



# Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

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

FFB 2:7 • 18 JANUARY 2019

## Incident report shows fracking industry riddled by miscalculations, human errors

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

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

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

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

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

"These details that have only just come to light as part of the WA Fracking

Frack site spill. Photo: Lock the Gate WA



Inquiry show an industry riddled by mistakes, miscalculations and human error," Ms Hammond said.

### Litany of spills and incidents

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

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

"It is also of great concern that the fracking inquiry's report is the first

time that this data has been made available to the public."

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

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

"How can this industry be effectively policed? As these statistics show fracking mistakes can, and frequently do, happen."

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• P2: Heatwaves to push up Adelaide death rate

• P3: Ozone success – why treaties matter

• P4: Cashing in on the US fracking boom

## Knitting Nannas in action for 2019

*LEFT: Midcoast Knitting Nannas made a colourful appearance with a knit-in in Wharf Street, Forster, on January 16.*

*BELOW LEFT: Adelaide Knitting Nanna, Pinkie, outside the Santos HQ on Thursday.*

*BELOW: Lismore Knitting Nannas drew attention to the current heat-wave and reminded people: YOUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU to fight climate change and move on from fossil fuels, on Thursday, January 17.*

*You never know where the Knitting Nannas will turn up next!*

**FFB**



# Extreme heat predicted to devastate Adelaide

*Adelaide could experience nearly three times as many extreme heat days over 35 degrees by 2090, as well as 600% more days over 40 degrees, unless comprehensive action is undertaken to tackle global warming, according to new analysis from The Australia Institute's HeatWatch initiative.*

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

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

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

### Adelaide has highest heatwave death rate

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

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

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

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

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

"Children are especially vulnerable to extreme heat because they're more susceptible to heat stress and dehydration. If we're going to protect the youngest and most vulnerable among us, the time to tackle dangerous global warming is now."

# UN: Healing ozone layer shows why environmental treaties matter

By Lorraine Chow, EcoWatch

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

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

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

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

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

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



*A view of Earth's atmosphere from space. Photo: NASA, public domain*

“That will be for our grandchildren to do.”

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

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

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

### Inspiration for climate action

Still, the new report is “an inspiration for more ambitious climate action to halt a catastrophic rise in world temperatures,” the UN said in a press release of the new report, adding the findings “provide a ray of hope”

less than a month after the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its dire report urging drastic action to stave off catastrophic climate change.

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

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



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# Petrochemical plants cash in on US fracking boom

From the Environmental Integrity Project

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

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

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

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

“Hurricane season is a good time to think about the impact these big greenhouse gas emitters will have on global warming,” said Eric Schaeffer, director of the Environmental Integrity

**Projects approved 2016-2018 could produce as much greenhouse gas as 11 coal-fired power plants; total rises 60% since 2012**

Project. “We had better start thinking about whether all this oil and gas infrastructure is strong enough and safe enough to withstand the severe storms that are sure to follow.”

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

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

## Humanity adding to weather extremes

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

• Continued p5

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

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

Petrochemical Plant Project	County or Parrish	Approved Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Tons)
Sasol North America, Inc. Lake Charles Chemical Complex Cracker Project	Calcasieu Parrish, LA	10,418,839
Sabine Pass LNG Terminal	Cameron Parrish, LA	10,157,556
Driftwood LNG LLC – LNG Facility	Calcasieu Parrish, LA	9,513,442
Cameron LNG – Cameron LNG Liquefaction	Cameron Parrish, LA	9,029,617
Lake Charles Methanol LLC – Gasification Facility	Calcasieu Parrish, LA	6,014,977
Corpus Christi Liquefaction LNG Terminal	San Patricio County, TX	5,813,445
Golden Pass Products LLC LNG Facility	Jefferson County, TX	4,940,072
CF Industries Nitrogen LLC Donaldsonville Nitrogen Complex	Ascension Parrish, LA	4,848,688
Port Arthur LNG, LLC – LNG Plant and Export Terminal	Jefferson County, TX	4,659,930
Trunkline LNG Export LLC Lake Charles Liquefaction Export Terminal	Calcasieu Parrish, LA	4,513,540

# US: Cheap oil and gas unleashed



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

## • Continued from p4

because so much of their product or raw materials is shipped in and out of nearby harbours. But global warming puts that infrastructure at risk, and the consequences can be devastating.

