



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

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Linc Energy cops \$4.5 million fine for Qld's worst pollution event – but will not pay

A Queensland court has hit defunct gas miner Linc Energy with the state's biggest ever fine for environmental damage.

Linc went into liquidation in 2016, with debts of \$320 million. The liquidators say they can't legally be forced to pay the fine and have no intention of doing so. Former Linc Energy boss, Peter Bond, has previously said the court case against the company was "meaningless bullshit".

He still faces prosecution, along with four other Linc directors, in a criminal case later this year.

The Queensland government has been left with an \$80 million cleanup bill for the Linc site in the Darling Downs.

The toxic emissions from Linc's rogue underground coal gasification (UCG) scheme polluted land, air and water over hundreds of square kilometres of adjoining farmland.

Affected land owners have seen no benefit from the recent court case – there has been no compensation for them and precious little help from the government.

Instead, people whose health was impacted, whose livestock died and whose lives were wrecked have been left to pursue justice for themselves. Class actions are underway against Linc, and also the government which approved the UCG project and allowed it to continue even as the company lost control of one gasifier after another.



Former Linc neighbour Shay Owen-Turner told the *Courier-Mail*, "Let's not forget it's the government who owns the resources and gives permission to access the resources. The chain of responsibility should start with accountability within the government for these decisions that allow these types of unmitigated disaster to happen."

"This outcome has been pursued in terms of environmental harm and the penalty is payable to the government, but the harm to people, their businesses, their homes, their health, is absent in this argument."

Lock the Gate spokeswoman Vicki Perin said, "The Queensland Government needs to stop approving every mining and gas project that comes before it, and set higher standards in the early stages before we end up with another mess like this."

• See more coverage p9-11.



Linc Energy liquidators refuse to pay record fine for environmental damage

Isobel Roe on AM, ABC, 12/05/2018

Liquidators for a gas company slapped with Queensland's biggest corporate fine for environmental damage say they won't be paying up, because there is no legal requirement for them to do so.

Duration: 3min 29sec

Featured: Jo Bragg, Environmental Defenders Office • Brian Bender, Hopeland land owner • Kate Jones, Queensland Tourism Minister

• To hear this broadcast, go to:

<http://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/am/linc-energy-liquidators-refuse-to-pay-record-environmental-fine/9754520>

ABC interviews Helen Bender

Helen Bender was interviewed on the ABC's evening news bulletin after a Queensland judge issued Linc's record-breaking fine.

The Bender family's farm adjacent to the Linc UCG project endured years of harmful effects, including livestock deaths thought to be caused by toxins unleashed by the plant.

Helen has continued her late father George Bender's battle for justice.

• To see the interview:

<https://www.facebook.com/GeorgeBender68/videos/1726838867432435/>



• P 2: The budget: special treatment for Big Coal

• P 3: Call to reject Palmer's monster mine

• P 5: Fossil fools fraternise in Brisvegas

The budget: Special treatment for Big Coal, says ACF

Australian Conservation Foundation economist Matt Rose, commenting on the Federal budget for 2018, said: "If you breathe air, live on planet Earth or love nature, this was a bad budget."

"I've just stepped out of the federal budget lockup – a night when bespectacled boffins like me pour over a big pile of budget papers in a locked room.

"A budget is about finance and economic decisions – but it's really about values. It's about how our elected representatives choose, on our behalf, to spend our public money. Here's how this budget stacks up:

Coal

A good government would stop companies digging up and burning coal – it's damaging our climate and fuelling fire-storms, heatwaves, cyclones and floods.

This budget? The Turnbull Government's listening to the coal barons, not the people. They're giving Big Coal special treatment and actually paying big mining and big agricultural companies to keep burning diesel, pumping out pollution and damaging our climate.

This bonanza of fuel tax credit subsidies will cost the Australian people \$6.9 billion in public money next year, and \$29.9 billion to 2021-22.

Coal mining companies alone will receive over \$1 billion a year in diesel fuel subsidies.

And some of the world's biggest and most polluting mining companies, like BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto and Glencore, will pay no tax on the fuel they use.

The World Bank, the OECD and other major international financial institutions are urging countries like Australia to rapidly end coal, gas and oil subsidies, as they just encourage companies to fuel more climate pollution.

So why on earth is the Turnbull Government choosing to subsidise and prop up polluting companies with a hefty chunk of public money, as they profoundly damage our climate?

Climate change and clean energy

A good government would make a plan to stop climate pollution and ramp up clean energy fast – so we can power our cities and towns with energy from



Photo: ACF

the sun and wind. It's clean, abundant and good for our communities and our planet.

This budget? They've been sweet-talked by the coal lobby to sabotage clean energy and keep us handcuffed to burning polluting fossil fuels.

The Turnbull government has chosen to slash investment in – you guessed it – cutting climate pollution. In 2017-18, the government spent \$3 billion. This year, that'll drop to \$1.6 billion, and drop again to a just \$1.25 billion in 2021-22. It's just climate change, the biggest issue of our times.

They've chosen not to give any more funding to the Emissions Reduction Fund – so there's no financial support for industry and landowners to cut their pollution.

The reef

Our Great Barrier Reef is in serious trouble, with back to back bleaching two years in a row. A good government would rapidly cut climate pollution and prioritise coral resilience to give our beautiful reef a chance.

While it's great the budget includes some funding to improve water quality, tackle crown-of-thorns starfish and build coral resilience, the Great Barrier Reef is in dire trouble. It needs sustained and increased funding to stop run off and meet the water quality targets that have been promised to the international community.

Most critically, this budget does very little to stop the biggest threat to the reef's survival – climate pollution.

Nature

A good government would try to save our endangered wildlife – the thousands of possums, plants and critical ecosystems under threat.

They've made a deliberate decision not to invest in protecting wildlife at the brink of extinction. They've refused to help the scientists who know how to save our endangered species – their recovery plans are just sitting there gathering dust. This budget puts in jeopardy threatened whole species like Leadbeater's Possums, Palm Cockatoos and Southern Corroboree Frogs.

Money for the environment

A good government would focus on cutting climate pollution, stopping environmental destruction, mending the damage and looking after nature.

Instead, this government has chosen to slash environmental spending by 37 per cent since 2013-14 – even through the overall federal budget has actually increased by 18 per cent.

Values choices

This is a values choice by the Turnbull Government to slash investment in the clean water, healthy country and safe climate that sustains all Australians.

Planning for our future means making smart decisions about the world we want to live in. It means making smart choices to spend public money wisely – in a way that creates the conditions for the whole community of our living world to thrive.

