



# Fossil Fool Bulletin

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

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

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## Fracking Compendium compiles evidence from 1,500 studies demonstrating harm to air, water and people

*As the planet grapples with climate change, the policy choices made about natural gas and fracking in the near future are enormously consequential.*

A major new report compiles, tracks, and analyses key trends about drilling, fracking, and its infrastructure, and demonstrates that there are pervasive, grave misunderstandings about the effects of natural gas and fracking.

It finds that drilling, fracking, and reliance on natural gas can lead to serious harm to public health and the environment, and are incompatible with climate solutions.

Physicians for Social Responsibility and Concerned Health Professionals of New York released the *Compendium of Scientific, Medical, and Media Findings Demonstrating Risks and Harms of Fracking*, sixth edition, written by scientists, doctors, and experts who have extensive experience with the issue.

### 1,500 studies demonstrate danger

The *Compendium* draws on nearly 1,500 studies (355 of which were published in 2018) and important government reports and investigative reports by journalists.

Ten years ago, there were a handful of peer-reviewed, scientific studies of drilling and fracking. Today there is a substantial body of evidence, making the *Compendium's* scope and analysis of trends crucial. The analysis finds that the vast majority of evidence points to serious risks and harms from drilling, fracking, and related infrastructure like pipelines and compressor stations.



*Compendium co-author, Sandra Steingraber, PhD, of Concerned Health Professionals of New York. Photo: laurakowolski.com*

***There is no evidence that fracking can operate without threatening public health directly and without imperilling climate stability upon which public health depends.***

The implications for public health are increasingly serious, given that today at least six percent of the US population – 17.6 million people – live within a mile of an active oil or gas well, making them particularly vulnerable to fracking-related health impacts.

Sandra Steingraber, PhD, co-founder of Concerned Health Professionals of New York, said, “With each edition

of the *Compendium*, the case against fracking becomes more damning. As the science continues to come in, early inklings of harm have converged into a wide river of corroborating evidence. All-together, the data show that fracking impairs the health of people who live nearby, especially pregnant women, and swings a wrecking ball at the climate. We urgently call on political leaders to act on the knowledge we’ve compiled.”

### Gas industry suppresses health data

“Despite efforts by the gas industry to suppress all health data on fracking, the *Compendium* documents the

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# 1,500 studies: Proof of harm from fracking

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serious harm fracking holds for pregnant women, children and those with respiratory disease,” said Walter Tsou, MD, MPH, interim executive director of Philadelphia Physicians for Social Responsibility and a former Philadelphia Health Commissioner.

He added, “We need to ban fracking.”

The *Compendium* presents the evidence behind environment and health-related trends, detailing more than a dozen trends from the emerging science, including:

- **Regulations are simply not capable of preventing harm.**
- **Fracking and natural gas are incompatible with climate solutions.**
- **Fracking and the disposal of fracking waste threaten drinking water.**
- **Public health effects associated with drilling and fracking include poor birth outcomes, cardiovascular and respiratory impacts, and cancer risks.**
- **Fracking infrastructure – including gas-fired power plants, pipelines, sand mining, and liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facilities – poses serious exposure risks to those living nearby.**
- **Drilling and fracking contribute to toxic air pollution and smog (ground-level ozone) at levels known to have health impacts. Workers are at special risk.**
- **Fracking raises human rights and environmental justice issues.**

These trends underscore how continued support for fracking and natural gas – and its ancillary infrastructure – rests on outdated assumptions and dangerous misconceptions about their impacts.

## Bridging fuel a dangerous fallacy

The notion that natural gas can serve as an intermediate ‘bridge fuel’ between coal and renewable energy is fallacious and now disproven by new scientific evidence showing that methane is a more powerful greenhouse gas than formerly appreciated.

It escapes in larger amounts from all parts of the extraction and distribution process than previously presumed, including from inactive, long-abandoned wells. Grossly underestimating methane emissions threatens to undermine the efficacy of efforts to combat climate change.

## Toxic harm to water, air and people

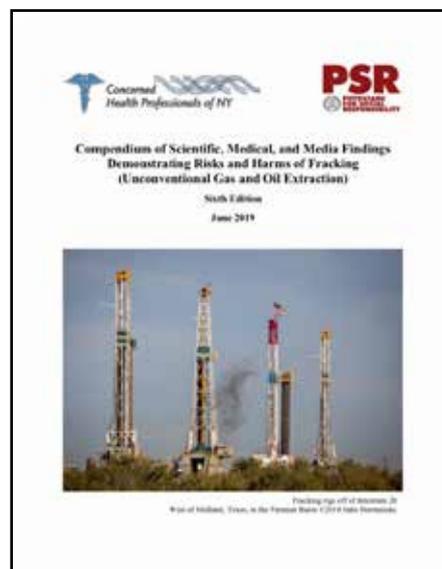
“The *Compendium* gives a sobering overview of the toxic harm that fracking is inflicting on our water, our air and our people,” observed Larry Moore, MD, an emergency room doctor in Colorado Springs and a member of Physicians for Social Responsibility Colorado Working Group. “It’s a real problem here in Colorado, where I practice, and it’s getting worse and worse across the country.”

The evidence to date from scientific, medical, and journalistic investigations combine to demonstrate that fracking poses significant threats to air, water, human health, public safety, community cohesion, long-term economic vitality, biodiversity, seismic stability, and climate stability.

The *Compendium* finds that, “Across a wide range of parameters, from air and water pollution to radioactivity to social disruption to greenhouse gas emissions, the data continue to reveal a plethora of recurring problems and harms that cannot be sufficiently averted through regulatory frameworks.

“There is no evidence that fracking can operate without threatening public health directly and without imperiling climate stability upon which public health depends.”

• **Download the 361 page *Compendium* here:**  
<https://concernedhealthny.org/compendium/>



## Whitehaven Coal sets fire to Narrabri tip

***Whitehaven’s flagrant disregard for environmental laws at its Narrabri underground coal mine is further evidence the company has little respect for the community it operates in, according to environmentalists.***

The company was recently penalised by NSW’s Environment Protection Agency for two incidents, one of which caused several fires to break out at the Narrabri tip.

According to the EPA, Whitehaven disposed more than 100 canisters used in breathing apparatus of workers at the nearby tip, and the canisters subsequently ignited.

The company was issued with a clean-up notice and were required to dispose of the canisters properly.

## \$15,000 fine for dust plume

The miner was also fined \$15,000 after large plumes of black coal dust were observed at its Narrabri Mine.

Neighbour of the underground mine and Narrabri farmer Stuart Murray said the local community had been left in the dark over the incidents.

“Whitehaven appears to have made no effort to contact neighbours or tell locals about these two troubling events,” he said.

“How can we have any faith in this company when we only find out about these serious environmental violations weeks or even months after they have occurred?”

Lock the Gate Alliance spokesperson Georgina Woods said the miner’s actions showed it cared little about the environment and the surrounding community.

“These two separate pollution incidents demonstrate a disdain for the effects of the mine on the public and the environment,” she said.

“The EPA has fined Whitehaven for not operating its mine in a competent manner. That seems to us a pretty serious breach of the public trust.

Whitehaven also admitted an offence at the company’s Rocglen mine in the Land and Environment Court three months ago.

# Taxpayers cop \$31 million clean-up after Linc disaster

**Queensland taxpayers are being forced to clean up after Linc Energy caused massive environmental damage to fertile Western Downs farmland and the environment.**

Budget papers recently revealed the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy will fork out \$21.9 million over four years and the Department of Environment and Science will toss in \$8.9 million over the next two years for work on the site – a total of \$31 million from taxpayers' pockets.

The state government has created a no-go zone for coal seam gas drilling on parts of gas tenements that include the former Linc site at Hopeland, but is bizarrely allowing it on other tenements above the Linc site.

The former head of Linc Energy Peter Bond, already facing criminal charges with other former Linc directors, now faces two more charges over the disaster, relating to remediation works and a bank guarantee.

Former Hopeland resident Shay Dougall said the State Government had failed both Western Downs residents and Queenslanders generally over its handling of the situation.

"We have been left in the dark on the details since day one," she said.

