Incident report shows fracking industry riddled by miscalculations, human errors

There were 21 spills of oil, polluted water, drilling mud and chemicals at fracking sites in WA that were serious enough to require reporting to authorities in the five years to November 2017, the WA Fracking Inquiry report has revealed for the first time.

The serious spills don’t even include the nearly 400 other spills that took place over the same period at oil and gas mining, exploration and production sites in WA including smaller spills at fracking test sites across the state.

Included in the list of reportable incidents at fracking sites was the discharge of more than 300,000 litres of a water-based mud mix from a well-pad in the Kimberley in 2015 and 100 barrels of drilling mud from a well pad in the Mid West in 2014.

Also listed was a transport tanker spill in the Kimberley in 2016 that saw 8,300 litres of an unspecified substance spill into the environment; a diesel fuel tank leak that resulted in the loss 1,000 litres of diesel in the Mid West in 2012; and a chemical failure on a high generator fuel line that resulted in a spill of 2,500 litres of diesel in the Mid West in 2017.

A spokesperson for Lock the Gate in WA, Jane Hammond, said the number of spills was alarming especially given the fact that only a handful of test fracking wells had so far been drilled in WA and there had been no horizontal fracking wells drilled.

“These details that have only just come to light as part of the WA Fracking Inquiry show an industry riddled by mistakes, miscalculations and human error,” Ms Hammond said.

Litany of spills and incidents

“Since 2004 we have only seen a dozen fracking wells in WA yet we see a litany of spills and incidents. These reportable spills have been happening on average once every three months over the past five years and are likely to be the tip of the iceberg as they rely on the fracking companies actually admitting to their mistakes.

“They are part of a bigger problem in the onshore oil and gas industry that has seen an average of one spill every four days for the past five years.

“It is also of great concern that the fracking inquiry’s report is the first time that this data has been made available to the public.”

Incidents also took place in the South West with multiple small spills of diesel, drilling mud and oil in late 2013, at the same time that work was taking place at a previous fracking site in the Whicher Range. The South West spills included a discharge that saw 240 litres of drilling fluid spew into a bunded area.

“The WA Government has just given the greenlight to fracking in WA, a situation that could see thousands more wells dotting the landscape.

“How can this industry be effectively policed? As these statistics show fracking mistakes can, and frequently do, happen.”
Adelaide could experience nearly three times as many extreme heat days over 35 degrees by 2090, as well as 600% more days over 40 degrees, unless comprehensive action is undertaken to tackle global warming, according to new analysis from The Australia Institute’s HeatWatch initiative.

The report, from The Australia Institute’s Climate & Energy Program, uses CSIRO-BoM modelling to show how areas in and around Adelaide will get hotter, more regularly, if the government fails to act on reducing carbon emissions.

“Adelaide already has some of the hottest weather of any Australian capital city and, unless we do more to tackle dangerous global warming, that is only going to get worse,” said Noah Schultz-Byard, The Australia Institute’s SA projects manager.

“This report paints a clear and unnerving picture of the very real way that global warming will affect all aspects of our state, including our productivity, livelihoods, infrastructure and economy.

**Adelaide has highest heatwave death rate**

“In Australia, heatwaves are a bigger killer than all other natural disasters combined and Adelaide already has the highest heatwave death rate of any capital city. Having even hotter days, even more regularly, will be devastating for people in South Australia.

“The good news though is that it’s not too late to take action. CSIRO projections show that if we reduce carbon emissions now and take preventative action to limit global warming into the future, we can avoid the majority of these temperature increases."

Doctor Eleanor Evans, an Adelaide based GP and member of Doctors for the Environment Australia, said it is the elderly, the sick and children who will suffer the worst health effects from the projected increase in extreme heat days.

“With more extreme heat days in Adelaide there will be a direct increase in heat related deaths and illnesses, such as dehydration, heat stress and heat stroke” said Dr Evans.

“Heatwaves increase pressure on ambulance and emergency room services, increase air pollution and even make workplace accidents more likely.

“Children are especially vulnerable to extreme heat because they’re more susceptible to heat stress and dehydration. If we’re going to protect the youngest and most vulnerable among us, the time to tackle dangerous global warming is now.”
UN: Healing ozone layer shows why environmental treaties matter

By Lorraine Chow, EcoWatch

After decades of thinning, Earth’s ozone layer is slowly recovering, the United Nations (UN) said in a report released last November, highlighting how international cooperation can help tackle major environmental issues.

