

# APSA Environmental Politics and Policy Workshop: Transforming Australia's resource and energy governance

## Final report



Climate and  
Sustainability  
Policy Research  
Group

## APSA Environmental Politics and Policy Workshop: Transforming Australia's resource and energy governance

Convenors:

- Associate Professor Cassandra Star, Climate and Sustainability Policy Research Group, Flinders University
- Dr Jonathan Pickering, Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance, University of Canberra
- Dr Rebecca Pearse, Sydney Environment Institute, The University of Sydney (now at ANU)

The poster features a composite image of three wind turbines in the foreground and a power plant with cooling towers in the background, all set against a dark, night-time sky. The text is overlaid on this image.

**Flinders University Victoria Square**  
**September 26-27 2019**

# **Transforming Australia's resource and energy governance**

**A workshop convened by: Cassandra Star, Jonathan Pickering and Rebecca Pearse**  
**Hosted by: the Climate and Sustainability Policy Research Group and Democratic Futures research theme, Flinders University**  
**Funded by: the Australian Political Studies Association**

**APSA** Australian Political Studies Association  
**Flinders UNIVERSITY**

## Workshop overview

The Transforming Australia's resource and energy governance workshop brought together leading researchers, policymakers and activists to present and discuss research addressing the past, present and future of environmental governance in Australia.

There are unprecedented challenges to Australia's systems of resource and energy governance. As environmental change intensifies, affecting multiple aspects of Australia's economy and society, clear-sighted analysis of possibilities for transforming environmental governance is needed. Prospects for transformation depend on addressing major political and policy barriers, including high degrees of party polarisation on climate change, and complex federal–state relationships on transboundary environmental systems such as the Murray–Darling Basin. These barriers in turn raise important questions for research, including what theories and methods are suited to explaining stasis and change in these areas, and what modes of governance are capable of bringing about democratically legitimate and just transformations.

The workshop, held at Flinders University's Victoria Square campus on 26–27 September 2019, addressed these issues through the presentation of 12 original research papers and generative discussion on the issues raised and directions for further research and policymaking.

The research generated and papers developed continue to inform and influence debate on resource and energy governance through publications, including articles in *Climate Policy* and *Energy Research and Social Science*, and through ongoing collaboration among workshop participants.

See full program attached.



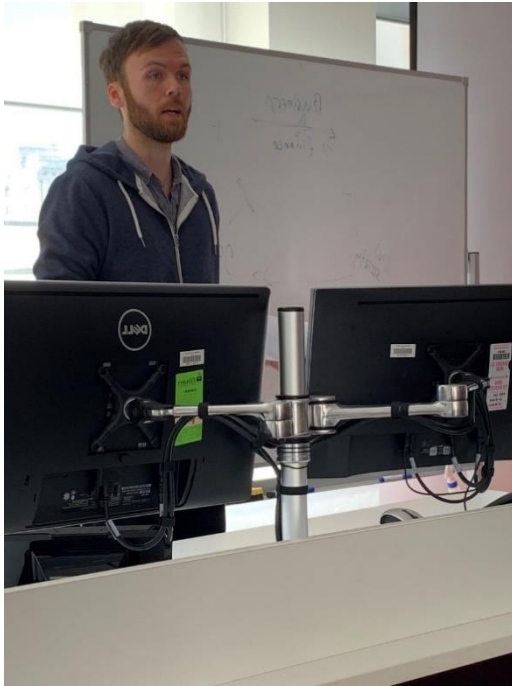
## Workshop highlights



Rebecca Pearse on how we might move towards decommodifying coal and keeping it in the ground



Hedda Ransan-Cooper on community-based and large-scale generation of electricity and the political dynamics of each as part of energy transition