Folly of fracking in floodprone areas

Buru's Yulleroo 3 fracking well pad still partially underwater months after flooding. Photo: Lock the Gate



Months after flood water inundated the Kimberley, Buru Energy's former fracking waste water pond at its Yulleroo 3 well remains under water, despite claims by the company that flooding of its ponds was so unlikely it would mean "Noah's Ark for all of us."

The release of photos of the flooded well pad came on the eve of Buru Energy's annual general meeting in Perth on May 8.

Yawuru traditional owner Micklo Corpus visited the well last week after flooding receded enough to allow vehicular access to the site.

He said he was shocked to see the site of the former waste water pond still underwater and much of the area inundated.

"This is something the company claimed could never happen and yet here it is," Mr Corpus said.

"The well itself must also have been under water for some time. The fact the water is still staying around the well pad site shows that the site is no place for a fracking well.

"Yulleroo 3 is on the Roebuck Plains wetland and water is still 1 metre deep for about 2km in every direction around the pad.

"The waste water ponds are supposed to withstand a two times 100-year flood event and to be sufficiently raised above the floodplain to avoid this situation.

"Fracking has barely only started in the Kimberley and here we have the

well sites inundated and the site of the former waste water ponds submerged months after the floods.

"There are so far only a handful of these fracking wells rusting away on our country. Imagine the damage that thousands of fracking wells will do to the Kimberley if the State Government gives fracking the greenlight.

"These sites were fracked without the consent of the Yawuru people on Yawuru land."

A representative of Buru Energy claimed in a forum broadcast on ABC radio in the Kimberley on January 22, 2014 that if the waste water ponds were ever submerged by flooding, the rain would have to be so heavy that "it would be Noah's Ark for all of us" a reference to rain of biblical proportions.

A spokesperson for Lock the Gate in WA Jane Hammond said the flood event showed how the company had little understanding of the environment of the Kimberley and the potential impact of their wells and waste water holding facilities.

"These photos are a shocking reminder of the folly of fracking in flood prone areas and that contamination events can and do happen," Ms Hammond said.

"Buru Energy and the Mines Minister need to explain to the public how this event that we were told could never happen has occurred, exactly what contaminants were planned to be routinely stored in any waste water ponds and what will be done to prevent an incident like this happening again."

Palmer's 'Monster Mine' should be rejected outright

Lock the Gate Alliance has called on the Federal Environment Minister, Josh Frydenberg, to reject Clive Palmer's Alpha North Coal mine outright, at the early referral stage, because of the unacceptable impacts it will have on water resources.

The Alliance made the call in a submission on the referral to the Federal Government under the Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999. Public submissions on the referral closed yesterday.

The project proposed by Palmer's Waratah Coal, north-west of Emerald, would essentially consist of two separate coal mines each with a production capacity of 40Mtpa of thermal coal and each dependent on a different rail project being built.

"The impacts of this monster coal mine on scarce water resources will be immense and are completely unacceptable in the dry country of Central Queensland," said Carmel Flint, spokesperson for Lock the Gate Alliance.

"The referral completely ignores research by the Federal Government's own Bioregional Assessment which has highlighted concerns about the impacts of mines in this area on precious natural spring systems.

"The referral also ignores the cumulative impacts of the eight other coal mines that are proposed in the Galilee Basin - which would drain an estimated 2,007 billion litres of groundwater over their lives.

"The monster mine would also make a massive contribution to climate change - burning the coal from the mine for power generation will release approximately 170 mtpa of CO₂, putting our farm productivity and natural resources at risk from extreme weather.

"The Minister has all the power he needs to step in and to stop this project in its tracks right now. That's the only way to go if he has any regard for the water resources of Central Queensland," she said.

CSG wastewater truck rolls in Narrabri

What the frack is going on – Tim Forcey

Hazmat crews clean up after Santos contractor Namoi Wastecorp's tanker rolled on a Narrabri Street. Photos: Fire & Rescue NSW



The potential hazards of carting CSG wastewater by road were illustrated last week when Santos contractor Namoi Wastecorp rolled a truck in Narrabri.

Fire and Rescue NSW crews confirmed it contained potable water being transported in bulk for watering plants and regeneration of vegetation.

Water for these purposes is sourced from the Santos reverse osmosis plant at Leewood.

An activist said, "Leewood RO water is described as medium strength effluent

in the management plan."

Specialist Hazardous Materials crews were on hand to assist in removing and rendering safe an oil and diesel leak that was caused from the impact of the rollover.

Crews utilised hydrocarbon booms to remove the oil and diesel from the water that was flowing into the nearby stormwater drains to eliminate the impact of contamination to the nearby Namoi River system.

The driver was uninjured but was fined for negligent driving.



From the NT to WA, in SA, VIC, NSW, and of course in QLD, unconventional oil and gas explorers and producers are pressuring Australian communities and governments to allow access to enormous new fossil fuel provinces.

But aren't we urgently meant to be moving away from fossil fuels?

Tim Forcey describes "What the FRACK is going on" Tim Forcey is a chemical engineer and energy researcher with over 35 years experience in the oil, gas and electricity industries in Australia and abroad.

Tim has presented on certain impacts of unconventional oil and gas extraction, and on renewable-heat alternatives to gas, at community events and to local councils, parliamentarians and inquiries in New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria, Canberra, and Darwin.

Beyond Zero Emissions Inc. is a not-for-profit research and education organisation known for its work designing and implementing a zero emissions economy for Australia.

• To watch Tim Forcey's talk:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2W6ovzjgsw&feature=youtu.be>

Book aims for a future without burning coal

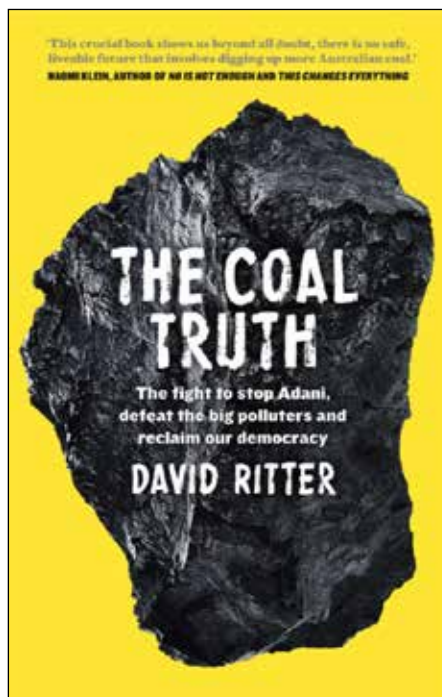
Newly launched book – *The Coal Truth* – has a simple message: stop the proposed Adani Carmichael Mine in Queensland from going ahead.

