Newsletter

Number 31 November 2026

From the editor (John Gwyther)

More activity in the lead up to the State Election on November 28th. We handed out our scorecards and EV leaflets at the Maffra show; a bit of hard work on a family day. Questioned Darren Chester at the Nationals stand on their VNI West cancellation and got a very rude and patronizing reply. The candidate, Gemma Rendell, displayed no apparent knowledge on the issue but did respond to emailed questions; again, with no displayed awareness of the issues.

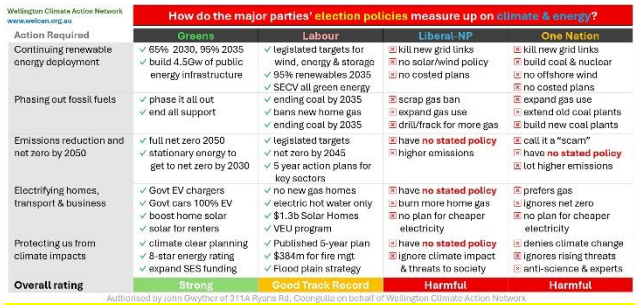
Also questioned One Nation's candidate Steve Goodman at their stand and got a bluster-filled and ignorant display about all things related to energy.

The level of candidate ignorance about the state of the energy transition does not bode well for our energy security over the next few years.

Also, mass letter-boxing in Maffra, Sale and other towns by our volunteers; thank you.

All we can do now is wait to see how this all pans out. Could we have done more? Of course, but our pool of people willing to get out and do stuff is small.

Last, here is our scorecard again. It seems to have been well received.



Wellington Climate Action Network www.welcan.org.au

How do the major parties' election policies measure up on climate & energy?

Action Required	Greens	Labour	Liberal-NP	One Nation
Continuing renewable energy deployment	✓ 65% 2030, 95% 2035 ✓ build 4.5Gw of public energy infrastructure	✓ legislated targets for wind, energy & storage ✓ 95% renewables 2035 ✓ SECV all green energy	✗ kill new grid links ✗ no solar/wind policy ✗ no costed plans	✗ kill new grid links ✗ build coal & nuclear ✗ no offshore wind ✗ no costed plans
Phasing out fossil fuels	✓ phase it all out ✓ end all support	✓ ending coal by 2035 ✓ bans new home gas ✓ ending coal by 2035	✗ scrap gas ban ✗ expand gas use ✗ drill/frack for more gas	✗ expand gas use ✗ extend old coal plants ✗ build new coal plants
Emissions reduction and net zero by 2050	✓ full net zero 2050 ✓ stationary energy to get to net zero by 2030	✓ legislated targets ✓ net zero by 2045 ✓ 5 year action plans for key sectors	✗ have **no stated policy** ✗ higher emissions	✗ call it a "scam" ✗ have **no stated policy** ✗ lot higher emissions
Electrifying homes, transport & business	✓ Govt EV chargers ✓ Govt cars 100% EV ✓ boost home solar ✓ solar for renters	✓ no new gas homes ✓ electric hot water only ✓ $1.3b Solar Homes ✓ VEU program	✗ have **no stated policy** ✗ burn more home gas ✗ no plan for cheaper electricity	✗ prefers gas ✗ ignores net zero ✗ no plan for cheaper electricity
Protecting us from climate impacts	✓ climate clear planning ✓ 8-star energy rating ✓ expand SES funding	✓ Published 5-year plan ✓ $384m for fire mgt ✓ Flood plain strategy	✗ have **no stated policy** ✗ ignore climate impact & threats to society	✗ denies climate change ✗ ignores rising threats ✗ anti-science & experts
Overall rating	Strong	Good Track Record	Harmful	Harmful

Authorised by John Gwythor of 311A Ryans Rd, Coongulla on behalf of Wellington Climate Action Network



www.welcan.org.au **Keep the bigger picture in mind when voting**

We all want **affordable, reliable energy**. We all see the damage from **climate change**. We know that we must **reduce emissions** to ensure our kids have a liveable planet. So, **ask yourself:**

- How will **ditching renewable energy** lower electricity prices when utility solar averaged $27, wind $50 (together, 47% of all supply), coal $72 and gas $137 per MWh over the last year?
- How will spending billions on **coal plants** lower energy prices and reduce emissions?
- How will **new coal or nuclear** in 10-15 years help when Yallourn closes in under 2 years?
- How will shutting down **offshore wind** preserve our farmland and increase electricity supply?
- How will **fracking for gas** on our food-producing farms lower energy and food prices?
- How will **cancelling transmission** lines help with soaring energy demand & supply reliability?