"I would like to see what they're using that \$31 million for. I would like to see transparency, six monthly reports – we've had nothing so far.

"Provide us as taxpayers and people in the community with results and data.

"That's what has been missing all along – it's just been this vague discussion about a vague issue with no quantification of anything.

"If they can put a dollar figure on it they should be able to explain to us in detail what the money will be used for and details characterising the actual problem that is being 'rehabilitated'.

"The government gets to make these grand statements about repairing the environment but it has never provided detailed information to those most affected."

"The government made a massive mistake allowing this project, and allowing cowboys to play with fire unsupervised and unaccountable, and now everyday Queenslanders are being forced to pick up the bill.

Lock the Alliance's Queensland spokesperson said Queenslanders should feel outraged they were being forced to pay for a private company's mistakes.

"On top of the human costs already felt by the community at Hopeland, we are now being forced to pay for remediation," Ellie Smith said.

"Linc Energy is ultimately responsible for this disaster and should continue to be pursued. This highlights the impor-

tance of governments taking adequate financial assurance up front.

"We have lost valuable agricultural land due to these mistakes.

"This also highlights the risks we take with agricultural land when we allow untested and unproven dangerous industry to treat Queenslanders like guinea pigs."

**FFB**

## Toxic water problem for Buru Energy

**By Market Forces**

***Buru Energy's own testing in Western Australia shows increased levels of chemical contaminants.***

Buru Energy, a WA-based exploration and production company is planning to re-inject wastewater from their fracking wells into the earth, according to chairman Eric Streitberg at the company's annual general meeting (AGM) in Perth.

According to the Buru Energy WA fracking enquiry, the company has admitted that testing of flowback fluids from its 2015 fracking operations in the Kimberley showed elevated levels of the chemical contaminants boron and barium and the radionuclide radium-228.

### **Flowback fluid destined for cattle**

As part of another enquiry, Buru Energy outlined its plans to dispose of part of its fracking flowback fluid into the drinking water of Kimberley cattle. When shareholders asked about this at the AGM, it was denied by Streitberg.

Chris Wattington, Buru's operations officer, explained their flowback water was safe to drink – two-thirds of the time. Essentially meaning one-third of the time it was highly contaminated. If reinjected and seeping into the water supply, it could potentially contaminate the water source.

The WA government is completing an enquiry into fracking in the area where Buru is operating. "When those regulations come out, the industry will look at those regulations and decide whether they want to

continue to go ahead and do what the millions of wells are doing in the US, or not," Streitberg said.

According to an article in The Conversation, in Oklahoma, US officials have reduced fracking operations after injection of wastewater underground caused several earthquakes above magnitude five on the Richter scale – one nearly 180,000 times stronger than the 2.3 magnitude earthquake that prompted a seven-year pause on fracking in the UK in 2011.

"It's counterproductive to have a conversation about something that may not happen or will be in a completely different regulatory environment. It is not advancing the cause of the industry or the government," stated Streitberg.

Countries around the world have seen an increase in earthquakes due to waste water being re-injected, and the evidence of risk to people if water gets contaminated.

With only a handful of wells being developed (and 80 in the pipeline if Buru ramps up production) it is really important that communities are fully aware of the risks involved and understand what Buru plan to do with the waste products from fracking.

It's in Buru's interest to keep people in the dark, due to the strong opposition to contaminated water and risk of increased earthquakes.

**• Market Forces is an associate of Friends of the Earth and exposes institutions that are financing environmentally destructive projects, to help Australians hold these institutions accountable.**

<https://www.marketforces.org.au>

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# Santos ramps up pressure for politicised approval of Narrabri gasfield in NSW

By Eve Sinton

*Gas giant Santos is applying political pressure to get its Narrabri gasfield approved by the NSW government, despite having refused to supply additional information requested by government agencies.*

Santos chief executive Kevin Gallagher told a Credit Suisse energy conference in Sydney this week he is hopeful to get NSW government approval for the project by the end of the year.

Gallagher believes that recent gas sales agreements with Brickworks, Weston Energy and Perdaman Group will help convince NSW Premier, Gladys Berejiklian, to push the gasfield through the approval process.

“We’re expecting soon the project to get put into the hands of the Independent Planning Commission; we are still hopeful that by the end of this year we can get that EIS approved and we can move forward with the project,” Gallagher said.

Santos has said it will commit 100% of the gasfield output to the domestic market, if requested by the government.

The Narrabri push is supported by federal resources minister Matt Canavan, who has called on the NSW government to get on with the approval.

## Call for science and proper process

Santos is playing politics when it should be sticking to science and proper process, according to Lock the Gate Alliance.

Spokesperson Georgina Woods said the company had shown an arrogant disregard for existing laws, communities, and the environment during its push to build its controversial gasfield.

“The NSW Government gave Santos a 12-month timeline to fast-track its coal seam gasfield five years ago, but Santos failed to submit its environmental assessment on time and has failed to meet the standards of NSW environmental assessments ever since,” Woods said.

“From Santos’ comments at the Credit Suisse event, it sounds as if it has lobbied the Premier and Treasurer directly, but neither of those politicians



*A Santos exploration site in the proposed Narrabri gasfield.*

*Photo: Northwest Protection Advocacy*

have the power to make a decision about this gasfield.

“In NSW, that’s done via an independent commission to avoid precisely this kind of inappropriate political interference.

“Santos has failed to comply with the NSW assessment process. It has twice refused reasonable requests for more information from the Department of Planning and Environment, the EPA, Narrabri Council, and the Rural Fire Service.

“It has refused an RFS request to not operate flares in the flammable Pilliga forest on extreme fire danger days, and refused the EPA’s request to assess the capacity of landfill facilities to accommodate their huge volumes of CSG waste.

“It’s a bit rich for Santos to throw the blame around now and try to use politics to duck environmental law and scientific scrutiny, especially when there is a gas import terminal which is well ahead of Santos’s project and properly going through the assessment process.”

## Media skips over the facts

Along with the usual Murdoch press cheer squad, the *Nine’s Australian Financial Review (AFR)* supported Santos in a strong editorial on Friday (June 21), saying:

“Santos is spending \$3 billion developing 850 coal seam gas wells in

north-western NSW, and using existing pipelines to send it into the state’s energy markets. The company has pushed the project against shrill protests by city greens and local farmers who ignore the science, which does not suit them.”

It’s obvious the *AFR* editor hasn’t spent much time reading science, and hasn’t scrutinised any of the 1,500 studies referenced in **FFB’s** front page story this week, which demonstrate there is no evidence fracking can operate without damaging the environment.

The *AFR* is also incorrect in claiming the gasfield would use an existing pipeline. In fact, APA Group plans to build a 460 kilometre Western Slopes Pipeline, to connect the gasfield to the New South Wales gas transmission network, via the Moomba-Sydney Pipeline.

## Gas pipeline vehemently opposed

APA’s plans have attracted such vehement opposition from the region’s farming community that company representatives have been known to retreat from local towns under police escort.

While spruiking jobs, the *AFR* overlooks research showing that for every gasfield job created, 1.8 jobs are lost from agriculture.

The *AFR* claimed, “The development could supply half the needs of NSW with competitively priced gas and at-

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



## Santos pushes for gasfield

• Continued from p4

tract a whole cluster of industries and regional jobs around it – unions have been among its strongest backers.”

However, Lock the Gate Alliance says, “Santos is the key architect of the gas price crisis in eastern Australia. It led the charge to build the export terminals at Gladstone in Queensland, linking us to the international market and driving up costs.

“Pulling up a small amount of gas at high risk and high cost from Narrabri will do nothing to reduce the price of gas for manufacturers.”

### Call for govt to stand firm

Community group Northwest Protection Advocacy has called on agencies and government to stand firm in their requests for standard information that needs to be provided by Santos, to fully inform of the dangers and risks inherent to the project.

“Further, we outright reject interstate and corporate interference in the NSW assessment process by CEOs and federal ministers,” the group said.

