



SPONSORED BY

KNITTING NANNAS AGAINST GAS

# Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

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

FFB 1:41 • 11 SEPTEMBER 2018

## Battle to stop dangerous gas project Communities fear a repeat of previous UCG disasters will desecrate land

By Eve Sinton

*Traditional owners and environmentalists have launched a last-ditch effort to prevent Leigh Creek Energy's underground coal gasification (UCG) project from going ahead in South Australia.*

Last week the Adnyamathanha people applied for a Supreme Court injunction to halt the project, on the grounds it should not have been approved by Mining Minister Dan van Holst Pellekaan.

The matter was due to return to court on Monday (September 10). The outcome was unknown by *FFB's* publication deadline.

Meanwhile, representatives of Flinders Ranges communities and supporters, coordinated by the William Light Foundation, sent an open letter to the Premier of South Australia, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Steven Marshall. They asked for the government to cease all further UCG approvals and put an end to the practice.

"We stand together to defend the communities, the environment and sacred sites of the Flinders Ranges on behalf of generations to come," the communities said.

### Sacred site must be protected

"We do not accept that the profits of Leigh Creek Energy or any UCG company outweigh the serious offence of desecration of a registered Aboriginal Heritage site.

"The Anggamathanha Camp Law Mob Elders who are responsible for



### Same technology, same people involved in the Linc Energy disaster – Queensland's biggest pollution event

Aboriginal Heritage site protection demand an immediate end to all mining activities at the protected Yurlu's Coal site, and call for the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation to show proper and lawful adherence to the SA Aboriginal Heritage Act. The longstanding Anggamathanha Camp Law Mob complaint concerning alleged breaches and unlawful damage to the site must be responded to immediately.

"We do not accept the risks imposed by UCG to the land or to the health and wellbeing of life in the Flinders Ranges for generations to come. We defend the right of Adnyamathanha people to ac-

cess their birthplaces, burial grounds and sacred sites, and to eat from the land without concern of mining contamination," they said.

The Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association says they were not properly consulted about the UCG project.

Senior traditional owner Vince Coulthard said the site held important significance to yulu, the Kingfisher Man, one of the major creation ancestors of the Adnyamathanha people.

### Linc Energy disaster could be repeated

The project involves the same technology, and some of the same people, involved in Queensland's largest ever pollution event. When Linc Energy's Hopeland project went rogue, 320 square kilometres of farmland was declared a hazard-zone.

• Continued p2

• P 3: UCG has failed at multiple sites

• P 4: Wilderness Soc. targets CSG waste

• SUBSCRIBE FREE

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

# Community battles to save Leigh Creek

• Continued from p1

The pollution is irreversible and long-term effects, such as soil acidification, are still to emerge. Remediation attempts will cost taxpayers millions, but the land can't be returned to its original state.

Linc Energy was found guilty on five charges of deliberately and willfully causing environmental harm and fined \$4.5 million. As the company is in liquidation, the fine will never be paid.

Five Linc Energy directors, including former chief Peter Bond, still face criminal charges from the event.

Former Linc executive, Justyn Peters, who has not been charged over the disaster, is now executive chairman of Leigh Creek Energy. The company was formerly known as Marathon Resources.

## Like a bad zombie movie

It was the subject of withering criticism in the SA Parliament in 2016, when Greens MC, Mark Parnell, said:

“Like a bad zombie movie, the undead have come back to haunt us. Members will remember Marathon Resources Limited. That is the cowboy mining company that was sent packing from the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary five years ago after trashing the natural environment. They are back. Quietly rebranded as Leigh Creek Energy Limited, they now want to get into the UCG business.”

Parnell went on to say, “I do note that the Leigh Creek project does involve people who are involved in the Queensland Linc Energy project ... top of the list is Mr Justyn Peters, whose title is executive chairman. His profile includes that he was a former experienced senior manager with Linc Energy. ...

“The South Australian government needs to pay attention not just to what companies claim they are going to achieve and what they claim is their environmental performance, but have a look at who they are, what they have done, and have a look at how these projects have ended up interstate, because they have ended up in tears.”

## Warnings ignored

Despite the warnings, the SA government has chosen to believe Leigh Creek Energy's assertion that their

# A dismal history of disasters: UCG in Australia

	Company	Location/Time	Outcome
	<b>Linc Energy</b> In liquidation	Hopeland, 1999-2013	Fined \$4.5 million for causing serious environmental harm. Permanently contaminated 320 sq km of farmland. Company in liquidation, five directors facing criminal charges. Qld govt (taxpayers) left to deal with site.
	<b>Cougar Energy</b> Now Moreton Resources	Kingaroy, 2010-2011	Fined \$75,000 for contaminating bores with benzene and toluene. Site shut down.
	<b>Carbon Energy</b>	Bloodwood, 2008-2012	Fined \$100,000 for release of contaminated water into environment. Site shut down.

project, at an old coal mine, is not comparable to Linc's process, nor that of other Queensland failures by Cougar Energy and Carbon Energy (see table).

Mining Minister Dan van Holst Pellekaan has given successive approvals to Leigh Creek Energy for a trial of UCG without an independent expert review.

The William Light Foundation says independent hydrogeologists, Professor Gavin Mudd and Doctor Matthew Currell, have identified serious risks to groundwater in the Flinders Ranges.

They advised the Foundation that faults and multiple existing drill holes present an unacceptable likelihood of gas or fluid migration through the aquifer system which could lead to uncontrolled combustion and irreparable groundwater contamination.

## Report details extensive risks

The Foundation has drawn the government's attention to a Scottish government report by Professor Campbell Gemmill which clearly outlines the extensive risks to the environment.

These include large number of hazardous water-borne contaminants identified during different UCG operations conducted so far, including the organic pollutants phenols, benzene with its derivatives, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), heterocycles, ammonia, mercury, zinc, sulphates, cyanides and other heavy metals.

“The LCKE three month trial project alone anticipates the use of 1,000,000 litres of diesel and up to 1.6 million litres of water. This is unacceptable,” the Foundation said.

The William Light Foundation's letter demanded that the South Australian

Government cease all further approvals of UCG and put an end to Underground Coal Gasification:

*We urge you the Premier to show positive and progressive leadership and*

- *show proper and lawful adherence to the SA Aboriginal Heritage Act and cease mining on registered Aboriginal Heritage Sites*

- *call for the Department of Environment and Water to fully investigate and report on the impacts of pollutants of the CSG industry*

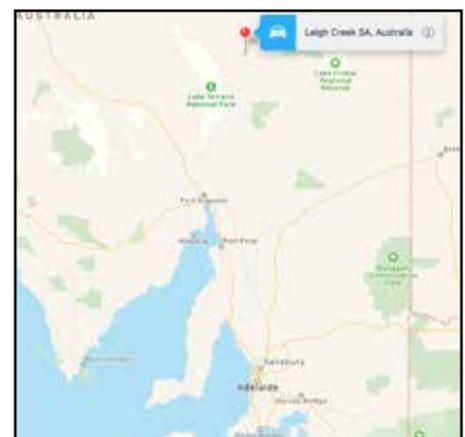
- *call for the Department of Health and Wellbeing to fully investigate and report on the health impacts of the CSG industry on communities and industry workers*

- *call for a complete review of the failure of the Department of Energy and Mining in approving a UCG operation with such enormous social, cultural and environmental risks.*

**The William Light Foundation is fundraising to support further action against UCG. You can support them here:**

[www.williamlightfoundation.org](http://www.williamlightfoundation.org)

• See media coverage pages 9-10



# UCG technology has failed at multiple sites world-wide

*A Friends of the Earth report documents 24 known underground coal gasification (UCG) sites worldwide. Only one – Linc Energy's Yerostigaz UCG plant in Angren, Uzbekistan, is operating commercially.*

Yerostigaz has been operating since 1965. According to Linc Energy, the plant produces 1 million m<sup>3</sup> of syngas a day from its coal reserves, to be used for electricity generation at the nearby 480MW Angren Power Station.

Besides the three Australian disasters documented on page 2, there have been many failures elsewhere.

At El Tremedal, in Spain, a test resulted in methane blockage and subsequent explosion.

Rocky Mountain wells 1 and 2 in the US contaminated groundwater with boron, ammonia and phenols; elevated concentrations of sulphates and ammonia were measured a number of years after the test. At least six other US test sites resulted in serious water pollution.

At several other places, such as Haute-Deule and Brauy-en-Artois in France, coal simply failed to gasify.

## Setting fire to coal underground

UCG is a technology that gasifies coal seams in situ underground, creating syngas (or synthesis gas).

