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# Undermining Women's Rights: Digging Deeper

Australia's expanding global  
fossil fuel footprint



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Cover Photo © ActionAid - A woman standing in solidarity with other women from mining affected communities in South Africa.

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# 1. Introduction

The Australian fossil fuel extraction sector continues to have a massive global carbon footprint with Australian coal, oil and gas companies operating in the furthest reaches of the world. There is mounting evidence that the activities of Australian fossil fuel companies are having a negative impact on women and their communities. This happens at the local level, with fossil fuel extraction undermining women's ability to provide food and clean water for their families, and at the global level, when fossil fuels are burnt and contribute to accelerated heating of the planet.

This report provides an update on ActionAid's 2018 report, *Undermining Women's Rights: Australia's global fossil fuel footprint*, through a comparative analysis between 2017 and 2018 of fossil fuel projects operated or under development by companies listed on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX). The

report quantifies the size of Australia's global fossil fuel footprint in 2018 with a particular focus on projects being developed in low income countries. These countries often have the least resources to properly regulate the coal, oil and

gas sectors, and are where corporate and community power imbalances are often the greatest. They are also particularly exposed and vulnerable to the most catastrophic impacts of climate change with less resources to adapt.

This report aims to continue to share reliable data on Australia's fossil fuel footprint and its impact on the communities we work with overseas, with a view to calling for increased accountability of the fossil fuel sector. It considers the lack of progress made by government and corporations since 2018 in addressing Australia's disproportionate fossil fuel footprint overseas and the ongoing gendered impacts of these activities on women in poor and marginalised communities. Very few of the recommendations from ActionAid's 2018 report calling for increased corporate accountability of the fossil fuels sector have been addressed, and Australia's financing of

fossil fuel projects overseas continues unabated. This report also aims to address this inaction with a call to increase Australia's support for climate change financing, particularly to support low income countries, where we are profiting from extraction, to adapt to climate change and to address the loss and damage caused by climate change impacts.

**ActionAid Australia defines low income countries as Low, Lower-Middle, and Upper Middle Income Economies based on World Bank classification.**

For more information, please refer to the Methodology on page 15.

## 1.1 About ActionAid Australia

ActionAid Australia works with women across the African continent that are impacted by mining, including fossil fuel mining. It also works with women who are facing the worst impacts of climate change and who are leading community adaptation, and disaster preparedness and response, in a number of countries around the world, including Cambodia, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nepal, the Philippines, Somaliland, Uganda, and Vanuatu.

ActionAid Australia's work with mining-affected communities is designed to ensure that Australia is making a positive contribution to women's empowerment and gender equality. This experience has highlighted significant potential for extractive projects to undermine women's rights where no adequate safeguards and regulations are in place. Furthermore, coal, oil and gas projects also contribute significantly to climate change and could cause global emissions to surpass levels consistent with the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global warming to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Thus, ActionAid Australia's aim is to ensure that Australian government policy and corporate practice is making a positive contribution to the lives of women and their communities living in poverty and exclusion and does not further entrench inequalities by fuelling human rights violations and catastrophic climate change impacts.

**Australia's financing of fossil fuel projects overseas continues unabated**



## 2. Women's rights and climate justice

Women, especially those from poor and marginalised communities, often bear the brunt of the adverse consequences from the social and environmental change caused by the extraction of coal, oil and gas.<sup>1</sup> Increasingly they are also being impacted by changes in the climate and extreme weather events that are caused by the burning of these same fossil fuels. Women are hit hard, and often twice.

ActionAid's work with mining affected communities continues to show that mining is restricting women's access to land, their livelihoods and food security; impacting on women's health and safety including through higher rates of gender based violence; increasing their unpaid care work; and undermining women's access to decision making and resources.<sup>2</sup>

Research conducted by ActionAid South Africa in 2018 found that large-scale mining in South Africa has significant social, environmental and economic impacts on local communities and that these impacts disproportionately affect women.<sup>3</sup> The research found that:

Accessing the benefits of mining, such as employment opportunities, may require women to provide sexual favours or endure sexual harassment in the workplace;

The structural exclusion of women from mining jobs – because they don't have the experience or qualifications required, or because of discrimination against women – has a dire impact on the ability of women to assert their own agency and often keeps women dependent on men to access opportunities and income;

Alternative forms of livelihood opportunities, such as farming, are negatively impacted due to mining activities, for example due to restricted land and water access;

The influx of men into a community looking for mine-related employment contributes to the rapid rise in gender based violence in various forms – a growing population of migrant labourers contributes to an unsettled community in which violence becomes exacerbated and further erodes the social fabric of a community.<sup>4</sup>

In its concluding observations of Australia's periodic report in 2018<sup>5</sup>, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women noted with concern the overseas operation of Australian extractive industries projects that have gendered social and environmental impacts linked to displacement, and the loss of livelihoods and social services among local women. This results in the further discrimination, exclusion and marginalisation of women, and fuels conflict and related gender-based violence against women. It also noted the lack of consultation with women on the management of mines or benefit-sharing, and the absence of prior informed consent by local women.