• Northwest Protection Advocacy’s detailed information on aspects of the Santos Narrabri gasfield project can be seen here:

<https://nwprotectionadvocacy.com/santos-blatant-disdain-for-a-robust-timely-and-thorough-assessment>

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## Inside the news

Adani gave Foxtel’s **After Dark** commentator **Peta Credlin** a lovely trip to India (p8) and introduced her to a villager recently connected to electricity. This was a great public relations exercise for a company which justifies its bullying business model by saying it gives lighting to the poor.

However, the poor woman interviewed **couldn’t afford** to power a stove – only a couple of lightbulbs – so still cooks over a wood-fire. Which proves the point that Indians don’t go without electricity due to a **lack of coal**, but due to the nation’s structural poverty. New power in India comes much cheaper from renewables than coal, and there’s no good reason to trash Australian land to feed Adani’s **coal-fired power stations**.

FFB has had feedback from a reader who thinks the newsletter should not be so **anti-nuclear**, as the technology offers emissions-free power, and is not actually a fossil fuel. While those points are true, **FFB** believes nuclear presents unacceptable safety hazards and is inextricably linked to its military origins, which foster a deep secrecy culture within nuclear circles.

Even coal-loving resources minister **Matt Canavan** thinks nuclear power in Australia is unachievable (p13). Canavan reckoned he would have a low-level nuclear waste dump in South Australia sorted by last Christmas, but failed due to community opposition. He realises nobody is going to accept a high-level waste dump in their region. **FFB** remains opposed to nukes, but appreciates the reader’s correspondence.

The **revolving door** between the fossil fuel industry and government continues to spin, as *The Australian* reveals (p14) that former **Minerals Council of Australia** CEO, **Brendan Pearson**, has been appointed as a senior adviser to **Scott Morrison**. He joins his former MCA deputy, **John Kunkel**, who is Morrison’s Chief of Staff. Kunkel once headed **Rio Tinto’s** public relations team, while Pearson once worked for coal giant **Peabody**.

The fossil fools are running the joint.

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## SACRIFICE ZONE

Cloudcatcher Media’s feature-length film:  
battle to save the Pilliga

<https://vimeo.com/257444267>

## Fossil Fool Bulletin

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# In the news this week

This week Fossil Fool Bulletin has summarised 34,900 words of news for your convenience. [Click on the links](#) to view original articles. (Subscriptions may be required)

## THE ADANI SAGA

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/adani-cleared-for-megamine-expansion-to-60-million-tonnes/news-story/9905454dfedba9af1b660d186ced13e>

### Adani cleared for mega-mine expansion to 60 million tonnes

Jamie Walker & Charlie Peel, *The Australian*, 15/06/2019

Adani has been certified to rapidly expand its new 10 million tonne Carmichael coalmine into a mega-pit producing six times the volume of ore ... the company's Australian chief executive, Lucas Dow, revealed the "original configuration" had been approved by state and federal regulators, not the downsized mine it went with after failing to secure finance for the project ...

Dow rejected claims that most or much of the output would be sold on the international spot market, potentially feeding a glut. [He] insisted that in the start-up phase at least 90 per cent of the 10 million tonne annual production would be shipped to India to supply power stations operated by Adani. ...

New details show the open-cut will be 25m deep after the first year of construction and measure 0.85km by 0.48km, requiring the removal of 7.2 million cubic metres of rock and soil. Exports are expected to begin at the end of year two.

By year four, the pit will be 2.5km long and 125m deep, and Dow said it was possible production would exceed 10 million tonnes. ...

<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/adani-mine-australia-climate-change-848315/>

### The world's most insane energy project moves ahead

jeff Goodell, *Rolling Stone*, 14/06/2019

Thanks to President Trump and his transparent and perverse desire to enrich his golfing buddies in the fossil fuel industry and to accelerate the climate crisis, the US is the most notorious climate criminal in the world right now. But the Aussie's are giving us a run for our money.

Exhibit A: the decision this week by the Queensland State government to allow a big coal mine in northeastern Australia to move forward. The project,



*In a taste of things to come, 200 protesters gathered on Saturday (June 15) outside the Indian High Commission in Canberra, with several dozen campaigning near the Indian consulate in Sydney (pictured). The target was not only Adani's Carmichael mine in central Queensland but the Indian company's destruction of Hasdeo Arand forests in central India. Photo: Bob Brown Foundation*

known as the Carmichael mine, is controlled by the Adani Group, an Indian corporate behemoth headed by billionaire Gautam Adani. ... It may be the most insane energy project on the planet, and one that shows just how far supposedly civilized nations (and people) are from grasping what's at stake in the climate crisis. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/business/markets/adani-s-carmichael-mine-just-viable-other-galilee-ventures-less-so-20190614-p51xt7.html>

### Adani's Carmichael mine 'just' viable, other Galilee ventures less so

Peter Hannam & Tony Moore, *SMH*, 14/06/2019

Adani's Carmichael mine is barely viable and other projects in the Galilee Basin may be less so, analysts say, raising doubts this week's approval will open a major new coal province in Queensland.

Rory Simington, a thermal coal analyst with Wood Mackenzie, estimates the \$2 billion Carmichael mine needs a benchmark Newcastle coal price of about \$US80 a tonne – or more than the \$US74 price – to be profitable.

"We see [the Carmichael mine] as being economic - but only just," Simington said ...

Tim Buckley, an analyst with the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA), said the Carmichael mine has advantages over other prospective Galilee mines because Adani owns the Abbot Point port which will export the coal, and power plants in its home nation of India that will burn it. ...

"If you give enough subsidies to anything, it becomes viable," Mr Buckley said, noting the Carmichael mine itself has unlimited access to groundwater and other fuel and royalty inducements in Australia. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/quite-uneventful-adani-learnt-of-go-ahead-in-a-simple-email-20190614-p51xr7.html>

### 'Quite uneventful': Adani learnt of go-ahead in a simple email

Tony Moore, *SMH*, 14/06/2019

Lucas Dow found out Adani's Carmichael coal mine has passed its final environmental hurdle in an email.

“The way these things play out, they are actually quite uneventful,” the Adani Australia chief executive said.

“You just get an email.” ...

In what was somewhat of a surprise, Dow said Adani saw the Carmichael Mine as an open-cut mine in the near future.

“We don’t contemplate any underground mine operations in the near term. That is well into the future and it doesn’t feature in our plans.” ...

<https://www.echo.net.au/2019/06/two-fossil-fools-tell-coals-future/>

## Two fossil fools tell coal’s future

Phillip Frazer, *Echonet Daily*, 14/06/2019

Two of our nation’s top climate-change deniers, speaking immediately after the coalition’s election victory, unwittingly revealed why Australia’s coal reserves are doomed to remain largely in the ground.

First came former deputy prime minister Barnaby Joyce, cheeks reddened as ever by hubris, declaring that Labor and the Greens lost because ‘people are talking about their power prices, they want to know how they can get dignity in their lives... by being able to turn on the toaster.’

He has a point, this man so firmly rusted-on to the here-and-now, but he misses the bigger picture; that when the planet’s burning up it’s not enough to worry about the toaster.

Then came former prime minister Tony Abbott, facial skin taught as ever on account of raw onions and fury at losing his seat.

‘Where climate change is a moral issue,’ Tony declared, ‘we Liberals do it tough, but where climate change is an economic issue ... we do very, very well.’

Tony misses the point that leaving burning fossil fuels alone and harvesting energy from more accessible bits of the environment is the better economic option. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/queensland/protests-to-continue-as-adani-gets-to-work-20190615-p51xz6.html>

## Protests to continue as Adani gets to work

AAP, SMH, 15/06/2019

Adani ... released pictures and videos of bridge reinforcement work under way on Friday, a day after winning Queensland approval to construct the thermal coal mine.

Opponents of the Galilee Basin mine project say politicians have failed them, so they will wage a nonviolent campaign and brave mass arrests to stop the project.

Ben Pennings from Galilee Blockade said, “Sustained nonviolent tactics like strikes, boycotts, street occupations and blockades will communicate our refusal to ever allow thermal coal mining in the Galilee Basin.

