of life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions, demonstrated that the practice would not contribute adversely to climate change. ...

The group of scientists, including professors Fiona Stanley and Peter Newman from WA, and left-wing think-tank the Australia Institute, has rejected the conclusion.

In a letter to State Cabinet, the group said the report made a series of assumptions that seriously underestimated greenhouse emissions from fracking. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/dec/12/barnaby-joyce-seat-to-be-targeted-by-third-party-group-anyone-but-nats>

## Campaigners pledge to target Barnaby Joyce after ‘unwarranted’ electoral commission raid

Gabrielle Chan, *The Guardian*, 12/12/2018

A third-party organisation trying to unseat New South Wales National party MPs is under investigation by the state’s electoral commission – a move that has spurred its organisers to target federal Nationals seats, specifically Barnaby Joyce’s seat of New England.

The commission has sent officers to the homes of co-founders of the newly formed third-party campaigner known as Anyone But Nats, which has urged voters to “put the Nats last” at the March state election.

Mudgee-based IT businessman Charles

Tym said the commission had issued a notice under the state’s Electoral Act informing him that investigating officers would inspect his financial records regarding donations. ...

Charles Tym said he would not be intimidated by the investigation and promised to take the organisation to the federal election, with a specific focus on Joyce’s electorate. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/government-not-ruling-out-support-for-coal-in-mammoth-energy-boost-20181212-p50lv9.html>

## Government not ruling out support for coal in mammoth energy boost

David Crowe, *SMH*, 13/12/2018

The Morrison government will clear the ground for a mammoth financial boost to new energy projects in an uncapped scheme that will offer loans and grants, giving the industry six weeks to step forward with proposals.

The government is not ruling out support for coal-fired power stations in the official document that calls for proposals, putting a priority on projects that could reduce prices and offer reliable electricity around the clock.

But the plan does not canvass any indemnity for projects that might one day have to incur a price on carbon – a key factor for long-term investors in new generators that use fossil fuels. ...

Opposition Leader Bill Shorten has taken a different approach ... announcing last month that a Labor government would expand the existing Clean Energy Finance Corporation with another \$10 billion. ...

A Labor government would also spend \$5 billion to modernise the electricity grid, including new transmission links.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/dec/13/coalition-signals-it-will-provide-taxpayer-support-for-new-and-existing-coal-plants>

## Coalition signals it will provide taxpayer support for new and existing coal plants

Katharine Murphy, *The Guardian*, 13/12/2018

The Morrison government has sent a clear signal that it is prepared to provide taxpayer support for both new and existing coal plants, opening registrations of interest in its controversial new power generation underwriting program. ...

Taxpayer support will be made available to projects through a range of financing options such as underwriting floor prices, underwriting cap prices, grants and loans ...

The government has not published an upper limit on the size of eligible projects but the minimum eligible project size will be 30MW. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/dec/13/banks-urged-not-to-fund-coal-power-as-government-moves-to-underwrite-projects>

## Banks urged not to fund coal power as government moves to underwrite projects

Katharine Murphy, *The Guardian*, 13/12/2018

Environmental and progressive activist groups are urging Australia’s major banks and financial institutions not to fund new coal projects now that the Morrison government has flagged taxpayer assistance for power generation.

The Australian Conservation Foundation, GetUp, Greenpeace, Environment Victoria, the Australian Youth Climate Coalition, the Australian Centre for Corporate Responsibility and the Australia Institute wrote on Thursday to chief executives of the major lenders, warning the provision of finance for new coal, or retrofits of old coal-fired power stations, would be inconsistent with their public commitments to the Paris agreement. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/dec/13/scott-morrison-and-the-business-council-are-pushing-coal-but-on-what-evidence>

## Scott Morrison and the Business Council are pushing coal – but on what evidence?

Richard Denniss, *The Guardian*, 13/12/2018

Despite plummeting costs of renewables the government and the BCA insist that emissions reduction would be ‘economy wrecking’.

Fresh from losing the economic fight about company tax cuts, the Coalition government is doubling down on an economic fight about renewable energy. And yet again, as they march into battle they have the Business Council of Australia as their key source of economic and political advice. What could go wrong? ...

• Richard Denniss is chief economist for the Australia Institute

[https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/new-energy-future-minister-touts-australia-at-climate-summit-20181213-p50m3f.html?fbclid=IwAR0KC4RbVVKk13nVuArTl4fuw-Z6K67wPRvYfMgOVTP\\_EjcltAhGL\\_zza3c](https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/new-energy-future-minister-touts-australia-at-climate-summit-20181213-p50m3f.html?fbclid=IwAR0KC4RbVVKk13nVuArTl4fuw-Z6K67wPRvYfMgOVTP_EjcltAhGL_zza3c)

## ‘New energy future’: Minister touts Australia at climate summit

Peter Hannam, *SMH*, 13/12/2018

Australia is moving “towards a new energy future”, powered by unprece-

## News this week ... from previous page

dented investments in renewable energy, Environment Minister Melissa Price has told a summit in Poland even as the country earned a “fossil of the day” award for its poor climate policies.

