



Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

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FFB 3:32 • 18 AUGUST 2020

Palmer fights human rights objections to proposed Waratah Galilee coal mine

Clive Palmer's Waratah Coal has launched a legal bid to stop young Queenslanders, landholders and conservationists objecting to the massive Galilee Coal Project on human rights grounds.

The Galilee Coal Project is Waratah Coal's proposed 40 megatonne per year thermal coal mine in central Queensland, currently being challenged in Queensland's Land Court by a range of concerned community groups, farmers and other individuals.

Last week Waratah Coal applied to the Land Court to strike out a number of objections to the mine, including arguments under Queensland's new Human Rights Act brought by EDO clients The Bimblebox Alliance – a group of local landholders and conservationists – and Youth Verdict – a collection of young Queenslanders fighting the mine over climate impacts.

In a move that could have broader consequences for the fledgling Human Rights Act, lawyers acting on behalf of Waratah Coal argued that the law should not apply to mining objection hearings, and that only individuals, not incorporated entities, have standing to seek 'relief or remedy' under the Act.

Human Rights Act in jeopardy

If Waratah Coal succeeds, it could restrict the application of the Human Rights Act by limiting the ability of organisations to bring human rights arguments to Court on behalf of vulnerable Queenslanders, and by removing the ability to object to mines in the Land Court on human rights grounds.



Clive Palmer checks his petty cash stash. Photo: Unknown

Barristers Emrys Nekvapil and Kasey McAuliffe-Lake appeared in court to argue against the strike out application on behalf of our clients, supported by EDO solicitor Alison Rose and managing lawyer Sean Ryan.

Young peoples' future at risk

"Our clients' arguments include that the Galilee Coal Project breaches their human rights by fuelling climate change that puts the futures, lives, and cultures of Queenslanders at risk," said Ryan.

"They are relying on section 58 of the Human Rights Act, which requires a public entity to consider human rights when acting or making a decision."

Waratah Coal's arguments include that the Human Rights Act does not apply

to these mining objection proceedings, because the Queensland Land Court will ultimately issue a recommendation to the state government, an outcome they argue does not constitute a 'decision' or an 'act'.

"Our clients' arguments include that the Land Court recommendation and final government decisions are within the meaning of 'decision' intended by the Human Rights Act," Ryan said.

The strike out application also argues that Youth Verdict and The Bimblebox Alliance cannot rely on the Human Rights Act in their objections because our clients are incorporated entities, not individuals.

"Our clients' arguments also include that a person under the Human

• Continued p2

• P2: AGL graphic misleading, says group

• P2: Knitting Nannas' petition in parliament

P4: Book documents Hazelwood mine fire

Happy days for Clive Palmer's lawyers

• Continued from p1

Rights Act includes individuals and corporations by operation of the Queensland's Acts Interpretation Act," said Ryan.

"If this legal action by Waratah Coal is successful it would serve to limit the application of Queensland's new Human Rights Act and constrain the ability of charities to take action to protect human rights."

The Land Court adjourned to consider arguments related to the Human Rights Act and is expected to make a decision in the coming weeks.

\$30bn lawyer-fest in WA

Palmer has also been in the news this week as the Western Australian government rushed legislation through parliament in an effort to thwart his massive \$30bn lawsuit over WA's refusal of a massive iron ore project.

Former WA premier Colin Barnett told ABC Radio Perth his government in 2012 rejected Clive Palmer's application to develop the Balmoral South iron ore mine in the Pilbara on a host of grounds including environmental, safety and asbestos issues.

"He just simply presented the department [with] boxes full of documents, it was not a professional or competent way to proceed with a major project," Barnett said.

In 2014, Palmer put forward another set of proposals to pursue the issue and was given approval subject to 46 detailed conditions.

It was then "up to Clive to pursue it if he wanted to get the project off the ground," Barnett told the ABC.

The matter has also triggered Palmer litigation in Queensland.

Additionally, Palmer is suing the WA government (now lead by Mark McGowan) over its Covid-19 border closure. Palmer is frustrated the government rejected his bid to get an exemption and enter the state.

It's certainly a great time to be a lawyer!

F

AGL graphic misleading, says community



AGL's 11,000 page environmental report on its proposed Crib Point gas import terminal contains some misleading information, according to community group Save Westernport.

For example, Figure 69 above, where the United tanker shown at left is 180.01 meters long, whereas AGL have said that the gas import vessel at right, a Floating Storage and Regasification Unit, (FSRU) is 290 metres long.

"This doesn't appear to be an accurate depiction of what this picture would

look like if the FSRU was moored there. There's no question that an accurate depiction would demonstrate how oppressive the proposed plant and vessel would be in that quiet coastal location, and how deceptive AGL's own representations have been throughout all their 'consultation sessions', and continue to be even now, in the EES.

"AGL has continually underestimated and downplayed the size, noise, danger, and threat of every single one of

• Continued p3

Knitting Nannas' petition in NSW Parliament

Last week, after a four-year effort, the Knitting Nannas' 11,000 signature petition against Santos' CSG in the Pilliga was debated in NSW Parliament.

Trish Doyle (Labor Blue Mountains) presented the petition in Parliament and lead the debate.