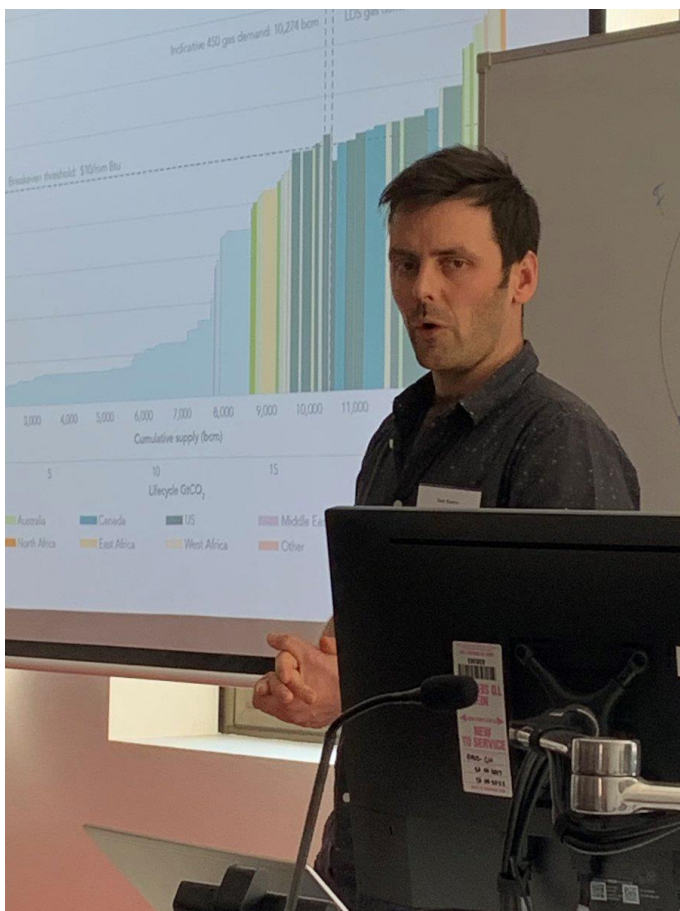
Josh Holloway discussing energy democratisation and how it is distinct from energy justice, in response to papers by Hedda Ransan-Cooper and Stuart Rosewarne



Roger Davis addressing the role of Indigenous water values and knowledges in deliberation on the Murray–Darling Basin



Lively panel discussion with Mark Beeson, Jonathan Pickering, Rebecca Colvin and Peter Tangney



Tom Swann from The Australia Institute on approaches for measuring companies' alignment with the Paris Agreement.



Giorel Curran on a just transition, 'in its own right and also as a strategy'



Vlado Vivoda discussing the challenges of mine closure





Rebecca Colvin exploring the effects of the 'us versus them' coverage of the Adani Convoy



Identifying next steps for future research and collaboration



## Attendees

Twenty-four people participated in the *Transforming Australia's resource and energy governance* workshop. Of these, six were APSA members; four were early career researchers.

### List of participants

Name	Institution	Role
Dr Cassandra Star *	Flinders University	Convenor, discussant, panel chair
Dr Jonathan Pickering *	University of Canberra	Convenor, discussant, panel chair
Dr Rebecca Pearse +	The University of Sydney	Convenor, presenter, discussant
Dr Cobi Calyx	Flinders University	Panel chair
Professor Mark Beeson	University of Western Australia	Presenter
Dr Rebecca Colvin	The Australian National University	Presenter
Dr Peter Tangney +*	Flinders University	Discussant
Dr Vlado Vivoda	The University of Queensland	Presenter
George Woods	Lock the Gate	Presenter
Dr Beverley Clarke	Flinders University	Discussant
Dr Giorel Curran	Griffith University	Presenter
Tom Swann	The Australia Institute	Presenter
Dr Susan Park *	The University of Sydney	Presenter, discussant

Dr Stuart Rosewarne	The University of Sydney	Presenter
Dr Hedda Ransan-Cooper	The Australian National University	Presenter
Dr Josh Holloway +*	Flinders University	Discussant
Roger Davis	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and Canberra University	Presenter
Dr Darren Sinclair	The University of Canberra	Presenter
Dr Joshua Newman *	Flinders University	Panel chair
Birgitte Sorenson	Department for Environment and Water, Government of South Australia	Participant
Laura James	Flinders University	Participant
Ros Wong	Flinders University	Participant
Heather Smith	University of South Australia	Participant
Dr Claire Nettle +	Flinders University	Participant

\* APSA member

+ early career researcher

## Publications arising

We had originally planned a journal symposium as an outcome from this workshop. However, the diversity of the final papers presented was better suited to a range of publication outlets. Participants in the workshop have gone on to publish further developed versions of their papers since the workshop in a range of outlets, as below.

- **Colvin, R.** (2020). Social identity in the energy transition: An analysis of the "Stop Adani Convoy" to explore social-political conflict in Australia. *Energy Research and Social Science*, 66, Article 101492. doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2020.101492
- **Curran, G.** (2020). Divestment, energy incumbency and the global political economy of energy transition: The case of Adani's Carmichael mine in Australia. *Climate Policy*, 20(8), 949–962. doi:10.1080/14693062.2020.1756731
- Goodman, J., Connor, L., Ghosh, D., Kohli, K., Marshall, J. P., Menon, M., Mueller, K., Morton, T., **Pearse, R.**, & **Rosewarne, S.** (2020). *Beyond the coal rush: A turning point for global energy and climate policy?* Cambridge University Press.
- Kung, A., Everingham, J., & **Vivoda, V.** (2020). *Social aspects of mine closure: governance and regulation*. Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining. The University of Queensland: Brisbane.
- Nelson, R., **Sinclair, D.**, O'Donnell, E., & Holley, C. (2020). *South central urban water market trial: review and foundations*. Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.
- **Ransan-Cooper, H.**, Lovell, H., Watson, P., Harwood, A., & Hann, V. (2020). Frustration, confusion and excitement: Mixed emotional responses to new household solar-battery systems in Australia. *Energy Research and Social Science*, 70, Article 101656. doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2020.101656
- **Star, C.** (2020). Re-making the future: Transition movements and dismantling the environment-economy dichotomy. In G. Wood & K Baker (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Managing Fossil Fuels and Energy Transitions* (pp 505–527). Palgrave.