“The Clean Air Act requires petrochemical facilities and other industrial sources to design and follow risk management plans to reduce the risk of industrial accidents,” said Schaeffer, former Director of Civil Enforcement at EPA.

## Applications rubber stamped

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

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

2.2 million tons of which were approved in September 2017.

## Plastic resins proliferate

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

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

• *The Environmental Integrity Project is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that empowers communities and protects public health and the environment by investigating polluters, holding them accountable under the law, and strengthening public policy.*

See [www.environmentalintegrity.org](http://www.environmentalintegrity.org)

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## TAI on Darling River fish kill: Long-term mismanagement

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



ENVIRONMENTAL  
INTEGRITY PROJECT

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

David Rowe is on holiday. FFB likes his take on Scott Morrison's rescue of climate denier Craig Kelly from a pre-selection challenge late last year. Kelly had made a point of appearing in a Menzies-portrait T-shirt prior to the challenge, in an effort to appeal to the Libs' mythical far-right, coal-crazy 'base'. Happy holidays, David!

## Inside the news

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Fossils want to make coal cool again

An FFB reader was gobsmacked to discover an American group dedicated to burning more coal!

Here is their supporting manifesto:

"Electricity is life. Coal is electricity.

"Burn More Coal (BMC) will buy and own stock in publicly traded utilities. BMC will be an activist shareholder to persuade electric utilities that burning more coal is best for their shareholders, ratepayers and the environment. BMC intends to Make Coal Cool Again."

BMC is run by former Peabody exec Fred Palmer and Trump transition team member Steve Milloy.

Both Palmer and Milloy are seasoned climate denialists and are profiled in Desmog Blog's useful Global Warming Disinformation Database at [desmogblog.com](http://desmogblog.com).

Palmer is a member of the National Coal Council where he is chairman of the New Markets For Coal Subcommittee, Coal Policy Committee.

Milloy is publisher of JunkScience.com. He is the author of *Scare Pollution: Why and How to Fix the EPA*, and *Green Hell: How Environmentalists Plan to Control Your Life and What You Can Do to Stop Them*.



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# In the news this week

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

## THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/business/trendy-fashion-brands-get-up-to-protest-adani/news-story/2245e51786765e77edef2df33810e4be>

### Trendy fashion brands Get Up to protest Adani

Michael Wray, *Courier-Mail*, 13/01/2019

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

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

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



Frontline Action on Coal supporters locked the gates at the ETS Group work site in Townsville (pictured) and other locations. Photo: FLAC

<https://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/news/queensland/federal-plan-to-take-over-adani-rail-line-abandoned/news-story/4fc7669c2c3d4d2b742770971e6c1ab57csp=334ac867348e8406d03c930dc8a5d5f9>

### Federal plan to take over Adani rail line abandoned

Steven Scott, *Courier-Mail*, 15/01/2019

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

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

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

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

<https://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/story/5850825/business-targeted-over-incorrect-ties-to-carmichael-mine/?cs=4733>

### Anti-Adani protesters target tree clearing business

Steven Trask, *Qld Country Life*, 15/01/2019

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

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

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

Formerly known as Eastern Tree Services, ETS said it was doing fire hazard work for Adani subsidiary Abbott Point Operations, north of Bowen.

However, the company said this work was nothing like the tree clearing that FLAC had described. ...

Frontline Action on Coal said ETS had accepted a contract to clear the rail corridor from Adani's proposed Carmichael mine to link in with existing lines travelling to Abbott Point.

In protest, the FLAC group said it had locked staff out of five ETS work sites

and blocked trucks at a further two sites. ...