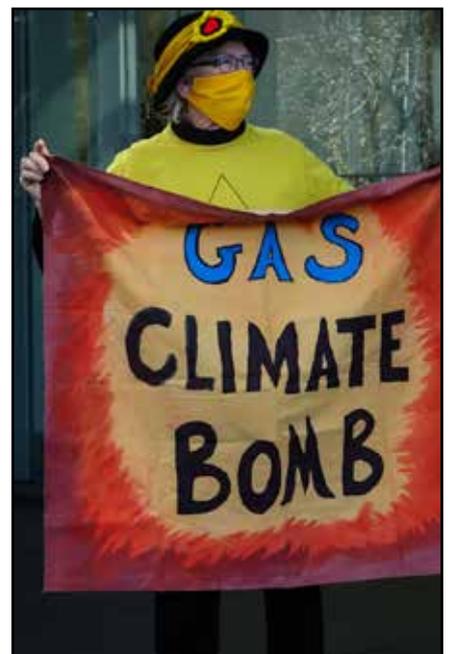
Other speakers in support included Justin Field (Independent), Cate Faehrmann (Greens) and Mark Pearson (Animal Justice Party).

Speaking against were John Barilaro (Nationals) and Michael Johnson (Nationals), who shuddered as he uttered the immortal phrase "unholy alliance of Greens, Labor and the Shooters and Fishers".

Rob Stokes, (Liberal) stayed right in the middle without committing himself in either direction, claiming that as Minister for Planning he didn't want to be seen to be giving directions to the IPC who are still assessing the gasfield.

• Watch the debate here:

<https://vimeo.com/445393287>



Nanna Keelah and others were met outside NSW Parliament by Labor MP Trish Doyle before the petition was debated.

Photo: Knitting Nannas Sydney

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AGL: community, Council reject gas terminal

• Continued from p2

the many impacts of their operations on the community and on the area's environment, its amenity, safety and economy.

"Now AGL's plans to apply to have Woolleys Beach Foreshore Reserve rezoned for port related use have only been discovered because community members have been spending countless hours – days even – to read the detail contained in the 11,000 pages of EES reports," Save Westernport said.

The project would also require construction of a 55-kilometre pipeline to Pakenham.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council officers recommended that councillors oppose the project due to a range of concerns, including greenhouse emissions, impact on marine life and

increased traffic. The council backed the report and voted unanimously to reject the gas project on Monday night.

"Owing to the findings of this analysis, shire officers recommend that [the] council opposes the project in the strongest possible terms as the project poses unacceptable impacts and associated risks across a range of areas," the report says.

The report found the pipeline would run through conservation and rail reserves, agricultural areas and rural residential properties. It said AGL had fallen short of demonstrating the project's impact on the environment could be acceptably managed and raised concerns about potential fuel spills.

The Victorian and Commonwealth governments are ultimately responsible for the project's approval.

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Farmers welcome opposition to New Acland coal mine

The Oakey Coal Action Alliance (OCAA) has welcomed the Queensland Labor Environment Action Network's (LEAN) decision to publicly endorse a policy opposing the granting of approvals to New Acland Stage 3 – at least until the High Court challenge is complete.

The decision comes as New Hope once again attempts to scuttle the High Court case, demanding farmers provide a \$90,000 bond prior to the hearing commencing.

OCAA Secretary Paul King commended LEAN members and the Palaszczuk Government for standing firm against attacks from New Acland owner New Hope Group, the LNP, and a small group of misguided voices from within the Labor party.

"Farmers commend the Queensland Palaszczuk Government and LEAN for standing firm and respecting the court process in the face of uninformed attacks," King said.

"Deb Frecklington meanwhile, came out as a strong opponent of this mine when she was first seeking election in 2011, but now toes the company line in direct opposition to what farmers want in the district."

If the New Acland coal mine expansion goes ahead, it threatens major dairy farms that supply 10 million litres of milk annually, while also employing many workers.

"New Acland has committed multiple breaches, including drilling illegal boreholes, repeatedly violating noise requirements, and is now under federal investigation for alleged illegal mining outside its permitted area.

"This company is the perfect example of a bad corporate citizen and a bully. OCAA commends LEAN and the Palaszczuk Government for standing up to this bully."

On Thursday, August 20, 2020, the High Court will consider New Acland Coal's application for OCAA to pay \$90,000 in security of potential costs, in order for the appeal to continue. Through the EDO, OCAA will argue against New Acland's application.

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Environmental Defense Fund will sue over Trump's methane move

On August 13 the US EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler signed two rules that weaken or eliminate key safeguards that reduce oil-and-gas sector methane pollution, a potent greenhouse gas. In response, US Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp issued the following statement:

"The Trump administration's attempt to eliminate these sensible methane standards is fundamentally flawed. Like so many other administration rollbacks that have already been rejected by the courts, this one ignores the science, the public health impacts and the low-cost solutions we have at hand. These sensible pollution controls have been working to protect Americans since 2016.

"Investors, states, community groups and even leading oil and gas producers have all called on the EPA to retain and strengthen methane safeguards. The administration has no scientific or public health basis for taking this action, and EDF will forcefully oppose it in court.

"These rollbacks would have devastating effects on our climate and air quality, and will disproportionately damage the well-being of more than nine million Americans who live

within half a mile of wells affected by this rollback, including many Americans in our most vulnerable communities.

"The oil and gas industry is one of the largest sources of human-made methane pollution. Reducing methane from the oil and gas supply chain is the fastest, most effective way to slow the rate of global warming right now — but the rules signed today would instead allow an estimated additional 4.5 million metric tons of methane pollution into the atmosphere each year.

