

OPINION

## Abbott's support for Old King Coal is worse than knighting a prince

BY CHRISTINE MILNE

ABC Environment | 13 FEB 2015

Comments (17)

If you needed more evidence that Tony Abbott's views are stuck in a bygone era, look to his support of a power source from the 1800s.

PRIME MINISTER TONY ABBOTT *knights a prince* and pushes his own leadership to the brink of a spill. The resulting storm of criticism has dimmed the flame Mr Abbott keeps lit for the monarchy — even his biggest supporters have called him out of touch, behind the times, clinging desperately to a bygone era.

That's true. but knights and dames are the least of it.



Tony Abbott has an abiding affection for royalty, including Prince Philip and Old King Coal.

<http://www.abc.net.au/environment/articles/2015/02/13/4179504.htm>

## Good neighbours say no to CSG

29 Jan. 2015, 9:14 a.m.

Dear Editor,

The news that AGL has suspended operations at its Gloucester CSG (coal seam gas) test well site (The Australian, January 28) should give Moree landowners pause for thought.

The reason given for AGL pausing operations is the detection of petroleum-related chemicals BTEX (benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, and xylenes) in flow-back water around the well site.

These are the same volatile organic compounds that cause the kind of central nervous system damage we usually associate with petrol-sniffing. <http://www.moreechampion.com.au/story/2848074/good-neighbours-say-no-to-csg/>

## What happened to the lobbyists who tried to reshape the US view of climate change?

In 1998 major fossil fuel companies put \$2m behind a plan that would effectively fuel the fires of climate science scepticism among the American public. We reveal where the 12 people behind that plan are now



This Jan. 16, 2015, file photo shows pumpjacks operating at the Kern River Oil Field in Bakersfield, California.  
Photograph: Jae C. Hong/AP

[Graham Readfearn](#)

Friday 27 February 2015 23.50 AEDT

In early 1998, some of the biggest fossil fuel companies in the world were hatching a plan to hijack the science of human-caused global warming.

Representatives from major fossil fuel corporations and industry groups had joined forces with operatives from major conservative think tanks and public relations experts to draft what they called their Global Climate Science Communications (GCSC) plan.

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/feb/27/what-happened-to-lobbyists-who-tried-reshape-us-view-climate-change>



## Ockham's Razor

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### Limits to growth

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Sunday 15 February 2015 7:45AM

Australian writer Dr Kerryn Higgs has written a book called *Collision Course - Endless Growth On A Finite Planet*, in which she examines how society's commitment to growth has marginalized scientific findings on the limit of growth, calling them bogus predictions of imminent doom.



IMAGE: IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR POPULATIONS AND ECONOMIES TO GROW WITHOUT LIMIT (GETTY/MARK EVANS)



Sundays 7:45am  
Presented by Robyn Williams

<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/ockhamsrazor/limits-to-growth/6088808>

## The Guardian view on food security: if the dreamers lose, we face a nightmare

[Editorial](#)

Less food for more people on a hotter, drier Earth. How can we work to avoid this future?



A Leicestershire wheat field. 'A team has calculated that average yields of wheat per field, which only two decades ago were rising rapidly, are now down 2.5%, and barley by 3.8%. In each case, the scientists identify climate change as a contributing factor.' Photograph: Andrew Matthews/PA

Monday 2 March 2015 06.36 AEDT Last modified on Monday 2 March 2015 11.05 AEDT

By the time nations once again get round a table [in Paris in December](#) to discuss climate change, hunger should be on the menu. Researchers have just warned that a new and [aggressive strain of yellow rust fungus](#) is now a threat to Britain's wheat harvest. Another team has calculated that average yields of wheat per field, which only two decades ago were rising rapidly, [are now down](#) 2.5%, and barley by 3.8%. In each case, the scientists identify climate change as a contributing factor. Global warming has barely begun but climate scientists have been warning about the consequences for food security for 30 years.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/mar/01/guardian-view-food-security-dreamers-lose-face-nightmare>

# Storing carbon in soil: potential opportunities outweigh limits

## AUTHORS



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## DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Budiman Minasny receives funding from Australian Research Council Linkage program.

Alex McBratney receives funding from the Australian Research Council, and Grains Research & Development Corporation.



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It's expensive to apply nitrogen fertilizer, but there are other ways to store carbon in soils. [Image: iStock](#)

For several years, and particularly since the advent of the Coalition's **Direct Action policy** for reducing emissions, the potential of agricultural soils in Australia to soak up carbon has been widely debated. Proponents argue that soils can sequester a large amount of carbon and farmers should be encouraged to, and recognised for, managing their soil to increase this possibility. Others argue soils cannot do the job.

<http://theconversation.com/storing-carbon-in-soil-potential-opportunities-outweigh-limits-17922>

26 February 2015, 5:21pm AEDT

# China farming boom has left ecosystems in danger of total collapse

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## DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

John Dearing receives funding from NERC-ESRC-DFID Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation Programme. He is a member of the The Green Party.

