

ENVIRONMENTALLY SPEAKING

Autumn 2008: Environmental News from Botany Bay Explorers www.laperouse.info
SOCIAL CHANGE NOT CLIMATE CHANGE

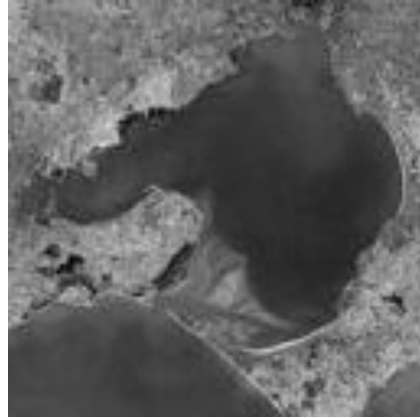
THE SMART COUNTRY???

Destroying Assets we hold in trust for Future Generations

The NSW government dredges Botany Bay to compete with Victoria



The Victorian Government dredges Port Phillip Bay to compete with NSW



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At www.bluwedges.org a "Sydney Doctor warns of Health Risks of Yarra River Dredging".... "Doctors warn us again about toxic dump" .."Unlicensed hazardous waste disposal in Bay".... "Economic Case under Scrutiny at last.."..."Fishermen Prefer Caution" . These items all relate to the dredging of Port Phillip Bay. Port Phillip Bay will undergo about 2.5 times the amount of dredging and trenching that will occur in Botany Bay. But at only 1/25th the size of Port Phillip Bay the relative impact on Botany Bay of the Port Expansion, Desalination pipes, and Energy Australia cables will be 10 times the impact of what is occurring in Port Phillip Bay.

Both developments are predicated on assumptions that the best way forward for Australians is **competition at any cost** and that **all growth is good growth**.¹ In NSW that not only means competing with other states but also pitting region against region. Newcastle Port Corporation² and Port Kembla Corporation were also in the running for container port expansion but their respective claims were overridden by Sydney Ports Corporation. It matters nothing that business in northern NSW might be

¹ Sydney recently (18/3/08) hosted a conference called "Growth is Good" with the NSW Coordinator General, David Richmond, as one of the keynote speakers. In his role Professor Richmond oversees the building of major infrastructure such as the Port Botany Expansion, Kurnell Desalination Plant and pipelines and the Botany Bay Energy Australia Cable.

² Under the NSW Ports Growth Plan when Port Botany reaches its capacity at 3.2million TEUS then container trade above that moves to Newcastle. The expansion was approved by Minister Sartor for a cap of 3.2million TEUS but in the IPART terms of reference the figure shifted to 3.9million and though pointed out to IPART has remained 'uncorrected'. Both Chris Corrigan (Patrick) and Tim Blood (P&O) stated at the Commission of Inquiry that the current footprint could accommodate more than 4million TEUs. The expansion is about 'enticing' a 3rd stevedore and building capacity to around 7million TEUs to compete with Port Melbourne.

better serviced by Newcastle or even Port Brisbane. And while \$billions will be needed to build infrastructure to achieve anywhere near the 40% of containers onto rail from Port Botany³, vital rail lines supporting our grain exporters have been closed in NSW and the government does nothing to support the proposed inland rail freight line through Parkes.

As First Mate John Doyle would say many times to Captain Tim Flannery when commenting on the plight of the Murray-Darling in *Two Men in a Tinnie* – "You can't trust the States.." Exactly, only the Federal Government through legislation and persuasion can change the dysfunctional approach to major assets and infrastructure planning in this Nation. They have been talking about this so let's hope the action follows:

³ A doubling of rail's share of container movements to and from Port Botany was identified as a major feature of the port expansion package and Laurie Brereton's "Railing Port Botany Containers" report was about achieving this. Read the final IPART report released same day as "Growth is Good" conference, 18/3/08 www.ipart.nsw.gov.au

March 26 2008: Council of Australian Governments

COAG agreed that a more nationally-coordinated approach to further infrastructure reform is critical to enhance Australia's future economic performance and raise national productivity. As a critical first step, COAG agreed that the immediate priorities for Infrastructure Australia over the next 12 months were the completion of the National Infrastructure Audit by end 2008, the development of an Infrastructure Priority List for COAG consideration in March 2009 and the development of best practice guidelines of Public Private Partnerships for COAG's consideration by October 2008. (More COAG information at www.coag.gov.au)

CLIMATE CHANGE WHAT EMPLOYEES THINK

A report by STW Group subtitled '**Climate change and its implications for business and brands**', based on a survey of 1,000 people and series of focus groups, found 86% would think more highly of their employer if they were "addressing the climate change issue".⁴

WALKING COASTAL SYDNEY

A dedicated band of walking volunteers led by Bill Orme and Bill Avery have completed the last section of the Sydney Coastal Walk - Barrenjoey to Cronulla. Maps and information about the various sections can be downloaded from www.walkingcoastalsydney.com.au and collected from outlets such as the Laperouse Museum.