"This pollution has the climate warming potential, when considered on a 20-year basis, of nearly 400 million metric tons of carbon dioxide each year — equal to the emissions from around 100 coal-fired power plants annually.

"It is notable that this announcement was made in Pennsylvania, birthplace of the oil and gas industry, which emits more than 1 million metric tons of methane each year. This underscores the need for state leaders like Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf to continue to strengthen and finalize rules to cut emissions across the oil and gas supply chain."

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New book documents Hazelwood fire

Early in the afternoon of February 9, 2014, during a severe drought and heatwave, two separate bushfires raged towards the massive Hazelwood open-pit brown-coal mine, near Morwell in the Latrobe Valley.

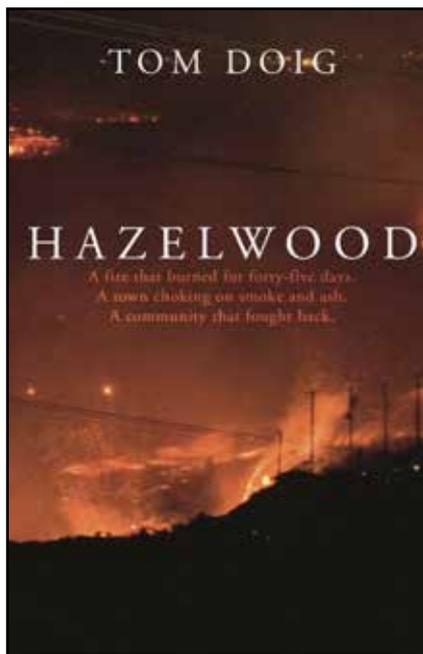
The fires overwhelmed local fire-fighting efforts and sent a skyful of embers sailing onto millions of square metres of exposed, highly flammable brown coal. Twelve hours later, the mine was ablaze.

The Hazelwood mine fire burned out of control for 45 days. As the air filled with toxic smoke and ash, residents of the Latrobe Valley became ill, afraid – and angry. Up against an unresponsive corporation and an indifferent government, the community banded together, turning tragedy into a political fight.

In *Hazelwood*, Tom Doig reveals the decades of decisions that led to the fire, and gives an intimate account of the first moments of the blaze and the dark months that followed. This is a gripping and immediate report of one of the worst environmental and public health disasters in Australian history.

Reviewing the book for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, Kurt Johnson said “The sense of betrayal is palpable as each concentric ring of authority failed to respond to the escalating crisis.

“First, the mine’s owner had reduced safety staff to skeletal levels. When the fire ignited, sprinklers had been sold for scrap, access roads lay in disrepair



and the mine was overgrown with flammable scrub. Contractors were called in, told to work within the toxic inferno without proper safety gear then tasked to prioritise protecting expensive mining equipment.

“The local member left his seat for a vote in Melbourne during the catastrophe’s crucial opening phase and then the police failed to evacuate Morwell’s vulnerable population even as some developed chronic pulmonary conditions.

“The Department of Health and Human Services bungled communication,

informing Morwellians that everything was all right. It was not. Even a hardened media should have recognised the pyrotechnic value of the hellish images that adorn the book’s cover – but until towards the end they too stayed away.

“As with each person in Hazelwood, the reader must discover the callousness of power in modern Australia – for all the bluster, multinationals, politicians and the media were missing when it counted. Doig’s book contains the tragedies of those who died or developed terminal conditions from the smoke because they were simply too poor to leave.

“Its heart lies with those who discovered their voice and have not stopped using it to hold power to account. Those such as Wendy Farmer, who was transformed from apolitical receptionist to keen rhetorician and advocate; her daughter Naomi, who was the first to perceive the situation’s gravity and report on it; Ron Ipsen, who deduced the heightened death levels during the fire from previous death notices; and Tracie Lund, who ran against the incumbent local member Russell Northe in a bid to force a minority government.

“The mine’s rehabilitation is another incendiary issue. The plan to fill it with some 740 billion litres of water – one and a half Sydney Harbours – could take up to 500 years.”

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Community opposed to Waitsia gasfield

Farmers and Lock the Gate Alliance in Western Australia are alarmed the State Government appears to have effectively given the controversial proposed Waitsia Gas Project Stage 2 the green light before waiting for the outcome of a full environmental assessment.

Premier Mark McGowan has announced the yet-to-be constructed gasfield expansion would be the only one in WA to produce gas for export.

Local farmer Rod Copeland, whose vegetable and fruit growing property is across the road from Waitsia, said he was concerned this decision could lead to fracking as had occurred in 2009.

Copeland and his wife Annette live

closer to a fracked gas well – Cory Bas – than anyone else in WA currently.

“The company (Mitsui E&P 50%/Beach Energy 50%) has always said that this field was for local supply, not international sale,” Copeland said.

“Obviously now they will want more gas, and they might want to frack to get more gas out. Neither the company nor the government has ruled out fracking. While the McGowan Government has protected all West Australians during the Covid-19 pandemic, it does not give the government the right to put the community at risk through a toxic operation like fracking.

“The more gas they pull out, the more it puts the community and the

environment at risk because there is always a certain percentage of gas that escapes during the production process. It also means more trucks, more noise, and we will have to pick up the pieces when the gas company leaves.

Neighbours left in the dark

“The gas industry doesn’t work well with the nearby general community – the companies do everything in their own time. The last time they flared their well we weren’t aware and our house vibrated, we could smell the gases, and it made our eyes sting.

