

Wodonga Albury Towards Climate Health

WATCHWORD 19.6.19

Election reflection

Some words from WATCH convenor Lizette Salmon

The election results shocked many of us. In local and national debriefings, I heard people say they felt devastated, despairing, pessimistic, exhausted, frustrated and angry. But people were also reflective, analytical, determined and re-energised. More than ever there's a recognition of the need for smarter, more targeted climate campaigns. Details have yet to emerge, but may include focusing on powerful mining figures, the toxic Murdoch media, insurance companies and other businesses. Certainly, we need conversations outside our usual echo chambers and a deeper understanding of economics and workplace transitions.

Going forward, WATCH will be guided by the direction set by the national climate movement, but for our small team to be effective we really need new voices willing to play an active role. Sussan Ley is Australia's new Environment Minister. Opportunities abound. As Barack Obama said, "Do we settle for the world as it is, or do we work for the world as it should be?" Please get in touch with your thoughts.

'Actions matter' – WATCH member Michael Rosenbrock

If you are concerned or despairing after the Federal Election result and its implications for the future (and present), please take the outcome as a reminder that our actions matter. Change requires sustained and persistent effort, often in the face of adversity. If we want change, we need to be active as much as we can, not just when there is an election. Action is the antidote to despair - it really is!

Our Federal representatives

Helen Haines

Part of the reason Dr Helen Haines won the seat of Indi was a climate platform founded on energy democracy. Read this insightful article by Cam Klose:

<https://amp.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jun/01/communities-around-australia-are-taking-clean-energy-into-their-own-hands-the-indi-win-built-on-that?>

Sussan Ley

In the article below, the newly appointed Environment Minister appears to dismiss the findings of a UN and an ACF report, claiming that habitat loss isn't just land clearing 'if it is land clearing at all' and states the biggest threat to threatened species is 'probably feral cats'. The Australian Conservation Foundation has estimated that there has been a loss of more than 7.4m hectares of threatened species habitat since the EPBC Act was introduced in 1999, with Australia singled out for its high rates of deforestation. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2019/jun/14/sussan-ley-ill-be-an-environmentalist-as-minister?>

Two interviews were given by WATCH members in response to Sussan Ley's appointment as Environment Minister. A big thank you to Bobbi McKibbin for speaking on ABC GM and to Lauriston Muirhead for speaking to Anthony Bunn at the BM:

<https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/6184213/enviro-group-reacts-to-leys-new-gig/?>

Letters to the editor

David Macilwain was on fire with two letters published in the Border Mail in one week. Unfortunately, you need to be a subscriber to read them. But here are a few choice excerpts:

No climate policy mandate

'Our recycled Prime Minister Scott Morrison and his Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction Angus Taylor say they now have a mandate for (in)action on climate change. But they have nothing of the sort, and we need to tell them so.

<https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/6190956/you-say-we-owe-the-deceased-the-last-word/?cs=9940>

Miracle won't save us

'Well, we had our little "Helenic" miracle here in Indi, even as Scott Morrison celebrated his "miracle" in Canberra. But evidently one man's miracle is another's disaster, as the return of the "Coal"-ition government puts an end to our chance of stopping disastrous climate change that will continue to be caused by the burning of more coal.'

<https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/6164030/your-say-we-need-a-real-miracle-to-save-us-from-fires-droughts-floods-and-cyclones/?cs=9940>

And two more letters here from Graham Parton and Bruce Key:

<https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/6204924/your-say-what-will-sussan-do-to-save-the-black-throated-finch/?cs=9940>

Adani

Adani is cleared to start digging its coal mine – six key questions answered

By approving the Adani's groundwater management plan on June 13, the Queensland government has given the final green light to the company's controversial Carmichael coal mine.

<https://theconversation.com/adani-is-cleared-to-start-digging-its-coal-mine-six-key-questions-answered-118760?>

Liberals concede error on Suttor River pipeline decision

The federal government has conceded it erred by failing to consider public submissions when evaluating a plan by mining giant Adani to pump billions of litres of water from a river in drought-stricken Queensland.

