



**Nillumbik
Climate
Action
Team**

Newsletter April 2026

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1. Climate Cafe 2026

At last Thursday's Climate Cafe we heard from **Kelly Albion** from [350 Australia](#). Kelly talked to us about the [Make Big Polluters Pay](#) campaign. She described what this campaign could

look like for Nillumbik, and how we can engage our local council to advocate for a **Climate Compensation Fund** funded by a **Climate Pollution Levy** on big polluters. The campaign adopts a **polluter pays approach**, based on the principle that if you make a mess, you should clean it up. Local councils are often in the front line of mopping up following climate disasters



such as fires and floods, while the big polluters who are responsible for the disasters pay very little tax.

A **summary of Kelly's presentation** can be found [here](#).

NCAT is looking for volunteers who would like to help out with this campaign, which will start with a petition and a community survey. **If you are interested in becoming involved in this campaign in Nillumbik, please contact Mitzi Tuke at tukemitzi@gmail.com to be added to the campaign mailing list.** You will then be contacted with further details of how you can support this campaign in your local community.

Our April climate cafe will be on the topic of [Sustainable House Day](#), and will be presented by Melinda Miles from [Clean Energy Nillumbik](#). Sustainable House Day, to be held on **17 May 2026**, invites Australians into real houses to see what sustainability looks like in practice.

The program until June **2026** is as follows:

April 30: Sustainable House Day - Melinda Miles, Clean Energy Nillumbik

May 28: Innovative Housing - Teresa Dominik, Brougham St Co-housing Devt.

June 25: Planetary Justice - Dr Rachel Busbridge, Environmental Sociologist

Where: Platform 3095 Cafe, 965 Main Rd, Eltham

When: 7:30pm last Thursday of the month February to November

As always, you are welcome to join us earlier for a meal from 6:00pm onwards if you can, or come at 7:30pm for the speaker event.

nillumbikclimateactionteam.org/ncat-climate-cafe/

2. March for the Forests

NCAT members Mitzi Tuke and Elizabeth Doig at the March for the Forests on 22 March. Photo: Karena Goldfinch

It was a spectacular turnout for the forests recently at the **March for the Forests** in Naarm, Melbourne. Native forests are at threat across Australia from logging, thinning and unscientific fire management practices. The nationwide event, organised by **The Bob Brown Foundation**, saw thousands around Australia marching in towns and cities to



demand an urgent end to native forest logging. The protection of native forests is vital for climate, wildlife and our shared future.

Speakers included Curtin University Adjunct Associate Professor and fire behaviour scientist **Dr Phil Zylstra**, and Kinglake Friends of the Forest forest campaigner **Rosemary Storey**. Dr Zylstra quoted Khalil Gibran, 'Trees are poems the earth writes upon the sky.' He referred to outdated and non-evidence-based forest practices such as so-called '**hazard-reduction' burning**, the repeated use of which was causing forests to become more flammable. He stressed the need to allow forests to reduce fire risk naturally by permitting them to grow to maturity. Rosemary outlined the many government environmental services that have **suffered funding cuts** recently, demonstrating the government's **failure to prioritise protection and conservation**, and putting forests at ever greater risk of degradation and destruction.

3. Closing the logging loopholes

The Wilderness Society (TWS) is currently spearheading a campaign, in conjunction with other environment and climate groups, to ensure that Victoria's forests are **permanently protected from damaging logging and other extractive activities**.

While native forest logging in many parts of Victoria officially ended on 1 January 2024, the **legislation currently does not reflect this change**. This means that a government in the future could restart industrial logging of native forests.

As part of this coordinated campaign, NCAT is currently in the process of setting up a meeting with state Eltham MP, **Vicki Ward**, to discuss with her the necessity to close the logging loopholes in Victorian legislation. A new **Public Land Act** is currently being drafted, so this is a good opportunity to urge the Victorian government to fully protect Victoria's forests through legislation.

