

November 2014

Special announcement – don't miss this

Smart Homes Seminars

Free seminars each Thursday in November to help you save \$\$s on your new or existing home.

Seminars will be held at the Wagga City Council Meeting Room on the corner of Baylis and Morrow Sts from 6pm to 7.30pm on Thursdays 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th of November.

For more information just click [here](#).

Next meeting

We will hold our regular monthly meeting starting at the usual time and place – South Wagga Public School, across the lawn from the front carpark entered off Edward st., Thursday 20th November at 5:30. However the meeting will be very brief because at about 5:50 we will adjourn to the third of the Smart Homes Seminars as above. This seminar will be about how to keep your home at comfy temperatures year round at minimal cost.

The last meeting finalised a submission from CROW to Council in request to a response from them for suggestions for improved sustainability.

... and in other news

Something has stirred up the local denialati. Letters to the Daily Advertiser in the last month from local residents pointing out that global warming is not happening, or that it is a secret plot by the Bureau of Meteorology, or that them scientists know nuffin' are suddenly peaking.

My hypothesis: The earth's hottest twelve months on record (October 2013 to September 2014) has brought them out of hibernation.

Thank goodness we have Daily Advertiser correspondents like Andrew Wallace and Graham White to set them straight.

Money and politics

The NSW Government gets it

NSW injects extra \$700,000 into community renewable projects

The NSW government has announced it will inject another \$700,000 of funding to help communities establish their own community renewable energy projects.

Environment Minister Rob Stokes made the announcement at the formal opening of the 99kW community-owned solar installation at the Shoalhaven Heads Bowling Club in NSW. The project, established by Repower Shoalhaven, is the largest community owned solar project to date in the country.

Stokes said the new grants – up to \$70,000 can be allocated for a single project, will offset the high upfront administrative costs of community energy projects, and “unlock

the potential that small-scale renewable energy” has to offer.

“This funding will open up the benefits that decentralised electricity can provide to local communities. Projects that benefit low income families will receive priority.”

Divesting from coal

Market Forces Organisation, along with 350.org, have been pushing for major bankers to divest from coal. They reported in late October that major banks in the United States have indicated that they won't finance the Abbot Point coal expansion!

Citi have provided a statement that says “Citi is not involved and does not plan to be involved in any financing for the Abbot Point expansion” while the Wall Street Journal has reported that Goldman Sachs and JP Morgan Chase also indicated that they wouldn't support new investment at Abbot Point.

Earlier this year there were similar commitments from Deutsche Bank, HSBC, Credit Agricole, Barclays and the Royal Bank of Scotland. This now means that many of the world's biggest coal-funding banks across Europe and the US have distanced themselves from the massive new coal export terminals in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, proposed by GVK and Adani.

But while international banks make statements that they won't fund the Abbot Point coal port expansion, the “big four” Australian banks refuse to do the same.

Market Forces ask us to take a moment to get an important message in to the “big four” Aussie banks: “the world is moving against dirty coal exports in the Reef, why won't you?”

[Click here to take action.](#)

And more about Market Forces [here](#).

Germany's renewable energy incentives and regulations attracting Australian companies

An Australian company which invented a renewable energy electricity generator says it was forced to move its operation to Germany because of a lack of opportunities in Australia.

Ceramic Fuel Cells, a Melbourne-based **CSIRO** spin-off company, said its generator could cut electricity bills by up to 50 per cent for households and small businesses.

But the company moved its operations to Germany two years ago to benefit from generous German government subsidies not on offer in Australia.

"This is what we need right now," the company's Germany-based managing director, Frank Obertnitz said.

"We are at an early stage. We need to commercialise the product and the incentives in Europe are much better for that."

Germany is in the middle of an energy transition it calls Energiewende, which aims to shut down nuclear plants, reduce carbon emissions and increase electricity produced from renewable sources.

See more on this story [here](#).

Science and technology

Five things to know about 2014 global temperatures

[From National Climatic Data Center](#) in the USA.

No doubt about it: 2014 will go down as one of the warmest years on record, according to the National Climatic Data Center's global surface temperature monitoring.

1. We've already set records at the yearly scale.

The 12-month period ending September 2014 it was the warmest of *any* 12-month period on record, clipping a record first set in 1998 and tied twice since. October 2013, the next month to drop from the rolling 12-month average, was one of the cooler (or least warm) months of the recent stretch, so we may visit this record again soon.

2. We've done this without El Nino.

Each of the three warmest years on record (2010, 2005 and 1998) came on the heels of El Nino events, as did 2003, which is tied for fourth warmest. But 2014 is already pummeling records without the aid of El Nino's push.

3. Several scenarios for 2014's end-of-year finish point to a new record.

Through September this year recovered from a cool February to pull even with 1998 and 2010, and into a three-way tie for the lead as hottest calendar year. Both 1998 and 2010 faded in their last three months when La Nina conditions arrived. According to CPC, a La Nina finish to 2014 is very unlikely, which helps 2014's chances to finish warmer than its two "competitors."

4. This year's extreme warmth is largely driven by the global ocean. The globally averaged ocean temperatures have broken or tied records since the [Northern Hemisphere's] spring. The 2014 warmth is pervasive too: sizable chunks of every major ocean basin observed their warmest year-to-date on record. The combination of widespread ocean warmth, and its tendency to change relatively slowly, builds more confidence in a warm end-of-year finish.

5. Ranking individual years is a bit overrated. When 2014 goes into the books, it will probably be statistically indistinguishable from the warmest years on record, even if marginally the warmest.

In the big picture, regardless of the eventual rank—1st, 2nd or 3rd—what matters most is that 2014 will end up very, very warm compared to the historical record, will re-confirm that we live in a significantly warmed world, and will provide an exclamation point at the end of a global temperature time series that continues its long-term march toward warmer temperatures.

NSW Bushfires

Latest analysis from the Climate Council

Residents of NSW have experienced the serious consequences of bushfires. In 2013, bushfires in January and October burnt 768,000 hectares of land and destroyed 279 homes. Tragically, 2 people lost their lives and damages were in excess of an estimated \$180 million.

SIX KEY FINDINGS

1. Climate change is already increasing the risk of bushfires in NSW
2. In NSW the fire season is starting earlier and lasting longer. Fire weather has been extending into Spring and Autumn.

3. Recent severe fires in NSW have been influenced by record hot, dry conditions.
 4. The total economic costs of NSW bushfires in 2014 are projected to be \$43 million. By around the middle of the century these costs will almost triple.
 5. In the future, NSW is very likely to experience an increased number of days with extreme fire danger. Communities, emergency services and health services across NSW must prepare.
 6. This is the critical decade.
- To reduce the risk of even more extreme events, including bushfires, in the future, Australia must cut greenhouse gas emissions rapidly and deeply to join global efforts to stabilise the world's climate.

And this month's strange one – fusion on a truck

[Is Lockheed's fusion project breaking new ground?](#)

The defence company's announcement that it is working on a fusion reactor that could fit on the back of a truck was greeted with surprise. It says it could change the future of the planet, but some are sceptical. Daniel Clery reports.

Lockheed Martin, the US defence company behind stealth aircraft, is known for working on futuristic projects. Even so, its announcement early in October surprised many people. The company revealed it is working on a fusion reactor that it says could power a small city but will be compact enough to fit on the back of a truck. At a press conference last week, Lockheed team leader Tom McGuire talked about fusion-powered ships and even aircraft. "We have an idea that makes us very excited," he said. Fusion researchers have reacted with some scepticism, especially to the claim that the reactor could be ready for commercial use in 10 years.