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/government-concedes-error-on-adani-pipeline-decision-20190613-p51x9l.html>

Scientists warn ancient desert springs may dry up under Adani plan

A group of Australia's pre-eminent water scientists say a rare desert oasis may dry up under Adani's "flawed" protections for groundwater near its proposed Carmichael mine:

<https://www.theage.com.au/politics/federal/scientists-warn-ancient-desert-springs-may-dry-up-under-adani-plan-20190608-p51vqn.html?>

#StopAdani Albury Wodonga (SAAW)

On Friday June 14th, ABC Goulburn Murray's Sandra Moon interviewed Jenni Huber about the Adani approval. Jenni not only courageously agreed to being interviewed, she did a terrific job, answering each of Sandra's questions really well. Bravo and three cheers to Jenni!

Next meeting

Our next meeting will be at 6.00pm, 4 July at the SAC. We will be having a think and planning what will be the next step. To keep abreast of breaking news, please visit our Facebook page:

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

Knitting Nannas

Knitting Nannas for Renewables meet each Thursday, 12.30 to 1.30 in QEII square near Dean St.

We chat to people in the street about anything from energy efficiency, solar subsidies, draught- proofing the house to gardening. Bring a chair, or just drop by to say hi.

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. Follow Ecoportal on Facebook:

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

June <http://ecoportal.net.au/events/2019-06/>

July Lots of tree planting activities coming up later in July. <http://ecoportal.net.au/events/2019-07/>

Living Lightly

Living Lightly is published every Wednesday in the Border Mail and published on the Ecoportal website <http://ecoportal.net.au/articles/>. It is a wonderful way to connect with people who have similar conservation and environmental values. If you have a 380 word article you'd like to share, please send it to Lauren Salathiel at l.salathiel@gmail.com

Recent articles

- [Winged wonders at the bottom of the garden](#) By Katherine Muirhead, Tabletop
- [Play your part for the platypus](#) By Geoff Williams, Australian Platypus Conservancy
- [Biodiversity flourishes in roadside reserves](#) By Jonathan Howard
- [Retiring? How about conservation volunteering?](#) By Mick Webster

Climate emergency

Why the Guardian is changing the language it uses about the environment

Instead of "climate change" the preferred terms are "climate emergency, crisis or breakdown" and "global heating" is favoured over "global warming", although the original terms are not banned.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/may/17/why-the-guardian-is-changing-the-language-it-uses-about-the-environment?>

Time to flick climate emergency switch: a plea to our new Parliament

Organisations representing 66 million people in 13 countries have adopted formal climate emergency resolutions. But Australia still has its head in the sand. <https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/time-to-flick-climate-emergency-switch-a-plea-to-our-new-parliament-20190530-p51so6.html?>

Pope Francis declares 'climate emergency' and urges action

Addressing energy leaders, pope warns of 'catastrophic' effects of global heating:

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jun/14/pope-francis-declares-climate-emergency-and-urges-action?>

Torres Strait Islanders ask UN to hold Australia to account on climate 'human rights abuses'

Climate change is a crisis that's washing away their homes, infrastructure and even cemeteries.

<https://theconversation.com/torres-strait-islanders-ask-un-to-hold-australia-to-account-on-climate-human-rights-abuses-117262?>

Carbon emissions

Dirty Power: Big Coal's network of influence over the coalition government

Watch this 15-minute Greenpeace video on the enormous effect the mining industry is having on the government.

Essential viewing! <https://www.facebook.com/greenpeaceaustraliapacific/videos/376426336310070/?t=18>

Figures show emissions have risen for the fourth consecutive year – RN Breakfast

Listen to this interview where Fran Kelly interrogates Minister Angus Taylor. As one of our members commented, 'This guy could sell you a bridge in a drought!'

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/figures-show-emissions-have-risen-for-fourth-consecutive-year/11188756>

Have your say...

Albury-Wodonga's natural environment strategy

The plan has yet to be developed and will be shaped by community feedback. It's an opportunity to get our concerns about climate incorporated into the report. Complete an online survey here:

<https://wodonga.mysocialpinpoint.com/2c1c-regional-natural-environment-strategy-home>

Draft Climate Change Policy, Indigo Shire Council

To make a submission fill in the online form below, available until 26 June 2019.