Since 2012, the fight to stop the opening of the vast Galilee coal basin has emerged as an iconic pivot of the Australian environment movement.

The Coal Truth: the fight to stop Adani, defeat the big polluters and reclaim our democracy (\$29.99) provides a timely and colourful contribution to one of the most important struggles in our national history – over the future of the coal industry.

Contributors include Tara Moss and Berndt Sellheim, Adrian Burragubba, Lesley Hughes, John Quiggin, Hilary Bambrick, Ruchira Talukdar and Geoffrey Cousins.

The lead author is David Ritter, CEO, Greenpeace Australia Pacific.



LTG seeks funds for Queensland advertisement

Lock the Gate plans to publish the ad below to call on the Queensland government to fix a legislative loophole that lets miners walk away from their mess.

When coal mines shut up shop, mining companies can leave behind giant holes in the ground and contaminated water sources. Treasurer Jackie Trad is trying to fix this. But there's a loophole in her laws that means mining giants can get out of cleaning up their mess. By fixing the loophole, Treasurer Trad can create thousands of new jobs in mining rehabilitation across Central and Northern Qld and ensure mined land doesn't become wasteland.

Treasurer, we want the jobs, not the pits.

Authorised by Carmel Flint, Lock the Gate Alliance, 3/15 Lamington St, New Farm, QLD 4005

LOCK THE GATE

News this week

Linc Energy's \$4.5 million fine for environmental vandalism dominated the headlines. However, the liquidated company is unlikely to pay up, leaving taxpayers with an \$80 million cleanup bill. Land owners in the contamination zone have been left to pursue a **class action** to try and get some compensation for the **Linc stink** impact on their prime agricultural land.

Things are not looking bright for **Adani**, as the company takes a \$13.3 million **writedown** on its proposed Carmichael coal mine. While Adani's Townsville and Brisbane offices remain in operation, the company has **relinquished** 600 square metres of office space in **Townsville**. It still has 200 people working there.

New Hope spent \$1.2 million on promoting its blocked Ackland mine extension last year, in a pre-election ad blitz. The company has also put a lot of effort into **astrourfing**: setting up **Facebook** groups, a petition and a website designed to look like community initiatives, but actually the work of employees.

Another example of astrourfing is coal power advocacy group **The Australian Power Project**. It's run by former **AGL** media honcho **Nathan Vass**. FFB would like to know who is paying his wages.

Narrabri locals travelled to Adelaide and protested outside the **Santos AGM**. They told shareholders that Santos faces a **rural uprising** if it persists with its proposed Narrabri gasfield.

The **Northern Territory's** Labor chief minister may recently have given NT frackers the go-ahead, but his party's annual conference voted for a **frack ban**. The vote is non-binding and Mr Gunner is still gonna frack ahead.

The Turnbull government's **Energy Security Board** chairwoman **Kerry Schott** horrified far right LNP politicians when she said there was no longer a case for investment in new coal-fired power stations. Her statement was raised in a meeting of government MPs by coal campaigner **Craig Kelly**, who was practically foaming at the mouth over Dr Schott's words.

Fossil fools fraternise in Brisbane

energyminesandmoney AUSTRALIA

Showcasing mineral, coal, oil and gas opportunities and matching projects with global investment

20 - 21 JUNE 2018 | BRISBANE CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE

Australia's finest fossil fools will gather next month at the Energy Mines and Money event in Brisbane, 20-21 June at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre

Tickets are upward of \$2,000, unless you're a fossil executive (\$1395) or a 'buy side investor' – free if you show them the colour of your money.

FFB can't give you the program, as enquirers have to fill out a detailed profile before it can be downloaded. The speaker list includes:

- Anthony Lynham, Minister for Natural Resources Mines and Energy,

Queensland Government

- David Buyers, Interim Chief Executive, Minerals Council of Australia
- Greg Evans, Executive Director – Coal, Minerals Council of Australia
- Ian MacFarlane, CEO, Queensland Resources Council
- Jeyakumar Janakaraj, CEO, Adani Australia
- Peter Ross, Executive Director, NAIF

As the Knitting Nannas recently discovered, there is industrial-strength security at Brisbane's Southbank precinct and 'political' activities are not permitted.

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In the news this week:

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 23,000 words of news for your convenience. [Click on the links to view original articles.](#) (Subscriptions may be required)

THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/news/townsville/talk-of-the-north-with-john-andersen/news-story/3308be60d56df28cc6059ca64356212b?login=1>

Talk of the North with John Andersen

John Andersen, Townsville Bulletin, 04/05/2018

Big news this week that Adani has appointed former BHP coal mines executive Lucas Dow to oversee development of its Carmichael mine. After having held top jobs at mining and metals company South32 and at BMA (Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance) Mr Dow is now tasked with making Carmichael happen. In other Adani news, the company has given up 600 square metres of office space at its Palmer Street headquarters. Don't read too much into it. One Townsville property expert tells me that the company still has 1700 square metres in the Telstra building which is plenty of room for 200 people.



Adani losses prompt mining company to shift away from imported coal
Results show Carmichael mine in Queensland no longer a viable proposition, analysts say
THEGUARDIAN.COM

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/may/07/adani-coal-losses-prompt-mining-company-to-shift-from-imported-coal>

Adani losses prompt mining company to shift away from imported coal

Ben Smees, The Guardian, 07/05/2018

Adani's coal-fired power business has reported more heavy losses, prompting the Indian conglomerate to announce it would shift away from using expensive imported coal.

Analysts say the fourth-quarter financial results for Adani Power, a subsidiary of the Adani group, showed the proposed Carmichael mega-mine in Queensland was no longer a viable proposition.

Remarkably in the context of the Carmichael project, the billionaire Adani Group boss, Gautam Adani, acknowledged in a statement that the cost of importing coal to India had contribut-

ed to Adani Power's struggles. ...

Tim Buckley, an analyst for the pro-renewables Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, said Gautam Adani "didn't become one of the wealthiest man in India by throwing good money after bad on bad projects".

"The result reconfirms the point IEEFA has made repeatedly. [Adani Power] is unable to provide a viable nor bankable coal offtake agreement for ... the Carmichael proposal." ...

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/opinion/opinion-early-federal-election-will-kill-the-adani-megamine/news-story/f7a4f4803d16ae9a578074dc5310b2d1>

Opinion: Early Federal election will kill the Adani megamine

John McCarthy, Courier-Mail, 09/05/2018

If the Turnbull Government does what it is expected to do and goes to the polls early it could spell the end to the tortured struggle of the Adani project.