Local walkers on the Rainforest Walk through Botany Bay National Park 15 December 2007. Next walk to celebrate the botanical and heritage features of the La Perouse headland will be held 4 May 2008 to coincide with the annual Cook celebrations in Botany Bay.

GARNAUT REVIEW⁵

Has this to say about Freight Emissions:

3.1.2 Freight emissions

Several commentators raised concerns at the Forum in Perth that greenhouse gas emissions from freight have attracted relatively little attention, despite their rapid growth. Australia's total road freight is forecast to double between 2000 and 2020. (Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics 2006). Trucks and light commercial vehicles account for 31 per cent of Australia's transport emissions, and emissions from these modes are projected to increase by 112 per cent between 1990 and 2020, outpacing the growth in emissions from passenger vehicles. Diesel rail is a smaller source of emissions than trucks.

MEASURING THE GROCERY ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

The Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) and Woolworths recently announced a joint study to examine ways of measuring the climate change impact of food, beverage and grocery products. Michael Luscombe, CEO Woolworths: "We realize that the emissions associated with our supply chain are also important ..." Dick Wells, AFGC: "We have been monitoring developments in the UK on carbon footprinting and food miles..." In August last year Michael Luscombe was reported in The Australian Business, saying that the **Inland Rail(Brisbane-Parkes-Melbourne) should be a TOP PRIORITY for the country's future.**

⁴ WME magazine February 2008, p.22

⁵ Garnaut Review on Transport, Planning and Built Environment released March 11,2008 with submissions due by April 18,2008 see www.garnautreview.org for details.

IF YOU LOVE THE EARTH STAY ON IT

Jet aircraft not only emit carbon from vast quantities of kerosene fuel, they also do it at high altitudes, where it has a much greater warming effect than it would in the lower atmosphere. In addition, jets emit other greenhouse gases, including nitrous oxide and water vapour. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates the net effect of all these emissions from jet aircraft at 2.7 times the carbon consumed in the fuel. **The IPCC global target for 2050 to avoid the worst effects of climate change is 700kg CO2 equivalent per person per year. Return flight London-New York 1700 kg CO2 per person.**⁶

International Arrivals worldwide⁷

Year	1970	1980	1990	2000	2020
No. in millions	160	285	425	690	Est. 1600

Aviation in Australia is a rapidly growing source of emissions in both freight and passenger transport. While domestic aviation only accounts for 6 per cent of Australia's transport emissions, domestic aviation emissions are projected to increase by 198 per cent between 1990 and 2020.⁸

QUARANTINE – OUR BIOSECURITY – Celebrating 100 years⁹ PORT BOTANY

Pollination services, provided by honeybee populations were estimated to be worth \$1.7 billion to the 35 most important honeybee dependent crops in 1999-2000. Some of the honeybees threats are already in Australia but the most threatening is still out there – Varroa destructor, the Varroa mite. Asian bees are carriers and pests in their own right so if they or another carrier, the European honeybee, manage to enter Australia the impact on horticulture and agriculture in this country could be devastating. Experts suggest that the Varroa mite's entry could be facilitated by a shipping container.



The work of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) is critical at Port Botany. Defending Australia against the Varroa mite is just one example.

⁶ See *New Internationalist* March 2008

⁷ UN World Tourism Organization

⁸ Garnaut Review on Transport, Planning and Built Environment

⁹ 2008 marks 100 years since the introduction of the 1908 Quarantine Act.

EARTH HOUR 2008 PORT BOTANY Business as Usual



If politicians were serious about emissions they would question the unsustainable growth of Port Botany containers not allocate \$billions to provide more port and allied infrastructure. With imports increasing at more than 10 times the rate of exports the greater benefit of the additional infrastructure will accrue to imports in some cases at the expense of locally produced goods. Local goods are more likely to be lower in embedded carbon¹⁰.