“Whoever gets contracted to build the Adani mine is a brave company indeed.” ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2019/jun/15/we-will-make-this-international-adani-protest-to-go-global-says-bob-brown>

## ‘We will make this international’: Adani protest to go global, says Bob Brown

*The Guardian*, 15/06/2019

Former Greens leader Bob Brown is undeterred in his campaign to stop the Adani coal mine, warning “we will make this international” at a protest in Canberra. ... Some 200 campaigners held a vigil outside the Indian High Commission on Saturday. ...

Labor’s poor election showing in Queensland was blamed partly on Brown and his anti-Adani convoy, with locals viewing their protests in the region as the south telling the north what to do.

“This is hogwash,” said Brown before addressing his supporters.

“The biggest person telling Queenslanders what to do here is Gautam Adani. He’s pulling the strings from over in India on a stack of politicians and media.” ...

The group was protesting outside the Indian High Commission because the high commissioner Ajay Gondane had called for the Adani mine to go ahead. ...

Brown said the Adani company has an appalling record of environmental destruction and corruption overseas, particularly in its home country of India and the forested areas inhabited by the Gond peoples. ...

<https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/the-cost-of-the-adani-mine-on-the-planets-health-and-our-own.12808>

## The cost of the Adani mine on the planet’s health and our own

David King, *Independent Australia*, 15/06/2019

As a doctor, I am concerned about the adverse health impacts of coal and living in a hotter world. The evidence is clear that warming is increasing the

severity of weather events and the health impacts will only increase. Food insecurity, increased range of infectious diseases and increase in allergic disease are also being seen.

Coal is the largest contributor to climate change and the world will need to leave the majority of known reserves in the ground to prevent further warming. ...

As climate change will have impacts for all of us, it’s critical that Premier Palaszczuk follows the best evidence and considers the health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders, rather than buckle under the political pressure of self-interest to support the Adani mine. ...

• Dr David King is a Brisbane GP and a member of *Doctors for the Environment Australia*.

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/sustainability/gearing-up-anti-adani-action-to-expand-and-spread-green-groups-say-20190615-p51y0w.html>

## ‘Gearing up’: Anti-Adani action to expand and spread, green groups say

Peter Hannam & Tony Moore, *SMH*, 16/06/2019

Environmental groups warn Adani’s Carmichael mine and the governments that support it face widespread and growing protests across the country after the company secured final approval for the Galilee Basin coal project. ...

“We’re just gearing up,” [said] Bob Brown ... “The company and governments are “going to be surprised by the variety and vigour of the protests”.

In central Queensland, “a couple of hundred people” about an hour’s drive for Bowen are preparing “direct action” to block construction starting on the Adani mine, said Charlie Mgee, a spokesman for Frontline Action on Coal.

“We will take whatever measures that are effective and necessary to stop the work,” he said, adding supporters had streamed in from as far as Western Australia and far north Queensland and others were welcome.

Other groups, such as the Galilee Blockade, are preparing a mass protest in Brisbane in early August ...

Since first-time protests attract fines of \$200-\$300, the plan is to have waves of such arrests, to avoid most costly penalties that repeat offenders face. ...

<https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/rendezview/peta-credlin-leftwing-activists-fail-to-see-the-light-on-adani/news-story/6d77b4bbc5870ab0936de41215e06249>

## Left-wing activists fail to see the light on Adani

*Peta Credlin, Daily Telegraph, 15/06/2019*

Credlin recently visited India as a guest of Gautam Adani and was shown a village on the outskirts of Mumbai that was connected to electricity in March.

She met a woman who could afford not much more than a couple of bulbs inside her two-room home, hence the wood fire for cooking.

“Her joy was so real you could almost touch it ... electricity made her feel safe at night and that was the real prize.”

Credlin says, “left-wing activists tend to crow that they’re all for helping the poor, even though depriving them of baseload power denies them a future.

“And it has to be baseload: the sort of reliable, affordable power that can only come from coal and gas, and in India’s case, nuclear energy, too.”

She says one fifth of the country’s population is without electricity and there is ever-increasing demand as industries grow.

• *Peta Credlin is a columnist and Sky News presenter, and former Chief of Staff to Tony Abbott.*

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-17/adani-approval-queensland-environment-minister-devastated/11217884>

## Queensland’s Environment Minister ‘devastated’ following Adani coal mine approval

*Allyson Horn, ABC, 17/06/2019*

Queensland Environment Minister Leeanne Enoch has been filmed saying she is “devastated” following her own department’s approval of the Adani coal mine.

Opposition Deputy Leader Tim Mander said it showed senior figures inside the Government remained divided on the project’s approval. ...

Enoch, the first Indigenous woman to be elected to the Queensland Parliament, had final environmental approvals taken out of her hands last month when Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk asked the state coordinator-general to oversee the process in a bid to speed things up. ...

Enoch [later] said, “I am particularly devastated about how this issue has divided traditional owners – a division which may have been lessened if there was a treaty in place.” ...



**Right-wing commentator Peta Credlin visited India courtesy of Adani and met villagers recently connected to electricity. The woman she interviewed could only afford a couple of light bulbs and was still cooking on a wood fire. Credlin missed the point here – Indians go without power due to poverty, not lack of coal, and Adani is not going to forgo profits to supply electricity to people who can’t pay. Renewables are now cheaper than coal in India.**

<https://www.townsvillebulletin.com.au/news/townsville/protesters-threaten-to-target-adani-and-physically-stand-in-the-way-of-machinery/news-story/51edfce169042c49b-189628f4c42e8c0>

## Protesters threaten to target Adani and ‘physically stand in the way of machinery’

*Madura McCormack & Jacob Miley, Townsville Bulletin, 14/06/2019*

Businesses that take on work for Adani are in the firing line, protesters warn, as a “massive influx” of activists prepare to travel to the mine site to “physically stand in the way of machinery”.

Conservation groups are also sifting through the mining giant’s environmental approvals for legal holes that could be used to drag the Carmichael mine project back to the courts.

Police in Townsville and Bowen, which has been a hotbed for protest activity near the Adani-operated Abbot Point port for years, said they were bracing for the influx of protesters. ...

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-18/adani-environment-minister-leeanne-enoch-qld/11220104>

## Queensland Environment Minister ‘shed tears’ over Adani approval process, video shows

*Jesse Thompson, ABC, 18/06/2019*

A new video shows Queensland’s Environment Minister Leeanne Enoch telling a room full of people she has shed tears over the approval of Adani’s Carmichael coal mine, while also saying current environmental legislation is flawed. The comments were in response to someone heckling Ms Enoch.

“I don’t want to diminish anybody’s feelings or thoughts with regards to this decision by the regulator – I think it is absolutely fair,” Ms Enoch told an audience of hundreds at an environmental awards night in Cairns.

“Let me tell you, me personally, there have been some tears shed on this – very much.

“But my role will always be to uphold the regulator and I’ll fight every day to make sure that the regulator is able to what they can do in this state ... and hold those companies to account.” ...

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/brisbane-cbd-protest-eric-serge-herbert-tells-court-nothing-is-going-to-stop-me-doing-this-again/news-story/d985b3aaec8d2a4b481893b04bd4c7a8>

## Brisbane CBD protest: Eric Serge Herbert tells court ‘nothing is going to stop me doing this again’

*Vanessa Marsh & Sarah Matthews, Courier-Mail, 19/06/2019*

A key anti-Adani activist has threatened to “shut down Brisbane” in several weeks in an escalated protest against the contentious now-approved Carmichael megamine.

In a Twitter post, Galilee Blockade spokesman Ben Pennings said the environmental activist group Extinction Rebellion, as well as other “concerned citizens”, were planning a demonstration for August 6. ...

The call came as ... Eric Serge Herbert, who glued himself to Queen St was fined \$550. Herbert told the court he had been protesting the “planned genocide of life on planet earth”.

"I don't really care what punishment I get because nothing is going to stop me from doing this again," he said. ... No conviction was recorded.

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/first-video-of-construction-at-adani-mega-coalmine/news-story/7daa86f68f3ddc90d-71852c19e65e1c5>

### First video of construction at Adani mega coalmine

Michael Wray, *Courier-Mail*, 20/06/2019

Construction of the Adani Carmichael coalmine has started ... about 60 workers fired up bulldozers and graders to start building an access road at the Galilee Basin mine site.