The polls have Labor in front and if that translated into an election win Adani may as well start booking flights back to India. ...

That's why Adani has until about August (or whenever the election is held) to raise the more than \$2 billion it needs to get the project started. After August it will hit a green wall.

The fact that Adani still has its Townsville and Brisbane offices open means the project is still alive despite all the problems it has both here and in India.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-05-11/legal-fight-delays-force-adani-writedowns-on-carmichael-coal>

Legal fight, delays force Adani writedowns on Carmichael Coal

Perry Williams & Rajesh Kumar Singh, Bloomberg, 11 May 2018,

Indian conglomerate Adani Enterprises Ltd. has taken a 896.4 million rupees (\$13.3 million) writedown on its Carmichael coal mine in Australia's Queensland state due to delays and legal challenges.

The impairment charge was booked by its Australian unit Adani Mining Pty in the quarter ended March 31, Adani Enterprises said in a stock exchange filing Thursday in Mumbai.

Even though the writedown is small

compared to the overall size of the A\$16.5 billion (\$12.4 billion) project, it's the latest sign of strain to hit the massive thermal coal development. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/may/12/just-four-citizens-the-australians-who-confronted-adani-in-india-and-made-a-difference>

'Just four citizens': the Australians who confronted Adani in India, and made a difference

In this book extract, Geoff Cousins describes how the farmer, the activist, the tourism operator and 'an old bald man with hope in his heart' travelled to India to protest against Adani.

"I settled back into the seat as the Air India flight took off from my hometown of Sydney, unaware of just how relieved I would be to return there. I had been warned the Indian government might take a dim view of our mission to intercept the Queensland premier on her journey to have lunch with chairman Gautam Adani, who would be intending to impress on her the force and majesty of his major asset, the Mundra power plant – ironically, now for sale for one rupee.

"I'd also been told there was a chance that either the government or Adani or both were intercepting all my communications. So there was a degree of apprehension even as I passed through customs in New Delhi, since I was travelling on a tourist visa and the sites we would be visiting did not include the Taj Mahal." ...

• This is an edited extract from David Ritter's *The Coal Truth: The fight to stop Adani, defeat the big polluters and reclaim our democracy* (\$29.99, UWA publishing)

COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/sustainability/pollution-from-coal-fired-power-plants-should-be-reviewed-nsw-epa-20180503-p4zd3m.html>

Pollution from coal-fired power plants should be reviewed: NSW EPA

Peter Hannam, SMH, 06/05/2018

The state's five coal-fired power stations are allowed "unnecessary variation" in their pollution and operate "well below" licensed limits, providing scope for more consistent and tighter controls, the Environment Protection Agency has found.

The review by the watchdog – prompted in part by reports of unexplained falls in pollution from some plants even as power output rose – made a string of recommendations for an industry that contributes NSW’s largest share of pollutants such as sulphur dioxide. ...

“There has been no rhyme or reason to the approach taken by the NSW EPA to licensing toxic pollution from power stations,” said James Whelan, an Environmental Justice Australia researcher.

“By implementing the recommendations in this report, the NSW EPA will begin to hold power generators to account for the toxic pollution they emit and provide some impetus for pollution control.”

The EPA did not give a timeframe for when it might seek an overhaul of permitted pollution levels but has set up a working group to oversee implementation of the review’s findings. ...

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-07/sa-council-makes-scathing-assessment-of-power-station-closure/9732928>

Coal-fired power station closure, ash dam rehabilitation draws scathing criticism from SA council

Gary-Jon Lysaght, ABC, 07/05/2018

A South Australian council has made a scathing, 22 page submission to a Senate inquiry investigating the rehabilitation of coal-fired power stations and their ash dams.

In its report, the Port Augusta City Council points to the failure of both the State and Federal Government to assist the community, following the closure of the Northern Power Station, one of the city’s biggest employers.

It also said Flinders Power, a subsidiary of Alinta Energy, had failed to protect the local environment following the closure of the station. ...

Port Augusta Mayor Sam Johnson said the Federal Government made very little attempt to help the city transition away from its coal-fired past. ...

The council’s submission made further reference to the power station’s ash dam remediation.

The submission says Flinders Power failed to properly mitigate against dust storms. ...

It also said Alinta Energy intended to liquidate Flinders Power “as soon as the reorganisation measures related to the ceasing of activities ... had been completed.

The rehabilitation effort at Port Augusta’s Northern Power Station has left nearby residents angry, as clouds of dust often blow off the 273ha ash dam.

Photo: Flinders Power



“This leaves the Port Augusta community with little confidence that any contamination and ongoing site monitoring will be undertaken.” ...

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/business/sa-business-journal/cleanup-of-port-augusta-power-station-more-complex-and-extensive-than-originally-planned/news-story/011df770fd33c3c32468bfd6f22c4931>

Clean-up of Port Augusta power station more complex and extensive than originally planned

Erin Jones, The Advertiser, 10/05/2018

Port Augusta residents have suffered from breathing and respiratory issues while living next to an ash dam the size of Adelaide’s CBD.

But the company responsible for the rehabilitation of the Northern Power Station’s 273ha ash dam remained confident the clean-up would be successfully completed. ...

Despite the station’s closure in May, 2016, the ash dam has a “very high public profile” as dust blankets the town during windy weather, causing breathing issues for residents.

Flinders Power said the dam’s proximity to Port Augusta – some houses are only 400m away – was determined by the State Government.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2018/may/09/new-hope-spent-12m-promoting-new-acland-mine-before-queensland-election>

New Hope spent \$1.2m promoting New Acland mine before Queensland election

Ben Smees, The Guardian, 09/05/2018

The Queensland mining company New Hope spent \$1.2m on a pre-state elec-

tion advertising blitz last year, promoting the company’s blocked New Acland coalmine expansion.

The senior economist at the Australia Institute, Cameron Murray, has authored a new discussion paper that says New Hope also ran an “astro-turfing” campaign – managing social media pages and running petitions that appeared on face value to be grassroots community initiatives. ...

“None of this marketing effort is directed at ... customers, encouraging them to buy more of the company’s coal,” Murray said. “Instead, it is aimed at the public, media and political decision makers; a clear sign of rent-seeking behaviour ... the business practice of investing resources to sway political or administrative decisions that provide windfall financial gains rather than using resources to invest in productive activities.” ...

Murray said a Facebook group, petition and website – each set-up or moderated by senior New Hope employees – were classic “astro-turfing” tactics. “To the casual observer these online groups appear to show a great deal of community-led organisation but are actually run by New Hope group to give the impression of widespread public support,” he said. ...