The campaign is seeking commitments from the Victorian government to:

1. Permanently Protect All State Forests
2. Exclude Extraction from Healthy Forest Plans
3. Close Legislative Loopholes
4. Review Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMV)
5. Repeal Redundant Pulpwood Agreement
6. Close the Private Land Logging Loophole.

In short, we are advocating for **permanent legislative protection for Victoria's state forests** that will prevent industrial logging from ever returning, ensure ecological oversight of forest management, and close private land logging loopholes.

Click [here](#) to sign the letter to your local MP to **close logging loopholes** and permanently protect Victoria's state forests.

4. Some more actions for the forests



An endangered greater glider. Photo: Justin Calley

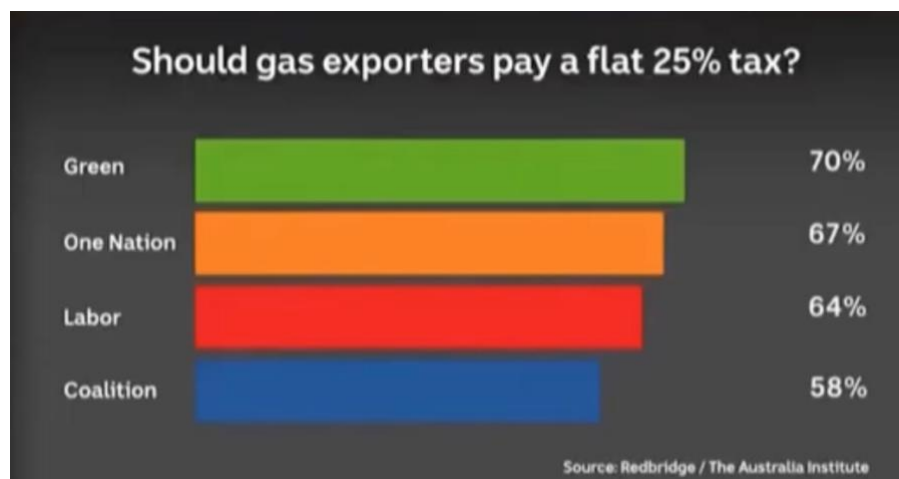
In addition to signing the letter to your state MP to close logging loopholes (see 3. above), Kinglake Friends of the Forest are urging people to send in a submission to the state [Inquiry into Victoria's 2026 Summer Fires](#), due on 19 April 2026.

This inquiry is a major opportunity to put lived experience, evidence and real solutions on the public record.

Please take this opportunity to offer calm, evidence-based responses to this important inquiry, to help break through the strident voices that will call for more planned burns and more 'fuel breaks' through already struggling forests.

KFF have prepared some useful submission guidelines which can be found [here](#). Click [here](#) to read an article, [Fire in the Bully](#), which describes an insidious, macho, anti-national parks culture that is threatening forests and forest campaigners alike. If you can't access the article because of the paywall, enter your email address (you can get one article a month).

5. Taxation could be the answer!



There are a number of campaigns and initiatives ramping up at the moment on the topic of **taxation** as a means to shift the dial towards **greater climate and living standards justice**. Pressure is building to call the big fossil fuel corporations, tech-bros and billionaires to account for their role in environmental and climate catastrophes, and humanitarian inequities.

And this movement is not just confined to Australia. Globally, **just twelve billionaires hold more wealth than half of humanity combined**—and they're using it to undermine democracy. California is at present debating a first-of-its-kind wealth tax that could finally rein in billionaires. If it passes there, it will set a precedent for the entire world.

1. The War Profits/Gas Exports Tax call-out is a cross-movement call (ACF, ACTU, ACROSS, CANA, Australia Institute, Oxfam) for the Albanese government to implement a **25% tax on gas export revenue** as multinational corporations bank massive profits driven by global instability and war. This tax could be immediately directed to providing cost-of-living relief and long-term energy security for Australian households and businesses. Importantly in these divisive times, it has cross-party support in the community (see graph above).

