



# 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 2:25 • 31 MAY 2019

## Black-throated finch sacrificed for coal

By Eve Sinton

*After months of belligerent bullying from Adani Australia CEO, Lucas Dow, the Queensland government has caved in.*

The state's Coordinator General, Barry Broe, has ticked off a deeply flawed conservation plan for the endangered black-throated finch, whose last core habitat is on the proposed Carmichael Mine site.

Only about 1,000 of the birds remain in the wild, but a requirement that Adani count them before commencing work has been dropped. Adani's plan for the birds is to hope they move to adjoining land which is the site of another mine planned by Clive Palmer.

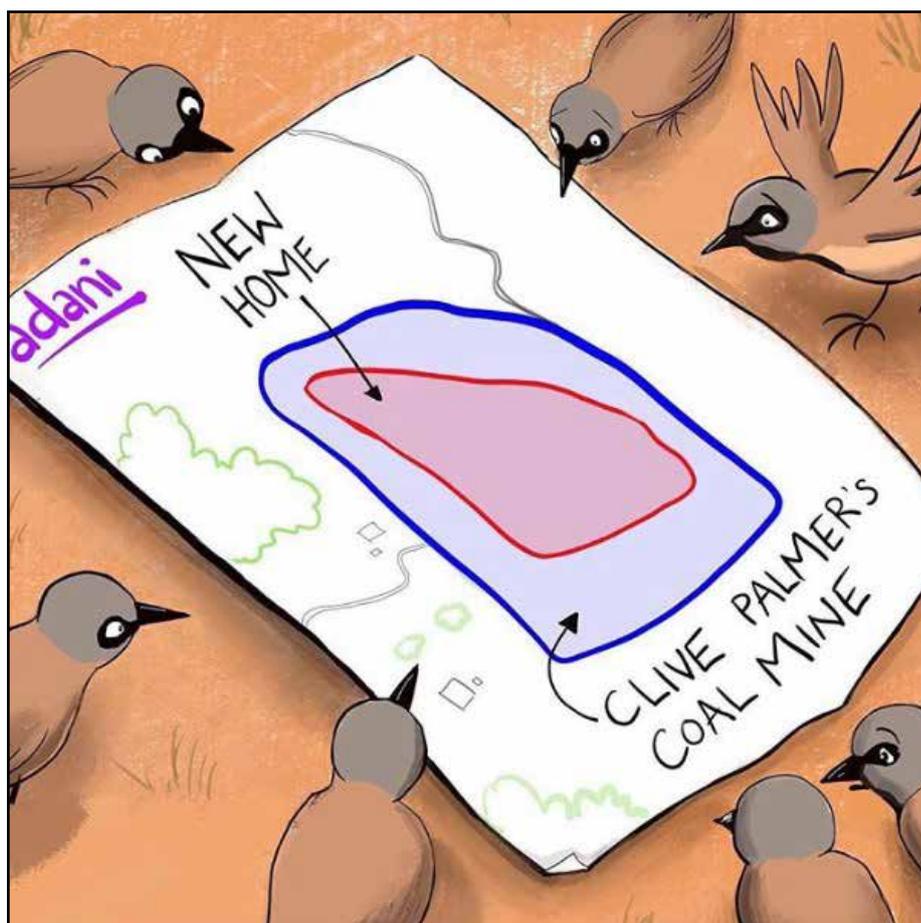
The plan is regarded by experts as unlikely to save the finch, prompting Murdoch's *Daily Telegraph* to label it a 'do-nothing bludger bird'.

Adani CEO Lucas Dow, speaking at a media conference after the announcement, said the company had spent over a million dollars studying the bird and two years working with the government to get its conservation plan passed.

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) said the approval of Adani's finch plan was scientifically dubious, the result of corporate bullying and could lead to the finch's extinction.

"Adani's proposed Galilee Basin coal mine would devastate critical habitat for this endangered bird," said ACF campaigner Christian Slattery.

"The Black-throated finch has already lost 88 per cent of its historical range and recent analysis shows six of the coal mines planned for the Galilee Basin would completely clear nearly



*Adani's plan for the endangered black-throated finch is to hope the birds move next door, to a site which Clive Palmer plans to mine. Cartoonist: Unknown*

35,000 hectares of the finch's best remaining habitat.

"Politicians should stand up to corporate bullying, not roll over and roll out the red carpet," Slattery said.

The Coordinator General must now announce the outcome of Adani's biggest remaining hurdle, a groundwater management plan, within two weeks. Despite aspects of the water plan being

considered inadequate by the CSIRO and other bodies, political pressure is likely to see it ticked off too.

Adani hopes to start work on the mine within weeks.

However, while Adani celebrates its planning victory, a royalty agreement and various permits remain outstanding along with the results of two court cases.

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• P2: Santos imitates Adani's bullying tactics

• P3: Qld govt: More Linc zone restrictions

• P4: Origin's NT frack plan slammed

# Santos imitates Adani's bullying tactics

*Santos has been condemned for attempting to bully the NSW Government into approving its deeply unpopular Narrabri coal seam gas venture.*

Company chief executive Kevin Gallagher has sought to put pressure on the NSW Government to introduce timelines surrounding the project via the media, in the same way Adani has bullied the Queensland Government.

In recent days, Minister for Resources, Matt Canavan, put pressure on the NSW government to approve the Narrabri project while addressing gas lobby group APPEA's annual conference in Brisbane.

But local people say delays in the assessment and decision for the gasfield are a result of Santos' own repeated failure to meet NSW's standards for data collection and assessment.

## Santos refuses to supply information

Recently, the company refused to supply critical information about the Narrabri project after requests from the Narrabri Council and State Government.

The company also flat out refused a Rural Fire Service request that it not flare gas wells during extreme and catastrophic fire danger conditions.

Local beef farmer Margaret Fleck said the sooner the project was rejected, the better for the farming communities of North West NSW.

"It seems to us that Santos is trying to avoid being frank about the scale, severity and duration of the damage this gasfield will inflict on important groundwater sources. We've faced nearly a decade of uncertainty as a result of Santos' timetable and the company's failure to conduct the assessment to the standard required is making more delays," she said.

Fleck pointed to polling conducted late last year, that revealed only 28 per cent of Narrabri locals supported the project, 52 per cent were opposed, and 20 per cent were unsure.

"Santos is ignoring requests by the NSW Government and Narrabri Council for data, analysis and commitments to allow them to finalise assessment of the Narrabri CSG gasfield," she said.

"Santos can 'plead' for approval all it likes, but in NSW, we have long-stand-

*The Santos GLNG plant on Curtis Island is blamed for Australia's gas price crisis.  
Photo: Santos*



ing environmental laws and standards that the public want to see upheld. Santos could start by telling us what it plans to do with hundreds of thousands of tonnes of toxic CSG salt waste that would be generated from the project."

Ms Fleck said the project would also do nothing to reduce gas prices in NSW.

"Coal seam gas is expensive to produce and Santos' risky and damaging coal seam gas ventures in Queensland have left lasting economic damage already in NSW," she said.

Opening more Australian farmland to gasfields and fracking is a dangerous, short-sighted, and counter-productive approach to reducing domestic energy costs, according to Lock the Gate Alliance.

Responding to comments made by export-driven big gas companies during the APPEA conference yesterday, LTGA spokesperson Naomi Hogan said Australians had been paying exorbitant, inflated prices for gas ever since the industry was linked to international markets.

"Gas exporting companies are sucking up a lion's share of Australian gas and charging Australian gas users through the nose," she said.

## High-cost, high-risk industry

"Opening up more farming land to expensive fracking and coal seam gas will only keep gas prices high for consumers. It's a high-cost, high-risk industry that has caused economic upheaval in eastern Australia.

"Instead of forcing farmers and regional communities to cop polluting gasfields, government ministers like Matt Canavan should be helping businesses innovate to get off expensive gas in order to save money and create new jobs.

"Onshore unconventional gas is expensive low-yield gas. It will cost consumers and businesses more, cost jobs and put Australian waterways and aquifers at risk.

## Santos was architect of gas crisis

"Santos was the architect of Australia's gas price crisis and drive up the cost of gas for everyone by linking domestic production to international markets via the export terminals at Gladstone.

"Australian East Coast gas prices have tripled since the three major gas export terminals came online in Gladstone with unrestricted gas exports."

Ms Hogan said the government would have a fight on its hands if it tried to steamroll over the top of Australian farmers who had clearly rejected the unconventional gas industry.