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Provides funding as a Member of The Conversation UK.  
southampton.ac.uk/



This lake is not supposed to be green. Greenpeace China, CC BY

China's push for more intense farming has kept its city dwellers well-fed and helped lift millions of rural workers out of poverty. But it has come at a cost. Ecosystems in what should be one of the country's most fertile region have already been badly damaged – some beyond repair – and the consequences will be felt across the world.

## JOBBS

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<http://theconversation.com/china-farming-boom-has-left-ecosystems-in-danger-of-total-collapse-38058>

## OPINION

### A prescription for global public health: no more coal

BY LIZ HANNA AND PETER SAINSBURY

ABC Environment | 24 FEB 2015

Comments (32)

**The health of our planet is not the only thing at risk of unabated coal burning. The health of our population suffers when we burn coal too.**

THE COAL INDUSTRY has been dealt a series of blows in recent months, with investors [selling out](#), banks [refusing to finance](#) coal projects and the three main political parties in the UK in lockstep with a [joint commitment](#) to phase out coal.

The economic profitability of the industry in Australia is already under pressure from caps on coal imports in



**A healthy population needs less coal.**

Credit: iStockphoto

*[Dr Liz Hanna](#) is Fellow at the National Centre for Epidemiology & Population Health, ANU and President [Climate and Health Alliance](#).*

<http://www.abc.net.au/environment/articles/2015/02/24/4185989.htm>

# Under the sun: Australia's largest solar farm set to sprout in a Queensland field

A sea of glass panels may soon be sprawling across a paddock in Queensland's Darling Downs cranking out two gigawatts of energy – 100 times more than the largest solar farm in Australia today – and a former top flight barrister is the unusual shining light behind its development



A 20MW solar farm constructed on land in California's central valley – the Bulli Creek solar farm would be 100 times as large as this installation. Photograph: Proehl Studios/Corbis

[Joshua Robertson](#)

Monday 2 March 2015 10.14 AEDT Last modified on Monday 2 March 2015 12.24 AEDT

As a barrister acting in some Australia's biggest defamation cases, Angus Gemmell encountered power in various forms: political, military, celebrity.

He killed off rumours bedevilling rising political stars in Canberra. He acted for defence intelligence chief Frank Lewincamp against the Bulletin over stories on Indonesia and the East Timor crisis, in a case where generals Peter Cosgrove and Angus Houston gave evidence. He won the largest damages ever awarded by a judge, \$385,000, for rugby league player Mark McGaw over false Today Tonight stories of domestic violence. <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/mar/02/under-the-sun-australias-largest-solar-farm-set-to-sprout-in-a-queensland-field>

# The Cry for Creation: What Can We Expect from Pope Francis's Encyclical on Ecology?

By Michael Stafford

ABC RELIGION AND ETHICS | 5 FEB 2015

Comments (22)

*"Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds."* J. Robert Oppenheimer, one of the key scientists involved in the Manhattan Project, reflected on those words from the *Bhagavad Gita* as he witnessed the detonation of the first atomic bomb during the Trinity test deep in the New Mexican desert in 1945.



THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRISES OF MODERNITY ARE SYMPTOMS OF A DEEPER SPIRITUAL PROBLEM. A BROKEN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD "HAS INEVITABLE REPERCUSSIONS ON THE REST OF THE CREATED ORDER."

CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK

<http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2015/02/05/4174718.htm>

## A more sustainable Australia: we need to talk about our soils

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DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Vanessa Wong receives funding from the Australian Research Council and Corangamite Catchment Management Authority.

Robert Edis does not work for, consult to, own shares in or receive funding from any company or organisation that would benefit from this article, and has no relevant affiliations.



Provides funding as a Founding Partner of The Conversation AU.  
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We need to get our hands dirty and have a look at our soils. [Photo: Getty Images](#)

**A more sustainable Australia** As the 2013 election campaign continues, we've asked academics to look at some of the long-term issues affecting Australia – the issues that will shape our future.

Our soils are in trouble. Not only are they declining in health, but we're losing the capacity to even know what state they're in. Storing carbon may be one way to improve our soils, but it could also be a red herring.

<http://theconversation.com/a-more-sustainable-australia-we-need-to-talk-about-our-soils-16555>



## Don't fence me in

BY SARA PHILLIPS

ABC Environment

UPDATED 20 FEB 2015 (FIRST POSTED 19 FEB 2015)

Comments (13)

Predator-proof fences have long been thought of as a way to save our most vulnerable species from extinction. But the fences have a dark side.

LAST YEAR I travelled out to the edge of Melbourne, near the airport, to witness the release of some eastern barred bandicoots. Bred by Zoos Victoria in captivity, the threatened, guinea-pig-sized, dusky marsupials were being 'set free' in a fenced-off enclosure in what was once their natural range ([listen](#)).

The fences, a few metres high with a drooping wire cap,



Eastern bettongs are thriving in their fenced enclosure. Long-necked turtles however are not so fortunate.