The ozone layer, which protects humans and other species from the sun’s highly hazardous ultraviolet radiation, has been declining since the 1970s due to the effect of chemicals such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and similar gases found in refrigerants and aerosol spray cans.

But the new study – ‘Scientific Assessment of Ozone Depletion: 2018’ – shows that ozone in parts of the stratosphere has recovered at a rate of 1-3% since 2000 due to the success of the 1987 Montreal Protocol, the landmark multilateral environmental agreement that phased out ozone-depleting substances.

“It’s really good news,” report co-chairman Paul Newman, chief Earth scientist at NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center, told the Associated Press. “If ozone-depleting substances had continued to increase, we would have seen huge effects. We stopped that.”

That said, the ozone layer still has a long road to complete recovery. If progress continues, the Northern Hemisphere and mid-latitude ozone should be healed by the 2030s, followed by the Southern Hemisphere in the 2050s and polar regions by 2060, according to the study.

“I don’t think we can do a victory lap until 2060,” Newman added to the AP.

“That will be for our grandchildren to do.”

Notably, scientists have recently detected a mysterious rise of CFCs out of eastern Asia.

Newman also pointed out to the AP that the refrigerants that are currently being used also need to be replaced themselves with chemicals that do not worsen global warming.

Next year, the Montreal Protocol is set to be strengthened with the ratification of the Kigali Amendment, which slashes climate-warming gases in refrigerators, air conditioners and related products.

Inspiration for climate action

Still, the new report is “an inspiration for more ambitious climate action to halt a catastrophic rise in world temperatures,” the UN said in a press release of the new report, adding the findings “provide a ray of hope” less than a month after the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its dire report urging drastic action to stave off catastrophic climate change.

The writers of the new report said that with the full implementation of the Kigali Amendment, the world can avoid up to 0.4% of global warming this century, meaning that it will play a major role in keeping the global temperature rise below 2°C.

“The Montreal Protocol is one of the most successful multilateral agreements in history for a reason,” Erik Solheim, head of UN Environment stated in the press release. “The careful mix of authoritative science and collaborative action that has defined the Protocol for more than 30 years and was set to heal our ozone layer is precisely why the Kigali Amendment holds such promise for climate action in future.”
**Petrochemical plants cash in on US fracking boom**

From the Environmental Integrity Project

Since 2016, state regulators in Louisiana and Texas have approved 31 new oil, gas, and petrochemical projects along the Gulf Coast that will add another 50 million tons of greenhouse gas pollution – the equivalent of 11 new coal-fired power plants.

These new projects add to a petrochemical construction boom underway since at least 2012, as investors build or expand liquid natural gas (LNG) terminals, refineries, ethylene crackers, and chemical and fertiliser plants to cash in on cheap and plentiful supplies of oil and gas unleashed by fracking.

Overall, Texas and Louisiana have issued Clean Air Act permits for 74 projects since 2012 that are located within 70 miles of the Gulf Coast shoreline, according to an Environmental Integrity Project review of state records. These permits allow these new installations to add 134 million tons of global warming pollution to the atmosphere every year – as much as 29 new coal-fired power plants running around the clock.

The new oil and gas infrastructure is largely in coastal areas that are especially vulnerable to the storms, heavy rainfall, flooding, and sea level rise that are expected to increase as global temperatures increase, driven by greenhouse gas pollution.

“Hurricane season is a good time to think about the impact these big greenhouse gas emitters will have on global warming,” said Eric Schaeffer, director of the Environmental Integrity Project. “We had better start thinking about whether all this oil and gas infrastructure is strong enough and safe enough to withstand the severe storms that are sure to follow.”

Anne Rolfs, Founding Director, Louisiana Bucket Brigade, said: “Louisiana is already sinking into the Gulf of Mexico, and yet our state government is permitting more of the emissions that cause flooding and storms. It’s mind boggling.

“During the next storm, when our elected officials watch TV and see their constituents drowning, our Governor and Congressmen should be prepared to say it’s their fault, a result of their willingness to give a permit to every bad project.”

**Humanity adding to weather extremes**

A 2014 report called the ‘National Climate Assessment’, which was written by NASA and other federal agencies and reviewed by a panel of the National Academy of Sciences, warned that: “Increasingly, humanity is also adding to weather-related factors, as human-induced warming increases heavy downpours, causes more extensive storm surges due to sea level rise, and leads to more rapid spring snowmelt.”

The same report noted the sharp rise in the number of extreme rainfall events over the last 30 years.

