

# Newsletter

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Issue: 18 January 2013

## Act Now- Today

The Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Assessment of the Maules Creek And Boggabri Mine extension proposals is due on Thursday 7 February 2013.

Now is the time - write, call, fax, email. There is still time to contact Tony Burke, Minister For Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population And Communities and urge him to use the EPBC Act to reject all mining proposals in and around Leard State Forest.

Mr. Tony Burke MP  
Minister For Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities  
Po Box 156  
Roselands, NSW 2196

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## Federal Appeal

### 24 January 2013-

ABC news- Land owners in the state's North West have accused Whitehaven Coal of lying its way through the approval process for an open-cut mine.

[Watch news report](#)

### Whitehaven suspected to have misled on offsets

The controversial Whitehaven Coal mine proposal near Narrabri may have misled the federal government over the provision of offsets..... [Read more](#)

Press release: [Nature Conservation Council of NSW](#).

### Leard Forest Coal Offsets Report

Report Summary excerpt- "A survey of Whitehaven's northern offsets found that - the dominant vegetation community in areas mapped by the proponent as White Box woodland was in fact Stringybark Open Forest and did not contain any White Box. It did not meet the definition of the Critically Endangered Ecological Community."

[Read the report and summaries.](#)



Leard Forest January 2013.

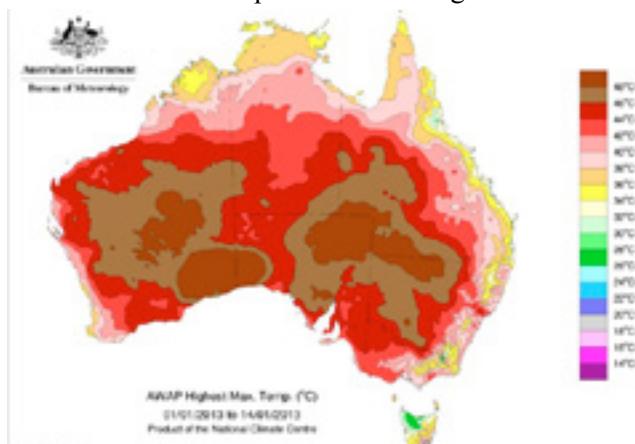
### Whitehaven Coal has been given State approval to expand its Tarrawonga mine in the Gunnedah Basin.

The project is now awaiting approval from the Federal Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water Population and Communities, overseen by Minister Tony Burke.

"The fact that they have sought permission to leave a final void and to move the Goonbri Creek and interfere with the region's water resources is deeply disappointing," MCCC spokesperson said. [Read More](#)

### A very hot January

Here is why it is so hot according to the Bureau of Meteorology. Australia has always experienced heat waves, and they are a normal part of most summers. However, the current event affecting much of inland Australia has definitely not been typical. The most significant thing about the recent heat has been its coverage across the continent, and its persistence. It is very unusual to have such widespread extreme temperatures — and have them persist for so long. [Read more](#)



**7 January 2013**

### **FLAC and ANZ**

SMH coverage- The man behind a hoax press release which wiped more than \$314 million off the value of Nathan Tinkler's Whitehaven Coal, and caused the company's shares to be placed in a trading halt, has defended his actions as justified.

**Jonathan Moylan**, an anti-coal activist, compared himself to the Chaser breaking into APEC in defending his stunt, which wreaked havoc on the Australian share market on Monday.

The fake press release claimed to be from ANZ bank and said that a recent \$1.2 billion loan to help Whitehaven build a new mine had been overturned because of concerns about the impact the mine would have on agriculture and the environment. [Read more.](#)

**Ethicist Clive Hamilton** believes Jonathan Moylan's action is the result of Government's inability to effectively deal with the issue of climate change -- where activists are pushed into lawlessness in order to be heard. [Listen here.](#)

### **Whitehaven hoax shows NSW planning system can't cope with community concern**

The mining boom has created unprecedented land use conflicts, particularly in rural and regional Australia. Agricultural communities and environmentalists are engaged in disputes with mining and gas companies over the use and management of natural resources. In many cases, these conflicts have eluded resolution. [Read More.](#)

### **Opinion in song**

**Listen to-** The Jonathan Moylan Song by Enda Kenny & Lindsay Martin. Recorded at the 2013 Illawarra Folk Festival

### **MCCC Opinion – 24.1.2013 Trust, Deception and Hoax**

Jonathan Moylan meets with ASIC today. ASIC have been urged by a wide range of commentators to throw the book at him although legal opinion varies as to which page that will be. The fact that Jono's spoof was publicizing a cause, that he is not part of a corporation and that he didn't profit financially leaves serious questions as to our democracy and the right to freedom of speech.

