

Wodonga Albury Towards Climate Health

WATCHWORD 20.5.20

#StopAdani Albury Wodonga (SAAW)

Marsh online rally, Tuesday May 19th

Lots of locals joined the 6000-strong online-throng to lobby insurance giant Marsh to dump Adani. Our hashtag trended at number one on the Twittersphere, we left hundreds of messages on the Marsh LinkedIn and Facebook pages and we flooded their top executives' phones with messages. We'll find out at this Thursday's AGM if their climate policy rules out Adani. Stay tuned!

Stay in touch

The next StopAdani Albury-Wodonga meeting has been postponed until 6pm, Thursday 2nd July. This will be subject to what is happening with COVID 19. For more information contact Tracey Esler tesesler@gmail.com. For all updates visit the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StopAdaniAlburyWodonga/>

Young people taking action

School Strike 4 Climate (SS4C)

Albury Wodonga School Strike for Climate Action group held a virtual panel discussion on Friday 15th May with Dr Helen Haines and Cr Amanda Cohn. Organised by School Strike 4 Climate Albury-Wodonga, our leaders answered audience questions about bushfires, COVID-19 and the climate. Details on the WATCH Facebook page:

<https://m.facebook.com/wodongaandalburytowardclimatehealth/photos/a.596490217110957/2917316915028264/?>

Youth activists claim Clive Palmer's proposed coal mine could breach their human rights

Youth Verdict is a new organisation of young people from across Queensland using legal rights to fight for youth justice. The first case is a historic legal challenge against Clive Palmer's Galilee Coal mine. Watch this item on the 7.30 Report. Heart-warming: <https://www.abc.net.au/7.30/youth-activists-claim-clive-palmers-proposed-coal/12245602> And here is more information about this landmark case from the Environmental Defenders Office:

<https://www.edo.org.au/gcp-become-a-defender/>

WATCH news

If you have any local campaign ideas, please send them through. In the meantime, remember to write letters to the editor (letters@bordermail.com.au), and *Living Lightly* articles. Also, use social media to ensure our government and society doesn't forget about climate change over coming weeks and months.

Facebook

Check the WATCH Facebook page for stories, photos and comments:

<https://m.facebook.com/pg/wodongaandalburytowardclimatehealth/posts/?>

Letters in the Border Mail

May 18th 'Greater transparency essential with COVID 19 Commission' – Lizette Salmon

<https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/6758302/your-say-greater-transparency-essential-with-covid-19-commission/?cs=9940>

May 7th 'Coal industry's thirst'- Aileen Jacob

<https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/6746827/your-say-army-base-a-better-host-for-the-storm/?cs=9940>

Glen Eira City Council

Glen Eira City Council has joined the growing movement calling for urgent action to address climate change by passing a motion to declare a climate emergency. <https://www.gleneira.vic.gov.au/about-council/news/latest-news/glen-eira-declares-a-climate-emergency?>

Cause for concern

Vested interests in the COVID Commission

The fossil fuel lobby is running a concerted campaign to exploit this global health crisis to further their agenda and the people put in charge of economic recovery have strong fossil fuel ties. Scott Morrison's COVID Commission is stacked with gas "kingmakers" and fossil fuel executives. For more on this miscarriage see: <https://fossilfuel.watch/>

Global warming: Safe climate niche closing fast, with billions at risk

As much as one-third of the world's population will be exposed to Sahara Desert-like heat within half a century if greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise at the pace of recent years.

<https://www.theage.com.au/environment/climate-change/blown-away-safe-climate-niche-closing-fast-with-billions-at-risk-20200504-p54pod.html?>

Morrison government passes laws to aid expensive brown hydrogen experiment

The Morrison government has succeeded in passing new legislation that is designed to kick start the production of hydrogen from brown coal, a move that undermines efforts to establish a green hydrogen industry in Australia.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/morrison-government-passes-laws-to-aid-expensive-brown-hydrogen-experiment-58765/>

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>

Most of the Ecoportal events have been cancelled or postponed. However, some groups are operating in other ways, such as online, so please keep an eye on the calendar. Follow the link at ecoportal.net.au/events.

