

Wodonga Albury Towards Climate Health

WATCHWORD 21.4.21

Zali Steggall's Climate Change Bill

It's been over a month since the public hearings into Zali Steggall's Climate Change Bill concluded and just over 2,000 of the 6,500 written submissions received have now been uploaded to the APH website for public review. Check [here](#) for links to view. The Chair is expected to submit his report into the Climate Change Bill sometime in the May/June session of parliament. It will be interesting to see whether international pressure from this week's Global Leaders Climate Summit, combined with Zali's Bill, will finally push our government to take meaningful action.

Countdown to Earth Day

Climate talks will test Biden's pledge to make global heating a priority

The Leaders' Summit on Climate talks, to be held virtually tomorrow 22nd April and Friday 23rd April, are an opportunity for the US to shape, hasten and deepen global efforts to cut climate-wrecking fossil fuel pollution. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/mar/27/joe-biden-climate-talks-global-heating?>

Alan Kohler: The climate spin can't go on forever. Net zero must be our aim

The Morrison government faces a big choice when it comes time to commit fully to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. <https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2021/04/06/alan-kohler-net-zero-2050/?>

WATCH news

Adani Ports removed from Dow Jones Sustainability Index

WATCH was a signatory to a letter challenging Adani Ports in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. In some good news, [S&P Dow Jones has announced that it will remove](#) Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (Adani Ports) from its Sustainability Index in response to [evidence presented to it](#) by human rights and environmental groups in March. <https://www.marketforces.org.au/adani-ports-removed-from-dow-jones-sustainability-index/>

Wodonga's Council Plan and Environmental Sustainability Strategy

WATCH members were among the dozen community representatives who attended the breakfast meeting on March 18 on Wodonga's new Council Plan and Environmental Sustainability Strategy. Suggestions included mentioning climate impacts and mitigation in the Council Plan, an emissions reduction target of zero net emissions by 2030, other measurable targets and regular reporting on actions.

Good news from Wagga

Wagga Wagga City Council has resolved to adopt a Community Target for Net Zero Emissions (NZE) by 2050 and also a Corporate Target for Net Zero Emissions by 2040. <https://wagga.nsw.gov.au/the-council/news-and-updates/news-articles/council-commits-to-net-zero-emissions-targets>

Letters in the Border Mail

'*Obvious answer*' - Graham Parton, 3rd April <https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/7190591/your-say-congratulations-to-council-for-doing-their-homework/?cs=9940>

'*The world is changing*' - Albert Smith, 19th March (no link)

'*Climate crisis must be recognised*' - Ching Ang, 17th March (no link)

WATCH meetings

WATCH meetings occur every quarter, usually in central Albury and anyone is most welcome to attend. The next meeting will be at 6pm on Tuesday 15th June 2021. Contact Lizette to be advised of the venue: lizette@salmonfamily.id.au

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

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

Climate emergency

For these Torres Strait Islanders, climate change is already here

For generations, Indigenous Australians have thrived on the islands in the Torres Strait – but rising sea levels, more extreme weather and coastal erosion are devouring some of the 17 inhabited islands in the region and threatening their way of life. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-04-19/torres-strait-islanders-climate-change-impacts-uninhabitable/100069596?>

Environment minister Sussan Ley says climate action not her portfolio in stoush with states

Sussan Ley is understood to have told state counterparts that coordinating with them on climate mitigation is beyond her portfolio. One wonders if Australia is the only country in the world whose environment minister has no responsibility for the climate emergency.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/apr/17/environment-minister-sussan-ley-says-climate-action-not-her-portfolio-in-stoush-with-states>

'Failure is not an option': after a lost decade on climate action, the 2020s offer one last chance

The outlook may be dire, but every fraction of a degree of avoided warming matters. Its value will be measured in terms of human lives, species and ecosystems saved. The goal is very challenging, but still achievable. <https://theconversation.com/failure-is-not-an-option-after-a-lost-decade-on-climate-action-the-2020s-offer-one-last-chance-158913?>

Listen to this interview with Will Steffen on RN Breakfast with Fran Kelly

<https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/breakfast/australia-net-zero-carbon-emissions-by-2035-climate-council/13303578>

Community energy

Parliament to inquire into locally-owned renewables - Helen Haines MP

The House Standing Committee on the Environment and Energy has agreed to hold a public inquiry into Dr Haines' *Australian Local Power Agency Bill 2021*.

