



Edmund Rice Centre
Awareness. Advocacy. Action

ERC JUSTICE UPDATES

May 2022 No.69

Dear Friends,

This 69th Edition of ERC Justice Updates, our regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on matters relating to human rights, first nations and environmental justice.

The world we live in places many obstacles in our way to live a life filled with Blessed Edmund Rice's three main tenets:
COMPASSION LIBERATION & PRESENCE so

Hold onto what is good,
Even if it's a handful of earth.
Hold onto what you believe,
Even if it's a long way from here.
Hold onto your life,
Even if it's easier to let go.
Hold on to my hand,
Even if someday I'll be gone away from you.
A Pueblo Indian Prayer

Please note that if you come up against a paywall in any of the articles below - please contact me at: mmcinerney@edmundrice.org and I will

send you the full article.

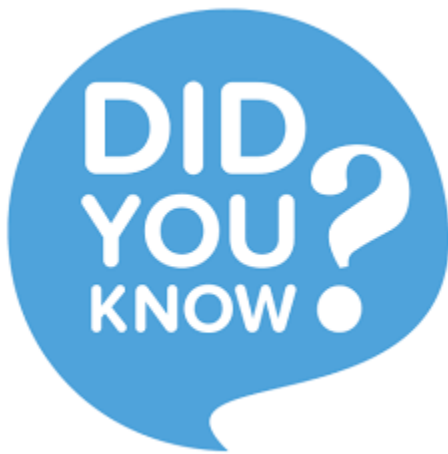
Previous editions are available at <https://www.erc.org.au/newsletters>

Peace & Blessings

Marita

Communications Project Officer,
Marita McInerney

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that there may be articles in this publication with names and images of deceased people.



Australian Election 2022: Political party and independent climate goals: analysis by Climate Analytics

Global warming rating of Australian political party commitments

EVALUATING AUSTRALIA'S POLITICAL PARTIES CLIMATE GOALS 2

One of the critical issues in the 2022 federal election is what position the major parties are taking on the top-level emission commitments for Australia. 2030 emission reduction commitments are a critical part of the Paris Agreement, and the UNFCCC had requested governments to update these for the Glasgow COP26 conference in 2021.

However at Glasgow Australia did not improve its 2030 commitment of a 26-28% emissions reduction, first made in 2015. In 2021 it resubmitted the same target to the UN as it had in 2015.

LIBERAL NATIONAL PARTY

The LNP climate commitment of a 26-28% emissions reduction by 2030 is

consistent with a warming of 3°C globally, bordering on 4°C. Under this level of warming, the Great Barrier Reef and all other tropical reefs would be destroyed. At the global level the most extreme heat events could be 5-6 times more frequent than in recent decades and in Australia the highest maximum temperatures about 3°C hotter. In other words, an intense heat event that might have occurred once in a decade in recent decades could occur almost every year, and be substantially hotter.

LABOR PARTY

The ALP's 2030 target of a 43% emissions reduction is consistent with 2°C of warming globally. Under this level of warming, if sustained, the Great Barrier Reef would very likely be destroyed, along with all other tropical reefs in Australia and elsewhere. At the global level the most extreme heat events could be about three times more frequent than in recent decades, and in Australia the highest maximum temperatures about 1.7 °C hotter. In other words, an intense heat event that might have occurred once in a decade in recent decades could occur about every three years and would be significantly hotter.

TEAL INDEPENDENTS

The Teal Independents have rallied around the Zali Steggall Climate Bill, which contains a target of a 60% emissions reduction by 2030. This is close to, but within, the upper boundary of modelled 1.5°C pathways for Australia. A stronger target would give a higher probability of meeting the 1.5°C limit, but it is still within a 1.5°C pathway. Under this warming some areas of the Great Barrier Reef and other Australian tropical reefs, including Ningaloo, would survive. At the global level the most extreme heat events could be nearly twice as frequent than in recent decades and in Australia the highest max temperatures about 1.1°C hotter.