Online events

ACF Community Albury Wodonga Region, June 6th 2pm

ACF Albury Wodonga Region has been added to the Australian Conservation Foundation's list of local community groups. Meetings will be held on the first Saturday of the month. Details at ACF.AWR@gmail.com or the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/512119632769926>

National Bushfire and Climate Summit, June 9th 6pm

The [National Bushfire Summit 2020](#) is a series of six events, bringing together critical stakeholders to build the foundations for a national, coordinated response to Australia's bushfire, natural disaster, and climate change crises. Hosted by Kerry O'Brien, join Climate Council CEO Amanda McKenzie, for a live-streamed panel featuring experts across disaster preparedness, emergency services, climate science and defence. [Register here](#)

Climate Council webinars

May 27th '2040' with **Amanda McKenzie**, documentary filmmaker and director of 2040, **Damon Gameau**, and actor and climate activist **Yael Stone**. [Register here](#).

June 17th 'Sunlight and Seaweed' with author Professor Tim Flannery and Sam Elsom from Sea Forest, a seaweed carbon storage start-up. [Register here](#).

ABC links

'Climate Wars: How brutal politics derailed climate policy in Australia' – Four Corners

'Climate Wars', reported by Michael Brissenden, went to air on Monday May 18th and will be replayed on Wednesday May 20th at 11.20pm. It can also be seen on the ABC News channel on Saturday May 23rd at 8.10pm and at

<https://www.abc.net.au/4corners/climate-wars/12247494>

Hot Mess – Radio National

Hot Mess is a four-part RN series currently on Sunday mornings. Well worth a listen for anyone wanting a summary of the politics of climate change over the last 10 or so years and the money behind those who wish to control the conversation about coal and gas.

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/hot-mess/>

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. Articles of 380 words should be submitted to the *Living Lightly* coordinator, Lauren

Salathiel: l.salathiel@gmail.com

Recent articles

- [Hitting the road, fossil-fuel free](#) By Lauren Salathiel
- [Why the early blossoms?](#) By Lizette Salmon, WATCH and Gardens for Wildlife Albury-Wodonga Project Officer
- [I talk to the trees](#) By John Whale
- [There's something better than the old 'normal'](#) By Chris McGorlick

Community energy

Community owned renewable energy – Helen Haines, Federal member for Indi

Together with 15 local energy advocates, Helen Haines has co-authored a discussion paper about accelerating 'community-owned renewable energy, as she explains in this video:

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=552916455639964&id=230032374595042

Voices from the North East

This is a new podcast series that looks at community energy, recorded and produced by Green Energy Videos and Simon Duncan. There are now five to listen to. [Community Energy: Voices from the North East](#)

Indigo Power raises funds for community energy hubs

Indigo Power succeeded in raising \$300,000 of initial investment capital through a crowd investment offer that the company will now use to expand the number of 100 per cent renewable energy hubs serving Victorian regional communities. Such good news for our local energy retailer! <https://onestepoffthegrid.com.au/indigo-power-raises-funds-for-community-energy-hubs/>

COVID 19

Here are 5 ways to flatten the climate change curve while stuck at home

For those of us with time and resources to spare, there's plenty to do now to support climate action

<https://theconversation.com/here-are-5-ways-to-flatten-the-climate-change-curve-while-stuck-at-home-134995>

Coronavirus and climate: Australia's chance to shift to green energy - BBC News

Climate scientists Mark Howden and Matthew England say the Covid-19 pandemic is a "huge opportunity" to fast-track Australia's shift towards more renewable energy. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-52395319?>

Focus on fossil fuels

Fossil Fuel Watch

350 Australia created this website as a resource for the climate movement and journalists to remain across the coordinated campaign from the Minerals Council, APPEA, QRC, NSWMC and some of the biggest fossil fuel companies. www.fossilfuelwatch.com

Australia listened to the science on coronavirus. Imagine if we did the same for coal mining

Australia's relative success in stopping the spread of COVID-19 is largely due governments taking expert advice on a complex problem. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of decisions on projects that threaten the environment – most notably, Adani's [Carmichael coal mine](#).

<https://theconversation.com/australia-listened-to-the-science-on-coronavirus-imagine-if-we-did-the-same-for-coal-mining-138212?>

Westpac to withdraw support for thermal coalmining after 2030

Westpac Bank says climate change is a financial risk and addressing use of fossil fuels will create opportunities.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/may/04/westpac-bank-to-withdraw-support-for-thermal-coal-mining-after-2030?>

Aren't we in a drought? The Australian black coal industry uses enough water for over 5 million people

Water is a highly contested resource and the coal industry is one of Australia's biggest water users.