Big storm surges can rip oil or chemical tanks off their moorings, as happened during Hurricane Katrina in 2005 at the Murphy Oil USA refinery in Chalmette, Louisiana, spreading oil and toxic wastes into rivers and surrounding neighborhoods.

In the rush to shut down operations after Hurricane Harvey made landfall last year, industries in the Houston area reported 23 incidents within 48 hours that released 2.2 million pounds of air pollution, often because of failed tanks, equipment failures or blackouts, according to an Environmental Integrity Project report, ‘Preparing for the Next Storm’.

Also often overrun during floods are waste ponds used to store industrial wastewater and municipal sewage and too often built in low-lying areas. Hurricane Harvey caused the release of more than 150 million gallons of wastewater during the storm, records show.

“As we saw from Hurricane Harvey last year, building massive refineries and petrochemical plants in the flood zone without adequate planning or engineering is not just a risk to the environment, but a real potential health hazard, as well,” said Bakeyah Nelson, Executive Director of Air Alliance Houston.

Petrochemical plants have historically been sited on or close to coastlines, 

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**The 10 largest petrochemical projects, locations, and total approved emission increases since 2012 are listed below**

*Note: The greenhouse gas emissions numbers in this chart are expressed as annual tons of carbon-dioxide equivalent gases (because some pollutants, such as methane, have a larger greenhouse gas impact than others.)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Petrochemical Plant Project</th>
<th>County or Parish</th>
<th>Approved Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Tons)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sasol North America, Inc. Lake Charles Chemical Complex Cracker Project</td>
<td>Calcasieu Parrish, LA</td>
<td>10,418,839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabine Pass LNG Terminal</td>
<td>Cameron Parrish, LA</td>
<td>10,157,556</td>
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<tr>
<td>Driftwood LNG LLC – LNG Facility</td>
<td>Calcasieu Parrish, LA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cameron LNG – Cameron LNG Liquefaction</td>
<td>Cameron Parrish, LA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Charles Methanol LLC — Gasification Facility</td>
<td>Calcasieu Parrish, LA</td>
<td>6,014,977</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corpus Christi Liquefaction LNG Terminal</td>
<td>San Patricio County, TX</td>
<td>5,813,445</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golden Pass Products LLC LNG Facility</td>
<td>Jefferson County, TX</td>
<td>4,940,072</td>
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<tr>
<td>CF Industries Nitrogen LLC Donaldsonville Nitrogen Complex</td>
<td>Ascension Parish, LA</td>
<td>4,848,688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Arthur LNG, LLC — LNG Plant and Export Terminal</td>
<td>Jefferson County, TX</td>
<td>4,659,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trunkline LNG Export LLC Lake Charles Liquefaction Export Terminal</td>
<td>Calcasieu Parrish, LA</td>
<td>4,513,540</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Continued p5
US: Cheap oil and gas unleashed

“The first cargo prepares to depart Sabine Pass LNG export terminal in Louisiana, which emits 10.5 million tons of greenhouse gases annually. Photo: Cheniere Energy

Applications rubber stamped

“Those plans should anticipate increasingly severe weather and include actions to minimise potential damage from storms. And we can do more to minimise greenhouse gas emissions from these new plants, instead of just rubber stamping their permit applications, as Texas and Louisiana have done.”

Two new projects that were recently permitted to release the most greenhouse gases are Driftwood LNG LLC’s liquid natural gas terminal in Calcasieu Parrish, Louisiana, which is authorised to release an additional 9.5 million tons of greenhouse gases to the air; according to a state Clean Air Act permit issued on July 10, 2018. The other is the Sabine Pass LNG Terminal in Cameron Parrish, Louisiana, which is authorised to release an additional 10.2 million tons of greenhouse gases, 2.2 million tons of which were approved in September 2017.

Plastic resins proliferate

Of the 31 petrochemical projects approved since January 1, 2016, 15 are at chemical or plastic resin plants; seven are at LNG plants or terminals; five are petroleum refineries; two are natural gas processing facilities; one is an ammonia fertiliser manufacturing plant; and one is a hydrogen plant, according to state records.

States often issue permits for these projects incrementally, meaning that emission limits for the projects can increase over time. For instance, Louisiana in 2013 authorised Cameron LNG to release four million tons of greenhouse gases per year from a new natural gas liquefaction facility in Cameron Parrish. The state issued another permit to the plant in 2016 that allows the construction of two new production units and an additional five million tons of greenhouse gases per year. The total emissions from the project could be as high as nine million tons of greenhouse gases per year.