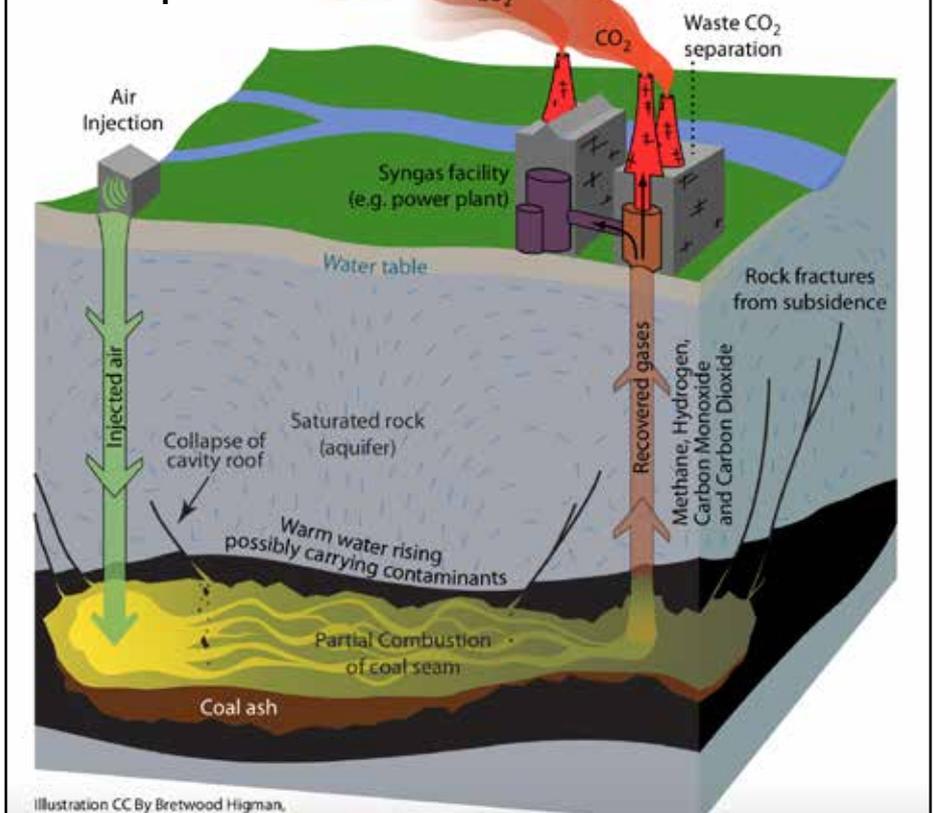
This is mainly a mixture of hydrogen, methane, carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide – to be used for either electricity production or industrial chemical processes. It is also referred to as In Situ Gasification (ISG).

UCG involves drilling two wells, some distance apart, directly into an underground coal seam. The wells are connected through the coal seam, usually through directional drilling techniques. (See diagram at right.)

The injection well is used to pump oxygen along with an ignition catalyst into the coal seam. The coal is ignited, then partially combusts with the injected oxygen. Water in the coal seam or the surrounding strata flows into the cavity and is essential for the series of chemical reactions that take place to produce raw syngas – a mixture of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), hydrogen (H<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO) and other contaminants including sulphur and trace metals.

The gas mixture travels through the

## Fuelling the Fire: The UCG process



production well to the surface gas plant where it is treated and cleaned.

As the coal is gasified, the gasification cavity expands and moves along the coal seam. Eventually, this causes the cavity roof to collapse. Pyrolysis (high-temperature decomposition without oxygen) of the coal also takes place as the coal is heated.

Syngas can be used as the base feedstock for a whole variety of chemical products and processes, or combusted to produce electricity.

## What could go wrong?

UCG presents serious environmental risks including massive greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change; surface water and groundwater contamination; toxic waste issues; ground subsidence; worker health and safety; and hazards to nearby residents and animals.

The development of a UCG industry will emit high levels of CO<sub>2</sub> further fuelling climate change, at a time when countries should be shifting to low-carbon economies and energy sources. Additionally, UCG's history of groundwater pollution, including the contamination incident in Queensland,

Australia, highlight the unacceptable local environmental pollution problems, to say nothing of the problem of dealing with high levels of toxic waste.

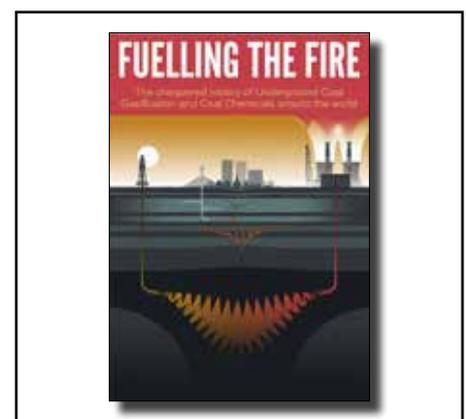
Case studies from Australia, South Africa and the US document further experiences of pollution from UCG trials.

Countries pursuing UCG – including Australia, South Africa and Europe – must focus on the long-term environmental and health risks and ban this industry before it is responsible for even more environmental damage.

– from *Fuelling the Fire*, FOE International

Download the report here:

<https://www.foei.org/resources/publications/unconventional-coal>



## Micklo protecting country from Buru



*Buru Energy is hoping to develop a large shale gasfield about 70km east of Broome. And one extraordinary man, Micklo Corpus, a Yawuru Traditional Owner, has led the charge against the risks this industry poses to country.*

Micklo has never wavered in his resolve. In 2014, he camped out on crown land outside the entrance to Buru Energy's fracking exploration site to fight the project, and he's still there today.

Thanks to the determination of Micklo and others from Broome and surrounding areas, the local member of parliament, Josie Farrer, has also spoken out opposing fracking in the Kimberley.

### Fragile wetland threatened

Two of Buru Energy's exploration wells are located at the head of the internationally significant Roebuck Plains wetlands, which flow into Roebuck Bay.

Roebuck Bay is a Ramsar listed wetland, one of only 65 in Australia and is about to be one of Western Australia's newest marine parks.

The area Buru are targeting is also home to an important population of threatened Greater Bilbies.

Fracking in the fragile and unique landscapes of the Kimberley represents a massive risk to the Bilby and many other unique Australian wildlife.

And the Kimberley is not the only region under threat – the wildflowers and wheat farms of the Mid West of Western Australia are also in the firing line.

• See a short video about Mick's work here:

<https://vimeo.com/287342565>



## Three arrests as coal trains stopped in their tracks



*Newcastle Police arrested a young man and woman for filming a peaceful protest last week.*

This was while Sarah Barron, a Hamilton local was suspended for in a tripod blocking coal trains from entering the world's biggest coal port. All coal trains heading across Sandgate bridge were halted for three hours.

Sarah was arrested when she came down from the tripod.

While filming the action from a safe distance, a man and woman were also arrested for 'aiding and abetting'.

Sarah said, "Coal needs to end and we can't afford to wait for our government to end it. Our Prime Minister is

a proxy for Minerals Council Australia, the PM's chief of staff is former coal industry boss, our Energy Minister is an anti-wind campaigner and our Environment Minister is a mining industry lawyer. Our climate is in crisis and our government is a farce. If the government won't end coal, we, the people, will."

Frontline Action on Coal (FLAC) said the event highlighted the power imbalance between the coal industry and everyday people.

"We are inviting everyone are are inviting everyone to come and join Act Up in Newcastle this month to stand strong against this injustice and fight for a safe climate," FLAC said.

## Wilderness Society targets CSG waste

*The Wilderness Society is raising funds for an investigation to expose the toxic coal seam gas industry*

The coal seam gas (CSG) industry runs rampant across QLD. The industry produces millions of tonnes of salty, toxic waste each year, yet the public is in the dark about how this waste is disposed.

"Santos has stated its Narrabri Gas Project in the Pilliga will produce over half a million tonnes of contaminated salty waste. Where is this waste going? This should not be classified information," the Society said.

"In Queensland, the CSG industry keeps waste disposal top secret. We are talking million tonnes of salts, contaminated with heavy metals and radionuclides. There are ominous clues about its fate, but no clear picture.

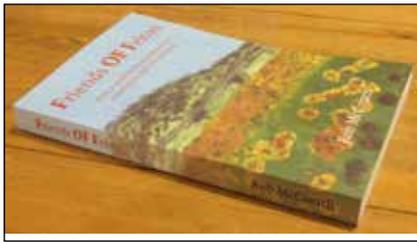
"Together, we can expose the real impacts of the CSG industry – for Queensland right now and as a timely warning for NSW.

"The findings will be shared widely through social media advertisements and mainstream media. The results will reach the Ministers for Health and Planning Departments of QLD and NSW, where the CSG industry is currently knocking."

Donations will help to raise the \$30,000 needed to fund an investigation to uncover the harmful impacts of CSG waste and plans for CSG waste disposal. Click here to support the fund:

[https://supporter.wilderness.org.au/donation-pages/c1807-pilliga-crowdie?utm\\_source=breaking\\_news&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=crowdfunder&utm\\_term=pilliga&utm\\_content=button1&erid=40336898&trid=70a233ca-3fac-4dd4-90ac-527033734aeb](https://supporter.wilderness.org.au/donation-pages/c1807-pilliga-crowdie?utm_source=breaking_news&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=crowdfunder&utm_term=pilliga&utm_content=button1&erid=40336898&trid=70a233ca-3fac-4dd4-90ac-527033734aeb)

## Book tells how community of Felton beat coal giant



A new book, *Friends OF Felton – How a small farming community stood up to Big Coal and won* – tells the story of the successful community campaign to stop the proposed Ambre Energy coal-to-liquids operation at Felton, on Queensland’s Darling Downs.

Author Rob McCreath hopes it gives encouragement to others facing similar challenges.

The book is for sale via the facebook page ‘Rob McCreath author’ (\$21).

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

# Hunter people are over coal mines

*A survey of Upper Hunter residents by Hunter Research Foundation Centre has found more than half (55%) of people in the Upper Hunter agree that the Hunter region economy should diversify away from reliance on coal mining. Only 23% disagreed.*

Bulga electrician and Hunter and Central Rivers Alliance spokesperson Rob McLaughlin said, “The results of this polling indicate that the balance is not right in the Hunter, with our community ready and willing to pursue a positive future for the region that includes diversifying away from mining.

“Diversification is crucial to a strong Hunter Valley but it does mean making some tough decisions, especially when it comes to balancing competing land use.

“The community wants to see our existing industries including horse-breeding, wine-making and tourism protected, and a strong plan developed to build new value-added

industries and renewable energy” he said.

Hunter Renewal project coordinator Dan Coleman said, “This polling reflects what we’re hearing from people in the Upper Hunter; that the economy is too heavily reliant on coal mining at the moment and that makes us vulnerable and insecure.

