

Wodonga Albury Towards Climate Health

WATCHWORD 22.2.17

WATCH update

Adani and Westpac - local action

At the end of 2015 Westpac promised that they'd do their bit to limit global warming to below two degrees but they are still funding projects that expand coal, oil and gas use in Australia and elsewhere. They are the only major Australian bank that hasn't distanced itself from funding Adani's massive Queensland coal mine.

In early February WATCH wrote to Westpac, urging them to refuse to fund the Adani mine. We have yet to receive a reply. So it's time to up the ante. A snap action outside a local Westpac branch is being planned. We'll keep you posted, but in the mean time you can write to Westpac. Market Forces has made this easy to do here: <https://www.marketforces.org.au/cleanupwestpac> or you can create your own message. Market Forces has also posted [a short video on facebook](#) for sharing.

ACF and Adani

On Friday March 3rd, ACF will be in court for an appeal hearing challenging the government's approval of the mine. [Our movement is united to stop Adani. Don't sit this one out – send your MP the Adani Brief now.](#)

Power for Change – new 350.org campaign

In late February, 350.org will be launching their new campaign – Power for Change – targeting Australia's three largest electricity retailers. WATCH is likely to participate in this campaign.

WATCH meetings

WATCH meets every second month in central Albury. We offer plenty of opportunities to take positive action. Find out more by attending one of our friendly meetings. The next one is on Tuesday 4th April at 6pm. Please RSVP to Lizette on 60 59 4185 to be advised of the venue.

WATCH website

Please check our website: www.watch.id.au

And follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/wodongaandalburytowardclimatehealth>

Coal – it's never clean!

Politicians should be ashamed of coal

Well done to Bobbi McKibbin representing RAW Energy for responding to Malcolm Turnbull's press club comments: <http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/4442271/politicians-should-be-ashamed-of-coal-raw/?cs=11>

Hard facts unmask the fiction behind Coalition's 'coal comeback'

Lenore Taylor makes some excellent points:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/feb/11/hard-facts-unmask-the-fiction-behind-coalitions-coal-comeback>

Claiming coal can be clean is like saying smoking can be healthy

The more coal we burn, the more heatwaves and bushfires we'll get.

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/nikola-casule/claiming-coal-can-be-clean-is-like-saying-smoking-can-be-healthy/>

Green bank could fund coal under Malcolm Turnbull rule changes

Certainly a cause for concern!

<http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/4477768/green-bank-could-fund-coal-under-malcolm-turnbull-rule-changes/?cs=12>

'Clean coal' fact sheet

A useful reference from the Climate Council:

<https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/uploads/fec4332de4c32ece44eedde7dd76b6c7.pdf>

Climate news

Climate change could threaten entire financial system, warns APRA

it's a pretty major deal to have a regulator as conservative as APRA saying this so strongly:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-02-17/climate-change-could-threaten-entire-financial-system-apra/8281436>

The climate bombshell the politicians didn't touch

Economist Michael Pascoe speaks his mind:

<http://www.smh.com.au/business/the-climate-bombshell-the-politicians-didnt-touch-20170219-gugn0r.html>

Scientists sad, frustrated as extreme weather becomes the new norm - ABC News

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-02-15/climate-change-blamed-for-australia-extreme-weather-events/8268692>

What a relief that climate change doesn't really exist!

A pithy piece by economist Ross Gittins:

<http://www.smh.com.au/comment/what-a-relief-that-climate-change-doesnt-really-exist-20170214-gucb48.html>

Ecoportal

<http://www.ecoportal.net.au>

Ecoportal is your online directory, listing groups and events for sustainable living in Albury-Wodonga, North East Victoria and Southern New South Wales.

February <http://ecoportal.net.au/events/2017-02/>

March <http://ecoportal.net.au/events/2017-03/>

Follow *Ecoportal* on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Ecoportal.net.au?fref=nf>

Selected events

North East Fair Food Farmers and Followers, Friday 24th February, 9am, Stanley

Organised by the Beechworth Food Co-op and Black Barn Farm:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/north-east-fair-food-farmers-and-followers-tickets-29877800305?aff=efbevent>

Murray River Clean Up Paddle, Saturday 4th March, 9am – 1pm

Join a canoe-based clean-up effort on the Murray river organised by Parklands Albury Wodonga. Details here:

<http://ecoportal.net.au/event/murray-river-clean-up-paddle/>

Clean Up Australia Day, Sunday 5th March, 9 – 11am, Padman Park, Albury

Organised by Parklands Albury Wodonga. Details here.

<http://ecoportal.net.au/event/clean-up-australia/>

Living Lightly

Urgent request!

Living Lightly is published every Wednesday in the Border Mail and published on the Ecoportal website

www.ecoportal.net.au/articles/. Karen Bowley

has requested that you keep sending her your articles so this popular column is able to continue. The situation is somewhat urgent! Please email them to kbowley53@gmail.com

Some interesting articles this month:

- [Plastic consumption](#) By Tess Middleton, Fin Free Albury Wodonga
- [Variety is the Spice of Life](#) By Gill Baker, Wangaratta Sustainability
- [A New Cup](#) By Halve Waste

Community renewable energy news

TRY – Totally Renewable Yackandandah

Totally Renewable Yackandandah has been working on a bulk-buy solar panel program in partnership with Ausnet Services. On 9th February, TRY and AusNet Services held two information sessions at the Yackandandah Public Hall to outline their plan for one of the first commercial community solar mini grids in Australia. Over 300 people attended! An amazing turnout.