<https://www.indigoshire.vic.gov.au/Have-your-say/Current-consultations/Draft-Climate-Change-Policy?>

Hume Regional Renewable Energy Roadmap

Completing our survey will help the Hume Roadmap represent the voice of the community, its values, identify local barriers and issues, and what the community expects from the renewable energy transition.

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/regional-renewable-energy-roadmaps/hume?>

Reducing Victoria's Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Have your say about what Victoria should do over the next five years and beyond to set the State on a pathway to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/climate-change-reducing-victorias-greenhouse-gas-emissions?>

Wildlife matters

Wild Pollinator Count news: Autumn 2019 results: our biggest count yet!

With 629 submissions from 266 localities, this was not only our biggest autumn count but it surpassed our all-time record! <https://wildpollinatorcount.com/blog/>

Our Native Garden Nursery winter sale, Saturday June 29, 10am to 1pm

Wodonga Waste Transfer Station, 29 Kane Rd. Free plants with every sale. Enquires 0418 579 331

<ournativegarden.com.au>

Birds in Backyards Winter Survey 2019

Rug up and get outdoors! <http://www.birdsinbackyards.net/content/article/Birds-Backyards-Winter-Survey-2019-rug-and-get-outdoors?>

Australia's wildlife still needs a pathway for recovery

The [global announcement](#) that extinction looms for about a million species was made a few weeks ago. This scale of loss will have catastrophic consequences not only for nature, but for us too.

<https://theconversation.com/as-the-dust-of-the-election-settles-australias-wildlife-still-needs-a-pathway-for-recovery-117406?>

Regenerative farming

Back to Nature: Making money while restoring the land – Landline

Going against the grain has paid off for these beef producers and even encouraged other conventional farmers to change course. <https://www.abc.net.au/landline/back-to-nature:-making-money-while-restoring-the/11126866>

Farmers turn back on harsh chemicals, improve biodiversity and lower costs

A growing number of farmers are rejecting modern agricultural practices, instead relying on more natural methods to improve their land and increase biodiversity. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-05-18/farmers-use-regenerative-agriculture-to-fuel-biodiversity/11111066>

Regenerative farming has helped transform the landscape of dry properties

Boorowa farmer David Marsh began adopting regenerative practices in 1999, increasing native vegetation and tree coverage on his property from just 3 per cent to 20 per cent. Watch this video: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-14/10900580?>

Food for thought

Here are three articles recommended by our readers. Hope you find them useful

Climate action: 6 reasons you should feel inspired, not defeated - Climate Council

If we take a moment to look around us, there are many reasons to feel inspired and hopeful for our future and the climate. <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/climate-action-reasons-feel-inspired-not-defeated/?>

What psychotherapy can do for the climate and biodiversity crises

That humans are having an unsustainable impact on Earth may have become a familiar message – but it is still a difficult message to hear. <https://theconversation.com/what-psychotherapy-can-do-for-the-climate-and-biodiversity-crisis-116977>

Coping with climate change distress

This information sheet is on how to deal with the distress and stress of not just *knowing* that climate change is a threat, but also *feeling* that it is a threat. <https://www.psychology.org.au/for-the-public/Psychology-topics/Climate-change-psychology/Coping-with-climate-change-distress>

Congratulations!

Eileen Collins OAM

The Queen's Birthday Honours List announced the award of an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in the General Division to Eileen Collins, Chiltern Victoria, for service to conservation and the environment. This is a richly deserved award that acknowledges Eileen's extensive contribution to the Friends of Chiltern Mt Pilot National Park. Have a look at the link and admire the many photos which Eileen has taken of local fungi:

Fungi of Chiltern Mt Pilot NP

<http://friendsofchiltern.org.au/index.php/biodiversity/galleries/fungi-of-chiltern-mt-pilot-np2?>

Thankyou...

Thanks again to everyone who has provided content for this newsletter including those who regularly send links, write *Living Lightly* articles or letters to the editor. They are all much appreciated. Next newsletter is due out on July 24th.

Facebook

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

WATCH meetings

WATCH meetings occur every quarter, usually in central Albury. The next meeting will be at 6pm on Tuesday June 25th. Contact Lizette to be advised of the venue: lizette@salmonfamily.id.au

WATCH email address: watch.albwod@gmail.com

WATCH website: www.watch.id.au

*Warm regards,
Jenny Davies*