## Budget statement

Item	Description	Proposed budget	Actual expenditure from APSA funding	Actual expenditure from other sources
Travel	Domestic flights for 12 workshop participants	\$7954	\$7094.22	
Accommodation	Hotel accommodation for 12 workshop participants	\$4640	\$4077.39	
	Venue hire			\$1400
Catering	Lunches and morning and afternoon teas	\$1083	\$1529.51	
	Conference dinner			\$697
Administrative support	Support for travel booking, event planning and during workshop	\$1033	2307.85	
Printing and administrative costs		\$280	\$40.90	
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$14990</b>	<b>\$15049.86</b>	<b>\$2097</b>



# Transforming Australia's resource and energy governance

Flinders University, Adelaide, 26–27 September 2019

A workshop organised by the Australian Political Studies Association (APSA) Environmental Politics and Policy Standing Research Group

Co-convenors: Cassandra Star (Flinders University), Rebecca Pearse (University of Sydney) and Jonathan Pickering (University of Canberra)

## Workshop program



Australian Political  
Studies Association



**Flinders**  
UNIVERSITY

College of Business,  
Government & Law



## Traditional owners

We acknowledge the Kurna people, the traditional owners of the lands and waters where the city of Adelaide has been built.

Flinders University was established on the lands of the Kurna Nation with the main Flinders campus located near Warriparinga. Warriparinga is a significant site in the complex and multi-layered Dreaming of ancestral being Tjilbruke. For the Kurna Nation, Tjilbruke was a keeper of the fire and a peace maker/ law maker. Tjilbruke continues to be part of the living culture and traditions of the Kurna people. His spirit lives in the land and waters, in the Kurna people and in the glossy ibis (known as Tjilbruke for the Kurna). Through Tjilbruke the Kurna continue their creative relationship with their country, its spirituality and its stories.

Flinders University's city presence at Victoria Square/ Tarndanyangga is located at an important meeting place for Indigenous people past and present. The area, a former campsite for the 'Dundagunya tribe' serves today as the focal point for many political and community-based Indigenous events that draw people from all over. Tarndanyangga is also the site at which the Aboriginal flag flies permanently in Adelaide. The name 'Tarndanyangga' derives from the Kurna words tarnda 'red kangaroo' and kanya 'rock'.

Flinders University recognises the unique position of all Indigenous Australians as First Nations people, and aims to provide all our students and staff with an understanding of and respect for traditional and contemporary Indigenous cultures.

Flinders University is also committed to closing the gap in Indigenous education and health outcomes, respecting and recognising Indigenous perspectives, facilitating participation rates of Indigenous peoples, and significantly increasing the numbers of Indigenous students and staff.

# General workshop information

## Emergency contacts

Flinders Victoria Square Security: 0427 611 106 or press the Security speed dial button on an internal phone.

For urgent workshop-related matters, contact Cassandra Star [Cassandra.Star@Flinders.edu.au](mailto:Cassandra.Star@Flinders.edu.au)  
0434 887 998

## Venue information

The workshop is being held at Flinders University's Victoria Square campus in the centre of Adelaide.

It is located at 182 Victoria Square, Adelaide SA 5000.

Information about Flinders University's Victoria Square campus is available at [www.flinders.edu.au/victoriasquare/](http://www.flinders.edu.au/victoriasquare/)



## Registration and name tags

Registration will open at 8:45am. The workshop will be held on the second floor of Flinders Victoria Square in room 2.3. There will be digital signage in the reception area and on level 2.

Please proceed to level 2 to register and collect your name tag in room 2.3.

## Wi-fi

Free wi-fi is available. Please select Flinders Conference from wi-fi settings, follow the prompts to enter the access code **fancymask12** and click accept. Eduroam is also available on site.

## Accommodation

Participants travelling to the workshop will be staying at the Ibis Hotel, 122 Grenfell Street Adelaide. This is a 650 metre walk from the workshop venue.

