

CHAIN REACTION

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A CLIMATE FOR CHANGE

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EARTH NEWS



Oz bans cluster bombs!

The Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), is a cutting-edge international agreement currently signed by 100 countries and ratified by 17 of them, so far. It outlaws the use of nearly all existing cluster munitions and requires impressive post-conflict measures. The CCM empowers nations to make laws against investment in companies that produce cluster munitions. This follows from Article 1c of the convention: "Each State Party undertakes never under any circumstances to assist, encourage or induce anyone to engage in any activity prohibited to a State Party under this Convention."

Australia agreed to ratify the CCM in August. We must now draft legislation that allows us to implement the treaty, in our set of circumstances. These include our military alliances: the USA, for example, is not a signatory to the treaty. If the CCM is as effective as the Mine Ban Treaty has been, if cluster munitions become as globally stigmatised as land mines have become, such issues may become relatively unimportant to our alliance with the US.

More Information:
CMC Australia, email <cmc-aust@bigpond.com>,
CMC web <www.stopclusterbombs.org>.
If you want to do something right now, ring your favourite federal politician and ask what is happening with the enabling legislation.

Protection for northern Australian oceans

The federal government has identified 'Areas for Further Assessment' in Australia's north-western waters, a move heralded as a positive step towards marine protection for the globally significant region. The relatively pristine marine waters of north-western Australia – including the Kimberley –

currently have almost no protection whilst oil and gas exploration is forging ahead. The area is home to the world's largest nursery area for humpback whales.

Darren Kindleysides of the Australian Marine Conservation Society said: "The level of protection should reflect its ecological and cultural significance. Despite its importance currently less than 1% of the area is fully protected and 99% remains at risk from development".

State and federal government support for gas developments in the region have sparked community protest and a growing movement for more environmental planning of marine areas. The Marine Bioregional Plan is due for release in 2010 and will indicate areas for potential protection.

More Information: Australian Marine Conservation Society <www.amcs.org.au/MediaReleases-AMCS.asp?active_page_id=522>
Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts <www.environment.gov.au/coasts/mbp/north-west/index.html>

Australia's first bottled water ban

Bundanoon has become Australia's first town to introduce a ban on the sale of bottled water. The environmental cost of bottled water has been claimed as the major motivator behind the voluntary decision backed by 350 residents of the NSW community. The "Bundy on Tap" campaign has been heralded as a milestone for Australia as bottles of water have been removed from the shelves. The sale of reusable bottles has proven very popular with fountains of filtered water proposed for the town centre.

Source: <www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/09/26/2697266.htm>

Timor Sea oil spill disaster

The federal government has been accused of watching on as oil continued to flow into the Timor Sea several weeks after the spill began in late August. Upwards of 1200 tonnes of oil have entered the sea off WA's Kimberly coast since the leak. The Timor Sea is home to whales, dolphins, turtles,

seabirds, and a diverse array of fish all of which may be harmed by the oil spill. In September the federal government claimed to have found only four dead birds as a result of the spill, but the full extent of the destruction remains unknown.

The Greens claim the federal government has been too slow to act on the spill and that monitoring has been insufficient. Senator Rachel Siewert said: "It seems very clear to me that the government's public response to this crisis has been a reactive one _ where they have only released information or been pushed into action when others have taken the first steps and there has been a public outcry".

More information: <www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/09/14/2685394.htm>

Act now for southern forests of Tasmania

Australia is still logging the precious ancient old growth forests of Tasmania. Please check out the short animation, *'The PM & The Frog'*, a political satire at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=anetSXEHu8> and take action at <http://stillwildstillthreatened.org/form/please-protect-southern-forests-tasmania>. Thanks!

Chileans unite against the privatisation of seeds

An alliance of environmental organisations, organic farmers and indigenous people in Chile have opposed the introduction of a draft law which they claim further protects the rights of seed developers. The eleven groups involved in the campaign are collecting signatures of those opposed to the law. The law provides breeders with exclusive rights to propagate, sell or market the specific plant during a period of 20-25 years depending upon the type of plant.

The government claims the law will align Chilean legislation with the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants. Guillermo Riveros, president of the Association of Organic Farmers of the Bío-Bío region, told Inter Press Service: "The issue here is whether or not life can be patented. ... We believe the draft law under debate threatens food sovereignty by leaving the genetic material of plant varieties in just a few hands, especially those of transnational corporations."

More information: <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48315>

Humanity moves towards environmental catastrophe

An international group of 28 scientists has proposed nine planetary boundaries that the human race should not transgress if its civilizations are to continue into the future. The scientists have identified boundaries for climate change, stratospheric ozone, land-use change, freshwater use, biological diversity, ocean acidification, the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, aerosol loading and chemical pollution.

The study suggests that three of these boundaries (climate change, biological diversity and nitrogen input to the environment) may already have been transgressed. It also says that the boundaries are strongly connected, so crossing one boundary may seriously threaten the ability to stay within safe levels of the others.

The report is posted at: <www.stockholmresilience.org/planetary-boundaries>. An audio interview is posted at <<http://news.anu.edu.au/?p=1646>>

Australia's greenhouse mafia — a dirty dozen



Academic Clive Hamilton has compiled a list of Australia's "dirty dozen" — people who "have done more than all others in recent times to protect the interests of the fossil fuel industries by blocking and slowing effective action to reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions":

1. Mike Hitchens, CEO of the Australian Industry Greenhouse Network
2. Miles Prosser, executive director of the Australian Aluminium Council
3. Don Voelte, managing director and CEO of Woodside Energy

4. Tom Albanese, CEO of mining giant Rio Tinto
5. Heather Ridout, executive director of the Australian Industry Group
6. Paul Howes, national secretary of the Australian Workers Union
7. Ralph Hillman, executive director of the Australian Coal Association
8. John Tilley, executive director of the Australian Institute of Petroleum
9. John Daley, a prominent lobbyist for fossil-fuel intensive industries
10. Brian Fisher, CEO of Concept Economics
11. Chris Mitchell, editor-in-chief of *The Australian*, recently handed an award for 'media excellence' for the paper's coverage of climate change issues - by the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association!
12. Martin Ferguson, federal Minister for Energy and Resources, the greenhouse mafia's "point-man in the cabinet"

More information: <www.crikey.com.au/author/clivehamilton>

Clean energy to create more jobs than coal

A strong shift toward renewable energies could create 2.7 million more jobs in power generation worldwide by 2030 than staying with dependence on fossil fuels would, according to a report released in September by Greenpeace and the European Renewable Energy Council (EREC). The switch would also avoid 10 billion tonnes of greenhouse emissions over the same period.

Assuming strong policies to shift to renewables, the study projected that the number of jobs in power generation would rise by more than 2 million to 11.3 million in 2030, helped by a surge in renewables jobs to 6.9 million from 1.9 million. Under a scenario of business as usual, the number of jobs in power generation would fall by about half a million to 8.6 million by 2030, hit mainly by a decline in the coal sector due to wider mechanisation.

The report said that, for the first time in 2008, both the United States and the European Union added more capacity from renewable energies than from conventional sources including gas, coal oil and nuclear power. The report suggested the wind sector alone, for instance, could employ 2.03 million people in generating power in 2030 against about 0.5 million in 2010. Guy Ryder, general secretary of the

International Trade Union Confederation, said: "The union movement, as well as the authors of this report, believe ambitious climate action by world leaders can and must be a driver for sustainable economic growth and social progress."

The report is posted at <www.greenpeace.org/greenjobs>

Where did the benefits of the mining boom go?

A report by The Australia Institute analyses the winners and losers from the 2005-08 mining boom. It found that many of the gains from the boom were temporary or offset by losses elsewhere. The benefits of the boom barely went beyond the mining industry itself. Higher mortgages and other borrowing costs meant that many households were actually worse off as a result of the mining boom.

As a result of the boom, revenue received by mining companies increased by over \$60 billion, of which well over half, \$37 billion, represented increases in company profits before interest and tax expenses. Another \$20 billion represented increased input costs, including transport, business services, chemicals, fuels, construction and construction materials. Additional labour costs accounted for \$5 billion and additional royalties to state governments, \$3 billion. A large proportion of the increased revenue was spent by mining companies on investment in new capacity, which went up by \$30 billion.

The report is posted at: <www.tai.org.au/?q=node/9&pubid=2063>

International recognition for Australia's largest conservation corridor

An international expert has congratulated efforts to link large areas of landscape as a way of preserving habitats for Australia's threatened plants and animals. Harvey Locke, visiting Australia as a guest of the Nature Conservancy and the Thomas Foundation, is the founder and strategic advisor to the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative and a member of the World Commission on Protected Areas.

"The science of conservation biology is showing us the best way to preserve key environments from climate change is to protect large areas of land and have natural

connections between them,” said Locke. “Australia’s Great Eastern Ranges Initiative is a wonderful example of the latest international efforts to tackle conservation issues on a continental scale.”

The Great Eastern Ranges Initiative aims to create a conservation corridor along the Great Dividing Range and the Great Escarpment of eastern Australia. Announced by the NSW government in 2007 with \$7 million of seed funding to make a start in NSW, the Initiative aims to create a 2800 km conservation corridor from Victoria to Queensland. It works by encouraging voluntary conservation partnerships with organisations, community groups and landholders. Greening Australia, OzGreen, Nature Conservation Trust of NSW, NSW Department of Environment Climate Change and Water and the National Parks Association of NSW are combining to lead the Initiative.

Greenpeace blocks coal exports in Qld

Greenpeace protesters stopped production at the BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance’s (BMA) Hay Point Export Coal Terminal at Mackay for 36 hours when they chained themselves to the top of the terminal in early August, while a Greenpeace ship obstructed the loading point. The blockade coincided with the Pacific Islands Forum in Cairns. Greenpeace also staged a similar protest at the Xstrata Coal-operated Abbot Point terminal, 25km north of Bowen in north Queensland. In early August, 14 people were charged over the protests.

Source: AAP, August 7.

Fake trees: false solution to climate change

The Royal Society, one of the UK’s premier science organisations, has released a report detailing the use of geoengineering to prevent catastrophic climate change. The report titled ‘Geoengineering the climate: science, governance and uncertainty’ has received mass media attention following its proposal to use fake mechanical trees to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The report also proposes the use of solar radiation management techniques such as placing tiny mirrors into space to reflect solar radiation from hitting earth.

The report has faced criticism from many environmental organisations who claim the

report fails to adequately address the need to cut emissions, rather than seek techno-fix solutions. Tim Flannery has been amongst those in Australia advocating for research into geoengineering technologies to address climate change.

More information: Royal Society, ‘Geoengineering the climate: science, governance and uncertainty’, <<http://royalsociety.org/document.asp?tip=0&id=8770>> Greenpeace UK <www.greenpeace.org.uk/blog/climate/perspectives-geoengineering-20090902>

World Bank abandons palm oil

The World Bank has made a welcome move by agreeing to suspend International Finance Corporation funding of the oil palm sector pending the use of safeguards to ensure that lending doesn’t cause social or environmental harm. The palm oil industry has been criticised as causing large scale deforestation, community displacement, human right abuses, and huge greenhouse gas emissions. The agreement from the World Bank followed years of community, grassroots action to stop support going towards programs which benefit big business at the expense of the environment and communities. The Asian Development Bank, also a major supporter of palm oil developments, is now being urged to follow in the World Bank’s footsteps.

More information: FoE Australia <www.foe.org.au/corporates> and <http://news.mongabay.com/2009/0909-palm_oil_ifc.html>

Welcome relief for the Reef

The federal and Queensland governments have announced a plan to cut 50% of pollution running into the Great Barrier Reef over the next four years. The Reef Water Quality Protection Plan aims to halt and reverse the decline in water quality entering the Reef by 2013. The Plan focuses on water catchment areas along the length of the Great Barrier Reef and has a goal of ensuring that by 2020 the water entering the Reef from adjacent catchments has no detrimental impact on the health and resilience of the Great Barrier Reef. The recently announced Coral Reef Outlook report produced by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority has shown that the current rate of coral growth is at its lowest point in a century.

More Information: Reef Water Quality Protection Plan <www.environment.gov.au/coasts/pollution/reef/index>

html>
Australian Marine Conservation Society,
<http://www.amcs.org.au/MediaReleases-AMCS.asp?active_page_id=505>

Energy efficiency could save US\$600 billion

The United States could save about \$600 billion in energy costs by 2020 if it increased annual efficiency spending five-fold, business consultants McKinsey and Co said in a report released in July. Governments, businesses and the general public would have to boost annual spending on existing energy-saving measures, like insulating walls and more efficient appliances, from about \$10 billion annually to \$50 billion per year. The upfront costs would pay off by saving \$1.2 trillion by 2020, according to the report called ‘Unlocking Energy Efficiency in the U.S. Economy’. US greenhouse gas emissions would be reduced by about 1.1 gigatons annually, or the equivalent of taking the entire fleet of US vehicles off the road.

The report is posted at <www.mckinsey.com/client/service/electricpower/naturalgas/US_energy_efficiency>

Nuclear power goes solar

In July, Greenpeace activists hung a banner at the Zwentendorf nuclear power station, which was built in the 1970s but never used. The unused nuclear plant is being turned into the largest solar power station in Austria.

Source: <www.greenpeace.org/international/news/award-nuclear-solar250709>





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FOE AUSTRALIA NEWS

Friends of the Earth Australia is a federation of independent local groups. You can join FoE by contacting your local group. For further details, please see: <www.foe.org.au>. There is a monthly email newsletter which includes details on our campaigns here and around the world. You can subscribe via the FoEA website.

Australian Nuclear Free Alliance meeting

100 people attended the national meeting of the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance (ANFA), held on September 5-6 on Nukunu land, Quorn, South Australia. Formed in 1997, ANFA is a forum for Aboriginal people targeted by the nuclear industry to come together, with support from environmental and public health organisations. The meeting discussed plans to stop uranium and nuclear waste dump projects, elected a new national committee and formed numerous ANFA working groups. More information is posted at <www.anfa.org.au>.

A super-inspiring group of FoE activists from several states played a leading role in funding and organising the ANFA meeting and making it a big success. Cat Beaton and Steve Holdsworth from FoE Melbourne's Anti-nuclear and Clean Energy (ACE) campaign were the main organisers of the meeting, and Steve is the new FoE rep on the ANFA national committee.

Here's a rhyme by ACE activist Kasey Sparks, inspired by the Alliance meeting

*Meeting's up, whilst the giants stand down,
Take ya hats off men and watch tha black crown,*

*On country word 's up stop foolin around,
Cause sacred sites, mobs unite, the armies on tha ground,*

*Line up and be found,
Stop hiding behind,
all the lies ya put in tha minds,
whilst approving mines,
with native title being ya dime*

Baby Marlin - unanimously elected as one of the Australian Nuclear Free Alliance's mascots - with his mum Cat Beaton.



*in a dozen of excuses,
ya running a fine line,
between the races in this country,
you've gone to war with the polices
that you've already changed before,
in the interest of the white man gaining
more,
make what ya will of white mans law.*

*Black law is ignored,
Whats law for,
If this democracies flawed,
Racism was born
When james cook first explored,
Hit the shore,
With more than he bargained for,
Why'd ya have to colonise,
Why'd ya have to start this war.*

*Australia is a country
With a black history.
Aboriginal rights tied to the land
Whites, tried to take,
They took with their hand,
It's misery how much they've fucked up the land.*

*No mystery,
Its power and greed,
Whilst black families struggle even to feed,
Offering royalty money that bleeds,
The blood that's the seed,
To you getting what ya need.
Pull up ya steed,
And stop discriminating please.
Its an insult that comes with fees,*

*Land rights taken, you think no one can stop
me,
I'm the superior skin from over the sea.
Theres no cup of tea,
No consultation in the least,
Of the whole community,
Whos land ya wanna lease.
So cease,
Creatin war and start delivering some peace.*

New report shows zero emissions homes are possible

As part of its campaign to ensure Victoria builds new homes to the highest possible energy standard, FoE has joined with other green organisations to release a report called 'Towards climate safe homes: The case for zero emissions and water saving homes and neighbourhoods'.

The report shows that Victoria could introduce new building standards to reduce both emissions and water use, while also helping the state's homes and families cope with future temperature and resource price shocks. We believe that with the right government support, and with efforts to fast track stronger environmental building standards, Victorian homes and neighbourhoods could be essentially

emissions-free and water efficient by 2020. The report also considers how to retrofit existing housing. It was prepared through a collaboration between Environment Victoria, the Alternative Technology Association, Australian Conservation Foundation, FoE and the Moreland Energy Foundation.

The report can be found under the Sustainable Cities section of the FoE Melbourne website: <www.melbourne.foe.org.au>

The future of food in SA: call for workshops and presentations

From climate change, salinity, and the peaking of world oil production, to issues of trade, urban planning and public health, securing sustainable and just food systems in South Australia is facing growing challenges. In February 2010, 'From Plains to Plate: the Future of Food in South Australia' will be held in Adelaide. The event aims to build networks between active communities, government and industry to strengthen SA's food system in the face of intensifying environmental, social and economic challenges.

We are currently seeking expressions of interest from farmers, gardeners, planners, activists, permaculturalists, cooks, community workers, health professionals, teachers, policy makers and others to participate by offering workshops in your field of interest.

We'd like to hear from you if you:

- are involved with projects that aim

strengthen local food systems, (including community gardens, co-operatives, cow-shares, fruit and vegetable exchanges, guerrilla gardening, community-supported agriculture or more); or

- have practical skills to share (including on gardening, design, composting, livestock, preserving, roof gardens, community building or more); or

- have a food-security concept that you would like to initiate or share; or can offer a professional or community perspective on food issues and challenges.

For more information, or to register your interest in presenting, please forward your name, organisation, contact details and a short summary of your proposed topic to <joel.catchlove@foe.org.au>. Also contact Joel to discuss organisational support and partnerships. <www.adelaide.foe.org.au>

Kakadu Traditional Owners and environment groups call for greenhouse cuts to protect World Heritage sites

Traditional Owners from Kakadu have joined national and international environment groups in an urgent call for major reductions in greenhouse gas emissions to help protect key World Heritage sites.

The Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation, representing the Mirarr Traditional Owners of north-eastern Kakadu, have joined the environmental groups and have lodged a submission to the United Nations seeking to ensure that nations give effect to their obligations under the World Heritage

Convention when negotiating emissions reductions in Copenhagen in December. The United Nations has identified over 120 World Heritage sites threatened by climate change including Kakadu National Park, the Great Barrier Reef and the Himalayan Glaciers.

Tulele Peisa

At the FoE Australia national meeting held in August, PNG NGO Tulele Peisa was admitted as an affiliate member. Many FoE members will remember Tulele Peisa from the national speaking tour we organised in 2007 which featured Ursula Rakova and Bernard Tunin. They spoke about the climate change impacts on the Carteret Islands, offshore from Bougainville.

The Carteret Islanders are amongst the growing ranks of environmental refugees – the entire cultural group is facing relocation due to the impacts of climate change. The islanders have fought for more than 20 years against the rising ocean, building sea walls and planting mangroves. However, storm surges and high tides continue to wash away homes, destroy vegetable gardens, and contaminate fresh water supplies. It has been estimated that by 2015, the Carteret Islands could be largely submerged and entirely uninhabitable.

As a result, the community is currently in the process of staging a migration to Bougainville. We are proud to further our relationship with Tulele Peisa.