### Negative health and social impacts

“The expansion of the industry has not come without cost for the people of this region in health impacts, negative social effects and its encroachment on other rural industries.

“What the region needs now is leadership from the NSW Government ensuring that the rural industries of the Upper Hunter thrive and grow.”

The polling was conducted in June by Hunter Research Foundation Centre for Lock the Gate Alliance.



## Acclaimed movie now online:

<https://www.thebentleyeffect.com/>

# Reef grant parked with fossil funders

*The Great Barrier Reef Foundation’s unprecedented \$443.3 million dollar Government grant is being invested with banks that fund the expansion of the fossil fuel industry, contrary to the Foundation’s stated goals.*

A new report released last week from The Australia Institute’s Climate & Energy program and Future Super shows the Foundation’s grant, which was paid upfront and in full, is split between six banks.

The report was released as Labor’s environment spokesman, Tony Burke, announced that a future Shorten government would ask for the money to be returned to the Commonwealth.

Mr Burke warned that a federal election “can be called at any time”.

“I ask that the foundation be mindful of this commitment in any spending decisions that it makes,” he writes.

“It would be grossly inappropriate for the foundation to be making spending decisions which will affect future financial years, given that the appropriateness of this grant will be determined by the Australian people at the election.”

A majority of the grant is being invested with Australia’s Big Four Banks (Commonwealth, NAB, ANZ and

Westpac), who have loaned \$70 billion to fossil fuel projects since 2008.

“Despite the Great Barrier Reef Foundation recognising climate change as the greatest threat to the Reef, it beggars belief that the Foundation does not have an investment policy to guide what it does with its undisbursed Government money which is sitting in its bank accounts,” says Richie Merzian, Director of the Australia Institute’s Climate & Energy Program.

“If the Foundation is to gain credibility in its role protecting the Reef against threats like climate change, it needs to put its money where its mouth is.

“Right now the only organisations benefiting from the half-a-billion dollar grant are the big banks – including the same Big Four responsible for investing \$2.3 billion in fossil fuel projects last year.

The Australia Institute and Future Super have written to the Chair and Executive Director of the Great Barrier Reef Foundation to encourage the Foundation to develop a fossil-free investment policy and submitted their report to the Senate Inquiry into the 2018-19 Budget measure, the Great Barrier Reef 2050 Partnership Program.



## CONTACT FFB

[fossil.fool.bulletin@gmail.com](mailto:fossil.fool.bulletin@gmail.com)

with your comments, tips and news of community activities against fossil fuels

## SACRIFICE ZONE



<https://vimeo.com/257444267>



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



## Inside the news

“Fair dinkum power” is the latest three-word political slogan, being uttered by new PM **Scott Morrison** and his energy offside, **Angus Taylor**. It is obvious the phrase is code for more **coal power**. Morrison came up with it during an extensive radio interview with Alan Jones. **FFB** cherry-picked the energy aspects of the interview from *The Australian's* coverage, see page 13.

**Fossil fools** are making the most of political instability by pushing coal and gas agendas. A lot of hot air emerged from **NT Resources Week** events in Darwin; gas bosses like **Santos CEO, Kevin Gallagher**, warned all political parties against **biting the hand** that feeds the economy \$40 billion a year in export dollars.

Unfortunately, opposition leader **Bill Shorten** is listening to them and saying the states must **lift their gas bans**.

Players like the powerful **Andrew Liveris**, who has a hotline to a \$250 billion Saudi Arabian investment fund (p15), pushed for ever expanding gasfields, pipelines and a massive explosion of petro-chemical industries.

Meanwhile the **Murdoch** press wheeled out some pro-nuclear commentators and a mystery bunch of retired engineers who claim **nuclear** is the answer to Australia's energy dilemma (p10-11).

Voices of reason emerged, with both the ABC and *Sydney Morning Herald* (p 12 & 13) featuring stories about the **economic sense** of moving to renewable energy sources.

**Public pressure** was successful in motivating the Queensland government to launch a prosecution of **Adani** for pollution, just a couple of days before the legal deadline expired (p7).

Activists stopped **coal trains** in the Hunter Valley on three occasions through the week (p4 & 7). People filming the events were arrested for ‘**aiding and abetting**’ those locked on, or on tripods. One has to ask, what is the difference between **activists** and **journalists** when it comes to witnessing or broadcasting protest action? What are the implications for **citizen journalists**?

## Save Westernport publishes informative wrap-around



**Community group Save Westernport, which is fighting AGL's plants for a gas import hub at peaceful Crib Point, informed the community of its concerns with a four-page wrap-around enveloping their local newspaper last week.**

People are alarmed that work on the terminal has begun, even though environmental impact statements have yet to be considered by the Victorian government.

They point out the absurdity of importing gas, despite Australia being one of the world's largest exporters.

The terminal will have a massive impact on local residents and the internationally-recognised wetland environment of Westernport Bay.

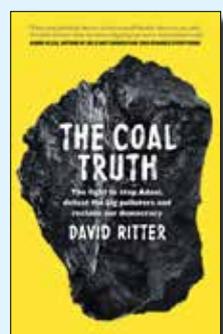
“If AGL's plans succeed, they will bind Westernport communities to the damaging ways of the past just as new and better energy choices are becoming widely available,” the group said.

**FFB**

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

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

Contributors include Tara Moss and Berndt Sellheim, Adrian Burragubba, Lesley Hughes, John Quiggin, Hilary Bambrick, Ruchira Talukdar and Geoffrey Cousins. Lead author is David Ritter, CEO, Greenpeace Australia Pacific.



**FFB**

# In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 31,500 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/new-mining-boom-on-horizon-as-our-ship-waits-to-come-in/news-story/6e3b4e83732df608fb89c06060f0f728>

### New mining boom on horizon as our ship waits to come in

John McCarthy, *Townsville Bulletin*, 03/09/2018

[With Adani-produced video at top of story]

No one is calling it a mining boom yet but it's starting to look like one. ...

Coal and gas are hot commodities, according to Queensland Resources Council chief Ian Macfarlane. ...

It is the first year there has been an increase in mining capital expenditure since 2013-14. ...

"There is a very real push to employ locally. The industry will manage it better this time," Mr Macfarlane said. ...

<https://www.echo.net.au/2018/09/adani-protesters-throw-black-confetti-qld-politicians/>

### Adani protesters throw black confetti over Qld politicians

*Echonet Daily*, 04/09/2018

Anti-Adani protesters this morning threw piles of black confetti over politicians during Queensland Parliament's question time.

The action was to remind Queensland Labor they have only three days left to prosecute Adani for intentionally breaching its pollution licence by more than 800 per cent, releasing toxic coal sludge into the waters of the Great Barrier Reef.

In the last fortnight, 40,000 people have written to environment minister Leanne Enoch appealing for Adani to be prosecuted. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/state-politics/adani-protesters-shower-queensland-mps-in-black-confetti/news-story/be41ae0433c35d775cb8203931db4194>

### Adani protesters shower Queensland MPs in black confetti

Jared Owens, *The Australian*, 04/09/2018

Security arrangements at Queensland's Parliament House will be reviewed after environmental protesters today showered MPs with black confetti from the public gallery. ...

Addressing the chamber after the in-

cident, Speaker Curtis Pitt understood the incident "may have caused some distress" as the MPs would not have known that the spray was harmless confetti. ...

Energy Minister Anthony Lynham extended the parliament's apologies to visiting schoolchildren over the incident, although some appeared to find the episode humorous.

<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/qld-pursuing-adani-for-alleged-breaches>

### Qld pursuing Adani for alleged breaches

*SBS*, 05/09/2018

The Queensland government is taking legal action against Indian mining giant Adani for allegedly releasing sediment water eight times over the allowed limit into the Great Barrier Reef.

The Department of Environment and Science (DES) has charged the Adani-owned Abbot Point Bulkcoal (APBC) with breaching a temporary emissions licence over the discharge at the Abbot Point coal terminal during Cyclone Debbie in 2017. ...

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-05/adani-prosecuted-over-release-of-sediment-near-barrier-reef/10204374>

### Adani prosecuted over release of coal-laden water near Great Barrier Reef

Allyson Horne, *ABC*, 05/09/2018

The Queensland Government will take Indian mining giant Adani to court, alleging one of its companies illegally released coal-laden water near the Great Barrier Reef. ...

Environment Minister Leanne Enoch said the decision to prosecute was made after months of legal and scientific advice. ...

In a statement, Abbot Point Bulkcoal "categorically refuted" any wrongdoing, saying it "fully complied with the conditions imposed by the Temporary Emissions Licence". ...

The matter is due before the Bowen Magistrates Court next month.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/state-politics/adani-to-face-court-over-spill-of-contaminated-water/news-story/96d41f233105e599c0f91de523654ebb>

### Adani to face court over spill of contaminated water

Jared Owens, *The Australian*, 06/09/2018

Indian conglomerate Adani – the proponent of Australia's biggest coalmine – will be prosecuted over a spill of contaminated water from the Abbot Point coal terminal in north Queensland during the Cyclone Debbie emergency in March last year. ...

Although there were no known environmental consequences, the company faces a \$2.7 million fine if convicted. ...

## COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.theherald.com.au/news/local-news/5621695/protesters-stop-coal-train-at-sandgate-police-at-the-scene/>

### Protesters stop coal train at Sandgate: police at the scene

Jessica Brown, *Newcastle Herald*, 03/09/2018

Protesters have managed to stop a coal train at Sandgate, effectively blocking rail movements into Newcastle Port.

One activist, Sarah Barron, setup a large tripod on the tracks and suspended herself over the rail line. ...