Click [here](#) to send a letter to Anthony Albanese calling for a 25% tax to end big gas greed. Also [here](#) to sign an Australia Institute petition to support a 25% tax on all Australian gas exports.

2. We recently heard from Kelly Albion about the [Make Big Polluters Pay](#) campaign (see 1. Climate Cafe above) calling for the creation of a **Climate Compensation Fund** financed by levying big fossil fuel corporations to pay for the climate damage they are contributing to through their emissions. This tax will target **coal, oil and gas** corporations, and is expected to raise **\$47 billion a year**.

NCAT is throwing its weight behind this campaign, which will begin by seeking community support via a **petition** and **community survey**. This campaign, by emphasising **cost of living and fairness issues over climate**, has a chance to reach a wide spectrum of the community, and we are looking for help from our supporters to reach as many people in the community as we can.

If you are interested in becoming involved in this campaign in Nillumbik, please contact Mitzi Tuke at tukemitzi@gmail.com to be added to the campaign mailing list. You will then be contacted with further details of how you can support this campaign in your local community.

In the meantime, please click [here](#) to sign the petition to make big polluters pay for their climate damage.

For anyone who is confused about the difference between these two very similar-sounding campaigns, Google AI has this to say:

"The **25% tax on gas export revenues** and the **Make Big Polluters Pay campaign** are distinct yet complementary initiatives aimed at increasing the financial obligations of fossil fuel companies in Australia. The primary difference is that the 25% tax is a **specific economic policy proposal** aimed at revenue collection, while the Make Big Polluters Pay campaign is a **broader advocacy campaign** focused on climate justice and accountability for environmental damage."

3. With a state election on the way, a **Tax Wealth not Work** campaign has been launched to build on the work of economist [Gary Stevenson](#) (AKA 'the people's economist'). This campaign hopes to tackle the interwoven crises of rising wealth disparity, ecological collapse and resurgent far-right politics. They plan to do this through calling for a tax on wealth, not income, i.e wealth accumulated through financial assets, immovable property and financial transactions. A campaign that **targets billionaires and not salaried workers**.

Click [here](#) to view the campaign launch webinar.

Click [here](#) to sign up for campaign updates and to become involved.

Help **keep the momentum going** on these important campaigns!

6. How local councils can champion the fossil fuel treaty

NCAT's Mitzi Tuke recently organised a **Climate Action Network Australia (CANA)** Brown Bag Lunch to provide information to CANA members on how climate groups can advocate to their local councils to pass a motion of support for the **Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty** (FFNPT). The treaty aims to provide a global roadmap for the **just transition to phase out fossil fuels**. This BBL session was proposed following the **successful endorsement of the motion to support a FFNPT by Nillumbik Council in 2025**.

A range of speakers spoke about their respective experiences with the Treaty initiative. **Michael Poland**, Campaign Director of the FFNPT, set the Treaty initiative in the global context and outlined its campaign trajectory in the lead-up to the **Santa Marta Conference** on transitioning away from fossil fuels, to be held in Columbia in April 2026. **Mitzi Tuke** laid out the steps that she and Nillumbik Climate Action Team took in approaching Nillumbik Council to make a case for a motion of support for a FFNPT. **Cr Kate McKay**, Deputy Mayor of Nillumbik Council, who took on the task of garnering support within the council prior to moving the motion, shared first-hand insights into how decisions are made inside council, and how she successfully secured endorsement.

This example of successful endorsement of support for the FFNPT at a local council level provides inspiration for other climate and environment groups to **attempt similar advocacy to their own councils**. In the case of Nillumbik, while the goal of the motion (to support a just transition to the global phase-out of fossil fuels) aligned with the stated objectives of Nillumbik

Council's 10 year **Climate Action Plan**, nevertheless a successful outcome was by no means assured.

Resources were made available to other interested groups to kickstart their own campaign.