More information: <www.tulelepeisa.org>



Australian Nuclear Free Alliance Meeting, Quorn, September 5 - 6



FOE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Eviction of African-descent communities in Colombia

August 6 was the date fixed for the eviction of the black community 'squatters' in La Toma, in the Suárez municipality in north Cauca, Colombia. Their territory consists of 7000 hectares, some 6500 of which, including the cemetery, are sought by Anglo Gold Ashanti for exploration purposes.

The presence of black communities on these lands dates from 1636, since when they have worked small gold mines, which are now the only means of subsistence for hundreds of families. These artisanal gold mines constitute one of the last common goods still conserved by the black communities of northern Cauca, and their eviction from La Toma would be one more link in the historic chain of unjust expropriations that should be blocked by determined action by all.

More info: <<http://londonminingnetwork.org>>

Solidarity with the people of Honduras

Messages of solidarity and actions supporting the people of Honduras and FoE Honduras / Movimiento Madre Tierra continue to flood in. The recent Young FoE Europe meeting in Croatia, with 62 young people from 27 countries, for example, sent a strong message of solidarity and demanded an end to this undemocratic situation. FoE Uruguay / REDES, together with the Uruguayan social movements, marked the Global Day of Action against the coup in Honduras, which was called by Via Campesina and took place on 11 August, by organising an event at the university with the participation of Daniel Viglietti, a musician committed to social struggles. FoE Spain and other Spanish organisations also expressed their solidarity with an action in front of the Honduran embassy in Spain; and FoE International joined Dutch organisations in a protest in Dam Square in Amsterdam. The coup in Honduras has been rejected internationally, including by the Organization of American States

and the European Union but continues unabated. You can read FoE International's statement on the coup and get updates at <www.foei.org>.

You can provide support by contributing to FoE International's Honduras Solidarity Fund at <www.foei.org/en/getinvolved/take-action/solidarity-for-Honduras/Honduras-solidarity-fund>. Protesters are still in urgent need of humanitarian assistance: food, shelter, clothing, and medicines.

Global day of action against open-pit mining

Actions against open-pit mines took place in a number of countries including Australia, Canada, Mexico and Thailand, to mark the Global Day of Action Against Open Pit Mining on July 22. These included a 36-hour sit-in by the Mexican Frente Amplio Opositor coalition outside the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City, to protest against New Gold Inc's Cerro de San Pedro gold and silver mine in Mexico. Australian FoE activists joined Filipino environmental activists from the newly formed Mining Action Philippines – Australia (<<http://map-oz.blogspot.com>>) dropped banners condemning open-pit mining. Neville Chappy Williams, a Traditional Owner from Lake Cowal, who has fought many court cases against mining, delivered documents to the Deputy Canadian High Commissioner and the Minerals Council of Australia in Canberra.

Contact: Tamara Herman (Mexico) <tamaravherman@gmail.com> or Mia Pepper, FoE Australia, <bar_barrick@yahoo.com.au>.

Send messages for Copenhagen climate capsule

The Climate Capsule initiative will bring the voices of climate change victims around the world to the UN climate conference at Copenhagen in December, in part by collecting messages from people via the FoE International website. If you are working with people affected by climate change or struggling against false solutions (such as nuclear power, large hydro dams and agrofuels), share this link with them: <www.foei.org/en/what-we-do/affected-peoples/global/2009/climate-capsule>.

The Spanish version will be available soon. Contributions in the form of video, audio, photography, drawings, letters or in any format that gets their personal messages across can be sent to <climatecapsule@foei.org> (or by snail mail to the FoE International offices).

Contact: Irene Velez, FoE International climate justice and energy co-coordinator, <clima@censat.org>



Nnimmo Bassey

FoEI members nominated as 'Time heroes of the Environment'

Nnimmo Bassey from Friends of the Earth Nigeria, and Syeda Rizwana Hasan from Friends of the Earth Bangladesh, have been nominated by Time magazine as heroes of the environment for 2009.

In his interview with Time magazine Nnimmo talks of how a massacre in 1990 by Nigeria's armed forces prompted him into championing the environment and rights of the people around him. "We realised that if people don't have a safe environment to live in, then they don't have literally any other rights," he says.

He talks about the work of Friends of the Earth Nigeria in documenting the environmental abuse caused by the oil companies, his efforts to educate people on their rights and the fact that his work often puts him on a collision course with the

authorities. "Oil has been the destruction of the Nigerian economy," says Bassey. "It destroys the relation between the people and the state" he says.

Rizwana, who is also a member of the Friends of the Earth International board, has been nominated for her legal work in advocating for tighter regulations for the country's environmentally devastating ship-breaking industry. Ship breaking is a big employer in Bangladesh - last year over 150 ships were decommissioned - and the authorities often turn a blind eye to the immense harm it causes. Rizwana sees it differently: "It's better to be jobless than to have a job that gives you cancer" she says. In March 2009, the Supreme Court laid down strict regulations on the industry, resulting in the closure of 36 ship breaking yards operating without environmental clearance.

The government has since appealed against the ruling but Rizwana and her team will fight on. "I don't want the outside world to think of Bangladesh as a dumping site," she says. "It is against my dignity. It is against the dignity of my nation and the dignity of the people."

More information: <www.time.com/time/specials/packages/0,28757,1924149,00.html> and <www.foei.org> Earlier this year, Rizwana was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize 2009 for the Asia region. More info: <www.goldmanprize.org/2009/asia>, <www.belabangla.org>.

Climate justice and energy: together, many drops can make a flood

Climate campaigners will flood Copenhagen with demands for climate justice during the crucial UNFCCC climate conference in December. The high point will be the massive 'flood for climate justice' action on 12 December. FoE Europe has put together a guide to help groups prepare mobilisation and public outreach activities in the coming months. It covers the flood action in Copenhagen; mobilisation for Copenhagen (for groups planning to bring people to the summit); Klimaforum09 in Copenhagen; the 'message in a bottle' action; the online petition and the 'demand climate justice' website; teaser actions; local floods and demonstrations; working with celebrities - and lots more!

Contact: Sophie Manson from Young FoE Europe <sophie.manson@foeeurope.org> or the FoE Europe climate justice team <flood@foeeurope.org>.



World march of women's regional assembly

FoE International was invited to participate in the World March of Women's (WMW) First Regional Encounter in the Americas, which took place from August 10-14 in Cochabamba, Bolivia. Organisations from 16 member countries participated: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Quebec and the US. FoE International's presentation was made by Patricia Gainza, from FoE Uruguay / REDES and FoE International's Economic Justice - Resisting Neoliberalism program working group. There was also time to present the FoEI International network and report on progress in talks between WMW and FoE International.

Contact: Patricia Gainza, FoE Uruguay, <patricia@redes.org.uy>

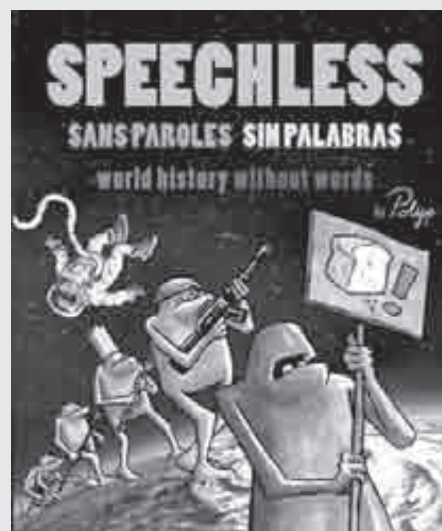
That's a BIT rich

FoE US, FoE Costa Rica / COECO-Ceiba and FoE Uruguay / REDES presented written comments on the impacts of US Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) that the US has negotiated with different countries around the world, to a special committee formed by the Obama administration. Each presented their own reports, with the FOE US report being made in conjunction with the Sierra Club, CIEL, Oxfam America and Earthjustice. All the presentations warned that the current model of BITs pushed by the US has serious defects, and threatens human rights, the environment and development possibilities. BITs are in fact designed to give more tools and powers to transnational companies to continue their strategy of making profits at any cost.

Contacts: Kate Horner, FoE US, <KHorner@foe.org>; Grace García, FoE Costa Rica, <graciagarcimunoz@gmail.com>; Sebastián Valdomir, FoE Uruguay <sebastian@redes.org.uy>.

No karaoke on a dead planet

Young FoE Cyprus has recently launched the 'Don't Give Up' project which is based around a song they have written and recorded on climate change with the aim of uniting young peoples' voices from all over the world. They are collecting video clips of young people singing the song, and need other young activists to join in. You can download a special karaoke version with lyrics, and a final video clip of the song will be formed by combining the video clips of young people singing it. It's easy to do, with step-by-step instructions, a karaoke version and example clips, all on-line at: <www.foecyprus.weebly.com/dontgiveup.html>.



Speechless

FoE International has produced 'Speechless', a 128 page, full-colour graphic novel. Speechless is a work of cartoon magic, condensing the whole of world history - from the Big Bang to Climate Chaos - into a graphic and narrative. It was drawn by cartoonist Polyp. Through this simple yet intriguing concept, the reader will experience the intensely real but often ignored political and environmental truths of our era. It's a celebration of human resistance, ingenuity and bravery in the face of war, greed and environmental pillage. With its clever use of symbolism, the book is a puzzle in itself, and has already proven to be a catalyst for lively debate.

To order (the cost is 10 Euros plus postage) or to view a preview of 'Speechless', visit <www.foei.org/speechless>. See also <www.speechlessthebook.org> and <www.polyp.org.uk>.



Heading for Copenhagen and Feeling the Heat

Cam Walker, Wendy Flannery and Hannah Elvery - Friends of the Earth

As we head towards the Copenhagen negotiations, what is it exactly that governments are likely to agree to and will it be enough? The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change grew from the 'Earth Summit' held in Rio in 1992, indicating it was already apparent that climate change was posing a serious threat to humanity and the ecosystems we all rely on.

This awareness led to a commitment to develop a global response to the problem, and in 1997 the Kyoto Protocol became the implementing mechanism for taking action. It was historic because it accepted that the rich world had caused most of the problem and hence expected that the rich would go first in accepting binding greenhouse gas emissions. The shameful lobbying by the Howard government resulted in Australia getting permission to actually increase its emissions - to 108% of 1990 levels by 2012 - despite the glaring reality of our carbon debt to the rest of the planet, especially the Majority World, where per capita emissions are so low.

Now, 12 years on, world leaders attending the climate change summit in Copenhagen in December will make decisions affecting the future of our planet. They will have an historic opportunity to commit to actions that help to protect the global human community and other interdependent life forms in earth's ecosystems from the disastrous consequences of the dangerous climate change.

What's at stake?

The overall goal for the United Nations Climate Change Conference hosted by Denmark is to establish an ambitious global climate agreement for the period from 2012, when

the first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol expires.

In June, delegates from 182 countries met in Bonn to discuss key negotiating texts which will serve as the basis for the critical talks in Copenhagen. Given the limited movement that happened at Bonn, it is very hard to be too optimistic about the Copenhagen talks. The negotiations are currently deadlocked. And as US-based NGO EcoEquity has noted, "unless this deadlock is broken, the result just might be truly, resonantly, catastrophic".

Even without a deadlock, the positions and proposals which are on the table represent disaster for many of the most vulnerable people in the world, including Indigenous Peoples and forest-dependent communities, as well as the many millions who will be impacted most if we do not stabilise carbon dioxide concentrations below 350ppm.

What We Need?

The new agreement for the post 2012 period should reflect the founding principles of the UNFCCC, by recognising that rich countries have done the most damage to our climate and therefore should take action first. In addition, the agreement should:

- Commit wealthy industrialised countries (listed as "Annex I") to at least 40% cuts in emissions domestically by 2020, by using green energy, sustainable transport and farming and cutting energy demand.

- Not allow wealthy industrialised countries to evade their emission reduction responsibilities through offsetting

or other such flawed schemes. Emission reductions must occur at home. Outsourcing reductions through buying carbon credits from developing countries to 'offset' ongoing emissions in the industrialised world fuels further inequalities and is a dangerous distraction from the real changes which are required. (For more information, see the FoE UK paper 'Carbon offsets: A dangerous distraction', <www.foe.co.uk>.)

- Reject false solutions such as 'Clean Development Mechanisms' and the inclusion of forests in carbon markets. These mechanisms endanger the livelihoods of communities in developing countries, in particular Indigenous Peoples and forest-dependent communities, while many have little demonstrated benefit for the climate.

- Commit rich countries to providing additional money for developing countries to pursue sustainable development pathways, including clean energy, along with adequate funds to enable developing countries to adapt to the multiple and intensifying impacts of climate change. The global estimate for this funding is US\$187 billion annually. The agreement should ensure this money is distributed fairly and transparently through the UNFCCC.

- Keep the World Bank out of climate funding! Critiques of the World Bank's Climate Investment Funds are well documented as not supporting the adaptation and mitigation needs of the world's most vulnerable peoples, while undermining the established international frameworks for the transfer of finance and technology. (See for example the reports 'World Bank: Climate Profiteer' and 'Dirty is the New Clean' at <www.ips-dc.org>.)

What is Australia's Responsibility?

Australia itself is already being hit by climate change: bush fires, floods and droughts are only going to get worse unless we take strong global action.

The first steps must be taken at home, with strong national emissions reduction programs and targets of at least 45% by 2020 without offsets. We must also commit to providing our fair share of mitigation and adaptation funding for developing countries, recently calculated at US\$4.3 billion per year as Australia's fair share of the \$187 billion mentioned above (see the Make Poverty History report, 'The Bigger Picture – Act on Climate Change', posted at <www.makepovertyhistory.com.au>).

Australia's current funding through bilateral agreements and the World Bank's Climate Investment Funds do not fulfil the international criteria for mitigation and adaptation financing, and should therefore be redirected through the internationally recognised and transparent mechanisms of the UNFCCC. The US\$4.3 billion must also be additional to existing Overseas Development Assistance.

Inside the fora of the international negotiations, as the

highest per capita emitter in the world, Australia must join the Alliance of Small Island States in calling for a global target of 350ppm. Distribution of emissions targets to reach this global target must be allocated according to historical responsibility and based on a 'fair share' of the atmosphere.

To date, Australia has performed poorly both domestically and internationally, pushing for outcomes which are unjust and 'solve' climate change by outsourcing pollution to poor countries, hurting local communities and not addressing the real causes. Australia will not be seriously addressing climate change until it legislates for national emission reduction targets of at least 45% by 2020, commits adequate adaptation and mitigation funding for developing countries, and puts in place a national moratorium on coal-fired power and coal mining.

Each person in Australia has a critical role in holding the government accountable both to its existing commitments, and its responsibilities into the future. You can help by staying informed and joining the many actions that will be happening around Australia as we move towards and beyond COP15.

Stay Informed

The official UN website for the Copenhagen talks: <<http://en.cop15.dk>>

During the negotiations, follow the FoE International blog: <www.foei.org/en/blog>

Grassroots perspectives on climate change can also be found here: <www.radiomundoreal.fm/tema/justicia-climatica-y-energia>

For youth perspectives: <<http://itsgettinghotinhere.org>>

'A Climate for Change', a community social networking and news site focussed on climate change: <www.aclimateforchange.org>

Mobilise!

Sign a petition for climate justice at <www.demandclimatejustice.org>. FoE International and others are organising a large climate justice mobilisation in the streets of Copenhagen on December 12 2009, in support of broader actions happening all around the world on this day, the Global Day of Action 2009. If you happen to be in Copenhagen, join the flood! Otherwise, get involved in actions in your city or state both in the lead up to and during the negotiations.

NSW, ACT, SA, WA, TAS, NT: Walk Against Warming
December 12 - QLD. VIC: Walk Against Warming – date to be confirmed.

Contact your local FoE group to join an action in your area
<www.foe.org.au>.

Switch off Hazelwood, Switch on Renewables

Louise Morris



'Switch on renewables – Switch off Coal' is the call echoing out through the Victorian community following the Switch Off Hazelwood weekend of action on September 12-13.

Friends of the Earth Melbourne played a central role in pulling together and supporting this weekend of community action for renewable energy. After years of signing petitions, writing letters, meeting with political representatives and Walking Against Warming, the time had come for people who care about climate change to take peaceful action and mass civil disobedience.

'Switch off Hazelwood, switch on renewables' was a first for the Victorian climate campaign. Never before had we come together to take action at the source of pollution, and been prepared to face arrest to drive home the point that the social licence to go on burning coal as been revoked.

Five hundred people united on a drizzly Gippsland morning at the front gates of one of the industrialised world's most polluting coal fired power stations. In the process of declaring 'Community Decommission Orders', 22 people were arrested while the 500 strong crowd cheered them on.

For more images and information on the event visit <www.switchoffhazelwood.org>.





All photos from the Hazlewood action, September 12 - 13.

Climate Campaigning in 2010

Compiled by Cam Walker. Thanks to Ellen Roberts, Holly Greenaune, Rye Senjen, and Simeon Scott.



Parliament Protest, May 2009. Photo by Conor Ashley.

Regardless of the outcome of the Copenhagen talks, we will need to keep building the strength of the grassroots movement here in Australia. We will need to campaign locally, and also strategically engage across the country to force the state and federal governments and the companies involved in the industry to shift from fossil fuels and into a low-carbon future, focusing on green renewable energy sources and smarter energy use. Below are some of the key issues, and over the page is a summary of coal campaign 'hot spots' around Australia.

THE CPRS and REDD schemes

A key struggle continues to be around the federal government's proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) and what carbon trading will mean in Australia and internationally. The CPRS, as currently put forward, has a strong focus on market solutions to climate change. Similarly, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) is an international plan to make forests available as a source of offsets for developed countries to meet their emissions reduction targets. Under the proposed plan rainforest nations, such as Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, will be able to sell 'credits' for the carbon stored in their forests to countries that have emissions reduction targets.

We will need to deal with the issue of who profits from and who pays as a result of carbon trading. The social and environmental impacts of carbon offset projects in the global South are already well documented: we must ensure that these are not allowed to get worse in 2010 under either an Australian CPRS or a global post-Kyoto agreement.

Check here for further information: www.foe.org.au/climate-justice/activities-and-projects/redd

Contesting false 'solutions'

As with offsetting, there will be continuing and growing debate about many potential 'solutions' that are being put

forward to tackle the climate change problem – including nuclear power, geoengineering, biofuels, etc. Many of these are put forward by people who are hoping we can have (green) business as usual and still stop dangerous climate change. Sadly, some of them are supported by climate campaigners who should know better. We will need to continue to contest these false solutions in the public realm and alert people to the solutions that will actually work. See Chain Reaction #106 for a primer on some of these issues: www.foe.org.au/resources/chain-reaction

Working for just transitions

There is growing consensus that we need a 'just transition' away from coal and fossil fuel dependence. That is, a shift from our current heavy reliance on fossil fuels for our energy needs to a low carbon future that recognises that there must be a fair distribution of the costs and benefits. As noted by Geoff Evans: "a just transition links ecological sustainability with issues of work, equity and social justice. A just transition process recognises the needs of both current and future generations for safe, secure and satisfying jobs. Participants in a just transition seek to build collaborations rather than conflict, and in particular, to avoid a false 'jobs vs. the environment' conflict. A just transition is needed to ensure that the costs of change do not fall on vulnerable workers and communities".

