

# ENVIRONMENT VICTORIA NEWS

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## On track to 100% clean energy



### PLUS

Will our rivers  
survive global heating?  
A look at Victoria's draft  
Sustainable Water Strategy.



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## Editorial

**Jono La Nauze,**  
Chief Executive Officer



**I'm often asked how I cope with thinking about our environment every day. From climate-fuelled flooding to flattened forests that aren't growing back, the markers of ecological catastrophe are all around us. But so too are the signs of hope.**

It's in people like Monica Morgan and other leaders of the Yorta Yorta people. What they've achieved – like the protection of the world's largest river red gum forest – is remarkable, especially when you consider how colonisation stacked the deck against them. You can read a bit of Monica's story on page 14.

It's in the staunch leaders of Friends of Latrobe Water, who are forcing coal companies to repair the harm they've

done to the rivers that flow into the world-renowned Gippsland Lakes. Some of the latest outcomes we've helped them achieve are outlined on page 8 and 9.

And it's in the new generation of local leaders we're welcoming to our Action Network all around the state (see page 7).

This year is a double election year for Victorians. I know the state of our political debate might make you want to throw things, or switch off altogether. But I urge you to tune in because the signal that says "We are winning" is getting louder and clearer.

The momentum is with us, and it's showing not just in the opinion polls but in the response of governments and businesses. Lies and fear campaigns aren't working the way they used to. The more clean energy we build, the more people love it.

And we're building a lot. Industry observers have run out of synonyms for "unprecedented". Whether it's an offshore

wind farm or a giant battery, there's a new "world's biggest" announced just about every month. As this edition of EV News outlines, a completely renewable energy system is now closer than ever.

Of course, there's still much more to be done, and some powerful interests stand in our way: energy corporations like Viva and ExxonMobil, who will do anything to protect their dirty fossil fuel profits; politicians like Scott Morrison who think climate action is just a marketing exercise. Our job is to hold them to account and demand something better.

2022 is already shaping up as a big year of change – not all of it good, for sure, but the more we join together for a healthy environment the more we can steer our society toward a brighter future. I'm looking forward to it.

Front cover image:  
**Nicholas Doherty**

# 100% clean energy – let's get on with it!



Image credit: Nicholas Doherty

**Paul Beaton,**  
Senior Energy  
Policy Analyst



## The future has arrived much sooner than many people expected.

At the beginning of March this year, the Victorian government announced a new target to build a massive nine gigawatts of offshore wind in the state by 2040, creating a whole new clean energy sector and giving Australia its first offshore wind industry. This came after years of campaigning by Friends of the Earth and the union movement

This huge news brings us closer to meeting the Australian Energy Market Operator's prediction that Victoria could be out of the business of burning brown coal by 2032 and closer to reaching 100 per cent renewable electricity in our power grid.

To take a step back, the Victorian Renewable Energy Target (VRET) was updated in 2019 with the aim of achieving 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030. It wasn't as ambitious as we would have liked, but it took us closer to where we needed to be.

Since that time, owing largely to grid improvements and further bolstered by the offshore wind farm announcement, a 100 per cent renewable power system is now more clearly within reach in Victoria, but only if appropriate policy settings and investments in renewable power expansion are fast-tracked.

Several research reports released in the second half of 2021 back this up and, importantly, these research efforts come from a range of sources and points of view. NSW's grid operator, Transgrid, the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO), the Grattan Institute, and the Blueprint Institute all agree that this kind of massive and rapid change is feasible – and desirable – for Victoria's power grid.

It's clearer than ever that we have the technical solutions, and the case for action has never been stronger. We are seeing the alarming increase of climate impacts around Australia including the recent floods in NSW and the devastating fires across Victoria in 2020.

But to achieve a rapid shift to clean energy, bipartisan political leadership is crucial.

We've seen some positive initial shifts, with the Victorian Liberal Party indicating

in March that they now share Labor's goal of cutting emissions by 50 per cent by 2030.

Environment Victoria is now preparing a roadmap for legislators, policy makers and other decision makers with specific guidance on what's required to transition Victoria's power system to 100 per cent renewable energy.

A critical next step in Victoria's clean energy transition is going to be meaningfully engaging local and regional communities in the journey as we build the infrastructure needed to realise the vision of a future powered purely by renewable energy.

**THANK YOU to everyone who sent our 100% clean energy briefing paper to their local Federal MP.**

You can read it at  
[envict.org/100percent](http://envict.org/100percent)

And send a copy to your Federal MP here:  
[envict.org/emailmp](http://envict.org/emailmp)

# The transition gathers speed

**Taegen Edwards,**  
Organising  
Program Manager



**There is a tectonic shift underway in our energy system. But the planning and certainty for local communities is still sorely lacking.**

"How did you go bankrupt?" Bill asked.  
"Two ways," Mike said. "Gradually, then suddenly."