TAI on Darling River fish kill: Long-term mismanagement

The Australia Institute welcomes the Labor Party proposal to hold a Commission of Inquiry into the mass fish kill at Menindee Lakes last week.

“The blame game for the mass fish deaths is well and truly on. The Prime Minister blames the drought, the NSW Water Minister blames the Commonwealth, upstream blames downstream, and downstream blames upstream,” said Rod Campbell, Research Director at The Australia Institute.

“Australia Institute research has shown that the Lower Darling and Menindee Lakes has been mismanaged by many over a long period of time.

“Approximately two Sydney Harbours worth of water has been taken out of the region in the last two years.

“Repeated policy failure in the management of the Lower Darling and Menindee Lakes has implications for major projects, irrigation and the environment throughout the Basin.

“The hundreds of thousands of fish like the Murray cod have been sacrificed for interests elsewhere. The Australian public deserve an open account of how we have gotten to this point and the proposed inquiry is a good start.

To find answers, any inquiry into the Darling River fish kill needs to examine:

• why inflows have been declining substantially into Menindee Lakes over the last decade;
• whether the long-standing management arrangements for Menindee Lake are still appropriate, particularly with large holdings of environmental water;
• whether the management of Menindee Lakes was, in fact, inconsistent with agreed management arrangements; and
• evaporation and salinity at Menindee Lakes.

“The river of dead fish is symbolic of the death of public trust in the management of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan,” Mr Campbell said.
Inside the news

Anti-Adani groups like Frontline Action on Coal and Galilee Blockade have kicked off the year with more coal train stoppages and action against companies working for the mining giant. With the federal elections just months away, Adani will be a key issue and protesters aim to keep it on the boil (p7).

Meanwhile, Adani has been cleared of any wrongdoing with its water bores and other work at the mine site. Greens Senator, Larissa Waters, said the department’s investigation comprised just one day on-site and should be reviewed (p8).

The West Australian triggered a safety investigation when it revealed that the Ichthys Explorer platform and nearby Ichthys Venturer oil production vessel, off the Kimberley coast, are in danger because shoddy electrical work could cause a deadly gas explosion (p9-10).

The Daily Telegraph ran a puff-piece about the Santos Narrabri gasfield, which awaits a tick from the NSW government (p10). Like all Murdoch news outfits, the Tele is an avid promoter of fossil fuels.

Stable-mates the NT News and The Courier-Mail (p11) ran a long promotion of the NT’s emerging fracking industries and the petro-chemical nasties (like the ones discussed on p4-5) they hope will emerge from it. This comes as scientists warn we absolutely can’t afford new fossil fuel projects (p12) if the earth is to have a chance of limiting global warming to a habitable level.

The very dodgy Leigh Creek Energy underground coal gasification project has attracted Chinese and African links (p11). A source tells FFB that African Carbon Energy has been in discussion with a former Linc Energy executive who has South African ties.

Remember Linc Energy’s Darling Downs pollution disaster! Former Linc execs are deeply involved with Leigh Creek Energy and we can expect further dodgy deals and environmental damage as the project proceeds.
In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 14,400 words of news for your convenience.
Click on the links to view original articles. (Subscriptions may be required)

**THE ADANI SAGA**


Trendy fashion brands Get Up to protest Adani

_Michael Wray, Courier-Mail, 13/01/2019_

Trendy urban fashion brands are joining the battle against Adani, encouraging customers to fund the campaigns of ecowarriors trying to stop the coal mine.

In the past month, Australia's most famous eco-conscious fashion label, Gorman, and campaigning UK cosmetics retailer, Lush, have funnelled funds to anti-Adani activists, including left-wing lobbyists GetUp!.

Both companies have also run social media campaigns attacking the mine.


Federal plan to take over Adani rail line abandoned

_Steven Scott, Courier-Mail, 15/01/2019_

The Federal Government was considering a plan to fund a rail line to open up central Queensland to further mining development but abandoned it after Malcolm Turnbull was rolled as prime minister.

Negotiations for the Australian Rail Track Corporation to build Queensland's first standard gauge rail line would have seen the Government take over Adani's original rail proposal to ensure it could be expanded and accessed by future mines.

Mr Turnbull had not agreed to the push, which came from Nationals and the Queensland LNP, but had not rejected it either, The Courier-Mail has confirmed.

Executives in Adani, GVK and Waratah Coal were aware of the negotiations.