2008 –Year of the frog



Litoria peronii Peron's Tree Frog

Peron's Tree Frog ranges in size from 45 to 70mm and is common around South Ward suburbs. The eggs are pigmented in jelly. The tadpoles are pale golden-yellow to iridescent green. Adults have bright yellow with black mottling on armpits, groin, and backs of thighs. They have a cross-shaped pupil and small (sometimes indistinct) emerald green flecks on the back. They can also change colour in a short time. Males call from near water either on the ground or in vegetation. The call is very long and drawn out, slowly pulsed and increasing in loudness - "cra-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ahhk". Peron's Tree Frog is named after Francois Peron, one of 5 zoologists on the Baudin expedition (1801-1803). Baudin called into Sydney on the voyage and while here bought a new ship made from casurina wood.

The following comes from: www.amphibianark.org Frogs and other amphibians are dying. After thriving for over 360 million years, one-third to one-half of the world's 6,000 known amphibian species could become extinct in our lifetime. This would be the single greatest mass extinction since the disappearance of the dinosaurs. The urgent danger is chytrid fungus, but other

¹⁰ Embedded carbon includes the kilometers taken to freight goods or components as well as the carbon used in production.

causes include habitat loss, pollution and pesticides, and climate change. Amphibians have long been referred to as the 'canaries in the coal mine'. They are among the first species to be affected by environmental stresses. When they show decline in the wild, it serves as a warning to other species, including humans. Amphibians are a critical part of a healthy, natural world. In addition to their intrinsic value as a beautiful part of nature, they offer many benefits to us. They play an important role in the food web as both predator and prey, maintaining the delicate balance of nature. They eat pest insects, benefiting successful agriculture around the world and minimising the spread of diseases, including malaria. The skin of amphibians contains substances that offer possible medical cures for a variety of human diseases. Amphibians are at risk due to human activities and it's up to humankind to save them. If we do nothing, they will disappear forever. We must act now. Zoos, aquariums, and conservation organisations around the world have designated 2008 as The Year of the frog to raise awareness of the issue.

Water consumption in the mining sector grew by 29% in the five years to 2004/5, while total national use fell 14% due to urban restrictions and rural drought.¹¹

ORICA

The Groundwater Treatment and Southlands Projects now appear on the new Orica website: www.oricabotanytransformation.com Everyone is encouraged to attend community consultation meetings and tours. All Community Consultation is open, unlike Sydney Ports and some other government forums, and even if you cannot attend meetings your views can be communicated at meetings by emailing or sending written comments. Major items of interest include: Carpark Waste – Orica is applying to the EPA Board for an exemption to allow a higher level for Mercury emissions. HCB Waste – This is being repackaged and awaiting the outcome of an appeal to the German Government to allow shipment to Germany. It could take all of 2008. Water Recycling – Orica is successfully selling water which has been processed through the Groundwater Treatment Plant and a second Water Forum is to be held this year. Groundwater – a forum to discuss the impact of the Sydney Ports dredging is to be held. Southlands – this is arguably the most contentious of the Transformation Projects given the alternatives that could be considered. Sydney Harbour residents are seeing former industrial lands turned into parklands (some even purchased by Government) while the plan for Southlands is to raise the level above the floodprone height and then hardstand for warehousing. Southlands is the first line of containment for contaminated groundwater as well as containing a cocktail of contaminants dumped over years from the paper mills, Bunnerong Power Station, and others. With the Port's footprint being expanded to increase container

throughput fourfold, the airport to double, and other industrials in the area expanding it is time someone called for a retention of open-space – a mini forest to offset the massive carbon footprint that dominates.

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA 2008



Staff from National Parks and volunteers from Kingsford Smith Scouts, Little Bay Cubs, Fishcare, Streamwatch, Kooloora and the La Perouse Precinct Committee at work on Little Congwong Beach.

COMING EVENTS

5-20 April National Trust Heritage Festival details at www.nsw.nationaltrust.org.au/events/festival

20 April(Sunday) Bare Island and Laperouse Museum Open Day

22nd April Dive for Earth Day Project Aware www.projectaware.org

4 May (Sunday), In the footsteps of Joseph Banks: A Walk around Congwong Bay to the Laperouse Monuments: Meet 8am at the Snake Pit, Cann Park.

12th - 18th May, National Volunteer Week, www.volunteeringaustralia.org

13th May, Community Consultation Committee for HCB waste Orica 5-8pm Botany Town Hall

22nd May, The International Day for Biodiversity, www.cbd.int

5th June, World Environment Day, www.unep.org/wed/2008/english/

8th June, World Ocean Day, www.theoceanproject.org/wod/

17th June, Community Consultation Committee for Groundwater Orica 1-4pm Botany Town Hall
20 June (Friday) Winter Solstice

Lynda Newnam March 2008

¹¹ WME magazine February 2008, p.6