This interaction from Ernest Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises* hints at how different forces can change slowly in the background and then suddenly come together to create a dramatic change. In the energy space it feels like we're on the precipice of such a moment.

In a period of just two months this year the closure dates for Eraring, Bayswater and Loy Yang B were all brought forward; a takeover bid was launched for AGL with the intention of closing their coal power stations by 2030; and the Victorian government announced a massive new offshore wind target, establishing an entirely new clean energy sector.

These announcements took some by surprise, but they shouldn't have. For a long time now wind and solar have been pushing down the price of electricity and undercutting the profitability of coal-burning power stations.

And we didn't have to read economic tea leaves to know this was coming.

The draft 2022 Integrated Systems Plan (ISP) by the Australian Energy

Market Operator (AEMO) is the most comprehensive assessment we have of where Australia's electricity grid is heading. It forecasts that almost every coal power station in the country will close sooner than the official dates.

Remarkably, the new 2025 closure date for Eraring power station is almost exactly what AEMO predicted. And for Victoria it's even more interesting.

The current draft ISP forecasts that Victoria could be out of the business of burning coal by 2032. In the case of Loy Yang B power station, AEMO thinks it could close a staggering 18 years sooner than the official date set by its owner, Alinta.

It gets even more interesting when you consider the ISP doesn't account for offshore wind.

The Victorian government's massive new target for 9 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2040, with the first projects to come online as soon as 2028, has literally re-written the nation's energy transition. It means even more clean energy will be coming online as we rapidly phase-out coal.

It looks like we're on track to phasing out coal in Victoria, and FAST.

But the other side of the coin is 'will this transition be fair?' The answer to that is much less certain.

	Current 'official' closure date	AEMO predicted closure date (draft ISP '22)	Difference (Years)
Yallourn	2028	2026	2
Loy Yang B	2047	2029	18
Loy Yang A	2040-2045	2032	8-13

Victoria's coal power stations are likely to close much sooner than their owners are saying publicly. Source: AEMO Draft 2022 ISP.



The now-demolished Hazelwood power station loomed large over the town of Morwell.

The Andrews government established the Latrobe Valley Authority (LVA) after Hazelwood's closure to support workers and the region more broadly to manage the economic impact. The work of moving beyond coal is only just beginning in the Valley, but the LVA's funding runs out in June!

**So THANK YOU to everyone who signed our petition supporting a community-led transition plan for the Latrobe Valley and calling for the Latrobe Valley Authority (LVA) to be funded until the last coal power station closes.**

We've presented your signatures to both Mary-Anne Thomas, the Minister for Regional Development, and Tim Pallas, the Victorian treasurer. With the Victorian budget expected in May we'll be looking out for some good news!

According to YouGov polling released in February, we know that people in the Latrobe Valley want to be part of the solution to the climate crisis. But they also want governments to deliver a secure and prosperous future for the region.

The positive signs are already showing. With the Delburn Wind Farm to be built near the former Hazelwood site, and offshore wind projects which will create thousands of good, long-term jobs across Gippsland.

But the thing that these isolated examples lack is long-term planning. History shows that engaged, orderly planning that is led by the community is essential for any successful economic transition.

Pretending that energy companies are going to be able to 'sweat' their coal power stations for decades to come only makes the inevitable transition more chaotic.

Change doesn't happen overnight, but closure announcements can. So if we're to make sure the transition to clean energy is fast AND fair, we need to put the pressure on governments at all levels to get ahead of the curve.

As the transition inevitably gathers speed, long-term support is urgently needed to grow new businesses and re-skill the community for new clean energy jobs.

## EPA Court Case Update

In the last edition of *Environment Victoria News* we announced our plans to take the Victorian Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and Victoria's three remaining coal power station owners to court.

In their review of coal power station licences the EPA failed to place limits on greenhouse gas emissions and only made minor tweaks to toxic air pollution limits, which are not strong enough to protect

the health of the local community. With your support we're challenging that decision!

We'd like to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who has donated. Currently we are expecting a court date sometime in October this year.

You can read more about this landmark case at: [envict.org/epa](http://envict.org/epa)



# There's never been a better time to get off gas



**Greg Foyster,**  
Campaigns Manager



## You can save money by switching from gas to efficient electric appliances – and you'll be helping to stop new fossil fuel projects too.

The gas industry has spent decades bombarding us with ads featuring actors singing pro-gas jingles in steaming hot showers. But here's the truth they don't want you to hear: their arguments have been blown away by the rise of cheap, clean energy.