Anti-Adani protesters target tree clearing business

_Steven Trask, Qld Country Life, 15/01/2019_

Staff from a tree maintenance company needed angle grinders to get into work after the business was caught in the middle of an anti-Adani protest.

On Monday Frontline Action on Coal supporters locked the gates at ETS Group work sites across Australia, claiming the company had taken on a contract to clear land for Adani's controversial Carmichael mine.

ETS Group spokesman Paul Tymensen said the company had no such contract in place and had unfortunately been caught in the middle of the spat.

On Thursday morning, ETS and the anti-coal group Galilee Blockade released apparently coordinated statements confirming the company would not undertake work for Adani relating to the Carmichael project.

"Following events of the past week ETS can confirm we will not undertake work for Adani relating to the proposed Carmichael mine, including the mine site, water facilities, rail corridor or expansion of the port," the company said in a statement posted on its Facebook page.


Adani contractor won't work on Carmichael project after protesters target worksites

_Ben Sme, The Guardian, 17/01/2019_

An Adani contractor has pledged not to work with the company on its Carmichael mine project, agreeing to the demands of protesters who had targeted worksites this week.

The Eastern Tree Services group – an integrated contractor based in Melbourne – had been clearing trees near the Adani Abbot Point port to manage a fire break.

On Thursday morning, ETS and the anti-coal group Galilee Blockade released apparently coordinated statements confirming the company would not participate in the Carmichael project.

"Following events of the past week ETS can confirm we will not undertake work for Adani relating to the proposed Carmichael mine, including the mine site, water facilities, rail corridor or expansion of the port," the company said in a statement posted on its Facebook page.
Galilee Blockade thanked the company for upholding their value to “make communities safer” and not take on contracts “if potential client work compromises this”. ...

"Adani must be the most toxic company in Australia’s corporate history," Galilee Blockade spokesman Ben Penning said. "Eastern Tree Service learnt very quickly how committed people are to protecting the reef, scarce water and a liveable climate.

"Banks, insurers and major contractors have all walked away from Adani. Now smaller contractors are beginning to understand that Australians will punish companies that threaten their future. ...


Adani ‘broke no law’ in drilling Carmichael bores
Rosie Lewis, The Australian, 17/01/2019

Indian energy giant Adani has been cleared of allegations made by conservationists that it had commenced mining operations at its Carmichael mine site, with new documents revealing the Environment Department found no breach of the law.

The department launched an investigation last September into allegations from the Environmental Defenders Office Queensland, acting on behalf of the Australian Conservation Foundation, that Adani "has drilled six groundwater dewatering bores (meaning that mining has commenced)". ...

Documents produced by the government’s deputy Senate leader, Simon Birmingham, show the department’s office of compliance concluded in late October that “its assessment of the matter relating to the drilling of six bores/pads … found that Adani has not breached the conditions of the EPBC Act approval”. ...

Greens mining and resources spokeswoman Larissa Waters said the department’s investigation had been “far from rigorous” and left many unanswered questions, blaming successive funding cuts that affected departmental staff numbers, and political pressure to support Adani.

"The documents read like another big failure by this government when it comes to adequately protecting our environment. After just one day of site inspections, the department simply asked Adani whether they’d broken the rules or not and accepted their reply when they said no,” Senator Waters said.


Adani mine ‘could save us from decline’, say Townsville residents
Jared Owens, The Australian, 17/01/2019

Townsville’s economy has reached a “tipping point” and faces structural decline unless new projects – chiefly Adani’s coalmine – are pushed into production, new analysis of unemployment data by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland says.

North Queensland’s largest city has lost almost 16,000 jobs since 2011, including at major employers such as Clive Palmer’s Queensland Nickel, Townsville City Council and James Cook University. ...

Townsville-based state crossbench MP Nick Dametto said the city could not rely solely on coalmining and wanted its tourism industry rebuilt. ...


Coal transport halted in protest against Adani
Echonet Daily, 17/01/2019

Keeping the pressure against the proposed Adani Carmichael coal mine in the Galilee Basin, 25 year old Romaan halted coal transport to the Abbot Point Coal Terminal from a treesit 20 meters off the ground attached to the Newlands Rail line. ...

Romaan’s protest is the second of its kind this year and one of a long series of nationwide demonstrations against the proposed mine. ...

‘I felt inspired by the students who put their lives on hold during the School Strike for Climate to make the government listen to their concerns for the state of the climate and its implications for our future,’ said Romaan. ...