Sharon Beder, an honorary professor at the University of Wollongong, said ... “They’re not trying to sell coal but what they’re often doing is promoting coal as an energy source,” Beder said.

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5392369/galilee-says-survey-shows-value-of-coal/?cs=305>

Minerals Council survey shows mining spending down

Ian Kirkwood, Newcastle Herald, 11/05/2018

Despite the end of the coal mining construction boom, the industry still contributed \$4.5 billion to the Hunter economy last financial year, the latest annual NSW Minerals Council survey of coal mining company expenditure has found. ...

Although the survey shows the coal industry is still a major contributor to the Hunter and NSW economies, most of the measured indices showed a decline for the third year in a row. ...

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5392882/struggle-towns-in-mining/?cs=305>

Cessnock and Muswellbrook the Hunter towns facing the most disadvantage: Hunter Research Foundation Centre

Penelope Green, Newcastle Herald, 11/05/2018

Mining reliant Cessnock and Muswellbrook faced the most disadvantage in the Hunter in 2016 and sat in the bottom 30 per cent of all local government areas in Australia, data shows. ...

Data from the 2016 Census' Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage shows that between 2011 and 2016, only Dungog's LGA witnessed a significant boost in ranking.

Meanwhile Muswellbrook, Upper Hunter, Singleton and Maitland all experienced a notable increase in relative disadvantage in the same five-year period. ...

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/5392151/liddell-bid-can-help-families-and-business/?cs=308>

Bid for Liddell can help NSW families and business

Nathan Vass, Newcastle Herald, 11/05/2018

Alinta's \$1.2 billion bid to buy Liddell power station – including an offer of \$250 million in cash to current owner AGL – and keep it running beyond 2022 is the first bright spark in the energy debate. ...

AGL are on track to make \$1 billion profit this year. Alinta are offering \$250 million in cash to AGL who bought Liddell in 2014 for \$0 from the NSW Government.

That's a very good return by anyone's standards. A refusal to sell the asset appears contrary to the best interests of business and consumers in NSW.



Statoil's drilling plans for the Great Australian Bight are causing concern.

Photo: BobBrown.org.au

• *Nathan Vass is founder of the Australian Power Project, an advocacy group calling for a balanced and sustainable approach to achieving a clean energy future. [And former media honcho for AGL]*

<https://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/5392550/how-many-millions-does-new-england-make-from-the-mining-industry/>

How many millions does New England make from the mining industry?

Jamieson Murphy, Northern Daily Leader, 10/05/2018

The mining industry contributed more than \$200 million to the New England economy in the previous financial year, according to the NSW Mineral Council's annual expenditure survey.

The mining lobby group estimates the industry contributed 3.8 percent of the Gross Regional Product of the New England economy in the 2016-17 financial year. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/pay-dirt-for-nsw-as-mining-delivers-10bn-to-state-economy/news-story/4d12a4f86c84bf249d7401bafb40e4b9>

Pay dirt for NSW as mining delivers \$10bn to state economy

Joe Kelly, The Australian, 07/05/2018

Mining companies injected at least \$10.4 billion into the NSW economy in 2016-17 including \$2.9bn in wages for 22,821 full-time workers and \$5.9bn on goods and services from more than 6680 local businesses.

Direct spending fell slightly by 3.5 per cent on the previous year. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/may/07/impending-blight-how-statoils-plans-threaten-the-great-australian-bight>

Impending blight: how Statoil's plans threaten the Great Australian Bight

Helen Davidson, The Guardian, 07/05/2018

In July 2017 Statoil, Norway's state-owned oil company, became operator and 100% equity owner of two of the four [Great Australian Bight] permit zones it had shared with BP until the British oil giant withdrew the previous year. A few months later Chevron also withdrew from its exploration zones.

Statoil is planning to go ahead with drilling by October 2019. The company says by that time it will have spent more than two years planning the project and convincing itself it can operate safely and compliantly. ...

The Statoil spokesman said if the drilling finds oil and begins development, South Australia could expect "hundreds of new jobs" – a claim Greenpeace says would likely be by FIFO workers, for a short period of construction – as well as tax revenue and "rich opportunities for local suppliers". ...

On Thursday Nopsema buoyed the hopes of those opposed to drilling when it rejected the application by oil exploration company PGS to conduct a seismic survey over an area including the four permit zones.

• *Helen Davidson travelled to the Great Australian Bight with the assistance of Greenpeace*

GAS, GAS, GAS

<https://www.chinchillanews.com.au/news/bore-water-levels-discussed/3410125/>

Bore water levels discussed

Brooke Duncan, Chinchilla News, 09/05/2018

The Groundwater Net Chinchilla workshop, held last Wednesday, was hosted by the Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy and attended by landholders, department representatives, QGC, Origin Energy, Arrow Energy, the University of Queensland, Chinchilla Landcare and the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee. ...

Basin Sustainability Alliance chairman Lee McNicholl said for him the key message was the disproportionate drop in water levels in bores in the Chinchilla area. ...

The workshop was also a chance for landholders to get information on new funding to subsidise up to 75 per cent of the cost of installing water monitoring equipment on their bores. "It is critical that all bore owners join ... and monitor their bores," McNicholl said.

<https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/narrabri-locals-protest-santos-agm>

Narrabri locals protest at Santos AGM

Kerry Smith, GreenLeft Weekly, 11/05/2018

Farmers, businessmen and Traditional Owners from north-west NSW travelled to Adelaide on May 3 to tell Santos and its shareholders at the company AGM it will face a rural uprising if it proceeds with the Narrabri coal seam gasfield.

They were joined by South Australian locals who oppose Santos's plans to drill for oil in the Great Australian Bight, telling Santos it has "No Licence to Drill" because these projects do not have community support. ...

Outside the AGM Gamilaraay Traditional Owner Judy Kaye Knox said: "I'm here representing the opposition of my people to this destructive industry. The Pilliga is considered the heart of our vast Gamilaraay nation and we do not want coal seam gas continuing to impact the irreplaceable natural and cultural values of the Pilliga Forest. Enough damage has already occurred."

Coonamble farmer David Chadwick said: "When town, Aboriginal and farming communities across the 5.5 million hectares of five shires surrounding the Narrabri-Pilliga region return a staggering 97% opposition to CSG and declare 'this is a war for water', you have a problem. ...



The Convoy for Country passing through Katherine enroute to the NT Labor Conference. Pastoralists and Traditional Owners stand united with communities in the frack zone to deliver their message to the Chief Minister: This is just the beginning. We will protect our water, homelands and communities from a fracked future!