An Adani spokeswoman said workers had started surveying and grading and would soon begin fencing, geotechnical work, water management and clearing. ...

## COAL ROCKS ON

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/cheap-renewables-put-old-coal-plants-to-test/news-story/112b4ebe22b8598e9ef5d7b168e7346d>

### Renewables put old coal to test

Perry Williams, *The Australian*, 15/06/2019

Australia's largest coal plant is facing its biggest test yet: cheap renewable energy.

The Eraring power station on the shores of NSW's Lake Macquarie supplies 20 per cent of the state's daily consumption, helping to keep the lights on after ageing coal facilities like Victoria's Hazelwood were mothballed in 2017. But nearly four decades into its life, owner Origin Energy is contemplating a radical rethink of the way Eraring feeds electricity into the east coast's grid, including shutting the facility down during the day when huge slabs of solar often beat coal on price. ...

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-18/coal-mine-proposal-splitting-kingaroy-in-two/11208934>

### Would a coal mine save Kingaroy, or destroy it? Opinion is fiercely divided

Nikola Van de Wetering, *ABC*, 18/06/2019

Debate over a proposed open pit coal mine [near Kingaroy] has gone on for half a decade now, with the town holding its breath for the mine to receive government approval.

"It's like religion mate, some people are for it and some people are against it," business owner Glen Bailey says. ...

There are many who believe agriculture and the environment should come before mining.

John Bjelke-Petersen, the son of former Queensland premier Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen, is one of them. ...

"I certainly don't want a mine coming in and taking up some of the best soil in the country." ...

It doesn't help that the company proposing the mine, Moreton Resources, has a chequered past in the area, following a failed UCG trial in the area in 2010 that resulted in carcinogenic chemicals contaminating an overlying aquifer. ...

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-18/north-queenslanders-want-proposed-thermal-coal-power-station/11194306>

### Billion-dollar Indigenous-led power station to revive struggling Queensland coal town

Sally Rafferty, *ABC*, 18/06/2019

A proposed \$2 billion Indigenous-led coal-fired power station in Collinsville in North Queensland – developed by Brisbane-based Indigenous company Shine Energy and headed by traditional Biri man Ashley Dodd – is set to revive one of the country's oldest coal towns.

If the project is given the go-ahead, about 2,000 jobs would be created during the construction phase and 600 once operations begin, with a focus on Indigenous employment. ...

However, some locals fear the project is just "a drawing on a wall" and will experience the same lengthy delays as the Galilee Basin's Adani project.

Shine Energy Australia said if it does get the tick of approval, the Collinsville project would be the first high efficient low emission ultra supercritical coal-fired power plant in the country. ...

<https://www.afr.com/business/mining/bhp-upgrades-coal-to-dodge-china-ban-20190617-p51ygf>

### BHP upgrades coal to dodge China ban

Peter Ker, *AFR*, 19/06/2019

BHP is working on a plan to change the types of coal it produces in NSW in response to the Chinese import curbs that shocked coal markets earlier this year. ...

The coal Mt Arthur sells to China typically contains 5500 kilocalories of energy per kilogram.

Japanese and many Korean customers typically prefer coal with at least 6000 kilocalories of energy per kilogram ...

Trials at Mt Arthur have successfully produced coal with higher energy con-

tent, with the process involving extra washing of coal. ...

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/sustainability/significant-coal-issues-hit-power-plant-forcing-miner-to-truck-fuel-20190617-p51yjd.html>

### 'Significant' coal issues hit power plant, forcing miner to truck fuel

Peter Hannam, *SMH*, 20/06/2019

The state's newest coal-fired power station has endured "significant disruptions" to its fuel supplies from a nearby mine, curtailing its output by almost half, and prompting it to seek increased amounts to be trucked in.

EnergyAustralia's Mt Piper plant near Lithgow, which supplies as much as 15 per cent of NSW's electricity, is mostly supplied by Centennial Coal's nearby Springvale mine. That mine, though, has hit "geological issues", with the operator extracting coal of lower quality and quantity than expected. ...

Centennial has asked the Berejiklian government for approval to increase the amount of coal it can truck to the 1400-megawatt power plant from its Clarence Colliery, also near Lithgow.

It wants to be able to increase tonnage trucked by 60 per cent to a total of 500,000 tonnes a year, up to the end of 2020. Daily truck movements would increase from 25 to 40, each way. ...

Deputy Premier John Barilaro said a plan to increase trucked coal from the Clarence mine by 100,000 tonnes a year is open for public comment until June 20. ...

The NSW Nature Conservation Council said it was "very concerned about the impact of heavy diesel truck movements, mining and coal-fired power on air pollution and the health of residents in Lithgow and surrounding areas".

Any approval of the additional trucking should be accompanied by the installation of at least two continuous air-quality monitoring stations in the Lithgow area, the council said. ...

## OIL & GAS LEAKS

<https://thewest.com.au/business/energy/conservation-council-of-wa-warns-of-cost-burden-over-special-pass-for-lng-emissions-ng-b881228623z>

### Conservation Council of WA warns of 'cost burden' over special pass for LNG emissions

Peter Milne, *West Australian*, 13/06/2019

Any special treatment of LNG industry carbon emissions by the State Government could shift the burden to other

sectors of the WA economy less able to bear the cost, according to a leading environmental group.

Conservation Council of WA director Piers Verstegen said he was concerned the Government could take climate policy options off the table to appease the LNG industry.

The Environmental Protection Authority this week started 12 weeks of consultation to replace a greenhouse gas emissions guideline withdrawn in March after fierce opposition from LNG producers. ...

<https://www.afr.com/business/energy/gas/gas-industry-calls-on-qld-to-delay-new-royalty-regime-20190614-p51x0n>

### Gas industry calls on Qld to delay new royalty regime

Mark Ludlow, AFR, 14/06/2019

Big gas producers and users have called on the Palaszczuk government to delay its controversial gas royalty hike until next year to allow the industry time to prepare for the impacts of the tax increase.

The industry also wants an exemption on the royalty increase for domestic-only gas ...

Andrew McConville, chief executive of the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association, said the royalty hike should be scrapped rather than delayed. ...

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/miners-count-13m-energy-hit-to-business-customers-in-qld-budget/news-story/2bb3b0e5ca6abaf54578903fab470fc>

### Miners count \$13m energy hit to business, customers in Qld Budget

Jessica Marszalek, Courier-Mail, 17/06/2019

Queensland's 25 % gas royalty hike will slug industry and households more than \$13 million a year through higher energy costs, the Queensland Resources Council says. ...

QRC chief executive Ian Macfarlane said, "When you put up taxes someone has to pay, and in this case unfortunately that means that domestic gas users will have to reach further into their pockets. An extra tax hit of more than \$13 million a year will make Queensland manufacturers less competitive and it will have a bigger flow-on effect for other Australian businesses that rely on Queensland gas." ...

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-18/gas-fracking-northern-territory-executive-public-service-solar/11219234>

### NT executives paid top dollar to focus on gas industry, but some experts doubt it will stack up

Emily Smith, ABC, 18/06/2019

Four Northern Territory public service executives are being paid more than \$200,000 a year to facilitate a planned gas industry that some experts doubt will ever stack up economically.

At least four Northern Territory public service executives have been appointed to manage and implement gas industry regulation, including executive directors of onshore gas reform, onshore gas developments, hydraulic fracturing inquiry implementation and a senior director of petroleum operations.

Each director is being paid between \$217,533 and \$391,848 per year.