## Transport

For information about parking and transport please see <https://www.flinders.edu.au/campus/victoria-square/parking-transport>

Public transport Information is available at [AdelaideMetro.com.au](http://AdelaideMetro.com.au)

## Conference catering

The workshop will be catered by The Foodprint Experience, a local business with a mission to demonstrate how food choices can have positive impacts on the environment and the future of our community.

Vegetarians will be well catered for. If you have any additional food needs, please contact Claire Nettle at [Claire.Nettle@Flinders.edu.au](mailto:Claire.Nettle@Flinders.edu.au) before the workshop.

Tea and coffee will be provided. **Please bring your reusable cup and water bottle.**

## Workshop dinner

The conference dinner on Thursday evening from 6.30pm will be at Concubine, 132 Gouger St, Adelaide. Concubine is a modern Chinese restaurant that showcases fresh local produce. There will be a set, shared menu with vegetarians well catered for. Entree and mains are included; you may purchase drinks and desserts if you wish. Concubine is a 12 minute walk from the conference venue and a 20 minute walk from the accommodation. Several buses run between the Ibis hotel and the restaurant.



# Schedule

## Day 1: Thursday 26 September

### **9.10–9.30am: Welcome**

Cassandra Star, Jonathan Pickering and Rebecca Pearse.

### **9.30–11am: Session 1: Political contestation and energy transition**

Mark Beeson (University of Western Australia): If not Australia, then where? Populism, leadership and environmental reform.

Rebecca Colvin (Australian National University): Getting out of the trenches to enable and sustain the energy transition in Australia: Illustrating the role of social identity via analysis of the 'Stop Adani Convoy'

Chair: Jonathan Pickering (University of Canberra)

Discussant: Peter Tangney (Flinders University)

### **11.00am–11:30am Morning tea**

### **11.30am–1.00pm Session 2: Mining fossil fuels**

Vlado Vivoda (University of Queensland): Regulating the social aspects of mine closure in three Australian states.

George Woods (Lock the Gate): Coal comfort: tackling the politics and practicalities of change in Australia's largest thermal coal region.

Chair: Beverley Clarke (Flinders University)

Discussant: Cassandra Star (Flinders University)

### **1.00–2.00pm Lunch**

### **2.00–3.30pm Session 3: Coal contestation and energy transition**

Giorel Curran (Griffith University): Coal contestation and energy transition: Strategies of divestment and just transition in Adani's Carmichael mine in Australia.

Tom Swann (The Australia Institute): Normative principles for shareholder engagement with fossil fuel companies.

Chair: Cassandra Star (Flinders University)

Discussant: Rebecca Pearse (The University of Sydney)

**3.30–4.00pm**

**Afternoon tea**

**4.00pm–5.30pm**

**Session 4: Rethinking energy regulation**

Susan Park (University of Sydney): Governing the 'dark side' or renewable energy: The politics of global displacement

Rebecca Pearse (The University of Sydney): Wrong places for new coal? Contradictions and possibilities for re-regulating the coal commodity.

Chair: Cobi Calyx (Flinders University)

Discussant: Jonathan Pickering (Canberra University)

**6.30pm**

**Dinner**

## Day 2: Friday 27 September

**9.30am–11am**

### **Session 5: Democratising renewable energy**

Stuart Rosewarne (University of Sydney): Contested futures: Renewable energy and the empowerment of households and communities?

Hedda Ransan-Cooper (Australian National University): Local energy storage as potential sites of energy democratisation? Current tensions and opportunities.

Chair: Rebecca Pearse (The University of Sydney)

Discussant: Josh Holloway (Flinders University)

**11.00am–11.30am**

### **Morning tea**

**11.30am–1.00pm**

### **Session 6: Water governance**

Roger Davis (University of Canberra): Transforming cultural flows in the Murray-Darling Basin? Indigenous water policy in a deliberative system.

Darren Sinclair (University of Canberra): The rise and fall of non-urban water regulation: The curious case of the NSW Office of Water.

Chair: Joshua Newman (Flinders University)

Discussant: Susan Park (The University of Sydney)

**1.00pm–2.00pm**

### **Lunch**

**2.00pm –3.00pm**

### **Session 7: Workshop wrap up and future publications**

Chairs: Cassandra Star, Jonathan Pickering and Rebecca Pearse (Co-convenors)

**3.00–3.30pm**

### **Afternoon tea**

**3.30–3:45pm**

### **Workshop wrap up and future publications**

## Abstracts and biographies

### Mark Beeson (University of Western Australia)

#### **If not Australia, then where? Populism, leadership and environmental reform**

The emergence of groups such as Extinction Rebellion suggest that we may have reached a tipping point in public consciousness and political mobilisation. Remarkably rapidly, new actors have injected urgency into demands for action as the evidence about human-induced climate change becomes increasingly evident and incontrovertible. The question now is whether such pressure from 'below' can actually change the behaviour of vested economic interests and political elites who seem incapable of long-term thinking and policy innovation. This paper argues that if such an attitudinal transformation is not possible on the part of leaders in Australia, it may not be possible anywhere: few other countries have either the state capacity with which to act, or the incentives to respond to a challenge that is likely to affect this continent as badly as any other. There are some hopeful signs, but there are also some formidable obstacles, which suggest change will be difficult – especially in the forbidding timeframe available for meaningful and effective reform. If change can be achieved, however, Australia could provide an unlikely but much needed leadership role internationally.