Examples of studies and proposals concerning the potential for green jobs in Australia include:

- The ACF/ACTU Green Gold Rush report which says that with strong action on climate and industry policy, we could trigger the creation of an additional 500,000 jobs in six sectors by 2030. These sectors are: renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable water systems, biomaterials, green buildings, and waste and recycling. www.actu.asn.au/Campaigns/CleanEnergyJobs.aspx
- Research prepared for Environment Victoria in five sectors (rail, solar hot water, energy and water efficiency, recycling

and wind) suggests we could create 26,000 new green jobs for Victoria. <www.envict.org.au/inform.php?item=2027>. - See also the two reports released by the Climate Institute in May 2009, 'Regional Employment and Income Opportunities Provided by Renewable Energy Generation', and 'Clean Energy Jobs and Investment in Rural Australia', posted at <www.climateinstitute.org.au>.

Avoiding the ghetto

A strong focus on direct action and civil disobedience has the risk of the grassroots movement being 'wedged' from mainstream society. We will need to re-double our efforts to talk with, inspire and mobilise the broader community who are keenly aware of the threats of climate change but who are not yet acting on the issue, or acting only in the personal/lifestyle realm. One example of a program that could be replicated widely is the 'Climate Conversation' program organised by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

Other areas

While it is understandable that, as a movement, we concentrate on coal, there are other major greenhouse gas emitters which are not subject to the same levels of campaign activity, including natural gas production, forestry operations, farming, and transport. An obvious focus for campaigning in 2010 could be stronger climate movement support for communities and organisations opposing major expansion of greenhouse intensive industry – especially the major natural gas developments currently being pushed forward in WA.

See here for a sector by sector analysis of our national greenhouse gas emissions: <www.climatechange.gov.au/inventory> Check here for information on forests and their role in storing carbon: <www.wilderness.org.au/campaigns>

Keeping it global

Australia is the world's worst per capita greenhouse emitter. Ultimately we will need to reduce our emissions so that we only consume a 'fair share' of the world's sustainable greenhouse emissions. Without rich nations like Australia reducing emissions to a sustainable level, we cannot expect large emerging economies like India and China to ever accept binding emissions reduction targets.

A sound model for assessing what a fair share would be, and a way to quantify and pay for our 'carbon debt' is offered by the Greenhouse Development Rights model put forward by US-based NGO Eco Equity: <www.ecoequity.org>. It will be the poorest – those least responsible for climate change – who will suffer the most from the changes that will come. Australian activists must keep demanding that Australia pay a fair share of adaptation funds to the global community (estimated as at least \$1.5 billion a year by EcoEquity) and also for Australia to begin to accept people displaced by global warming – climate refugees.

There also needs to be a strong campaign launched as soon

as possible for a major, independent disaster relief fund to help the 'developing' countries that will be affected more frequently by climate change related disasters.

A strong and persistent campaign also needs to be mounted to protect the human rights of people especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. This includes the entire populations facing the prospect of total and irreversible depatriation. As yet, there are no international legal frameworks in place to deal with the latter reality, and work urgently needs to be done to put these in place.

A few of our achievements so far!

Climate Camp Newcastle, July 2008: Australia's first Camp for Climate Action was an incredible moment of inspiration and learning for future bold actions on climate change. Well over a thousand people joined to block the coal export facilities in Newcastle, and 57 people were arrested. All coal trains to and from Carrington port were successfully halted on the day. By the next day, the number of people arrested in peaceful acts of direct action had risen to 65, with shutdowns of the Kooragang port and other areas of the coal port network. After the climate camp, the ABC's 7.30 Report declared "that the battle lines in Australia's climate change debate had been redrawn".

Australia's first climate summit, Canberra, January 2009: This was the first national gathering of climate action groups, followed by a human chain around Parliament House, formed by almost 2,000 people.

Newcastle, March 2009: The people's blockade of the world's largest coal port - hundreds of people took action to prevent coal exports by canoeing out onto the Newcastle harbour.

Protest at Parliament House in Canberra, May 2009: Two women disrupted Treasurer Wayne Swan's post-budget address in the Great Hall, protesting at the government's shamefully inadequate response to climate change in both this budget and its Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme. At the same time, seven women locked themselves together in a circle in the main foyer of Parliament, chanting slogans calling for swift and meaningful greenhouse pollution cuts, not handouts to polluting industries. Meanwhile, outside, two protesters in climbing harnesses abseiled from the front facade of Parliament, hanging an eight metre long banner reading "Carbon Budget Blowout". Eight people were arrested during the protest at Parliament House.

Climate Camp SA: Activists gathered in Port Augusta, South Australia in late September declared the state's first climate camp a great success. Flinders Power announced that the coal train from Leigh Creek, the longest coal train in the world, would not run over the weekend of the camp.

Climate Campaigning in 2010 - Coal Campaigns

New South Wales

There is so much coal mining activity, expansion and export, it is hard to 'short list' the campaigns. The following are just indicative examples of coal mining activities and the associated struggles for land, water, and a safe climate.

Sunnyside coal proposal - Sunnyside is located 15km west of Gunnedah in the Gunnedah Basin of Northern NSW, which the industry refers to as the 'new coal frontier'. Whitehaven Coal proposes producing one million tonnes of coal per year (small by Hunter Valley standards). More info <www.risingtide.org.au/sunnyside>

Anvil Hill - 20km west of Muswellbrook, in the Central Hunter Valley region of NSW. Centennial is proposing a massive open-cut coal mine, with a footprint of 2.2km by 10 km. Over half of that land is presently highly significant and rare Hunter Valley floor bushland, one of the largest stands remaining. Centennial's consultant company has identified six threatened plant species, two endangered plant populations, 19 threatened animal species, and one endangered ecological community in the Anvil Hill study area, but others have found even more. The proposed mine, at its peak, would produce 10.5 million tonnes of Run-of-Mine (raw) coal. When burned, the coal from Anvil Hill would produce over 22 million tonnes of greenhouse pollution per year. Local contact: Anvil Hill Project Watch, Christine Phelps: <christine.phelps@reset.net.au>, <www.risingtide.org.au/anvilhill>

Newcastle port and export facility. Newcastle is home to the biggest coal exporting facility in the world. It is also the focus of a concerted and growing community campaign against this export. Rising Tide Australia is one of the groups leading the campaign against coal in the Hunter. It is a grassroots Newcastle-based group taking action against the causes of climate change and campaigns for equitable, just, effective, and sustainable solutions to the crisis. <www.risingtide.org.au>

Other groups: Nature Conservation Council NSW: <www.nccnsw.org.au> For a dossier on mine sites in NSW, check <www.risingtide.org.au/dossiers> For a listing of 'active' coal mines in NSW: <<http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/page/project-sectors/mining--petroleum---extractive-industries/mining>>

Queensland

The Queensland government is looking to more than double coal production and exports by 2030. Even at conservative estimates, this will emit an additional 460 million tonnes of CO₂ per annum into the atmosphere – equivalent to the annual emissions of 65 average coal-fired power stations. Amongst these investments, the government is supporting the expansion of existing coal rail lines and expansion of the five major coal ports. In addition, plans are underway

for two new rail lines and the construction of a new coal terminal on Wiggins Island, which will make Gladstone the second largest coal port in world. There are currently 18 new mines in various stages of development around the state. But there is also a strong and growing movement, increasingly based on building alliances between city-based communities and affected farming communities.

Groups in Queensland:

Six Degrees - Six Degrees is a campaign initiative of Friends of the Earth, Brisbane. Six Degrees works with communities and groups across the state to reduce Queensland's dependence on the coal industry, and to ensure a just and measured transition to a safe climate future. <www.sixdegrees.org.au> <www.brisbane.foe.org.au>

Friends of Felton - Friends of Felton is a community organisation established in response to the proposal by Ambre Energy to build an open-cut coal mine, petrochemical plant, and power station in the beautiful Felton Valley, 30km south west of Toowoomba. <www.friendsoffelton.blogspot.com>

Future Food Queensland - The mission of Future Food Queensland is to protect the world renowned, clean and green, premium food production capacity of Queensland from inappropriate mining developments. <www.futurefoodqld.com.au>.

For other local groups, see <www.sixdegrees.org.au/content/coal-campaigners-across-queensland>. For a list of proposed coal developments in Queensland: <www.dip.qld.gov.au/projects/mining-and-mineral-processing/coal.html>

South Australia

People concerned about energy probably think of the struggle against uranium mining when they think of SA. Yet Port Augusta has substantial coal infrastructure, including the world's largest coal train. The ageing brown coal-fired power stations at Port Augusta are among the most inefficient and carbon polluting in Australia. But rather than shut them down and invest in South Australia's plentiful renewable energy resources of solar, geothermal and wind, the South Australian Labor government plans to upgrade and extend them.

There is a major coal mine at Leigh Creek, to the west of the Flinders Ranges. It is operated by NRG Flinders and currently produces over 2.5 million tonnes a year of coal. NRG Flinders also operates the power stations at Port Augusta which produce up to 40% of the electricity generated in SA. The black coal is transported 250 km by rail to the power stations outside Port Augusta.

To get involved in climate issues, check the Climate Camp SA website: <<http://climatecamps.org>> Other groups: CLEAN SA: <www.cleansa.org.au/index.html>

Victoria

The key struggle will be to generate the momentum in the community to demand a rapid transition away from coal. At present around 95% of Victoria's energy production comes

from coal, mostly based in the Latrobe Valley. A key focus is Hazelwood Power Station, one of the dirtiest coal power plants in the industrialised world, which was due to be shut down in 2009. However the Victorian ALP government has allowed its life span to be extended to 2031. Hazelwood emits around 17 million tonnes of CO₂ every year. There have been recent suggestions that a coal export industry from Victoria could be 'feasible'. This would be strongly resisted if it became a serious proposal by either industry or government. The movement continues to campaign against the construction of the new HRL coal fired power station. There is also a significant campaign growing to achieve a just transition away from coal at the Anglesea power station, west of Melbourne.

Local groups in Victoria:

Climate Action Centre: The Climate Action Centre is an open access resource hub for community climate action groups and climate activists in Victoria, based in Trades Hall. <www.climateactioncentre.org>

Friends of the Earth: <www.melbourne.foe.org.au> See here for a list of local groups: <www.climateactioncentre.org/localgroupslist>

WA

Camp for Climate action in WA will be held in mid December 2009. This camp will include a grassroots direct action designed to stop coal mining and its use for energy production in the coal capital of WA, Collie. Collie is currently home to three coal fired power stations, three coal mines and several proposed projects. There are currently plans to expand the Bluewaters power station in Collie and also plans to bring back on line two decommissioned units at the old Muja power station. <<http://climatecampwa.wordpress.com>>

Coalition for a Safe Climate is a group of activists based in WA, mostly in or near Perth, who have joined forces to build the climate action movement here. <www.safecclimate.org.au>

See here for a listing of climate groups in WA: <<http://climatecampwa.wordpress.com/climate-justice-info/wa-groups>> Conservation Council of WA: <www.conservationswa.asn.au>

Some key national groups

Australian Student Environment Network

<<http://asen.org.au>>

Beyond Zero Emissions

<<http://beyondzeroemissions.org>>

Climate Emergency Network

<www.climateemergencynetwork.org>

Greenpeace

<www.greenpeace.org/australia>

Australian Youth Climate Coalition

<www.aycc.org.au>

Friends of the Earth Australia: The FoEA climate justice campaign works in five key areas: against existing coal mining and plans for expansion; to gain recognition of climate refugees; in collaboration with trade unions in



Climate Camp, Newcastle, 2008

seeking a just transition and green jobs; to highlight the problems associated with false solutions to climate change (such as nuclear power and agrofuels); and helping to build the climate movement. <www.foe.org.au/climate-justice>

Other links and resources: problems & solutions

The problem:

Check out the remarkable collection of Google Earth coal infrastructure files at <www.aboutcarbon.com.au>. It also has files for uranium, logging and renewables. <www.aboutcarbon.com.au/Display.aspx?tabid=2495>

An authoritative source of information on Australian coal mines is the OZMIN Mineral Deposits Database, within the Australian Spatial Data Directory (ASDD), maintained by Geosciences Australia, a federal government agency. You can access the atlas here:

<www.australianminesatlas.gov.au/mapping/downloads.jsp>

<www.australianminesatlas.gov.au/education/fact_sheets/coal.jsp>

The solutions:

Renewable energy atlas: <www.environment.gov.au/settlements/renewable/atlas>. Map of Australia's existing commercial renewable energy sites: <www.ga.gov.au/map/orer>. Coal communities listening tour: <<http://coalcommunities.wordpress.com>>

For a list of climate groups around Australia, check here:

<www.climatemovement.org.au/groups> or here <www.climatemovement.org.au/map>.



The New Climate Wedge: Farmers vs Coal Mining

Steve Skitmore

It's more than the crops that are taking root and unfurling green leaves in Queensland this Spring. From the headwaters of the Murray-Darling on the Darling Downs, farmers' groups are fighting the government sponsored expansion of the coal industry into their food-producing lands, but are adding a twist to their campaigning: a green twist. Of course, farmers have fought mining developments on their lands in the past, and as NIMBY campaigns that have argued for the protection of local areas and values, the rational response by mining companies, 'if not yours, then someone else's', has generally carried weight with the state government.

However, times are changing. Increased public demand for real action on climate change has meant that the coal industry's social license in Queensland is slowly eroding, and farmers' groups are tapping into this sentiment by drawing the broader picture around their local campaigns. Instead of remaining as NIMBY groups, campaigns such as the Friends of Felton on the Darling Downs are now leading the charge towards renewable energy production and rejecting coal proposals on the basis of both food and climate security. The green in their banners is now taking on a new significance in the context of sustainable development politics and reflecting the developing alliance between farming and environmental groups to work against the Queensland government's plans to massively expand the coal industry.

Friends of Felton first formed in 2007 in opposition to the threat of an application by Ambre Energy to mine coal and build a petrochemical and power producing plant in the midst of their closely settled farming community just south of Toowoomba in south-east Queensland. At full

operation, Ambre's proposal will take over 2,800 hectares of land in the Felton Valley, and produce over 12.8 million tonnes of coal annually, as large as any coal mine currently in operation in Queensland. As the largest coal producing state in the world's largest coal exporting nation, this is an avenue we can ill afford to take.

However, the Felton coal development is key to the Queensland government's claim that mining and agriculture can co-exist, a claim fervently denied by the local community who have seen for themselves what has happened in farming communities on the Darling Downs that have consented to mining on their land. Nearby Acland has experienced severe social decline and the remaining farmers have seen food production extensively reduced due to failed dust control measures. It is impossible to see Felton, Toowoomba and Pittsworth co-existing with a coal mine that would require around 2,000 megalitres of water per year for coal washing and dust control alone. Friends of Felton spokesperson Rob McCreath also points out that mining will risk destroying the underground water aquifers, contribute to the decline of the Murray-Darling system and reduce food production in the valley.

In July, agricultural union representatives from Agforce visited Felton and chaired a meeting at which three motions were passed to support Felton's struggle against Ambre Energy. Vice-President Ian Burnett commented on the other precedent that Felton could potentially set for Queensland: "We will try to stop mining here. I believe it could be the opportunity to set a precedent and say 'no' to coal mining." Ambre's proposal is the thin edge of the wedge, with massive coal deposits throughout south-east Queensland leading to a doubling of coal exploration licenses distributed in 2008



and scores of applications for new coal developments.

This is a vitally important precedent. At a national level, the Senate on September 10 resoundingly rejected a motion by Australian Greens leader Bob Brown for a halt to mining exploration and development on farming areas in the Galilee Basin in central Queensland. Probably more than any other state in the nation, the Queensland government is embedded in its rapturous relationship with coal, and it's an addiction that is proving hard to break even in light of overwhelming evidence and recognition that we need to take real action on climate change.

In Queensland, we need to begin transitioning away from coal production now, and stop the mindless ramping up of coal exports that is currently being orchestrated by the Bligh Labor government. However, like any strong addiction, going 'cold turkey' can often lead to more harm than good. With coal, in order to avoid the devastating social implications that an ad hoc collapse of the coal industry will entail, we need to start imagining what this transition will look like and through what mechanisms it will occur.

Friends of Felton's campaign stands solidly by this transition, and they recognise along with the climate movement that opposition without alternatives is a fraught endeavour. Resistance must be backed up by a mobilisation towards transformation.

The group has been actively seeking information about sustainable energy initiatives and recently gathered in Cambooya to hear consultant Trevor Berril speak on sustainable energy systems that are needed to transition away from our dependence on coal, and that can co-exist with farming. Ironically, Friends of Felton has also won funding from the Queensland government's 'Low Carbon Diet' community grants and has invested in renewable energy in the valley.

Convergent environmental crises have led to converging campaigns in Queensland. While Friends of Felton are linking their work to its broader impacts on climate change,

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Friends of the Earth Brisbane's coal and climate collective Six Degrees recognises that protecting farming lands is a key step to phasing out coal in Queensland and taking real action on climate change. Such alliances are key to addressing the greatest challenge of our time: climate change.

More information:

Friends of Felton <www.friendsoffelton.blogspot.com>

Six Degrees <www.sixdegrees.org.au>

Climate movement: a new politics of moral protest?

James Goodman

For many involved in movements for social change it is axiomatic that there is no action without hope. Whether social movements are understood as instruments, as social means to a political end, or as expressions of collective identity and autonomy, it is assumed that hope is central. Research we have conducted with activists is increasingly challenging this assumption.

There is a general consensus across commentators on climate action that people need hope in order to take action. But the problem is that dangerous climate change is already with us, and there is little to hope for in terms of avoiding runaway climate change.

In this context, some climate campaigners argue the climate movement has to deliberately accentuate the positive: if we want a movement we must use the language of hope. We arrive at what may be called 'strategic climate action', a position that represses the reality and welcomes every climate initiative, from changing a light bulb to carbon trading, as a positive step no matter how inadequate.

Moral action?

Over the last year this issue of hope has been one of the key questions we have addressed in a small research project that has involved interviewing NSW-based climate camp activists. What we have found is that activists, and through them movements, are producing their own foundations and motivations for action. Out of this, rather than false hopes, we are seeing an emerging model of moral action.

Climate science is the key starting point. With it, activists speak of being 'immobilised by fear', overwhelmed by the urgency and magnitude of the problem, of losing their sense of agency and descending into 'climate depression'.

People speak of lapsing into bouts of despair, especially intense where it is personified in younger generations. One activist says: 'I have nightmares thinking about what my young grandchildren, thinking about what their world will be like when they're my age'

Anger is directed at carbon-intensive perpetrators, and their defenders. There are many accounts of engaging with non-activists and encountering a range of avoidance strategies, from outright denial, to strategic and deliberate hopelessness, to self-conscious ambivalence.

Many of the activists spoke of how they have to channel anger. One put it as follows: 'The ... laziness and acceptance of people is infuriating for me. So ... I said, I've got to try and keep it in check otherwise it would really overwhelm me to a destructive point.'

Hopes come from engagement with the movement. One interviewee says: 'I think just being involved in campaigning and activism in itself gives hope; and being surrounded by and working with other people who are really dedicated to creating a better world; that inspires me with hope constantly'.

Beyond mobilisation, many stress the opportunities embedded in climate crisis. Activists talk passionately about ecological sufficiency, post-consumerism, re-localisation and community mobilisation, as necessary elements and key outcomes of the crisis.

These new possibilities can become realities by force of circumstance. Or, as one interviewee put it: 'I don't think we've even had this kind of challenge before. Or this opportunity to radically restructure the entire way we do things'.