“They don’t consider other people – the gas industry is inherently selfish.”

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



Inside the news

One of the week's best reads is **Plastic no longer fantastic for Andrew Liveris** from the AFR (p9).

Joe Aston tells us: *With farcical sorrow, Liveris is "seeing the environment bear the collateral damage of increasing plastic waste".*

This is the same Andrew Liveris who served for 14 years as chief executive of the Dow Chemical Company, the world's largest manufacturer of plastic ... And the same fellow whose legacy encompasses the global overcultivation of farmland enabled by Dow's herbicides and pesticides. Not to mention their monstrous public health effects.

Aston relates how Liveris used Dow's **Gulfstream jet** to transport cases of **Penfolds Grange** to his home and office in Michigan.

Liveris is an advisor to **Donald Trump**, and to **Scott Morrison's** Covid-19 Commission where he advocates for tax-payer subsidies to the gas industry. What could go wrong?

Peter Milne takes us on a tour of **Chevron's** under-whelming **Carbon Capture and Storage** project at the Gorgon gas plant in WA. It's a long, complex and technical story, click the link to get the full details (p7).

Santos has made a late submission on the economics of the Narrabri gasfield, after the **Independent Planning Commission (IPC)** finished its hearings on the project (p7). The IPC has now extended its deliberation period to September 30 and will accept submissions on the new Santos submission.

Jumping on post Covid-19 opportunities, the proposed **Isaac Downs coal mine** in Queensland is being touted as a jobs saviour (p6), even as established miners like **Glencore** and **Peabody** are cutting back production due to falling demand and price drops (p6-7).

Adani stayed out of the media this week, but the staunch people at **Galilee Blockade** and **Stop Adani** are pursuing insurance company **AON** after discovering it is working with the coal baron (p6).

Labor is internally divided and shilly-shallying around fossil fuel issues (p9-10). It's as if they never heard of **melting glaciers** (p8).

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In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 13,300 words of news for your convenience. [Click on the links](#) to view original articles. (Subscriptions may be required)

COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.nvi.com.au/story/6879813/truck-crash-causes-coal-mining-company-to-cough-up-800k/>

Truck crash at Maules Creek coal mine near Boggabri to cost Whitehaven Coal \$800k after enforceable undertaking agreement approved by NSW Resources Regulator

Anna Falkenmire, Namoi Valley Independent, 16/08/2020

Whitehaven Coal will have to cough up more than \$800,000 in relation to a truck crash which seriously injured one of its employees.

The NSW Resources Regulator has accepted an enforceable undertaking proposal from Maules Creek Coal Pty Ltd (MCCPL), the operator of the Maules Creek coal mine near Boggabri, which is owned by Whitehaven.

Under the agreement, the company must now spend at least \$803,613 on various projects and initiatives for the community and the industry.

The state's mining watchdog conducted an extensive investigation into a collision in April 2018 between a 100-tonne service truck and a 500-tonne haul truck, which left one man hospitalised.

<https://www.981powerfm.com.au/news/local-news/102366-australia-pacific-coal-is-still-fighting-in-the-nsw-land-and-environment-court>

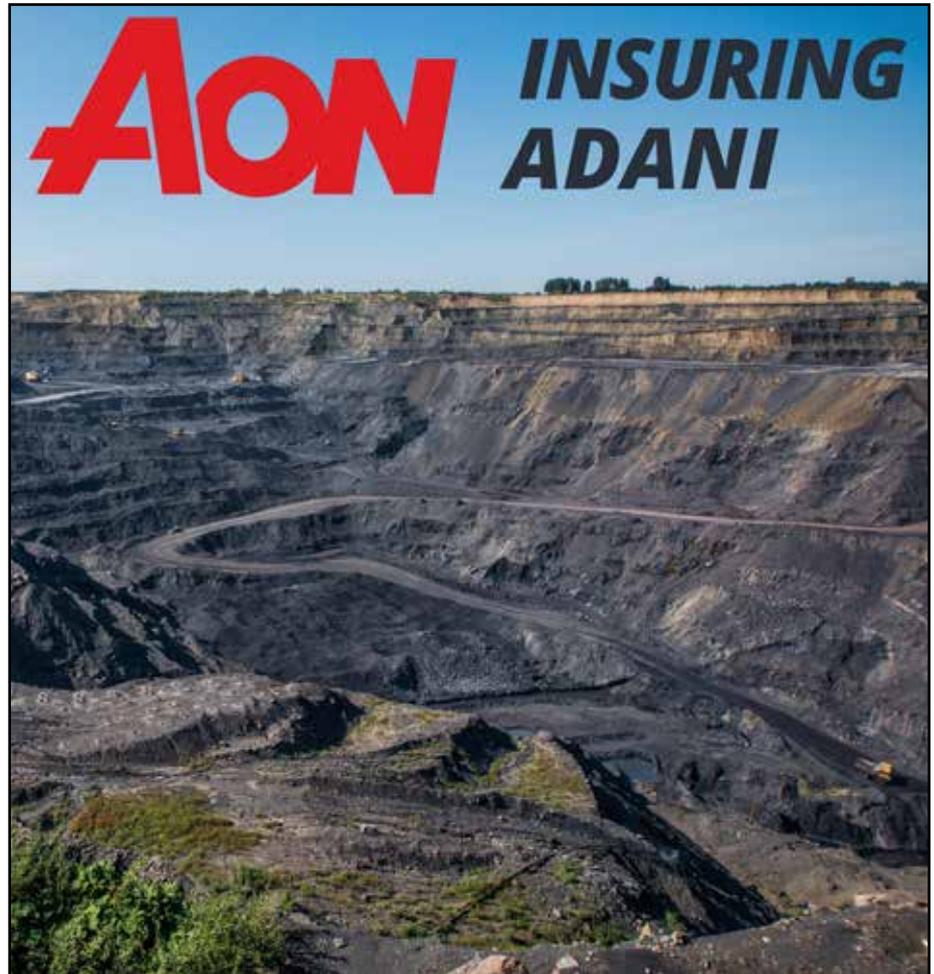
Australia Pacific Coal is still fighting in the NSW Land and Environment Court