Photo: Convoy for Country

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-12/nt-labors-divisions-revealed-as-majority-vote-to-ban-fracking/9754982>

NT Labor Party divisions revealed as majority vote to ban fracking

Jano Gibson, ABC, 12/05/2018

Delegates at Territory Labor's annual conference have voted in favour of a ban on fracking, highlighting the deep divisions within the party just a month after the Gunner Government lifted its moratorium. ...

Despite the vote, Mr Gunner will not be bound by the conference decision. ...

Big River Station owner Daniel Tapp, who arrived at the protest on horseback, said the Government should listen to the concerns of the community.

"We all oppose fracking, so how can you just overrule the majority of the population here?" he said.

His concerns were echoed by Garrawa traditional owner Nancy McDinny, from the Borroloola region.

"We don't want your money," she said. "We love our land and our water. For our children's future."

<https://www.australianmining.com.au/oil-gas/news-oil-gas/lng-exports-australia-reach-35-billion/>

LNG exports from Australia to reach \$35 billion

Australian Mining, 07/05/2018

With Australia predicted to be the leading LNG exporter by 2022, growth in the industry has been strong this year. ...

One of the focuses of Energy Mines and Money Australia, taking place at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre on June 20-21 2018, will be LNG gas opportunities. ...

Energy, Mines and Money Australia will attract over 500 attendees, showcasing over 40 strategic mineral, coal, oil and gas opportunities, matching projects with global investment throughout a two-day conference and exhibition.

<https://www.watoday.com.au/national/western-australia/probe-after-gorgon-releases-millions-of-tonnes-of-greenhouse-gas-20180510-p4zeis.html>

Probe after Gorgon releases millions of tonnes of greenhouse gas

Emma Young, WA Today, 10/05/2018

The Barrow Island operation had still not yet injected any carbon dioxide underground, West Australian Environment Minister Stephen Dawson confirmed in Parliament on Tuesday in response to a question from Greens MP Robin Chapple. ...

Chevron estimated in 2015 that the plant would produce more than 5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide annually.

But Chevron has advised government regulators that problems with the \$2.5 billion injection system meant carbon dioxide would not be reinjected any earlier than the December quarter of 2018.

When Chevron on April 15 announced the planned \$5.1 billion expansion of the Gorgon project Premier Mark McGowan dismissed environmental con-

cerns. “It’s offshore and in very deep water. When we put Gorgon on Barrow we put in place the tightest regulations in the world,” he said.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/australias-big-business-energy-fantasy-lets-frack-like-america-36958/>

Australia’s big business energy fantasy: Let’s frack like it’s America

Sophie Vorrath & Giles Parkinson, Renew Economy, 09/05/2018

Chair of Manufacturing Australia, James Fazzino ... wants Australia to effectively “frack like the Americans”. He sees it as the only avenue to cheap energy. ...

Fazzino seems to have missed the bit about fracking in Australia, and that even if it was widely allowed, would not be anywhere near as cheap in the US. And it seems he’s missed the alternatives. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/oil-search-acknowledges-benefits-problem-at-png-lng/news-story/2fd4e01e0c5ea53a066180c7c1b357a5>

Oil Search vows to lift the game in PNG LNG project

Paul Garvey, The Australian, 12/05/2018

Oil Search says there are “growing frustrations and discontent” in local communities around its Papua New Guinea liquefied natural gas project due to delays in distributing benefits from the project.

Chief executive Peter Botten used the company’s annual general meeting in Port Moresby to pledge that it and its partners would work to improve the way economic benefits are spread to

local landowners ahead of a massive expansion of PNG LNG. ...

Mr Botten noted about \$288m of landowner benefits from PNG LNG were being held in trust while landowners were identified and verified, noting it was “a highly complex process complicated by in-migration and dispute resolution”.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/warnings-of-violence-over-png-lng-project/news-story/6b8e6877a14b4b5f99dc0edc27d040f1>

Warnings of violence over PNG LNG project

Lisa Martin, The Australian, 11/05/2018

A partly Australian-funded liquefied natural gas project in Papua New Guinea’s southern highlands has the hallmarks of another Bougainville civil war, a report warns.

The ExxonMobil-led PNG LNG project, which attracted a half billion dollar Australian government loan in 2009, supplies eight million tonnes of gas a year to Japan, South Korea and China.

Despite gas flowing since 2014, landowners in Hela province are yet to receive royalty payments, resulting in escalating tensions, tribal violence, incidents of hostage-taking, blockades and sabotage.

A report from Jubilee Australia, which is part of the left-leaning Australia Institute think tank, warns there are risks landowner discontent could “spiral out of control”.

They fear it might force the PNG government into a military crackdown. “The build-up of arms has accelerated

to a point where it is often speculated that the landowners are in possession of more firepower than the entire PNG defence force,” the report says. ...

THE LINC STINK

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-11/linc-energy-fined-4.5-million-for-serious-environmental-harm/9751154>

Linc Energy fined \$4.5 million for serious environmental harm at underground coal gasification plant

Ellie Sibson, ABC, 11/05/2018

A gas company has been fined a record \$4.5 million for causing serious environmental harm at its underground coal gasification plant on Queensland’s western Darling Downs. ...

The court heard the highest fine imposed upon a company so far in Queensland for similar offending was \$500,000. ...

The court heard there would be monitoring and remediation of the site for decades to come, and it will take potentially between 10 to 20 years for groundwater to recover. ...

Five executive directors have been charged with failing to ensure compliance of the company and are due to face a committal hearing in the Brisbane Magistrates Court in July. ...

<https://www.chinchillanews.com.au/news/ecological-vandalism-linc-energy-fined-millions/3412203/>

Concerns Linc Energy may never pay fines

John Weekes, Chinchilla News, 11/05/2018

Linc was fined a record \$4.5 million for causing environmental damage with its underground coal gasification activities at Chinchilla. ...

Lock the Gate alliance spokeswoman Vicki Perrin said Friday’s judgment sent “a strong message” to other mining companies in Queensland.

But the alliance called for tougher standards to prevent a repeat of the disaster.

“The Queensland Government needs to stop approving every mining and gas project that comes before it, and set higher standards in the early stages before we end up with another mess like this,” Ms Perrin said.

Lock the Gate also said it was “deeply concerned” about Linc Energy’s ability to pay the \$4.5 million, given the firm was in liquidation. ...

Apart from the fine, Judge Shanahan

The 100th load of LNG about to leave to leave a Papua New Guinea port, while landowners in Hela province are close to rebellion over unpaid royalties. Photo; Santos





The Linc Energy site will cost the taxpayer \$80 million to clean up. By going into liquidation, the company has avoided responsibility for the costs and is unlikely to pay its \$4.5 million in fines. Photo: Linc

was asked to consider a compensation order.