"State gas regulations are in place because farmers and rural communities across the country have been forced to stand up and protect their livelihoods, water and the food they produce for us all," she said.

"The Morrison Government should be cracking down on the big companies, which are ripping off domestic customers by funnelling our gas overseas."

# Qld govt puts further restrictions on Linc contamination zone

*Farming communities in designated priority agricultural areas near Chinchilla fear the Queensland Government has knowingly put them at risk of water and land contamination, with plans for coal seam gas wells to be drilled at the former Linc Energy site.*

Arrow Energy plans to drill CSG wells across 2,500 km<sup>2</sup> of land in the Western Downs, including on two new petroleum licences granted this year that sit above and near the former Linc underground coal gasification site.

One of the environmental authorities granted to Arrow prohibits CSG drilling within 10km of the Linc site due to the risk of mobilising the “existing contamination” but the second authority does not, and instead only requires groundwater monitoring.

Worryingly, a number of CSG wells have already been drilled by other gas companies within a 10km radius of the Linc contamination site, and landholders now fear this may have already spread the contamination.

## Landholders never consulted

Chinchilla resident and former Hope-land landholder, Shay Dougall, said landholders had never been consulted regarding the impacts of the CSG industry on their businesses, let alone the additional risk of the Linc contamination.

“Landholders in our region only became aware of these new Arrow Energy licences when there was a vague announcement by the government of a new major project that seemed to be over the properties,” she said.

“The Queensland Labor Government never should have granted gas licences to Arrow Energy on top of the Linc contamination site earlier this year. It’s an incredibly risky thing to do.”

Local identity Helen Bender, whose family farm is affected by Linc’s contamination and other gas activity, said the ban was designed to strengthen a court case against former Linc Energy directors, rather than protecting farmers.

Shay Dougall said, “This is just another example of the government showing total disregard for landholders, and favouring big mining over citizens’ wellbeing.



“If the government is saying there is a risk of mobilising the ‘existing contamination’ into prime agricultural land due to the CSG activities, the correct action is to deny the petroleum leases and not take more risks with prime agricultural land and our businesses.

“It has been by pure happenstance that we discovered this risk of contamination, with a reference to it buried in a government document, then it became even more concerning when the inconsistencies between documents were discovered.

“The fact that local residents and landholders have never been consulted or even advised about this shows a total disregard for our homes and our farm businesses, and once again demonstrates the government’s questionable decision making.

Dougall said, “I personally raised these concerns about CSG drilling spreading the Linc contamination with the Queensland Government back in 2016, but was told there were no issues.

“How can we possibly believe this seemingly arbitrary 10km exclusion zone will do anything to protect farming families and prime agricultural land, when the conditions are not even applied consistently across environmental authorities? What happens to landholders who are just 13km from the Linc site?”

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## Comment sought on gasfields water impact

*In related news from the Darling Downs gasfields, the Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment (OGIA) is seeking submissions on the draft 2019 Surat Underground water impact report (UWIR).*

Tenure holders, bore owners and the public are invited to comment. Submissions close on July 1, 2019.

The OGIA report indicates the number of bores to be impacted by CSG activities totals 574, up approximately 10 percent since 2016.

AgForce recently commented on the report, saying “Of these, 101 new bores will suffer impacts that trigger ‘make good’ arrangements within the next three years – a significant challenge for those affected bore owners.

“We know from the 2016 report there are still 30 outstanding ‘make good’ agreements yet to be concluded out of the 123 identified bores.

“This shortfall in finalised agreements indicates further improvements are required so that the ‘make good’ system is timely, effective and fair.

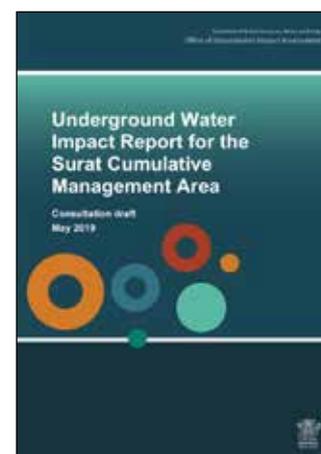
“The report also predicts greater groundwater declines in the Walloon Coal Measures and the Springbok Sandstone than previously estimated, and recent falls of around 1.5 to 2 metres per year in the Hutton aquifer are also concerning.

### • Further information:

<https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/resources/landholders/csg/surat-cma/consultation-draft-uwir>

### • Download the report:

[https://www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/1445554/uwir-2019-report.pdf](https://www.dnrme.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1445554/uwir-2019-report.pdf)



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

## Origin's fracking plan slammed

*More than 6,000 submissions have been sent in response to the first public Environmental Management Plan for an NT fracking site – a huge number for the Territory, and a sign the public is deeply concerned about the proposal, according to Protect Country Alliance.*

It's the first test for new regulations that now require gas exploration companies to submit their exploration plans for public feedback as part of the assessment process.

Graeme Sawyer of the Protect Country Alliance said, "The community is appalled at Origin's lack of respect for biodiversity and the risks they are prepared to impose on future generations.

"People are shocked and horrified that Origin's frack plans include using open dams to store their toxic fracking waste.

### Wet season hazard

"Origin wants to put birdlife at risk from drinking the polluted muck, plus it wants to leave it there during the extreme weather events of the wet season.

"It's just not good enough."

Ray Dixon is a Traditional Custodian for the region downstream from Origin's frack site.

He said, "There are many Traditional Owners who are sharing concerns

about Origin's fracking plan and the downstream impacts.

"Origin Energy wants to build a fracking gasfield in the catchment areas for Newcastle Waters and Lake Woods. When the rains come, they can rapidly flood wide areas. Right now it's pretty dry, we are in the drought season now, but if we have a massive wet season, it could turn up any time of the year. That's a big worry for us.

"No matter when the rains come, large open ponds holding polluted or poisoned water will be a magnet to the birds and animals who inhabit the area.

"There are a lot of Territorians that are standing with me and my people. We understand that we don't need fracking and the waste in this part of the country," he said.

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**Fossil Fool Bulletin**

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## Inside the news

The Morrison government can't get **Adani** approved fast enough, despite the fact the business **numbers don't stack up** – as explained by David Fickling in *The New Daily* (p5). Tim Buckley's "The fix is in" is also an informative read (p8).

Even the **CFMMEU** appears to be fracturing, (p5) with state secretary Michael Ravbar breaking ranks to criticise the Queensland premier, saying, "The promise of jobs and prosperity that was such a touchstone in the federal election is a myth, a fiction designed to hoodwink people into thinking Adani will be a good corporate citizen."

Queensland has **stuffed up a gas royalties deal** which may leave the government out of pocket and has the whole gas cartel's lawyers looking at how to take advantage of the situation (p9).

Queensland Labor has also tried to have mining companies voluntarily contribute to a regional development fund in return for a **freeze on coal royalties** (p9). This may have back-fired, with the **LNP accusing her of extortion** and referring her to the Crime and Corruption Commission (p15). The miners are furious at any attempt, however mild, to get them to **contribute more** for the resources they use.

The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (**APPEA**) held its **conference** in Brisbane this week, giving a platform to gasco execs encouraged by the return of a fossil fueled government (p11). Shell's CEO accused environmentalists of waging a war with **religious zealotry**. She alleges they are well-funded, but **FFB** seems to have missed out on the supposed largesse!

As *Renew Economy* points out (p14), the **Galilee Basin carbon bomb** is about to be triggered as numerous coal and gas miners prepare to exploit the area. A gas pipeline is already being planned to link the Galilee to the troubled east coast gas market.

**Fossil minister Matt Canavan** has been all over the news, lashing greenies, playing down rising emissions and telling banks to lend money to miners.

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# In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 37,000 words of news for your convenience. [Click on the links to view original articles.](#) (Subscriptions may be required)

## THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.theage.com.au/business/companies/the-numbers-on-adani-simply-don-t-add-up-20190524-p51qoy.html>

### The numbers on Adani simply don't add up

David Fickling, *New Daily*, 24/05/2019

Is the world's most bitterly contested coal mine finally getting the go-ahead?

In the view of the government's resources minister Matt Canavan, the pit being developed by Adani, a unit of Indian billionaire Gautam Adani's business empire, is all systems go.