[https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/jan/17/adani-contractor-wont-work-on-carmichael-project-after-protesters-target-worksites?fbclid=IwAR0U3-vemGXU-7jgg53aho0Sr36v7-Vd4-Qhr8Xt4GfXguFo\\_tdzcpS3Guo](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/jan/17/adani-contractor-wont-work-on-carmichael-project-after-protesters-target-worksites?fbclid=IwAR0U3-vemGXU-7jgg53aho0Sr36v7-Vd4-Qhr8Xt4GfXguFo_tdzcpS3Guo)

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

Ben Smee, *The Guardian*, 17/01/2019

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

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

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

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

## STOP WATER MINING THE NEXT RESOURCES BATTLE



Galilee Blockade thanked the company for upholding their value to “make communities safer” and not take on contracts “if potential client work compromises this”. ...

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

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

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/adani-broke-no-law-in-drilling-carmichael-bores/news-story/66ea2f44beb5d9a5053f9808145de24ce>

### **Adani ‘broke no law’ in drilling Carmichael bores**

*Rosie Lewis, The Australian, 17/01/2019*

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

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

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

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

“The documents read like another big failure by this government when it comes to adequately protecting our environment. After just one day of site inspections, the department simply asked Adani whether they’d broken

the rules or not and accepted their reply when they said no,” Senator Waters said. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/adani-mine-could-save-us-from-decline-say-townsville-residents/news-story/69a33d4dc73db84b9055de5669c4b4ea>

### **Adani mine ‘could save us from decline’, say Townsville residents**

*Jared Owens, The Australian, 17/01/2019*

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

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

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

<https://www.echo.net.au/2019/01/coal-transport-halted-protest-adani/>

### **Coal transport halted in protest against Adani**

*Echonet Daily, 17/01/2019*

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

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

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

## **COAL ROCKS ON**

<https://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/story/5850558/mine-accommodation-approved-at-alpha/>

### **Alpha mine support plan gets Barcaldine council approval**

*Sally Cripps, Qld Country Life, 14/01/2019*

The Barcaldine Regional Council has approved development applications at Alpha that, if proceeded with, could

see 1000 extra people in the community. ...

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

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

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

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-15/queensland-record-coal-exports/10715628>

### **Queensland coal exports hit record high, Greens claim jobs numbers don’t stack up**

*Tim Swanston & Talissa Siganto, ABC, 15/01/2019*

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

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

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

<https://www.theage.com.au/business/companies/pretty-disturbing-agl-pulls-toxic-waste-product-off-the-market-20190117-p50s1u.html>

### **‘Pretty disturbing’: AGL pulls toxic waste product off the market**

*Carrie Fellner, The Age, 18/01/2019*

The NSW environment watchdog has launched an investigation into revelations a coal waste product sold by AGL to “various markets” has tested positive for elevated levels of toxic substances including chromium, cadmium and copper.

It comes as environmentalists and unions expressed “alarm” at the energy giant’s announcement on Thursday that it would indefinitely suspend sales of the coal ash from its Bayswater and Liddell power stations in the Hunter Valley as a precaution. ...

Bronya Lipski, a lawyer with Environmental Justice Australia, said the public had reason to be concerned. ...

“We really don’t know where [the ash] has gone and what that means from a public health perspective. It raises some pretty significant questions around the process and the EPA’s role.” ...

## GAS, GAS, GAS

<https://thewest.com.au/business/energy/environment-pays-big-price-for-tricky-gorgon-start-up-ng-b881067449z>

### Environment pays big price for tricky Gorgon start-up

*Peter Milne, West Australian, 09/01/2019*

The problematic start-up of the Gorgon LNG project proved costly to the environment as burning of excess gas produced more than 1.5 million tonnes of greenhouse gases a year for the first 16 months of operation.

Disposing of Gorgon’s excess gas produced greenhouse gases at a rate greater than alumina production from Alcoa’s Wagerup refinery.

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

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

Gorgon produced 7.72 million tonnes

of greenhouse gases in the 12 months to June 2017.

This is more than the 6.1 million tonnes a year predicted for normal operation despite all Gorgon’s three trains operating for just the last three months of the period.

The excess is likely because of a combination of the high level of flaring and Chevron’s failure to start injecting carbon dioxide underground on schedule.