7. Webinar: Rights of Rivers and an update from the Birrarung (Yarra) River



In this webinar that was recorded at the [Australian Earth Laws Alliance 2023 Rights of Nature Symposium](#), **Erin O'Donnell** from the **Birrarung Council** talks about the ground-breaking [Yarra River Protection Act](#) that recognises the Birrarung (Yarra) as the only river in Australian settler state law to be declared a **single living and integrated entity**. In Woiwurrung, the name of this act translates to 'Keep the Birrarung Alive'. She notes the imperative voice of this title - it is a **call to action** to everyone who lives along this river and to all who love it to keep it alive.

The 50 year vision for the river is broken down into ten year strategic plans - the title of the first ten year strategic plan translates to **'What is good for the river, is good for us all'**. She points out that this is not a trade-off between the environment and the economy - **it is a reminder that if you care for the river you will care for the people.**

Click [here](#) to view the recording of the webinar.

8. 100% renewable electricity for Nillumbik Councils

As of 1 January 2026, Nillumbik Council is now using **100% renewable energy** for all electricity used at sites they own and operate.

This cuts approximately 35% of emissions and is a huge step towards achieving their **target of net-zero emissions by 2030**.

This is also part of a wider collaboration of 51 Victorian councils to cut emissions, in a project called the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO).

To help further reduce Council and community emissions, over the next six months (as part of the [Climate Action Plan](#)) they will be: supporting tenanted sites to switch to green electricity; replacing the gas pool heating at the Diamond Creek Outdoor Pool with efficient electric heat pumps over the winter closure period; replacing Nillumbik's remaining mercury vapour streetlights with LEDs; and running lots of energy efficiency and renewable energy community workshops, including free 1:1 advice sessions!

This article is reprinted from the March [Nillumbik Environment and Sustainability newsletter](#).

9. Leisure centre ready for clean energy future

Eltham Leisure Centre is taking a major step towards a **cleaner, more energy efficient future**.

Thanks to a \$2.5 million grant from the Federal Government's Community Energy Upgrades Fund, matched by Council, the centre **will soon replace its ageing gas boilers with modern electric heat pumps**.

This upgrade will deliver big benefits for our community by:

- **cutting carbon emissions by 33 per cent** (around 631 tonnes every year)
- enabling the centre to run on **100 per cent renewable energy**
- **reducing long term heating costs**, helping keep the facility affordable and sustainable for the future.

With Eltham Leisure Centre Nillumbik's **most used facility and highest energy user**, this transition marks a major milestone in Council's climate action efforts.

Reprinted from [Nillumbik News Autumn 2026](#)

10. Quote of the Month

“Even a wounded world is feeding us. Even a wounded world holds us, giving us moments of wonder and joy. I choose joy over despair. Not because I have my head in the sand, but because joy is what the earth gives me daily and I must return the gift.”

— Robin Wall Kimmerer, [Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants](#)

11. Pulling water from...air?



'What if you could pull water out of thin air? Thanks to an invention from Omar Yaghi, a U.C. Berkeley chemistry professor and Nobel laureate, this may soon be viable and affordable at scale.

Yaghi has founded a company called Atoco, which is developing **a new kind of Atmospheric Water Generator**. This generator is the size of a 20 foot shipping container and uses [reticular materials](#)—ultra-porous structures that **act like high-tech sponges**—to capture invisible moisture from the air and release it as clean water. Powered by sunlight alone, these generators could **produce up to 1,000 liters of fresh water a day**, even in areas impacted by drought or natural disaster – and Atoco is also developing a form of carbon capture using the same materials.

Affordable, scalable water generators could prove invaluable in a warming world. A U.N. report published in January minced no words about the precarious position billions find themselves in when it comes to water: “The planet has entered **the Global Water Bankruptcy era**,” the report stated plainly. “Nearly three-quarters of the world’s population lives in countries classified as **water-insecure or critically water insecure**. Around 2.2 billion people still lack safely managed drinking water, 3.5 billion lack safely managed sanitation, and about 4 billion experience severe water scarcity for at least one month a year.” For reference, that number represents **half the people on the planet.**’

This excerpt is reprinted from Katharine Hayhoe's **Talking Climate** blog. Click [here](#) to read the full article.