GREEN PARTY

The Greens' target of a 74% emissions reduction by 2030 is consistent with limiting warming to 1.5 degrees. Under this level of warming some regions of the Great Barrier Reef and other tropical reefs around Australia, including Ningaloo, would survive. At the global level the most extreme heat events could be nearly twice as frequent than in recent decades and in Australia the highest maximum temperatures about 1.1°C hotter. In other words, an intense heat event that might have occurred once in a decade in recent decades could occur every five years

and would be noticeably hotter.

Read full analysis:

<https://climateanalytics.org/publications/2022/australian-election-2022-political-party-and-independent-climate-goals-analysis/>



Diyaara stands among the carcasses of her family's livestock in Wajir, Kenya. (Photo: Khadija Farah/Oxfam/February 2022)

DANGEROUS DELAY 2: THE COST OF INACTION 2

Authors: Emily Farr, Leah Finnegan, Joanne Grace, Mathew Truscott

In this follow-up to their 2012 briefing *A Dangerous Delay*, Oxfam and Save the Children, supported by the Jameel Observatory, examine what has changed and what has not in the humanitarian system since 2011. They explain how it must evolve in order to enable and fully fund anticipatory action. With the climate crisis set to deepen, the current system must change quickly in order to meet the challenges we face in the years ahead.

Around the world, 181 million are forecast to be in crisis levels of hunger in 2022¹ Oxfam and Save the Children estimate that across Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, on average one person is likely dying every 48 seconds² from acute hunger linked to conflict, COVID-19, the climate crisis and inflationary and market pressures accelerated by the current conflict in Ukraine. Hard-won progress on the Sustainable Development Goals and millions of children's lives are now at risk if urgent action is not taken to avert famine. But preventing people from dying of starvation without political action to tackle underlying drivers –including inequality, conflict and the climate crisis, will not stop the

cyclical – and predictable – crises experienced by millions of people around the world. Starvation is a political failure.

THE WARNINGS WERE THERE

- The 2020 March-April-May (MAM) rain performance was poor in southern Somalia. By June or July 2020 anticipatory action could have been triggered.
- In August 2020, the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) alert projected that the coming two seasons would be poor, and were likely to drive high food assistance needs.
- In mid-May 2021, the Food Security and Nutrition Working Groups (FSNWG) called for urgent action and FEWS NET issued an alert that a multi-season drought would likely persist until late 2021.
- On 8 September 2021, Kenya officially declared drought in parts of the country a national disaster.
- On 31 October 2021, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) warned of an 87% probability of La Niña – for the second year in a row. This follows La Niña in 2016–17, when East Africa last faced a hunger crisis.
- On 23 November 2021, the Federal Government of Somalia declared a state of emergency due to the drought.
- In November 2021, FEWS NET issued a warning that an unprecedented drought was imminent in the region if the rainfall remained poor.
- In February 2022, FAO and WFP issued an early warning that acute food insecurity was likely to deteriorate further across multiple countries.
- In April 2022, an IPC Acute Food Insecurity Projection Update for Somalia warned of the risk of famine in some parts of the country, noting that food insecurity has drastically worsened since the beginning of 2022 and that ‘further and faster deterioration’ was expected through until at least June 2022. The World Meteorological Organization issued a stark warning:

“The very real prospect that the rains will fail for a fourth consecutive season, placing Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia into a drought of a length not experienced in the last 40 years...”

Read full executive summary:

<https://oxfamlibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621373/bp-dangerous-delay-2-180522-summ-en.pdf>



WHAT IS NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK?

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

The dates for NRW are the same each year; 27 May to 3 June.

These dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey— the successful 1967 referendum, and the High Court Mabo decision respectively.

- **27 May 1967** On this day, Australia's most successful referendum saw more than 90 per cent of Australians vote to give the Australian Government power to make laws for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and recognise them in the Census:
<https://nrw.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/27-May-Referendum-NRW-2020.pdf>
- **3 June 1992** On this day, the Australian High Court delivered the Mabo decision, the culmination of Eddie Koiki Mabo's challenge to the legal fiction of 'terra nullius' (land belonging to no one) and leading to the legal recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of lands. This decision paved the way for Native Title: <https://nrw.reconciliation.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Mabo-decision-nrw-2020.docx.pdf>

Read more:

<https://nrw.reconciliation.org.au/about-nrw/>



Raelene Cooper, a First Nations advocate, says of the ancient rock carvings site: 'There is no price you can put on this place.'