There's a rarely discussed problem with this, though: The numbers on Carmichael don't stack up – and haven't for most of the past decade, despite the mine becoming a high-profile proxy for broader fights over fossil fuels among politicians, lobbyists and environmentalists. (An Adani spokeswoman said our assumptions were incorrect, but didn't dispute any specific figures or provide alternative ones. 'The Carmichael Project economics are strong and are projected to remain strong,' she wrote.) ...

[The economics of the mine show] Adani [will be] losing \$US220 million a year: It would cost about \$US88 to produce a tonne of coal that would sell for \$US66 on the open market. Those challenging numbers (rather than pressure from environmentalists) look like the best explanation for why banks have refused to lend to Carmichael. Adani has promised to fund the project from its own balance sheet.

All this raises the question of why everyone is so adamant that this project is going ahead.

For the Morrison government, the attractions are obvious: Carmichael is a potent wedge issue that may have just helped swing last weekend's federal election in its favour. ...

What of Adani itself? We've speculated in the past that keeping the project on life support helps avoid a painful billion-dollar writedown; perhaps a sufficient level of taxpayer subsidy might be enough to salvage something from the wreckage. ...

<https://www.themonthly.com.au/today/paddy-manning/2019/24/2019/1558676715/adani-repeater>

### Adani repeater: Another deadline, another argument

Paddy Manning, *The Monthly*, 24/05/2019

Queensland premier Anastacia Palaszczuk may have had "a gutful" but her announcement of a timetable for the final approval of Adani's Carmichael coalmine will only kick off another round of arguments about possibly the most controversial mining project this country has ever seen. ...

The kind of low-quality coal that Adani wants to dig up at Carmichael is not profitable on any accepted measure, given finance and construction costs including rail, without enormous government subsidy.

The politics of Adani remain toxic because the science and the economics are toxic, and the election changes none of that. Queenslanders, no matter how angry, can't just vote climate change off the national agenda. The climate crisis demands that the Galilee – a whole new thermal coal province, as Palaszczuk crowed yesterday – does not open for mining. Even the striking school kids know that. ...

Even the CFMMEU appears to be fracturing, with state secretary Michael Ravbar breaking ranks to criticise the premier yesterday, saying, "The promise of jobs and prosperity that was such a touchstone in the federal election is a myth, a fiction designed to hoodwink people into thinking Adani will be a good corporate citizen." ...

Clermont, 160 kilometres from the Carmichael site, would get bugger-all out of Adani's mine – all the DIDOs would probably be based in Townsville, only an extra half-hour's drive away.

The pro-Adani rally in Clermont that day was a culture war, fuelled by the Murdoch media and a lot of free beer that somebody paid for (Clive?). ...

If you don't accept climate science, you'll never agree a rapid transition is necessary – that it's not some elitist imperative, it's an emergency. Unfortunately, a hell of a lot of Queenslanders simply don't believe it, and that's the problem.



Minister for coal, Senator Matt Canavan, with north Queensland politicians including Mayor Margaret Strelow and MPs, Michelle Landry and Deb Frecklington.

Photo: Rockhampton Regional Council

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/28/the-environment-vs-jobs-we-have-been-in-this-fight-before>

### The environment vs jobs? We have been in this fight before

Jeff Sparrow, *The Guardian*, 28/05/2019

An energy company seeks to develop an impoverished region.

When ecologists raise concerns about the effects on a natural wonder, state politicians call them middle-class interlopers who care nothing for the rural economy. As environmentalists rally in the big cities, local workers march for their jobs. The conservatives insist the project must go ahead while deep divisions wrack the Labor party.

That might be a description of the politics of Adani's Carmichael coalmine, but it's not.

It's a summary of the struggle over the Franklin Dam in the early 1980s – perhaps the most significant environmental protest in Australian history. ...

Everyone knows that Bob Hawke stepped in to override the Tasmanian government and save the river. But few remember that, all through the early 1980s, the ALP was as split on the Franklin as it's now divided on Adani. ...

What changed the situation was the blockade that disrupted construction

in the Tasmanian rainforest. Infinitely more confronting than Brown's Adani convoy, the protest brought 6,000 people into the wilderness, determined to stop work going ahead.

The Tasmanian premier Robin Gray denounced the protesters as outsiders, dirty and unemployed mainlanders intent merely on trouble. A local politician in Queenstown declared that bloodshed was likely, and blamed conservationists in advance.

The Tasmanian parliament had amended the Police Offences Act so that trespass became an arrestable matter carrying a maximum penalty of six months imprisonment.

More than 1,200 people were arrested, with almost 500 going to jail. ...

But the Franklin story reminds us that corporations and politicians always pit jobs against the environment and there's nothing new in conservationists needing to win over working people. ...

After its surprise victory, the Coalition considers the Carmichael mine a magic weapon against Labor (a perspective that many in the ALP clearly share). Coal might be of declining economic viability but conservative politicians will provide to Adani whatever subsidies necessary to make the project happen, confident they've found the perfect political wedge. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/may/27/court-battle-between-adani-and-traditional-owners-hears-slur-allegation>

### **Court battle between Adani and traditional owners hears 'slur' allegation**

*AAP, The Guardian, 27/05/2019*

The federal court has heard allegations of "slurs" and "surreptitious" tactics in the latest instalment of a legal battle by a small group of traditional owners against mining giant Adani.

Some members of the Wangan and Jagalingou are appealing a federal court decision, which last year rejected their objections to an Indigenous land use agreement.

Under the ILUA, native title over the area would be extinguished for Adani to build its Carmichael coalmine. ...

The group has appealed the decision on grounds including that "below reasonable efforts" were made to verify whether participants were W&J people at meetings held to make decisions on the proposed ILUA. ...



*Members of the Wangan & Jagalingou Family Council outside their Federal Court hearing this week. The court has reserved its decision. Photo: W&J Family Council*

<https://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/politics/queensland/anxious-wait-in-legal-battle-against-adani-20190528-p51s46.html>

### **Anxious wait in legal battle against Adani**

*Nicholas McElroy, Brisbane Times, 28/05/2019*

People came out of the woodwork to vote on Adani's proposed mine but no proper checks ensured they were entitled to have a say.

That's what a small group opposed to the controversial Carmichael coal mine claim happened when Wangan and Jagalingou people voted on a land use agreement with the mining giant in 2016.

Now they face an anxious wait to hear from the Full Court of the Federal Court, which reserved a decision in the group's appeal against the mine on Tuesday. ...

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/politics/2019/05/25/morrison-sprints-adani-approval/15587064008190>

### **Morrison sprints to Adani approval**

*Micke Seccombe, Saturday Paper, 26/05/2019*

Adani Enterprises [has seen its Indian] share price leap almost 30 per cent.

"The sharemarket is telling us the probability of the [Adani] Carmichael mine going ahead has just increased dramatically," says Tim Buckley, the director of Energy Finance Studies, Australasia, at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis.

It was not only the sharemarket telling us that. So was the behaviour of the federal minister for resources, Matt Canavan. On election night he tweeted, "START ADANI!" Canavan also

celebrated the election win wearing a T-shirt bearing the same message.

In the days since, Canavan and his fellow pro-coal travellers in the Coalition have seized the political agenda.

Australia now is accelerating towards the Carmichael mine's approval and, beyond that, the opening up of further coal projects in huge, previously unexploited reserves of Queensland's Galilee Basin. ...

The prospect of Australia implementing credible measures to address climate change – Labor's targets were for a 45 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a 50 per cent renewable share of energy generation by 2030 – seems lost, at least for the next three years.

Of even greater concern is that approval of the Adani mine will open the way for other mine proponents, notably Clive Palmer, whose Waratah Coal has plans for an even bigger mine than Adani's.

If the huge reserves of the Galilee Basin were fully exploited, according to an estimate by the Climate Council, it would result in the emission of an additional 705 million tonnes of carbon dioxide each year, equivalent to 1.3 times Australia's current annual emissions. But it also would generate vast revenue. ...

Tim Buckley suspects the Queensland government's capitulation on an expedited review process will not be the end of it. Adani previously sought \$1 billion from the federal government's Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility (NAIF) to build a rail line to transport its coal. The Queensland government blocked it.

Given recent political developments, though, he sees the prospect of government involvement in a rail line now as being back on the cards.

Canavan has long championed it. Back in 2017, he said he would be “happy to see” the NAIF invest in rail as “a nation-building initiative”.

“But what I’d expect to see, with the federal government wanting to open the Galilee Basin, is that the rail line’s open access that other mines can use it...” Canavan said.