<https://www.helenhaines.org/media/parliament-to-inquire-into-locally-owned-renewables?>

Time to make the Community Energy Target a reality

The Victorian Parliament's recent inquiry into community action to tackle the climate crisis found that community energy could play a significant role in our transition. Please sign this petition from Friends of the Earth <https://www.melbournefoe.org.au/communityenergytarget?>

#StopAdani Albury Wodonga (SAAW)

Current actions

Lloyds of London has introduced an Environmental Social Governance policy and committed to no new insurance for coal and tar sands from 2022 and to no further insurance by 2030. Adani must renew two insurance policies this year. SAAW is focusing on ARK underwriters, asking them to publicly rule out providing insurance for Adani. Send emails to the management team and let them know how important this is. <https://arkunderwriting.com/contact/management-team/>

International organisations are keen to work with Friends of the Earth and StopAdani to push Lloyds to a better policy. There is an action planned for early May and more information will be posted on the SAAW Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/StopAdaniAlburyWodonga/>

Knitting Nannas for Renewables

Knitting Nannas are meeting every Thursday at 12.30 to 1.30 alternating between Sussan Ley's office, 517 Kiewa St Albury and Bridget McKenzie's office, 172 High St Wodonga, carefully socially distancing. Everyone is welcome and BYO your own chair. We continue to knit rugs and donate them to local charities. Contact Liz Hammond 0429 177 681 ronlizhammond@gmail.com or Jenni Huber 0410 074 900.

The national Knitting Nannas are supporting the '**Fund Our Future Not Gas Week of Action**' during late April and early May. SAAW is working with AW Extinction Rebellion and will be targeting Sussan Ley. More information soon.

Committee meeting, Thursday 6th May 2021, 6.30 - 8 pm

This will be a Zoom meeting. RSVP to Alison on alison.veld@gmail.com and the invitation will be sent out in the week before the meeting. (Please note, it's the second Thursday of the month, changed due to a clash with the national Stop Adani meeting)

Regional advocacy groups

ACF Albury Wodonga Region

ACF AWR is planning to hold its first formal meeting on 1st May. The group has been busy behind the scenes lobbying Wodonga council to ask them to include emission reduction targets and strategies in their four-year plan. Details at acf.awr@gmail.com.

Extinction Rebellion Albury-Wodonga and Indigo XR

A climate action protest outside the office of the environment minister Sussan Ley on Monday 22nd March received excellent media coverage, with a Border Mail article and interviews on local TV and radio. <https://www.bordermail.com.au/story/7177602/theatrics-a-part-of-border-climate-change-rally-outside-ministers-office/>

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. Keep checking the calendar for updates.

April <http://ecoportal.net.au/events/2021-04/>

May <http://ecoportal.net.au/events/2021-05/>

Selected events

Disaster recovery and climate change leadership program

This program will be delivered by Alpine Valleys Community Leadership (AVCL) and supported by North East Catchment Management Authority (NECMA), Please email your completed application to eo@avclp.org.au by Friday 21 May 2021. Details here: <http://avclp.org.au/programs-and-courses/dr-climate-change-program/>

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, Kirsten Coates. Please send your articles to: livinglightlybm@gmail.com

Recent articles

- [Rewilding](#) By Alan Hewett
- [Gardens as habitat](#) By David Thurley
- [Collecting firewood](#) By Anne Stelling, Parklands Albury Wodonga
- [Scanning for Platypus](#) By Geoff Williams, Australian Platypus Conservancy

Focus on our young people

May 21st - School Strike 4 Climate

There will be a SS4C event in Albury Wodonga. Stayed tuned for more details in the next newsletter. <http://www.schoolstrike4climate.com/may21>

Kids and climate change: a toolkit - ACF

To work out if the children in your world are ready to talk, listen carefully to what they say and the questions they ask. Even if you haven't talked about climate change with them, chances are they will have heard about it from friends or at school. Here is a PDF of the guide. [Download the guide.](#)

Fired up!