A spokesperson for the Chief Minister said the Government would eventually be reimbursed the costs of these salaries, as government vowed to recover all costs associated with establishing onshore gas regulation. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/years-of-high-gas-prices-ahead/news-story/2db1efc70141f708a97fe630248d62ae>

### Years of high gas prices ahead

Perry Williams, The Australian, 19/06/2019

AGL Energy says big gas users on the east coast face years of elevated prices, with the high cost of moving Queensland gas to southern states, expensive LNG imports and developing new domestic supplies locking in high tariffs for industrial buyers. ... industrial and commercial users need to adapt to gas prices starting from \$10 a gigajoule, which is roughly three times historic levels ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/exxonmobil-to-drill-deep-for-bass-strait-gas/news-story/246b67eb6a45f85dac24761cb8ce5b69>

### ExxonMobil to drill deep for Bass Strait gas

Perry Williams, The Australian, 19/06/2019

Energy giant ExxonMobil has received environmental approval to drill Australia's deepest ever oil and gas well ... Exxon will drill the Sculpin well in the Bass Strait in the next few months off the coast of Victoria to an expected depth of 2300 metres, an all-time Australian record and even deeper than a controversial oil well planned by Norway's Equinor in the Great Australian Bight. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/nsw-government-shifting-on-narrabri-coal-seam-gas-santos-says/news-story/8bfc98588077ab22f04e-f86ae58c227e>

### NSW government shifting on Narrabri coal seam gas, Santos says

Perry Williams, The Australian, 19/06/2019

Santos chief executive Kevin Gallagher said he believed the Narrabri project is gaining traction with NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian as part of a gradual shift in sentiment within the governing Liberal party. ...

Santos faces a test, however, to win approval for its proposal following strong environmental opposition from activist groups like Lock The Gate over the effect drilling may have on Great Artesian Basin water supplies and nearby farmland. ...

NSW Treasurer Dominic Perrottet said the government was focused on ensuring a reliable electricity grid and lowering power prices which have been inflated in the last few years by high gas costs. ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/canberra-puts-its-foot-on-the-gas/news-story/5327182fdd6dcfc029d82e4b3d61134c>

### Canberra puts its foot on the gas

Nick Evans & Paul Garvey, The Australian, 20/06/2019

Federal Resources Minister Matt Canavan says he will use the "clear message" sent by last month's federal election victory to help ramp up resources development, warning Woodside Petroleum and a consortium of the world's biggest oil and gas companies he will strip them of ownership of Australia's biggest undeveloped gas field [Browse, off WA] if they don't get cracking on the project.

The threat is part of the federal government's renewed push to open up new resource basins across the country in the wake of its stunning election win in May, with Browse joining Queensland's Galilee Basin coal fields, the Beetaloo gas play in the Northern Territory and the Great Australian Bight on Senator Canavan's target list for the next term of government. ...

## LINC STINK

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/queensland/taxpayers-fork-out-31-million-to-clean-up-toxic-coal-gasification-plant-20190614-p51xrb.html>

### Taxpayers fork out \$31 million to clean up toxic coal gasification plant

Lydia Lynch, SMH, 16/06/2019

Queensland taxpayers are spending almost \$31 million over the next four

years to clean up land polluted by a private coal gasification plant.

Linc Energy, a failed Queensland energy company, caused serious environmental harm by polluting the Darling Downs site with hazardous contaminants despite warnings from scientists.

Budget papers reveal the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy will contribute \$21.9 million over four years and the Department of Environment and Science will pitch in \$8.9 million over the next two years to fix up the site. ...

A spokesman for the department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy did not answer questions about whether it was fair that taxpayers had been slugged with the clean-up bill.

“On the former Linc site the department is progressing the Hopeland Remediation Project which includes environmental monitoring and assessments, demolition and removal of infrastructure,” the spokesman said. ...

Another \$5 million is being spent in the next two years to monitor four other abandoned mines: Wolfram Camp Mine, Collingwood Tin, Herberton Tailings Facility and Mount Oxide Mine.

<https://www.thechronicle.com.au/news/landowners-want-transparency-over-linc-energy-clean-up/3756289/?c-spt=15608184891462b03ac1b1990fa895b2ba4fa6b461c>

### Landowners want transparency over Linc Energy clean-up

*Tom Gillespie, The Chronicle, 18/06/2019*

A landholder affected by the massive contamination caused by the Linc Energy disaster west of Toowoomba has called for transparency around the State Government’s proposed \$30 million site clean-up bill. ...

Chinchilla farmer Brian Bender, whose family owns land caught in the contamination zone around the Hopeland site, said the State Government needed to explain why [\$30.5 million] was needed and how it would be spent.

“It’s definitely not good at all. This is what happens when you let industry self-regulate,” he said. ...

“I’ve got a meeting with the Department of Environment and Science, which is the first time DES have had contact with me for 12 months.” ...

While the State Government issued a \$4.5 million fine to the company in May 2018, a high court decision later that year ruled Linc Energy liquidators were not liable for the cost.

Former head of Linc Energy Peter Bond was then charged by the DES in December with two counts of wilfully contravening the environmental protection order. ...

<https://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/news/regional/cleanup-of-contaminated-csg-site-will-cost-30m/news-story/eb88efb00dd6cab1ef470582ff526ddf>

### Linc Energy: Clean-up of contaminated CSG site will cost taxpayers \$30m

*Tom Gillespie, Weekly Times, 17/06/2019*

The Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy and the Department of Environment and Science will spend a combined \$30.5m, according to statements on expenses and capital spending in the budget papers.

More than half of this (\$16.2 million) will be spent in the next financial year to rehabilitate the site as part of the Abandoned Mine Lands program.

“The Government is providing increased funding of \$17.6 million over four years (\$19.4 million over five years) to continue the management and remediation of the former Linc Energy underground coal gasification site,” the papers read.

“The Government is providing increased funding of \$8.9 million over two years to support environmental monitoring of land impacted by underground coal gasification by-products; and the ongoing prosecution of Linc Energy and its former directors for alleged serious environmental harm.” ...

## IMPORT INSANITY

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/mining-energy/plant-delay-leaves-agl-with-expected-gas-shortfall/news-story/0b264c821c2f9d4ae70df84f4ce01a0d>

### Plant delay leaves AGL with expected gas shortfall

*Perry Williams, The Australian, 14/06/2019*

An expected delay in AGL Energy’s planned LNG import plant in Victoria may force the power giant to cover a gas shortfall in its portfolio by signing expensive short-term contracts, UBS has warned.

Approvals for the Crib Point unit may now not be received until mid-next year and may require changes to the facility design and attract extra costs.

Given AGL faces an annual gas portfolio shortfall of 40 petajoules from 2021 on, it may have to look beyond the delayed gas import hub and strike deals at higher prevailing prices potentially topping \$10.50 a gigajoule. ...

## HYDROGEN HYPE

<https://www.afr.com/chanticleer/hydrogen-exports-a-long-way-off-20190617-p51yke>

### Hydrogen exports a long way off

*Chanticleer, AFR, 18/06/2019*

It might be time for a reality check on the timeline for building an entirely new energy export industry focused on the production of hydrogen, judging from the CSIRO’s latest Australian National Outlook. ...

The Australian National Outlook models a future where demand for coal declines steadily through to 2060. It says that hydrogen can become a commer-



*Liquid Natural Gas (LNG) import terminals could mean LNG tankers pass each other as they export, then import, gas to eastern Australia. Photo: APPEA*

cially viable energy carrier from 2030 and is cheaper than LNG from 2036 “given a strong carbon price ...”

Chanticleer goes on to explain various hydrogen manufacturing processes and their carbon intensity.

“Experience shows that all think tanks, research houses and government bodies such as the CSIRO have badly underestimated the uptake of solar energy. This could have a significant bearing on the time it will take to make hydrogen cost-competitive.”

## NUKE MADNESS

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/commentisfree/2019/jun/15/nothing-new-in-coalitions-nuclear-awakening-no-wait-perhaps-there-is>

### Nothing new in Coalition's nuclear awakening. No, wait, perhaps there is

*Katharine Murphy, The Guardian, 15/06/2019*

Members of the Coalition want to open the door to nuclear energy, which isn't actually economical unless the Coalition implements the carbon price it has spent the entire post-Howard era resisting. ...

Perhaps there are some in the government who think pesky fine print, such as the need for a carbon price, can be bypassed by Scott Morrison building a nuclear power plant with his bare hands and several billions of taxpayer dollars. (How good is it?)