Freedom of speech is a tricky thing and it's not just the tech savvy activist who are inclined to take liberties with the truth.

When the current Premier of NSW asked us to trust that "the next Liberal/National government will ensure that mining cannot occur ... in any water catchment area ... no ifs, no buts, a guarantee" many including the NSW National Party would have taken him at his word. [Read More.](#)



Photo with permission: Getup! Action for Australia

### **A clearing in the forest 27 January 2013**

EVERY couple of months I ring the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and ask a question.

Has ASIC done anything yet about a director of a former construction group – Hightrade – that left a trail of destruction through the Hunter, after I was told he might be prevented from being a company director for a few years?

The answer has been no so far. [Read More.](#)

ANZ DONATIONS- interesting to note that in 2012 ANZ donated \$80,000 to the ALP & \$80,000 to Libs. Nothing to the Greens! [View Australian Electoral Commission's Donor Annual Returns](#)

### **CHRIS HARTCHER 3 MAY 2005 - SPEECH TO PARLIAMENT**

Dangers of csg... "the groundwater issue is at the very heart of this debate.....we have a process driven. It may well comply with the act but certainly does not comply with the needs of the people of the central coast for clean safe drinking water..." [Watch speech](#)

## Lock the Gate

\*Join Lock the Gate\*

In 2012 thousands of us came together to send a very clear message: coal and coal seam gas is not welcome in our communities. From the country to the coast, from our community halls to the court rooms, from board-rooms to blockades - we committed to protecting our land, our water, and our future. This year our battle continues.

Lock the Gate Community. We know we are up against powerful players, but we also know that if we act together, we can win. We have locked our gates. We have blocked our gates. Now, road by road, entire communities are being declared mining free.

Help us continue our campaign by joining or renewing your membership from just \$10 a year. [Click here](#)

Read the first [monthly newsletter of 2013](#).

## Environmental Defender's Office Cuts

### Miners lobbied premier to pull plug on environmental legal centre

The mining industry urged the Premier, Barry O'Farrell, to scrap funding to the Environmental Defenders Office – and months later the state government did just that.

Documents released under freedom of information laws show the NSW Minerals Council and the Australian Coal Association lobbied the Premier to cancel the EDO's \$2.5 million annual public subsidy.

The government announced in December it had pulled the plug on the legal centre by redirecting money to Legal Aid and forbidding state funding for agencies "providing legal advice to activists and lobby groups" – the EDO's core business. [Read more](#)

### Can communities afford access to environmental justice?

Being exposed to cost orders in the courts is one of the major impediments to community members starting or continuing litigation to protect the environment in the public interest. Recently, there was a decision in the Land and Environment Court of NSW that will have significant consequences for community groups seeking to enforce breaches of planning or environmental laws in the future. [Read more](#)



Protesters taking their message to Tony Burke's electorate office.

## Let's talk about Coal

14th January, 2013: Today, academics, scientists, prominent Australians and community groups placed a full-page ad [Let's talk about Coal](#) in The Australian Financial Review calling for an end to Australia's coal export expansion and an honest national discussion about the role it plays in driving climate change.

The Climate Commission issued a report over the weekend that confirmed: "Climate change has contributed to making the current extreme heat conditions and bushfires worse."

Citing the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the Bureau of Meteorology, the CSIRO and the Prime Minister, the signatories underscore the relationship between extreme weather and climate change and argue Australia faces a choice to either, 'cease expansion of coal exports or wilfully threaten our children's future.'

"As the Prime Minister reminded everyone last week, '...we do know that over time as a result of climate change we are going to see more extreme weather events'. [Read more](#)



Endangered Corben Long-eared bat

## **Rich Land, Wasteland- How coal is killing Australia – by Sharyn Munro**

The creeks were down but that didn't stop people coming to hear what Sharyn Munro had to say about coal and gas. Great to see so many at the Maules Creek Hall. Grab her book and give it a read.

Reaction from some residents-

"It's just not us that are feeling this. We are not alone. That was the positive to come out of it."

"A bit of an eye opener to what is going on in the mining industry. It made us aware that a lot of the goings-on here are happening in a lot of other places."

'It was a great night. Sharyn held everyone's attention with her stories from mine affected communities around the nation. The message I got was "we are not alone and that change is just over the horizon".

One resident shared her thankyou letter to Sharyn- "Thank you ... Your insights showed that the destruction of our environment by the extractive industries, is not just an issue for our district, as it is happening Australia wide with many diverse problems from CSG, Coal mining and Mineral exploration...."

"I feel the hall was filled with people who have lost faith in the ability of government of any level to protect the environment we live in and who are starting to see the true cost of mining on our local community.