Mark Beeson is Professor of International Politics at the University of Western Australia. Before joining UWA, he taught at Murdoch, Griffith, Queensland, York (UK) and Birmingham, where he was also head of department. He is the founding editor of *Critical Studies of the Asia Pacific*. His latest books are *Rethinking Global Governance* (Palgrave, 2019), and *Environmental Populism: The Politics of Survival in the Anthropocene*, (Palgrave, 2019).

### Rebecca Colvin (Australian National University)

#### **Getting out of the trenches to enable and sustain the energy transition in Australia**

The energy transition underway in Australia draws together a confluence of interests and agendas, bringing with them their attendant political, ideological, and identity groups. We can point at those who agitate to see the urgent cessation of fossil fuelled power across the country, just as we can point at those who have committed to maintaining the resource industry economic status quo. We choose our side, build a narrative about our enemy, and throw stones from our trench. These familiar dynamics are characteristic of social conflict between combatant identity groups. In such a case, large 'social distance' grows between the groups and they dig deeper into their trenches. From here, between the groups we see polarisation, mistrust, stereotyping, and dehumanisation. Within the groups we see extremism, confirmatory selection of facts, experts, and truths, and conformity to norms of attitudes, behaviour, and discourse. Comfortably, we can describe this situation as 'dysfunctional', and it is not uncommon in cases of energy and land use change. But, dysfunctional social conflict is bad for social harmony and wellbeing and often leads to suboptimal environmental outcomes too. The Social Identity Approach – a family of theoretical perspectives from social psychology – offers promise for helping us to understand the dynamics of dysfunctional social conflicts. Importantly, it also offers insights for alleviating them. This is critical if we are to enable and sustain the energy transition in Australia.

Dr Bec Colvin is a social scientist with the Resources, Environment & Development Group in the Crawford School of Public Policy at the Australian National University. Bec's research interest is in how groups of people interact with each other - especially in settings of social and political conflict - with regard to climate and environmental issues. Much of this work has a focus on the dynamics of formalised processes for

including citizens and stakeholders in decision-making, and leverages on perspectives from social psychology, especially social identity, to understand the complexities of people and process.

## Giorel Curran (Griffith University)

### **Coal contestation and energy transition: Strategies of Divestment and Just Transition in Adani's Carmichael mine in Australia**

Divestment plays a central role in the decarbonisation project. There is good reason for this: the de-financing of fossil fuels is critical to decarbonisation. The first part of the paper traces the important role that divestment strategies play in shaping coal contestation, and the criticality of enrolling financial actors to the climate cause. The paper then argues that the complex politics of energy transition also mean that divestment strategy goes so far. While significant progress has been made, the financialisation of fossil fuels continues apace, raising significant concerns about the capacity to reduce emissions quickly enough to avert catastrophic climate change. The enrolment of another key set of actors is hence also critical. These are the energy transition's 'losers' – workers, usually in regional locations, whose jobs and livelihoods are threatened by the coal sector's structural decline. Responding to the needs of these workers requires the further expansion of the 'just transition' strategy that attends to these challenges. Addressing the inequitable impacts of energy transition is of course important in its own right. But the expansion of just transition planning is also central to countering the divisive 'environment versus jobs' narrative that opponents of energy transition utilise to retard change. Using the Carmichael mine project in central Queensland as its illustrative case, the paper argues that a more direct coupling of just transition and divestment strategies advances the decarbonisation effort.

Dr Giorel Curran is Director, Learning and Teaching and a senior lecturer in the School of Government and International Relations at Griffith University. Her current research focuses on environmental politics and policy and the theorising of new social and political movements, areas in which she publishes widely. Her most recent book is *Sustainability and Energy Politics: Ecological Modernisation and Corporate Social Responsibility* (2015, Palgrave).

## Roger Davis (University of Canberra)

### **Transforming cultural flows in the Murray-Darling Basin? Indigenous water policy in a deliberative system**

One of the hardest challenges in water policy in the Murray-Darling Basin is how to represent marginalised Indigenous voices in a competitive and majoritarian system, where there is little to stop them being ignored by more powerful and numerous interests. The only hope Indigenous peoples can have a lasting effect on water policy is if decisions are based not only on the counting of votes but also on the sharing of reasons.