Ducted gas heating is now about the most expensive and polluting way to heat a home. Efficient electric appliances such as reverse cycle air conditioners are now much cheaper – and better for our climate too.

This is because fossil gas prices have risen dramatically since 2015 when Australia started exporting massive quantities of it. With sanctions on Russian gas and reduced supply from Bass Strait, they'll only go up further.

For electricity, it's the opposite.

A November 2021 report by the Australian Energy Market Commission found that the use of clean energy and battery storage will reduce Victoria's wholesale electricity prices by 39 per cent or about \$200 per household in the three years to 2024.

Environment Victoria's own research confirms that households save money by switching from gas to efficient electric heating. New homes with all-electric appliances save \$700 per year on energy bills. If you make the house more efficient and add solar, you can save up to \$1795 per year, cutting bills by up to 80 per cent.

One concern is that this means using more electricity, which in Victoria still comes mostly from burning coal. For years the gas industry has used this to claim gas was better for the environment. But our research found that even with the current electricity mix, an all-electric home still has slightly lower emissions than one that burns gas. And because more clean energy is coming online every year, an all-electric home's emissions will continue falling.

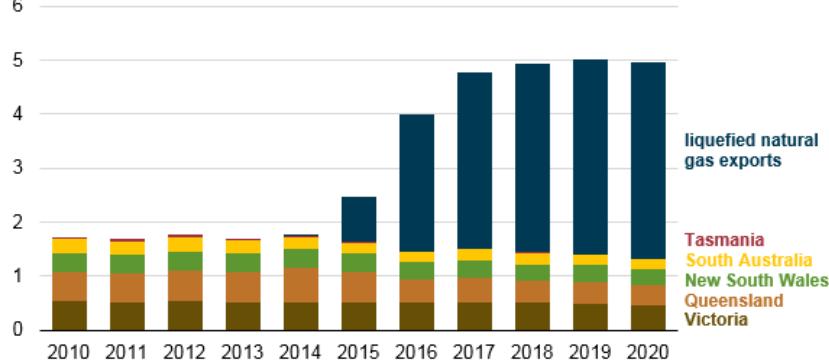
Finally, phasing out gas can help to stop new fossil fuel projects from being built, because it sends a signal to the market that future gas supply isn't needed. If the demand isn't there, gas companies can't make a business case to invest in projects like drilling near the Twelve Apostles or building a floating gas import terminal in Geelong.

Victorian households burn more gas than any other sector – more than industry and far more than gas power stations. This means that consumers have great market leverage. If you switch away from gas, you'll save money, reduce pollution, and help to stop destructive gas projects from going ahead.

## GET A \$1000 HEATER REBATE

The Victorian government is supporting up to 250,000 homes to switch to an efficient electric heater. Environment Victoria campaigned for this program as part of the state's COVID recovery budget, so make the most of it! Find out if you're eligible at: [heatingupgrades.vic.gov.au](http://heatingupgrades.vic.gov.au)

**Eastern and southeastern Australia domestic natural gas consumption and LNG exports**  
billion cubic feet per day



This graph shows the huge explosion in Australia's gas exports since 2015, which has resulted in large price increases. Source: AEMO

## HELP STOP THE GEELONG GAS IMPORT TERMINAL

Viva Energy plans to build a floating gas terminal in Geelong's Corio Bay, much like the one AGL proposed for Westernport. We're supporting Geelong Renewables Not Gas to campaign against the project.

Get involved at:  
[geelongrenewablesnotgas.org](http://geelongrenewablesnotgas.org)



# Meet the Victorians building a new movement for climate action

**Victor Komarovsky,**  
Senior Organiser



**In the midst of worsening climate impacts and persistent federal government efforts to block action, communities across Victoria are building people power for change.**

From Western Victoria to East Gippsland, and from the Goulburn Valley down to Westernport, people are taking climate action. You'd be hard pressed to find anywhere in Victoria where members of the community are not working together to protect people and planet.

Environment Victoria's Action Network is a new and growing collection of communities who are supporting each other's efforts and connecting the dots to push for big wins across the state.

The network kicked off with a series of workshops late last year, and since then Environment Victoria staff have been collaborating with local leaders – or Local Organisers – across the state. Organisers have built on the relationships within their communities to have values-based conversations, run events and reach out to the public through market stalls

It's all about building people power. We know that our elected representatives have agreed to fund record amounts of clean energy because of Victorians' loud

and relentless campaigning. And to secure a healthy and safe future for all, we must redouble our efforts by bringing even more people on board.

Who is better placed to do that than local people working in their own communities!

So who are these Local Organisers?