Climate Camp, Newcastle, 2008



This balancing between despair and hope, with a dose of anger, is signalled in people's motivation. Amongst this group of activists, at least, there was only one person who said they would not be involved in the movement if they didn't believe that dangerous climate change could be prevented.

The rest voiced an absolute certainty in the necessity for mobilisation, regardless of whether climate change can be addressed. Their action is grounded in something less contingent, that says, as one put it: 'this is the right thing to do'. Here climate mobilisation becomes an intrinsic necessity, and end in itself, regardless of anticipated outcome.

A universal identity?

The question of moral duty raises the issue of identity. What is becoming clear from the research is that while moral action sustains activist identity, it is not associated with autonomy, rather with universality. Climate mobilisation affirms self-respect and human dignity, but it does not produce a sectional identity, rather it directly produces a universalist humanism.

In practice, inevitably, activist consciousness and in-practice commitment creates a boundary with non-activists. The climate movement is by definition anti-systemic, and for most of the interviewees, requires at the very least a transformation beyond consumer society. This pits activists against vested interests, injecting a powerful politics to the movement. It can also create barriers with wider consumer society, which many activists very consciously attempt to bridge.

But importantly, the moral protest of climate activism is in-principle universal. With climate change whole populations are made immediately and collectively aware of a world-historical process, creating a global consciousness that politicises carbon pollution as a threat to survival. This is the underlying trajectory of climate change, and the foundation for the moral appeal of climate action.

As such, climate action makes a claim to be all-enveloping, a movement that is everywhere, embedded in the emergent universal subjectivity of life under climate change. From this perspective activists can despair at the built-in logic of climate change, and at the same time vest hopes in mass action to create new possibilities.

Regardless of whether hopes or fears are realised, climate action remains the right thing to do. In these and many other statements, activists are producing this new language of moral protest in the face of a profound historical conjuncture. As the historian Dipesh Chakrabarty has argued, we are living through a confrontation between the history of the species, as expressed in climate science, and the history of humanity. How we are to bridge the two, and exercise human agency in the face of a species-wide crisis, is the key question for the climate movement.

Climate activists are self-consciously engaged in this intellectual process of generating new visions and new

models for action in the context of climate change. In apprehending the profound clash of histories, activists are finding ways of moving beyond fatalism, and are creating new foundations for mobilisation.

James Goodman is a lecturer at the University of Technology, Sydney

Climate action as moral protest

Quotes from three interviewees.

'Regardless of how enormous and terrifying the problem is, it's really important to keep active on it. Partly just because I would certainly find it a lot more difficult, and my mental health would be a lot worse if I wasn't trying to do anything about it; I'd just feel a bit like I was in denial if I was aware of this enormous problem that was threatening to change everything about life as we know it on this planet, and not doing anything about it, I would find that really difficult.'

'So when, if the Arctic does completely collapse and all of these terrible things happen and we are getting to three billion refugees and people starving ... I think it still would have been positive to work against those things happening even if we're not successful.'

'I think if we don't win there's no future for anyone. So there's nothing to be gained by giving up ... You would want to think that you tried. And I suppose that there's various levels of dangerous, catastrophic, irreversible climate change. So every time you do anything, you win, it's just a pity that you're probably not going to win enough.'



Research and action in the 'movement of movements'

Climate Action Research Group, Sydney



As a mass movement, climate action takes us well beyond the entrenched sectors and identities of social change. At the simplest level, climate change affects everyone, so climate action is for everyone. It creates new social forces and new constituencies, in a transformed political field. In this sense it is a constitutive force, from the ground-up, politicising and radicalising people who are otherwise resolutely apolitical.

The all-encompassing character of climate change means that the climate movement is an all-encompassing political project. It has now migrated far beyond environmentalism, into all facets of social change. As climate change subsumes society, the climate movement has the basis for subsuming and making possible all other movements. It is now widely

accepted that there is no possibility of progressive social change without effective climate action. And, as recognised by the United Nations no less, there is no possibility of legitimate and therefore effective climate action without climate justice. In this context, it is becoming increasingly clear that the emerging climate movement may indeed be the long sought-after 'movement of movements'.

Despite the now widespread consciousness of the need for action, the climate movement still remains potential, not actual. At best we are seeing early signs of what is to come, pockets of strategising and experimentation. As we approach the climate change 'tipping point', is there a climate action tipping point? When will the climate movement emerge as a political force, capable of taking action, rather than deferring to the government of the day? When will we, as a society, set about dismantling the mines, infrastructures and industries that create the crisis?

To answer some of these questions a group of us in Sydney have created what we call a 'Climate Action Research Group', dedicated to investigating sources of climate action, in partnership with Friends of the Earth Australia. The objective is to research the emerging strategies, both through our direct participation and through interviews with activists and on-lookers. Our operating assumption is that answers to the problems of climate action are to be found in the process of mobilisation and contestation, at the 'coal face', not in the abstract.

Our main focus so far is the phenomenon of the direct action Climate Camp, which has proliferated across carbon-intensive societies since it was proposed by the Dissent protest camp at the Gleneagles G8 meeting in 2005. As sites for strategising, popularising, and politicising, Climate Camps have defined a new genre in climate action. Creating an encampment for up to a week at the site of expanding carbon-intensive development, Climate Camp precisely poses the question of direct mass mobilisation on climate change.

After a year of participation and interviews, before and since the Newcastle Climate Camp in 2008, we have focused on four key dimensions. The first is developed by Rebecca Pearse, and centres on what gets people involved in the climate activism, and what keeps them there. The second, James Goodman's focus, centres on how activists bridge climate science and climate justice, to create a morality for climate action. The third is taken-up by Rick Flowers and asks how climate camps can be seen as an

exercise in popular education, of creating mass counter-publics. Finally, Stuart Rosewarne is investigating how Climate Camp expresses a new politics of direct climate action, and whether this opens up new strategic pathways for challenging the political dispensation. Draft discussions of this material, along with presentations, and some video footage of interviews, is available on the website of the research centre in Cosmopolitan Civil Societies (CCS): <http://cosmopolitancivilsocieties.com/projects/climate-action-research-group>.

Emerging from this research we have developed an idea for a major event, 'Key debates in the climate movement: the world we want and how to get there', to be held in 2010. The idea behind this is to debate the politics of the movement, and help . We would organise for speakers to take opposing positions, to stimulate debate, and help strengthen the strategies and visions of the movement. So far we have drawn up six 'key debates' (see box), and we are constantly revising them so suggestions are welcome.

We can be contacted at the CCS centre at the University of Technology Sydney: <ccs@uts.edu.au>



Key debates in the climate movement

We are proposing that these six debates take place at a major event, early in 2010. Creating dialogues between the six polarities is aimed at both clarifying the issues, and enabling the development of shared agendas for the climate movement.

1. Carbon markets vs. regulation for renewables

Carbon trading has become the dominant means of reducing emissions. The use of state-led indirect market incentives is said to be more effective than direct 'command and control' regulation. How does the evidence stack up?

2. High-tech growth vs. low-tech sufficiency

Growth is the elephant in the room in climate debates. Can renewable technology delink growth from carbon dependence, or is growth itself the problem? Emission limits may require a rethink, but what does sufficiency look like, beyond consumer society?

3. State emergency climate action vs. community de-linking

The call for centralised action by state authorities reflects the scale and urgency of climate crisis. At the same time there are multiplying local initiatives, directed at de-linking neighbourhoods and towns from carbon dependence. How do these differ, can they be reconciled?

4. Workers climate action vs. community action

Climate policy compensates shareholders, penalises taxpayers, and charges consumers. What constituencies does this entrench, or create? Is climate action a class-based issue, or cross-class? Who is leading the fight for climate action and climate justice?

5. Local climate justice v global climate justice

The impact of climate change is overwhelmingly concentrated in the poorest of societies. Where global climate justice addresses these impacts, local climate justice in countries like Australia focuses on the impact of transition. How does 'Just Transitions' (for instance for coal mining communities) relate to 'Climate Justice' (for instance in the Pacific)?

6. Climate advocacy v climate organising

Climate action has been led by the environment movement, and dominated by climate scientists and environmental NGOs. What are the advances achieved by these advocacy efforts? Climate organising, helping people to take action themselves, may be an alternative, but how does it work in practice?

The History of the Alcoa Aluminium Smelter in Portland

Craig Horne

Alcoa aluminium smelter, Portland



Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has proposed that Australia's greenhouse gas emissions would be cut by up to 25% by the year 2020 as part of a global agreement. If we are to achieve this target, we must radically examine the viability of some of our more heavily emitting industries such as aluminium smelting.

Much of Australia's smelting capacity was added in the late 1970s and early 1980s in a way that severely compromised the long term benefits to the Australian economy of hosting the industry. It might be time to examine how we came to host this industry and to look at its long-term future. This article looks at one particular deal that occurred between the Victorian government and the US giant Alcoa that resulted in a three pot smelter being located in Portland in the state's far west in the 1980s. The deal was the result of a highly politically compromised process that has been an ongoing financial and environmental disaster for the state and the nation ever since.

The Victorian taxpayer has subsidised the production of aluminium by the US multinational by between \$100 million and \$200 million per year through electricity subsidies for the past 25 years and will continue to do so until at least 2016. At the same time the aluminium manufacturing process at Portland releases approximately 4.76 million tonnes of carbon dioxide per year contributing to Victoria being Australia's and one of the world's biggest greenhouse polluters per head of population.

In 1978 I was working as a social researcher in the Victorian Department of Economic Development,

ostensibly as part of a state government taskforce that was developing the then Hamer-Liberal Government's bid for a new Alcoa Aluminium Smelter to be located somewhere in Australia. My job, as part of the taskforce was to look at the social impact of locating the smelter at Portland on Victoria's far west coast, some 550 kilometres away from Victoria's electricity generating centre in the Latrobe Valley.

At this time Australia was emerging from an economic recession brought on by the first oil shock in the mid 1970's. Although the economic climate was improving, unemployment and inflation were of concern both hovering around 7% nationally. Victoria and Queensland had been particularly hard hit. Victoria's traditional manufacturing industry was in decline and its regional areas were suffering. Queensland was also under pressure with unemployment at 8%, the nation's highest, and inflation was on the rise.

Both states needed an economic boost, especially Victoria because it was due to hold an election early in 1979 and an announcement of a major new project for the state was seen by the Liberal government to be a real shot in the arm for their re-election chances. Queensland was also keen to attract the energy intensive project as it would complement its decision to build a brand new power station slap in the middle of Premier Joh Bjelke Peterson's electorate in south-eastern Queensland.

A key factor in the production of aluminium is the supply of abundant and cheap energy - something Victoria's Latrobe Valley had in spades. The Valley, which contained 20% of the world's known reserves of brown coal, had

been the centre of the state's electricity generating industry since the 1920s and was the basis of Victoria's industrial development. But Portland was located at the opposite end of the state.

It would have seemed rational to locate the aluminium smelting project as close as possible to the Valley-Hastings



for example, on the shores of Victoria's Westernport Bay, was less than 100 kilometres away and overlooked a deep, safe harbour capable of receiving large container ships. But rationality had little to do with the final decision to firstly bid for the project and then locate it in far western Victoria. It was all about politics.

Portland at the time was in serious decline, hit hard by the closure of its meat works - Borthwick and Sons - then the town's biggest employer. This meant several key conservative seats in the upcoming state election were in jeopardy, including the upper house seat of Western held by the then Minister of State Development, Decentralisation and Tourism, Digby Crozier.

In conversation with a senior Liberal Party cabinet minister decades later, it was confirmed that Crozier had lobbied hard for the project to be located in his electorate and won, despite strong opposition to the project's final location in Cabinet. This former minister in the Kennett government said quite openly to me that the decision to build the smelter in Portland was a disaster that cost the state literally tens of millions of dollars in infrastructural costs - including the building of a \$350 million power line across the state.

But I'm ahead of myself. Victoria needed to be fast on its feet if it was to lure the smelter from Queensland's clutches. And it was. In departmental correspondence, internal briefings and memorandums leaked to *The Age* and *Financial Review* at the time, the arcane negotiations over the key elements to the success of the negotiations

- including the provision of infrastructure, like the 550 kilometre power line and more importantly the price of electricity supplied to the smelter - were revealed.

Aluminium smelting is a high energy-intensive activity, with electricity purchases accounting for 21% of production costs, so it was important to get the price of supply right if the government was going to lure the smelter to Victoria. The price of electricity per kilowatt hour (kWh) largely depended on what is included in the measurement of the cost of producing that energy. In the leaked correspondence between the then chair of the State Electricity Commission Charles Trethowan and the Premier, a debate raged about the true cost of providing electricity to the project. Specifically it concerned the inclusion of a replacement cost of generating capacity in the final energy price and how the Commission would be able to build an entirely new generating facility in time to fuel the new project.

The Premier indicated that the cost price of power for the project quoted by Trethowan was too high and Queensland would certainly offer a cheaper alternative.

Victoria needed to offer a more attractive incentive package - including a long term electricity supply contract and a raft of taxpayer funded infrastructural projects in order to lure Alcoa to Victoria. These included roads, transport links, harbour upgrades, local government rate waivers, housing and a streamlined environmental effects process that would guarantee approval despite real concerns about toxic emission fall-out over Portland and destruction of important coastal habitat.

This was a very attractive incentive package for the US multinational giant, however the real clincher was Hamer's insistence on paying the full cost of building the high tension power line from the Latrobe Valley to Portland, some \$350 million in 1978 dollars. Ironically Alcoa felt this would be political dynamite and offered to contribute to some part of the cost.

There was still the matter of the price of energy supplied by the state to Alcoa and negotiations continued over the next few years, even after Victoria secured the project.

Once Alcoa's signature was on the contract, the government's attention was drawn to the legislation that would ensure the project went ahead. The government put into law Victoria's commitment to supply enough energy to allow a five pot line aluminium smelter to be operated in Portland. If they failed to deliver, there were significant penalties to be paid to by the government to the multinational giant. There was no such obligation on Alcoa to build the full five pot line project. And they didn't - the Smelter at Portland has never gone beyond three.

This legislative requirement for guarantee of supply resulted in the government compulsory acquiring land in the Valley and then borrowing tens of millions of dollars at high interest on short-term overseas money markets in order to build what subsequently became the Loy Yang Power Station.

The Alcoa draft legislation was also leaked to the media in the lead up to the 1979 election where it was strongly condemned by both the *Melbourne Age and Financial Review* for the level of subsidy offered by the government to the US giant. Unfortunately that subsidy was about to blow out even further. In the final contract established by the Cain Labor Government in 1984, electricity was supplied to Alcoa on the basis of a flexible tariff that will be in place until 2016. This price was based on the world price of aluminium at 1982 prices.

Unfortunately the world price for the commodity plummeted after 1984 which has resulted in Alcoa in real terms rarely paying any part of the capital component of the flexible tariff - costing the taxpayer around \$200 million per year up until 2001 at least. Alcoa's Victorian smelters (located in Portland and Point Henry in Geelong) employ around 1800 people, so taxpayers are directly subsidising each job at around \$70,000 per year.

Former Victorian Treasurer Alan Stockdale described the contracts as "manifestly unjust" and the Department of Treasury and Finance agreed, describing the contract as "onerous and unfavourable". (For a detailed analysis of the pricing arrangements and the impact on greenhouse emissions as a result of the Alcoa project, see the excellent report written by Hal Turton for the Australia Institute entitled 'The Aluminium Smelting Industry: structure, market power, subsidies and greenhouse gas emissions'. <www.tai.org.au>)

Added to the direct subsidy to Alcoa is the vast environmental damage inflicted by the smelter and the brown coal-fired power stations used to produce the vast amounts of electricity required.

Portland produces on average about 350,000 tonnes of aluminium ingots a year. The problem is that for every tonne of aluminium smelted, approximately 13.6 tonnes

of carbon dioxide is produced from electricity generation. That's around 4.76 million tonnes of CO₂ per year. In fact Alcoa Australia admits that in 2006 the combined CO₂ direct and indirect emissions from the Point Henry and Portland smelters were 11.2 million tonnes.

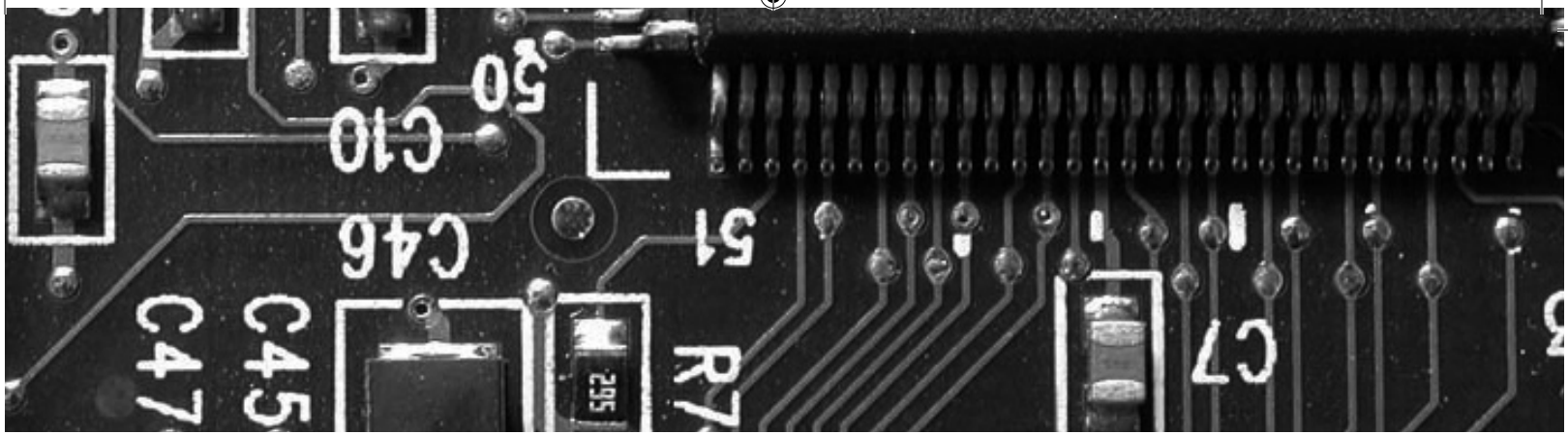
The fall out from this smelter and other smelters across Australia results in the aluminium industry accounting for around 6% of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions - five times more greenhouse pollution than the aluminium industry's world average and five times more emissions than agriculture - and around 22 times more than other manufacturing activities.

Victoria has paid, and continues to pay, a high price for the political machinations that resulted in the Portland aluminium smelter being built in Victoria - the costs include billions of dollars in electricity subsidies, tens of billions of tonnes of greenhouse emissions and the allocation of 25% of our electricity generating capacity to one industry.

Meanwhile our renewable energy industry is starved of government funds, opportunities for new clean energy producing industries are lost, other energy users pay a premium to support the Alcoa deal and the state and nation are becoming an environmental pariah in the eyes of the world. The only people who did not pay a price for the smelter are those who negotiated the deal in the first place.

The Hamer Government was returned with a reduced majority in the 1979 election and Digby Crozier was rewarded for his troubles with a senior Cabinet position - he became the Minister for Local Government and later the Minister for Minerals and Energy and Mines, a position he held until the Liberal Party lost Government in 1982. In 1985 he moved from the upper house to take up the lower house seat of Portland. He then went on to be the Shadow Minister for Police and Emergency Services, a position he held until he left parliament in 1988.





Are activists overdependent on information technology?