<https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/newcastle-police-arrest-anti-coal-protester>

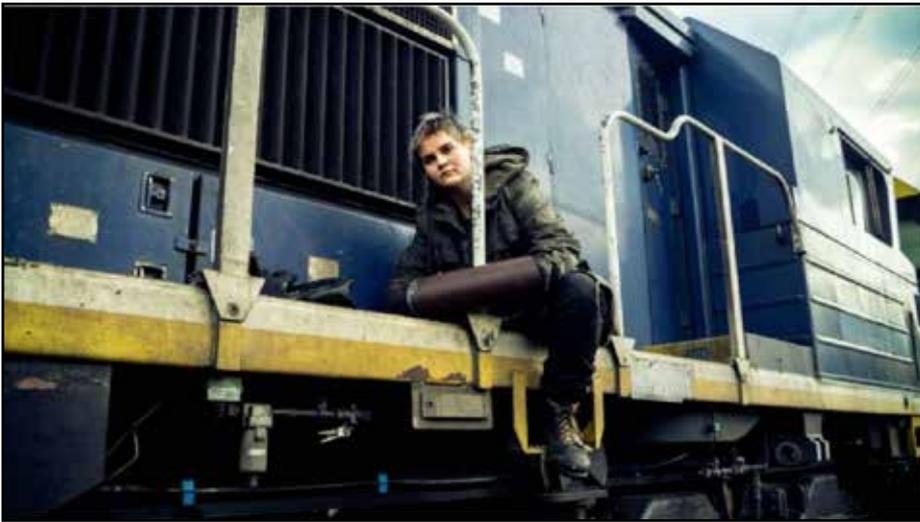
### Newcastle police arrest anti-coal protester, and those filming the action

Kerry Smith, *Green Left Weekly*, 03/09/2018

Newcastle Police arrested a young man and woman for filming a peaceful protest on September 3, along with Sarah Barron, a Newcastle local, who had blocked all coal trains heading across Sandgate bridge for three hours. All three were taken into custody by around a dozen police, with the two who filmed the event being charged with "aiding and abetting".

Barron was participating in "Act Up Newcastle" as part of the #EndCoal campaign initiated by Climate Justice group Frontline Action on Coal (FLAC), in collaboration with Newcastle Climate Justice Uprising.

The groups' aim is to shut down the railways feeding coal into the world's



*Cedar locked herself to the side of a coal train, stopping trains from entering Newcastle Port last Friday. Photo: Frontline Action on Coal*

largest coal port in Newcastle and draw attention to Australia's shameful status as the world's biggest coal exporter and one of its worst greenhouse gas emitters. ...

<https://www.triplem.com.au/news/newcastle/breaking-another-anti-coal-protest-at-sandgate?station=sydney>

### Another Anti-Coal Protest At Sandgate

*Triple M radio, 07/09/2018*

Another protest has brought coal trains to a halt at Sandgate – the third one this week.

A climate change activist has locked herself to the side of a coal train, stopping trains from entering Newcastle Port. ...

"I have turned to direct action because I've tried signing petitions, I've tried going to rallies and it's not enough. We need transition (to renewables) yesterday, we're running out of time," Cedar said.

The train line was also blocked by protesters on Monday and Wednesday, resulting in five people being charged.

Police have labelled their actions as "extremely dangerous".

<https://www.muswellbrookchronicle.com.au/story/5620297/mines-accountable-to-the-communities-in-which-they-operate-epa/>

### Upper Hunter coal mines warned to keep dust under control during new operation or risk further fines

*Muswellbrook Chronicle, 01/09/2018*

Upper Hunter coal mines have been warned to keep dust under control, as the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) mounts a special operation to monitor dust levels in the area.

"From September 1, Operation Dust Patrol will put the Hunter's coal mines under closer scrutiny," EPA director Hunter Karen Marler said. ...

During Operation Dust Patrol, EPA officers will inspect mines to check that, in addition to best practice dust controls, extra precautions are in place on days when there is a higher risk of dust. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/windfall-profits-to-keep-old-coalfired-power-station-going-for-another-20-years/news-story/2ec39f4f96c71d47f5c71c44cb481e61>

### Profits to keep Vales Point coal-fired power station going for another 20 years

*John Stensholt & Perry Williams, The Australian, 07/09/2018*

Power baron Trevor St Baker has revealed a plan to extend the life of the ageing NSW coal-fired plant he owns with billionaire Brian Flannery for another 20 years after surging electricity prices delivered the pair a huge profit and a bumper \$41 million dividend from an asset they bought for \$1m from the NSW government.

The Vales Point power station near Lake Macquarie, which supplies about 4 per cent of power for the national grid, could receive a \$750m injection to ensure it runs until 2049, making it the nation's last standing coal station, with the country's other facilities due to be shuttered over the next 30 years. ...

[https://www.singletonargus.com.au/story/5625409/legal-advice-says-road-closure-invalid/?cs=1534&utm\\_source=eBulletin+list+June+2018&utm\\_campaign=ae-fe6a3d41-eBulletin7Sept2018&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_0aa74baca5-ae-fe6a3d41-100949](https://www.singletonargus.com.au/story/5625409/legal-advice-says-road-closure-invalid/?cs=1534&utm_source=eBulletin+list+June+2018&utm_campaign=ae-fe6a3d41-eBulletin7Sept2018&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_0aa74baca5-ae-fe6a3d41-100949)

### The future of Wallaby Scrub Road remains in doubt with a legal battle looming

*Louise Nichols, Singleton Argus, 05/09/2018*

The closure and \$27.5 million sale of Wallaby Scrub Road is now in serious doubt.

Legal advice prepared for the Bulga Milbrodale Progress Association (BMPA) states that the process undertaken by Singleton Council to close the road has been invalid.

It recommends that the Council begin the entire process again and should it fail to comply with this recommendation the Association may commence proceedings in the Supreme Court seeking orders to quash the decision to close the road.

Singleton Council at two meetings last month first determined to close the road and then to sell it off to the Chinese miner Yancoal owners of Warwickworth mine. The sale price of \$27.5 million was conditional on the road being closed by September 28. ...

## GAS, GAS, GAS

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/appea-searching-for-new-chief/news-story/1f3c431f9cb00661aced7e58e7e3d15d>

### APPEA searching for new chief

*Matt Chambers, The Australian, 04/09/2018*

The nation's peak oil and gas lobby is looking for a new chief executive just as the focus on the industry intensifies ahead of the coming federal election.

*The Australian* understands recruitment firm Heidrick & Struggles has been engaged to find a potential replacement for Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association chief executive Malcolm Roberts, whose contract expired this year. ...

<http://www.abc.net.au/widebay>

### Gas report author: farmers "should be worried"

*ABC Wide Bay, 03/08/2018*

It's been a subject of controversy in southern Queensland, now gas exploration is on the agenda in the Wide Bay Burnett.

With 3,000sqkm of shale gas exploration permits in the region and two licences held by Blue Energy up for renewal in December, local ag industry

**SUBSCRIBE FREE  
FOSSIL FOOL BULLETIN**

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

bodies have commissioned a report into the possible impacts of a gas industry in the region. ...

Report author Tom Crothers has previously worked for the department of natural resources and is now a water consultant. He presented his findings to growers in Bundaberg.

He says if a gas industry were to emerge in the region, fracking could affect groundwater and tougher laws are needed to protect “the rich soils and abundant water” that feed the region’s high value agricultural land. ...

A spokesman from Gas industry body APPEA says the industry is “proud of (its) environmental track record and collaborative partnerships with land-owners, which have seen significant benefits flow to farmers”. ...

The spokesman also describes Tom Crothers as a “long term critic of the oil and gas industry” and says that’s worth noting.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-05/port-lincoln-votes-no-to-oil-drilling-in-bight/10199282>

### **Port Lincoln City Council becomes 13th council to oppose oil exploration in Great Australian Bight**

*Samantha Jonscher, ABC, 05/09/2018*

After months of fierce community debate, Port Lincoln City Council on South Australia’s West Coast has become the 13th local council to oppose drilling in the Great Australian Bight.

The council’s formal opposition has no direct impact on whether or not drilling precedes, but the debate and council’s stance has divided the community. ...

Several oil companies have hoped to drill in the Bight since 2011, but it is the most recent proposal from Norwegian oil company Equinor that has energised the current debates and encouraged the community to declare its position. ...

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/sa-government-to-vote-for-10-year-fracking-ban-in-south-east/news-story/43a84cd9ac0d10db764106d30c3f62a4>

### **SA Government to vote for 10-year fracking ban in South-East**

*Adam Langenberg, Advertiser, 05/09/2018*

Fracking is set to be banned from the South-East for 10 years after the State Liberals flipped their position, setting up a potential stoush with the Federal Government.

Independent Mt Gambier MP Troy

Bell’s Bill banning unconventional gas exploration in the South-East passed the Government-dominated Lower House on Wednesday morning and is now almost certain to pass the Upper House.

State Energy Minister Dan van Holst Pellekaan had previously rejected enshrining the 10-year-moratorium in legislation.

In an election pledge, he argued it was already in place, courtesy of a ministerial directive.

The move has sparked tensions with Mr van Holst Pellekaan’s Commonwealth counterpart Resources Minister Matthew Canavan, who reiterated his Government “does not support basin-wide bans on gas development”. ...

Limestone Coast Protection Alliance chairman Angus Ralton said the group was “beside ourselves” with joy after securing the ban. ...