Amy is a newly graduated environmental officer from Pakenham, with a part-time job at the library. She is incredibly concerned about the future we're moving towards due to a lack of climate action, but she doesn't let that stop her creating a better future.

*"I have joined other concerned community members from all across the south-eastern suburbs to create an open letter calling for our federal government to make a real and fair plan for net zero emissions."*

The open letter she mentions is one of several similar letters gathering steam in Victorian communities. Each calls for deep cuts to our emissions and highlights the unique ways that each region can play its part in – and benefit from – the transition to clean energy.

Underlying the open letters is a mood for change in the federal government's climate policies. For the best part of a decade, our government has blocked fast and fair action, propped up the fossil fuel industry and attempted to deny its responsibility to future generations.

In February this year, we hosted a series of trainings with new Local Organisers across the state. We looked at how to build power in our local communities and begun strategising together for the year ahead!

Jillian from Crib Point is part of our Action Network group in Westernport. She says,

*"People around the Peninsula and Westernport have a long legacy of standing up for nature, and now, in the midst of a climate crisis, it's even more important to do so. That's why I got involved with the Action Network. Together we've drafted an open letter that calls for the waters and lands around Westernport to be protected, and for the federal government to make deep cuts to our emissions this decade by phasing out fossil fuels like coal and gas."*

Amy and Jillian are just two leaders in a burgeoning movement calling for action on climate change. This federal election we can expect to see Victorians show up in their millions to vote for fast and fair climate action.

**Tell your federal MP that climate is a top issue for you, email them here:**

[envict.org/mp-email](http://envict.org/mp-email)

# What's next for mine rehabilitation?

A coal ash dam at Yallourn mine.

**Laura Melville,**  
Organising  
Program Manager



**Work is ramping up in the Latrobe Valley to address the toxic legacy of decades of brown coal mining.**

## CLEANING UP TOXIC COAL ASH

The issue has long slipped under the radar, but in November 2021 Friends of Latrobe Water (FLoW) and Environmental Justice Australia (EJA) addressed it in a report titled "When the Coal Ash Settles", highlighting the Latrobe Valley's problems with toxic coal ash. As mine owners develop plans to rehabilitate coal mines and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) creates new regulations to manage coal ash, this will be a crucial issue for the region.

When coal is burnt, the toxic chemicals and heavy metals concentrate in the ash. These contaminants can travel in surface water and in the air as dust, so it's important that they're cleaned up properly.

Coal ash slurry in the Latrobe Valley is held in dams built next to waterways. Without proper regulation, they leach pollutants into the groundwater. EPA guidelines have historically categorised these dams as landfill, but the guidelines for managing landfill are totally inappropriate for coal ash.

The work from FLoW and EJA has guided discussions with mine operators, the

EPA and Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLAWAC) about how to ensure coal-ash dams are properly engineered, managed, monitored and rehabilitated. As a result, the EPA has determined that rehabilitation plans for coal-ash dams must be made available to the public. This is a huge win for our community.

But there's still a long way to go. Right now, we're pushing for more transparency about the composition of the coal ash – we need to know more about what's in it to understand the dangers it poses and the protection measures we need.



The community guide FLoW and EJA created on cleaning up coal ash dams in the Latrobe Valley.

We also want to see funding for coal ash clean-up included in plans for the transition from coal to clean energy. And importantly, we're working to make sure that environmental protections are in place when our region welcomes new investments, industries and jobs.

## HAZELWOOD PLAN REFERRED FOR FULL EES

For several years we've been working with FLoW and EJA to lobby for a thorough Environment Effects Statement (EES) process for the plans to rehabilitate the Hazelwood coal mine. So we were pleased in February 2022 when the Victorian Minister for Planning, Richard Wynne, announced that the project will have to undergo an EES.

The EES requires operator Engie to investigate the environmental and social impacts of its proposal to flood the old mine site and turn it into an artificial pit lake.





The minister's announcement recognises that mine rehabilitation has significant implications for water quality and availability, native plants and animals and the landscape and land use of the area. With Aboriginal heritage, our internationally recognised Gippsland Lakes and local ecosystems at stake, the community has a right to expect a thorough process.

The planning minister has determined that there is a risk of cumulative adverse effects in combination with other future projects. So this EES will also provide an opportunity to assess the use of alternative landforms and water sources, and other mitigation measures.

The next step is for Engie to provide information about the scope of the assessments under the EES to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. The public will then have fifteen business days to make submissions on the draft scope of the assessment.

## STAY IN THE LOOP

If you would like to receive updates on the Hazelwood EES process, you can sign up to EJA's alerts at: [envict.org/eja-updates](http://envict.org/eja-updates)

## WHERE WILL THE WATER COME FROM?

It could take more than two decades to turn the Hazelwood mine void into a 'pit lake' and would require an estimated 638 billion litres of water, or more water than Sydney Harbour. Engie's proposal would require an extra five billion litres of water each year just to offset evaporation.