Rosalind Byass

I'm concerned that social justice and environmental activists have become so dependent on information technology (IT) that other strengths are rusting, particularly communication networks. When reviewing my own budget I have spent a minimum of \$5,500 on hardware and paraphernalia in the past 10 years: this money more wisely spent could have made a difference.

As the world seems hell bent on grand consumption of all resources, the time has arrived where we need to audit expenditure. I ask for some of my questions to be seriously considered:

1. Considering hardware has to be updated so often, are we becoming more and more dependent on the manufacturers? Consider the cost of cartridges and the inability of many printers to use recycled paper. Main offices may have geeks who can get around the technology but this is no help to people not living nearby.
2. Is the computer good at keeping in touch with busy people? Emails sent and received. Without a phone call I don't know whether my thoughts and concerns have been viewed let alone read. When my concerns are important and may facilitate a good outcome if acted on today, should I follow through nagging for a response?
3. Is online activism actually effective? It is so easy to sign a petition online ... action has been taken but follow-on commitment may not be there.
4. Could IT systems collapse within minutes (solar flares, hackers, sabotage)?

I am now old enough to be officially retired. There are many in my age group who are passionate about social justice and the environment: many of them share my ineptitude with IT.

My recommendations:

1. Appreciate the tech-savvy people and exploit the technology intelligently with their guidance; use technology as the good servant it is.
2. Depend on no-one but ourselves, especially indifferent technology. Keep communication lines open.
3. Keep friendship networks uppermost. This eases burnout, helps morale and strengthens resilience.
4. Question the actual influences that have moved individuals to be such committed activists and focus on them. I respond to conversations myself, especially when reinforced with a good thoughtful article. Flyers, t-shirts and badges obviously have a place for some but have no impact on this old girl.
5. Keep in mind that some of us are less flexible, less fit, perhaps not quick thinkers and talkers, however we may still have passion and a need to work.
6. Call for a moratorium on galloping technology and in the meantime do no harm.
7. Stop wasting energy unless it is for a greater good.
8. Don't turn our backs on a real support base. Keep a place for the less able to continue to engage.

Rosalind Byass is a member of Friends of the Earth, Stawell.

Forest Carbon Trading: Promoting Business as Usual in Indonesia's Forests

Ellen Roberts

In 1996 Suharto ordered the clearing of one million hectares of Kalimantan's unique peat land swamp forest in an attempt to regain rice self sufficiency for Indonesia. The plan failed: not one blade of rice was grown and the forest clearing was an environmental disaster and the site is now teeming with dozens of international NGOs undertaking rehabilitation and reforestation work on the swampy land.

A recent addition to the conservation groups are the Australian and Indonesian governments, pursuing a different agenda. The governments are working together to set up a pilot forest carbon trading project in time for the Copenhagen climate talks in December. Because in addition to their unique biodiversity, the peat forests are climate change dynamite, emitting more carbon and for longer than other types of forest. Once it is up and running, the forest carbon trading pilot project in Central Kalimantan will sell carbon credits to governments and polluting companies around the world as offsets for their own emissions and to reach any obligations set in Copenhagen.

Carbon trading promises to be big business for Indonesia. Already the Australian government has committed \$300 million in aid to develop REDD, and there are more than 20 forest carbon trading pilot projects already underway in the forest rich provinces of Kalimantan, Sumatra and Papua. International conservation NGOs, carbon trading companies, and international financiers are all negotiating REDD deals with logging and plantation companies and all levels of the Indonesian government.

And there will be a large market for carbon offsets in Australia. Under the proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS), Australian companies are able to purchase offshore carbon credits instead of reducing their emissions in Australia. Initially limited to 50% of overall emissions reductions, after industry lobbying the Australian government in its final version of the CPRS allowed unlimited access to these international offsets.

And not just any offsets either: in their submissions on the CPRS, polluters such as the Energy Supply Association of Australia specifically asked for access to forest carbon credits whereby developing countries sell the carbon contained in their forests instead of cutting those forests down. Why forest carbon? Primarily because it promises to be a cheap source of offsets, with some sources predicting prices as little as \$1 US per tonne of carbon traded.

There's one catch though – 'avoided deforestation' is currently excluded from the Clean Development Mechanism and can not be traded as part of the UN system.

This started to change after the announcement of the Bali Road Map in 2007, which encouraged parties to 'engage in initiatives designed to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation,' since shortened to REDD.

Even before the Bali talks, the Australian government was heavily involved in efforts to have a forest carbon market included in the international climate treaty. In support of its efforts to get REDD off the ground, the Australian government has negotiated bilateral agreements with Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, established demonstration REDD pilot projects and has plans to set up a purpose built forest monitoring station in Darwin. There's no doubt that addressing deforestation will be a crucial part of any attempts to deal with climate change. When Indonesia's peat forests burned in 1997-98, the amount of carbon released to the atmosphere was estimated to be up to 40% of the annual emissions from fossil fuel use globally. Even now there are more emissions released through deforestation than through the entire transport sector.

But addressing deforestation requires understanding what causes it. The question of who is responsible for deforestation is a much discussed issue in Indonesia, with governments often focussing on land clearing by small scale farmers. However an estimate in 1990 suggested 20% of land clearing was caused by farmers, and the remaining 80% by large plantation and logging companies, either legally or illegally.

Plantation and logging companies face little regulation over their activities, even though accusations of forcible and illegal annexation of community land, illegal logging, illegal burning of forested land and failure to meet the requirements of their concessions abound. Even the Indonesian government's own review of forest governance found only 70 of the 297 holders of forestry concessions to have good performance.

For decades environment NGOs in Indonesia have been arguing that the power and impunity of these companies must be directly tackled if deforestation is to be stopped in Indonesia. But logging and plantation concessions holders have been given the legal right to negotiate and enter into REDD forest preservation deals. REDD income then becomes a further source of resources for these companies, consolidates their control over land and provides a source of legitimacy and defence against other unsustainable practices.

Some plantation companies view REDD as a deal to enable them to continue their exploitation of the forest. A

representative from Asia Pacific Resources Limited, a massive logging and plantation company accused of illegal logging and forcible dispossession of people from their land, told New Scientist of the company's planned REDD project: "If nothing is done, the parks will all be gone in 10 years. The government should use us to protect conservation areas in return for being allowed to make productive use of the rest."

The existence of REDD is also used to justify the continued expansion of paper and palm oil plantations which have their own range of social and environmental problems. In a submission to the World Bank, the Indonesian government argued that in order to 'reduce pressure' on forests, plantations should be expanded to provide alternative sources of income for subsistence farmers. In Central Kalimantan, where the Australian government is pursuing its key REDD pilot project, the governor announced in February 2009 that the province planned to convert one million hectares of peat land into palm oil plantations. Recent international discussions on the REDD scheme could see companies receiving climate change income for expanding plantations.

The alternative to the current system of exploitation of land and forests by plantation and logging companies is community based forest management. But this would require secure land title, enabling communities to engage on an equitable basis with government and companies. However in Indonesia the rights of indigenous peoples to land are granted at the sole discretion of the government and extend only to management, not ownership. As a result millions of forest dependent people in Indonesia live without secure land tenure. The granting of management rights is handled at a local government level but so far only six of the over 300 district governments in Indonesia have chosen to recognise those rights. Only communities with recognised management rights are able to participate in REDD deals - those without are relegated to the 'monitoring' of the REDD schemes negotiated by companies, governments and carbon trading companies on their lands.

In relation to its REDD projects, and the development of the REDD system more generally, the Australian government has assiduously avoided dealing with the land rights issue. In a submission on the Kalimantan Forests and Climate Partnership, the Australian government stated that the project accepted the context of current Indonesian forestry law and that 'this approach has the advantage of building on existing, well understood systems within a recognised legal framework' – a statement that must be tongue in cheek given the conflicting, confusing and virtually unenforceable state of forest laws in Indonesia.

This failure to prioritise the resolution of disputes over land tenure is not limited to the relationship between Australia and Indonesia, but rather is becoming a feature of REDD schemes throughout the world. Addressing land rights and ongoing problems with logging and plantations is

vital to changing land use practices and to developing long term sustainable solutions aimed at stopping deforestation, not simply preserving pockets of forest to enable ongoing consumption in Australia and other wealthy nations.

More information about REDD, including a report on REDD in Indonesia by WALHI (Friends of the Earth Indonesia) is available at <www.foe.org.au/climate-

Climate Colonialism at the Pacific Island Forum

Reporting from the Pacific Island Forum held in Cairns in August, Shirley Atatagi, Greenpeace's Pacific advisor, detailed a pattern of bullying behaviour by the Australian and New Zealand governments on the issue of climate change.

Tactics included overloading the agenda, stopping a Forum Officials Committee from being held, controlling the Secretariat, late distribution and non-distribution of meeting papers, suppressing the release of a strongly-worded communiqué from the Small Island States, scheduling a side event (with NGO speakers) at a time when political leaders could not attend, and banning media from reporting the side event lest it lead to 'mixed messages'.

A Samoan, Shirley Atatagi said: "Australia and New Zealand's corrupt and underhanded means of getting their way inside the Pacific Islands Forum carries the stench of colonialism. It is no secret that in this forum they continue to use their small contributions to our poor countries as a means of ensuring absolute power in the region. ...

"The world should know that the Forum has today ceased to become relevant to the people of the Pacific and to the issues that really matter. Climate Change is the biggest security threat facing the region right now and the scientific projections are dire. Yet the former colonial powers have succeeded in manipulating the science-based positions of our government while exploiting the low level of technical understanding that our Leaders have on this issue. This is scandalous at most.

"Getting our Leaders to endorse 2 degrees as the limit in global temperature increases is a death sentence for small island countries like Tuvalu and Kiribati that the Pacific Islands Forum supposedly serves."

Sources: 'Cairnsgate', <<http://blogs.crikey.com.au/rooted/2009/08/10/cairnsgate>>; 'Oz discouraged Pacific Islands from tough emissions stance', Crikey, 21 September 2009.



Resisting Talisman Sabre military training exercises

Jessica Morrison

Bonhoeffer 4 awaiting arrest, blockading one of the Shoalwater Bay internal roads

Recent military training exercises of Australian and US troops faced significant opposition when national protests converged and 16 people were arrested.

For the last six years the major biannual training exercises between the Australian and US militaries has been dubbed Talisman Sabre. Despite the name, there is nothing magic or sacred about these three-week exercises – to build our ‘interoperability’ with the largest and most aggressive military force in the world, as they continue to wage an war in Afghanistan and expand into Northern Pakistan.

Held from July 6-26, Talisman Sabre cost Australians \$48 million. The 5,500 Australian troops were joined by 17,000 US troops who bombed our land and oceans, sunk boats just back from the offensive wars in the Middle East, and practiced manoeuvres for the wars.

Scenarios played out during the war ‘games’ included troops landing on foreign soil, dealing with local armed resistance and taking control of a makeshift village.

The exercises are primarily focused on Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area (SWBTA) - an area the size of Belgium, in Central Queensland. The base includes RAMSAR listed wetlands, and a chunk of ocean cut out from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. It includes breeding grounds and migration routes for protected marine life such as whales, dugongs and turtles.

Talisman Sabre’s live fire component was also undertaken at remote sites of Bradshaw and Delamere Ranges in the Northern Territory, as well as the Coral and Timor Seas. High explosive munitions are a key part of the exercises, using nuclear-powered ships, and in acquiescence to the US, Australia does not even ask whether the US ships are carrying nuclear weapons.

Senator John Faulkner’s statement that the US forces “have

been advised that the use of Depleted Uranium munitions in Australia is strictly prohibited” is less than an iron-clad guarantee that DU munitions are not brought to our shores.

Protesting the exercises

Before the exercises even began, two people on opposite sides of the country were arrested for resisting the arrival of US warships. In Perth, former Senator and long-time activist Jo Valentine was arrested for ‘disturbing the peace’ by holding up a placard on the wharfs, while in Cairns Terry Spackman (formally of the Royal Navy) was arrested seeking to undertake a Citizens Inspection of a US warship.

In the same week, young people from central Queensland organised a Committed to Change Festival, showcasing the many ways people can resist the destructive aspects of our society while also providing great music and entertainment. Committed to Change is led by Renton Bishopric who had visited Viequez – a community whose resistance had evicted the US military base on their island. Leaders in Viequez had attested to the importance of building communities of resistance and positive change to their campaign so the strategy was brought back to Australia.

In the week leading up to the exercises beginning, Native American and Peace Activist Judith LeBlanc toured Eastern Australia to promote resistance to the exercises and the wars of aggression that the US is part of. In Melbourne, two groups organised solidarity vigils and leafletting.

In Rockhampton Dr Sue Wareham from the Medical Association for Prevention of War spoke at a film screening of *Scarred Lands – Wounded Lives*, a documentary highlighting the horrendous environmental costs of war.

The military commenced its exercises with a family fun day in the adjoining town of Rockhampton, Christian protestors held a prominent die in – to attest to irony of parading war as fun for any families.

The Martin Luther King House of Christian Nonviolence continued its action in the first week - blockading the main road of the Rockhampton Barracks as they tried to move troops and equipment to the Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area. Then Jim Dowling and Ciaron O'Reilly were arrested as they stopped a convoy of trucks with tanks and armoured troop carriers on the road to the training area. Jim and Ciaron refused to sign an undertaking to appear in court and stayed in custody until joining resistance later in the exercises.

The national Peace Convergence began the next weekend, involving both visiting activists and locals. Participation in the massive NAIDOC Day parade helped the protests to be grounded in respect for Indigenous people and solidarity with their ongoing struggle for justice. The public meeting was honoured by a welcome by Auntie Jeanette Yow Yeh who is planning a Children of the Pacific conference next year for Indigenous people in the region to promote a nuclear-free future. Judith LeBlanc spoke from a North American perspective, inviting all to continue to act with conviction. Jake Lynch from Sydney's Peace and Conflict Centre described an escalating culture of war in the US. Hamish Chits, an Australian Army veteran, talked about the detestation faced by personnel in facing wars, and called on for us to support the troops by demanding they come home from wars of aggression.

The first action of the weekend was a mass hokey pokey where great grand-mother June Norman was arrested for crossing police lines on a road to the SWBTA – putting her whole self in and shaking it all about. (June is organising a womens' walk for peace from Brisbane to Canberra from February to May 2010, <junentimor@yahoo.com.au>.)

The other main action included a blockade of the Rockhampton Barracks where Sydney Chaplain Frank Vavasour was arrested climbing the fence.

As well as these actions including arrestable components, there was a night-time vigil at the Barracks with the Peace Bus lanterns providing a beautiful backdrop to the evening. Locals organised a march and peace concert on the Sunday, providing a chance for a public and creative show of resistance to war and demonstrating a positive alternative.

In the lead up to Talisman Sabre, in Senate Estimates, Senior Defence Official Air Commander Meier stated: "Essentially, if we know there is an unauthorised person into the Commonwealth land at Shoalwater Bay, Bradshaw or any of the other exercise areas, the exercise is stopped." Boosted by this, three groups of people made incursions into the base.

The first group entered on the first day of the live fire phase of the exercises. Calling themselves the Bonhoeffer 4 after Nazi resister and PM Kevin Rudd's favourite person of

the 20th century, they declared their presence by releasing helium-inflated giant red balloons. The military did not stop exercises when alerted to their presence, and the group was detected by US military personnel on the second day. The group remained in custody overnight, and pleaded guilty in court the next day. All were charged with trespass, and two of the group who stayed on the road when asked to move were also charged with 'assault or obstruct a police officer'.

Two groups entered the base several days later. One group was the 'Jagerstatter 3', named after Franz Jaggerstater, an Austrian farmer who refused to be conscripted by the Nazi's and was killed. The 'Grana 4' were named after a 12 year old girl who was the sole survivor in her family of a NATO aerial bombing in Afghanistan.

The seven people spent between three and 11 days inside the base. Two people walked out of the base undetected and travelled home. One held up an armoured convoy on a major road, holding a banner. Another stood on a rocky outcrop and addressed the troops for some time before they came and got him. All have stories of meeting and talking with troops, or witnessing parts of the games.

At no point did the military admit the presence of groups, avoiding publicly admitting any changes to their plans. However, in stark contrast to previous years, where the last phase of the exercises is marked by large explosions, once the Bonhoeffer 4 announced to police that they could hear the bombings, the bombings stopped and weren't heard again during the exercises.

Perhaps the exercises were significantly disrupted and curbed from the cumulative effect of all the actions. This is always difficult to determine outside the military but further evidence of disruption may be collected in 2011 as we repeat these actions.

The government cannot depend on silent compliance from Australians as long as they continue to escalate military spending and involve themselves in wars of aggression.

Footage and photos: <www.peaceconvergence.com>



How To Make Trouble And Influence People: Anti-Nuclear Action, 1958-2006

Iain McIntyre

Although demonstrations, public meetings and letter writing can be powerful means of expressing hope and anger, all too often they become empty rituals performed for want of having anything better to do in response to the latest government or corporate provocation. In his latest book, *How To Make Trouble And Influence People: The Collected Edition* (Breakdown Press), Iain McIntyre brings together hundreds of listings and photos, posters and other ephemera, as well as interviews with leading pranksters and activists, to celebrate Australia's history of creative sedition. The following excerpts from the book are just a few examples illustrating how anti-nuclear activists have used humorous and inventive approaches to challenge all aspects of the nuclear industry.

Perth, 1958 - An attempt by six members of the Union of Australian Women to get around anti-protest laws by wearing aprons and scarves bearing slogans in opposition to nuclear testing fails when they are arrested for "parading with placards." After an appeal to the Supreme Court, the charges are quashed.

Melbourne, 1975 - Over 300 cyclists pedal from Melbourne to Sydney to protest against the Federal government's pro-uranium policies. During the build up to the marathon former Olympic champion Nino Borsari lends a hand with coaching.

Adelaide, 1978 - Protestors marching on Hiroshima Day present mining company CRA with a number of "body bags" as a reward for its contribution to the nuclear industry.

Canberra, 1980 - Anti nuclear protesters squat Parliament lawns to set up an Atom-Free Embassy. After 94 days the police move in using the same anti-camping laws that had been applied to the Aboriginal Tent Embassy years earlier. Following the eviction the protesters return with a piece of cardboard and a flag in an attempt to create the Atom-Free Embassy Mark II, but are forced by the cops to remain on foot to avoid arrest. Weeks later the protest goes fully mobile engaging in an illegal banner drop at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Melbourne before taking over St Martins Square in Sydney for a week.

South Australia, 1982 - During three days of protest at the Honeymoon uranium mine, anti-nuclear demonstrators

defy police attempts to prevent them from setting fire to a massive three tier, cardboard "yellow cake."

Melbourne, 1982 - After a flotilla of kayaks, led by a burning HMAS Anzac made out of papier mache, fail to halt the US warship Goldsborough from docking at Station Pier, protesters react in a myriad of ways. One group, responding to a call from ALP Premier Cain for all Victorians to extend their "traditional courtesy and hospitality" to US servicemen, invites the crew to join them for a BBQ with "yellowcake and submarine sandwiches" at an anti-nuclear embassy set up on nearby Port Melbourne beach. Another bunch scuffle with police after a man dressed in black robes and a death's head mask leaps in front of a consulate vehicle carrying the ship's captain. Feminists meanwhile enrage servicemen by chanting "Take your syphilis elsewhere" and an Anglican priest from the group Clergy For Peace performs a service aimed at purifying the area of "demonic spirits."