I really am becoming worried about our future lives here and the potential cost to our childrens' health from the almost approved mining projects."

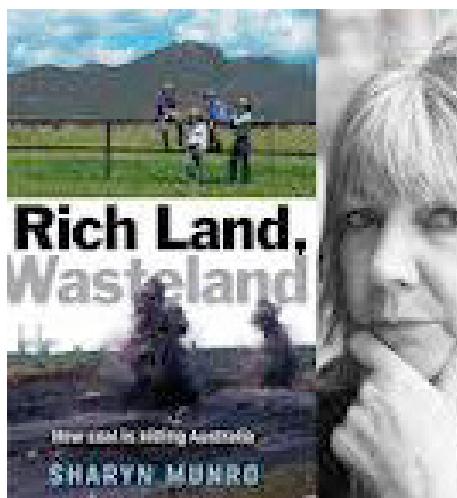
"I pray Tony Burke will have the guts to make the MORAL decision."

"Sharyn reminded us that we must stand together and not give up!"

Read [Looking into Leard blog](#).



Sharon Munro speaking at Maules Creek Hall



Nationally threatened: Swift Parrot

### **Living with Mining**

As communities everywhere are under pressure from mining, and the Leard Forest mines are pending a Federal decision, it is timely to remind ourselves of the checklist of strategies some mining companies are advised to employ in communities.

On the ABC's [Gruen Planet](#) in 2011 [Toby Ralph](#) in a segment titled *How do you buy off a community?* said

"A cheque is better than a checklist."

Beyond this his checklist for a mining company participating in the local community is as follows-

- Forge local relationships
- Understand local concerns
- Create local opinion leaders
- Claim the middle group
- Employ local activists as consultants
- Marginalize the remainder.

### **Can Farmers Live With Csg?**

### **The War Over Co-Existence**

[Read here](#)

## **Nothing to aspire to. China chokes as air pollution worsens**

Beijing air pollution due to coal burning is now back to dangerous levels and local authorities are reluctant to address the problem.

[Watch](#)

## **P.M 2.5 particles off the scale in China**

### **Deadly air: the smog shrouding China's future**

Environmental degradation and public protests are a challenge for most governments worldwide. But in countries where the policy-making process is not transparent, environmental protests are prone to escalating to social unrest, or even becoming threats to the state.

In China, where maintaining stability is still an overriding goal in social management, the situation is complex. As more people realise sustainability is now a matter of life and death to everybody, they are finding more ways to express, and to resist, for the good of themselves as well as the next generation.

[Read more.](#)



Endangered Plant: Tylophora linearis

## **Local Groups take on Big Coal**

Sutton Forest in the Southern Highlands- Hume coal blockade. Protesters express their anger over government's use of stereotyping tactic  
Jenny Frost:

"I am here because I'm passionate about preserving the water resources of this area. But particularly I am here because Chris Hartcher keeps referring to these community movements as left-wing socialists intent on destroying the economy.

Question: "So you wouldn't describe yourself as a left-wing socialist?"

"Ah..No. I never in my life have been described as that. However if that what it takes..." [Watch here.](#)

## **Bylong Valley ICAC hears blame game over corrupt tender**

"Farmer Stuart Andrews says the best thing to come out of this inquiry would be for the Obeids to leave the valley and for the State Government to cancel the exploration leases for the area."

Stuart Andrews: "You know, we just want to look after our land and have it there for the future generations but I don't think mines can say the same thing. They merely want to get in, take out the resource and leave." [Watch here.](#)

## **And a bit more – All in the name of power and fortune.**

And a gripping soap opera it is. [Read here](#)



Nationally threatened: Regent Honeyeater

## **Limiting Australia's ballooning coal exports is good for the economy**

Last week, Greenpeace released a report calling for a halt to Australia's burgeoning coal exports and pointing to the catastrophic climate impacts they would cause. In response, Mitch Hooke, chief executive of the Minerals Council of Australia, took a standard industry line: "the proposal to stop Australian coal exports won't stop global coal use – it will just send Australian jobs offshore and deprive state and federal governments of billions in revenue".

Arguments that the strength of the Australian economy is heavily dependent on digging up and shipping out as much coal as possible, as quickly as possible, are common. Of course, they also imply that economic arguments trump any concerns about contributions to climate change.

But leaving that aside, how true is it? Would slowing or halting Australia's coal exports really deprive Australians? What would it mean for Australian jobs? [Read More.](#)

**The Maules Creek Community Council (MCCC) was formed on the 25th of July 2010 at a community meeting to address the concerns of residents regarding the coal and gas developments in the local area. The Maules Creek Community Council (MCCC) was formed on the 25th of July 2010 at a community meeting to address the concerns of residents regarding the coal and gas developments in the local area.**