COAL ROCKS ON

Alpha mine support plan gets Barcaldine council approval
Sally Cripps, Qld Country Life, 14/01/2019

The Barcaldine Regional Council has approved development applications at Alpha that, if proceeded with, could see 1000 extra people in the community. ...

The details were listed in the minutes of the December 2018 council meeting, showing approval had been granted for both an integrated accommodation village, and for a 120-room motel, conference facility and tavern, to be built at the corner of the Capricorn Highway and Villagel Field.

The application was made by MRCH P/L based in Toowoomba, which, according to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission, lists Warren Dale Preston and Joseph Doyle Wagner as co-directors. ...

Alpha is surrounded by three potential coal mines – the South Galilee Project by AMCI and Bandanna, Clive Palmer’s Waratah Coal Project, and the GVK Hancock Alpha Coal project. ...


Queensland coal exports hit record high, Greens claim jobs numbers don’t stack up
Tim Swanston & Talissa Siganto, ABC, 15/01/2019

Queensland’s coal exports have reached a record high and yearly totals are predicted to continue growing, the Queensland Resources Council (QRC) says.

The peak mining body said 223 million tonnes of coal was shipped from Queensland ports to 30 different countries and territories last year, trumping the previous record set in 2016 by 2 million tonnes. ...

Despite the increase in exports, Greens senator Larissa Waters said the claims of more jobs for Queenslanders did not stack up. "It’s been very interesting to see the coal industry in desperate PR overdrive in the last few weeks having a bit of a tantrum about my bill to keep the thermal coal in the Galilee Basin in the ground,” she said.


'Pretty disturbing': AGL pulls toxic waste product off the market
Carrie Feller, The Age, 18/01/2019

The NSW environment watchdog has launched an investigation into revelations a coal waste product sold by AGL to “various markets” has tested positive for elevated levels of toxic substances including chromium, cadmium and copper.
It comes as environmentalists and unions expressed “alarm” at the energy giant’s announcement on Thursday that it would indefinitely suspend sales of the coal ash from its Bayswater and Liddell power stations in the Hunter Valley as a precaution. ...

Bronya Lipski, a lawyer with Environmental Justice Australia, said the public had reason to be concerned. ... "We really don't know where [the ash] has gone and what that means from a public health perspective. It raises some pretty significant questions around the process and the EPA’s role.” ...


Environment pays big price for tricky Gorgon start-up
Peter Milne, West Australian, 09/01/2019

The problematic start-up of the Gorgon LNG project proved costly to the environment as burning of excess gas produced more than 1.5 million tonnes of greenhouse gases a year for the first 16 months of operation. Disposing of Gorgon’s excess gas produced greenhouse gases at a rate greater than alumina production from Alcoa’s Wagerup refinery.

Chevron predicted that flaring of gas during normal operations would produce the equivalent of about 100,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year.

Any trips of the plant or shutdowns of a train would require some or all the gas within the plant to be flared and result in a big increase in emissions, according to the project’s greenhouse gas plan. ...

Gorgon produced 7.72 million tonnes of greenhouse gases in the 12 months to June 2017. This is more than the 6.1 million tonnes a year predicted for normal operation despite all Gorgon’s three trains operating for just the last three months of the period.

The excess is likely because of a combination of the high level of flaring and Chevron's failure to start injecting carbon dioxide underground on schedule. Any trips of the plant or shutdowns of trains would require some or all the gas within the plant to be flared and result in a big increase in emissions, according to the project’s greenhouse gas plan. The problematic start-up of the Gorgon LNG project proved costly to the environment as burning of excess gas produced more than 1.5 million tonnes of greenhouse gases a year for the first 16 months of operation. Disposing of Gorgon’s excess gas produced greenhouse gases at a rate greater than alumina production from Alcoa’s Wagerup refinery.

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in use in the September quarter com-
paring a year earlier. Use of gas on the east coast for electricity generation was 42 per cent lower in December than a year earlier while solar, hydro and wind all jumped, according to consultancy EnergyQuest.

Higher gas prices on the east coast have cut the hours through the day that gas plants can generate electricity at a profit, requiring expensive upgrades to fight off the closure threat, power producers admit. ...

https://www.afr.com/business/energy/gas/gas-power-crunch-fuels-concerns-on-supply-security-20190109-
i3v102

Regulator probe into shoddy Ichthys LNG work
Peter Milne, West Australian, 12/01/2019
Audits revealing potentially fatal shoddy electrical work on gas facilities off WA are now in the hands of the off-
shore safety regulator after The West Australian reported their existence yesterday.