Alice Springs, 1980s - In the run up to the Henley-on-Todd dry-river "boat" race, members of the "Alice Springs Peace Squadron" accuse US competitors of cheating by using nuclear-powered vessels. On the day of the event a lone protester tackles servicemen from the nearby Pine Gap spy base by boarding the US vessel with half a surfboard strapped to his waist.

Perth, 1980s - During a 1983 visit by the US Navy members of the Peace Fleet attempt to blockade the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson with a flotilla of protest ships before Project Iceberg (PI) goes on board the USS Worden to hang banners reading "Not Here, Not Anywhere" and "The Human Race Or The Arms Race?" PI continues to disrupt public tours of visiting warships over the next two years with many of its members and supporters being arrested as a result. When the authorities attempt to prevent the protests by searching bags in 1985, their efforts are easily circumvented by protesters who smuggle stickers and banners on board in their toddlers' and babies' clothes

Bombs Kill Babies, WA, 1980s. Photo courtesy of PND (WA).



and bags. One action, taken just before the campaign successfully finishes the tours off, sees two women and their children hang a banner, with each letter printed on a nappy, reading “Bombs Kill Babies.”

Adelaide, 1984 - An anti-uranium demonstrator splatters Prime Minister Hawke with yellow paint as he enters the National ALP Women's Conference.

Canberra, 1984 - Eight Greenpeace activists wearing white disposable suits and gasmasks walk into Parliament House carrying low level nuclear waste found in suburban Sydney.

Roxby Downs, 1984 - During actions against the construction of the Olympic Dam uranium mine, two protesters superglue their hands to a gate to prevent the entry of vehicles. While the police manage to remove them with the use of an oxy-cutter, the pair appear in court the following day with sections of piping and a lock still attached to their bodies.

Sydney, 1985 - A failed attempt by a hang glider pilot to land two yellow paint bombs on the deck of the US guided missile destroyer Buchanan ends in a high speed car chase after a policeman dives off a launch, swims to shore and commandeers a vehicle to pursue the bomber and his accomplice through the streets of Watson's Bay. The pair are eventually captured in nearby South Head.

Melbourne, 1986 - Peace groups picket the Myers Department Store's “Fete de France” calling for a boycott of the nuclear nation.

Melbourne, 1986 - Nuclear-capable warships visiting Melbourne are targeted by a peace fleet. With union bans having already limited the number of ships able to enter the port, the flotilla is only left with one warship to deal with. On the ship's entry into Princes Pier, a scuba diver manages to graffiti the side of the ship with anarchist and peace symbols as well as the slogan ‘U.S. F-CK OFF.’ During the ship's Open Day, pigs blood is thrown across the deck and

people walk on board unveiling t-shirts that spell out the word “DEATH”. Arrests ensue, but the police van carrying prisoners away is blockaded for over an hour by a Telecom car and a 44 gallon drum dragged in the way by protesters. South Australia, 1987 - When charged by police the 111 women arrested during a trespass action at the US spy base at Pine Gap all give the name of the murdered US anti-nuclear whistleblower Karen Silkwood.

Canberra, 1989 - During the opening of the new Parliament House Greenpeace activists steal the limelight by scaling the building to drop a banner over the entrance reading “No More Uranium Mines In Kakadu World Park.”

Northern Territory, 1998 - 93 protesters wearing John Howard masks are arrested for trespassing on the Jabiluka mine lease. When asked for their details all reply “John Howard, Government House, Canberra”.

Perth, 1998 - Anti-nuclear activists disrupt the flow of business by opening and immediately closing bank accounts in a protest against Westpac's involvement in uranium mining.

South Australia, 1999 - Chuck Foldenauer, head of the Beverley uranium mine, declines to press charges after receiving two servings of public humiliation in the form of “slimings” of green goo from anti-nuclear group Humps Not Dumps.

Torquay, 1999 - The Surfriders For Sacred Sites group protests against uranium mining during the Bells Beach surf competition by unfurling banners reading ‘Not Jabiluka, Not Anywhere.’

Sydney, 2001- An “invasion” by 50 anti-nuclear protesters, some dressed as barrels of nuclear waste, exposes the lax security at the Lucas Heights nuclear reactor. It takes police four hours to remove the demonstrators who hang banners from buildings and scale a weather tower as well as a building housing nuclear material.

Sydney, 2002 - In a bizarre promotional effort the federal government's nuclear agency ANSTO decides to hold a competition asking school kids to name its proposed second nuclear reactor at Lucas Heights. Anti-nuclear campaigners get in on the act coming up with such choice titles as Leukemia Heights, Melting Moments, Lupus Blights and ANSTO's Ashes.

Australia, 2006 - During a national day of action targeting pro-nuclear industry consultants Parsons Brinckerhoff, the company's offices are occupied in Melbourne and Sydney with activists offering staff freshly baked “yellowcake.” In Newcastle would be occupiers engage in a “radioactive” green jelly fight, hang banners and slip leaflets under the locked doors of the company's office whilst in Brisbane up to 40 police keep activists at bay before being led on a goose chase around the city.

‘How To Make Trouble And Influence People: The Collected Edition’ is available from <www.breakdownpress.org>

U.S.S Proteus, Fremantle, September 1984. Photo courtesy of PND (WA).



Angela Pamela Cleans Up at Alice Show Day

Ellie Rennie



An entry at Alice Springs Show.

The competition took a serious turn at this year's Alice Springs show. A contestant called Angela Pamela submitted entries in almost every prize category – and she cleaned up. Her name was spoken by small groups of families and friends as they passed shelves of crafts, preserves and cakes. “This one's Angela Pamela, too,” a woman said, pointing to a fruitcake. “I think it's a uranium thing,” her friend replied.

Angela Pamela has been around these parts since the 1970s, when a German company was drilling holes in the ground. Uranerz estimated that there could be as much as 13,000 tonnes of uranium at the site, 25 kms south of Alice Springs, but handed the land back to the Northern Territory government when the market turned cold in the early 1980s. The site was named after Pamela, a Uranerz geologist who worked on the project, and Angela, her colleague's wife.

Now Angela Pamela is back and this time she means business. The Northern Territory government awarded a new exploration licence to two companies, Cameco and Paladin, last October. By May, Cameco was pulling up samples from 500 metres below the surface, thanks in part to government subsidies for exploration and expedited Native Title procedures. Drill a little too deep and they'll get to the Mereenie Sandstone, a layer of porous rock that contains the Alice Springs water supply. Cameco says the drilling “shouldn't have any impact at all” on the town's water. But connections between aquifers are mysterious even to geologists and Cameco has made mistakes in the past (a leak at Port Hope, in Canada, was contaminating groundwater for 10 years before it was discovered). Moreover, in a place where dust storms are frequent, there are some things you don't want stirred up.

Angela Pamela has her name, in neat calligraphy, all over the show. Her prize cards have pretty borders and official stamps. On some entries, she has given her surname, Leevit (as in “Leevit-in-the-ground”). She has crocheted a yellow tea-cosy with an anti-nuclear pattern and baked a plate of cookies in the same design. She has made a broken-heart shaped cake with luminous icing oozing off. She gets second prize in the “senior art” category for a digital image of a radiated man against a glowing horizon; in a nearby cabinet lies some of her knitting, a sweater with a poem: “Fish in the water, birds in the air, uranium in the ground.”

My favourite of her entries is a purple hot waterbottle cover, decorated with a “nuclear danger” sign and the words “To Alice, from Angela Pamela.” But it's hard to go past the forlorn green teddy bear – no arms, but otherwise perfectly assembled – which wears a ribbon around its neck reading “Angela Pamela, Just Not Right.”

The number of prizes won by Angela Pamela suggests that at least some of her entries must have come from within the ranks of the Country Women's Association. The visual references were probably easy to cook up: glowing, garish colours, malformed figures, waste and ooze. The nuclear warning sign is now fixed within the Australian psyche, a mandala against easy money in a land of ‘rich’ mineral deposits.

The idea for Angela Pamela's appearance at the Alice Springs show came from local social-change historian, Megg Kelham, who sent out a viral email. Megg didn't want to impose any restrictions on how the name Angela Pamela was to be used. “The idea needed to take on a life of its own. If it was going to succeed it had to be open to anyone in the community to participate.” I asked her how the show's officials responded when the entries started arriving. “They were a little overwhelmed,” she says, “but they accepted everything.” Maybe the show really needed the \$9 entry fees.

Megg's own entry is a decorated ute (“It's a political year for utes,” I think to myself), competing in the ‘Chicks’ Utes’ category. Amid rows of seriously masculine vehicles with names like ‘Cowboy Up’ and ‘Rum Runner’ there she is, draped in banners and anti-uranium fact sheets. On the back of the ute hang two female cloth-and-wire sculptures, two bold women. A sign between them reads: “Alice Springs and Angela Pamela, a marriage made in hell.” One is wearing a 1993 Alice Springs lesbian festival t-shirt, which appropriately reads “eat our dust.” The ute has bumper stickers too – “Angela Pamela: Came for a look, stayed forever.”

"Do you own this ute?" a man asks Megg and her friend Terri. I stand by, thinking he is a pro-nuclear official and that the ute is about to get disqualified. Instead, he tells them off for bad parking. "I don't mind having youse in but they're the rules."

Apart from Angela Pamela, this is a routine country show. It has the usual dodgem cars, show bags and fairy floss. Out on the oval, a pony with its five-year-old jockey in tow tears away from the pack and goes galloping across the field. Crowds gather to watch the pig racing and the Dead Centre Bow Hunters (whose sign, at first glance, seems to say "dead bow hunters centre"). A dog with a spectacular blow-wave trots past; an immaculate equestrian rider canters by with a "No U-Mine" sticker pasted to her horse's groomed flank. As my friend points out, "There are lots of agendas at a show." Not far from where the \$6, low-cholesterol, camel-meat sausages are sizzling, camel control researchers are handing out reports.

I have one more shed to visit before I leave. I find the Cameco mining display near the door, where a mother and her son are playing with helium balloons. The walls are lined with maps of the area; information sheets about water, dust and radiation are neatly arranged on the table. I ask a man with a European accent if he knows about the Angela Pamela show entries and he says he has known since the planning stage. "We considered putting in our own entries. But ours would have been beautiful, well-engineered creations." Presumably, he wanted to give Angela a good name, rescuing her from her upstart reputation. In the end he decided against the idea: "It's all in good humour." He reveals only a hint of nervousness as he hands me a Cameco glow stick.

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GUESS WHO'S BUILDING NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS.

The Shah of Iran is sitting on top of one of the largest reservoirs of oil in the world.

Yet he's building two nuclear plants and planning two more to provide electricity for his country.

He knows the oil is running out — and time with it.

But he wouldn't build the plants now if he doubted their safety. He'd wait. As many Americans want to do.

The Shah knows that nuclear energy is not only economical, it has enjoyed a remarkable 30-year safety record. A record that was good enough for the citizens of Plymouth, Massachusetts, too. They've approved their second nuclear plant by a vote of almost 4 to 1. Which shows you don't have to go as far as Iran for an endorsement of nuclear power.

NUCLEAR ENERGY. TODAY'S ANSWER.



Peter Garrett's U Sky Mining

Jim Green

*And some have sailed from a distant shore
And the company takes what the company wants
And nothing's as precious, as a hole in the ground*

- Midnight Oil, Blue Sky Mining

Federal environment minister Peter Garrett justified his July 14 decision to approve in situ leach (ISL) uranium mining at Beverley Four Mile in South Australia with the claim that he had “set the bar to the highest level” and was applying “world’s best practice” environmental standards.

Thus Garrett added another chapter to the history of spin surrounding ISL mining. He has not insisted on rehabilitation of polluted groundwater at Beverley Four Mile. Moreover, he did not insist on an Environmental Impact Statement from the mining proponents but allowed a lower level of assessment, a Public Environment Report. On both counts, Garrett failed to live up to his own rhetoric.

ISL mining involves pumping an acidic solution into an aquifer, dissolving uranium and other heavy metals and pumping the solution back to the surface. After the uranium has been separated, liquid waste – containing radionuclides, heavy metals and acid – is simply dumped in the aquifer.

Proponents of ISL mining claim that ‘attenuation’ will occur over time - that the groundwater will return to its pre-mining state. However there is considerable scientific uncertainty about the future of ISL-polluted groundwater and uncertainty about the timeframe for attenuation if it does occur. A 2003 Senate References and Legislation Committee report recommended that “mines utilising the ISL technique should be subject to strict regulation, including prohibition of discharge of radioactive liquid mine waste to groundwater”. Garrett has rejected that Senate Committee recommendation.

Geoscience Australia has been commissioned by the federal government to carry out a review of ISL mining. Its draft guidelines include consideration of alternatives to dumping liquid waste in groundwater - specifically, it mentions the option of “evaporation to solid residues and disposal on site (or at a low level radioactive waste repository)”. Garrett had the draft report from Geoscience Australia before making his decision but still chose to allow liquid waste to be dumped in groundwater.

Following the 2003 Senate inquiry, The SA Labor

government commissioned a study by scientists from the CSIRO and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation. The study had all the hallmarks of a whitewash yet still acknowledged that attenuation is “not proven” and could only cite a period of “several years to decades” for it to occur. Yet the companies proposing to use ISL mining at Beverley Four Mile want to absolve themselves of any future responsibility for the site just seven years after they have finished mining.

ISL uranium mining is used at the Beverley uranium mine (10 kms from Beverley Four Mile) and it is the mining method proposed for Beverley Four Mile, Oban and Honeymoon. The future of ISL mining is plain to see - short-lived mines leaving a lasting legacy of polluted aquifers.

In addition to the pollution of groundwater, surface spills and leaks are a common feature of ISL mining. The SA Department of Primary Industry and Resources lists 59 spills at the Beverley mine from 1998-2007.

The horrendous environmental legacy of ISL mining in former Soviet and eastern European states is dismissed by ISL proponents as being a result of Soviet-era mismanagement and neglect. But the same problems are evident in Australia: captured bureaucracies; slack regulation; Orwellian doublespeak (e.g. ‘world’s best practice’); secrecy (for example, the Australian Conservation Foundation had to appeal to the SA Ombudsman to get Heathgate to release crucial information about the Beverley mine, such as the Groundwater Monitoring Summary); and questionable corporate practices (for example, Heathgate employed a private investigator in the late 1990s who attempted to infiltrate Friends of the Earth).

Adnyamathanha Traditional Owners

Garrett noted that there is an agreement between the mining proponents and the Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association in relation to Beverley Four Mile. But he knows that the agreement falls a long way short of free, prior and informed consent. Traditional Owners have no right of veto under SA or federal legislation.

In a July 15 statement, Adnyamathanha Elders Enice Marsh and Geraldine Anderson called on Garrett to reverse his decision at least until the completion of an investigation being conducted by the SA government into long-standing Aboriginal heritage concerns raised by Adnyamathanha Traditional Owners.

Enice Marsh said: “Adnyamathanha Elders wrote to [SA Aboriginal Affairs Minister Jay Weatherill] weeks ago raising our concerns, and he promised to do an investigation into the Four Mile proposal. His job is to make sure heritage laws are followed. If he won’t use his powers he should be sacked. ... “We have no decision making power under Native Title, we have been forced into signing a Native Title Mining Agreement that gives us royalty compensation. If we refused to sign it the proponent has the right to take the matter

to the ERD [Environment, Resources and Development] Court and cut us out of the process altogether. Aboriginal people have no rights under Native Title to protect our heritage. Look at what's already happened and how people have just given in to the pressures. ... "What more can we do to protect our land from being raped by mining companies that are allowed to pollute the water and carve up the waterways, even contaminate the soil with radioactive waste? The general public need to know what is going on and ordinary people need to take action to stop the abuse of our environment."

In addition to their battle with state and federal governments and mining companies, some Adnyamathanha Elders are battling within their own community. They have formed an Elders Group as a separate forum from the Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association. According to Enice Marsh: "There have been many attempts over the past 10 years to try and bring greater accountability to what's happening in Native Title, and to stop the ongoing assault on our Yarta (country). Many of us have tried with very little resources, limited understanding of the legal system and environmental laws, and despite a mountain of bullying, lies and deceit from mining companies, lawyers, and self-inflated thugs in our own community who dare to call themselves 'leaders'."

Even those Adnyamathanha custodians who supported the agreement to mine Beverley Four Mile seem unimpressed with the process. Vince Coulthard, chair of the Adnyamathanha Traditional Land Association, told ABC radio on July 17: "Well I think people have come to the understanding that if they didn't support it, it's going to happen in any case so the best thing to do is to negotiate an agreement."

Traditional Owner Geraldine Anderson said: "This Labor Government is saying sorry to the Stolen Generation, on the

other hand they're taking the way of destroying our sites and taking our identity away. So when's this going to stop?" If and when the abuse stops, it will be despite and not because of Peter Garrett. Presumably Garrett is prepared to sell out on long-held principles in the pursuit of broader political goals. He ought to have asked Adnyamathanha custodians if they are willing to be sacrificed in the pursuit of his goals and ambitions.

Military links

The Four Mile lease is owned by Quasar Resources (an affiliate of Heathgate Resources) and Alliance Craton Explorer, and the mine will be operated by Heathgate Resources (an affiliate of US weapons and nuclear energy corporation General Atomics).

The Sydney Morning Herald reported on July 16 that James Neal Blue, a "colourful but reclusive billionaire", is a director of Quasar Resources and chair of General Atomics. Blue first came to prominence in the 1980s as a self-described "enthusiastic supporter" of US involvement in the covert war against the Nicaraguan government.

The Beverley Four Mile deposit is estimated at 30,000 tonnes of uranium. Used in power reactors, that amount of uranium would produce 4,500 tonnes of high-level nuclear waste (in the form of spent nuclear fuel) and enough plutonium to build 4,500 nuclear weapons.

The major customer for the uranium is likely to be the US, a nuclear weapons state which has no intention of fulfilling its binding disarmament obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and which has for many years blocked progress on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the proposed Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty.

Jim Green is the national nuclear campaign with Friends of the Earth, Australia. <jim.green@foe.org.au> <www.foe.org.au/anti-nuclear>



Nanoparticle exposure related to deaths of Chinese workers

A new study is the first to document cases of serious illness and death in humans apparently caused by exposure to nanoparticles. In a peer-reviewed study published in the *European Respiratory Journal*, Chinese researchers have documented the tragic deaths of two print factory workers from lung failure, and severe lung problems experienced by another five workers.

Workers inhaled fumes produced when the polystyrene boards they were required to coat with a plastic material (polyacrylic ester) were heated to 75-100°C. This coating paste was found to contain nanoparticles 30 nanometres wide, as did the dust particles that had collected at the inlet of the broken ventilation unit. Particles this size were also found in the chest fluid and lung biopsies of the affected workers. The composition of the nanoparticles remains unknown. The women were working with a toxic mix of solvents, and the contribution to their illness of the other chemicals is also unknown.

There have been many high profile responses to the study so far. Several leading nanotoxicologists have warned of the uncertainties and knowledge gaps associated with the study. Others emphasise that if accepted occupational health and safety measures had been implemented (e.g. adequate ventilation, wearing of face masks), that the workers may not have suffered ill-health.

That workplace exposure to nanoparticles appears to have been a contributing factor in the deaths of two young women, and the serious illness of five others, is a tragedy. The potential contributing role of other chemicals does not diminish this. Many workers are unwittingly facing exposure to nanoparticles at the same time as a cocktail of other chemicals.