<https://www.chinchillanews.com.au/news/tariff-cuts-no-benefit-without-more-water/3617366/>

### Tariff cuts no benefit without more water

*Kate McCormack, Chinchilla News, 09/01/*

The new Trans Pacific Partnership and the China-Australia Free Trade Agreement could provide Western Downs farmers with a much needed leg-up, but only if the government plays its cards right.

Member for Maranoa and Minister for Agriculture and Water, David Littleproud, announced tariffs on Australian farm produce going into China would be largely eliminated on January 1. ...

Basin Sustainability Alliance chair, Lee McNicholl, agrees the opportunity is there but not with the limited amount of new underground water available to producers.

“There’s no more water for increased production. The mining sector has unlimited take of the artesian water in the region, and there’s only enough water for farmers to access a further two per cent above existing allocations,” Mr McNicholl said.

The agricultural sector currently accesses 40,000 megalitres of GAB water, with an increase water allowance of two percent equating to 840 megalitres.

Mr McNicholl is convinced this won’t be enough water to support the increased demands of the international market and could ultimately be setting local producers up for inevitable failure. ...

[https://thewest.com.au/business/energy/secret-docs-reveal-deadly-blast-risk-at-63b-lng-plant-ng-b881069411z?utm\\_campaign=share-icons&utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=social&tid=1547178528514&fbclid=IwAR0X32XXTMcwzxcdFD3800RrJ9e5XoySiofpQkccJotVY03bVu9kiaeq31E](https://thewest.com.au/business/energy/secret-docs-reveal-deadly-blast-risk-at-63b-lng-plant-ng-b881069411z?utm_campaign=share-icons&utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&tid=1547178528514&fbclid=IwAR0X32XXTMcwzxcdFD3800RrJ9e5XoySiofpQkccJotVY03bVu9kiaeq31E)

### Damning secret documents reveal deadly gas blast risk to WA workers at Inpex’s \$63b LNG project off Kimberley coast

*Peter Milne, West Australian, 11/01/2019*

WA workers on a Japanese LNG project off the Kimberley coast are in danger because shoddy electrical work could cause a deadly gas explosion, according to damning internal company documents.

With the hazardous cyclone season imminent, the \$63 billion Ichthys LNG project is besieged by electrical faults that could ignite any gas that escapes.

*The West Australian* has obtained audits of the Ichthys Explorer platform and nearby Ichthys Venturer oil production vessel that reveal more than half the electrical equipment in hazardous areas did not pass independent safety checks. ...

The platform audit said the work planned to fix the problems “do not, in their current form reduce the risk of a major accident event from the ignition of flammable gases by electrical equipment to as low as reasonably practical”.

A major accident event is industry parlance for an incident that could kill many people.

The oil vessel audit said the electrical equipment “introduced an unsatisfactory level of risk that is outside the tolerable levels acceptable at other comparable major hazard facilities”. ...

The 200-bed Ichthys Explorer platform is a 120,000-tonne floating giant moored to the seabed 250m below with 25,000 tonnes of chain. ...

The audit report said the number of devices to be fixed on the platform was unprecedented in the Australian LNG industry and concluded that the inspections in the shipyard were flawed. ...

*Chevron’s Gorgon LNG plant, WA. Photo: Chevron*





*Ichthys Ventura oil production vessel. Photo: Vesselfinder.com*

<https://thewest.com.au/business/regulator-probe-into-shoddy-ichthys-lng-work-ng-b881071081z>

### Regulator probe into shoddy Ichthys LNG work

*Peter Milne, West Australian, 12/01/2019*

Audits revealing potentially fatal shoddy electrical work on gas facilities off WA are now in the hands of the offshore safety regulator after The West Australian reported their existence yesterday.

The regulator NOPSEMA yesterday requested the reports from Ichthys LNG project operator Inpex.

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

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

<https://www.afr.com/business/energy/gas/gas-power-crunch-fuels-concerns-on-supply-security-20190109-h19vj1>

### Gas power crunch fuels concerns on supply security

*Angela Macdonald-Smith, AFR, 13/01/2018*

A dramatic fall in the use of gas in power generation has fuelled fears that some older plants will be forced to close despite the increasing need for gas to prevent blackouts as wind and solar generation surges.