Composite: Michael Jalaru Torres/the Guardian/Reuters/EPA/Getty

'Our ancestors are in the rocks': Australian gas project threatens ancient carvings – and emissions blowout

Eleanor de Jong & Adam Morton, The Guardian, 12th May 2022

Custodians of petroglyphs in remote north-west say Woodside's \$12bn 'carbon bomb' spells disaster for culture and climate

As the last of the sun's rays curl away from the coast in Australia's remote north-west, Josie Alec opens her arms and sings in traditional language to a mass of ochre-coloured rocks along Hearson's Cove. But her voice competes with the low rumble of a gas production plant less than a kilometre away, its flared emissions lightly hazing the sky above the beach.

This is the duality of what First Nations people refer to as Murujuga country, home to one of the world's largest and oldest collections of rock carvings as well as one of the largest new fossil fuel developments in Australia in a decade.

Taking in the Burrup peninsula and the nearby Dampier archipelago, the culturally rich area has an estimated 1m ancient petroglyphs. Some of the images, including illustrations of long-extinct species such as the thylacine and flat-tailed kangaroo, are believed to date back nearly 50,000 years.

Traditional custodians such as Alec and Mardudhunera woman Raelene Cooper come to Hearson's Cove to connect with nature, and the thousands of generations of their people who lived in the country before them, through song.

"You feel them in your heart and your soul, our ancestors in the rocks," Alec says. "We have to wake them up, sing them we're here, sing them we're still

protecting them. Then you hear the wisdom that they have for the past and the future. And it's time for listening.”

But just who is listening – and who is being listened to – is a live question in Murujuga. While the historical and cultural significance of the art is uncontested, and the subject of a Unesco world heritage bid, it sits uneasily alongside the industrial city of Karratha, a settlement of about 23,000 that is about to double down on fossil fuel extraction.

Read full story:

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/may/11/australia-gas-project-petroglyphs-woodside-climate-culture-carbon-bomb?utm_term=627c6a24fee5aa4b8e7f36ed64145224&utm_campaign=GuardianTodayAUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=GTAU_email



The Uluru Statement must be core to promises made by all parties in the lead-up to the federal election

Janine Mohamed & Rosemary Smith, The Conversation, 16th May 2021

The Close the Gap 2022 report calls on governments to make “large-scale systemic reforms to truly empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

peoples.” This is a call to recognise and support self-determination and leadership.

It is no accident that the very first recommendation of the Close the Gap Campaign Report 2022 is for the full implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and particularly for a Voice to Parliament.

The Uluru Statement is described as a “gift to all Australians” by one of its architects, Pat Anderson, the long-term chair of the Lowitja Institute.

The Uluru Statement is foundational for change in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and well-being. Therefore, it must be core to the promises made by all parties in the lead-up to the federal election and beyond. Yet it has been sidelined by the Coalition government so far, and is at risk of being abandoned at the coming federal election.

Transforming power

At this federal election, change that tinkers at the edges is not good enough. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people need the system – the health and education systems in particular but, also the Australian political system – to listen and respond to Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. To be free of racism. To hear our Voice.

The full implementation of the Uluru Statement, and its call for Voice, Treaty and Truth would be a huge step forward. This would be an opportunity to address the health inequity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians.

Recognition of the distinct identities and cultures of Indigenous Australia is vitally important for the health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. For our peoples, culture is key to understanding our health and well-being, shaping the connection between self to Country, kin, community and spirituality. Moreover, it is important for the collective pride of all Australians.

A Voice to Parliament would provide the basis for a better social contract – where both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous people know where they stand. This is an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work together on equal ground to find solutions to problems affecting both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous people.