12. Breakneck speed: Summer of climate whiplash

The [Climate Council](#) has released [a new report](#) analysing our most recent summer and **extreme weather impacts**.

The findings show **record global levels of coal, oil and gas pollution are overtaking natural climate drivers like El Niño and La Niña**, accelerating the “climate whiplash” phenomenon that flings communities rapidly from one kind of disaster to the next.

The **Otways in Victoria** epitomised the 2025/26 summer of breakneck climate whiplash. Some residents of Wye River on Victoria’s Great Ocean Road evacuated under **catastrophic fire danger warnings**. A week later, the same community watched floodwaters carry cars out to sea after **record-breaking rainfall**.

Click [here](#) to read the full report.

13. Can democracy be reclaimed?

"We live in an **era of democratic decay**. The symptoms are everywhere: politicians trading slogans while the planet burns, parliaments that debate the trivial and avoid the transformative, institutions that exist to ensure accountability yet lack the power to deliver it. **The gap between the democratic promise and the democratic reality has become a chasm** — and people know it.

In Australia, **the evidence is damning**. The **approaching climate catastrophe has evoked little more than palliatives**. The country's **stark and growing wealth divide** has been met with studied silence. The failure of the Voice referendum and the unresolved, urgent work of reconciliation with the First Nations — Treaty, Truth Telling, the full weight of the Uluru Statement — have been swept aside. And the decision to commit this nation to the \$368 billion AUKUS alliance was made without a full parliamentary debate, let alone a moment of genuine public consultation.

Institutions designed to protect integrity, transparency and accountability in government are, all too often, paralysed. Freedom of information provisions are riddled with exclusions. Whistleblowers are prosecuted rather than protected. Lawyer **Bernard Collaery** endured years of legal torment for helping expose the fact that Australia had bugged East Timor's government offices to gain commercial advantage over one of the poorest nations on earth. **Julian Assange** spent years in limbo for performing what any genuine democracy should consider a

public service: holding power to account. **These are not aberrations. They are the system working as it has come to work.**

...The time to act is now. **Democracy's future depends on our collective commitment to reclaim it** — through education, engagement, and institutional change that places the initiative, and the oversight, firmly back in the hands of the people."

This is an excerpt from **Reclaiming Democracy** - a discussion paper from [Conversation at the Crossroads](#). To read the full paper, click [here](#).

To be part of the discussion on how to reclaim democracy, click [here](#) to book, and for further information on the **Reclaiming Democracy Together national launch** in Melbourne on **9 May 2026**. Early bird offer ends 11 April.

14. Friends Groups in Nillumbik - Friends of Macmahon Ball Paddock

There are numerous "Friends of" groups in Nillumbik (and in other nearby municipalities) that look after the network of natural reserves throughout our area. We plan to introduce one group in each newsletter. This month's Friends group is **Friends of Macmahon Ball Paddock** located in a small nature reserve of approximately 0.3 hectares, at the eastern end of Bridge street, Eltham.

History: The block was set aside as a reserve when the surrounding land was subdivided in 1988. It was later named Macmahon Ball Paddock, after the previous owner, Professor William Macmahon Ball ('Mac'), who moved to Eltham in 1942 and lived in York Street until shortly before his death in 1986. Professor Macmahon Ball was the first professor of Political Science at Melbourne University, an ABC radio commentator, diplomat and well known local identity. A small group of residents, including Professor Macmahon Ball's daughter, Jenny Ellis, formed a Friends Group in 1999 to help manage the reserve.