<http://www.abc.net.au/environment/articles/2015/02/19/4182548.htm>

## Berries and hepatitis: the high cost of doing business

OPINION

By ABC's [Alan Kohler](#)

Posted Thu at 3:48pm Thu 26 Feb 2015, 3:48pm



**Photo:** The frozen berry issue could be a game changing event for labelling laws. (ABC News)

*The calamity of people apparently contracting hepatitis from frozen berries is partly a consequence of Australia's high cost of doing business, writes Alan Kohler.*

The calamity that befell Patties Foods a week and a half ago, along with the [18 people who have apparently contracted hepatitis from its berries](#), is partly a consequence of Australia's high cost of doing business.

Fresh raspberries, sourced from Australia, sell for \$40 and \$50 per kilogram and everyone's happy.

But as soon as a berry is frozen it becomes a globally-tradeable commodity. As a result, and even though the product has had energy applied to it and it comes from far away, the price falls to \$9 per kg.

Alan Kohler has been a financial journalist for 37 years. He began as a cadet on The Australian, has been a columnist for Chanticleer in the Australian Financial Review and editor of the AFR, and columnist for The Age and The Sydney Morning Herald. For the past 12 years he has been working for the ABC, first as business editor of The 7.30 Report and then host of Inside Business and finance presenter on ABC News. In recent years he has started his own newsletter, Eureka Report, and in 2007 launched a website, Business Spectator. In June 2012, Alan Kohler sold his interests in Business Spectator and Eureka Report to News Ltd. He continues to edit and contribute to both publications

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-02-26/kohler-berries-and-hepatitis-the-high-cost-of-doing-business/6265360>

## OPINION

### 4 religious leaders explain why the coal industry is immoral

BY JAYARAMAN, KEREN-BLACK, ORMEROD & PICKARD

ABC Environment | 27 FEB 2015

Comments (4)

**The coal industry needs to stop telling the developing world what to do and start listening to what it wants.**

MOMENTUM SEEMS TO be building for a global deal at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris this December. With this sense of optimism comes a keen awareness that the use of fossil fuels must be phased out globally as rapidly as possible. Indeed, the idea that greenhouse gas emissions should be reduced to zero by 2050 is gaining wider acceptance.



Burning coal kills more people than ebola.

*Raja Jayaraman is Vice Chair of the Hindu Council of Australia. Jonathan Keren-Black is a rabbi at the Leo Baeck Center for Progressive Judaism and Founder of the Jewish Ecological Coalition. Thea Ormerod is President of the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change. Stephen Pickard is Executive Director of the Australian Center for Christianity and Culture at Charles Sturt University*

<http://www.abc.net.au/environment/articles/2015/02/27/4187765.htm>

# Lester Brown: 'Vast dust bowls threaten tens of millions with hunger'

Over his 50-year career, Lester Brown has become known for his accurate global environmental predictions. As he enters retirement, he warns the world may face the worst hunger crisis of our lifetimes



Lester Brown fears the world may be on the verge of ever greater levels of hunger. Video produced by Laurence Mathieu-Léger

This content is sponsored.

**Suzanne Goldenberg**

 @suzyji

Wednesday 25 February 2015 12.48 AEDT



 Comments  
255

Vast tracts of Africa and of China are turning into dust bowls on a scale that dwarfs the one that devastated the US in the 1930s, one of the world's pre-eminent environmental thinkers has warned.

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/feb/25/lester-brown-vast-dust-bowls-threaten-tens-of-millions-with-hunger>

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# Shenhua criticises government delay on New South Wales coalmine

Liu Xiang says experience so far of the NSW project on edge of Liverpool Plains did not tally with Australia's 'proclaimed enthusiasm for offshore investment'



The Shenhua Watermark coalmine is currently under review by environment minister Greg Hunt. Photograph: Mick Tsikas/AAP

The chairman of the Chinese state-owned Shenhua Australia company has criticised government delay to its plans for a \$1.2bn open-cut coalmine on a site near some of Australia's best agricultural land on the edge of the Liverpool Plains.

Liu Xiang said the experience so far of the project - which has met with fierce local opposition - did not tally with Australia's "proclaimed enthusiasm for offshore investment".

<http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/feb/23/shenhua-chairman-criticises-australian-governments-delay-to-coalmine-plans>

14 December 2014, 7.31am AEDT

## **There are no penguins in the Arctic: Chronicle of an extinction**



Specimen of *Pinguinus impugns* kept at the Nature Center in Nuuk, Greenland Carlos M. Duarte

[Click to enlarge](#)

A film of penguin cartoons, *The Penguins of Madagascar*, will possibly be the blockbuster this Christmas. In this film the penguins, of course, from the southern hemisphere, receive help in their task of saving the world from a team of Arctic animals.

The script is supported by the known fact that there are no penguins in the Arctic, so the team of Arctic animals includes polar bears and wolves but no penguins. But was this always the case?



<http://theconversation.com/there-are-no-penguins-in-the-arctic-chronicle-of-an-extinction-35471>

**Soil is the essence of all terrestrial life.**

Rattan Lal, 2014