The Voice to Parliament could help ensure calls from community to address issues such as climate change, the COVID pandemic, escalating mental health issues, deepening chronic health conditions, and other crises are heard and acted on by government.

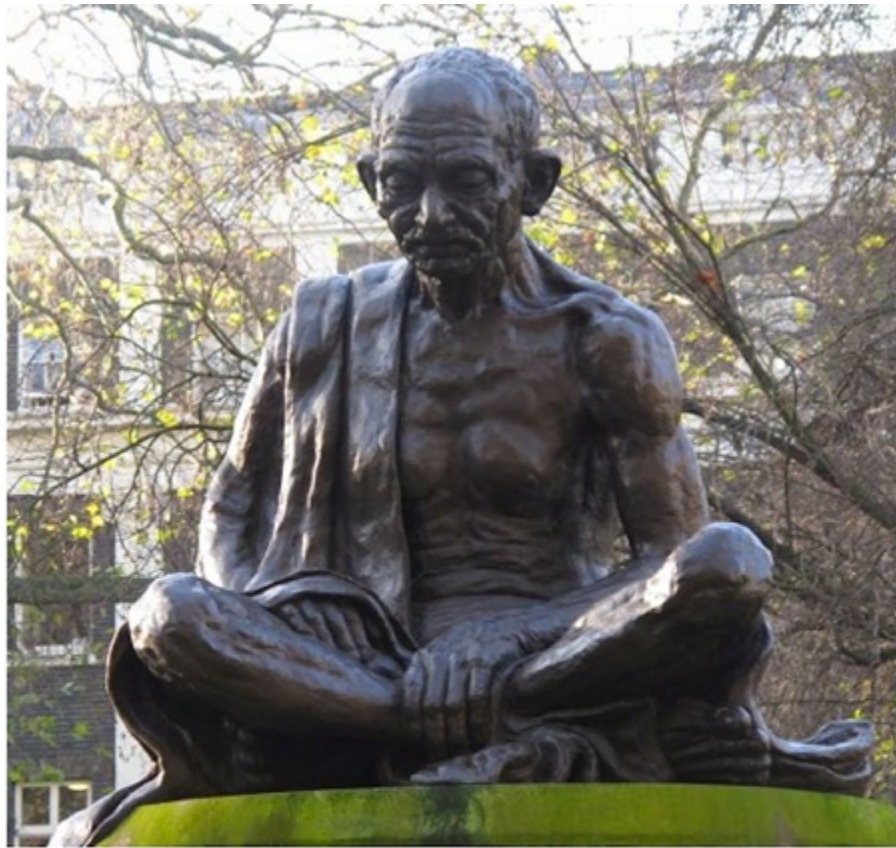
As we await the full implementation of the Uluru Statement, Lowitja Institute is calling on the next federal government to invest in robust, equitable, transparent, and culturally safe health systems that meet the needs of our

peoples.

We have identified five key priorities the federal government needs to address:

Read full article:

https://theconversation.com/the-uluru-statement-must-be-core-to-promises-made-by-all-parties-in-the-lead-up-to-the-federal-election-182296?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20May%2017%202022%20-%202292122799&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20May%2017%202022%20-%202292122799+CID_e2d4b6a58a0a864c5a0e8f82b7e6069f&



In times to come people will not judge us by the creed we profess or the label we wear or the slogans we shout, but by our work, industry, sacrifice, honesty and purity of character. Be the change you wish to see in the world.

M.K. Gandhi



We now have an unprecedented 30,000 unsuccessful asylum seekers living in the community, mainly working on farms. Image:

iStock

If I were the Minister for Immigration policy in the next parliament **Abul Rizvi, Pearls & Irritations, 11th May 2022**

Under the Morrison Government we have seen the biggest wave of asylum seeker applications in Australia ever – at over 100,000. Coming by air it is almost twice as big as the fourth wave under the Rudd/Gillard Governments.

A new Parliament, and possibly a new Government, offers an opportunity for policy renewal, including in immigration policy.