“I think the logic suggests Canavan now will push for the Commonwealth to fund common-user rail. It would be dressed up as a measure to prevent Adani having monopoly control of the railway line,” says Buckley. “Then three or four other billionaires – including Palmer – are happy because they get the taxpayer to fund a railway line.” ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/adani-could-get-to-work-in-three-weeks/news-story/bbfce14a4d7c6f23769fc7c92411ab05>

### **Adani could get to work in three weeks**

*Sarah Elks & Richard Ferguson, The Australian, 26/05/2019*

Adani could start construction work on its controversial coalmine in just three weeks, after Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk engineered a “breakthrough” in her own government’s delayed environmental approvals. ...

Ms Palaszczuk revealed yesterday that the “independent regulator”, her department, would rule on Adani’s management plan for the endangered black-throated finch by May 31, while its decision on the company’s ground-water management plan would be delivered by June 13. ...

A date for a decision on a royalties deal between the company and government won’t be set until the end of next month, two weeks after the state budget. Treasurer Ms Trad has repeatedly refused to rule out hiking the rate of mining royalties in the June 11 budget. ...

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/adani-mine-push-to-freeze-welfare-of-professional-protesters/news-story/86b2b7042c7235198d03f92bc01b7177>

### **Adani mine: Push to freeze welfare of ‘professional protesters’**

*Renee Viellaris, Sunday Mail (Qld), 26/05/2019*

Police have slammed “professional protesters” for diverting them from real police work, and re-elected federal

Coalition MPs have demanded bludger activists have their dole restricted. ...

Up to 150 activists – some who have protest histories dating back to the 2000s – are living at “Camp Nudja” on the Bogie River near Collinsville, where they receive training on how to properly chain themselves to infrastructure and what their legal rights are. ...

Member for Dawson George Christensen, who has the Abbot Point coal terminal in his electorate, said there needed to be change.

“If they’re unemployed, these people have deliberately chosen to move to Bowen, where jobs are scarce, and protest against the creation of jobs while collecting unemployment benefits,” he said.

“That is a deadset abuse of the system and it needs to stop.” ...

“I want to make sure that any of these cases are reported to Centrelink so appropriate action can be taken. Under our laws, if you can work, you must work, or you don’t get the dole,” he said. ...

*FFB Editor’s note: this story presented zero evidence that any of the protesters it named were in receipt of Newstart or any other allowance. Well done, Murdochrats.*

<https://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/news/greenie-groups-could-mount-legal-battles-against-adani/news-story/a3effdd5a472a0d1612d5201d0499dc4>

### **Greenie groups could mount legal battles against Adani**

*Madura McCormack, Townsville Bulletin, 27/05/2019*

Conservation groups are poised to mount possible legal battles against mining giant Adani as the Carmichael project inches closer to receiving final approvals from the State Government.

The Environmental Defenders Office, a not-for-profit environmental community legal centre, has raised concerns about the “highly unusual” intervention by the State Government to outline clear timelines for its department to make a decision on the final two outstanding approvals Adani needs to begin work in the Galilee Basin. ...

An Adani Mining official said the Environmental Defenders Office was in “no position” to comment on the quality of the company’s management plans. ...

The Environmental Defenders Office, on behalf of the Australian Conservation Foundation, will head to court on June 27 and 28 after mounting a legal case against federal environment min-

ister Melissa Price’s handling of the approval process for the North Galilee Water Scheme, which is meant to funnel 12.5 billion litres of water along a 110km pipeline to the Adani and other mines from the Suttor River.

Adani’s lawyers will go to Federal Court today and tomorrow to fend off an appeal by the Wangan and Jagalingou Traditional Owners Council against the mine.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/anthony-albanese-labor-leaders-mine-craft-doesnt-add-up/news-story/5409de5648e23a1cecb5e3b63c15dcf>

### **Anthony Albanese: Markets will determine Adani coal mine**

*Richard Ferguson, Greg Brown & Alice Workman, The Australian, 28/05/2019*

Anthony Albanese has continued to question the economics around the Adani mine, but says a climate change convoy which enraged Queensland communities was “very unproductive.” ...

Mr Albanese, who is making his first trip to the Sunshine State today, said this morning the markets would ultimately decide the economic case for Adani and pointed to its history of missing deadlines. ...

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/crime-and-justice/indigenous-activists-challenge-adani-land-use-agreement/news-story/>

### **Indigenous activists challenge Adani land use agreement**

*Alexandria Utting, Courier-Mail, 28/05/2019*

Traditional owners claim Adani did not “rigidly” check those who voted on the mine project actually held native title rights over the area, a court has heard.

In 2016, Adani won the right to permanently extinguish the rights of the Wangan and Jagalingou people through a land use agreement, which was required to build their Carmichael coal mine in central Queensland. ...

The traditional owners argued there were about 200 people who attended the meeting to vote on the mine who had not pre-registered or were not known by elders at the meeting.

They also say some who voted on the mine were not verified as native title holders through rigorous identification and genealogy checks.

Because of this, they claim the land use agreement is not valid. ...

<https://www.michaelwest.com.au/the-fix-is-in-adani-hooks-indias-poor-and-australias-taxpayers/>

## The Fix Is In: Adani hooks India's poor and Australia's taxpayers

Tim Buckley, Michaelwest.com, 29/05/2019

This is not just about Adani. Coal projects totalling 320 million tonnes per annum (Mtpa) could be set off by this first move, the move to approve Adani's Carmichael coal mine in Queensland, especially as Clive Palmer has been so quick to jump on the subsidised export thermal coal bandwagon on this week.

Despite the commercial viability of this mine being severely challenged, and with straight bank finance no longer an option, the Adani group could still finance the first stage itself. That would mean it would sell its expensive, dirty coal through newly-upgraded government contracts, and thereby lock in imported energy poverty for the poor people of Gujarat and Bangladesh, for decades to come.

Putting mythical accounting conventions aside, and spurious claims that Australia's exported carbon emissions are irrelevant to one side, this is a global climate disaster in the making. Adani's Carmichael mine is merely the stalking horse. A string of other fossil fuel projects are lined up behind it, coal and gas fracking. ...

Why would the Adani Group ignore the new economic reality and proceed with this long stranded proposal?

Firstly, having sunk \$1.5 billion in this project to date, the Adani Group does not want to admit they made a bet at the start of this decade, a bet which failed ...

Secondly, it is clear, where a project is unviable and un-bankable on normal commercial grounds, a well connected billionaire thinks not of moving on, but of changing the rules.

As The Australia Institute's Richard Dennis put it – any project is viable if you throw enough subsidies at it. The Carmichael coal proposal has long been underpinned by a raft of subsidies. Adani's ratepayer gift of a \$30-40 million new airport might have fallen over, and the heavily-fought-over \$1 billion-30 year subsidised loan from the North Australia Infrastructure Fund (NAIF) has likewise been blocked.

But other taxpayer gifts remain in the offing. Adani will be able to use huge quantities of ground water for its coal mining and extensive washing of its

HALE raw coal, no cost attached. The diesel fuel subsidy is worth hundreds of millions of dollars each and every year to Adani ...

The Government has sneaked in a final [rehabilitation] exemption just for Adani, such that they are entitled to leave a huge final toxic void in perpetuity. A void is a hole in the ground, in this case, a very big hole.

Adani is yet to provide the required financial assurance to garner its seven-year royalty holiday – a capital subsidy of \$600 million to \$700 million – but it is still on offer, which means precisely zero coal royalties are likely to flow into Queensland schools or hospitals from Carmichael this coming decade.

And expect to hear a lot more about the legislative change rushed through pre-election that dramatically expanded the fossil fuel funding capacity and scope of the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (EFIC).

It is highly likely that a \$1 billion, 30-year, 3 per cent annual interest rate loan will emerge from EFIC to entice Adani to actually start construction of its nine year odyssey to build a railway line to no-where (assuming thermal coal becomes obsolete sometime in the coming few decades). ...

Having been unable to secure one single global financial institution to invest in its Carmichael proposal, Adani has turned to self-financing the project because it [a deal with India's government] has guaranteed returns from the poor people of India ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/clock-ticking-for-the-black-throated-finch-a-plea-before-adani-d-day-20190529-p51s8w.html>

## Clock ticking for the black-throated finch: a plea before Adani D-Day

Bill Laurance, SMH, 30/05/2019

Australians from many walks of life have been worried for decades about the demise of endangered wildlife all over the world ...

But when it happens at home, suddenly all we hear about is the need for development and jobs, regardless of the risks involved.

