

Recent News

Low/Zero Emissions Vehicle Strategy Research from Wendy Cox

I obtained this link from attending last night's VIC Climate Update 2021 put on by the ANU Climate Change Institute. Wendy Cox was an attendee. When the recording for the webinar is published I will include a link in the next newsletter.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ZqjXFKETNEsShcQVRLaOlJezhlysFjGU/view>

Life-cycle emissions of electric cars are fraction of fossil-fuelled vehicles

A new analysis of electric vehicles (EVs) versus their petrol and diesel counterparts has been released by European clean transport lobby group Transport & Environment (T&E), and it puts to bed once again misconceptions that EVs have higher emissions over their entire life cycle.

<https://thedriven.io/2020/04/27/life-cycle-emissions-of-electric-cars-are-fraction-of-fossil-fuelled-vehicles/>

Two Victorian towns could go off grid under new network proposal

Two regional Victorian towns, Donald and Tarnagulla, are to take part in a trial with a local network operator that could see them become the biggest communities so far to cut ties with the grid and rely on local renewables and storage.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/two-victorian-towns-could-go-off-grid-under-new-network-proposal/>

ANU Climate Update 2021

ANU Climate Update 2021 presented on Feb 6 a snapshot of the latest climate research, including newly released data on the climate throughout 2020, and a focus on water and human health. The live stream recording and speaker presentations are available here:

<https://climate.anu.edu.au/news-events/events/anu-climate-update-2021>

AEMO Quarterly Energy Dynamics Q4 2020

On Wednesday 10 February, MEI hosted Dr Jonathan Myrtle from the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) for their first Quarterly Energy Dynamics seminar of the year.

<https://energy.unimelb.edu.au/news-and-events/news/podcast-aemo-q4-2020-quarterly-dynamics-seminar>

Relectrify's ReVolve rollout gives new life to EV batteries

Battery technology company Relectrify has turned its focus to the commercial and industrial (C&I) sector with the launch of a 36 kW / 120 kWh commercial-scale modular battery energy storage system (BESS) which utilises second-life electric vehicle (EV) battery packs.

<https://www.pv-magazine-australia.com/2021/02/26/relectrifys-revolve-rollout-gives-new-life-to-ev-batteries/>

<https://www.relectrify.com>

Neighbourhood Battery Initiative

The Victorian Government's \$3 million Neighbourhood Battery Initiative (NBI) will fund pilots and demonstrations of a range of neighbourhood scale battery ownership and operational models, to unlock the role that neighbourhood scale batteries can play in Victoria's transitioning electricity system. There is also an invitation from the Vic Govt to have your say on the NBI initiative.

<https://www.energy.vic.gov.au/new-energy-technologies>

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/victorian-neighbourhood-battery-initiative-consultation>

How Community Energy builds resilience & renewables – panel discussion

This webinar was delivered in partnership with the National Sustainable Living Festival in February 2021.

Starting with a brief overview of community energy, two questions were asked of established community energy groups:

1. How did your community energy group start and what has your group achieved so far
2. What are the key things you have learnt along the way?

Featuring Taryn Lane of Hepburn Wind, Lawrence McIntosh of SolarShare and Rob Passey from COREM (Community Owned Renewable Energy Mullumbimby). There are also other very informative webinar recordings on this web page under the banner of 'Community Participation Webinar Series'

<https://cpagency.org.au/our-work/innovation-research/webinars/>

Smart Energy Vision 2021

Enhar hosted the above very interesting online conference. Links to slide presentations and recordings below:

Ian Foster - Energy storage & solar considerations for commercial sites: [Slides](#) [Recording](#)

David Kincaid - Commercial PV asset management: [Slides](#) [Recording](#)

Demian Natakhan - Large scale solar & battery storage opportunities: [Slides](#) [Recording](#)

Richard Keech - Smart storage & VPPs: [Slides](#) [Recording](#)

Heath Shakespeare - Solar PV carport & electric vehicle: [Slides](#) [Recording](#)

Victoria network plans upgrade to allow for more rooftop solar exports

Victorian energy distributor, Powercor, is upgrading its network to support domestic solar.

The company is spending \$3 million to allow more solar export to the grid.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/victoria-network-plans-upgrade-to-allow-for-more-rooftop-solar-exports/>

Rooftop solar installs head for 3.5GW in 2021 after record start to year

Rooftop solar has enjoyed a record start to the year with installations up 27% on last year.

The small market is now on track for 3.5GW of installs in 2021.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/rooftop-solar-installs-head-for-3-5gw-in-2021-after-record-start-to-year/>

Gold star sustainable Gisborne development is snuffed by council despite serious community backing. Now it's up to Daniel Andrews to help

A planned sustainable housing development in Gisborne has been knocked back because it wasn't in the council's original future plan. Now, it could be up to the state government.

<https://www.thefifthestate.com.au/innovation/residential-2/gold-star-sustainable-gisborne-development-is-snuffed-by-council-despite-serious-community-backing-now-its-up-to-daniel-andrews-to-help/>

Electric vehicle user charge put on hold as SA Government monitors similar taxes interstate

South Australia has put a hold on its plans to introduce a road tax for EVs.

The government is waiting to see how a similar tax in Victoria goes first.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-03-04/sa-electric-car-tax/13216892>

'A huge step': Luxury car maker Jaguar to go all-electric

Luxury car brand Jaguar says it will phase out internal combustion engines and go fully electric by 2025.

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/life/auto/2021/02/16/jaguar-land-rover-electric/>

Against the odds, South Australia is a renewable energy powerhouse. How on Earth did they do it?

South Australia has gone from zero to 60% of energy coming from renewables in 20 years.