Don't laugh. This is entirely possible, given there are some in the show who think governments should build coal plants. The self-build approach would bypass the need to ruminate on whether the economics of a particular proposal stack up. George Christensen also strikes me as a bloke handy with a power drill and a nail gun. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jun/16/chernobyl-was-even-worse-than-tv-series-kim-willsher>

### The truth about Chernobyl? I saw it with my own eyes...

*Kim Willsher, The Guardian, 16/06/2019*

There is a line in the television series Chernobyl that comes as no surprise to those of us who reported on the 1986 nuclear disaster in what was the Soviet Union – but that still has the power to shock:

“The official position of the state is that global nuclear catastrophe is not possible in the Soviet Union.”

The Chernobyl miniseries is a compelling account of how the disaster unfolded, based largely on the testi-

mony of those present, most of whom died soon afterwards. It rings true but only scratches the surface of another, more cruel reality – that, in their desperation to save face, the Soviets were willing to sacrifice any number of men, women and children. ...

At the Chernobyl Research Centre, a short distance from the power plant, scientists showed us pine saplings grown from seeds from the nearby “red forest” where the trees glowed after absorbing radiation and had to be dug up and buried. The saplings were all bizarre mutations, some with needles growing backwards. There was no sign of wildlife, not even birds. The researchers spoke of mice with six toes and deformed teeth. ...

Because no data was kept from before the disaster, nothing can be proven. Today, as the TV series points out, the official number of directly attributable victims of Chernobyl is 31. Other, “unscientific”, estimates vary from 4,000 to 93,000. ...

The radioactive elements released in the explosion are active for between 30 and 24,000 years – an environmental threat for centuries. ...

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/opinion/andrew-bolt/andrew-bolt-lies-about-chernobyl-radiation-deaths-take-their-toll/news-story/d236f529dadac3530d9d5ea5adba1ed2>

### Lies about Chernobyl radiation deaths take their toll

*Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun, 16/06/2019*

The hype has been relentless. From the day the managers of the Chernobyl reactor somehow managed to blow it up, green activists, journalists and politicians have been exaggerating the death toll in their campaign to demonise nuclear power, which is still banned in Australia. ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/jun/18/australians-support-for-nuclear-plants-rising-but-most-dont-want-to-live-near-one>

### Australians' support for nuclear plants rising – but most don't want to live near one

*Katharine Murphy, The Guardian, 18/06/2019*

Australians are slightly more inclined to support nuclear power plants than oppose them, but a clear majority of voters do not want to live near one, according to new polling.

With nuclear power making a return to the national political agenda, a new survey from Essential finds 44% of Australians support nuclear power plants, up four points since the ques-

tion was last asked in November 2015, and 40% oppose them.

But asked whether respondents agreed or disagreed with the statement “I would be comfortable living close to a nuclear power plant”, only 28% agreed and 60% disagreed. ...

Influential industry groups such as the Minerals Council of Australia have been lobbying to overturn the ban [on nuclear power].

The new survey from Essential says a majority of the sample 54% believe nuclear energy would be a reliable energy source for the future (28% disagree) and almost half the people in the survey, 47%, think nuclear would be better for the environment than coal-fired generation (30% disagree).

A majority, 63%, think having a nuclear industry in Australia would create skilled jobs, with 22% disagreeing. Even though nuclear energy is expensive, just over half the sample, 51%, think nuclear would help lower power prices (26% disagree). ...

A recent inquiry in South Australia, while supportive of the industry, said a nuclear power plant would not be viable in the state even under carbon pricing policies consistent with achieving the well below 2C target agreed in Paris in December “because other low-carbon generation would be taken up before nuclear”. ...

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/going-nuclear-pms-blessing-sought-for-power-inquiry/news-story/2ed0fba4181e946ad77d46cb49cc3449>

### Going nuclear: PM's blessing sought for power inquiry

*Matthew Killoran, Courier-Mail, 19/06/2019*

Queensland MPs are going nuclear as they seek the Prime Minister's blessing to conduct a major inquiry into using the controversial power source in Australia.

Senator James McGrath and Member for Hinkler Keith Pitt ... backed by other Queensland Nationals-aligned MPs, ... will this week write to the Prime Minister seeking his support for an in-depth, two-year Senate inquiry into a nuclear power industry in Australia. ...

The new inquiry would canvass the latest developments in the technology, potential benefits to Australia, compare its life cycle and costs against traditional power sources, like coal, hydro and renewables, as well as how to deal with the radioactive waste by-products. ...

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/queensland-government/what-a-waste-ministers-question-for-nuclear-inquiry/news-story/b5dcfdcd0e81653c22137934d28a799b>

### What a waste: Minister's question for nuclear inquiry

Matthew Killoran, *Courier-Mail*, 21/06/2019

Resources Minister Matt Canavan has shied away from backing an inquiry into nuclear power in Australia, as he warns a permanent home would need to be found for high-level waste first. ...

Senator Canavan said he did not believe it stacked up financially and it could cost more to generate power than existing energy sources.

He said the British Government had recently underwritten a nuclear power station, guaranteeing a price of \$140/megawatt hour, which is higher than the \$100/megawatt hour price currently paid in Australia. ...

"We have been trying for 40 years to find a long-term repository for radioactive waste that is produced at Lucas Heights (nuclear reactor in Sydney) and some legacy waste we have from other activities," he said.

"If we can't find a permanent home for low-level radioactive waste associated with nuclear medicines, we've got a pretty big challenge dealing with the high-level waste that would be produced by any energy facilities." ...

## CLIMATE CRISIS

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2019-06-18/climate-change-emissions-smashing-temperature-records-study/11160340>

### We still have time to act on climate change – but records will tumble for next 20 years regardless of emissions: study

Jo Kahn, *ABC*, 18/06/2019

Our last summer was the hottest on record in Australia, and we can expect the record breaking weather to continue for at least the next 20 years, new climate change research has found.

Regardless of action on climate change, monthly temperature records will continue to be smashed for the next two decades, but what happens beyond then depends on whether or not we reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

Immediate action to drastically reduce emissions would rein in the temperature record-breaking from around 2040 ...

While large emissions reductions are key to avoiding smashing temperature



*Climate change in Arctic regions has led to famished polar bears scavenging rubbish around human settlements. Photo: theevolvingplanet.com*

records all the way to the year 2100, it is critical that areas such as fire management are able to adapt to unprecedented hot weather conditions for a few more decades ...

"People and plants and animals are going to have to cope with the regular occurrence of these extreme temperatures over the next two decades, because we won't get the benefits from reducing emissions for a while." ...

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jun/18/arctic-permafrost-canada-science-climate-crisis>

### Scientists shocked by Arctic permafrost thawing 70 years sooner than predicted

Reuters, *The Guardian*, 19/06/2019

Permafrost at outposts in the Canadian Arctic is thawing 70 years earlier than predicted, an expedition has discovered, in the latest sign that the global climate crisis is accelerating even faster than scientists had feared. ...

A team from the University of Alaska Fairbanks said they were astounded by how quickly a succession of unusually hot summers had destabilised the upper layers of giant subterranean ice blocks that had been frozen solid for millennia.

Vladimir Romanovsky, a professor of geophysics at the university, told Reuters, "It's an indication that the climate is now warmer than at any time in the last 5,000 or more years." ...

## FOSSIL POLITICS

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jun/17/environment-reporters-facing-harassment-murder-study>

### Environment reporters facing harassment and murder, study finds

Juliette Garside & Jonathan Watts, *The Guardian*, 18/06/2019

Thirteen journalists who were investigating damage to the environment have been killed in recent years and many more are suffering violence, harassment, intimidation and lawsuits, according to a study.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), which produced the tally, is investigating a further 16 deaths over the last decade. It says the number of murders may be as high as 29, making this field of journalism one of the most dangerous after war reporting.

On every continent reporters have been attacked for investigating concerns about abuses related to the impact of corporate and political interests scrambling to extract wealth from the earth's remaining natural resources. ...

<https://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/story/6227034/littleproud-supports-qld-coal-expansion/>

### Natural Disasters Minister David Littleproud backs Qld coal

Tracey Ferrier, *Qld Country Life*, 19/06/2019

Australia's Minister for Natural Disasters has backed new coal mines in Queensland even though he accepts fossil fuels are driving extreme weather events.