And that's for only one of the three giant mines in the Latrobe Valley.

If the mines are filled with water from the river system, that leaves less for the local environment, and it also means less for agriculture and other industries across the region. The government's ecological assessment highlighted the 'escalating impacts' and 'multiple interconnecting threats' of this approach.

On top of this is the fact that current climate projections indicate there simply won't be enough water to turn all the Latrobe Valley's coal pits into lakes.

It's our view that using water from the local rivers should be off the table, considering the potential impacts. Mine operators need to consider using recycled or desalinated water of sufficient quality, or they may need to prepare for clean-up options that don't rely on using such vast quantities of a precious resource.

## ENGAGING FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE IN THE LATROBE VALLEY

The area now known as the Latrobe Valley is the traditional country of the Gunaikurnai people. Through 2020 and 2021, Environment Victoria worked with Gunaikurnai community members to engage Indigenous people in the Latrobe Valley in discussions on the future as the region moves beyond coal.

Through one-on-one meetings, small group meetings and a community survey, we explored how we can better engage and take leadership from Gunaikurnai and other First Nations people.

We've learnt a lot through the process. We discovered how important it was to ensure our events and communications were culturally appropriate, and we learnt how long it takes to build relationships of trust.

As a Glengarry community member said, "Our ancestors have lived this land for thousands of years. The government digging up the earth and doing man-made destruction to our land for what benefit really? None of our people have been properly consulted, particularly our elders. Messing with mother nature's beauty clearly has devastating impacts and the government seem to put money before people's health. It's criminal."

Our full briefing paper on water availability and coal mine rehabilitation is available at: [envict.org/water-rehabilitation](http://envict.org/water-rehabilitation)

# After the logging

**Greg Foyster,**  
Campaigns Manager



## Report reveals shocking extent of regeneration failures in native forests logging.

In late 2021 Margaret Blakers, veteran forest campaigner and former director of the Green Institute, approached Environment Victoria about independent research she had undertaken into the neglect of Victoria's last remaining old growth forests at the hands of the government-owned loggers, VicForests.

The bombshell research, based on data obtained under Freedom of Information laws and ground-checks of logged areas in the public native forests of eastern Victoria, showed in graphic detail how VicForests is failing to carry out one of its most basic responsibilities – to regrow native forests after they are logged.

These revelations were too important to ignore, so we worked with a coalition of 19 Victorian environment groups to develop and release a report titled "After the Logging".

VicForests claims that fewer than 15 per cent of logged coupes fail to regenerate within three years at "first attempt". But this report presented compelling evidence that the failure rate is actually 30 per cent, twice what VicForests claims. In mountain ash forests, the failure rate is over 50 per cent. VicForests claims that all logged areas are regrown, but the reality is that some places are no longer forests at all. They have been turned into weed-infested blackberry patches and wastelands of

bracken and grass. Elsewhere, colonising species such as wattles have replaced the original eucalypts. Feral animals and weeds have become rife.

In short, the report showed that VicForests is simply failing to regenerate Victoria's native forests as it claims to do.

In 2019, the Victorian government announced that native forest logging would end in 2030. But given the mounting evidence of unlawful logging and regeneration failure, VicForests should be abolished now. If it isn't, we will continue to see more destruction, more impacts on wildlife, water and climate and more regeneration failure.

After the report was released in December 2021, it received significant media coverage. Yet far from taking the report's recommendations on board and abolishing VicForests, the Victorian government has proposed changes to logging standards that could further weaken protections and undermine existing legal challenges to VicForests' operations.

The changes include adjusting how logging limits are applied in "bushfire moderation zones" near rural communities and changing the protections of the vulnerable Tree Geebung. Under the draft rules, VicForests would only need to protect mature Tree Geebungs "where reasonably practicable" instead of the existing threshold "where possible".

The end of logging is a historic once-in-a-generation opportunity to recover and revitalise Victoria's diverse and beautiful native forests and protect our climate, wildlife, water and culture. But right now we run the risk of a logging free-for-all, where a very poorly regulated industry

rushes to trash what's left in the drive for short-term profit.

To stop this from happening, VicForests needs to be abolished and an independent authority established to manage the ecological, cultural and social dimensions of the transition out of native forest logging, with First Nations people at the forefront of the process.



An ABC special feature on the report used digital mapping and drone footage to show how huge swathes of native forest had been turned into weed-infested grassland.

**THANK YOU to the thousands of supporters who shared our posts on social media and sent the report to their Victorian MP.**

Together we reached over 100,000 people online and highlighted the terrible damage that VicForests is doing.



