



'Helping build a renewable energy community'

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CLIMATE EMERGENCY

On February 4 Phillip Sutton of the Victorian Climate Action Network (VCAN) reported that the number of Councils worldwide that had declared a Climate Emergency had grown to 296. This he said covered a population of about 25 million people.

GREAT QUOTE

I was reading an article recently in the SMH. It quoted bushfire survivor Ali Griffin from Yarra Glen who lost her home on Black Saturday . In the context of the looming election I reckon it says it all.

"Enough is enough, we are sick of the lack of progress on this issue – any politician without a serious plan to tackle climate damage is not fit to hold office."

Snowy 2.0

We were at a presentation recently by energy experts Bruce Mountain and Simon Holmes a Court. This was just after the Snowy 2.0 announcement by PM Morrison. They noted that no business case had been put up and that 2.0 might swallow up most of the available pumped hydro project funding and starve of funding other pumped hydro projects with more merit. Example the Kidston Genex project in Queensland and others in S.A.

Vestas in Geelong

Danish Wind giant Vestas has opened up a wind turbine maintenance facility in the old Ford manufacturing plant in Geelong. Vestas says it will service its growing fleet of turbines in Western Victoria. Last year Vestas [notched up more than 1GW of turbine orders around Australia](#)

TRY

The north-eastern Victorian town of Yackandandah has marked the production of 1GWh of locally generated clean energy, as it reaches the half-way mark of its transition to 100 per cent renewables by 2022.

The town, led by community energy organisation Totally Renewable Yackandandah (TRY), has so far installed solar - and some battery systems - on more than 50 per cent of its households and community buildings. *Source 'One step off the grid' February 13.*

To monitor or not to monitor?

This was one of several questions posed at DRREA's 'Monitoring and Management' forum on February 11 which was well attended. Most people that

have older inverters do monitor them manually by reading it at least once a week or once a month. I am one of them.

By scrolling down through the menu and reading the 'E Today' we know if the system is working and how well it is working. (E today tells us how many kilowatt hours were generated so far that day) We quickly come to recognise if the E Today is okay for that time of day and that time of year.

Most current day inverters have monitoring systems built in according to Ian Conibeer of Energy Connections. Like Finn Peacock of solarquotes.com Ian says they are fairly basic and inferior to add on, custom made monitoring packages like Solar Analytics.

These are quite expensive but if you are technologically savvy and can make good use of them they will provide you with excellent analysis of what your system is doing no matter where you are.

As more and more people add batteries to their systems use of monitoring and management will become more of a necessity if you want your system to perform well.

Once upon a time monitoring was just about energy efficiency and what appliances were on and how much power they were using. This is still important today but monitoring now involves so much more. As Tony Forster (ex Energy auditor) said, "If you can't measure it you can't control it".

Do solar panels go AWOL on hot days?

According to Finn Peacock a typical solar panel losses 0.5% of its efficiency for every degree over 25 for every degree that the panel's temperature is at. He said, on the recent 43 degree day in Adelaide he lost, he estimated 22.5 of his solar power.

Pathetic !

That is one word to describe the federal governments new Climate Change policy. Giles Parkinson of Renew Economy summed it up really well. He said, "Scott Morrison re-badges Tony Abbott's Direct Action policy and calls it something which it is not: A Climate Solutions package".

Solar panel recycling

DRREA committee member Roger Wilsher recently brought to my attention an article in the Age from January 13 called 'Solar panel waste, a toxic time bomb'. It was about a looming problem of low quality solar panels that would soon be reaching end of life and the fact that government had no recycling plan in place. It is a similar story with lithium batteries as it is with recycling in general.

Given that reducing and reusing always comes before recycling I thought I would ask you all for your suggestions about ways old solar panels could be re-purposed. Please email me your ideas. In the meantime DRREA will write to the Energy and Environment Minister Lily di Ambrosio about this looming problem.

Solar panel cleaning

To clean or not too clean? If you have decided to clean but want to employ a professional so the job can be done safely below are the names of 2 small businesses in Emerald you can ring.

There is Sunil of 'Aah Clean' on 0416 484 644. There is also Peter of 'Reach and Clean' on 59685149 or 0407 222 063

Atlantis Tidal Flow

If you aren't familiar with tidal flow generators google this and have a look at their website. They are like big underwater wind turbines. I was told that this UK based company had submitted an E.O.I. to the Victorian and Federal governments to trial one in Bass Strait because of its strong tides but that no interest was shown. They are quite different to the wave type generators being developed by Australian companies like Carnegie in WA.

Native animals doing it tough!

Our thanks go to 'Climate for Change' for the information below on native animal casualties of climate change

- This week the Department of Environment officially confirmed Australia's first climate change mammal extinction: the Bramble Cay melomy
<<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/climate-change/our-little-brown-rat-first-climate-change-caused-mammal-extinction-20190219-p50yry.html>>.

- Other Australian species are being pushed to the brink of extinction by man-made climate change:

- - The government has moved the Spectacled Flying-fox
<<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-12-19/heat-wipes-out-one-third-of-flying-fox-species/10632940>>
to the critically endangered list following our extreme summer. It was estimated one third of the entire population was wiped out in one heatwave last December!

And scientists are nervous the White Possum
<<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-02-03/white-lemuroid-possum-under-threat-from-climate-change/10774516>>
could be finished when the next extreme heat event hits far north Qld. The tropical species was nearly wiped out by heatwaves in 2005.

Tesla News

Renew Economy reported on March 31 this important news from Tesla. "Electric vehicle company Tesla says that the base version of the Model 3 electric sedan – the "mass market" version priced at \$US35,000 (\$A49,330 at current exchange rates) is finally available".

"This is also good news for prospective Australian customers, who should be able to start taking deliveries of the Model 3 mid year. Tesla has promised that all ranges available in the US will be made available in new right hand drive markets like the UK and Australia".

Carnegie completes Micro Grid

Carnegie Clean Energy has announced that it has completed commissioning of the Garden Island Microgrid (GIMG) Project. The Garden Island Microgrid is a 2MW Solar PV and 2MW/0.5MWh Battery Energy Storage System built by Carnegie on HMAS Stirling, Australia's largest naval base, located on Garden Island, Western Australia.

I hope you found this newsletter informative interesting: Peter Cook