Many people think of nano-exposure as an issue for scientists in laboratories. But the reality is that workers in factories that produce, handle or package sunscreens, cosmetics, clothing, glass, paints, electronics, packaging, building equipment and appliances that contain nanomaterials all face exposure – as do maintenance workers and cleaners.

The overwhelming majority of workers who experience occupational exposure to nanoparticles – in China, Australia and other countries – are not informed of this. This makes it impossible for workers to insist on precautionary measures to minimise their exposure. It is still unknown whether any safe level of occupational exposure to nanoparticles exists, or whether all levels of exposure could result in harm. Furthermore, it is unknown to what extent existing personal protective equipment will protect workers from unsafe nanoparticle exposure.

In 2004, the United Kingdom's Royal Society recommended that given the risks:

- all intentionally manufactured nanomaterials should be subject to mandatory safety assessment before being used in products;
- factories and research laboratories should treat nanomaterials as if they were hazardous; and
- the use of nanomaterials in products should be labelled.



Five years later, there has been a huge growth in evidence that some manufactured nanomaterials introduce new risks to human health and the environment.

The fact that commercial use of nanomaterials remains effectively unregulated, with no new safety measures or exposure standards, no mandatory safety testing before commercial use, and no way for workers or regulators to know how many people are already subject to occupational exposure, is completely unacceptable.

A spokesperson for the office of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research Minister Kim Carr said earlier this year that while the Rudd government is concerned about workers' health, it will not be introducing new, nano-specific regulations to deal with workplace exposure.

Friends of the Earth reiterates our support for the ACTU's call for a mandatory register of all commercially used nanomaterials, and mandatory notification to all workers potentially exposed to these nanomaterials, by the end of this year.

Furthermore, we reiterate our previous call for all intentionally manufactured nanomaterials to be required to pass nano-specific safety assessment before they can be used commercially.

For links to the peer-reviewed study, and commentary from industry observers, visit: <<http://thepumphandle.wordpress.com/2009/08/21/case-report-nanoparticles-in-workers-lungs>>
<<http://2020science.org/2009/08/18/new-study-seeks-to-link-seven-cases-of-occupational-lung-disease-with-nanoparticles-and-nanotechnology>>

Government 'consultation' on new nanotechnology strategy under fire

Genetic engineering of food and crops continues to be highly unpopular with the public, who, for social, political, health and environmental reasons would prefer their food and farming GE-free, and public science funding spent elsewhere.

Acknowledging this, governments have paid a lot of lip service to 'learning from the mistakes' of GE when it comes to nanotechnology – supposedly including the need to make sure that technologies have community support and a 'social license' to operate. However, the recent shabby consultation for the new "National Enabling Technologies Strategy" reveals a huge gap between the reality of technology decision making and the rhetoric of Innovation Minister

Carr's stated commitment to 'social democracy' and the Rudd Government's new 'social inclusion' agenda.

The consultation is supposed to underpin the development of a new four-year strategy to guide government policy, funding and support for technologies such as GE and nanotechnology. But despite the controversial nature of the technologies, the consultation did not involve members of the wider public.

There were three times as many consultations available to industry as to NGOs. Some key NGOs were only invited to participate in the consultation at the last minute after vigorous efforts by other NGOs, and others were not invited at all. The 'consultation' has done little to allay community concerns that nanotechnology is managed in industry interests, rather than those of the public.

Nano-free safe sunscreen guide – we need your help!

Last summer, FoE's safe sunscreen guide was a huge success. For the first time, the guide revealed which sunscreen brands have made a decision not to use nanoparticle or harmful chemical ingredients, letting people make an informed choice. Widely reported in the media, viewed over 15,000 times on our website, and distributed through unions and community networks, the guide had a huge reach. This year we want to make it even more comprehensive, and accessible to more people.

We need your help! We are looking for volunteers for the following jobs:

- developing a web-based guide (to enable people to readily search for their favourite brand, and for us to update brand information as we receive it)
- designing the hard-copy and downloadable guide (to make it easy to read and print, appealing and professional)
- supporting our public communications (help with mail-outs of the guide, mailing/ emailing responses to frequently asked questions, putting together community group contact lists etc)

If you are able to help or want to know more, please contact Fiona Thiessen, ph (03) 9419 8700, email <fiona.thiessen@foe.org.au>.



It's On! NSW Red Gum Assessment Kicks off

Carmel Flint

After the historic decision in Victoria early this year to dramatically increase protection of River Red Gum wetlands, things have finally started moving north of the border as well. This follows more than a decade of studied inaction from governments, both state and federal, on the plight of the NSW Red Gum forests.

In May, things took a dramatic turn when federal environment minister Peter Garrett looked set to step in and use his powers under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 to protect matters of national environment significance in the NSW Red Gum forests – namely Ramsar wetlands and habitat for nationally threatened species such as the Superb Parrot, Southern Bell Frog and Regent Parrot.

There was shock from the environment movement across the country – real conservation action from the federal ALP and the infamous EPBC Act 1999! Well, almost, but not quite. The federal environment department got as far as sending a threatening letter to Forests NSW apparently warning them to halt logging by May 31 or face having the logging ‘called-in’ under the EPBC Act 1999. Thereafter, things went somewhat pear-shaped for the attempted intervention. Garrett seemed to lose his bottle and things went into a protracted ‘negotiation’ phase.

The logging and patch-clearfelling was, of course, never stopped. Except by a group of concerned citizens who stepped in on June 1 to do what the federal government proved too weak to do – enforce the law and put a stop to illegal logging of the largest Red Gum wetland left on earth. The blockade, conducted in solidarity with the Yorta Yorta Traditional Owners in Millewa State Forest, lasted for 10 days.

At the end of that period, the NSW government sent in the police force in numbers – not to arrest the real villains of the piece, Forests NSW, for illegally patch-clearfelling Red Gum forests for more than five years, but to bust out the peaceful protesters trying to uphold the law. Three protesters were arrested.

The forests were ‘closed’ for the exclusive use of the loggers and their unlawful activities, whilst the protestors and Traditional Owners faced fines of up to \$2,000 if they entered the forests again. Undeterred, the Yorta Yorta returned to the forest to have a barbeque on Country, sharing food and yarns as they have always done, and invited others to join them. A fine feed was had by all – in the shadow of the ‘prohibited area’ signs.

In July, former NSW Premier Bob Carr came out in

support of Red Gum National Parks. He invoked the memory of Hans Heysen, water colour artist and conservationist, in calling on the NSW government to protect the Red Gum forests, stating that: “Heysen valued river red gums as Australian icons, part of our folklore, symbols of inland Australia. It is time for us collectively – that is, as a state – to do the same”.

Shortly afterwards, the current NSW Premier, Nathan Rees, finally stepped in and directed the NSW Natural Resources Commission to undertake an independent assessment of the Red Gum forests of the Riverina region. Despite failing to stop the logging as threatened, the federal government earns some credit for helping to get the NSW government to take this step.

Things are now proceeding very quickly. The Natural Resources Commission will make final recommendations to the NSW government about the future of the forests by the end of November this year.

Even the most cursory assessment of the extraordinary conservation significance of the forests and the severe and escalating threats they face, should find that an extensive network of new National Parks along the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers are required. It should also recommend much increased environmental water allocations for Red Gum wetlands.

However, such an outcome is by no means assured. The Natural Resources Commission has never undertaken a regional assessment before and they are largely an unknown quantity. They certainly do not have as strong a structure or legislative underpinning as the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council. They also have a huge task of getting on top of the issues, the science and the data in only a couple of months.

Then there is the NSW government, whose capacity to deliver a substantial environmental outcome in the River Red Gum (or anywhere else) is highly questionable. They deserve some credit for finally having a shot at an assessment, but they really need to produce an historic National Park decision to drag their environmental credibility up from the bottom of the deep dark well where it currently resides. In addition, they need to finally make proper restitution to the Traditional Owners and return the ownership of new Red Gum National Parks on Country through handback-leaseback arrangements. It is long past time for land justice in the southern Murray-Darling Basin.

Back in the forests, spring has come and almost gone again. The call of the last few pairs of Barking Owls left in

the Riverina region has long since quietened after the end of the winter breeding season. The Squirrel Gliders have re-emerged from their winter hide-outs, stretched, and commenced their hectic sugar-seeking lives. The parrots and cockatoos are busy nesting, breeding and fledging their young, safe in the spacious hollows that River Red Gum provide. The Fishing Bat is cruising the byways of the largest river on the continent, at great speed, touching down momentarily on the water to snare an unsuspecting insect.

It's possible to imagine, momentarily, that all is well - until you hear the scream of that chainsaw in the distance, and then the boom of the falling tree; until you notice the march of the dead and dying trees across the landscape as the years stretch on, endlessly it seems, between floods. These are the jarring, discordant notes that have no place here. It should be a scene of mighty trees emerging from the watery plain - an ethereal nether-realm, both land and water, where life is rich and languorous, where the subtle, muted hues of the foliage merge almost continuously into the blues of the endless skies.

But an even greater shadow now casts its darkened visage across these fragile wetlands - climate change in action. Recent research by CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology has concluded that the current ravaging dry spell in the southern Murray-Darling is not a drought at all, but a new climate pattern caused by global warming. The rainfall will not return while the temperature keeps rising, they predict. The outlook for the River Red Gum, as a result, is dire.

So it will take an enormous, extraordinary and possibly unprecedented effort to preserve these amazing Australian ecosystems into the future. The first immediate step is to create a network of connected National Parks along the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers. The second step is to recover water and secure adequate environmental flows as soon as possible to keep those Parks alive. The third and hardest step is a global one - to gain strong, binding action on climate change that keeps atmospheric carbon below 350ppm. We have one last shot at it. It is undoubtedly, and most emphatically, now or never for the River Red Gum.

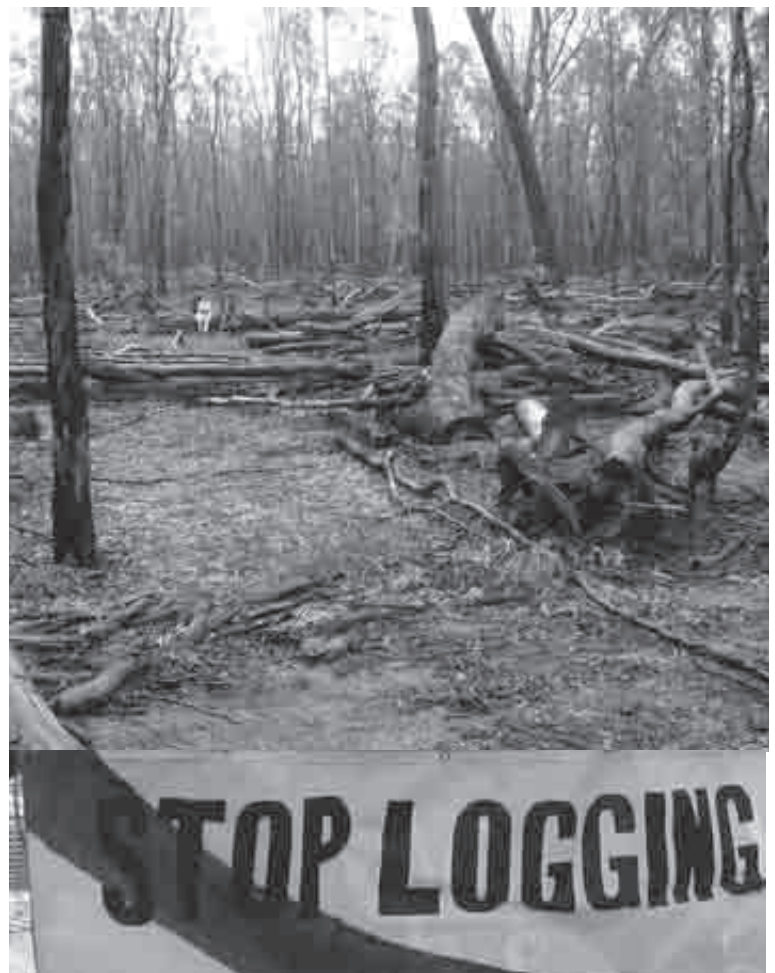
Please write to the NSW Premier calling for the creation of an extensive network of National Parks along the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers by the end of 2009, handback-leaseback to Traditional Owners wherever sought by them, and the commitment of secure environmental flows. Send letters to: Premier Nathan Rees, Level 40 Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney NSW 2000, or email <thepremier@www.nsw.gov.au>

Carmel Flint is a spokesperson for the National Parks Association of NSW.

For more information on the Red Gum campaign, go to <www.npansw.org.au> or <melbourne.foe.org.au>.



Top: Yorta Yorta Traditional owners and conservationists protest against logging in Millewa. Below: Patch-clearfelling in Millewa - Icon Site and Ramsar wetland.



Exposing Forestry Tasmania's false claims

Steve Leonard

New data shows that double the area previously acknowledged by Forestry Tasmania is available for logging in the Upper Florentine catchment.

Tasmania's Upper Florentine valley contains forests of immense natural beauty, with towering eucalypts emerging from an understorey of myrtle, sassafras and celery top pine. The valley is virtually an island of state forest surrounded by the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. This valley has hitherto been untouched by industrial logging. It is one of the few remaining areas in which intact forest extends from a lowland river valley to the treeline.

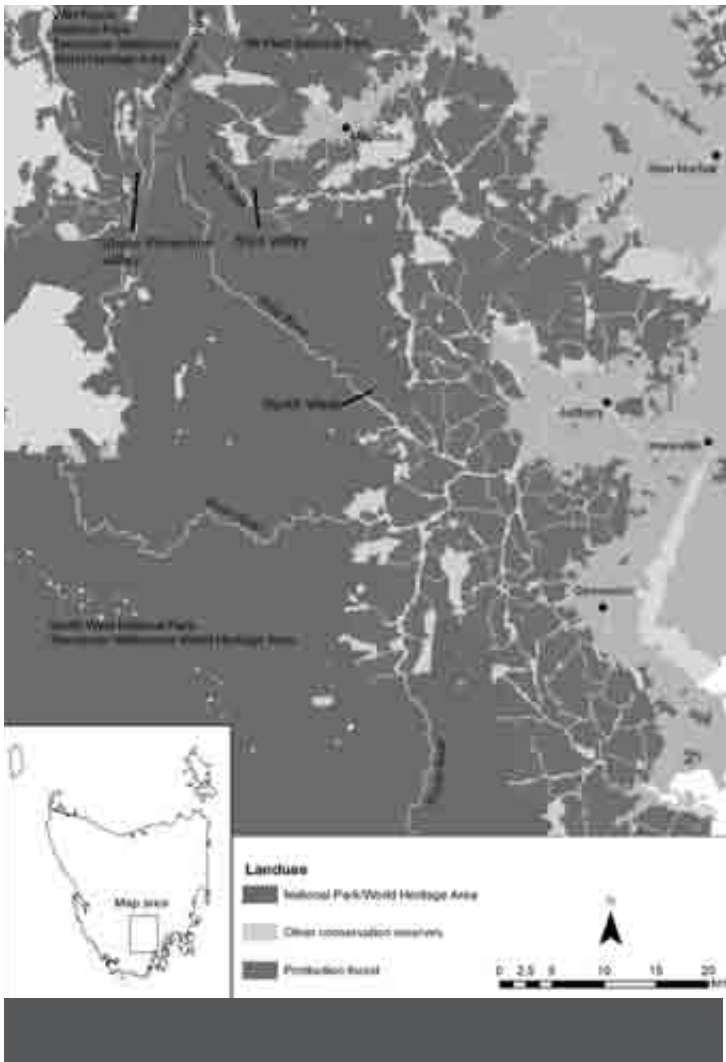
Forestry Tasmania's plan for logging will create a swathe of destruction along the floor of the valley, ripping the heart out of this majestically beautiful valley. Forestry Tasmania has repeatedly claimed that "no less than 90% of the Upper Florentine valley is protected for conservation values or otherwise unavailable for logging". This claim has been repeated by state government ministers, federal MPs and Kevin Rudd's office. Forestry Tasmania has repeatedly refused to release maps or evidence to verify its claims.

Data from the Land Information System Tasmania compiled by forest campaigners show that only 81% of the Upper Florentine is "protected or unavailable for logging". A breakdown of reservation figures for the Upper Florentine shows that:

- 47% of the Upper Florentine catchment is protected in formal reserves (National Parks and conservation areas, including within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area).
- 20% of the Upper Florentine catchment is protected in informal reserves managed by Forestry Tasmania, which can be revoked or changed at Forestry's discretion.
- 14% is "unavailable for logging" because it doesn't include eucalypt forest.
- 19% of the Upper Florentine is still available for logging
- this equates to over 2000 hectares of forest that potentially could be logged.

The area available for logging within the Upper Florentine catchment contains a high proportion of the tall wet eucalypt forest of most commercial interest, while reserves contain a high proportion of vegetation of no commercial interest. Most of the commercially desirable forest in the Upper Florentine is unprotected:

- 53% of the catchment's tall wet eucalypt forest (forest



Reservation of vegetation types in Upper Florentine catchment		
	Area (ha)	% of catchment
Unreserved total eucalypt forest	2080.7	19.2
Unreserved tall wet eucalypt forest	1407	13
Unreserved non-forest	758.5	7.0
Unreserved rainforest	786.2	7.3
Total unreserved	33.5	
Reserved total eucalypt forest	3175.3	29.4
Reserved wet eucalypt forest	1245	11
Reserved non-forest	1999.2	18.5
Reserved rainforest	2016.8	18.6
Total reserved	66.5	
Total catchment	10816.8	100
Tall wet eucalypt forest in catchment	2652	
% tall wet eucalypt forest reserved	47	
% tall wet eucalypt forest unreserved	53	

dominated by *Eucalyptus regnans*, *E. delegatensis* and *E. obliqua*) is available for logging.

- 37% of the area in reserves is of no commercial interest to Forestry (18.5% is non-forest, 18.6% is rainforest).
- 56% of old growth *Eucalyptus delegatensis* tall forest is available for logging.
- 48% of old growth *Eucalyptus obliqua* tall forest is available for logging.
- 80% of old growth forest dominated by *Eucalyptus regnans*, the tallest flowering plant species on the planet, is available for logging.

The area of forest available for logging in the Upper Florentine represents about 0.2% of the over one million hectares of state forest in Tasmania that can potentially be harvested. If the Tasmanian forestry industry is sustainable, as is claimed by its proponents, the reservation of the Upper Florentine forests would have negligible economic impacts.

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Tall Eucalypt forest: the missing piece of Tasmania's Wilderness World Heritage Area

Steve Leonard

The proclamation of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) represents one of Australia's greatest conservation achievements. The TWWHA protects approximately 1.38 million hectares of dramatic alpine landscapes, sweeping buttongrass plains and epiphyte-encrusted rainforests. Equally importantly, and an instrumental part of the reasons for the TWWHA being reserved, is the presence of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites dating to the height of the last ice age 30,000 years ago.

Tall eucalypt forest is conspicuously under-represented within the TWWHA. This is particularly the case for wet forests dominated by *Eucalyptus regnans*, *Eucalyptus delegatensis* and *Eucalyptus obliqua*, which are the main species targeted by the timber industry. Of the approximately 770,000 ha of these forests in Tasmania, only around 90,000 ha, or 12%, is included in the TWWHA. In comparison, 52% of Tasmania's heath and scrub vegetation is protected within the TWWHA.