Power 981FM, 12/08/2020

Australia Pacific Coal is still fighting in the NSW Land and Environment Court over the decision on Dartbrook mine near Aberdeen.

The Independent Planning Commission (IPC) ruled in August last year that the mine would only be able to operate for three years using bord and pillar methods and would be able to extract six million tonnes of coal.

But Australia Pacific Coal wanted to operate for a minimum of seven years so they lodged an appeal against the decision in the NSW Land and Environment Court in November last year.



Galilee Blockade and Stop Adani are targeting AON Insurance this week, after discovering the company is working on insurance for Adani. Graphic: Galilee Blockade

<https://www.themorningbulletin.com.au/news/isaac-coal-project-to-help-drive-covid-recovery/4077102/?cspt=1597637966|27c800e9beb-350fa4d3b46b927b216f5>

Isaac coal project to help drive COVID recovery

Ashley Pillhofer, Morning Bulletin, 12/08/2020

A proposed Bowen Basin mine has been declared a 'prescribed project' that would deliver job stability and boost the economy post pandemic for regional Queensland.

The \$90 million Isaac Downs mining project near Moranbah is expected to support hundreds of jobs and add billions into the region's economy once developed.

Regional Development Minister Glenn Butcher said the declaration meant the Co-ordinator-General could intervene in state and local government approval

processes to ensure the project proceeded in a timely manner.

<https://www.singletonargus.com.au/story/6882970/wambo-to-scale-back-underground-mining/>

Peabody Energy has announced it will scale back underground mining at their Wambo mine complex near Warkworth

Louise Nichols, Singleton Argus, 17/08/2020

Peabody Energy has announced it will scale back its underground mining at their Wambo mine complex near Warkworth

In late May the company announced the temporary closure of their Wambo underground mine citing falling global demand for thermal coal.

With COVID-19 restrictions across the world impacting economic activity, in particular energy demand from manu-

facturers, there has been reduced sales for thermal coal.

The world's largest thermal coal exporter Glencore announced ten days ago they would be cutting production by 7 million tonnes resulting in shutdowns at their Hunter sites and it is believed they will no longer have weekend production at their underground mine Integra.

The Australian owned Bloomfield group, owners of the Rix's Creek Mine near Singleton, have also applied for the Federal Government's Jobkeeper wage subsidy.

In a statement released tonight by the Federal member for Hunter Joel Fitzgibbon says a number of companies have, or are about to, announce production cutbacks and workforce stand-downs.

"In Canberra next week I'll have discussions with Ministers to highlight our challenges and to discuss possible responses.

"I will also take every chance to call-out anti-coal activists who display a hint of vindication in our current challenges and pain.

"Coal has a bright future, but it's suffering the consequences of the pandemic, like so many other industries. People adversely affected don't need activists rejoicing in false and misplaced vindication."

OIL & GAS LEAKS

<https://www.boilingcold.com.au/gorgon-co2-injection-one-year-on/>

Gorgon CO2 injection questions remain one year on

Peter Milne, Boiling Cold, 12/08/2020

Gorgon LNG's controversial and late storage of CO2 underground started 12 months ago, but operator Chevron will not confirm if it is fully operational.

The first of three units that compresses CO2 from gas in the Gorgon reservoir and sends it to wells that go deep under Barrow Island started operating on 8 August 2019: two and a half years after production from the CO2-rich Gorgon field commenced.

In March Chevron Australia operations director Kory Judd said the system, designed to store up to four million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year, was then fully operational.

Gorgon must inject at least 80% of the CO2 from the reservoirs that feed its \$US54 billion plant

Chevron would not answer if the system was meeting this requirement in July before the planned shutdown of the second of Gorgon's three LNG trains.

A Chevron spokesperson said the system's performance would be made public in November when it must release a report.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/aug/13/coronavirus-global-demand-for-oil-to-fall-further-than-expected-says-iaa>

Global demand for oil to fall further than expected, says IEA

Jillian Ambrose, Guardian, 13/08/2020

The world's demand for oil will fall further than expected through this year and in 2021 following a surge in new coronavirus cases, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA).

The oil watchdog wiped almost a quarter of a million barrels of oil a day (bpd) from its forecasts for next year after warning that the rising number of Covid-19 cases could mean a slower recovery for the global aviation industry and lower demand for transport fuels.

<https://www.theland.com.au/story/6880364/gas-deadline-delayed-ipc/>

Final judgement for Narrabri Gas Project delayed

Andrew Messenger, The Land, 16/08/2020

A final judgement for the controversial Narrabri Gas Project by the Independent Planning Commission will be delayed until the end of next month.