<https://www.ntnews.com.au/news/northern-territory/nt-gas-task-force-set-to-be-headed-by-paul-tyrell/news-story/1c352a23b6aad5c4ddcc1e82ed19a9b>

### **NT Gas Task Force set to be headed by Paul Tyrell**

*Ashley Manicaros, NT News, 05/09/2018*

Chief Minister Michael Gunner has announced the re-establishment of a gas taskforce in an opening address to a major oil and gas conference which started in Darwin today.

The NT Gas Task Force – disbanded by the previous CLP government – will have the highly respected Paul Tyrell as its Chair.

Mr Tyrell is a former head of the Department of Chief Minister and top Territory mandarin. ...

<https://www.skynews.com.au/details/5771719629001>

### **Northern Territory lifts fracking ban**

*Sky News, 07/09/2018*

The Northern Territory government has announced that it will lift a ban on the controversial practice of gas fracking, but strict new laws will apply. It comes after it accepted all 135 recommendations of an independent fracking inquiry, with 49 per cent of the Territory remaining frack-free, including National Parks, Conservation Areas, Indigenous Protected Areas and residential areas. The news has been welcomed by the Federal Government, but environmentalists say it’s a betrayal of trust.

<https://www.ntnews.com.au/business/australian-industry-encouraged-to-the-territory/news-story/5752fd24d7deb35c5bcc86e2195f1093>

### **Australian industry encouraged to the Territory**

*Ashley Manicaros & Gary Shipway, NT News, 05/09/2018*

Australian industry will need to consider where it is located if the Beetaloo Basin is to be successful, Santos managing director Kevin Gallagher will tell a major oil and gas conference in Darwin today.

The South East Asian Oil & Gas Conference is part of NT Resources Week, which also includes Mining in the Territory and Building the Territory. ...

Minister for Resources and Northern Australia, Senator Matt Canavan, said the Federal Government was ready to assist the NT capture opportunities.

“This is an enormous opportunity, not just for the Territory, but for our nation. Any major resources development costs billions of dollars and any delays or a concern about a lack of commitment is a risk,” he said.

## **LEIGH CK STINK**

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-04/outrage-as-banned-gas-technology-approved-in-south-australia/10196388>

### **Controversial trial of banned gas technology gets tick of approval in South Australia**

*Sarah Hancock & Camron Slessor, ABC, 04/05/2018*

A controversial trial for a highly polluting mining technology has been given the green light in South Australia, despite being banned in Queensland for what was described as the worst contamination in the state’s history.

Leigh Creek Energy yesterday announced it had received final approval from the state’s Energy and Mining Minister to commence a three-month trial of underground coal gasification (UCG) at the old Leigh Creek mine site in the state’s north. ...

Conservation SA chief executive Craig Wilkins said the state’s peak environment body was “outraged” that the trial had been approved.

“UCG has been banned interstate and right around the world because of the damage it causes,” Mr Wilkins said.

“We simply do not believe the assurances from the company that they have finally worked out how to do it safely.

“The same claims were made by Linc Energy at Chinchilla in Queensland just



**Workers at Leigh Creek.** Photo: Leigh Creek Energy

before they caused such widespread devastation there. Why should we take the risk here?" ...

Leigh Creek Energy executive chairman Justyn Peters said the technology had been proven with success stories across the globe.

He said it was unreasonable to compare the trial with issues Linc Energy had in Queensland because of differences related to the site, its operational practices and the fact it was at a much lower risk. ...

Coal was mined at Leigh Creek between 1888 and 2015.

Adnyamathanha traditional owner Vince Coulthard said it was time for the area to be "left alone".

"We're very concerned because people live in that area and it's time for healing of the site, not any more destruction," Mr Coulthard said.

"It's going to pollute that whole area and poison it — that's our concern."

He hoped Premier Steven Marshall, who is also Aboriginal Affairs Minister, would use a measure in the Aboriginal Heritage Act to stop the trial. ...

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/business/sa-business-journal/leigh-creek-energy-shares-jump-after-key-gas-production-approval-granted-for-site-in-sas-far-north/news-story/178626815080ab5d707bda8360b48c3>

### **Leigh Creek Energy shares jump after key gas production approval granted for site in SA's far North**

*Cameron England, Advertiser, 03/09/2018*

Leigh Creek Energy shares have surged after the company was granted its final key approval to produce gas. ...

<https://smallcaps.com.au/first-syngas-production-imminent-leigh-creek-energy-south-australia/>

### **First syngas production imminent for Leigh Creek Energy in South Australia**

*Danica Cullinane, Smallcaps, 03/09/2018*

Junior gas developer Leigh Creek Energy is on the verge of producing the first synthesis gas (syngas) from its flagship energy project in South Australia after receiving final approval for the pre-commercial demonstration (PCD) stage. ...

Leigh Creek Energy believes the remnant coal resources at Leigh Creek in northern South Australia are technically suitable for ISG, in addition to being close to infrastructure.

According to the company, the location also avoids sensitive features such as aquifers, residents, towns, culturally sensitive land or sites of high environmental value. ...

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-06/leigh-creek-aboriginal-group-bid-to-stop-gas-extraction/10208780>

### **Leigh Creek Aboriginal group seeks to stop coal gas extraction after minister's approval**

*Rebecca Puddy, ABC, 06/09/2018*

An Aboriginal group has launched an 11th-hour bid to stop underground gas extraction at Leigh Creek in South Australia's far north.

The Adnyamathanha people today applied for an injunction in South Australia's Supreme Court to halt plans to trial underground coal gasification at Leigh Creek's former coalfields.

The Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association is arguing that Mining Minister Dan van Holst Pellekaan should not have given final approval for the energy project.

Senior traditional owner Vince Coulthard said the site held important significance to yulu, the Kingfisher

Man, one of the major creation ancestors of the Adnyamathanha people. ...

He asked that the challenge be heard by the Full Court of the Supreme Court.

After being served the court documents late yesterday, Leigh Creek Energy halted trading on the Australian Stock Exchange. ...

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/breaking-news/indigenous-group-bid-to-halt-coal-project/news-story/e46b36b5ebdd1ed8060badd5231671a5>

### **Indigenous group bids to halt coal project**

*Kathryn Bermingham, AAP, Adelaide Now, 06/09/2018*

A South Australian indigenous group says it was not properly consulted on plans for a controversial mining trial and has launched Supreme Court action to halt the project. ...

The traditional owners of the land, the Adnyamathanha people, on Thursday sought an urgent Supreme Court injunction, arguing the necessary statement of environmental objectives was invalid or inappropriate. ...

The case was adjourned until Monday, after lawyers for the minister and Leigh Creek Energy said they were only served with court documents on Wednesday night and needed time to "digest the nature of the challenge". ...

## **NUKE MADNESS**

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/climate/engineers-warn-of-bill-shock-under-green-energy-surge/news-story/89ef58bcb07a13726bb9a014540ce17>

### **Engineers warn of bill shock under green energy surge**

*Adam Ceighton, The Australian, 05/09/2018*

Electricity bills will soar and gas and coal-fired power stations will close if the share of wind and solar generation increases dramatically, engineers have warned after analysing the nation's energy supply. ...

It found bills were likely to soar 84 per cent, or about \$1400 a year, for the typical household, if wind and solar power supplied 55 per cent of the national electricity market.

The analysis by a group of veteran engineers – written and funded by five mechanical, chemical, electrical and nuclear engineers, with decades of experience in the power industry – was sent to premiers, federal cabinet ministers and shadow cabinet late last month.

It contrasted the costs of supplying

electricity in the national electricity market under different mixes of generation ... as well as five other scenarios, including replacing coal-fired or gas generation with nuclear power. ...

Authors include Robert Barr, an electrical engineer and academic at University of Wollongong, and Barry Murphy, former managing director and chairman of Caltex Australia ...

The study recommends ceasing subsidies for renewable energy and ending the national ban on nuclear energy. ...

The new analysis calls for a bipartisan agreement to end the ban on nuclear energy – despite ongoing uranium exports – that has prevailed since 1998. ...

Mr Murphy said, “The South Koreans would jump at the opportunity to help us with building nuclear power stations.” ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/nuclear-offers-an-answer-on-cost-and-emissions/news-story/cf35fe49329e04a6510665e3b132d549>

### **Nuclear offers an answer on cost and emissions**

*Graham Lloyd, The Australian, 05/09/2018*

The standout result from modelling of Australia’s power system carried out by “engineers” is that it is possible to have our cake and eat it too on power prices and emissions – with nuclear. ...

The paper, prepared and circulated to MPs as a public service by what is claimed to be “a small group of professional engineers and scientists experienced in various aspects of electricity and distribution”, is an antidote to the drumbeat that wind, solar and batteries hold the only answer.

The claims and costings no doubt will be challenged, but in it we have a contest of ideas. ...

Nuclear may be emissions-free but it still needs strong champions to break into the renewables club.

[https://reneweconomy.com.au/taylor-says-there-is-too-much-wind-and-solar-in-electricity-grid-45315/?utm\\_source=RE+Daily+Newsletter&utm\\_campaign=8e77745519-EMAIL\\_CAM-PAIGN\\_2018\\_09\\_04\\_11\\_54&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_46a1943223-8e77745519-40461137](https://reneweconomy.com.au/taylor-says-there-is-too-much-wind-and-solar-in-electricity-grid-45315/?utm_source=RE+Daily+Newsletter&utm_campaign=8e77745519-EMAIL_CAM-PAIGN_2018_09_04_11_54&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_46a1943223-8e77745519-40461137)

### **Taylor says there is too much wind and solar in electricity grid**

*Giles Parkinson, RenewEconomy, 05/09/2018*

Crikey. If you thought that the political rhetoric around energy policy could not possibly get any lower, think again. It’s now about the Australian identity, it seems. Jingoism is now a power

source, and if you want to have “fair dinkum” power, it’s got to be coal.