Beyond its border protection mantra, over the last nine years the Coalition Government has implemented a hotch potch of immigration policy changes that offer little in the way of long-term coherence. The changes have been mainly to satisfy various pressure groups or perceived political advantage.

In 2014, the Abbott Government maintained the largest migration program in our history at 190,000 per annum while at the same time allowing net migration to fall sharply due to a weak labour market. A key part of the 190,000 migration program was former students securing permanent migration as has been the case for over two decades.

He re-implemented boat turnback policy and TPVs after boat arrivals had fallen sharply under the second Rudd Government which re-introduced offshore processing.

Whatever we may think of those policies, at least two of them – turnbacks and offshore processing – now have bi-partisan support from the two major parties.

After nine years of resistance, the Government has at last agreed to the NZ refugee re-settlement offer which should enable re-settlement of the remaining refugees on Manus and Nauru. That nine year delay has cost a fortune in

human misery and billions of taxpayer dollars.

The Government has also released the Medevac refugees that were in onshore detention but with minimal support – they have effectively been thrown out into the street.

The key policy difference in terms of boat arrivals now appears to be that the ALP does not support TPVs which should mean that the legacy boat caseload can be either re-settled in a third country or offered permanent residence in Australia if there is an ALP Government.

Read full article

<https://johnmenadue.com/immigration-policy-for-the-next-parliament/>



The Taliban on May 7 imposed some of the harshest restrictions on Afghanistan's women since they seized power, ordering them to cover fully in public, ideally with the traditional burqa [Mohsen Karimi/AFP]

Taliban tightens gender segregation rules in Afghanistan's Herat **Aljazeera, 12th May 2022**

Men and women are not allowed to dine out together, or to visit public parks on the same day, a Taliban official says.

Men and women dining out together or strolling in parks is now forbidden in Afghanistan's western city of Herat, Taliban authorities have said.

The new restrictions follow last week's order for women across Afghanistan to fully cover when in public and appeared to signal the Taliban's tightening grip on power.

Riazullah Seerat, a Taliban official at the Ministry for Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice in Herat, said on Thursday that authorities "have instructed that men and women be segregated in restaurants".

Restaurant owners had been verbally warned that the rule applied "even if

they are husband and wife”, he said.

The Taliban official also said his office has issued a decree that Herat’s public parks should be segregated by gender, with men and women permitted to visit only on different days.

“We have told women to visit parks on Thursday, Friday and Saturday,” he said.

“The other days are kept for men who can visit for leisure and for exercise.”

Women wanting to exercise on those days should find a “safe place or do it in their homes”, he added.

Safiullah, a restaurant manager who, like many Afghans, goes by only one name, confirmed he had received the ministry diktat.

“We have to follow the order, but it has a very negative impact on our business,” Safiullah said, adding that if the ban continues he will be forced to fire members of his staff.

Read full story:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/5/12/taliban-tightens-gender-segregation-rules-in-western-herat>

