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Bill McKibben: US environmentalist sounds warning on Tasmanian energy crisis

By Richard Baines
Posted Sun at 2:02am

In his first visit to Tasmania, world renowned US environmentalist Bill McKibben has given a stark warning to the Tasmanian Government.

The state is in the midst of an unprecedented energy crisis due to falling hydro-electric dam levels and a broken Basslink cable, which means power cannot be imported from the mainland.

The former is being blamed on a dry summer, but climate change activist Mr McKibben warns the weather will only get hotter.

"Unfortunately it's not going to be the new norm, the new norm is going to be worse and more dramatic with each passing few years," he said.

He believes the focus should now be on diversifying Tasmania's energy supply.

"In the future, the main sources of new generation around the world are going to be sun and wind," he said.

Attorney-General Vanessa Goodwin said alternative power sources were under consideration.

"The Energy Minister [Matthew Groom] has indicated that he will be considering all of these options in the context of where we go in the future," she said.

Greens slam lack of information as 'unbelievable', 'arrogant'

On Saturday, the ABC revealed Hydro Tasmania was providing the State Government with weekly updates of the running cost of the energy crisis.

The Government has released the figures for hiring and running diesel generators, but is not releasing the running cost, a decision Ms Goodwin has defended.

"I think we've tried to release as much information as possible but I don't think it's constructive to release what might be only estimates at this stage," she said.

Greens Leader Cassy O'Connor has slammed the lack of information as "unbelievable".

"I think it just comes down to arrogance and a lack of understanding of the importance of transparency when dealing with public money," she said.

In a statement issued on Sunday afternoon, Treasurer Peter Gutwein said he would reveal Hydro Tasmania's modelling on the actual cost of diesel generation to date as soon as possible.

Topics: climate-change, environmental-impact, environment, hydro-energy, government-and-politics, tas

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TOP STORIES



Spectacular footage shows dolphins fleeing orca ambush



Della Lawrie wants NT fracking referendum



El Nino may be behind coral bleaching found in Sydney Harbour: researchers



Millions of Chileans without water as floods suspend world's largest copper mine



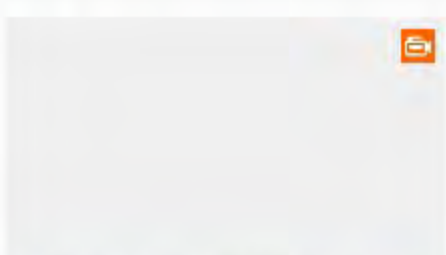
Mako shark rescued after being stranded on Port Fairy beach

ENVIRONMENT TV & VIDEOS



Researchers discover coral bleaching in Sydney Harbour

Coral bleaching has been discovered in Sydney Harbour for what is believed to be the first time.



Coral bleaching can be seen at Broome's Reddell Beach
The first evidence of coral bleaching has emerged on Western Australia's Kimberley coast.



Sir David Attenborough says the Great Barrier Reef could be gone within decades.
Sir David Attenborough says the Great Barrier Reef is in "grave danger" with rising sea temperatures and salinity brought by climate change. His documentary TV series Great Barrier Reef starts on ABC TV on 10 April.



Lizard Island coral bleaching 'worst in 30 years'
A recent incidence of coral bleaching around Lizard Island in far north Queensland is the 'worst I've seen' according to Prof. Justin Marshall, University of Queensland marine biologist.



The latest climate change surprises
The World Meteorological Organisation has issued an alarming report highlighting the "unprecedented" rate of climate change.

FEATURES



Election Symmetry
A former banker will campaign against the unions and a former unionist will campaign against the banks. There's an uncanny symmetry to Election 2016 right down to the perfectly balanced polls.



Changing bad habits
While most of us know from experience how difficult it is to change a habit or achieve a goal, knowing your core values and the things that matter to you will help you change your behaviour.



On Thin Ice
Foreign Correspondent's James Bennett reports on Afghanistan's hopeful ski industry and the resurgent Taliban as the snow melts on the Hindu Kush ranges.



Party declares itself anti-Islam
Alternative for Germany transforms into blatantly anti-Islam movement.

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- Two men jailed for murdering asylum seeker Reza Barati
- Arthur Sinodinos to front inquiry into political donations
- Working three days a week 'the secret to better brain function in over 40s'
- Michelle Bridges accused of fat shaming over obesity remarks
- Man charged with murder over death of teen footballer
- Rescuers pull out survivors of deadly Ecuador quake
- Students bare all to protest against fossil fuel investment
- Lebanese child case in limbo as parents thrash out deal
- Suns defender May suspended for five games for bump on Martin
- Slender root rat discovered by scientists on Indonesian island
- Retired Chinook helicopter makes final landing

JUST IN

- Hodgman fails on Tasmanian health budget details, Labor says
- Teenagers stuck on Second Valley cliffs on SA Fleurieu Peninsula
- Police officer accused of Ben Cousins tip-off has charge dropped
- Spectacular footage shows dolphins fleeing orca ambush
- Argument over journalists at navy media event
- Most commercial boats in Darwin fail electrical safety test, inquest told
- Immediate ban on microbeads, single-use plastic bags to be recommended
- Smoke from Tasmania regeneration burns seen in satellite imagery
- Arthur Sinodinos to front inquiry into political donations
- Police hunt for man over sexual offence at Melbourne school

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- UNHCR casts doubt on reports 'hundreds' dead in new migrant disaster
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- Election 2016: Will political discipline be the decider?
- Payne meets with Entsch over 'bloody stupid' patrol boat decision
- Turnbull compromised after striking 'deal' to become PM, John Hewson tells Q&A

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