Further information here: <https://mondopower.com.au/yackandandah/> And lots of coverage in the local media:

Totally Renewable Yackandandah and AusNet to launch new solar mini grid

<http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/4455090/energy-system-ready-to-launch/?cs=11>

Power to the people (video)

<https://au.prime7.yahoo.com/v1/news/a/-/national/34371205/power-to-the-people-video>

The game-changer for solar energy in homes

<http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/4457636/the-game-changer-for-solar-energy-in-homes/?cs=11>

The race to 100 per cent renewable town is on

<http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/4475843/the-race-to-100-per-cent-renewable-town-is-on/?cs=14>

Congress taps into growing energy for renewables

<http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/4430076/congress-taps-into-growing-energy-for-renewables/?cs=14>

Reduce, re-use, recycle, repair....

New look at rubbish for the Yack Folk Festival, March 24- 26

The Yackandandah Folk Festival is determined this year to effectively manage the waste stream that the Festival generates. TRY is working with the festival to make this happen by sorting the waste streams so that recycling and composting are maximised and land fill is minimised. We need enthusiastic and energetic volunteers for our Green Team to help us over the festival weekend to make this happen. Please give us a few hours of your time by volunteering for the Green Team on the festival website <http://yackfolkfestival.com/join-in/volunteers/>

Repair Cafe Albury-Wodonga, Saturday 4th March, Gateway Village, 10am-1pm,

<http://ecoportal.net.au/event/repair-cafe-11-2-2/>

Repair Cafe facts and stats - for those who like to know numbers. On 4th February we had 73 visitors, 90 broken items and an excellent 82% fix-it rate. Nineteen helpers (including 15 repairers) helped divert 94kg from landfill. Yay to all involved! Repair Cafe Albury-Wodonga is proudly supported by Halve Waste. <http://ecoportal.net.au/groups/repair-cafe-albury-wodonga/>

Plastic bags - what's the solution?

Bag it! Free movie & discussion at the SAC - Tuesday 28th February, 6 – 8pm

<http://ecoportal.net.au/event/free-movie-discussion-bag-it/>

Come along to this eye opening and inspiring documentary. For more details and trailer click [here](#). Tickets essential - book via Eventbrite [here](#)

Bag it! Public film screening and discussion, Saturday 4th March, 7 – 9.30pm, Yack Public Hall

Presented by Plastic Wise Yackandandah and Indigo Shire. Gold coin donation, light refreshments provided. Enquiries to Francesca Ciantar 0421 905 868.

A plastic bag revolution

Boomerang Bags are catching on...

<http://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/country-living/miranda/miranda-a-plastic-bag-revolution/news-story/ce80b7b21131cb38347acc833d9647f6>

First project takes off

Beechworth Women's Shed participants will be making reusable shopping bags!

<http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/4430007/first-project-takes-off/?cs=11>

ABC News video- As plastics continue to build up in the ocean and impact wildlife, is it time for Australia to ban the bag?...

<https://www.facebook.com/abcnews.au/videos/10156203950259988/>

Energy issues

Australia positioned to be renewable energy superpower

Here is an analysis from economist Ross Gittins:

<http://www.theage.com.au/business/comment-and-analysis/australia-positioned-to-be-renewable-energy-superpower-20170216-guf55r.html>

New coal and gas generation will not be built, so RET still needed after 2020

An excellent interview with Fran Kelly and Kane Thornton from the Clean Energy Council:

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/new-coal-and-gas-generation-unclear-ret-still-needed/8279192>

Cathy McGowan asks government how it can support community energy initiatives

http://www.cathymcgowan.com.au/how_can_govt_support_community_energy_initiatives

Michelle Grattan's plea to politicians on energy

<https://theconversation.com/plea-to-politicians-on-energy-stop-the-brawling-72849>

Divestment update

First health insurer divests from fossil fuels!

HCF – the private health fund for over 680,000 Australians and responsible for \$2 billion of assets – has confirmed that it is divesting from fossil fuels. This is an Australian first for a health insurance fund and what makes HCF's announcement all the more important is the fund's recognition that fossil fuels are harmful to the health and well-being of their members. Do you have private health insurance? [Click here to contact your fund and ask them to divest.](#)

Remembering Don Chambers

Long service not forgotten

Rutherglen councillor Don Chambers was awarded a posthumous Medal of the Order of Australia in the Australia Day Honours for his services to local government and to the Victorian community:

<http://www.bordermail.com.au/story/4421972/long-service-not-forgotten/?cs=11>

So inspiring!

Should the youth of Australia sue the government for inaction on climate change?

Xiuhtezcatl Martinez has been speaking on behalf of the planet since the tender age of six. Today still just a teenager, his extraordinary eloquence has moved audiences which include world leaders Xiuhtezcatl was a guest speaker at the Sustainable Living Festival on February 11th speaking about "Why I sued the U.S. Government". Here he is on Q and A:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-02-07/should-sue-government-over-inaction-climate-change-qanda/8246020>

Youth sue the US government for failing to protect them from climate change

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/lawreport/us-climate-change-case/8248068>

Thanks again to everyone who has provided content for this newsletter. Next edition is due out on Wednesday 22nd March.

WATCH email address: watch.albwod@gmail.com

*Warm regards,
Jenny Davies*