The science says one of our most endangered bird species – the black-throated finch – is at serious risk under the present Adani plan to dig up the Galilee Basin for coal.

The Queensland Co-ordinator-General has been asked to make a decision on

Adani's plan for the bird by Friday. I hope he considers what scientific experts are saying so emphatically. ...

The black-throated finch is right now on the road to extinction, in the same category as 238 other threatened Australian birds. ...

The problem is that the Adani mine will involve slashing undergrowth and cutting down trees precisely where the finch lives – right in the heart of its tiny remaining area of prime habitat.

The many scientists who've scrutinised Adani's finch plan hold grave concerns that it will not work. Adani says it has followed all the processes, but going through the motions is no cover if the plan is not good enough to deliver protection for the creature at risk. ...

• *Bill Laurance is a research professor and Australian laureate, James Cook University.*

## COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-28/clive-palmer-waratah-coal-meets-with-queensland-government/11155728>

## Clive Palmer's Waratah Coal met with Queensland Government over proposed power plant

Alexandra Blucher, ABC, 28/05/2019

The Queensland Government has met with one of Clive Palmer's companies multiple times to discuss the mining magnate's plans for a coal-fired power station in the Galilee Basin. ...

On May 8, the company announced plans for a 1,400-megawatt ultra-supercritical, "high efficiency, low emissions," coal-fired power station, called the Galilee Power Plant. ...

"The Galilee Power Plant would connect to the National Energy Market (NEM) through a new high-voltage feeder, which would connect to Powerlink's system," managing director Nui Harris said when announcing the bigger plant this month.

The company said local connections to nearby towns would also be explored. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/clives-piggyback-bid-on-the-road-to-galilee/news-story/d436a3db5e74e840c7414a2b9fe797e0>

## Clive's piggyback bid on the road to Galilee

Sarah Elks, The Australian, 28/05/2019

Clive Palmer's Waratah Coal is trying to piggyback on Adani's fast-tracked path into the Galilee Basin, claiming to have lobbied the Queensland government for intervention to progress its massive coal mine proposal as well. ...

“The Galilee Coal Project being proposed by Waratah Coal looks to mine coal through highly efficient long-wall mining, co-existing with existing grazing stakeholders, and minimising surface disturbance.”

A spokesman for the Premier last night confirmed Waratah Coal had met with officials from the state Department of Environment and Science about the project.

Waratah Coal yesterday said it would use a “slurry pipeline” to take coal hundreds of kilometres to the port at Gladstone, after saying for years it would need a rail line to the Abbot Point port, at Bowen. ...

Mr Palmer’s project, which he says would be much larger than Adani’s \$2bn operation, has not progressed as far as Adani’s, despite him lodging the original application back in 2008. ...

<https://www.theherald.com.au/story/6187101/personal-tragedy-is-industry-warning/>

### **A decade of dust exceedances at Dartbrook coal mine is under the microscope**

*Newcastle Herald, 29/05/2019*

A coal miner known as Worker Y told investigators he’d regularly experienced dusty conditions at Hunter mine sites since starting in the industry in 1980.

He was “black from head to toe with dust” at Newvale No.1 Colliery in the 1980s, he told the NSW Resources Regulator after tests from 2014 confirmed he had a condition the mining industry believed was a thing of the past – coal worker pneumoconiosis (CSW), or black lung disease.

His formal diagnosis in 2017 sent a shock through the NSW industry, which believed its standards protected workers from a condition that had suddenly re-emerged in Queensland. ...

The Worker Y case is both a personal tragedy and an industry warning.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-29/voluntary-coal-levy-sought-by-qld-government/11160526>

### **Coal companies urged to fund Queensland regional development in return for royalty freeze**

*Joshavas, ABC, 29/05/2019*

The Queensland Government has asked coal mining giants to contribute tens of millions of dollars for a regional infrastructure fund, as Treasurer Jackie Trad rules out a hike to royalties in next month’s state budget.

Ms Trad made the pre-budget announcement this afternoon, saying the State Government would contribute \$30 million towards the fund over three years, with private coal companies being asked to top up the fund to \$100 million.

In return for that commitment, she said royalties would be frozen for longer. ...

## **OIL & GAS LEAKS**

<https://www.afr.com/business/energy/gas-consortium-wins-royalty-decision-against-queensland-government-20190524-p51qrj>

### **Gas consortium wins royalty decision against Queensland government**

*Mark Ludlow, AFR, 24/05/2019*

The Australia Pacific LNG Consortium, including Origin Energy, has won a landmark legal challenge against the Queensland government over the amount of royalties it pays from its \$25 billion LNG export facility in Gladstone.

In a decision in the Supreme Court in Brisbane on Friday, Justice John Bond declared the royalty formula used for the APLNG project since 2015 was invalid and sent it back to the Queensland government to come up with a new way to determine royalties. ...

APLNG has been paying royalties on its gas since it started to export out of Gladstone in January 2016, but it has long believed it got a worse deal than the Shell-operated QGC consortium, which started exporting a year earlier. ...

The \$80 billion LNG industry was a major driver of the economy during the construction phase, but royalties from the sector have not lived up to expectations.

LNG royalties were due to jump from \$187 million in 2017-18 to \$422 million this financial year, creeping up to \$490 million a year by 2021-22, according to state budget papers. ...

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/opinion/opinion-independent-review-needed-in-lng-royalties-fiasco/news-story/87d8e0467d82d7b0dcb60ddab637feb>

### **Opinion: Independent review needed in LNG royalties fiasco**

*Steven Wardill, Courier-Mail, 30/05/2019*

Queenslanders deserve answers about how the Labor Government botched a royalty agreement with one of the state’s biggest players in the LNG game.

The Supreme Court’s decision this week to throw out the 2015 deal between the State Government and

APLNG, which includes corporate behemoths Origin Energy and ConocoPhillips, is an enormously embarrassing episode.

The modelling showed Treasury’s coffers stood to benefit by up to \$232 million over the first three years under OSR’s preferred model.

It’s hard to imagine APLNG won’t want to be paid back the difference between the royalty deal it has been paying and the one that Treasury now has to come up with.

Gas companies would now have their lawyers pouring through their own agreements, looking for issues.

<https://www.afr.com/news/policy/foreign-affairs/revealed-png-pm-peter-o-neill-s-very-bad-oil-search-deal-20190523-p51qhk>

### **Revealed: PNG PM Peter O’Neill’s ‘very bad’ Oil Search deal**

*Angus Grigg, Lisa Murray & Jonathan Shapiro, AFR, 24/05/2019*

One Sunday in early 2014 Australian oil executive Peter Botten sat down with the Prime Minister of PNG, Peter O’Neill.

Over coffee that day the two men would agree on a \$1.2 billion fix. ...

PNG, one of the world’s poorest countries with levels of poverty and disease equivalent to sub-saharan Africa, would borrow \$1.2 billion from Swiss investment bank UBS to buy a 10.1 per cent stake in the ASX-listed Oil Search, making it more difficult [for a Sheik from Abu Dhabi] to take over.

Oil Search would then use \$US900 million of this money to buy a 23 per cent stake in the Elk-Antelope gas fields in the PNG highlands, triggering a flurry of deals that is likely to culminate in the \$16 billion Papua LNG project being approved this year. It will be the country’s second LNG project after the first began production in 2014.

But as the Ombudsman outlined in its 332-page report, leaked this month, O’Neill’s decision to invest in Oil Search was “speculative” and a “highly inappropriate” investment for a country like PNG. It would take less than two weeks from that coffee meeting proposal to the deal being approved by cabinet – a process so flawed the Ombudsman says 15 PNG laws may have been broken. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/the-wall-street-journal/pngs-new-pm-seeks-more-control-over-resources/news-story/c0da605c42550c8b4a42e5cd-98944d2c>

## **PNG's new PM seeks more control over resources**

*Rhiannon Hoyle & Rachel Pannett, Wall St Journal, 30/05/2019*

Papua New Guinea's new Prime Minister has called for greater local control of resources, in a move that may upset a gas deal with international energy giants.

The new prime minister, James Marape, was elected by lawmakers on Thursday to succeed Peter O'Neill, who led the resource-rich nation for seven years and stepped down this week amid intensifying political unrest and government defections.