Wellington Climate Action Network are non-partisan locals concerned about slow action on climate change and ensuring reliable, affordable and clean energy. We want to stop the flood of **disinformation** and **simplistic, uncosted policies** at this election. Find Out More

We need workable, affordable solutions not ill-thought out "answers"

Very handy tip: Build a ballot

Build a Ballot is a very handy tool to work out your voting preferences according to your support of key policies. It first asks you to rate your support for a number of non-partisan policies covering health, transport, safety, energy, etc. It then ranks the candidates in your seat against policies that you support and lets you build your voting order and emails you the result.

Thus, on election day, you just number the ballot according to the email. Everything is in your hands but, of course, the preferences you decide with this tool don't consider the political impacts of the different parties.

Still, a powerful tool to cut through the political preferences spin and give you better control of your vote. Do give it a go.

What's On?

Nov 27: Coffee'n'Climate conversations 11am at Sale Library downstairs on the last Friday of each month. An informal chat amongst friends about all things climate and energy (or whatever), all welcome.

Note: we plan to hold another one of these in early December so we can talk about the election result and what we might need to tackle in 2027. Stand by for the details.

Dec 06: Environment Victoria's annual end-of-year Community Celebration - a chance for Gippsland's climate and environment groups and volunteers to come together, connect, share a meal, and reflect on a huge year for our movement. Traralgon 11am-1pm, RSVP here.

COP31 Guterres on Fossil Fuels

From Bill McKibben's recent post: "UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres gave what may be the last in a series of epic climate speeches, since he is stepping down at the end of December. Guterres' tenure has been defined in no small part by climate concerns, and to his immense credit he has never pulled a punch, abandoning diplomatic language to focus on the bankers and fossil fuel execs who drive the crisis. It's worth reading the transcript of his remarks to see how a world leader can address this crisis if he's not worried about appeasing commercial interests. (Pope Francis, and now Leo, are the only comparable examples)." His key points:

- The case for fossil fuels is collapsing.
- Three-quarters of humanity live in countries that

import fossil fuels.

- Hostage to price shocks they did not create and they cannot control.
- Recent conflicts make clear that this is a recipe for chronic insecurity and a cost-of-living meltdown.
- It's time to accelerate a science-aligned, just, orderly and equitable transition to renewables.
- But let's not underestimate the scale of the challenge.
- Fossil fuels must go the way of the dinosaurs.
- But that won't happen on its own.
- The dinosaurs did not have a lobby, but fossil fuels do.
- And their strategy is simple: distort the science. Delay the policy. Delay the action. Delay the accountability.
- It's time to kick the habit – and end the fossil-fuel addiction.

One Lie At A Time…..

"We can't afford the $11 billion cost for VNI West[1]". Both the LNP and One Nation plan to scrap this link, saying it costs too much and will push up bills. Quite apart from their inability to explain how our future grid will run without it, their numbers don't make sense.

Its cost of up to $11 billion sounds like a lot but it will add less than $10 per month[2] to bills whilst ensuring secure and reliable delivery of much greater volumes of much cheaper renewable energy. Compare that to the $40-42 per month extra we will pay if we increase gas reliance or delay the transition (Clean Energy Council).

Note that the above figure is the total project cost, but Victoria's share is about $3.5 billion of that.

Another simplistic, unworkable "solution" to a complex problem.

Little Rays of Sunshine (the "good")

Agrivoltaics' global surge brings untold benefits (Earth Hope): Farmers across the world are placing solar panels over their crops, livestock, and prairies, a practice known as agrivoltaics. They are producing electricity, saving water, and in many cases even increasing crop yields. Agrivoltaics are expanding exponentially globally, currently producing 20 gigawatts of energy and $2.4 billion in revenue.



Solar panels can triple the amount of lettuce a farmer produces. They can triple the yield of peppers, double yields for cherry tomatoes, and produce similar yields of jalapeños using 65 percent less water.

Researchers estimate that agrivoltaics could add 1.8 billion tonnes to global crop yields annually in best-case scenarios. That would provide enough calories to feed over 2.1 billion people per year.

Keeping Homes Cool (link) and Staying Safe in the Heat (links) guides from the Climate Council.