The poor representation of tall forests within the TWWHA is no accident. The convoluted boundary of the TWWHA in many places coincides with the edge of tall forest, frequently running along a contour just above the altitudinal limit for the development of this vegetation. It is impossible to escape the conclusion that the TWWHA boundary has been deliberately crafted to minimise the protection of the forests most sought after for logging.

All the flashpoints in the current campaign to preserve Tasmania's southern forests are right up against the TWWHA boundary (see map). The Upper Florentine valley is virtually an island of state forest surrounded by the TWWHA. This valley has hitherto been untouched by industrial logging. It is one of the few remaining areas in which intact forest extends from a lowland river valley to the treeline. Forestry Tasmania's plan for logging will create a swathe of destruction along the floor of the valley, ripping the heart out of this majestically beautiful valley.

Along the upper reaches of the Styx River and on the northern slopes of the Snowy Range, coupes were logged last summer that were less than two kilometres from the TWWHA boundary. The Styx valley has suffered heavily under the onslaught of the timber industry. If the areas along the TWWHA boundary that forest campaigners are currently trying to defend are lost, all that will be left of this once magnificent forested landscape will be a few pocket handkerchief reserves to remind us of what was.

In the north Weld approximately 2000 hectares of old growth forest is sandwiched between the Weld River and the southern extremity of the Snowy Range. The only indication of the modern world in these forests is the remnants of an old surveyor's track dating from the early twentieth century. These forests are of immense botanical interest as they contain a flora transitional between that of eastern and western Tasmania. Large swathes of the lower Weld valley have recently been clearfelled. The north Weld contains the only substantial undisturbed old growth forests remaining in this area.

There is no objective reason why the remaining old growth forests of the upper Florentine, the Styx and the lower Weld should not be incorporated into the TWWHA. The TWWHA has been recognised as containing one of two of the world's best examples of eucalypt dominated landscapes. It would be fitting therefore that the outstanding examples of old growth forest occurring immediately on the boundary of the TWWHA should be also be included within this area. The biodiversity, cultural and aesthetic values of the upper Florentine, the Styx and north Weld are indisputable, and mean that their inclusion within the TWWHA is certainly warranted.

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Reviews

Books



Climate Action: A campaign manual for greenhouse solutions

Mark Diesendorf

2009

UNSW Press, 256pp, PB.

\$34.95

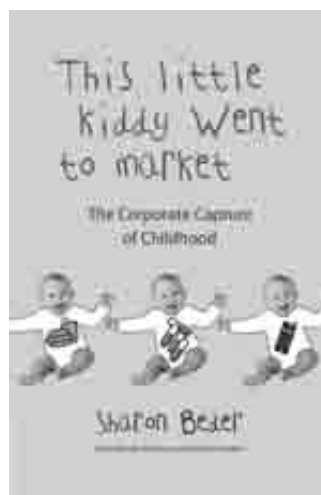
Mark Diesendorf's urgent message in 'Climate Action' is that if we don't exert collective pressure through grassroots climate groups, environmental and social justice NGOs, student, faith, trade union, business and professional groups, our governments will surely fail us.

Individual and household effort is important in fighting the climate crisis, but it is at government and policy level that we need immediate action to rapidly reduce greenhouse gases, Diesendorf argues.

Drawing upon case studies of successful grassroots social movements, Climate Action presents a menu of strategies for activists and citizens. It discusses how to:

- Demystify the fallacies created by vested interests, the 'Greenhouse Mafia';
- Explain the potentials of various clean energy technologies;
- Argue for policies that will lead to reductions in emissions; and,
- Develop and implement strategies and tactics to change the stances of governments, businesses, trade unions and citizens.

Mark Diesendorf is deputy director of the Institute of Environmental Studies at University of New South Wales. He is the author of 'Greenhouse Solutions with Sustainable Energy' (UNSW Press, 2007), to which the present book is the sequel.



This Little Kiddy Went to Market: The corporate capture of childhood

Sharon Beder with Wendy Varney and Richard Gosden
2009

UNSW Press

\$39.95

Few parents doubt that their children are being targeted by big business for commercial ends – advertising, promotions and marketing aimed at children are a constant feature of everyday life. This book provides fresh evidence about the extent of the problem and shows the manipulation goes much further than we imagine.

Analysing school reforms in English-speaking nations such as the UK, North America, Australia and New Zealand, 'This Little Kiddy Went to Market' investigates the ways in which business coalitions have persuaded governments around the world into shaping schools to suit corporate ends rather than the interests of children.

The authors argue that school reforms, driven by underfunding and corporate needs, have made the education system vulnerable to pressure from big business. The book examines the many prongs of this assault, including the flood of corporate-sponsored classroom materials being offered to teachers and children, and the role of corporations in promoting the privatisation of schooling.

'This Little Kiddy Went to Market' is an incisive examination of what many parents have suspected - that the corporate culture is contributing to the decline of childhood. Beder writes: "The consequence of this corporate capture of childhood has been a generation of children who have been manipulated, shaped and exploited as never before. Not only have they lost the opportunity to play and develop at their own pace, their psyches have been damaged and their view of the world distorted. They are trained rather than educated and constantly tested to make sure they have absorbed the 'correct' information. They are supposed to seek happiness in possessions, treat relationships as a means to an end, and incessantly compete with each other.

Children have never before been under such pressure to 'succeed, conform and look good'. It is little wonder that so many children grow into youths who are unhappy, stressed, fat, delinquent or self-destructive."

More info: <www.herinst.org/sbeder/Books/kiddy.html>



Living Alongside the Animals - Anangu Way
Eileen Wani Wingfield and Emily Munyungka Austin
 2009

48 pages

RP \$12.95

Jukurrpa Books, an imprint of Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD) Press Purchase by phoning IAD Press on (08) 8951 1334, or online at <www.iad.edu.au/press>, or from good booksellers across Australia.

"Well, we used to take the nanny goats out. In the mornings we'd get up and milk them - five o'clock! And it's cold! No shoes - tjina nikiti. And after the milking, we'd take the milk into the boss lady and get our lunch off her, she'd cut a lunch for us and then we'd take the nanny goats out. Yes, we were only six or seven years old and we'd have to take the nanny goats right out - no paddock then. Take them a long way to the creeks where it's water and grass. We'd sit down all day with 'em. Look after them you know, because no paddock - nothing - or a dingo would get 'em."

Living Alongside the Animals is a delightful short book about the relations between Aboriginal people and the animals of the South Australian desert - the malu (kangaroo), kalaya (emu), kalta (sleepy lizard) and many others. The book has illustrations by Brenton McKenna, and a translation and pronunciation guide.

Eileen Wani Wingfield was born and grew up on Ingomar station in the 1930s. Her parents were Arabunna on her father's side and Kokatha on her mother's. At that time government officials were taking Aboriginal children from their families so Eileen's family hid their children and moved away into less populated areas. Eileen and her cousin Edna Tantjingu Williams told this story in their book *Down the Hole* (IAD Press, 2000). Eileen's family

worked on many cattle stations in the region and, later, like many other Aboriginal people living in the desert at the time, were caught up in the atomic bomb tests and became sick from the radiation. Many years later, when she moved to Coober Pedy, Eileen joined Kupa Piti Kungka Tjuta - a Senior Aboriginal Women's Council of Coober Pedy, a group formed to keep the culture alive and look after their country. She was involved in the successful campaign against the building of a radioactive waste dump in the area.

Eileen now lives in Port Augusta and is involved with landrights work with the Kokatha Mula group, and with her painting - "following the Seven Sisters track in that and everything we do ... that's the strongest part of our Law and Culture".

Emily Munyungka Austin was born in north-west South Australia to a Yankunytjatjara family in 1933. After years of working on stations with her family, Emily was sent to the Mission in Port Augusta to receive an education. She worked at station jobs and then moved with her family to Andamooka where she met her husband, Robert Austin, with whom she had six children. In 1992, Emily, Ivy Stewart and Eileen Crombie formed the Kupa Piti Kungka Tjuta to look after their community and culture. In 2006, after Emily moved to Port Augusta, her first book, *My Young Days* (Umoona Aged Care Aboriginal Corporation, Coober Pedy) was published.



Global Citizens: Australian Activists for Change
Edited by Geoffrey Stokes et al.

June 2008

Cambridge University Press <www.cambridge.org/aus>.

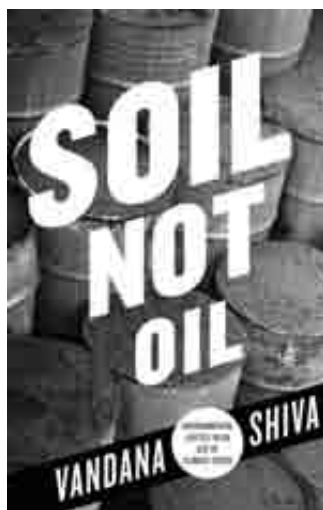
Freecall 1800 005210.

ISBN-13: 9780521731874

\$39.95

Global Citizens examines the work and achievements of nine Australian community activists including Greens leader Bob Brown, High Court Justice Michael Kirby, trade unionist and environmental campaigner Jack Mundey,

human rights advocate Margaret Reynolds, Christian activist Keith Suter, indigenous campaigner Faith Bandler, Herb Feith, Nancy Shelley and Thao Nguyen. The book charts over 50 years of campaigning, and espouses perennial causes such as peace, social justice, ecological sustainability and gender and racial equality. The editors take a global perspective, featuring activists who have attempted to bring their Australian voices to bear on a broader, global stage.



Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis

Vandana Shiva

South End Books <www.southendpress.org>
2008

In 'Soil Not Oil', Vandana Shiva connects humanity's most urgent crises - food insecurity, peak oil, and climate change - and explains why any attempt to solve one without addressing the others will get us nowhere.

Condemning industrial biofuels and agriculture as recipes for ecological and economic disaster, Shiva champions the small independent farm instead. With millions hungry and the earth's future at peril, only sustainable, biologically diverse farms that are more resistant to disease, drought, and flood can both feed and safeguard the world for generations to come. 'Soil Not Oil' calls for a return to sound agricultural principles - and a world based on self-organisation, community, and environmental justice.

Born in India in 1952, Vandana Shiva is the Director of the Research Foundation on Science, Technology, and Ecology, and the author of many books, including 'Water Wars: Pollution, Profits, and Privatization' (South End Press, 2001), 'Biopiracy: The Plunder of Nature and Knowledge' (South End Press, 1997), 'Monocultures of the Mind' (Zed, 1993), 'The Violence of the Green Revolution' (Zed, 1992), and 'Staying Alive' (St. Martin's Press, 1989).



A Brush With Birds: Australian Bird Art

Introduction by Penny Olsen

National Library of Australia, PB, Full colour illustrations

\$34.95

Review by Ila Marks

Lovers and enthusiasts of art, birds or Australian history will find this book fascinating. It includes beautiful and vibrant illustrations of birds by ten different artists from before settlement to the 1970s. The development of art, a feature of the book, is further enhanced by the stories and detail included by Penny Olsen who has written an introduction and biographies of the artists.

We are fortunate that two naval officers on the First Fleet, Captain John Hunter and Midshipman George Raper, used their chart making and drafting skills to paint the birds around them. We learn that Sarah Stone, 1777–1802, never left England, but left a legacy of finely painted Australian birds painted from the skins and stuffed birds sent back to England.

The history of the delight and love of birds runs parallel with the love of nature and conservation. 'A Brush With Birds' is this story told and illustrated in a delightful and insightful manner.

DVDs

Wild Earth DVD Collection

RRP A\$49.95

<www.hopscotchfilms.com.au>

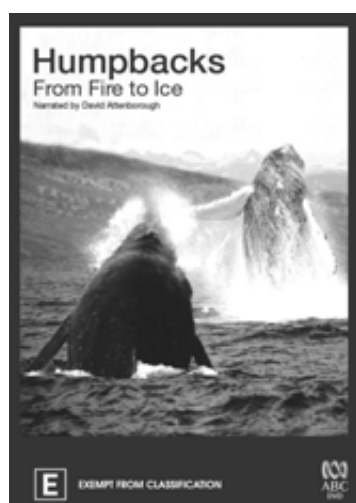
This is a collection of three Hopscotch nature films, which date from 1996–2004 – 'Earth From Above', 'Microcosmos', and 'Travelling Birds'.

'Earth From Above' shows spectacular parts of the world (people, places, nature) as seen from above (more precisely, from a helicopter). It is done in the Koyaanisqatsi style with a musical soundtrack but no words except for a

snippet of French. Must admit I would have preferred some commentary or captions, to learn at least something about the places and the people. Even so, it's worth watching. Lots of extras and interviews, in French with English subtitles.

'Microcosmos' also lacks commentary or captions but it doesn't want for them - the film is mostly self-explanatory (one full day in a French meadow) and mostly breathtaking. Fascinating to see the world from the perspective of creatures so small that a single rain-drop can be a Big Deal. The 'making of' extra is in French with no subtitles.

'Travelling Birds' gets the balance just right - mostly the birds are left to speak for themselves but there is a bit of explanation with commentary and captions. Filming lasted three years and crossed 20 countries. It has a tedious 'making of' extra. If you're into nature docos and haven't seen these three, then this Hopscotch collection is for you. All the more so if you parlez francaise.



Humpbacks: From Fire to Ice
DVD

Roadshow Entertainment

Available from ABC shops and online order <<http://shop.abc.net.au>>

\$24.95 – \$29.95

Narrated by David Attenborough, 'Humpbacks' follows the story of a whale calf and her mother on their perilous path across the Pacific Ocean from Hawaii to Alaska and back. Port Douglas-based Ross Isaacs directs and produces this documentary and contributes to filming.

Each winter, up to 5,000 humpbacks arrive at the islands of Hawaii. Expectant mothers come to give birth after carrying their baby for nearly 12 months. After months of frolicking in the warm Hawaiian waters, the humpbacks start their journey across the Pacific Ocean to the summer feeding grounds – the Inside Passage of the Alexander Archipelago in South East Alaska. Carved by giant glaciers, Alaska's Pacific coast is a labyrinth of fjords, bays and islands that provide shelter and food for humpback whales.

All very beautiful, and the commentary is interesting enough. One wonders if these nature documentaries don't make stuff up sometimes - for example, how on earth could anyone know that half of a sleeping whale's brain is asleep and the other half awake?

Album Review



Moonah – A Nice Beast

2009

<www.myspace.com/moonahband>

Review by Anthony Amis

Leaving the August 2009 FoE AGM held at Anglesea I ran into local artist Mark 'Monkey' Trinham who was just arriving. We got talking and I was handed a copy of his band's latest album, 'A Nice Beast' (Moonah's fourth album over the past decade). As I headed west along the Great Ocean Road towards a logging destination in the Otways, I cranked up the CD player and was entirely swept away by what I was hearing. I kept playing the CD for the rest of the day.

Harnessing the energies of Victoria's surf coast, Moonah tap right into a very interesting hybrid of folk, progressive, psychedelic and surf rock. This album contains 11 instrumental tracks, all quite mesmerising. At first I thought I was hearing a reincarnation of '90s Melbourne folkies Lothlorien, but then the surf element kicked in and took me on a journey into unique Moonah country - low forest or shrubland, which can be dominated by Moonah (*Melaleuca lanceolata*). The use of didgeridoo grounds the music in a way that conjures up connection to the stretch of country between Geelong and Lorne and the soaring guitar and violin sent me right out there.

Moonah, a four piece (with guests) also harness a range of instruments to fill out and broaden their song visions. These include tin whistle, banjo, didgeridoo, chimes, keyboards, violin and even a flugelhorn! Irish/Spanish/Andes leaning folkies give way to indigenous/surf instrumentals and there's always a surprise when you least expect it. It seems amazing that a band this talented has been able to fly well under the radar for so long. Could this music be labelled progressive psychedelised surf rock?

Music from the vaults ...

Canned Heat – Future Blues

September 1970

Review by Anthony Amis

“Too Much Smoke, Too Much Gas, Too Little Green and its Goin’ Fast”

Formed in Los Angeles in 1966 by obsessive blues record collectors Bob “The Bear” Hite and Al “Blind Owl” Wilson, Canned Heat soon progressed from playing basic 12 boogie/blues to impressing the ‘in crowd’ at Monterey in 1967 and hitting it big in May 1968 with their first hit ‘On the Road Again’. They even played at Woodstock and by the time ‘Future Blues’ was released in 1970 they had had three top 40 albums in the US and UK. By recording lots of old blues covers, the band gave blues legends Albert Collins and John Lee Hooker the opportunity to be heard by heaps of people.

Canned Heat were rebels with psychedelic introspective outlaw leanings. In September 1969 they recorded a single called ‘Sic em Pigs’ (full of pig grunts/squeals) targeted directly at the LA cops and on the flipside recorded a sad ode called ‘Poor Moon’ about men someday in the future, mining the face of the moon. As early as June 1968 they had also targeted Denver Police in a song called ‘My Crime’. How many bands would get the thumbs up from bikies, dropouts and nascent environmentalists whilst at the same time offending state authorities?

‘Future Blues’, their seventh album in three years, featured a fold-out cover, with a great inside photo of the dudes hanging out in a redwood forest grove, complete with a 300-word plea from Wilson called ‘Grim Harvest’, calling for protection of the redwoods. The music is still great blues/boogie with exceptional guitar playing by the under-appreciated Harvey Mandel. At the age of 27, Blind Owl Wilson died in September 1970, before ‘Future Blues’ was actually released. Suffering from depression, he overdosed, supposedly in Hite’s backyard. Hearing the record you can definitely hear his woes, particularly on ‘My Time Ain’t Long’ ... future blues indeed.

Jello Biafra with DOA – Last Scream of the Missing Neighbors

1989

Review by Anthony Amis

This was a ‘comeback’ album for Jello Biafra of Dead Kennedys infamy. The DKs folded in 1986 due largely to a lawsuit taken out on the band, because of an H.R. Giger poster called ‘Penis Landscape’ included in their 1985 album Frankenchrist. Parental groups such as the Parents Music Resource Centre (PMRC) found the poster offensive and an ensuing court battle basically broke the band. One of the main movers and shakers of the PMRC was none other than Tipper Gore, wife of Al.

A court battle ended in a hung jury, yet the chaos helped Biafra kick start a massive ‘No More Censorship’ campaign aimed at countering the PMRC’s increasing influence in Washington.

‘Last Scream’ was recorded in DOA’s hometown of Vancouver. DOA, themselves decade long veterans of the Canadian/US hardcore punk scene, had a more beefier/slower sound than the more trashy Dead Kennedys and the added grunt pays dividends on this album. Biafra’s completely over the top paranoid political lyrics continue to impress by the range of topics covered here, including the downsides of so-called progress, drug abuse by peacekeeping military forces and the depressing consequences, sarcasm highlighting police/military corruption/oppression in El Salvador, and the anarchist perceptions dealing with human relationships in ‘Power is Boring’.

However the album’s magnum opus is the menacing ‘Full Metal Jackoff’, a 15-minute epic focussing on the crack wars rampant in the US at the time. The song’s contention was that crack was deliberately put into black communities as a means of ultimate government control. “So much comes in so easy it’s as though someone wants it there”. More drugs lead to more crimes ultimately meaning more jails with a subsequent erosion of civil rights with the ultimate goal of bringing into play a fascist US police state, with Ollie North as President!

“Embrace the Red White and Blue Reich,” Jello repeatedly howls at the end of the album to accompanying marching nazi boot stomps.

***“Too Much Smoke, Too Much Gas,
Too Little Green and its Goin’ Fast”***