Using a deliberative democracy framework, I show how the Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations (MLDRIN) and Northern Basin Aboriginal Nations (NBAN) have been successful in getting Indigenous water values, described as 'cultural flows' recognised in the water policy system. This 'sharing of reasons' by these Indigenous deliberative forums highlights their democratic contribution to water policy and helps explain their ability to amplify Indigenous water narratives and counter majoritarian settler state water narratives. I use the development of the Basin Plan (2012) and the National Cultural Flows Research Project (2018) as case studies to ground deliberative theory in water policy practice and suggest implications for Indigenous policy making.

Roger Davis is an environmental planner and lawyer who has worked closely with First Nations peoples across Australia to progress their interests in environmental planning and policy for twenty years. He is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Deliberative Democracy and Global Governance at the University of Canberra. His topic, Re-thinking Indigenous Environment Policy, uses a deliberative democracy lens to focus on the underlying barriers and enablers influencing Indigenous environment policy making.

## Susan Park (University of Sydney)

### **Governing the 'dark side' or renewable energy: The politics of global displacement**

Renewable energy is considered one of the best means of bringing global emissions within the 1.5 degrees limit for sustainable life on Earth. While this is an imperative technical response to climate change, the true cost of renewables needs further investigation. Specifically, the extent of carbon, rare earth minerals, and other resources used to produce renewable energy remains hidden. This paper has two aims. First, it seeks to map the inputs required to make renewable energy, including the environmental, social, and economic costs of producing and utilizing them. Doing so highlights the elements required to produce and use renewable energy. Second, the paper explores the transnational governance arrangements and accountability mechanisms that have been established by state, private, and non-state actors in terms of their ability to reconcile the social and environmental costs of renewables. We identify what governance exists of the displacement effects of the renewable energy transition in terms of the supply chain of three renewable technologies: onshore wind, solar photovoltaics (PV), and lithium-ion batteries technology. The paper seeks to transcend the technocratic paradigm and scholarship driving contemporary demand for renewables, arguing that despite the imperative for renewable energy, the transition to renewables must internalize their true environmental and social costs

Susan Park is an Associate Professor in International Relations at the University of Sydney. She focuses on how state and non-state actors use formal and informal influence to make the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and global governance greener and more accountable. Her new book is *International Organisations and Global Problems: Theories and Explanations* (Cambridge University Press, 2018). Susan has co-edited special editions and books including *Global Environmental Governance and the Accountability Trap* (2019, MIT Press with Teresa Kramarz).

## Rebecca Pearse (University of Sydney)

### **Wrong places for new coal? Contradictions and possibilities for re-regulating the coal commodity**

This paper explores the dilemmas and contradictions underlying debates about no go zones for the coal commodity. The project-by-project logic of environmental and planning approvals for major new coal and gas mines has been roundly critiqued as a failed system of governance that favours extractive developmentalism over human and non-human flourishing and sustainability. Communities and environmentalists seeking to ring fence areas of rural socio-ecological life as out of bounds for the coal commodity have contested this. Their strategies reveal coordinated state reforms are necessary to de-commodify subterranean fossil fuel deposits. I seek to extend this critique by first going backward— to the property relations underpinning extractivism in Australia. I then move forward – to what might end the losing fight against project-by-project fossil fuel mine approvals. Any reform agenda to end the disastrous logic of project-by-project approvals will need to reckon with the settler capitalist system of landed



property. This critique of the political economy of extractivism will be put into conversation with the ongoing campaigns for a new generation of environmental law and regulation in Australia.

Beck Pearce is a lecturer in the Department of Political Economy at the University of Sydney. She has research interests across in environmental political economy, social movement studies, feminist political economy, labour studies and the sociology of knowledge. Rebecca's work has been published in Australian and international journals including *Sociological Review*, *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change*, *Environmental Politics*, *Energy Policy* and *Feminist Economics*. She has co-authored a book with Stuart Rosewarne and James Goodman called *Climate Action Upsurge: An Ethnography of Climate Movement Politics* (Routledge, 2014), and co-authored the latest revision of Raewyn Connell's *Gender: in World Perspective* (3rd edition Polity 2015). Rebecca's book *Carbon Pricing in Australia: Contestation, the State and Market Failure* was published by Earthscan Routledge in 2018.