Mr O'Neill had come under intense pressure in recent weeks over a plan the government agreed to in April with French oil major Total SA, US petroleum giant Exxon Mobil Corp. and Australia's Oil Search. The multibillion-dollar project is part of a broader industry expansion aimed at doubling Papua New Guinea's liquefied natural gas exports to help meet surging global demand. Local communities in the country's highlands have questioned projected revenues and employment guarantees. ...

The change of leadership could delay production by roughly two years, to beyond 2025, consulting firm Wood Mackenzie said. ...

<https://www.chinchillanews.com.au/news/council-negotiating-gas-giant-over-maranoa-camps/3735879/>

## **Council negotiating with gas giant over Maranoa camps**

*Jorja Macdonnell, Chinchilla News, 24/05/2019*

The future of workers' camps is officially on the table, after Maranoa Regional Council met with delegates for Australia Pacific LNG for the first time in Roma. ...

The company submitted a change application last year, when the 'temporary' status of their workers' camps was nearing its expiry date, and after some discussion with Maranoa Regional Council, went further with the application - all the way to the office of the Queensland Coordinator General.

The proposed change was to turn two sites of temporary accommodation into a permanent fixture for 20 years - the estimated duration of APLNG operations in the Maranoa.

Completing the circle, the QCG came

back to council, asking its opinion, and Council was clear in their opposition to workers' camps being made permanent.

"Our submission to the CG outlined that we are willing to keep the camps for temporary workers, but we want the permanent production workers living in our region," Councillor David Scheffe said. ...

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/palaszczuk-government-announces-new-gas-exploration-rights-to-tackle-domestic-shortages/news-story/d6523e0bf10b8a8611c52a4e09f38284>

## **Palaszczuk Government announces new gas exploration rights to tackle domestic shortages**

*Michael Wray, Courier-Mail, 29/05/2019*

Mines Minister Anthony Lynham yesterday also called for tenders to explore new pockets of central Queensland, with a quarter of the area reserved for domestic gas supply. ...

He announced that Senex Australia, Galilee Energy, a joint-venture between Santos and Shell and debutante Sajawin had been awarded exploration rights for nearly 3000 square kilometres combined around Miles, about 300km west of Brisbane. ...

He also opened a new round of bids to explore 3700 square kilometres of land around Springsure, in central Queensland. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/santos-pleads-for-narrabri-csg-approval/news-story/37a3888bdb008db11674bba13cb71a62>

## **Santos pleads for Narrabri CSG approval**

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 27/05/2019*

Santos has issued a plea for the NSW government to outline its approval timeline for its controversial \$3 billion Narrabri coal-seam gas project just days after the Queensland government agreed on a deadline to make a call on Adani's long-delayed Carmichael coal mine. ...

The company submitted its environmental impact statement in February 2017 to the NSW Department of Planning and Environment, which is reviewing the project before it proceeds to the state's Independent Planning Commission. ...

Even so, Santos may struggle to build the same sort of political pressure when it comes to Narrabri. The coal-seam gas project located in the Gunnedah Basin received a record 23,000 submissions on its environmental impact statement, with many

concerned about the development's potential impact on groundwater and the surrounding agriculture. ...

<https://www.miragenews.com/agforce-welcomes-science-based-underground-water-report/>

## **AgForce welcomes science-based underground water report**

*Mirage News, 29/05/2019*

AgForce has welcomed updated scientific information about the effects of coal seam gas (CSG) production on underground water in the Surat Cumulative Management Area (CMA) as an important tool in helping protect the natural environment and preserve Queensland's sustainable agriculture industry. ...

The OGIA report indicates the number of bores to be impacted by CSG activities totals 574, up approximately 10 percent since 2016.

Of these, 101 new bores will suffer impacts that trigger 'make good' arrangements within the next three years - a significant challenge for those affected bore owners.

"AgForce has successfully advocated for landholders in negotiation with resource companies to be advised by expert hydrogeologists and agronomists at the CSG companies' cost," Mr Bremner said.

"The problem, however, is that we know from the 2016 report there are still 30 outstanding 'make good' agreements yet to be concluded out of the 123 identified bores.

"This shortfall in finalised agreements indicates further improvements are required so that the 'make good' system is timely, effective and fair.

"The report also predicts greater groundwater declines in the Walloon Coal Measures and the Springbok Sandstone than previously estimated, and recent falls of around 1.5 to 2 metres per year in the Hutton aquifer are also concerning. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/activists-waging-a-virtual-war-with-religious-zealotry-against-oil-and-gas-industry/news-story/e9f4f0e1183b-3433c915b1031944a50d>

## **Activists 'waging a virtual war with religious zealotry' against oil and gas industry**

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 29/05/2019*

One of Australia's biggest foreign investors has warned the energy sector faces a battle with a new breed of well-funded professional activists and



**Shell chief Zoe Yujnovich wants to take on environmentalist 'zealots'.**

armies of ideologically driven volunteers aiming to destroy the oil and gas industry.

Shell – owner of the \$20 billion Queensland LNG export facility and \$US12bn (\$17.3bn) Prelude floating gas project off the northwest coast – said energy companies face strong ideological opposition in Australian cities and called for the industry to band together and fight for its role in the energy mix.

“Our opponents are well orchestrated, well-funded and well drilled on tactics aiming to destroy an industry that has been an overwhelming force for good,” said Zoe Yujnovich, head of Shell Australia and chair of the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association.

“Armed with megaphones or iPhones, an increasing number of professional activists and huge armies of ideologically driven volunteers are waging a virtual war with religious zealotry.” ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/companies/gas-is-no-enemy-of-renewable-energy-shell-boss-tells-conference-20190528-p51rsl.html>

### **Gas is no enemy of renewable energy, Shell boss tells conference**

*Stuart Layt, SMH, 28/05/2019*

The annual Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (APPEA) conference is being held in Brisbane this week, with the result of the recent federal election front of many delegate's minds.

APPEA chair and Shell Australia chief Zoe Yujnovich said following the elec-

tion result, which saw the Coalition returned to power, the industry had an opportunity to “plant the seeds of positive public debate” around energy.

“In the wake of the election, when armchair experts are hoarse from shouting, we have a real opportunity to drive real change,” she said. ...

As Ms Yujnovich spoke there was an environmental demonstration outside the convention centre, protesting the industry in general and the process of fracking to extract gas.

Philip Winzer, from the Seed Indigenous Youth Climate Network, said the environmental downside to the gas production industry outweighed its benefit as a transitional energy source.

“Opening up new areas to dangerous gas and oil fracking and drilling will unleash a massive carbon bomb on our communities and the world, and poses an unacceptable risk to health of country and communities,” Mr Winzer said.

“APPEA are not acting in our best interests and need to be called out for their destructive projects that devastate local communities and the climate.”

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/may/29/energy-department-molecules-freedom-fossil-fuel-rebranding>

### **US energy department rebrands fossil fuels as 'molecules of freedom'**

*Luke O'Neil, The Guardian, 30/05/2019*

In a news release this week from the Department of Energy (DoE), Mark W Menezes, the US undersecretary of

energy, bestowed a peculiar honorific on our continent's natural resources, dubbing it “freedom gas” in a release touting the DoE's approval of increased exports of natural gas produced by a Freeport LNG terminal off the coast of Texas.

“Increasing export capacity from the Freeport LNG project is critical to spreading freedom gas throughout the world by giving America's allies a diverse and affordable source of clean energy,” he said. ...

“With the US in another year of record-setting natural gas production, I am pleased that the Department of Energy is doing what it can to promote an efficient regulatory system that allows for molecules of US freedom to be exported to the world,” said Steven Winberg. ...

<https://mobile.reuters.com/article/amp/idUSKCN1SY0D2>

### **'It's time to tell our story': Australia's LNG industry finally fights**

*Clyde Russell, Reuters, 30/05/2019*

It's taken a while but Australia's liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry is putting on the gloves and stepping into the ring against the activists who want to condemn it and all fossil fuels to history's dustbin.

The central theme of virtually every speech on the opening day of the annual Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (APPEA) conference was that the industry



**APPEA, the gas industry's top lobby group, held its 2019 conference in Brisbane this week and vowed to ramp up their fight against environmentalists. They forgot to send FFB a media invite, and the Knitting Nannas were left outside on the footpath – shame, we would have enjoyed the feast.**

has to fight its corner and not allow environmentalists all the space in the fight for the hearts and minds of the populace. ...

The LNG industry ... has also suffered a public relations setback by being labeled as partly responsible for the sharp rise in domestic natural gas prices in Australia's populated east coast, which coincided with the start-up of three LNG plants in eastern Queensland state. ...