Storm Warnings (the "bad")

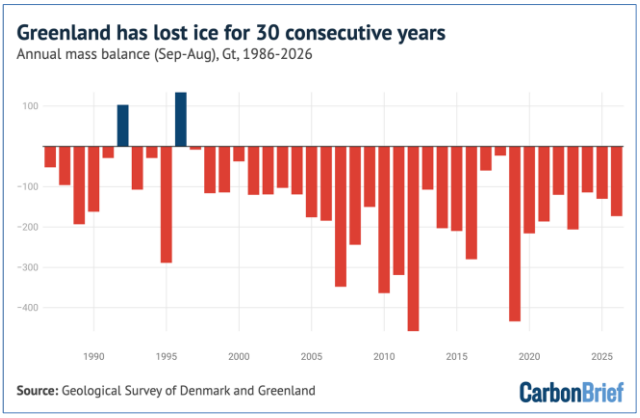
Counting the cost of climate-fueled bushfires: New economic modelling commissioned by Emergency Leaders for Climate Action quantifies that burden in the most up-to-date figures with bushfires now costing the Australian economy a staggering $6 billion a year on average. Cutting pollution from coal, oil and gas faster and more deeply worldwide can limit how severe future bushfires become, while greater government investment in preparedness can reduce their cost. Without stronger action, bushfires are projected to cost more than $180 billion over the next 30 years.



[1] A proposed high-voltage 500 kV double-circuit overhead transmission line connecting Victorian and NSW grids.

[2] Assumes $11b repaid over 40 years at 9% interest across all NEM customers.

Greenland Ice Loss (Carbon Brief): The 12-month period to August 2026 marked the 30th consecutive year of ice loss in Greenland. The analysis shows how 1996 was the last year where the world's second-largest ice sheet gained more ice than it lost.



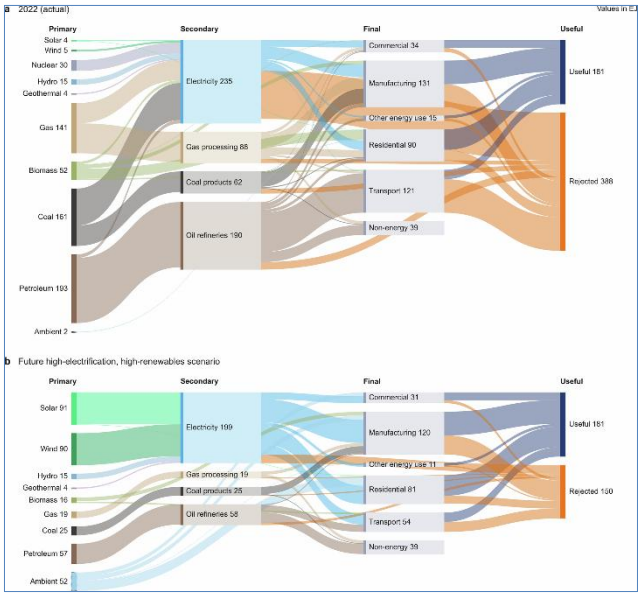
England suffers worst harvest on record (ECIU): For many English farmers, this summer has been the worst in living memory. Unprecedented early summer heat, the driest July on record and a dry April combined to desiccate cereal crops, driving down yields and with them farm incomes.

"Confirmation of 2026 as England's worst cereal harvest on record means that four of the five worst harvests have now occurred since 2020 following extreme weather. Climate change is now undermining the very fundamentals of our food security, a fact that should create more urgency to reduce emissions to net zero and bring our climate back into balance."

In Between (the "interesting")

Australia will get out of gas. Here's how (Grattan Institute): An excellent description of why the phrase 'gas is going through a transition' should replace 'gas will be an important part of the transition'.

The primary energy fallacy in energy transitions (Clean Energy Journal): compares today's fossil-fuel-based system with a stylized highly electrified scenario delivering the same level of useful energy services and finds that system-wide losses (rejected energy) fall by 61%, while the contribution of ambient environmental heat captured by heat pumps rises approximately twentyfold. A good illustration of the "primary energy fallacy".



About Us

WelCAN is a group of Wellington Shire residents determined to accelerate the pace and direction of action on climate change at all Government levels. For more information, email info@welcan.org.au or call me on 0419 309 158. You can sign up for this newsletter here. Note: Any opinions herein are mine and are not necessarily endorsed by WelCAN.