## Hedda Ransan-Coooper (Australian National University)

### **Local energy storage as potential sites of energy democratisation? Current tensions and opportunities**

Community energy models in which communities drive and own renewable energy infrastructure, while vibrant in many ways, have not been able to make in-roads at scale in Australia, for a variety of reasons. Recently there has been interest from industry about the opportunity for the development of local storage that benefits electricity users and also ensures network stability. This paper explores the perspectives of industry players, including community energy groups, networks and retailers on the key tensions and opportunities for developing local energy storage business models. I argue that local energy systems could become a key site of contestation in a changing electricity system whose specific technological changes (e.g. digitisation and optimisation) too often elides active political debate due to its technological complexity (among other issues). Whereas many aspects of a changing grid are highly technical and inaccessible to the majority of electricity users, storage technologies that must in some way involve electricity users, provides the opportunity for debate over what matters to people in their electricity system. Such models provide an entirely different paradigm for electricity provision and the distribution of its costs and benefits. While Networks are obvious instigators of these models, they remain hampered to do so for a variety of reasons, while assumptions about how 'engaged' people want to be in their energy underlies responses to various models of local energy storage. I'll explore the narratives and framings of different actors in the energy system as a way to uncover perceptions on two different models for how people may be involved in local energy storage: community investment models and customer bill linked models of energy storage.

Dr Ransan-Cooper is a research fellow at the Battery and Storage Grid Integration Program at the Australian National University. She is interested in the social aspects of the transformations underway in the electricity system. She has previously worked on the Bruny Island Battery trial as well as undertaken research on the politics of coal seam gas exploration in north-west NSW.

## Stuart Rosewarne

### **Contested futures: Renewable energy and the empowerment of households and communities?**

Until recently, energy production and distribution in Australia has, since the privatisation of state-owned power utilities and, been dominated by three global energy corporations. Technological developments, and

particularly advances in photovoltaic solar panels and wind turbines, battery storage and the digitisation of power management, are enabling changes in the scale of energy production and distribution such that it is now within the reach of households and communities to intervene in remaking the energy-intensive economy. This has ignited debate across the political spectrum, from libertarians through to eco-socialists, on the potential for household and community empowerment through becoming more energy self-sufficient, reducing energy costs and contributing directly to the decarbonisation of the economy. But the potential for empowerment is contingent on the forms of governance that emerge, and how these reflect and enable the different political and material logics and engender changes in social relations that can drive the decarbonising transition. In considering the liberating potentials of the new energy technologies and the character of their adoption, this study explores the contested nature of the take-up and how households, communities and energy corporations and the state seek to define energy governance arrangements to affect the construction and the resilience of empowerment.

Stuart is Honorary Associate Professor in the Department of Political Economy at The University of Sydney, having led the development of teaching programs across the spectrum of environmental and ecological economics, socialist ecology, ecofeminism and social ecology. His research interests have focused on the political economy of climate change and socialist ecology.

## Darren Sinclair (University of Canberra)

### **The rise and fall of non-urban water regulation: The curious case of the NSW Office of Water**

Over the last two decades, Australia's approach to non-urban water management has undergone major reforms. At its core is a hybrid system of governance involving 'top down' governmental regulation (hierarchy), water trading and pricing (markets), and water planning developed with stakeholder cooperation (collaborative governance). A now sizeable literature has examined this hybrid system, particularly the effectiveness and operation of markets; and, to a lesser extent, collaborative planning. However, very little attention has been given to the third and fundamental pillar of reform: the implementation and enforcement of regulation. In this regard, this presentation will address the experiences of the NSW Office of Water as the key regulator in ensuring that effective implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Plan (MDBP) in NSW. The MDBP is widely viewed as being a transformational approach to water governance that placed Australia at the forefront of international trends in the sustainable management of water resources. In recent years, however, the 'gloss has begun to wear off', and critics of the MDBP have become more vocal, to the extent that some have even called for its abolition. A major shortcoming of the MDBP that has impeded its policy potential is woefully inadequate approaches to compliance and enforcement 'on the ground'. The NSW Office of Water is illustrative of this experience, and the lessons learned here should be used to inform future, more effective approaches to water governance in non-urban settings.

Darren Sinclair is an Associate Professor at the Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis, University of Canberra. He has published widely in the areas of environmental regulation and governance. His current focus is on the relationships between markets, compliance, technology and participatory governance, in the context of non-urban water use. He is the recipient of an ARC DECRA and ARC Discovery, with research partners at UNSW, the University of Arizona and the French Geological Survey. He has been working in the multi-disciplinary area of heavy metal emissions, particularly mercury, from coal fired power stations and is co-convenor of the Mercury Australia Research Network. He also has an interest in prudential regulation and climate change.