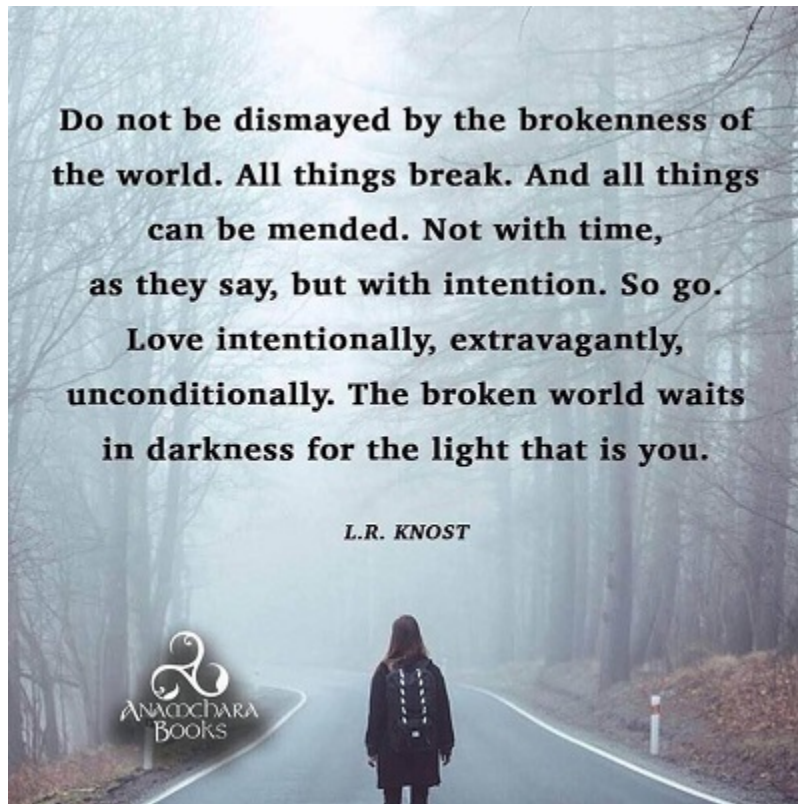




Image Source: U.S. Central Intelligence Agency – Public Domain

Australia's Pacific Neglect: Distractions from Climate Change Security

Binoy Kampmark, Counter Punch, 2nd May 2022

The hysteria in Canberra and Washington over the Sino-Solomon Islands security pact has shown, again, how irrelevant the individual affairs of Pacific Island states are in the chess game of geopolitics. The one thing conspicuously missing has been the issue of climate change, near and dear to those whose lands are gradually being inundated by rising sea levels.

In a desperate attempt to understand why Honiara courted Chinese interest in defiance of Australian wishes, opposition Labor figures pointed the finger at climate change. Australia's sniffly approach to such a vital issue was key in pushing the country into the arms of Beijing. According to the Shadow Education Minister Tanya Plihersek, Canberra had "left a vacuum" on the matter. Senator Penny Wong stated the obvious in remarking that Pacific leaders had been less than impressed by the Morrison government's indifference to climate change as the "number one economic and national issue".

The indifference, even contempt shown by Canberra to that most existential of concerns has made itself present on several occasions. In September 2015, banter ensued between Immigration Minister Peter Dutton waiting alongside Prime Minister Tony Abbott and Social Services Minister Scott Morrison. Abbott recalled the rather casual approach to punctuality that had taken place at a

Pacific Islands Forum meeting the previous day in Papua New Guinea. “Time doesn’t mean anything,” remarked Dutton, “when you’re about to have water lapping at your door.”

In August 2019, Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama was already giving signals that a turning might well be in the offing. After the Pacific Island nations summit held that month, Bainimarama noted how Morrison had been “very insulting, very condescending”, behaviour that had hardly been “good for the relationship” with Pacific Island states. The Chinese, on the other hand, “don’t insult us.” They did not “go down and tell the world that we’ve given this much money to the Pacific Islands. They don’t do that. They’re good people, definitely better than Morrison.”

Read full story:

<https://www.counterpunch.org/2022/05/03/australias-pacific-neglect-distractions-from-climate-change-security/>



Climate Change, as our greatest security threat, must be given absolute priority in national policy and decision-making. Image:

Pixabay

To the next minister for climate change & energy: The execution plan for climate mobilisation

Chris Barrie & Ian Dunlop, Pearls & Irritations, 5th May 2022

Climate decisions taken here and globally within the next three years, the term of the new government, will determine the future of humanity.

Climate is not a single issue. It is going to change every aspect of our society, so we cannot allow a continuation of the lies and deception around climate policy which the two-party system perpetuates.

For thirty years, Coalition governments have been in denial of human-induced climate change, despite science and evidence repeatedly confirming that the phenomenon is real and rapidly moving beyond human influence. But the Morrison government has taken climate denial and deception to new levels, not withstanding the fact that their three-year term has been dominated by climate

disasters; first the 2019/20 bushfires then floods in profusion, not to forget that Covid is climate-related. Even greater climate disasters now occur regularly worldwide.

Contrary to political scaremongering, climate change, not China, is the greatest security threat we face. A threat which, because of political inaction here and globally, is now existential, meaning that it may either annihilate life or permanently, and drastically, curtail its potential. A threat facing the world at large, whose resolution requires co-operation rather than belligerent confrontation.