Opponents of the project cried foul this week, after proponent Santos released new economic modelling for the controversial coal seam gas project.

Australia Institute Principal Advisor Mark Ogge demanded extra time to consider the new modeling and make a new submission based on the new information.

The IPC has granted his request.

The project was to be determined by the IPC by September 4. They now have until September 30.

The Commission will reopen public comment on the new information it had received from the Department and Santos until August 21.

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/acc-c-finds-gas-producers-not-passing-on-global-price-cut/news-story/15ac2a7309e1d8560d9116affcb67e39>

ACCC finds gas producers not passing on global price cut

Chris Russell, Advertiser, 17/08/2020

Gas prices have fallen but Australians are missing out on the steep falls on international markets, the consumer watchdog says.

Prices were more than 20% higher than might be expected and the gap between local and export prices had worsened this year.

Federal Energy and Emissions Reduction Minister Angus Taylor said the Government expected gas producers to pass on cheaper international prices to Australians.

The ACCC warned that the Moomba pipeline was congested and needed investment.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/western-australia/closed-for-business-petroleum-group-lashes-mcgowan-government-s-new-gas-rules-20200817-p55ml2.html>

'Closed for business': Petroleum group lashes McGowan government's new gas rules

Hamish Hastie, SMH, 17/08/2020

The country's peak petroleum body has criticised the McGowan government's new domestic gas policy, warning future projects are at risk.

On Monday morning WA Premier Mark McGowan announced changes to the state's domestic gas policy that prevented onshore gas extracted in WA from being exported overseas or east in an effort to bring down local energy prices.

The only onshore gas project to get an exemption was the Kerry Stokes-backed Beach Energy, Mitsui and Co joint venture at the Waitsia gas field, which has been given the green light to send its gas overseas via Woodside's Karratha Gas Plant from 2023.

The Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association's WA director Claire Wilkinson lashed the policy change, saying WA already had a good supply of gas under the existing policy. She warned the change would stifle future investment.

"Cutting off a potential market for any gas developed is a sure way to signal that WA is not open for business," she said.

<https://www.afr.com/politics/federal/federal-government-poised-to-extend-gas-export-conditions-20200817-p55mcu>

Taylor to keep clamps on gas exporters

Phillip Coorey, Angela Macdonald-Smith & Elouise Fowler, *AFR*, 17/08/2020

The Morrison government is poised to extend conditions on gas exporters that it says will help push down contract gas prices on the east coast, putting it on a collision course with the major producers who argue the move is unwarranted.

Following the latest ACCC report that said east coast gas users were still «paying prices significantly above export parity prices», Energy Minister Angus Taylor indicated the government would extend a Heads of Agreement which is due to expire at the end of this year.

The Heads of Agreement works alongside the gas trigger and requires a producer to offer excess export gas to the domestic market first before being able to sell it on the international spot market.

Taylor said while the domestic spot price for gas had fallen sufficiently, the contract price had not.

The ACCC said in its latest gas market report on Monday that domestic gas users were paying too much, while finding there was no actual shortage.

<https://www.theland.com.au/story/6882299/hunter-gas-pipeline-to-re-engage-with-farmers-around-access-and-route/>

Consultation to include presentations and updates to local communities

Garbis Simonian, *The Land*, 17/08/2020

The Hunter Gas Pipeline will connect the gas fields of northern Australia to markets in the south and east.

The pipeline will run through areas such as Narrabri, Gunnedah and the Hunter Valley, connecting the major gas supply hub at Wallumbilla, Central Queensland, to Newcastle – where I have run a gas-dependent manufacturing business for more than 20 years.

The proposed Hunter Gas Pipeline was approved by the NSW government approval in 2009, and we have important work to do before construction can commence. That includes responding to the genuine questions and concerns held by some landholders and community members.

While a 200-metre corridor has been approved, the final location of the underground pipeline and its 30m easement will be informed by poten-

tial construction issues, landholder preferences to minimize any ongoing disruption, and environmental constraints.

There are several steps to prepare the corridor for construction. We have planned extensive landholder liaison to confirm route location within the approved corridor.

We know that some landholders have changed and when current government restrictions around COVID-19 ease we will re-commence engagement with the new and existing landholders as a priority.

Once constructed, the pipeline is buried (typically 75cm below the surface) and agricultural activities including grazing and cropping can continue. The only real visible impact will be the “dial before you dig” signs some landholders are already familiar with.

• *Garbis Simonian is the major shareholder and managing director of the Hunter Gas Pipeline Project. FFB notes, from his comment in the paragraph above, that he must never have visited the Queensland gasfields.*

<https://amp.theage.com.au/national/victoria/report-takes-aim-at-plans-for-crib-point-floating-gas-hub-20200817-p55mh9.html>

Report takes aim at plans for Crib Point floating gas hub

Benjamin Priess, *Age*, 17/08/2020

Plans to build a controversial floating gas hub at Western Port have hit a hurdle, with the Mornington Peninsula Shire opposing the project due to concerns about its proposed environmental and community benefits.

Energy giant AGL wants to build a liquefied natural gas storage unit at Crib Point, which would also require construction of a 55-kilometre pipeline to Pakenham.

The company says the \$250 million project will be crucial to securing gas supplies in future and will help keep a lid on prices.

But the report prepared by Mornington Peninsula Shire Council officers recommended that councillors oppose the project due to a range of concerns, including greenhouse emissions, impact on marine life and increased traffic.