## Examples of failed regeneration by VicForests

Tom's Track was a beautiful Alpine Ash forest until it was logged in 2010/11. After a seedling survey by VicForests in 2014, the coupe was listed as regenerated and handed back to DELWP. When researchers visited in 2021, they found no regeneration – just grasses, weeds, severe blackberry infestation and evidence of cattle grazing.



Big Bull Fiddle is in Toolangi State Forest. The Alpine Ash forest was logged in 2010 and formally listed as regenerated in 2018/2019. But aerial images show the area is now dominated by silver wattle, with barely a mountain ash in sight. Wattles will never be able to provide the tree hollows that animals like possums and greater gliders need.



The Oil Bore coupe was logged in 2019 and listed as regenerated by 2020. When researchers visited the once-thriving forest in 2021, they found a large area of disturbed, waterlogged ground that was almost entirely devoid of eucalypts.



# Will our rivers survive global heating?

Image credit: Ed Dunens

**Tyler Rotche,**  
Healthy Rivers  
Campaigner



**Water for our rivers is far from guaranteed in the state government's draft plan for southern Victoria.**

Victoria's Sustainable Water Strategy (SWS) deals with the next fifty years of water management in southern Victoria – a massive region that extends from East Gippsland to the coast of the Otway Peninsula.

While population growth is driving an ever-increasing demand for water, a hotter, drier climate means less water is flowing into our rivers, wetlands and lakes. Already in the last ten to fifteen years, flows have dropped by as much as 21 per cent in some areas. By 2065, projections show they could drop by a further 40 per cent.

This means that more than half the water southern Victoria will need by 2065 does not currently exist.

The prospect of this future is confronting, but it's one we can respond to by planning now. That's where the SWS comes in. Its task is to reset the balance between how much water our rivers need to survive and how much is taken for irrigation, industry, homes and workplaces.

So how will it reset that balance? The government's draft plan is underpinned by

an approach known as 'substitution'. It looks something like this: grow our water supply by investing in new sources, like recycled and desalinated water; those sources then 'substitute' for the water major users like irrigators take from our rivers, which means the water that used to be extracted is free to flow in our rivers instead.

There are a few major problems with this approach. One is that it isn't a plan for rivers – it's a plan for industry. Our rivers are already suffering from climate impacts and decades of over-extraction. But it will take years for new manufactured sources to be designed, approved and built – and start supplying water.

This leads into the second problem. Essentially, the SWS says that if new sources have water left over after industry has had its fill, then maybe we can begin to meet targets for restoring waterway health. These targets are largely focused on preventing the loss of critical species and avoiding events where rivers literally stop flowing. This isn't exactly ambition – it's narrowly avoiding catastrophe.

Finally, reasonable options have been left out of the plan entirely. There is no recognition that today's intensive use of water for industry and agriculture cannot continue in a drier climate. We need a thoughtful transition to an economy that simply takes less water.

The plan will allow rivers to be brought within an inch of death, but profit-seeking corporations aren't being asked to help by

reducing over-exploitation or contending seriously with the climate crisis. A better plan for our rivers is possible. With the right leadership, we can use the SWS to stop too much being taken from our rivers, set strong targets to keep them flowing and guarantee water from sources we know exist.

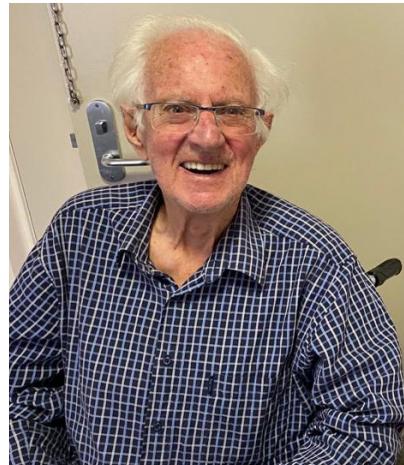
That's why we're working alongside river communities to stand up for their waterways and make sure our government recognises their importance. Together, we can work towards a better future – one where our rivers thrive, our economy respects limits and our work is dignified.

**Read more about the SWS on our website at: [envict.org/water-strategy](http://envict.org/water-strategy)**

**THANK YOU to everyone who has already supported our campaign to stop the dangerous offset projects proposed for Victoria's rivers.**

**Thanks to you, we can hire the lawyers and water experts we need to build our case, and continue working with local communities to build power and win long-term protection for our rivers.**

# Celebrating the life of Peter Fensham



We remember and celebrate the life of Peter Fensham, who sadly left us in August 2021 at the age of 93.