New evidence has emerged of the speed of the decline in gas power generation across the National Electricity Market last year, with several plants seeing a slump of 80 per cent or more in use in the September quarter com-

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

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

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/36b-plan-ready-to-cook-with-gas/news-story/936879ea83173823f24f5c92f8bebc0d>

### \$3.6b plan ready to cook with gas

*Edward Boyd, Daily Telegraph, 14/01/2019*

The Narrabri gas project has increased current capacity by more than 30 per cent to power 23,000 households in the state's northwest.

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

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

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

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

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/companies/santos-fumes-over-plans-for-lng-import-terminals/news-story/1b971089840ed5a5e02f40052b78bf51?csp=4909acd4cd1051e771dd7fbc54d80c7>

### Santos fumes over plans for LNG import terminals

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 14/01/2019*

One of Australia's largest gas producers, Santos, says plans for the nation to import LNG will trigger a price hike and supply squeeze, ensuring foreign operators “have a gun to the head” of local manufacturers.

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

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/search-for-oil-and-gas-deposits-approved-by-nopsema/news-story/cee5f084160106f68bd639afdd43202>

### Search for oil and gas deposits approved by NOPSEMA

*Jade Gailberger, The Advertiser, 14/01/2019*

Oil and gas deposits in the Great Australian Bight will be explored from September, after the federal regulator approved a bid.

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

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

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

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

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

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-15/great-australian-bight-seismic-testing-gets-green-light/10716252>

### Great Australian Bight seismic testing gets green light from regulator

*Casey Briggs, ABC, 15/01/2019*

Oil and gas testing is set to take place in the Great Australian Bight this year, after the national petroleum regulator

granted permission to exploration company PGS.

Key points:

An exploration company has been given permission to perform testing in a 30,100-square-kilometre area;

The tuna industry is questioning if seismic testing will go ahead;

The Greens fear drilling in the Bight will be the next step.

<https://thewest.com.au/business/energy/west-east-gas-pipe-dream-fails-to-add-up-ng-b881075919z>

### West-east gas pipe dream fails to add up

*Peter Milne, West Australian, 17/01/2019*

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

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

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

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

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

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/mixed-views-on-eastwest-pipeline/news-story/205218d580d011f466f5726ccc14bead?csp=815f21ce5ee5231510f09a4ec4d1de2c>

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

*Paul Garvey, The Australian, 18/01/2019*

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

Former West Australian premier Colin Barnett, who publicly pushed for the development of a pipeline from WA as a solution to the east coast gas

supply crisis, said he had not changed his view that the pipeline could be a "silver bullet" for the nation's energy issues. ...

"It is an absolutely doable project," he told *The Australian*.

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

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/national/paul-tyrell-a-man-with-a-mission-for-the-nt-as-territory-gassed-up-and-ready-to-go/news-story/ca1e88119ed57efc5ccb6572121fe5da?csp=00f03ecf9208de52f17c9edbb6d19561>

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

*Gary Shipway, NT News, 17/01/2019*

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

It's a mammoth task with five key points ...

1. Get more LNG in Darwin and expand Darwin's LNG Export Hub.
2. Grow the gas supply and service industry.
3. Establish a gas manufacturing industry.
4. Grow research, innovation and training capacity.
5. Contribute to national energy security on the East Coast. ...

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

## LEIGH CK STINK

[http://www.morningstar.co.uk/uk/news/AN\\_1547476858545386500/altona-energy-shares-drop-as-resolutions-to-remove-directors-fail.aspx](http://www.morningstar.co.uk/uk/news/AN_1547476858545386500/altona-energy-shares-drop-as-resolutions-to-remove-directors-fail.aspx)

### Altona Energy shares drop as resolutions to remove directors fail

*Anna Farley, Alliance News, 14/01/2019*

Altona Energy PLC on Monday said the resolutions to remove Zhang Qinfu and Ma Chi as directors were not passed. ...

A representative of Qinfu gave a statement at the general meeting and said the company's focus should be on "coal mining and underground coal gasification".

Qinfu's representative said the company's initial focus should be on investigating the feasibility of product extraction from its Australian coal resources.