The council backed the report and voted unanimously to reject the gas project on Monday night.

The Victorian and Commonwealth governments will ultimately be responsible for deciding whether the project gains approval.

The company has released an 11,000 page environmental effects statement for public comment, which formed the basis for the council officers' report.

CLIMATE CRISIS

<https://phys.org/news/2020-08-greenland-ice-sheet.html>

Warming Greenland ice sheet passes point of no return

Laura Arenschiold, *Phys.org*, 13/08/2020

Nearly 40 years of satellite data from Greenland shows that glaciers on the island have shrunk so much that even if global warming were to stop today, the ice sheet would continue shrinking.

The finding, published in the journal *Nature Communications Earth and Environment*, means that Greenland's glaciers have passed a tipping point of sorts, where the snowfall that replenishes the ice sheet each year cannot keep up with the ice that is flowing into the ocean from glaciers.

Before 2000, the ice sheet would have about the same chance to gain or lose mass each year. In the current climate, the ice sheet will gain mass in only one out of every 100 years.

Shrinking glaciers in Greenland are a problem for the entire planet. The ice that melts or breaks off from Greenland's ice sheets ends up in the Atlantic Ocean—and, eventually, all of the world's oceans. Ice from Greenland is a leading contributor to sea level rise—last year, enough ice melted or broke off from the Greenland ice sheet to cause the oceans to rise by 2.2 millimetres in just two months.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/aug/13/no-purpose-to-coalitions-climate-policy-after-big-polluters-increase-emissions-by-1.6m-tonnes>

'No purpose' to Coalition's climate policy after big polluters increase emissions by 1.6m tonnes

Adam Morton, *Guardian*, 13/08/2020

Industry and environment groups have questioned the point of the Coalition government's “safeguard mechanism” – which promised to keep a lid on industrial greenhouse gas emissions – after major companies were allowed to again increase pollution without penalty.

BHP, Anglo American and Tomago Aluminium were among companies given the green light to increase emissions by a combined 1.6m tonnes of carbon dioxide a year in an announcement by the Clean Energy Regulator in July.

The permitted increases are nearly equivalent to the 1.7m tonnes of emissions reduction purchased by the government through its main climate policy, the \$2.5bn emissions reduction fund (ERF), at an auction in March. Those cuts cost taxpayers \$26.6m.

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) said it showed there was no point in the safeguard mechanism existing in its current form.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-08-13/shareholder-fossil-fuel-resolution-whitehaven-coal/12546830>

Investors are trying to shut down fossil fuel companies from the inside – this is what they're doing

Michael Slezak, ABC, 13/08/2020

More than 100 investors in Whitehaven Coal have filed a resolution asking the company to plan its own closure – the first in an ambitious play by an activist shareholder group to push fossil fuel companies to act on climate change.

The resolution, organised by the activist shareholder group Market Forces, comes ahead of this year's company annual reporting season.

The group – which is aligned with conservation organisation Friends of the Earth – plans to file similar resolutions with three other Australian companies: New Hope Group, Beach Energy and Cooper Energy.

New Hope is predominantly a coal miner, while Beach Energy and Cooper Energy are both focused on oil and gas.

In a move analysts say may move other investors to question the long term viability of pure-play fossil fuel companies, Market Forces' latest resolution argues any investment in the company's coal operations will become worthless "stranded assets" as the world shifts away from coal.

It calls for a plan to return all remaining capital in the company to investors.

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/aug/12/mining-industry-opposes-new-laws-for-aboriginal-heritage-sites-despite-juukan-gorge-failures>

Mining industry opposes new laws for Aboriginal heritage sites despite Juukan Gorge failures

Lorena Allam & Calla Wahlquist, Guardian, 12/08/2020

A divide is forming about the way to fix Aboriginal heritage protection in Western Australia, with mining companies

saying they can be trusted to negotiate with traditional owners over heritage concerns even though that process failed to protect Juukan Gorge.

BHP, Rio Tinto, Gina Rinehart's Roy Hill, Woodside and Fortescue Metals (FMG) have all told a parliamentary inquiry into the destruction of Juukan Gorge that the federal government should not get more involved in Aboriginal heritage protection, and that agreements made under the native title system should be the basis of managing Aboriginal cultural heritage.

The idea also has the support of the WA government, with Aboriginal affairs minister Ben Wyatt telling the inquiry that his draft legislation, due to be released in a few weeks, will "create an architecture which elevates" the native title system.

But the National Native Title Council said the native title act (NTA) is flawed. It only gives traditional owners a six-month window in which they must negotiate with mining companies or face an outcome that allows mining to go ahead without any benefits to them.

"The lack of equal bargaining power extends beyond the obvious inequality of resources, it is entrenched by a legal framework that renders traditional owners reliant on the benevolence of industry standards and practice," the council's chief executive Jamie Lowe said.

The Yinhawangka PBC – which represents the traditional owners in negotiations with Rio Tinto at Paraburdoo in the Pilbara, said they are "overwhelmed" negotiating with an industry that is "massive in scale and relentless in nature".

"Our corporation, a relatively small one for the Pilbara, with 10 staff including one heritage professional, and a ranger team of three, is overwhelmed by the amount of attention that we should be paying to these matters, and our lack of the technical expertise," the Yinhawangka submission said.

They said regulation cannot be left to the WA government.