The regulator NOPSEMA yesterday re-
quested the reports from Ichthys LNG project operator Inpex.

The audits found the Ichthys Explorer-
ner platform and Ichthys Venturer oil production vessel had poorly installed electrical equipment that could ignite gas and cause a fatal explosion. ...

Minister for Resources Matt Canavan said NOPSEMA would not have al-
lowed production to start if it was not satisfied Inpex had reduced the risk to as low as reasonably practicable. ...


Gas power crunch fuels concerns on supply security
Angela Macdonald-Smith, AFR, 13/01/2018
A dramatic fall in the use of gas in power generation has fuelled fears that some older plants will be forced to close despite the increasing need for gas to prevent blackouts as wind and solar generation surges.

New evidence has emerged of the speed of the decline in gas power gener-
ation across the National Electricity Market last year, with several plants seeing a slump of 80 per cent or more in use in the September quarter com-
pared with a year earlier. Use of gas on the east coast for electricity generation was 42 per cent lower in December than a year earlier while solar, hydro and wind all jumped, according to consultancy EnergyQuest.

Higher gas prices on the east coast have cut the hours through the day that gas plants can generate electricity at a profit, requiring expensive upgrades to fight off the closure threat, power producers admit. ...

https://www.afr.com/business/energy/gas/gas-power-crunch-fuels-concerns-on-supply-security-20190109-
i3v102

$3.6b plan ready to cook with gas
Edward Boyd, Daily Telegraph, 14/01/2019
The Narrabri gas project has increased current capacity by more than 30 per cent to –power 23,000 households in the state’s northwest.

And owner Santos says if its $3.6 billion project gets the green light, it will be able to supply 50 per cent of the state’s gas needs – cutting prices to customers.

State government approval has been delayed amid opposition from environ-
mental groups, some local farmers and changing regulations for coal seam gas mining. A decision is expected later this year. ...

Federal Resources Minister Matt Canavan supports the project, saying it “would lower gas prices and secure jobs across the state”. ...

“One hundred per cent of Narrabri gas would go into the domestic market, potentially supplying up to half of NSW natural gas demand,” Santos chief executive Kevin Gallagher yesterday told The Daily Telegraph. ...

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Santos fumes over plans for LNG import terminals
Perry Williams, The Australian, 14/01/2019
One of Australia’s largest gas produc-
ers, Santos, says plans for the nation to import LNG will trigger a price hike and supply squeeze, ensuring foreign operators “have a gun to the head” of local manufacturers.

The South Australian company – which is targeting the development of its $3.6 billion Narrabri coal seam gas project in NSW – says developing the country’s domestic hydrocarbon reserves would lower prices rather than relying on a set of import plants which are set to start receiving gas in early 2020. ...


Search for oil and gas deposits approved by NOPSEMA
Jade Galiberg, The Advertiser, 14/01/2019
Oil and gas deposits in the Great Australian Bight will be explored from September, after the federal regulator approved a bid.

Testing company PGS was last year forced to push back plans to conduct seismic testing in March at an area off Kangaroo Island, telling regulator NOPSEMA it would move its activities to September this year.

The approval has sparked anger from environmentalists concerned about the effect on marine life. ...

Wilderness Society SA director Peter Owen said the approval in one of the most significant whale nurseries in the world was “unacceptable”.

“It has led to hearing loss in whales, which sometimes can’t hear each other above the extreme noise,” Mr Owen said.

Australian Greens environment spokesman, Senator Sarah Hanson-Young, said it was the first step to drilling.


Great Australian Bight seismic testing gets green light from regulator
Casey Briggs, ABC, 15/01/2019
Oil and gas testing is set to take place in the Great Australian Bight this year, after the national petroleum regulator
granted permission to exploration company PGS.

Key points:
An exploration company has been given permission to perform testing in a 30,100-square-kilometre area; The tuna industry is questioning if seismic testing will go ahead; The Greens fear drilling in the Bight will be the next step.

West-east gas pipe dream fails to add up

Peter Milne, West Australian, 17/01/2019

A gas pipeline from WA to ease the east coast gas crisis is only viable if supplied by cheap gas that WA consumers are barred from buying, a report commissioned by the Federal Government says.

The ACIL-Allen report, completed in March last year, was quietly released on the Department of Energy’s website recently. It favoured a 2900km route from Karratha that connected to the east coast gas pipeline network at Moomba in South Australia. …

ACIL-Allen senior associate Paul Balfe said the pipeline, which would take six to seven years to design and build, could not help the east coast in the short term.