Peter touched the lives of many as a loyal friend and colleague, and at Environment Victoria we are particularly grateful for his friendship and support ever since our founding in 1969. We talked to his son Patrick, who gave us a personal account of Peter's legacy.



Peter and his son Patrick hiking in New Zealand.

*Compassion, loyalty, intellectual curiosity and care for the environment are values that guided my dad's life. Dad was an attentive, though not a "doting", father to his four children. He set an example through living his values and it was apparent that this was an appropriate and "good" way to live.*

*I remember that our house was often filled with people from near and far who had crossed his path and were offered hospitality. I loved it! I was exposed to a lot of different people and learnt to be at ease with strangers.*

*I remember fondly the hikes we did together in Victoria and in the UK. Dad extended his love of the environment into his academic work and was involved in many associations, some of which he founded, including the Victorian Environmental Education Council.*

*His example encouraged me to go beyond my comfort zone and ask myself, "What else can I do to make a difference?"*

It was thanks to Peter's love of nature and his insatiable thirst to create positive change in the world that his path crossed with Environment Victoria's. We want to particularly acknowledge Peter's role in supporting our campaign protecting East Gippsland forests in the 1990s. We are grateful for Peter's loyalty and that he remembered Environment Victoria in his Will. It will be an honour to ensure that his legacy continues through our work.

Peter once wrote, "For me the essence of being human is twofold – the relationships we have with other humans and with the rest of the natural world on which we depend."

**Leaving a future gift to Environment Victoria in your Will is an exceptional legacy for future Victorians who will inherit this beautiful state from us. It's a simple change when you next review your Will. The wording below is a guide for your solicitor or trustee:**

"I give to Environment Victoria Inc. (ABN: 84 495 053 605) of Level 2, 60 Leicester Street, Carlton, Vic, 3053 for the purpose of safeguarding Victoria's environment [the residue [or....%] the residue of my estate] or [....% of my estate] or [the sum of \$....] or [specified

property....] free of all debts, duties or taxes and declare that the receipt of an authorised officer shall be a sufficient discharge for my executor(s)."

**To find out more, contact our Key Relationships Manager:**

Camille Warambourg  
Phone: +61 (03) 9341 8108  
Email: c.warambourg@environmentvictoria.org.au

# Monica Morgan – reflecting on 50 years of activism

Image credit: Justin McManus / The Age



**Monica Morgan is a Yorta Yorta woman and Chief Executive Officer of Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation (YYNAC). She has been an activist for over fifty years, fighting for the self-determination of her people and to protect Country. For International Women's Day we sat down with Monica to discuss the moments in history and the women who have inspired and taught her. The following is an extract of that interview.**

Where I've come from is a product of who's been influencing my life. And of course, that's very strong black women.

My mother, Elizabeth Morgan, led the way in advocating for the rights of our people. She became the chairperson and then the director of the Aboriginal Advancement League for over 10 years.

We went on many marches for land rights as I was growing up, and that's where I kind of got my mantle fighting for better conditions for our mob.

The two defining protests were the Aboriginal Tent Embassy on the lawns of Old Parliament House in 1972 and then after I met my partner, Kevin Whyman, the 1982 Commonwealth Games.

It was after returning from the Commonwealth Games that we went back to Cummeragunja. Kevin and I said, "We're not going to fight for land rights around the whole of Australia. We also need to go back to fight and protect our own Country."

Cummeragunja had a really unique beginning. In 1881 our Elder men signed a petition stating that, as People from the Moira, we wanted land of our own to farm and feed ourselves. We wanted to live on Country next to the Barmah and the Millewa Forests and wetlands, so we could do cultural hunting and gathering. And the land that was delivered to us was Cummeragunja.

Each of the 45 petitioners started to clear blocks and commenced farming wheat and sheep – and to all accounts, we had one of the highest rates of wheat and wool production in the district.

But then the Aborigines Protection Board, made up of white farmers and land owners, kicked up a fuss and took the blocks from our men. The Protection Board stated that all the farmlands would be farmed by the Aboriginal residents for free and they would get rations or would be sent away as farm labourers for the white man. Our mob were very, very angry and disillusioned.

I've always been told to be fearless, to be strong and to be very resolute. And that

is something that as a Yorta Yorta woman I've carried throughout my life. It's been the hallmark for how I do business and it's always in the absolute knowledge that we are the First Peoples. This is our land – stolen – and we've never ceded sovereignty to the British invaders.

We've now negotiated a joint management agreement with the Victorian government to protect and manage Barmah and to turn it into a national park. It means we have control over what happens on our Country and we have stopped the logging and the cattle grazing.

I think the importance for the future is to not stop the momentum, to get a foundation that there is self-determination, self-governance and proper land bases and economic bases that aren't tied to the strings of government.