"The Western Australian Treasury, of course, benefits from every additional tonne of iron ore that is exported from the state."

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/aug/12/joel-fitzgibbon-blasted-by-mark-butler-for-backing-gas-led-covid-recovery-plan>

Joel Fitzgibbon blasted by Mark Butler for backing gas-led Covid recovery plan

Katharine Murphy, Guardian, 12/08/2020

Labor's climate and energy spokesman Mark Butler has blasted his frontbench colleague Joel Fitzgibbon for endorsing the taxpayer underwriting of new gas infrastructure, championed by one of Scott Morrison's most influential business advisers, before seeing the specifics.

Butler said it would be ludicrous for Labor to sign up to an unseen proposition.

"Why would we give support to a secret report the government refuses to show the Australian people – and whose central recommendation appears to be a taxpayer-funded gas pipeline from Western Australia – a project the government itself said just two years ago doesn't stack up," the Labor MP said. "This would be the longest white elephant in Australian history."

Butler also insisted the recovery after the pandemic needed to set Australia on the path to low emissions.

<https://www.afr.com/rear-window/plastic-no-longer-fantastic-for-andrew-liveris-20200813-p55lhc>

Plastic no longer fantastic for Andrew Liveris

Joe Aston, AFR, 14/08/2020

How little self-awareness can one man have?

The deficit exhibited by Andrew Liveris, global statesman, is positively astonishing.

With farcical sorrow, Liveris is "seeing the environment bear the collateral damage of increasing plastic waste".

On Wednesday he co-authored an opinion piece in this newspaper entitled "Let us rid the seas of plastic on the road out of this crisis".

This is the same Andrew Liveris who served for 14 years as chief executive of the Dow Chemical Company, the world's largest manufacturer of plastic.

This is the same Andrew Liveris who now sits on the board of Saudi Aramco, by far the world's largest energy producer (and not the renewable kind).

And the same fellow whose legacy encompasses the global overcultivation of farmland enabled by Dow's herbicides and pesticides. Not to mention



Donald Trump appointed Andrew Liveris (right) as his key adviser on manufacturing in 2016. Now Liveris is advising the Morrison government on post-Covid manufacturing policies for Australia. But the Australian Financial Review's columnist Joe Aston has highlighted the man's massive capacity for hypocrisy.
 Photo: Don Emmert/AAP/Getty Images

their monstrous public health effects (try googling "Chlorpyrifos").

In the 12 years he ran Dow before its 2017 merger with DuPont, Dow generated earnings of \$US36.8 billion from its plastics business alone. That's not sales, that's profit (in case Emma Alberici was confused). And over that same period, Liveris was paid \$US262.3 million. One of the merger's most attractive synergies must surely have been his salary.

None of this is to detract from Andrew Forrest's laudable mission on marine pollution, though itself not lacking irony given the \$20 billion Twiggy has made himself "plundering natural resources" (Liveris' words, not ours).

Liveris somehow reconciles this new ecological crusade with his quixotic mission to unlock a gas-led manufacturing boom (that will incidentally require a moratorium on democracy in at least three Australian states or the removal by referendum of their constitutional powers).

That's right, he is saving the oceans while lobbying for fossil-fuel subsidies for uneconomic industries. It's like he has three heads and none of them actually talk to each other.

But this is hardly Liveris' first tour de force in hypocrisy. Even while trowseing more than a quarter of a billion US dollars, his aversion to paying for anything himself was legendary. He used Dow's Gulfstream jet to transport cases of Penfolds Grange to his home and office in Michigan. He flew the jet to the Bahamas, and to Queensland for Christmas and New Year, later admitting he "never put shoes on once".

He flew it to the Super Bowl where he asked to be seated nowhere near Dow's VIP clients. He used it to fly Bill Clinton to a game of golf – while Dow was paying Clinton's lobbying firm, Teneo, millions. Then he donated \$US1 million of Dow's money to Donald Trump's inauguration, and the President promptly appointed Liveris an adviser.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/aug/15/new-acland-coalmine-alps-environment-lobby-urges-queensland-not-to-approve-expansion>

New Acland coalmine: ALP's environment lobby urges Queensland not to approve expansion

Ben Smee, *Guardian*, 15/08/2020

Labor's internal environment lobby has called on the Queensland govern-

ment not to approve the expansion of the controversial New Acland coalmine on the Darling Downs – a project that has become an increasingly vexed election issue for the party.

This week, the mining union threatened to withdraw its campaign support for Labor at the upcoming Queensland election over the ongoing uncertainty about the proposed expansion.

The federal Labor MPs Joel Fitzgibbon, Shane Neumann and Anthony Chisholm have each urged the state to approve the New Acland expansion. The federal Labor leader, Anthony Albanese, has criticised the approvals process as taking "an extraordinary long period of time".

In the midst of the politically charged debate, the Labor Environment Action Network (Lean) has released a formal position to party members that the expansion "should not be approved at this time".

"The legal process must run its course with the best available science and full transparency being applied," the position statement says.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/shorten-backs-gas-in-widening-labor-rift-on-energy-20200816-p55m5u.html>

Shorten backs gas in widening Labor rift on energy

David Crowe, *SMH*, 16/08/2020

Labor frontbencher Bill Shorten has backed the case for new gas supplies to support Australian industry, in another sign of the rift within the party over energy.

Shorten said Australia needs to "double down" on local manufacturing in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and this meant shoring up the supply of low-cost energy including gas.



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