David Littleproud says the nation's disaster recovery bill is forecast to hit \$39 billion by 2050 and climate change is major contributor to weather-related disasters.

In an interview on ABC radio on Wednesday, the cabinet minister was asked if it was a responsible course of action to open up new thermal coal mines in Queensland's Galilee Basin.

"Definitely," he replied.

"You can invest in coal-fired technology and reduce emissions. You can do that. There's less emissions from our coal than other coals from around the world, and we're exporting a lot of that to India." ...

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/margin-call/former-minerals-council-ceo-brendan-pearson-appointed-to-scott-morrison-pmo/news-story/d1007cc1335d-053374ca4ed0c749f56a>

### Former Minerals Council CEO Brendan Pearson appointed to Scott Morrison's PMO

*Will Glasgow & Christine Lacy, The Australian, 19/06/2019*

Margin Call can reveal that former Minerals Council of Australia CEO Brendan Pearson has joined the ScoMo PMO as a senior adviser.

The addition makes for a bit of an extractive industry reunion at the heart of the Morrison government.

Pearson will join his former Minerals Council deputy John Kunkel ... Morrison's chief of staff [who] headed government relations for Rio Tinto. ...



*Former Minerals Council of Australia chief, Brendan Pearson, joins other fossil fuel executives as advisers to PM Scott Morrison, another example of the revolving door between industry and politics.*

Pearson was running the mining lobby back in early 2017 when Morrison, then Malcolm Turnbull's Treasurer, brought that lump of coal along to question time in the green house.

The source of that sooty lump?

None other than Pearson's Minerals Council, whose bunker sits just down the road from Capital Hill on Sydney Avenue.

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/commentary/lets-use-our-natural-advantage-in-energy-to-power-prosperity/news-story/edeed60cea1d21aac55cdc3815af876d>

### Let's use our natural advantage in energy to power prosperity

*Tony Grey, The Australian, 20/06/2019*

Australia is a treasure trove, a vast Aladdin's cave of energy resources virtually unique in the world, with its combination of uranium, coal and natural gas, not to mention an enviable amount of oil.

And with windswept spaces and wide cloudless skies, renewable energy adds a new potential.

But something is amiss. We can never agree on how the blessing can be enjoyed. On the contrary, often under the guise of addressing climate change, subversive voices speak against enjoying much of this patrimony. ...

The use of climate change by the hard left for its deep objective, a tactic served by exaggerating scientific observations and fomenting alarm, has generated significant pushback, energised by suspicion. ...

The ... coal-producing countries that compete with us ... will continue to supply the hundreds of coal-fired power stations still operating (and being built) around the world, just as our political restriction of uranium mining in the 80s and the complete ban on nuclear power in Australia in 1998 proved a boon for the uranium sectors of Canada and Namibia.

**• Tony Grey founded Pancontinental Mining and played a role in the exploration and discovery of the Jabiluka uranium deposits. This from his speech at this month's AusIMM International Uranium Conference in Adelaide.**

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jun/19/trump-climate-crisis-coal-pollution-clean-power-plan>

### Trump ditches sole climate rule that aimed to reduce coal plant pollution

*Emily Holden, The Guardian, 20/06/2019*

Trump's Environmental Protection Agency will replace an Obama-era climate change rule with a regulation that experts warn could help some of America's oldest and dirtiest coal plants to keep running. ...

Trump's rule will not significantly tackle the heat-trapping gases entering the atmosphere that cause extreme heatwaves, floods and other disasters. And it will lead to higher levels of air pollution, compared with the Clean Power Plan. ...

The EPA administrator, Andrew Wheeler, a former coal lobbyist, on Wednesday said the Obama rule would have raised electricity costs for poorer Americans. But even without that rule taking effect, power companies have been shutting down coal plants, which are more expensive than their cleaner competitors natural gas and renewable energy.

Wheeler argued EPA is "leveling the playing field" for coal, although the rule is not expected to significantly boost the US coal industry ...

Coal plant air pollution – from tiny particles that enter the lungs – cause breathing problems and early deaths. ... The new rule could lead to 1,400 more deaths each year. ...



<https://www.news.com.au/finance/economy/australian-economy/incredible-one-nation-result-highlights-deep-problems-in-nsws-hunter-valley/news-story/5f50887cc6f385f9107465c367cb0633>

## Incredible One Nation result highlights deep problems in NSW's Hunter Valley

Ben Graham, News.com.au, 20/06/2019

Since May 18, the Hunter ... has become the seething hotbed for Pauline Hanson's One Nation. ...

A heavily tattooed coalmine mechanic, Stuart Bonds, 33, took almost 22 per cent of the primary vote in the seat of Hunter.

The stunning result made him the most popular One Nation candidate in the country.

It wasn't enough to topple Labor stalwart and former defence minister Joel Fitzgibbon, who clung onto the seat after a nailbiting and drawn-out count. ...

The general consensus was that Cessnock – once a prosperous coalmining town – had been abandoned, forgotten and taken for granted by Labor over many years, as the mines were shut down and workers were laid off. ...

However, re-elected Labor MP Joel Fitzgibbon told news.com.au Bonds' surge in popularity was based on a single-minded "scare campaign" that Labor wanted to get rid of all coalmining jobs. ...

"He came in with a big lump of coal and he just put it in front of him and said: 'I'm Stuart Bonds and that's what I stand for,'" Mr Fitzgibbon said.

"And, that's what he ran on. He ran on a fear among coal miners that their jobs were at risk and he was successful."

He said Labor backed the mining and exporting of coal, but that the party made a "terrible mistake" in the campaign.

"Labor supports coal mining, but it wasn't prepared to say so out of fear of losing more progressive voters in other places," he said. ...

<https://www.afr.com/news/politics/national/gas-brawl-over-top-end-tax-cuts-20190619-p51z3f>

## Gas brawl over top end tax cuts

Phillip Coorey, AFR, 20/06/2019

The Coalition is actively considering a domestic gas reserve on the east coast for new projects as part of its push to get income tax cuts through parliament.

The proposal ... is now on the table as part of discussions with the Senate crossbench to secure the passage of the \$158 billion in income tax cuts.

Other options include strengthening the gas trigger to force exporters to divert more gas for domestic use, and improving transparency around long-term contract negotiations to enable big gas users to secure a better price.

Gas producers Shell and Santos issued fresh warnings yesterday that triggering Australia's domestic gas security mechanism would only choke investment in new supply. ...

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-21/erf-could-hand-money-to-coal-fired-power-stations-idea-in-review/11230752>

## Emissions Reduction Fund review considers opening the scheme to coal-fired power stations

Penny Timms, ABC, 21/06/2019

The federal fund set up to fight climate change and reduce Australia's carbon emissions could be used to help extend the life of coal-fired power stations – an idea labelled "insane" by one expert.

As part of the review, the independent Emissions Reduction Assurance Committee (ERAC) is considering whether changes are needed to how projects are assessed and which qualify for taxpayer-funded carbon credits – the assessment style is called 'the facilities method'.

Specifically, the review is looking at power generation projects, including, but not limited to, coal. ...

ERF expert Tim Baxter, a fellow of Melbourne Law School and associate of the Climate and Energy College, said the potential inclusion of coal-fired power stations was worrying.

"We're asking whether a scheme, designed purportedly to reduce Australia's emissions, should be funding some of the most polluting sources of electricity generation in the country," he said.

"This is an insane question to ask."

Earlier this year, the ABC reported the office of then-environment minister Melissa Price was approached on behalf of coal baron Trevor St Baker.

He heads up Delta Energy, which wanted carbon credits through the ERF to pay for the replacement of turbine blades at the company's Vales Point coal station.

That proposal was rejected by the Clean Energy Regulator. The company then lobbied the Government for help. ...

The chief of the Australian Conservation Foundation, Kelly O'Shanassy, said she believed expanding the scheme to include the fossil fuel energy sector would be a mistake.

"We would be the only country in the world to be using a climate fund to fund coal-fired power, and that would just be a global embarrassment," she said.

"We would expect that the committee remains quite clear and quite strong that this is an emissions reduction fund and that funding coal-fired power stations does not fit into the logic of that."

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