He said he was “not prepared to guess the actual costs” of damage at the site.

The court heard the UGC mess could cost tens of millions of dollars to clean up, over years or possibly decades.

Last year, it was reported the environmental contamination bill could reach almost \$80million - and taxpayers would have to fork out.

Linc Energy’s former chief executive Peter Bond last month told The Australian the lengthy district court trial was meaningless. -NewsRegional

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/business/linc-energy-fined-45-million-over-contamination-of-chinchilla-land/news-story/fdd231763999571b1f81a4cee8d7c9fa>

Linc Energy fined \$4.5 million over contamination of Chinchilla land

John McCarthy, AAP, Courier-Mail, 11/05/2018

Linc Energy’s record fine for polluting the Darling Downs with hazardous contaminants is welcome but doesn’t undo the community’s suffering, an affected former resident says.

Shay Owen-Turner, who lived next to the affected area in Chinchilla, wants the state government to ensure a similar level of contamination never happens again in Queensland.

“This outcome has been pursued in terms of environmental harm and the penalty is payable to the government,” Ms Owen-Turner said.

“But the harm to people, their businesses, their homes, their health, is absent in this argument.” ...

Ms Owen-Turner said the state govern-

ment also needed to be held to account for allowing Linc to harmfully operate.

“Let’s not forget it’s the government who owns the resource and gives permission to access the resource,” she said.

“The chain of responsibility should start with accountability within the government for these decisions that allow these types of unmitigated disasters to happen.”

Opposition Leader Deb Frecklington agreed.

“This is a mess of Labor’s creation,” she said. “They should never have approved this project and it is now up to the Labor government to clean it up.” ...

<http://www.afr.com/news/politics/former-rich-lister-peter-bonds-linc-energy-fined-45m-for-environment-damage-20180511-h0zxrld>

Former rich lister Peter Bond’s Linc Energy fined \$4.5m for environment damage

Mark Ludlow, AFR, 11/05/2018

Former rich lister Peter Bond’s Linc Energy has been fined a record \$4.5 million for serious environmental damage at its controversial underground coal gasification plant in the Darling Downs, west of Brisbane, but don’t expect the fines to be paid. ...

But with Linc in liquidation with debts of \$320 million, the fines against Mr Bond’s company are unlikely get paid – a fact noted by Justice Shanahan when he was handing down his judgment in Brisbane on Friday. ...

But the battle over who will pay for the rehabilitation of the Chinchilla site

is likely to end up in the High Court as liquidators PPB Advisory successfully challenged the Queensland government’s attempts to get creditors to pay for the clean-up which could run as high as \$80 million.

Liquidator PPB Advisory Queensland managing partner Grant Sparks, who is selling Linc Energy assets across the world to reclaim money for creditors, said they were not required to and would not pay the \$4.5 million in fines.

...

The financial penalty is another nail in the coffin for Mr Bond’s business reputation. He was valued at \$450 million on the 2013 BRW Rich List. Linc Energy was valued at \$1.1 billion and Mr Bond had bought Dunk Island on the Great Barrier Reef.

Mr Bond did not want to comment on the new fines when contacted on Friday, but he confirmed he was in the process of selling property and assets in Queensland as part of a move out of the state. But he said he would be keeping Dunk Island. ...

During the 2000s, UGC was fighting it out with coal seam gas (to liquefied natural gas) to be the Queensland government’s preferred new resources in western Queensland. UGC involves igniting coal seams and converting the gas into liquid fuel in an above-ground conversion plant.

The former Beattie government allowed both technologies to be trialled, but the more traditional CSG eventually won out and the \$80 billion LNG export industry was built around Gladstone. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/may/11/linc-energy-fined-45m-for-pollution-amounting-to-ecological-vandalism>

Linc Energy fined \$4.5m for pollution amounting to ‘ecological vandalism’

Ben Smees, The Guardian, 11/05/2018

The failed Queensland energy company Linc Energy has been slapped with one of the state’s largest environmental fines and ordered to pay \$4.5m for contaminating farmland in the state’s western downs. Judge Michael Shanahan said the company’s actions amounted to “ecological vandalism”. ...

The prosecution of the company and several ongoing cases involving Linc are considered a key test of the Queensland government’s ability to hold polluting mining companies to account for criminal actions and their toxic legacy.

Linc was found guilty of five counts of causing serious environmental harm by polluting farmland near Chinchilla with hazardous contaminants despite warnings from scientists. The former Queensland environment minister Stephen Miles described the contamination as “the biggest pollution event probably in Queensland’s history”.

Five former Linc executives also face charges related to the operation of the UGC site and will face a committal hearing in the Brisbane magistrates court later this year.

The law firm Slater and Gordon is investigating a potential class action representing agricultural landholders in an area up to 320 sq km around the Linc site.

A Bundaberg-based firm, Marland Law, is leading a class action from landowners against the Queensland government in relation to its approval and monitoring of the project.

In some cases where UGC has caused contamination, such as the Hoe Creek site in Wyoming, extensive subsidence occurred 15 years after the site was decommissioned.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/liquidated-coal-seam-gas-company-fined-45m-for-environmental-vandalism/news-story/77dd6905c75692608754636f20b1a8f5>

Linc Energy fined \$4.5m for environmental vandalism

Charlie Peel, The Australian, 12/05/2018

Coal seam gas company Linc Energy has been hit with Queensland’s highest ever fine for environmental vandalism, but the \$4.5 million is unlikely to ever reach government hands.

The company went into liquidation in 2016, leaving creditors chasing more than \$280 million, and ensuring its contaminated former site near Chinchilla on the Darling Downs would be left to others to manage in the future.

<https://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/news/breaking-news/4m-fine-urged-for-polluter-linc-energy/news-story/ce6fff6276059f1a5b00a83e93d4d7b6>

Wound-up Linc hit with record \$4.5m fine

Warren Barnsley, AAP, Weekly Times, 11/05/2018

Queensland’s biggest fine for environmental vandalism will probably never be paid.

Linc Energy, a company who’s staff referred to an area it contaminated in the Darling Downs as “Mr Bubbles”, has little prospect of meeting the \$4.5



Former Linc Energy boss Peter Bond has described the court case as “meaningless bullshit”. He faces charges over the Linc operation, with other former Linc directors.

million penalty because it’s being liquidated. ...

Judge Shanahan said the area’s groundwater would require monitoring and remediation for many years due to “explosive toxic gases, tars and oils escaping into parts of the landform”.

While noting the company’s dire financial position, deterrence was a key consideration in his sentence.