Likely targets [include] being an increased social media presence.

The industry will also want to lobby the federal and state governments to be more supportive of exploration, as it sees boosting supply as the surest way to lower costs for domestic consumers, and it is opposed to government intervention to reserve gas for local consumption.

## LINC & LEIGH CK

### Leigh Creek Energy reveals potential for further gas reserve upgrades as commercialisation approaches

*Danica Cullinane, Smallcaps, 28/05/2019*

Leigh Creek Energy has revealed additional information relating to the maiden gas reserve certification of its namesake syngas project in South Australia, highlighting the potential for further reserve upgrades in the future.

This is encouraging news for the company as it draws closer to locking in strategic partners and offtake deals to commercialise the project, designed to use in-situ gasification to process deep coal resources into synthesis gas, or 'syngas'. ...

<https://stockhead.com.au/resources/barry-fitzgerald-leigh-creek-energy-limited/>

### Turning coal into gas has Leigh Creek Energy on a high

*Barry Fitzgerald, Stockhead, 30/05/2019*

The oil and gas industry has been kicking its heels up in Brisbane this week at the annual four-day bash of the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (APPEA).

Apart from the well-oiled bonhomie of the delegates at various black-tie and not so black-tie events around town, there has been lots of discussion about the big issues confronting the industry.

The standout issue has been the gas crisis in the eastern states. ...



*Linc Energy's former site is in blue; the white circle shows a 10km radius. Arrow's mine site PL493 has the exclusion imposed, but PL253 does not.*

*Graphic: Qld Dept Natural Resources*

While the arguments go back and forth at APPEA, and the heat is turned up on the Federal and State governments to fix the problem, in-situ gasification (ISG) specialist Leigh Creek Energy has set out to become part of the solution at its namesake project in South Australia. ...

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-26/coal-seam-gas-mining-no-go-zone-linc-energy-contamination-ground/11141008>

### The new no-go zone around one of Queensland's worst environmental contaminations

*Josh Robertson, ABC, 26/05/2016*

The risk of spreading toxic groundwater from one of Queensland's worst environmental contaminations has prompted a ban on coal seam gas drilling in an area where companies are already extracting gas.

The State Government quietly created a no-go zone for gas extraction 10 kilometres around the former Linc Energy site in the Southern Inland, at Hopeland, burying the decision in an environmental approval issued to Arrow Energy in December.

Despite the ban, the same company as well as QGC still have permission to extract gas within the zone on a separate, neighbouring mining lease - approved in August ...

Farmers said they were alarmed by the revelation and want state officials to come clean about the risks of groundwater contamination spreading under prime grazing and cropping land.

The ban is the first public admission that a burgeoning CSG industry could aggravate the Linc contamination, where toxic gases were released into groundwater by a now-illegal process called underground coal gasification. ...

The ABC understands tests on groundwater contamination were being examined by a trio of experts who would be called as state witnesses in a criminal prosecution of five former Linc executives next month. ...

## CLIMATE CRISIS

<https://www.afr.com/business/mining/new-crisis-for-australian-resources-industry-20190526-p51r9b>

### New crisis for Australian resources industry

*Jennifer Hewett, AFR, 26/05/2019*

The massive West Australian resources industry is facing a new crisis with the state's environmental watchdog about to reissue guidelines requiring big companies to totally offset their carbon emissions from new projects.

Industry leaders believed they had headed off this threat last March after the state Labor government pressured the independent Environmental Protection Authority to withdraw its new guidelines pending "consultations".

But following this temporary reprieve, the EPA plans to reissue effectively the same rules, probably next week, insisting on zero net emissions. The industry believes the confidential consultations were a sham that took no account of the enormous risks being imposed. ...

The key requirement is that all new resources projects emitting more than 100,000 tonnes a year of CO<sub>2</sub> be immediately carbon-neutral, imposing potentially crippling abatement costs. The guidelines even include the longer-term prospect of taking into account “Scope 3” emissions – those created by customers in other countries. ...

But deeply alarmed LNG and mining leaders warned him the very existence of such guidelines would cripple investor confidence in new projects with a devastating impact on the economy and jobs.

McGowan will receive even more dire warnings on Tuesday when he addresses the annual conference of the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association in Brisbane this week ...

It appears as if McGowan might have to sack Hatton and the rest of the board if he wants to change the direction of the EPA. ...

It is also possible the Morrison government might intervene due to the threat to the national economy unless the EPA requirement to “avoid, reduce, offset” carbon emissions to cut them to zero is rescinded. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/australia-s-greenhouse-gas-emissions-up-for-four-years-in-a-row-20190529-p51s6u.html>

### **Australia's greenhouse gas emissions up for four years in a row**

*Peter Hannam, SMH, 29/05/2019*

Australia's greenhouse gas emissions in 2018 rose for a fourth year in a row, an increase at odds with the country's Paris climate pledge, according to a government submission to the United Nations. ...

The responsibility for emissions now lie with Angus Taylor, who has had emissions added to his energy portfolio following the Coalition's election win earlier this month. ...

Tim Baxter, a lecturer at the University of Melbourne, said it was not surprising 2018 showed an increase in annual emissions since “there's no meaningful policy to reduce them”.

He added that with fugitive emissions increasing rapidly in particular “there's no reason to think” 2019's emissions won't make it five years in a row of rising pollution. ...

According to the most recently released quarterly greenhouse gas fig-

ures for Australia, the fastest growing sources of pollution were so-called fugitive emissions from the energy sector – such as extraction of fossil fuels – and from processing of gas. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/may/29/australia-greenhouse-gas-emissions-increased-for-fourth-year-in-a-row-in-2018>

### **Matt Canavan shrugs off Australia's greenhouse gas emissions increase**

*Lisa Cox & Katharine Murphy, The Guardian, 29/05/2019*

The resources minister Matt Canavan has shrugged off Australia's trend of rising emissions, saying the industry responsible for the growth is gas, and Australian gas exports reduce carbon emissions in other countries. ...

“A lot of people comment on the fact that carbon emissions have gone up in Australia in the last couple of years, and they have, but that's almost principally due to the construction or bringing online of LNG export terminals,” Canavan said on Wednesday.

“Yes, from a carbon accounting perspective, that increases Australia's carbon emissions because we are the country where the gas is liquified, however the gas is then used in other countries and they use the gas to replace, often coal, but sometimes dirtier forms of power, and that helps the world's carbon emissions,” he said.

“So we've got to take a balanced viewpoint here because I certainly think the export of Australian gas is helping the world lower its carbon emissions even though there is an issue in how it is accounted for country to country”. ...

## **FOSSIL POLITICS**

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/rising-minister-angus-taylor-to-fast-track-cleaner-coal-plant/news-story/fc70ce7b2a34c3088f8ae7aff1c11a40>

### **Rising minister Angus Taylor to fast-track 'cleaner' coal plant**

*Graham Lloyd, The Australian, 27/05/2019*

Plans for a new lower emissions coal plant in Queensland will be fast-tracked by Energy Minister Angus Taylor, who has been given expanded responsibilities in the new Morrison cabinet.

Mr Taylor, who played a key role in re-focusing debate on the cost of climate change action during the election, will now oversee the twin portfolios of Energy and Emissions Reductions, and will steer the government's response to meeting the Paris targets. ...

A \$10 million feasibility study for a high-efficiency, low-emissions plant at Collinsville has been promised by the Coalition as part of a suite of projects aimed at improving the stability and reliability of the electricity grid.

The Coal Council of Australia has said the government should encourage further proposals for new build HELE coal plants, which offer the cheapest and cleanest energy for households and businesses. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/resources-minister-backs-new-coal-plant-as-labor-reconsiders-climate-policy-20190528-p51s31.html>

### **Resources Minister backs new coal plant as Labor reconsiders climate policy**

*David Crowe, SMH, 29/05/2019*

A new coal-fired power station is back on the federal government's agenda in the wake of its election victory, with ministers supporting a major project in Queensland despite calls from environmentalists to accelerate the shift to renewable energy.

Resources Minister Matt Canavan is backing the new power station proposal and pointing to the Coalition's strong vote in his home state of Queensland to warn off critics from southern states who want to halt the project.

Senator Canavan is also heightening pressure on the Victorian and NSW governments to open up more gas fields in order to prevent further increases in energy costs for households and manufacturers. ...