Government accused of pressuring experts who questioned its gas-fired recovery plan – Four Corners

The government has been accused of pressuring experts who questioned its gas-fired recovery plan: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-04-12/four-corners-gas-plan-pressured-experts/100055730?>

Here is a link to the Four Corners program '*Fired up*': <https://iview.abc.net.au/video/NC2103H010S00>

Renewables, not gas, will bring rural energy security - Helen Haines

Listen to Helen Haines' speech in Parliament: 'The gas distribution network simply doesn't even physically cover most of regional Australia. It doesn't reach places like Corryong. If you want to cook with gas in Corryong, you need to use a gas bottle.' <https://www.helenhaines.org/media/renewables-not-gas-will-bring-rural-energy-security?>

A land of flooding rains?

Yes, Australia is a land of flooding rains. But climate change could be making it worse

While Australia has always experienced floods, disasters like the one in NSW are likely to become more frequent and intense as climate change continues. <https://theconversation.com/yes-australia-is-a-land-of-flooding-rains-but-climate-change-could-be-making-it-worse-157586?>

Flood and Fire – stories courtesy of the ACF

As floods recently inundated farms, towns and even the fringes of our cities, it was a confronting reminder of what science is telling us about climate change. <https://stories.acf.org.au/flood-and-fire>

Fire and flood: 'Whole areas of Australia will be uninsurable'

Extreme weather events caused by the climate emergency are an existential threat to homeowners and industry alike. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/apr/02/fire-and-flood-whole-areas-of-australia-will-be-uninsurable>

Cause for concern

Australia's slack climate effort leaves our children 10 times more work to do

We hear a lot about the Morrison government 'kicking the can down the road' on emissions reduction. New research reveals the precise burden that forces onto young Australians. <https://theconversation.com/wake-up-mr-morrison-australias-slack-climate-effort-leaves-our-children-10-times-more-work-to-do-157136?>

How can NSW allow new coalmines while committing to net zero emissions? It's bizarre

Welcome to the topsy turvy world of Australian climate policy. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/apr/19/how-can-nsw-allow-new-coalmines-while-committing-to-net-zero-emissions-its-bizarre?>

Finance news

Climate Action 100+ investor group calls on the world's biggest polluters to lift their game

The world's biggest investors have declared that the world's biggest polluters need to do more and, more particularly, spend more to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions to live up to public commitments to cut their carbon footprints. <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-23/climate-investors-carbon-emissions-environment-pollution/13268854?>

Corporate Australia told to put money where its mouth is

Australian companies are second only to their European counterparts when it comes to announcing net-zero targets, but none of the [12 analysed](#) in a [new global benchmark](#) have outlined how they will adjust their investment plans to meet these targets. <https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2021/03/23/corporate-australia-net-zero/>

Wildlife matters

How to build a cat enclosure

If you missed the event on Saturday 13th February when Gardens 4 Wildlife teamed up with Safe and Sound Cat Enclosures' Ryan Forster, here is a video on 'How to build a cat enclosure' including design, tools and materials. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-p1Bj90wYg&fbclid=IwAR3EO6->

Only the lonely: an endangered bird is forgetting its song as the species dies out

In healthy populations, the song of regent honeyeaters is complex and long. But where the population is very small, the song is sadly diminished. <https://theconversation.com/only-the-lonely-an-endangered-bird-is-forgetting-its-song-as-the-species-dies-out-156950?>

Good news from our region

Awards a win for waste-wise community

Albury City was named the overall winner of the 2021 Sustainable Communities Tidy Towns NSW award at a special ceremony in northern NSW. Albury City also won awards for the Renewable Energy Hub at the Albury Waste Management Centre (AWMC) plus a highly commended recognition for the Albury Wodonga Repair Café <https://www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/news/ceos-message/awards-a-win-for-waste-wise-community?>

Age won't slow 90-year-old farmer determined to build on conservation, farm sustainability work

Maisie Enders and her husband were among the first to put their whole farm under a conservation covenant. Such an inspiration! <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-04-19/age-wont-slow-maisie-enders-farm-sustainability-work/13307670?>

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 19th May.

Warm regards,

Jenny Davies

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WATCH website: www.watch.id.au