Vegetation: Although the land was farmed in the earlier days of Eltham, when farming ceased, some indigenous species regenerated, especially the upper storey of Red Box (*Eucalyptus polyanthemos*). Remnant ground cover vegetation includes Chocolate Lilies *Arthropodium strictum*), Bulbine Lilies (*Bulbine bulbosa*), Dianella (*Dianella revoluta*), orchids (greenhoods and hyacinth orchids) and many native grasses. Since its formation, members of the Friends Group have planted understorey plants such as Gold Dust Wattle and wildflowers, to augment the existing species. They also spend time eradicating weeds.

Aim: To maintain the reserve with minimum disturbance, except for plantings, weed control, tidiness and safety. Ultimately to return the vegetation to something resembling the original vegetation prior to European colonisation.

Working bees: 10.00 am - 12.00 noon every third Sunday. The next one will be on the 12th April 2026.

Like to join? Or come along for a try out? Contact Convenor Jill Kellow at jnkellow@gmail.com

13. NCAT membership

We warmly invite you to become a **member of Nillumbik Climate Action Team**. Members and supporters participate in and help with various events, activities, and public actions according to ability and interest. If you would like to become more actively involved there is also the possibility of joining our monthly planning meetings.

NCAT Membership is free. If you wish to become a member, please fill in the [membership form](#) and return to info@nillumbikclimateactionteam.org.

15. Upcoming Events

REthink Nillumbik 2026 program

The REthink Nillumbik Program is a series of fun, interactive workshops designed to create a more sustainable and liveable Nillumbik. Sessions include a range of activities to help local residents reimagine our collective approach to energy and waste.

REthink events are collaborative, hands-on, and can help people take small actions that can lead to serious, positive change. They include practical demonstrations, creative activities, and simple ideas for rethinking everyday choices and behaviours.

Click [here](#) for more information about upcoming REthink Nillumbik events for 2026.



Draught proofing your home

Eltham Library: 23 April, 7 to 8pm

Simple techniques to identify and prevent draughts for a warmer, more comfortable home.



DIY window upgrades

DV Library: 7 May, 6.30 to 8.30pm

A hands-on workshop teaching how to make removable DIY panels for your windows, to boost their thermal efficiency.

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Sustainable House Day - The Nillumbik Trail, Sunday 17 May 10am-4pm

Visit local homes for information and inspiration to make your home more sustainable. Various locations around Nillumbik. For more information, click [here](#).

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Community video project

[Clean Energy Nillumbik](#) is plotting to produce some fun community videos to share information on energy resilience. They would love to work with schools, clubs, sporting groups, community groups and others to get a range of community members and groups in the footage. Please send them an email if you're interested to secretary@cleanenergynillumbik.org.au.

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Edendale Community Environment Farm events calendar

Click [here](#) to view the wide range of events on offer from Edendale Farm, including Waterwise wicking beds, Basic bike maintenance, Repair, restore and upcycle furniture, Edendale repair cafe, Food, fibre and medicine plants of the local area, and many more.

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Energy and Sustainable Living Advice

Nillumbik Council offers a **personalised advisory service** for Nillumbik residents and businesses on how to navigate the confusing world of energy and sustainable living.

Click [here](#) for more information.

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Repair Cafes in Nillumbik

Get your household items repaired for free by a team of volunteers. The aim is to help you fix things, learn new skills, and keep waste out of landfill. **Edendale repair cafe** is held at Edendale Farm on the third Saturday of every month. **For more information click [here](#).**

Support us

[Nillumbik Climate Action Team \(NCAT\)](#) is a small volunteer organisation.

We rely on donations to support our work.

Thank you to everyone who has donated to date.

We couldn't do it without you!

If you are able to [support us](#), even in a small way, we'd be very grateful.

[DONATE to NCAT](#)



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Owners of Nillumbik and its environs, and that this land was never ceded. We thank them for their custodianship of the land over millennia.

We acknowledge that we are in a climate emergency; there can be no climate justice without First Nations justice.

We support First Nations peoples in their striving for complete recognition, truth-telling, treaty and justice, and we are sorry for the hurt and injustice we have caused.

nillumbikclimateactionteam.org