We need the long-term ability to be able to look after our Country. Our rivers are dying and that's killing our systems, our future generations' ability to ensure a sustainable future. The struggle is everyone's struggle now with climate change.

**READ THE FULL ARTICLE  
ON OUR WEBSITE AT:  
[envict.org/IWD-2022](http://envict.org/IWD-2022)**

**SUPPORT YORTA YORTA:  
[yynac.com.au](http:// yynac.com.au)**



## Dear Jono, I want to protect Victoria's rivers and nature from destructive offset projects.

### PLEASE MAKE THIS A DONATION BY CREDIT CARD:

(All donations over \$2 are tax deductible)

\$50  \$100  \$250  \$1000  Your choice \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make this a monthly donation

Please find enclosed Cheque  or Money Order  (payable to Environment Victoria Inc.)

Or please debit my credit card: Visa  Mastercard  Amex



Cardholders name: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_/\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Card number

Please send me info about how I can make a gift to Environment Victoria in my Will

Are your personal details correct on your letter? Are you moving soon? Please update your personal information if necessary

### PERSONAL DETAILS

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ First name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Home: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please complete this form, cut off this page and return it to Reply Paid 12575, A'Beckett Street, Melbourne, VIC 8006 or visit [www.environmentvictoria.org.au](http://www.environmentvictoria.org.au) and make your donation online. Thank you for your generosity!**

Personal information is collected to process donations, issue tax receipts and keep you updated about our work. Please contact us at the address below if you wish to limit the use of your personal information or stop receiving direct marketing material from Environment Victoria. Our privacy policy is available at environmentvictoria.org.au/privacy and outlines how you can access or correct your personal information, who we disclose your personal information to (including overseas recipients) and how you can lodge a complaint.

Please tick if you do NOT want to receive communications from other organisations. Occasionally we allow like-minded organisations to contact you with information that may be of interest to you, including organisations outside Australia. Those organisations allow us to do the same and this way we can reach more people with vital information.

# The Green Electricity Guide

by GREENPEACE



## Switching energy providers?

Royal Dutch Shell's purchase of Powershop has many of you asking about alternative green energy retailers.

Fortunately our friends at Greenpeace Australia Pacific have recently updated their Green Electricity Guide, which you can access for free at [greenelectricityguide.org.au/](http://greenelectricityguide.org.au/)

The guide has detailed rankings of Australia's energy retailers and will help you make an informed switch.

As many of you would be aware, since 2015 Environment Victoria had maintained a partnership with Powershop, then consistently rated as the greenest electricity retailer in Australia. But the surprise

announcement in November that they were to be bought out by one of the world's biggest climate wreckers clearly made that untenable, and we immediately terminated our agreement.

**You can read our full statement at: [envict.org/powershop](http://envict.org/powershop)**

## Who's who at Environment Victoria

Chief Executive Officer  
**Jono La Nauze**

### CAMPAIGNS & PROGRAMS

Campaign Manager (Acting)

**Greg Foyster**

Healthy Rivers Campaigner

**Tyler Rotche**

Climate and Energy Analyst

**Rai Miralles**

Senior Climate and Energy Analyst

**Paul Beaton**

Community Organising Co-Managers

**Laura Melville,**

**Taegen Edwards**

Senior Organiser (acting)

**Victor Komarovsky**

Latrobe Valley First Nations Organiser

**Ange Chittim**

Latrobe Valley Organiser

**Hayley Sestokas**

Community Organiser  
**Lucy Marks**

Data Support Officer  
**Chante Bock**

Communications Manager (acting)  
**Cameron Wheatley**

Media and Content Manager  
**James Norman**

Beyond Coal Communications Lead  
**Joy Toose**

Communications Officer  
**Isabel Kimpton**

### OPERATIONS

Finance Manager  
**Don Batson**

Accounts Officer  
**Jing Lu**

Administration Support Officers  
**Fiona Ames,**  
**Ingrid Wys**  
Office Manager  
**Cate Hoyle**

Fundraising Officer  
**Hannah Minns**

Fundraising Director  
**Jonathan Storey**

Key Relationships Manager  
**Camille Warambourg**

Key Relationships Officer  
**Sylvia Sierkiewicz**

Database Officer  
**Karly Roolker**

### BOARD

President  
**Conor Costello**

Vice-President  
**Paul Brown**

**Tim Watts**  
**Paul Bailey**  
**Elaine Montegriffo**  
**Tabatha Fulker**  
**Ralf Thesing**  
**Paul Brown**  
**Tim Lo Surdo**  
**Marina Lou**

### REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

Environment Victoria would like to thank our amazing crew of regular volunteers, who are now too numerous to mention.

### TALK TO US

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