"We have communicated with the South Australian government; we have visited the pilot plant of Linc Energy in Brisbane to investigate its technology; and we have invited Chinese experts to South Australia to do an on-site investigation," the representative said. ...

<https://smallcaps.com.au/leigh-creek-energy-lease-syngas-pilot-plant-south-african-firm/>

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

*Lauren Barrett, Small Caps, 16/01/2019*

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

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

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

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

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

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

The company purchased massive coal

## News this week ... from previous page

tenements from BHP Billion in 2012 which are ideally suited for UCG.

African Carbon Energy will use Leigh Creek Energy's equipment and expertise to save it time and money when demonstrating Theunissen's potential for power generation. ...

### FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-16/banks-increase-exposure-to-fossil-fuels/10716828>

#### Banks increasing exposure to fossil fuels despite promises to fight climate change: report

Nassim Khadem, ABC, 16/01/2019

Australia's major banks have been getting back into fossil fuels over the past year – casting doubt on their seriousness in tackling climate change through their investments – according to environmental campaign group Market Forces.

Key points:

Westpac's coal mining exposure jumped 140%, ANZ's 27%, while NAB's was relatively steady and CBA's fell 7%;

The banks said these exposures fluctuate during the year and many increases have been due to diversified companies selling off coal mines;

All four major banks reduced their exposure to coal-fired power generation.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jan/15/immediate-fossil-fuel-phaseout-could-arrest-climate-change-study>

#### Immediate fossil fuel phaseout could arrest climate change – study

Damian Carrington, *The Guardian*, 16/01/2019

Climate change could be kept in check if a phaseout of all fossil fuel infrastructure were to begin immediately, according to research.

It shows that meeting the internationally agreed aspiration of keeping global warming to less than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels is still possible. The scientists say it is therefore the choices being made by global society, not physics, which is the obstacle to meeting the goal.

The study found that if all fossil fuel infrastructure – power plants, factories, vehicles, ships and planes – from now on are replaced by zero-carbon alternatives at the end of their useful lives, there is a 64% chance of staying under 1.5C. ...

Christopher Smith, of the University of Leeds, who led the research, said: "It's good news from a geophysical point of view. But on the other side of the coin, the [immediate fossil fuel phaseout] is really at the limit of what we could we possibly do. We are basically saying we can't build anything now that emits fossil fuels."

Nicholas Stern, of the London School of Economics, who was not part of the research team, said: "We are rapidly

approaching the end of the age of fossil fuels. This study confirms that all new energy infrastructure must be sustainable from now on if we are to avoid locking in commitments to emissions that would lead to the world exceeding the goals of the Paris agreement." ...

<https://www.hot91.com.au/news/local-news/90265-noosa-mining-exploration-permit-not-renewed>

#### Noosa mining exploration permit not renewed

Hot 91.1, 15/01/2019

Noosa Council has welcomed the State Government's decision not to renew a mining exploration permit that encroaches on the northern part of Noosa Shire.

Mayor Tony Wellington praised the hinterland community's efforts, particularly the Cooran Earth Rights group, for its campaign opposing mining exploration in the region.

"Cooran Earth Rights are to be heartily congratulated for raising public awareness of the issue, and also for encouraging we politicians to take action," the Mayor said.

"I would also like to acknowledge Member for Noosa Sandy Bolton's efforts within the State Government."

Last year Council unanimously adopted a position opposing coal and coal seam gas exploration and mining in the Shire. ...

FFB



#### A short educational film on the shale gas rush in the Northern Territory

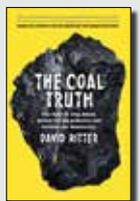
Featuring Eddie Mason and Heleana Gulwa from Protect Arnhem Land, Gadrian Hoosan, Nancy McDinny and Asman Rory from Borroloola in the South West Gulf of Carpentaria, Daniel and Shannon Tapp from Big River Station in the Roper and Marjorie Braedon from Wattarka Kings Canyon.

Produced by Lauren Mellor and Boudicca Cerese edited by Cloudcatcher Media for Lock the Gate Alliance, 2015.

<https://vimeo.com/122897319/description>

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

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



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



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