

From the President

Hi EnvA members and supporters!

It's our birthday! EnvA has now been in operation for a year 🎉.

We recently held our first EnvA annual general meeting which was really enjoyable and engaging.

I send my sincere thanks to Maryanne Smith outstanding support of EnvA from the very beginning and we all look forward to your active involvement despite standing down from the management committee.

I also welcome our new management committee member, Cassie Inglis, and look forward to engaging your energy and ideas as EnvA continues to grow!

At the risk of sounding repetitive, the EnvA campaign space never slows down! Coral and Tilly are running at full steam (driven by renewables not fossil fuels!), in progressing our major campaigns and keeping up with all the side-campaigns at the same time.

The two big standouts for me:

- The near finalisation of the research report on the impacts of coal mines on koalas, and
- Our legal challenge in relation to the approval of Blue Energy's coal seam gas project.

You can read more detail about these EnvA campaigns in this newsletter!

Thanks for your support.

James York
President



Blue Energy coal seam gas - EnvA goes to court!

EnvA-CQ is taking on our first legal challenge in our fight against fossil fuels!

With the expert legal team from the Environmental Defenders Office, EnvA is challenging the Queensland government's decision to approve Blue Energy's coal seam gas proposal in the Land Court.



EnvA has been frustrated with the Queensland government's poor assessment of many coal and gas applications over the last few years. Blue Energy's coal seam gas application is a classic example of poor assessment.

Blue Energy was given an environmental approval despite significant failings in its application.

We believe that the groundwater modelling was inadequate and there was not enough information to determine the real impacts on local landholders that rely on bore water, or the nationally significant Lake Elphinstone wetland (pictured above).

To add to this, Blue Energy applied for an approval over three separate areas, but only did a wildlife survey over one of the areas – the one with the least vegetation cover. We suspect that these areas will be home to many threatened species such as koalas, greater gliders and squatter pigeons.

"Coal and gas projects are industries of the past, not the future!"

You can find out more and keep updated on this campaign on our [Blue Energy](https://www.blueenergy.com.au) webpage.

Can you help?

We need your support to make this case a huge success. Please chip in to help fund expert legal support and help us overturn this shonky approval.

DONATE HERE!



Should gas be the future industry in the Bowen Basin?

Do we need more gas?

This is the fundamental question that government must address before gas companies are given approval to clear and fragment habitat, pollute our water, destroy agricultural land and contribute to more emissions to accelerate climate change.

Earlier this year, [AEMO](#) warned that gas will be in short supply along the east coast within the next five years, but [energy experts](#) challenged the concept that there is a gas shortage problem in Australia and warned that

“Opening new gas is not the answer. We have to cut ties with gas by developing greater renewable capacity and more storage in the system, and electrifying our homes and businesses.

That will cut greenhouse emissions and save Australians money on their bills too.”



Andrew Stock
Climate Councillor &
Energy expert

“Australia does not have a gas shortage problem. In fact, 80% of Australia’s gas is exported or used by the gas industry itself.

It’s preposterous to consider expanding gas when the bulk of it is being sent abroad.

More gas will have disastrous climate consequences, and will continue to expose Australians to the volatile energy prices we’ve experienced over the last two years.”

Dr Carl Tidemann
Senior Researcher
Climate Council



We need to start the transition to renewable energy now

To their credit, Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory and the City of Sydney are taking steps to transition away from fossil fuels and embrace the move to renewable energy. All have recently banned gas connections for new housing developments and government buildings.

Given Victoria is currently Australia's leading gas consumer, it is a courageous and welcome step. Our two biggest Australian cities are moving away from gas. This will result in reduced demand for domestic gas and limit the argument that we need more gas to supply the east coast market.

EnvA is calling on the Queensland government to recognise that our environment, our land and our waters are what makes our State such a desirable tourism destination. We need to stop the land clearing and climate impacts of new and expanding fossil fuel projects to stop.

Short term royalties will never cover the loss of long term tourism and the recovery from climate related weather event disasters.

We also call on the federal government to listen to the science and take real action to reduce emissions, save our threatened species, and help prevent the extra costs we all face when heating climate causes more extreme fire, floods, heatwaves and droughts.

“I don’t believe in a gas-led recovery ...I’ve used the term ‘bulls*’ publicly, it’s always been a fraud.**

Nor do I believe you can just turn away from gas immediately.”

Chris Bowen,
Minister for Climate Change and Energy



Koalas not coal campaign



EnvA continues to be concerned that nearly every new coal and gas proposal we review comes with impacts on our region’s endangered species.

Koalas, greater gliders, ornamental snakes and squatter pigeons are far too often recognised as species that will be impacted by new and expanding coal mines.

We chose to focus our campaign on koalas as an iconic species loved by all – even our politicians!

Koalas are struggling to survive in Queensland and were listed as an endangered species late last year.

Habitat clearing and climate impacts are two of the biggest threats to our Central Queensland koala populations – both of which are exacerbated by coal mining.

We have a draft of the research report on the impacts that coal mines have had on koalas, and advice on how best to argue our campaign. Now we await the final report so that we can back-up our advocacy with science.

More information about our ‘koalas not coal’ campaign and the research project is available on our [koala campaign webpage](#).

Please have a look at our short video clip which covers why we continue our work to stop new and expanding fossil fuels in Central Queensland (click the image below).



Bushfire survivors for climate action

For many of us in Central Queensland, we remember the extreme bushfires of 2019 and the catastrophic bushfires of 2020. Across Australia, there have been devastating bushfires that have impacted on so many people in the last few years.

Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action is a collective of people that have experienced this first-hand or have seen the impacts that extreme fires have on their communities.

“We lost our homes and our communities to bushfires. We are working hard to rebuild, and we want the rest of Australia to do the same. A zero-emission future will reduce the risk and the cost of future disasters.”

EnvA fully supports the advocacy and legal challenges that Bushfire Survivors are taking, and hence we are supporting their request to promote their petition which asks the Australian government to pause fossil fuel projects until our legislation is amended to address climate impacts.

Add your name to the Bushfire Survivors for Climate Action’s petition and help pause fossil fuel projects.

Climate change is making bushfires more frequent and more deadly. More homes and families are under threat than ever before.

Australia needs to reduce its carbon pollution to help reduce the risk and cost of future fires.



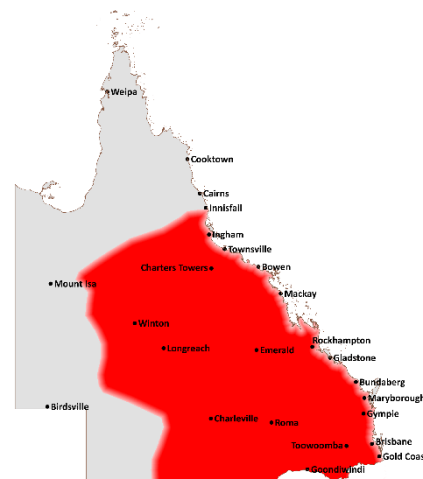
Short-term climate outlook for Central QLD

Spring Bushfire Outlook 2023

As the El Niño weather pattern brings higher temperatures and reduced rainfall, the Spring 2023 Seasonal Bushfire Outlook anticipates elevated fire risks across two-thirds of QLD.

Central Queensland has experienced above average rainfall over the past three years relieving some regions of drought.

However, this has also stimulated vegetation growth which is predicted to dry out in the upcoming months, increasing fuel loads and raising the danger of bushfires this Spring.



We have already had “catastrophic” bushfires in Central Queensland this spring.

Early this month, a bushfire burnt through 3,600ha of land south of Dingo and then another 1,000 ha of land and the stockyards at Belmont Research Station were destroyed in a grassfire at Etna Creek.



The Etna Creek fire, 14 September 2023 (photo credit Cassie Inglis)

On 17 September, another fire near Emerald resulted in a call for residents to ‘leave now’ as a fast-moving fire was approaching.

Firefighting aircraft were used to help the ground-crews to contain the fire.

The bushfire threat is likely to persist until March next year unless summer rainfall is higher than expected.

Get prepared!

A well-prepared home is easier to defend. There are [many things you can](#) do to prepare for the fire season, here are four simple steps with links for more information from Queensland Fire and Emergency Services:

DISCUSS

What will you do if a bushfire threatens your home?

Leaving early is the safest choice.
Staying and defending requires good preparation.
Having a bushfire survival plan is important regardless of whether you decide to leave or stay.
Don't leave the planning until you see the flames!

PREPARE

There are simple things you can do around your house to prepare it to survive a bushfire.

A well prepared home is easier to defend and reduces the risk to your neighbours.
Clean roof gutters, trim trees and shrubs, mow the lawn, remove flammable materials from around the house are some of the simple things you can do.
Having a water supply and a hose that can reach around your house on hand is also a great idea.

KNOW

Know the bushfire alert levels

EMERGENCY WARNING:
You're in danger and need to take life-saving action immediately.
WATCH AND ACT:
There is a heightened level of threat and conditions are changing. Act now to protect yourself and your family.
ADVICE:
There is no immediate danger but you need to stay informed in case the situation changes.

KEEP

Keep bushfire contact numbers and web links handy on your phone

LIFE THREATENING: CALL 000
FIRECOM: call 1800 670 476
WARNINGS AND UPDATES: www.qfes.qld.gov.au

Our committee

These are the amazing group of people that now lead EnvA's direction and actions:

- ★ James York – President
- ★ Coral Rowston – Secretary
- ★ Maggie Inglis – Treasurer
- ★ Matilda Widdowson – member
- ★ Tom Sjolund – member
- ★ Cassie Inglis – member



Get involved

Here is how you can help EnvA and the environment:

- ★ **Become a member:** It is free and numbers count! You'll also be included in all our member newsletters and get invitation to all our general meetings and events. Click [here](#) for our online membership application.
- ★ **Volunteer:** Whatever your skills, we would love to have you onboard! Many hands make light work! Join and put your hand up to help [here](#).
- ★ **Like and follow us on social media:** You can find our page [here](#). It will keep you up to date on what's happening at EnvA and local news related to climate change and government decisions.
- ★ **Donate:** Any donations will really help keep EnvA alive and active! Options for donating are on our website [here](#).
- ★ **Come along to our meetings and events:** As a member, you will be provided direct invitations. We also advertise these on our [social media page](#) and [web site](#).

Make a difference

AGM outcomes

Thank you to all those members who came along to EnvA's inaugural AGM!

EnvA has made remarkable strides in its first year, and these accomplishments wouldn't have been possible without the support of our amazing EnvA community.

Over the next twelve months, EnvA will continue to fight fossil fuel projects in Central Queensland with the guidance of our dedicated committee and the amazing support of our members.

We recognise the important and unique role EnvA plays in the climate activism scene and will continue to work hard advocating for a safe future for our environment and our communities.