He fined the company, which was led by chief executive Peter Bond during its operation, 50 per cent of the maximum for three of the offences and 75 per cent for two.

Environmental group Lock The Gate has welcomed the fine, while the mining industry has described it as appropriate.

“All businesses in all industries must comply with Queensland’s strict environmental laws,” Queensland Resources Council chief Ian Macfarlane said.

“If they don’t, they face significant penalties.” ...

<https://www.naturalgasworld.com/linc-energy-fined-3.39mn-for-environmental-offending-61105>

Linc energy fined over damaging UGC

Nathan Richardson, Natural Gas World, 11/05/2018

Linc Energy, which was placed into voluntary administration in 2016, has had convictions recorded against it and been fined A\$4.5mn (\$3.39mn), the highest penalty ever imposed under Australia’s Queensland law for

environmental offending. ...

Queensland banned UGC in April 2016, largely because of the negative impact of the Linc project.

In 2014 Linc was looking to extend its UGC trials to Poland and elsewhere in eastern Europe. UGC as a technology has been used in the past in a small number of countries, including since the 1960s in Uzbekistan, but recent international pilot projects have not been extended, and one offshore Scotland’s Firth of Forth was blocked along with development of unconventional oil and gas last year.

FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/planet-oz/2018/may/08/its-all-about-vested-interests-untangling-conspiracy-conservatism-and-climate-scepticism>

‘It’s all about vested interests’: untangling conspiracy, conservatism and climate scepticism

Graham Readfern, The Guardian, 08/05/2018

In many countries, climate scepticism is not part of the language of the conservative parties. But in Australia and America it is. So in those countries being a climate sceptic starts becoming part of the package of attitudes that you’re supposed to have if you’re a good conservative. ...

When the vested interests are high, the fossil fuel industry and conservative thinktanks, media and politicians collaborate in an organised campaign of misinformation. ... The link between conservatism and scepticism is really only obvious in countries with high per capita carbon emissions. If you think of

News this week ... from previous page

per capita carbon emissions as a measure of how fossil fuel reliant a country is, then this makes sense. In countries with low fossil fuel reliance – where the vested interests are low – then there's no need to kick off a campaign of misinformation, and no motivation to believe one either.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/pm-silent-as-energy-tzar-kerry-schott-attacks-coal-power/news-story/27d3011418d629c80f076a9b5b76f37>

PM silent as energy czar Kerry Schott attacks coal power

Jared Owens, *The Australian*, 09/05/2018

Tensions within the Coalition over Australia's future energy mix show little sign of subsiding, with Malcolm Turnbull refusing to criticise his energy adviser's claim that there was no case to invest in new coal-fired power stations.

Energy Security Board chairwoman Kerry Schott's comments were yesterday raised during a closed-door meeting of government MPs by backbencher Craig Kelly, an outspoken coal advocate, who said they would undermine the Coalition's argument that Labor was the party of higher power prices. ...

Dr Schott said it was widely accepted in the energy sector that new coal plants could no longer compete with wind and solar, together with gas or pumped-hydro capacity, to ensure "dispatchable" power. ...

Opposition energy spokesman Mark Butler said Mr Turnbull's refusal to defend Dr Schott showed he was "too weak" to stand up to the "hard-right climate-deniers" in his party. He said Dr Schott's views echoed a "consensus view" of economists, investors and industry.

<https://www.michaelwest.com.au/great-barrier-reef-funding-links-to-climate-sceptics-and-political-donors/>

Great Barrier Reef: funding links to climate sceptics and political donors

MichaelWest.com, 10/05/2018

Of the half a billion dollars earmarked for the Great Barrier Reef in Tuesday's Budget, the lion's share goes to a foundation with climate-denial links and whose patrons make the largest donations to the ruling Liberal National Party coalition.

The PR: "The investment comprises a new \$444 million partnership with the Great Barrier Reef Foundation and

\$56 million for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Department of the Environment and Energy."

The reality: The foundation has coal group Peabody Energy on its Chairman's Panel. Peabody has funded anti-climate change activism. There are myriad other links to fossil fuel operators, including Mitsubishi, Rio Tinto, BHP, Origin Energy, AGL and ConocoPhillips Australia. Chairman John Schubert was formerly chairman and chief executive of Esso in Australia (parent Exxon has also been involved in advocating against climate science).

On a bright note, at least in the public disclosures, it would appear coal miner Adani and its Carmichael Project are not involved. Still the patrons include an array of miners, heavy polluters such as Qantas and Boeing, and Big Four rentseekers Deloitte and PwC.

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/why-george-pell-dined-with-under-fire-epa-s-scott-pruitt-in-secret-20180512-p4zev4.html>

Why George Pell dined with under-fire EPA's Scott Pruitt in secret

Rachel Olding, *SMH*, 12/05/2018

New York: Cardinal George Pell has emerged as a mystery guest who dined at a lavish Rome restaurant with embattled US environmental chief Scott Pruitt to secretly plan a public debate challenging climate change.

The five-star rooftop dinner, which came three weeks before Pell was charged with historic child sexual abuse, was deliberately removed from four different public schedules released by Pruitt's offices due to the allegations hanging over the Vatican financial chief, it has emerged.

The extraordinary revelations not only add another twist in the tale of the American environmental administrator under fire for excessive spending and dubious ethics, but also pit Pell

squarely against the Pope, who has declared that climate change is real.

Pruitt, the administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency, is the subject of 11 separate investigations into his lavish travel habits, conflicts of interests and management practices. ...

Pell, the Vatican's treasurer, has previously dismissed the science linking greenhouse gas emissions with climate change, calling it "hysterical and extreme claims" and "a symptom of pagan emptiness".

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-13/tiny-victorian-beach-community-fights-ccs-plans/9738480>

Tiny beach community fears for 'pristine' environment over carbon capture and storage plan

Nicole Asher, *ABC*, 13/05/2018

Residents of an isolated beach village in Victoria's east are fighting carbon capture and storage (CCS) plans off their coastline.

A plan to use depleted oil fields in the Bass Strait to store carbon are being investigated by the Victorian Government through its Carbon Net project.

The carbon sinks are the key to a \$500 million pilot project, announced by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull in April, to convert the Latrobe Valley's brown coal to liquid hydrogen for export to Japan.

The plan has angered locals and holiday makers at Golden Beach and Paradise Beach — home to about 300 people.

They fear their way of life and the pristine environment along Ninety Mile Beach is being sacrificed to support industry.

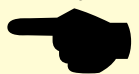
If the plan goes ahead it will be the first industrial-scale CCS project in eastern Australia.

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



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