That’s the message under new prime minister Scott Morrison, and the right wing and the coal lobby is running with it hard, if the extraordinary interview between radio broadcaster Alan Jones and his conservative acolyte, the new energy minister Angus Taylor, is anything to go by. ...

And during his interview with Taylor on 2GB on Tuesday, Jones showed he is as wrong about energy as he has ever been, and Taylor was not about to correct him.

Jones still thinks there are 1600 coal-fired power stations being built around the world; he thinks solar still costs \$180/MWh (three times more than it actually does); he thinks that wind and solar are receiving \$3.6 billion in subsidies each year; and he even thinks batteries are “intermittent.”

Each of these claims is complete nonsense, but Taylor wasn’t about to correct him. He either shared his views, or dared not correct him.

Instead, Taylor – the energy minister who insists he is not anti-renewables (his farm has solar and his grandad helped build Snowy Hydro) – told Jones that there is already “too much intermittent power” – wind and solar – in the electricity system. ...

But Jones and Taylor do not have a mortgage on nonsense.

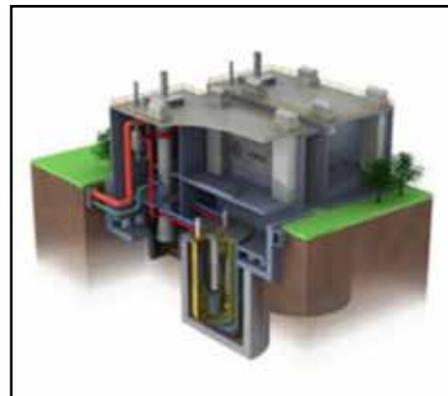
Laughably, a group of “engineers”, including a former boss of oil refiner Caltex, argued that replacing coal with nuclear would reduce emissions at a cost of \$27.50 a tonne, while wind and solar would cost \$365 a tonne. That got a run as the front page lead in The Australian, and a big follow-up by their “environment editor”.

Of course, being retired engineers, they pointed to the best solution being nuclear, somehow imagining it could be built and deliver a system levelled cost of \$93/MWh. They claim that renewables and storage would cost more than four times as much. ...

Finally, an interesting observation. Baseload has no more place in a modern grid than typewriters do in a world of laptops, or fax machines in a world with internet. But why is it that The Australian, and the rest of the conservatoriat, is so obsessed with past technologies? ...

Note: Renewables do not receive subsidies of \$3.6 billion a year – a myth

propagated by Taylor himself, along with the Minerals Council, various other private firms and the Murdoch media. Most renewable projects currently being contracted ascribe a negligible or even zero value on the renewable energy certificates.



**A US\$500 million small modular reactor of the type favoured by nuke-spuiker Jessica Lovering and the Murdoch press.**

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/why-the-focus-on-renewables-when-we-are-so-rich-in-uranium/news-story/606fa86a1543d498ab2258c86ca64b09>

### **Why the focus on renewables when we are so rich in uranium?**

*Jessica Lovering, The Australian, 07/09/2018*

While Australia has been a leader in renewable energy technologies, the country is being left behind in the advanced nuclear revolution gathering pace elsewhere.

Australia’s prohibitions on nuclear technologies are out of touch with novel nuclear designs such as small modular reactors and microreactors – factory-fabricated, sealed reactors usually under 20 megawatts of power, about 2 per cent the size of a conventional nuclear plant. ...

Every year Australia exports more than 400 shipping containers of uranium, enough to generate all of its own electricity with zero emissions. ...

In Australia the pure focus on renewable energy development only through policies such as the renewable energy target could be broadened to include other potentially viable carbon-reducing initiatives such as new nuclear, as well as waste-to-energy and fossil fuels with technology that captures carbon and returns it underground. ...

• *Jessica Lovering is director of energy at US-based research centre The Breakthrough Institute.*

**Editor’s note: The Breakthrough Institute is a US-based pro-nuclear lobby group**

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/foreign-affairs/british-workers-welcome-in-australia-tony-abbott/news-story/7cd26a8ddd824514e4be6f8153650e90>

## Tony Abbott wants end to subsidies for renewable energy, prohibition on nuclear power lifted

*Deborah Cornwall, The Australian, 07/09/2018*

Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott has called for the scrapping of subsidies for renewable energy and an end to the prohibition on nuclear power in Australia.

Speaking at the Spectator Anglo-Australian Forum in Sydney this morning Mr Abbott said subsidising “dirty cheap” but unreliable renewables was distorting the energy industry which still relied primarily on coal fuelled power. ...

Mr Abbott said it was time to lift the ban on nuclear energy. He conceded Australia had held a strong anti-nuke position since 1988, but it was Labor Party policy that did not have the given support from the Liberal Party.

“It shouldn’t be ruled out simply because its nuclear,” he said. ...

## FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/labor-plan-for-gas-export-controls-as-prices-rise-20180902-p501bg.html>

### Labor plan for gas export controls as prices rise

*Fergus Hunter, SMH, 02/09/2018*

Permanent export controls on the gas market, triggered whenever prices go too high, would be imposed by a Labor government in a hardline policy aimed at increasing the domestic energy supply and reducing prices.

Announcing the policy, Opposition Leader Bill Shorten said high gas prices were putting pressure on local manufacturers and jobs and labelled the Coalition government’s own export control trigger “weak and ineffective”. ...

<https://www.afr.com/business/energy/gas/santos-ceos-stark-warning-on-east-coast-gas-price-controls-20180903-h14vpe>

### Santos CEO’s stark warning on east coast gas price controls

*Angela Macdonald-Smith, AFR, 03/09/2018*

Santos chief executive Kevin Gallagher has gone on the attack over federal Labor’s pledge to introduce a domestic gas price trigger for slapping curbs on LNG exports, warning that such controls will only force smaller gas producers out of the market and deter investment in new fields. ...

Macquarie Equities advised clients that AGL’s proposed LNG import terminal may suffer “unintended negative consequences” from the measures because the company may not be able to sanction the project until after the next federal election or until the policy is clarified. It described the \$50 million-\$60 million that AGL has already invested as “at risk”. ...

Both Mr Gallagher and Shell, which owns the QCLNG project in Gladstone, said developing local gas in south-east Australia was the key to reducing prices and repeated calls for state restrictions on onshore gas to be scrapped. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/agl-warns-of-gas-squeeze-in-victoria/news-story/d6857b7190293d964b158de794ac4651>

### AGL warns of gas squeeze in Victoria

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 06/09/2018*

Australia’s largest power generator, AGL Energy, has warned Victoria faces gas shortages in the early 2020s as supplies from Queensland dry up, with the problem to be made worse should Labor introduce a price trigger to limit export volumes.

AGL, which is pushing ahead with plans to start importing liquefied natural gas to Victoria’s Crib Point by 2020-21, acknowledged the price of gas for Australian manufacturers had risen sharply but said imposing new restrictions on the export or import of gas may drive away investment in the sector. ...

The policy threat is seen as potentially casting doubt over AGL’s own import facility due to concerns the project would only be able to bring in gas supplies to Australia at higher international prices. ...

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-06/gas-industry-calls-for-energy-climate-policy-federal-government/10210680>

### Gas industry calls on Federal Government to address energy and climate policy ‘failure’

*Jane Bardon, ABC, 06/09/2018*

Gas companies and associated industries have called on the federal and state governments to quickly get back to the table on negotiating a national energy and climate policy.

They told the Darwin conference if Australia was to take advantage of opportunities for developing new gas and renewables projects, investors needed to know where the goalposts were. ...

Martin Wilkes, a managing partner at

RISC, which does consultancy work for companies including Santos, said “with the technology that’s available I think the best mix that we can hope for at the moment is gas and renewables, but that will change as the technology develops”.

But Mr Wilkes said the Federal Government’s recent pronouncement that it would support construction of more coal-fired power stations was “a dangerous precedent”.

“The idea of building new coal-fired power stations is in my mind a backward step,” he said. ...

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-03/angus-taylor-energy-minister-power-price-solution-curious/10188496>

### The reality is new coal power is not the answer for cheaper electricity bills

*Stephen Long, ABC, 03/09/2018*

The tipping point’s been reached: renewable energy is now a cheaper source of power for Australia’s future electricity needs than coal.

Surprised? That’s understandable, given the plethora of politicians in Canberra who keep saying that coal is the key to cheap electricity and renewables drive up prices. ...

But it’s a fact. The cold, hard numbers show that new renewable energy is supplying cheaper electricity than new coal-fired power plants could and will continue do so.

No less an authority than the Australian Energy Market Operator agrees. ...

At market rates of financing, the lowest cost of electricity from a new coal generator using so-called “high-efficiency, low-emissions” technology would be more than \$150 a megawatt hour, according to Bloomberg New Energy Finance.

In the absence of big government subsidies and underwriting, analysts say a new coal generator would need a price of more than \$80 a megawatt hour for its electricity just to cover the costs of its operation.

Meanwhile, the only way for renewable power prices appears to be down. ...

But if subsidies are his objection, [energy minister Angus] Taylor’s solutions are curious.

He’s advocating the “upgrading of legacy [coal] generators” – something which is highly unlikely to happen without government paying for it or underwriting the investment. ...

<https://www.afr.com/opinion/columnists/barnabys-coal-makes-droughts-worse-20180903-h14vhh>

## Barnaby's coal makes droughts worse

Richard Denniss, AFR, 03/09/2018

It's hard to fight a war when you don't know who your allies or opponents are, and a culture war is no different. Take the Coalition's approach to the drought. By appointing Barnaby Joyce as "Drought Envoy", Scott Morrison has allied himself with the coal industry in a fight against farmers, scientists, economists and environmentalists. Like the latest leadership change, the Coalition's war against water just doesn't make sense. ...