In a speech on Wednesday at the COP24 climate talks in Katowice, Ms Price said Australia was “committed to the Paris Agreement” and the development of a “robust rulebook” to implement the global pact agreed in 2015. ...

Richie Merzian, a climate researcher with The Australia Institute, said Minister Price’s speech “relied almost entirely on policies her government tried to kill-off or water down”.

He also criticised the climate finance pledge, saying Prime Minister Scott Morrison “had trashed and cut support for UN’s key climate finance body, the Green Climate Fund”. ...

Australia’s policies also copped flak from The Climate Action Network, an alliance of 1300 environmental groups, which declared the country “fossil of the day” for its four years of rising greenhouse gas emissions. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/dec/13/australias-carbon-emissions-highest-on-record-data-shows>

### Australia’s carbon emissions highest on record, data shows

Lisa Cox, *The Guardian*, 13/12/2018

Australia’s carbon emissions are again the highest on record, according to new data from the emissions-tracking organisation Ndevr Environmental.

Ndevr replicates the federal government’s national greenhouse gas inventory (NGGI) quarterly reports but releases them months ahead of the official data. ...

Matt Drum, the managing director of Ndevr, said if emissions continued at their current rate, Australia would miss the target by a cumulative 1.1bn tonnes. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/dec/13/australia-turns-back-on-allies-as-it-refuses-to-cut-emissions-above-paris-pledge>

### Australia turns back on allies as it refuses to cut emissions above Paris pledge

Ben Doherty, *The Guardian*, 13/12/2018

Australia will not commit to larger carbon emissions reductions above its Paris agreement target, despite a

coalition of former allies and Pacific neighbours urging greater cuts.

In Paris in 2015 Australia was a part of a bloc of countries called the “High Ambition Coalition”, which includes the UK, the EU, New Zealand, the Marshall Islands and Fiji. Australia is outside that bloc now.

On Wednesday, 27 countries and the EU in the High Ambition Coalition called for significantly increased targets for carbon emissions reductions by 2030, in response to a dramatic 1.5C warming report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that has dominated negotiations in Poland this week. ...

Progress has been slow on several key issues, and divisions have emerged between four fossil fuel powers – the US, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait – and the rest of the world. Australia is seen as closely allied to the US, having appeared at a US-government pro-fossil fuel event this week. ...

Environment Minister, Melissa Price, said Australia’s natural resources would provide “the low-emissions fuels of the future”.

“Our liquefied natural gas exports could save importing countries around 130m tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent a year.”

Price did not comment on whether Australia would use carryover carbon credits from the soon-to-be-obsolete Kyoto protocol periods to meet its Paris targets, but it appears almost certain to use the controversial practice. ...



[https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/fundamental-major-ambition-gaps-dog-final-days-of-climate-talks-20181214-p50mc0.html?fbclid=IwAR3jhtgL-7GxwoeJtywtjofyqykN7m0\\_yP5CSTjmrRuOWTGMkiYrW-C8oGdMo](https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/fundamental-major-ambition-gaps-dog-final-days-of-climate-talks-20181214-p50mc0.html?fbclid=IwAR3jhtgL-7GxwoeJtywtjofyqykN7m0_yP5CSTjmrRuOWTGMkiYrW-C8oGdMo)

### ‘Fundamental’: Major ambition gaps dog final days of climate talks

Peter Hannam, *SMH*, 14/12/2018

A major climate summit of more than 190 nations was set to run overtime as delegates struggled to narrow gaps on guidelines to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and raise aid for developing nations.

Observers at the COP24 talks in the Polish city of Katowice said talks would likely extend past the 5am Saturday deadline (AEDT).

“It’s not a treaty-type outcome, and some items can be pushed into [the next meeting in] 2019,” said Richie Merzian, of The Australia Institute. “There’s no need to kill themselves this time around.”

The Polish talks aim to agree on a so-called rulebook to increase transparency of national emissions-reduction pledges made at the Paris COP21 in 2015. Countries agreed then to keep global warming to well below 2 degrees.

If implemented, current promises leave the planet on a course to warm at least 3 degrees by 2100, scientists say. ...

**FFB**

### Fiona Wilson fundraiser

Gas industry whistleblower Fiona Wilson is still battling her incarceration and forced medication by Queensland’s Fixated Persons Unit.

Fiona’s story was told in FFB1.2 and FFB1.13. She needs to fund about \$30,000 in legal fees and medical costs.

If you can help, click the link below:

<https://www.gofundme.com/barrister-needed-for-fiona-wilson>

**Fossil Fool Bulletin** is emailed to subscribers every Tuesday.



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



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