<https://theconversation.com/arent-we-in-a-drought-the-australian-black-coal-industry-uses-enough-water-for-over-5-million-people-137591?>

Australian Conservation Foundation petition

The new ACF coal and water report exposes just how much of our country's freshwater coal corporations consume. [Sign the petition](#) calling on our elected representatives – state and federal – to support the shift from coal to clean energy.

Wildlife matters

Court halts logging in unburnt Victorian native forest

Logging has been temporarily halted in 26 unburnt areas of Victorian native forest after environmentalists argued in court there was a risk of “serious and irreversible damage” to threatened species after last summer's bushfires.

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/court-halts-logging-in-unburnt-victorian-native-forest-20200429-p54od0.html?>

Wire on a bird: Tiny backpack radios to keep track of rarest parrot

Orange-bellied parrots have been released in Victorian coastal wetlands wearing tiny, solar-powered backpack transmitters with researchers hoping the technology will eventually be used to track the migration of what is one of the world's rarest birds. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/wire-on-a-bird-tiny-backpack-radios-to-keep-track-of-rarest-parrot-20200427-p54nmx.html?>

How the dawn chorus reconnects me to life, and hope - Sean Dooley

‘Listening to the voluble morning choir spurs feelings of wonder and gratefulness to be alive on our sublime planet.’

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2020/may/02/beautiful-birdsong-how-the-dawn-chorus-reconnects-me-to-life-and-hope?>

Environment news

Environment bushfire fund boosted by \$150 million - RN Breakfast

Conservation groups have welcomed the extra funding but are calling on the Morrison Government to provide better legal protections for wildlife. Fran Kelly interviews the Federal Environment Minister Sussan Ley:

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/wildlife/12237424>

Coalition is aiming to change Australia's environment laws before review is finished

The environment minister, [Sussan Ley](#), has flagged the government may change Australia's national environment laws before a review is finished later this year. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/apr/23/coalition-is-aiming-to-change-australias-environment-laws-before-review-is-finished?>

Tell the Minister not to rush environmental protection - Friends of the Earth

Email Environment Minister Sussan Ley now:

https://www.foe.org.au/epbc?utm_campaign=epbc_rushed&utm_medium=email&utm_source=foe

Good news from Albury Wodonga

Wodonga Council adopts single use plastic policy

Wodonga Council has adopted a single-use plastic policy at the April council meeting. The policy will encourage staff and the community to be more sustainable and to reduce their impact on our natural resources.

<https://www.wodonga.vic.gov.au/Newsroom/Archive/wodonga-council-adopts-single-use-plastic-policy?>

Albury Wodonga food access guide

Wodonga Local Food Network and Gateway Health have compiled the Albury Wodonga Food Access Guide. To download the guide visit gatewayhealth.org.au.

Opinion pieces

The Great Pause

Watch this and contemplate how things might be: <https://vimeo.com/411278238/8ed0db6170?>

While the world looked the other way, corporate giants abandoned coal – Bob Carr

Can we deal with a pandemic and global warming at once – both urgent, one an immediate hit, the other a decade-long burn? <https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/while-the-world-looked-the-other-way-corporate-giants-abandoned-coal-20200514-p54ssj.html>

3 times Michael Moore's film Planet of the Humans gets the facts wrong (and 3 times it gets them right) – Ian Lowe

Documentary maker [Michael Moore's](#) latest offering, [Planet of the Humans](#), rightly argues that infinite growth on a finite planet is “suicide”. But the film's bogus claims threaten to overshadow that message.

<https://theconversation.com/3-times-michael-moores-film-planet-of-the-humans-gets-the-facts-wrong-and-3-times-it-gets-them-right-137890>

And finally...

10 best nature quotes from Sir David Attenborough

Happy 94th birthday, Sir David!

<https://www.wwf.org.au/news/blogs/10-best-nature-quotes-from-sir-david-attenborough?>

The Great Realisation

Many of us thought this was lovely and should be shared:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=925284527912453>

Thankyou...

Thanks again to friends and supporters who have 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. The next newsletter is due out on June 17th.

WATCH email address: watch.albwod@gmail.com

WATCH website: www.watch.id.au

Warm regards,

Jenny Davies