The latest IPCC AR6 reports, ignored by our politicians, confirm this future. There are no easy solutions. Carbon emissions globally must peak and reduce far faster than currently accepted politically, to reach zero as close to 2030 as possible. Atmospheric carbon concentrations must also be drawn down fast. A monumental undertaking requiring a fundamental re-framing of climate policy built around emergency action and the rapid phasing-out of the fossil fuel industry. As the IEA has stated, no new fossil fuel projects should be developed henceforth.

Yet despite the fact that we are already one of the world's worst carbon polluters, the Morrison government bets the future of Australia on precisely the opposite. Namely massive expansion of the fossil fuel industry via a gas-led recovery and refusal to rule out coal expansion. Despite soaring rhetoric about commitment to climate action via its criminally irresponsible "Australian Way" policy, the government is doing everything possible to subsidise and otherwise shore up the future of the industry. In addition to this outrageous taxpayer-funded financial support, fossil fuel proponents have been deliberately installed in every climate management institution, to ensure real action is delayed. The flurry of appointments and additional funding immediately prior to the election being called is blatant corruption; yet another attempt to further extend the fossil fuel era.

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Little wonder that Australia's credibility as a responsible global citizen is rock-bottom, particularly amongst our "Pacific family".

Read full article:

<https://johnmenadue.com/to-the-next-minister-for-climate-change-energy-the-execution-plan-for-climate-mobilisation/>

REFLECTIONS



Jamberoo Abbey Facebook Post 11th May 2022

Poem of the Week from Vision and Viewpoint

"I hear people say they can't watch the news anymore, it's too depressing and frightening. Others bemoan the world that their grandchildren will inherit. The pandemic, the invasion of Ukraine, the climate crisis, the threat to democracy—no doubt we live in scary and disheartening times. What to do? The poet Ellen Bass offers a heroic action."

The Thing Is

***to love life, to love it even
when you have no stomach for it
and everything you've held dear
crumbles like burnt paper in your hands,
your throat filled with the silt of it.
When grief sits with you, it's tropical heat
thickening the air, heavy as water
more fit for gills than lungs;
when grief weights you like your own flesh
only more of it, an obesity of grief,
you think, How can a body withstand this?
Then you hold life like a face
between your palms, a plain face,
no charming smile, no violet eyes,
and you say, yes, I will take you
I will love you again.
~ Ellen Bass***



Image ~ Tiffany Warner Photography

Jamberoo Abbey Facebook Post 17th May 2022

Monday Morning Reflection

*God of the fire and God of the wind,
God of the silent sound,
when you speak to us,
you do so in ways we may not expect
but cannot ignore.
Allow us in this time of frantic noise
to listen again to the wind
and the earth,
to the gentle whisper of you
calling our name.
And may we hear in your voice
words of love and hope,
the good news of your presence with us
still.
Amen.*

~ from the Corrymeela Community

Pace - e - Bene Nonviolence Inspirations

****“To choose what is difficult all one's days as if it were easy, that is faith.” W.H. Auden***

“One of the roadblocks for groups moving forward now is thinking that they have to wait for a leader to emerge—someone who embodies the future path. . . . The future can emerge within the group itself, not embodied in a 'hero.’” Betty Sue Flowers, Presence

“He could rest with equanimity in the fundamental purity of mind itself, confident in the natural qualities of compassion, love, and joy. And his great attachment was to the wellbeing and liberation of others.” Chagdud Khadro, describing her teacher and husband

“Kindness and truth shall meet, justice and peace shall kiss. Truth shall spring out of the earth, and justice shall look down from heaven.” Psalm 85:1 1-2



We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia as the traditional owners and custodians of the land. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside them for reconciliation and justice. We pay our respects to the Elders; past, present and future. As we take our next step we remember the first footsteps taken on this sacred land.

The Edmund Rice Centre wholeheartedly supports and endorses the
ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART
and urges all Australians to get behind this wonderful statement.

Our mailing address is:

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