Unfortunately for the Coalition, Barnaby's folksy dismissals don't change the fact that farmers, scientists and environmentalists all think reducing greenhouse gas emissions is central to protecting the long-run prospects of farmers on the world's driest continent. Even the lefties at the Productivity Commission agree. ...

Farmers know that climate change is making their industry more risky and less profitable. And farmers know that they have to pay for the water they use. But in Australia we have a Prime Minister who once waved a lump of coal around in Parliament, an Energy Minister who is proudly indifferent to the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and a Drought Envoy who thinks climate change is a distraction. It's not clear why the Coalition is so determined to ignore farmers, scientists and economists, but it's becoming obvious what happens to governments who don't listen.

• *Richard Denniss is chief economist at The Australia Institute*

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/pm-open-to-royal-commission-into-power-industry-saying-energy-companies-were-as-bad-as-big-banks/news-story/2293ff309d2375a84afca9c34f53f08f>

## PM open to royal commission into power industry, saying energy companies were as bad as big banks

Rachel Baxendale, The Australian, 03/09/2018

Bill Shorten says any royal commission into energy prices must include an analysis of whether privatisation of electricity assets has caused prices to go up.

The Labor leader was responding to comments from Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who this morning said he agreed with his Energy Minister Angus Taylor that the big energy companies are as bad as the big banks and that he is open to a royal commission into the



*New PM Scott Morrison outlined his thoughts on energy policy in an interview with Alan Jones, reported in The Australian and summarised here. It's all about "Fair dinkum power," code for coal.*

power industry. ...

Asked this morning whether he wanted a royal commission, the Prime Minister initially said: "No, not at this point," but went on to say: "I'm open to it though, and I'll look at it." ...

"I have separated the energy policy and the energy portfolio, and the environment portfolio. Angus Taylor has one job: get electricity prices down. He's not there to pursue anything else, and that's what he's doing." ...

Asked whether he would order power company AGL to divest the Liddell coal-fired power plant in the NSW Hunter Valley, which it plans to close, Mr Morrison said if it could be demonstrated that big power companies were going to do the wrong thing by customers in not ensuring power was in the system, he would legislate to "put powers in place". ...

He said he had famously brought a lump of coal into Question time because he saw it as part of the energy mix.

"That's why I brought it in. What I was sick and tired of is people telling me that if you have coal-fired power generation in your energy mix then you're committing some sort of crime, and that's nonsense," Mr Morrison said.

"I mean it remains a key source, and will for a long time, a key source of keeping electricity prices down and keeping the lights on, and I intend for it to stay there."

Mr Morrison said he would "love to see" a high energy, low emissions (HELE) coal plant built in Australia.

"I'd love to see lots of more new power generation built, and I want the market to invest in those things," he said. ...

Mr Morrison said he wanted to see Australia's coal-fired power stations stay open for as long as possible, because they are the "cheapest form of dispatchable power". ...

"Well real power. Fair dinkum power. Reliable. Keeps the lights on. All of that," Mr Morrison said.

"That's what we want to see and Angus (Taylor) and I are working on to ensure that we can have an investment plan that will see investment in all forms of this reliable power out there, fair dinkum power.

"That's what I'm about. I'm about fair dinkum power."

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/overwhelming-economics-favour-accelerating-shift-from-coal-reports-say-20180905-p501w0.html>

## 'Overwhelming' economics favour accelerating shift from coal, reports say

Peter Hannam, SMH, 05/09/2018

Making the transition to a low-carbon economy has the potential to unlock \$US26 trillion (\$36 trillion) in benefits by 2030, while failure to act on climate change will trigger huge costs including a surge in refugees, a report co-authored by Britain's Lord Nicholas Stern has found.

A separate report written partly by Canberra-based researchers argues global coal use has peaked and nations such as Australia must prepare for lower exports of the fuel. Local coal-fired power stations will also likely close earlier than forecast, it said.

The twin reports come as Angus Taylor, the new federal energy minister, this week said Australia had "too much intermittent" power in its grid. ...

In the New Climate Economy report, Lord Stern and other authors found ambitious climate action could generate 65 million new jobs through 2030 as nations moved to cut emissions from energy, land use and other industries.

Some 700,000 premature deaths would also be avoided from lower air pollution compared with business as usual. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/state-politics/shorten-tackles-andrews-over-conventional-gas-exploration/news-story/6fda9b386170487152783ef0066af0a1>

## Shorten tackles Andrews over conventional gas exploration

Joe Kelly, The Australian, 04/08/2018

Bill Shorten has clashed with Victorian Labor Premier Daniel Andrews, urging him to reconsider the state's opposition to conventional gas exploration as he revealed new measures aimed at securing domestic supply.

Despite pressure to overturn its permanent ban on fracking, and its decision to extend a moratorium on conventional onshore gas exploration to mid-2020, the Andrews government has refused to shift its policy.

Ahead of the Victorian election in November, the federal Opposition Leader yesterday took aim at the Andrews gas ban, and singled out restrictions on gas resource development in NSW.

Mr Shorten said Australia had “enough gas in the ground to make sure we can not only look after Aussie jobs but also have a very good export industry”. ...



<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/sep/04/angus-taylor-condemns-us-to-another-round-of-energy-stupidity>

### Angus Taylor condemns us to another round of energy stupidity

*Simon Holmes à Court, Guardian, 04/09/2017*

Just as we begin to imagine life without Tony Abbott undermining every sensible interaction between climate and energy policy, his “energy brain” in the form of the new energy minister, Angus Taylor, is now calling the shots.

Taylor has been fighting against the wind industry since the late 1990s, when developers came knocking, wanting to build a windfarm on his parents’ Monaro Plains property. The Taylor family turned down the opportunity ...

Ever since that first approach, Taylor has been tilting at windmills. ...

For Australia, the chance of real progress is bleak under Team Morrison. It’s now clear that Taylor will continue Josh Frydenberg’s campaign of half truths and politicisation. ...

Taylor has always been quick to claim he’s on board with the climate science. Yet, as Abbott’s protege, he’s chosen to spend his time in politics actively undermining sensible and effective climate and energy policy.

Angus Taylor is not a climate science denier – he’s much more dangerous.

• *Simon Holmes à Court is senior adviser to the Climate and Energy College at Melbourne University*

<https://www.crikey.com.au/2018/09/04/matt-canavan-spins-csiro-report-on-dams/>

### Canavan unleashes flood of hate on avo-munching, anti-dam hipsters

*Bernard Keane, Crikey, 04/09/2018*

What do you do when you’re the Minister for Northern Australia, your government’s landmark “Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility” is known only for its failure to fund any infrastructure, and one of the nation’s pre-eminent research organisations releases reports showing how uneconomic building new infrastructure in remote locations is?

If you’re Matt Canavan, attack inner-city avocado eaters.

Last week, the CSIRO released its Northern Australia Water Resource Assessment, three reports looking at the Mitchell catchment in far north Queensland, the Fitzroy catchment in Western Australia and the Darwin catchment in the Northern Territory. The reports were spun by Canavan and his party leader, paving the way for major new dam investment. ...

Canavan decided to go further, anticipating critics of dam-building. “They will pontificate from the salons of West End about the evils of irrigated agriculture in between mouthfuls of smashed avocado ... they know nothing about farming, even though they still want to eat the best produce all year round.” ...

But you’ll never pick it: the CSIRO reports actually detail how frighteningly uneconomic building dams in northern Australia are. ...

The CSIRO warns of “the systematic tendency of proponents of large infrastructure projects to substantially underestimate development costs” and concludes “even when technically feasible options are found, many of these are unlikely to be profitable at the returns and over time periods expected by many investors. ...

You don’t have to be an avo-munching hipster to find these dams objectionable. You merely have to be able to count.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/opinion/greenies-he-dammed-the-great-north-is-crying-out-for-infrastructure/news-story/23a6cd888347ca4acfdff6f137dd532b>

### Greenies he dammed! the great north is crying out for infrastructure

*Matt Canavan, The Australian, 05/09/2018*

There is a myth that we can’t grow food in our north. Those peddling this are wrong and often have not set foot north of Gympie. ...

The CSIRO has produced a new report outlining the opportunities to harness three northern water catchments: the Mitchell in Queensland, the Darwin in the Northern Territory and the Fitzroy in Western Australia. ...

The defeatist brigade was out in force just hours after the release of the CSIRO’s findings. GetUp, that respected scientific organisation, immediately claimed that dams “wreak havoc on ecosystems”. The Labor Party dismissed the CSIRO’s more than two years of effort as a “thought bubble”.

Labor and the greenies accept the science only when it suits them. The science is telling us that agriculture can work in a tropical climate ...

• *Matt Canavan is Resources and Northern Australia Minister.*

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/santos-warns-against-market-intervention/news-story/eaefd3de83d0765620390d16d0135d4f>

### Santos warns against market intervention

*Perry Williams & Matt Chambers, The Australian, 05/09/2018*

Santos has warned the Liberal and Labor parties they must avoid populist interventions in national energy markets in the lead-up to a federal election, with international investors concerned over the risks posed by new export and price control curbs. ...

Santos operates one of three LNG export ventures in Queensland which combined have attracted investment of more than \$80 billion, but have fallen foul of both major political parties who have accused the projects of exacerbating a domestic gas shortage and hiking prices for manufacturers and large industrial users.

Queensland LNG projects led by Santos, Origin Energy and Shell narrowly avoided export restrictions by the Turnbull administration last year under its Australian Domestic Gas Security Mechanism, after agreeing to provide reasonably priced gas to fill any short-term shortages. ...