<https://theconversation.com/against-the-odds-south-australia-is-a-renewable-energy-powerhouse-how-on-earth-did-they-do-it-153789>

New bodies to guide Qld, NSW on renewables

The NSW and Queensland governments have launched new agencies to oversee and accelerate their states' transitions towards renewable energy.

<https://www.governmentnews.com.au/new-bodies-to-guide-qld-nsw-on-renewables/>

Renewable energy could render five of Australia's remaining coal plants unviable by 2025

A new report says five of Australia's 16 coal power plants could close by 2025.

It's due to the sheer amount of new renewables entering the grid.

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2021/feb/24/renewable-energy-could-render-five-of-australias-remaining-coal-plants-unviable-by-2025>

Our 'tree-change' and 'sea-change' dreams are under threat as scientists warn about building homes in 'risky areas'

Covid has caused a rush of people leaving cities for tree and sea changes.

But is it resulting in greater risk from climate impacts?

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2021-02-24/tree-change-dream-over-resilient-communities-rebuild/13163800>

Haines proposes \$483m Local Power Agency to help communities buy in to wind and solar

Federal Independent MP, Jill Haines, has introduced a bill calling for a \$483 million Local Power Agency to help community energy.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/haines-proposes-483m-local-power-agency-to-help-communities-buy-in-to-wind-and-solar/>

Farmers in Western Australia's south-west corner are adapting to a life with less water

The south-west of WA has experienced one of the biggest drops in rainfall in the world.

How are locals adapting?

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-02-22/farmers-in-australias-southwest-adapting-to-less-water/13168666>

Australia risks being left behind in petrol-fuelled 'parallel world' as other countries embrace electric cars

Auto industry experts say Australia risks being left behind as the world shifts to EVs.

It comes as more manufacturers announce phase-outs of internal combustion engines.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/feb/19/australia-risks-being-left-behind-in-petrol-fuelled-parallel-world-as-other-countries-embrace-electric-cars>

WA Labor promises 1,000 stand-alone solar, battery and hydrogen microgrids

You can tell there's an election on in Western Australia.

Both parties have launched ambitious energy plans with renewables and storage at the centre.

<https://onestepoffthegrid.com.au/labor-promises-1000-stand-alone-solar-battery-and-hydrogen-microgrids/>

Victoria creates new body to modernise grid for wind and solar transition

Victoria has established a new body, VigGrid, to oversee the transition to renewables.

It comes as the grid faces increasing pressure from new renewables projects.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/victoria-creates-new-body-to-modernise-grid-for-wind-and-solar-transition/>

Electric Vehicle Technology Pulls In To Maryborough

The Victorian Government has started installing fast chargers for EVs in the central region of the state.

It's a result of the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance's Charging the Regions report.

<https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/electric-vehicle-technology-pulls-maryborough>

'Everyone else does it, so I can too': how the false consensus effect drives environmental damage

Going to more sustainable behaviours faces the problem of the 'false consensus'.

That is, what are the effects of social norms?

<https://theconversation.com/everyone-else-does-it-so-i-can-too-how-the-false-consensus-effect-drives-environmental-damage-153305>

COMMUNITY SKILLS FOR CLIMATE ACTION - A COMMUNITY TRAINING PROGRAM

The Cities of Yarra, Darebin and Moreland are offering a new program to support people to work together to take effective action on climate change.

<https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/news/2021/02/11/community-skills-for-climate-action>

How to Avoid a Climate Disaster by Bill Gates; The New Climate War by Michael E Mann – review

Two new books on climate change offer contrasting views on what to do.

Bill Gates argues for new technology; Michael Mann says we already have what we need.

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/feb/14/how-to-avoid-a-climate-disaster-by-bill-gates-the-new-climate-war-by-michael-e-mann-review>

How a seaweed supplement can eliminate most emissions from cows and sheep

A new seaweed supplement has the potential to dramatically reduce livestock methane emissions.

It's now being fast-tracked for production.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/how-a-seaweed-supplement-can-eliminate-most-emissions-from-cows-and-sheep-2/>

“Go hard, go early:” Clean energy groups say W.A. target should be 700 pct renewables

The Clean Energy Council has encouraged both parties in WA to go hard on building renewables.

Meanwhile, the state's Conservation Council wants a target of 700% renewables.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/go-hard-go-early-clean-energy-groups-say-w-a-target-should-be-700-pct-renewables/>

Future water plans must factor in climate change

The future management of Australia's water resources must factor in climate change.

That's according to a new report from the Productivity Commission.

<https://www.governmentnews.com.au/future-water-plans-must-factor-in-climate-change/>

New Tesla community battery trial will allow solar homes to bank their stored energy

Tesla is trialling a community battery for 600 households in the south-west of WA.

It's the third and largest community storage trial in the state.

<https://onestepoffthegrid.com.au/new-tesla-community-battery-trial-will-allow-solar-homes-to-bank-their-stored-energy/>

Big-emitting Australian businesses could soon face costly carbon levy in Europe

Australian exporters could face a \$70 per tonne carbon tariff in Europe.

The proposal has been endorsed by the European Parliament's environment committee.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/feb/11/big-emitting-australian-businesses-could-soon-face-costly-carbon-levy-in-europe>

Australia's first solar panel recycling facility to be established in Adelaide

Australia's first solar panel recycling facility is to be established in Adelaide.

To start with, the facility will be able to process up to 70,000 panels per annum.

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/australias-first-solar-panel-recycling-facility-to-be-established-in-adelaide/>

Electricity networks gear up to manage electric vehicle demands on the grid

ARENA is funding a trial of 176 households to test the impact of EV charging on the network.

The trial involves distributors in Victoria, Tasmania and the ACT.

<https://arena.gov.au/news/electricity-networks-gear-up-to-manage-electric-vehicle-demands-on-the-grid/>