## Tom Swann (The Australia Institute)

### **Normative principles for shareholder engagement with fossil fuel companies**

As social movements target fossil fuel investments, discourse within and about shareholder advocacy on climate change is shifting from disclosure to normative considerations. This study considers shareholder governance towards climate change mitigation by analysing documents from investor and academic literature setting out expectations on climate change. It outlines recent developments, including new interest in assessing impacts of mitigation scenarios, and methods for assessing company compliance with those scenarios, including from investor groups. It considers challenges from the complexity of the investor governance regime, highlights divergences and gaps in the literature, and responds to problems with standard alignment proposals by highlighting a cost-based method that is continuous with business, financial and social movement perspectives.

Tom Swann is the DivestInvest Australia Lead and senior researcher at The Australia Institute, a Canberra-based policy think tank. He completed the Master of Climate Change at the ANU.

## Vlado Vivoda (University of Queensland)

### **Regulating the social aspects of mine closure in three Australian states**

The absence of legal criteria to support the responsible closure of large-scale mines is a significant global issue. Mine closure regulation primarily focuses on the physical aspects of mining, with limited attention paid to social aspects of mine closure. This paper examines the extent to which regulatory instruments across three major Australian mining jurisdictions – New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia – include provisions that require proponents to consider the social aspects of mine closure. We found that regulatory frameworks broadly cover social aspects, but often without explicit text in legislation or policy guidelines. We also found that regulators rely on front-end approval processes to account for and mitigate the social impacts of mining and that, following approval, regulators rely on stakeholder engagement, rather than also requiring evidence-based analysis and impact management. In the absence of restrictive regulatory elements in the latter stages of the project life cycle, we conclude that mining companies are relatively unhindered, free to enter into indefinite care and maintenance mode, or divest their assets. The current approach allows the costs of mine closure to sit ‘outside’ the life of mine planning processes.

Dr Vlado Vivoda is Research Fellow at the Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, Sustainable Minerals Institute, at the University of Queensland. Prior to moving to UQ, Vlado held research positions at the University of South Australia and Griffith University. He holds a B.A. (Honours) from the National University of Singapore, and an M.A. (International Relations) from the Australian National University. In 2008, he completed his Ph.D. in International Relations at Flinders University. The focus of Vlado’s research is on policy and international political economy of energy and minerals. He has an extensive publication record on a wide range of salient issues in the extractive industries, which includes two single-authored books, 12 book chapters, 26 peer-reviewed journal articles and numerous technical reports.

## George Woods

### **Coal comfort: tackling the politics and practicalities of change in Australia's largest thermal coal region**

The Hunter region is a pivot point for Australia's contested energy politics. Home to the world's largest coal export port and the country's biggest thermal coal producing region, the Hunter Valley faces enormous challenges over the next twenty years as power stations close and markets for thermal coal exports decline. To fulfil the Paris Agreement on climate change, not only will many jobs in the coal mining and export industry cease to exist, but whole regions will lose their economic structures and this will disproportionately affect the Hunter Valley where up to 40% of people are employed in the coal mining and export industry. The literature shows that early preparation and public consensus are crucial prerequisites for coal mining communities to avoid the legacy of unemployment and disadvantage that usually follows mining decline, but the perversities of Australian climate change politics are suppressing that conversation. The grassroots Hunter Renewal project is building the case for diversification from inside the heart of a region that encapsulates the converging challenges of climate change, coal and politics in Australia. I introduce the challenges and successes of the project's work, and how the climate 'debate' has left the Hunter hanging.

George Woods is an activist and environmentalist from Muloobinba, Newcastle, in Awabakal country. She has been an environmental and climate advocate and activist for over fifteen years and has worked variously in paid unpaid roles ranging from direct action confrontation and community outreach with the grassroots collective Rising Tide to lobbying Ministers and coordinating Australian advocacy at the international climate negotiations for Climate Action Network. She is currently NSW Coordinator for Lock the Gate Alliance.

## Panel chairs and discussants

### Panel chairs

Chairs will start panels on time wherever possible. They will introduce people briefly by their names and institutional affiliations and allow presenters to introduce their papers themselves.

Presenters will speak in the order given in the program unless otherwise negotiated.

There will be 20 minutes allocated to each paper. Panel chairs will keep speakers to time, offering a subtle warning when they are close to the end of their time and letting speakers know when their time is over.

After each of the papers has been presented and the discussant has offered a response, the chair will invite questions and comments from the audience. The chair may also ask questions of the presenters. The chair will keep the focus on the issues under consideration and may redirect people from any tangents.

Sessions will finish on time. Any discussion can be continued over the breaks.

### Discussants

Discussants will speak for 8 to 10 minutes after all of the papers in a session have been presented. They will focus on the papers' contributions to the field and to society, and highlight complementarities, resonances and divergences among them. Discussants will also offer constructive critique, focusing on where papers might be strengthened in preparation for journal submission. Discussants may also stimulate conversation among the audience by posing questions for discussion.