He said other gas supply options, including the Northern Territory, NSW coal seam gas and LNG imports, would need to fail for the pipeline to be viable in the long term.

“It faces a whole range of commercial challenges that makes it unlikely to be the best means of supplementing gas supply in eastern Australia,” Mr Balfe said. …

East-west gas pipeline no pipe dream despite report: Barnett

Paul Garvey, The Australian, 18/01/2019

The biggest advocate for a multi-billion-dollar gas pipeline across Australia says he still believes the ambitious project has a future, despite a federal government-funded study finding it doesn’t stack up.

Former West Australian premier Colin Barnett, who publicly pushed for the development of a pipeline from WA as a solution to the east coast gas supply crisis, said he had not changed his view that the pipeline could be a “silver bullet” for the nation’s energy issues. …

“It is an absolutely doable project,” he told The Australian.

“Gas wouldn’t become the major source of energy on the east coast but it would stabilise the system. It gives flexibility and it would solve the crisis. It is a silver bullet.” …

Paul Tyrell a man with a mission for the NT as Territory gassed up and ready to go

Gary Shipway, NT News, 17/01/2019

As chair of the Gunner Government’s NT Gas Task Force, [Paul Tyrell] has the job of driving the Government’s vision for the Territory as a world-class hub for gas production, manufacturing and services by 2030.

It’s a mammoth task with five key points …
1. Get more LNG in Darwin and expand Darwin’s LNG Export Hub.
2. Grow the gas supply and service industry.
3. Establish a gas manufacturing industry.
4. Grow research, innovation and training capacity.
5. Contribute to national energy security on the East Coast. …

The establishment of gas- based manufacturing is a critical part of Mr Tyrell’s plan. … “Either the Barossa or Evans Shoal fields could provide the gas for gas-based manufacturing such as methane based products including ammonia nitrate, urea, fertilisers, including using local phosphate deposits, methanol, condensate refining and ethane based petrochemicals, and energy-intensive industries.” …

Leigh Creek Energy set to lease its syngas pilot plant to South African firm

Lauren Barrett, Small Caps, 16/01/2019

Leigh Creek Energy’s pre-commercial demonstration (PCD) syngas plant in South Australia has attracted international interest, with a South African-focused syngas company set to lease out the equipment.

Under a Heads of Agreement (HoA) agreement, African Carbon Energy will use the pilot plant for its own Theunissen in-situ gasification (ISG) project in South Africa, while Leigh Creek Energy will also provide advisory services to the mining and metals company.

The agreement comes after China Communications Construction Company (CCCC) committed to providing Leigh Creek Energy with a draft HoA to provide opportunities for investing and developing projects beyond ISG. …

Importantly, once the final lease and services agreements are executed, it will provide Leigh Creek Energy with an early revenue stream while also enabling the company to recover most of the costs associated with the PCD plant.

In addition, the agreement will provide the company with a “first mover advantage” on any overseas projects or joint ventures, with Leigh Creek acknowledging it was also being approached by other firms to provide similar services.

African Carbon Energy has turned to Leigh Creek Energy for technical advice as it moves to develop its own Underground Coal Gasification (known as ISG in South Australia) projects.

The company purchased massive coal...
Fossil Fuel Infrastructure

- Currently, fossil fuels are the main source of electricity generation globally.
- The burning of fossil fuels increases greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to climate change.
- The transition to cleaner energy sources is necessary to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Governments and industries are facing pressure to reduce their fossil fuel dependency.
- Renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, are becoming more cost-competitive.
- Educational campaigns and documentaries can raise awareness about the importance of transitioning to clean energy.

Protecting Country from Fracking

- A short educational film on the shale gas rush in the Northern Territory.
- Featuring Eddie Mason and Heleana Gulwa from Protect Arnhem Land, Gadrian Hoosan, Nancy McDinny and Asman Rory from Borroloola in the South West Gulf of Carpentaria, Daniel and Shannon Tapp from Big River Station in the Roper and Marjorie Braedon from Wattarka Kings Canyon.
- Produced by Lauren Mellor and Boudicca Cerese edited by Cloudcatcher Media for Lock the Gate Alliance, 2015.

The Coal Truth: the fight to stop Adani, defeat the big polluters and reclaim our democracy ($29.99)

A timely and colourful contribution to one of the most important struggles in our national history – over the future of the coal industry.

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