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/coal-industry-tightens-embrace-with-coalition-as-ex-minister-becomes-mca-chair-87672/>

### **Coal industry tightens embrace with Coalition as ex minister becomes MCA chair**

*Michael Mazengarb, Renew Economy, 27/05/2019*

The revolving door between conservative politics and the fossil fuel lobby has sat uncomfortably for many working in the energy space.

It has however been reinforced once more, with former Liberal Minister Helen Coonan being appointed as chair of the Minerals Council of Australia, which has led the efforts of Australia's coal lobby, running pro-coal campaigns both inside and outside of Parliament. ...

The Minerals Council also orchestrated the now infamous stunt by Scott Morrison, where the now Prime Minister



**Former Liberal minister, Helen Coonan, now heads the Minerals Council of Australia, which supplies lumps of coal for parliamentary stunts.**

brandished a lump of coal during Question Time.

Former CEO of the Minerals Council, John Kunkel, has been subsequently elevated to the position of Scott Morrison's chief of staff and continues to serve in that role. ...

Coonan served as minister for communications, and as assistant treasurer under the Howard Government. Since retiring from politics, Coonan has served as a presenter on Sky News and as a director for Crown Resorts and Snowy Hydro Limited. ...

Coonan will also join former Howard cabinet colleague Ian Macfarlane amongst the ranks of Australia's coal lobby, who currently serves as chief executive of the Queensland Resources Council. Ex Labor energy minister Martin Ferguson has a key role with gas and oil lobby APPEA.

In a statement following her appointment, Coonan called for an expedited approval process for new projects, with the Minerals Council likely to push to maintain the momentum following the accelerated approval process secured in the last week for Adani's Carmichael coal mine. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/may/29/australia-to-achieve-50-renewables-by-2030-without-government-intervention-analysis-finds>

### **Australia to achieve 50% renewables by 2030 without government intervention, analysis finds**

*Paul Karp, The Guardian, 29/05/2019*

Australia is on track to achieve 50% renewable electricity by 2030 even without new federal energy policies, according to modelling by the energy analysts RepuTex.

The analysis, to be released on

Wednesday, suggests that a surge in renewable energy driven by state schemes and rooftop solar installations will reduce wholesale prices from \$85 per MWh to \$70 over the next three years.

Lower prices will make gas- and coal-fired power less competitive, even without a market mechanism to make fossil fuels reflect the cost of pollution or a direct constraint on emissions, although a lack of federal policy could lead to longer-term price rises, RepuTex found. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/call-to-act-on-energy-emergency/news-story/6d867dfc680a5e02117166bc2ca379fc>

### **Big users issue call to act on energy emergency**

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 29/05/2019*

Australia's big energy users will hold urgent talks with the federal government requesting emergency gas market measures to ensure heavy industry can stay afloat amid opposition from top producers to government intervention in the sector.

The country's largest gas consumers – represented by the Energy Users Association of Australia – plan to meet Resources Minister Matt Canavan and Energy Minister Angus Taylor to push for a short-term domestic gas support fund, which may halve the price of gas, and the establishment of a commonwealth gas company to ease pressure on the industry. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/coalitions-big-stick-for-energy-firms-at-the-ready/news-story/>

### **Coalition's big stick for energy firms at the ready**

*Simon Benson, The Australian, 29/05/2019*

Energy companies will be compelled to cut wholesale prices and guarantee supply as the re-elected Morrison government prepares to revive the "big stick" divestment laws it was forced to shelve this year.

State governments will also face mounting pressure to fast-track approvals for new generation projects underwritten by the federal government and open up more gas supply.

In an interview with The Australian, Energy Minister Angus Taylor revealed the "big stick laws", which energy companies had labelled draconian, would be a priority when parliament returned, expected to be the first week of July. ...

The Coalition will require only four crossbench senators to pass legislation opposed by Labor and the Greens. ...

Energy chiefs, meeting yesterday in Brisbane at an annual oil and gas conference, repeated their concerns about the "big stick" laws. Origin chief executive Frank Calabria said: "If it's designed to break up energy companies, I don't think that's the way to go about achieving lower prices and better outcomes for customers. I don't feel it serves customers well."

Mr Taylor issued a warning to recalcitrant state governments that failure to increase gas and dispatchable electricity supply was a critical issue.

He said he would be seeking support from state governments to fast-track approvals for the construction of new generation, including coal. A shortlist of 12 projects providing an extra 4000 megawatts into the national electricity market was already under consideration for federal government underwriting. ...

"If a state refuses to put more gas supply and dispatchable electricity into the market, then they need to wear the accountability with their constituencies and businesses.

"The consequences are clear ... the people in those states will have to pay more for gas, they will have to pay more for electricity." ...

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/galilee-basin-carbon-bomb-about-to-explode-as-coal-and-gas-developers-rush-in-33856/>

### **Galilee Basin "carbon bomb" about to explode as coal and gas developers rush in**

*Michael Mazengarb, Renew Economy, 30/05/2019*

The unexpected re-election of the federal Coalition government appears to be the trigger for a major push by both coal and gas developments in Queensland's Galilee Basin, which is set to be ground-zero for what is regarded by environmentalists as one of the world's biggest "carbon bombs." ...

The Adani mine is just one of many prospective projects in the Galilee basin, many owned by familiar Australian coal barons and gas companies, including the Waratah coal project owned by the country's biggest ever investor in election advertising, Clive Palmer, and Hancock Prospecting, owned by Gina Rinehart, the country's richest person and major donor to the Institute of Public Affairs. ...

**News this week ... from previous page**

Meanwhile, Queensland mines and energy minister Dr Anthony Lynham, told the APPEA conference in Brisbane, that the Queensland Government is also opening up the opportunities for more companies to search for gas in the state. ...

Energy infrastructure firm APA Group has already reached an agreement with gas producer Vintage to develop a new pipeline link between the Galilee Basin and Australia's east coast gas market.

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/jackie-trad-referred-to-crime-and-corruption-commission-over-claims-of-extortion/news-story/477d55737e6966919e7d02f1608d>

**Jackie Trad referred to Crime and Corruption Commission over claims of extortion**

Jessica Marszalek, Courier-Mail, 31/05/2019

Deputy Premier Jackie Trad has been referred to the corruption watchdog, accused of extortion.

Opposition Leader Deb Frecklington last night wrote to Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) chair Alan MacSporran over Ms Trad's ultimatum that miners pay \$70 million into a "voluntary" infrastructure fund in exchange for a three-year royalty freeze.

Ms Frecklington told The Courier-Mail Ms Trad had "given mining bosses a \$70 million ransom note".

"This is extortion, it is blackmail and every Queenslanders should shudder at how Jackie Trad does business in Queensland," she said. "Queensland is not some tin pot dictatorship and I have asked the CCC to look at possible corrupt conduct by Labor's second most powerful politician." ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/government-may-invoke-powers-as-gas-producers-face-export-curbs/news-story/525d789cf91d-ca9f054955d0b639ff38>

**Government may invoke powers as gas producers face export curbs**

Perry Williams & Greg Brown, The Australian, 31/05/2019

The Morrison government may consider tapping its emergency powers to limit gas exports following warnings from the ACCC that high gas prices could lead to job cuts among the nation's manufacturing sector.

Amid a warning from the competition regulator that Australian factories face closure due to spiralling prices, Senator Matt Canavan indicated that he would be prepared to pull the trigger if Australian gas prices remained significantly above those in Asian markets. ...

Mr Canavan reiterated his call for the NSW government to approve the Narabri gas project and called on Victoria to lift its moratorium on conventional gas development, which ends next year. ...

<https://www.afr.com/business/energy/business-hits-back-at-canavan-on-carbon-price-20190530-p51std>

**Business hits back at Canavan on carbon price**

Mark Ludlow & Angela Macdonald-Smith, AFR, 30/05/2019

Big business and oil and gas companies have hit back at Resources Minister Matt Canavan for suggesting they should give up on a carbon price, saying climate change is not going away and they will still factor it into their business plans. ...

The Australian Climate Roundtable – which includes peak business, employer, union and environmental bodies – also released a statement on Thursday reaffirming their commitment to dealing with the issue of climate change and energy transition. ...

Senator Canavan also took aim at Australian banks for being scared off by activists in lending to coal projects, including Adani's controversial \$2 billion Carmichael mine.

"In light of the election result, I encourage the financial sector to review these policies and ensure that lending decisions are based on commercial and business considerations, not the influence of loud and undemocratic voices within our community," he said.



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