



September 2014

## Next meeting

Hi CROW members and supporters,  
We will hold our regular monthly meeting on the usual time and place - this thursday 18th September, 5:30 to 7pm, at South Wagga Public School. From the front carpark entered off Edward St, head across the lawn until you see the school canteen then head a bit to the left to a small building where we will have the lights on. We will be discussing the latest material on our community solar project.

## ... and in other news

The big news this week is that world leaders are getting together in New York on 23 September for the [UN Climate Summit, 2014](#). Four out of 128 countries will not be represented by their leaders, China, India, Canada and Australia. Despite the fact that he will be in New York the following day Tony Abbott will be represented by Australia's Science Minister, or if she is not available by our Environment Minister or, if for some reason he cannot go, by the Foreign Minister ([here](#)).

To go with the Summit meeting, a massive [march is planned in New York](#), along with marches around the world, including [Melbourne](#) and in all other [capital cities](#).

## Renewable energy politics

### [UBS: Time to join the solar, EV, storage revolution](#)

Leading investment bank UBS says the payback time for unsubsidised investment in electric vehicles plus rooftop solar plus battery storage will be as low as 6-8 years by 2020 – triggering a massive revolution in the energy industry.

“It's time to join the revolution,” UBS says in a note to clients, in what could be interpreted as a massive slap-down to those governments and corporates who believe that centralised fossil fuel generation will dominate for decades to come.

### [Why climate change could be the biggest threat to your portfolio](#)

The oil and gas industry faces a host of challenges, including high and rising development costs, stagnant commodity prices, and geopolitical risks in regions such as Russia and the Middle East. But climate change may be the biggest threat of all, with potentially grave consequences for oil and gas companies' asset values and share prices.

### [Solar in 22.6% of homes in SA, as renewables hit 2020 target](#)

Nearly one in four homes in South Australia now has rooftop solar, as the share of renewable energy in the state neared 33 per cent in 2013/14 – delivering the state's ambitious 2020 target six years ahead of schedule.

### [BNEF: Europe To Invest \\$1 Trillion Into Renewables By 2030](#)

Europe will invest around \$1 trillion into growing its renewable energy capacity by the

year 2030, according to a new report from Bloomberg New Energy Finance. Of this, a very substantial amount is expected to be into rooftop solar PV (\$339 billion) and onshore wind energy (\$250 billion).

The growing investment into solar PV and onshore wind will be down to falling technology costs in those fields. The report predicts that by the 2020s only offshore wind will still be subsidized, and that 557 GW of new renewable power capacity will be online in Europe by 2030.

#### [Chile is poised to adopt South America's first carbon tax](#)

It's a big year for fighting climate change in Chile. A carbon tax is set to go before its House of Representatives next week, as part of a larger tax reform package that includes measures intended to fight air pollution and climate change. Chile would become the first country in South America to institute a carbon tax, and the second in Latin America after Mexico, which [imposed its carbon tax](#) in January.

## Science and technology news

#### [Better batteries](#)

Salt has long been used to preserve meat, and now researchers at Cornell University have found that adding certain salts to the anodes of lithium-based batteries can also increase their useful life by a very large factor, solving long-standing problems associated with cell degradation. The advance can be adapted to other metal-based chemistries, including the lighter and more energy dense lithium-sulfur cells and, according to the researchers, might see commercial applications in as little as three years.

#### [Australian solar power scientists are one step closer to making available a cheaper and faster way to print solar cells onto plastic.](#)

CSIRO's senior research scientist Dr Fiona Scholes said the technology was almost at the commercialisation stage and could be used to power laptops to rooftops.

"iPad covers, laptop bags, skins of iPhone - not just for casing electronics but to collect some energy as well and power those electronics," Dr Scholes said.

The Victorian Organic Solar Cell Consortium behind the project comprises scientists from the CSIRO and the Melbourne and Monash universities who have been working on printing solar cells since 2007.

The team quickly produced results, creating coin-sized solar cells and increasing them to A3 size.

Dr Scholes said the team used commercial printers that were modified to take solar ink.

"It's very cheap. The way in which it looks and works is quite different to conventional silicon rooftop solar," she said.

"It can be made to be semitransparent - we can use it for a tinted window scenario."

Dr Scholes said any plastic surface could be substituted for solar panels. That made it perfect for powering up a skyscraper, she said.

#### [Zero energy at zero cost: How to retrofit buildings in a week](#)

By [Karel Beckman](#) on 15 September 2014

The Netherlands has found a way to refurbish existing buildings to net zero energy, within a week, with a 30-year builders' guarantee and no subsidies. With new kitchen and bathroom! Now revolutionary renovation programme Energiesprong (literally: Energy Jump) is looking to take its learnings to France and the UK.