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-09-05/santos-gas-federal-government-policy-investor-confidence/10204284>

### Santos boss berates Federal Government for ‘populist’ approach to energy policy

*Jane Bardon, ABC, 05/09/2018*

Australia’s gas industry has used its annual conference in Darwin to launch a scathing attack on the Federal Government.

Santos has accused the Government of unfairly blaming the gas companies for the east coast gas crisis because they send most of their supplies offshore under export contracts. ...

The company's chief executive, Kevin Gallagher, ... warned all political parties against biting the hand that feeds the economy \$40 billion a year in export dollars.

After approving fracking this year, the Territory Government is now unreservedly backing the gas industry.

It has announced the formation of a gas taskforce to help drive and support the industry's development. ...

"The thorough process and ultimate outcome has found broad community acceptance," Chief Minister Michael Gunner told the conference.

The Government's Pepper fracking inquiry found in fact a majority of the community were opposed to fracking.

When asked by the ABC what evidence the Government had that the community's view had changed, Mr Gunner said: "We've proven that we can be trusted."

He said the Government is now estimating the Territory's Beetaloo Basin contains 500 trillion cubic feet of gas — more than double that initially modelled. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/labor-will-force-return-of-controversial-443-million-great-barrier-reef-grant-20180904-p501qe.html>

### **Labor will force return of controversial \$443 million Great Barrier Reef grant**

*Nicole Hasham, SMH, 05/09/2018*

A tiny charity granted \$443 million in Great Barrier Reef funding would be forced to hand the money back if Labor wins office, severely stifling the organization's ability to spend the funds even before the next federal election.

In a letter sent to the foundation's chairman John Schubert, sighted by Fairfax Media, [Labor's environment spokesman Tony Burke] warns that a federal election "can be called at any time".

Labor would force the money's return by utilising a clause in the grant agreement between the foundation and the government.

The clause states that the Department of Environment and Energy can terminate the deal "if there is a material change in Australian government policy that is inconsistent with the contin-

ued operation of this agreement". ...

The foundation's "chairman's panel", which includes executives from heavy polluters AGL, BHP, Shell and Peabody Energy, has been a source of controversy given that climate change is the greatest threat facing the reef.

Peabody Energy has reportedly funded scores of climate denial groups in the United States and praised US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the Paris agreement. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/sep/06/power-retailers-spend-big-on-advertising-and-consumers-pick-up-the-tab>

### **Power retailers spend big on advertising and consumers pick up the tab**

*Richard Denniss, The Guardian, 06/09/2018*

Once upon a time people remembered to buy electricity even though there were no ads to remind them. But thanks to the "efficiency of the market", these days electricity companies spend hundreds of millions of dollars on marketing to remind us to turn on our lights. Needless to say the costs of all this marketing are passed on to you and me in the form of higher electricity bills. That's how efficient markets work.

It's not renewable power that is hurting Australian consumers. It's market power. Like the big banks, the big electricity retailers are making big profits off the back of charging high prices. But rather than admit that "competition policy" in Australia has failed to deliver the benefits, or even the competition that was promised, the Abbott, Turnbull and now Morrison governments are trying to blame renewable energy for the cost of electricity, rather than the failed reform agenda of privatisation and deregulation. ...

• *Richard Denniss is the chief economist for the Australia Institute.*

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/opinion/robert-gottliebsen/andrew-liveris-has-a-gas-plan-to-solve-australias-energy-deadlock/news-story/9aa65bdbb8f1d4defb3f8ae6488d582b>

### **Andrew Liveris has a gas plan to solve Australia's energy deadlock**

*Robert Gottliebsen, Australian, 07/09/2018*

One of our most successful overseas executives, Andrew Liveris, believes with a passion that not only can Australia slash its emissions but it can also reduce power and gas prices sharply while boosting reliability. ...

Liveris has now retired from Dow and taken on a series of new roles. The biggest is his appointment as a special



*Andrew Liveris envisages Australia as a massive gas hub, criss-crossed with pipelines and supporting petro-chemical industries. He would recommend the \$250 billion Saudi Arabia Public Investment Fund bankroll the vision.*

*Photo: Dow Chemical*

adviser to the \$250 billion Saudi Arabia Public Investment Fund. He is also a director of IBM and this week joined the board of Australia's Worley Parsons.

Liveris is one of the few people who have been an adviser to both president Obama (advanced manufacturing) and President Trump (energy). ...

Liveris believes that in time massive solar farms will provide baseload power, but the technology has a lot further to develop.

He also believes that clean coal technology is simply not viable on present technology so if Australia wants to reduce its emissions it must, over the long term, reduce its reliance on coal generation. These two pillars of his plan put him at odds with both the greens and the government.

One of Australia's clear options is nuclear but Liveris says the present community attitude and the problems that have occurred in Japan etc means that nuclear is not a feasible option for Australia at present. ...

The Liveris plan starts with the requirement that New South Wales needs to exploit its gas and Victoria needs to lift its ban on gas exploration and development. ...

But the Liveris plan goes much further. He believes that Australia should link both the West Australian gas fields and the Northern Territory gas fields to the eastern states, probably via Moomba.

## News this week ... from previous page

In that way we would create a massive gas hub. He points out that much of Australia's current pipe network is tied to particular projects and was usually erected using small pipes on the basis that gas would always rank second to coal and therefore would have limited demand. Liveris plans massive pipelines from west to east which would operate for 50 to 100 years. The recent advances in pipe technology make these long-term pipe projects an economic infrastructure investment and he would be happy to recommend them to the Saudi Arabia Public Investment Fund. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/climate/national-energy-guarantee-dead-as-morrison-sets-new-course/news-story/1e0db1f87ba30117317c-dcc24f537a88>

### National energy guarantee 'dead' as Morrison sets new course

*Simon Benson, The Australian, 08/09/2018*

Scott Morrison has declared the national energy guarantee "dead" and will seek endorsement from cabinet to tear up the Paris emissions target legislation when it meets formally for the first time on Monday, as the new Prime Minister moves to stamp his authority over a new policy direction for the government.

"The NEG is dead, long live reliability guarantee, long live default prices, long live backing new power generation," Mr Morrison said in an interview with *The Weekend Australian*. ...

Mr Morrison said the first order of government business, with parliament due to return next week for the first time since the leadership spill, was putting to rest the issue of the Turnbull administration's signature energy policy. The NEG had become emblematic of internal divisions within the Coalition and ultimately provided the trigger for the spill that elevated Mr Morrison into the top job on August 24.

"Next week we will be putting to rest the issue of the legislation ... it won't be proceeding," Mr Morrison said in an interview in Albury on Thursday. ...

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/environment/2018/09/08/climate-inaction-could-affect-trade-deals/15363288006820>

### Climate inaction could affect trade deals

*Mike Secombe, Saturday Paper, 08/09/2018*

It is not always pleasing to see ourselves as others see us. A case in point is a piece run this week by *The New*

*York Times*, by its famously acidic opinion columnist Maureen Dowd, headed "The Trump vibe spreads down under".

Reporting from Sydney, Dowd saw in Australian politics "plenty of echoes with America's mad, ugly Thunderdome" under the presidency of Donald Trump. ...

Dowd was particularly struck by the similarity in a couple of pronouncements by our new prime minister, Scott Morrison, and President Trump about coal.

"Morrison last year brought a lump of coal to the House of Representatives and stroked it while he complained about "coal-o-phobia" on the left," she told her readers. This reminded her of Trump's declaration at a rally in West Virginia a few weeks ago: "We love beautiful, clean West Virginia coal," the United States president said. ...

Dowd went on to note that it was the attempt by Malcolm Turnbull "to offer a modest policy on reducing emissions" that led to his removal from the prime ministership ...

Within days Scott Morrison abandoned all pretence of a climate policy. Splitting the environment and energy portfolio in two, he gave the energy part of it to a man with a long history of opposition to renewables, Angus Taylor, who promptly declared he had no interest in climate policy. ...

The environment ministry was given to a former mining industry lawyer from Kalgoorlie, Melissa Price, whose parliamentary record on environmental matters is most notable for her enthusiasm about using the poison known as 1080 ... to kill feral pests. That, and her steadfast refusal to acknowledge the seriousness of the threat posed by climate change. ...

Australia, along with the US, is very much an outlier on the subject of climate change, a reality driven home

by a study published in July in the respected, peer-reviewed scientific journal *Nature Climate Change*, which surveyed attitudes in 25 countries.

The study examined the correlation between climate change scepticism and other indicators of conservative belief across 25 countries. The US was the standout but Australia ran second – both were way ahead of other countries.

What the survey of more than 5000 people showed is "there is nothing inherent in conservatism that makes you reject the science of climate change," says Matthew Hornsey, professor of social psychology at the University of Queensland and one of the authors of the *Nature* article.

"It is not part of the package of what you are supposed to believe to be conservative in most countries. It is not part of the suite of things expected of a conservative." ...

Yet the Morrison government appears intent on running a scare campaign around climate policy and energy costs for purely domestic political ends. Speaking to ABC Radio on Thursday morning, Energy Minister Taylor even repeated the old furphy about the South Australia blackout two years ago, as a warning against over-reliance on renewables, although it has been conclusively established that its cause was a storm that blew down the power lines.

He did not mention that South Australian electricity prices have fallen faster than those in any other state in the national electricity market over the past decade – albeit from a higher base – or that over the past couple of unusually windy months, wholesale power prices have been lowest in that state. ...

**FFB**

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



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



**SIGN UP for your FREE subscription**  
Past issues available to download

**SAVING THE LAND, AIR AND WATER  
FOR THE KIDDIES**

[www.knitting-nannas.com](http://www.knitting-nannas.com)