*Australian extractive industries' projects have gendered social and environmental impacts linked to displacement, and the loss of livelihoods and social services among local women*

There is a growing movement of women's rights organisations who are resisting mining, oil and gas projects, building alternatives, and demanding reform of a sector that undermines their rights, and marginalises their voice and authority.<sup>6</sup> For example women from Phola in South Africa have been demanding justice for their community who have suffered ill health, and a loss of their land, livelihoods and water resources.

<sup>1</sup> ActionAid, *Women's vision for reform: an agenda for corporate accountability in Australia's mining sector*, 2018

<sup>2</sup> ActionAid, *Women's vision for reform: an agenda for corporate accountability in Australia's mining sector*, 2018; and ActionAid Australia, *Undermining women's rights: Australia's global fossil fuel footprint*, 2018

<sup>3</sup> ActionAid South Africa, *Mining in South Africa: Whose benefit and whose burden?*, 2018

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding observations on the eighth periodic report of Australia*, CEDAW/C/AUS/CO/8, 20 July 2018

<sup>6</sup> ActionAid, *Women's vision for reform: an agenda for corporate accountability in Australia's mining sector*, 2018

## Case study: Women-led research and resistance to coal mining in South Africa



As highlighted in the 2018 Undermining Women's Rights report, Mpumalanga province in South Africa has been heavily impacted by coal mining, with 60% of the province either being mined or under exploration as of December 2016.<sup>7</sup> The town of Phola in Mpumalanga is situated in close proximity to a number of large coal mines including the Klipspruit mine, owned and operated by a subsidiary of ASX listed company, South32.

ActionAid Australia has been working closely with the Greater Phola Ogies Women's Forum who have been organising local women to document the impacts of the mine on their community and also claim their right to have their voices heard - and concerns meaningfully addressed - by the company. The Women's Forum led the first women-led social audit in South Africa, a methodology which "seeks to engage citizens and communities directly in monitoring the delivery of public services and holding government [and in this case corporations] to account for poor performance, mismanagement or, in some cases, outright corruption."<sup>8</sup> For the women of Phola, this tool empowered them to gather evidence to develop a clearer picture of not only the social, health and environmental impacts of the mine but also the level of awareness within the community of South32's commitments made through their Social and Labour Plan (SLP).

The initial baseline social audit findings indicated that the community were facing challenges including damage to houses due to mine blasting causing cracks in foundations as well as air and water pollution, including high levels of dust, resulting in health problems like asthma, sinus and eye issues.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the audit found that over three quarters of 144 women respondents interviewed had never heard of nor seen South32's SLP, with eighty-four percent of respondents indicating that they had not been consulted with by the company to inform the development of the SLP.

Working in consultation with the Greater Phola Ogies Women's Forum, ActionAid Australia was then able to use these findings to amplify women's voices and raise their concerns directly with the company in Australia in the lead up to South32's 2018 Annual General Meeting (AGM). The culmination of public pressure both online and outside the company's AGM resulted in the company's senior leadership making a commitment to meet directly with the women of Phola and meaningfully consult with them on the commitments they had made in their SLP. Millicent Shungube, a representative of the Women's Forum, then travelled to Australia to meet with South32 at their Perth headquarters on behalf of her community. The meeting was a result of the strength of the collective power that can be generated across borders when people stand in solidarity with women in mining-affected communities to amplify their demands to have their voices heard and rights respected.

As of October 2019, the issues raised by the Greater Phola Ogies Women's Forum have yet to be adequately resolved. The women are continuing to demand more meaningful consultation and greater accountability from South32.

<sup>7</sup> GroundWork, *The Destruction of the Highveld*, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> ActionAid South Africa, *Mining in South Africa – Whose Benefit and Whose Burden?*, 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

### 3. Updating Australia's global fossil fuel footprint in 2018

#### Definition of a project:

There is no single agreed definition of a "project" in this context,<sup>10</sup> and reporting quality and consistency varies greatly between companies. Some companies, for instance, list all oil and gas tenements separately despite close proximity, whereas others will group together several different tenements as a single project. This report has attempted to follow as closely as possible companies' own presentation of their projects in their most recent annual reports, however with a different definition of "project" the numbers in this report would vary slightly. For more information, please refer to the Methodology page 15.

According to publicly available information from annual reports, ASX listed companies continued to operate and seek to develop a total of 133 coal, oil and gas projects in 38 low income countries in 2018.<sup>11</sup>

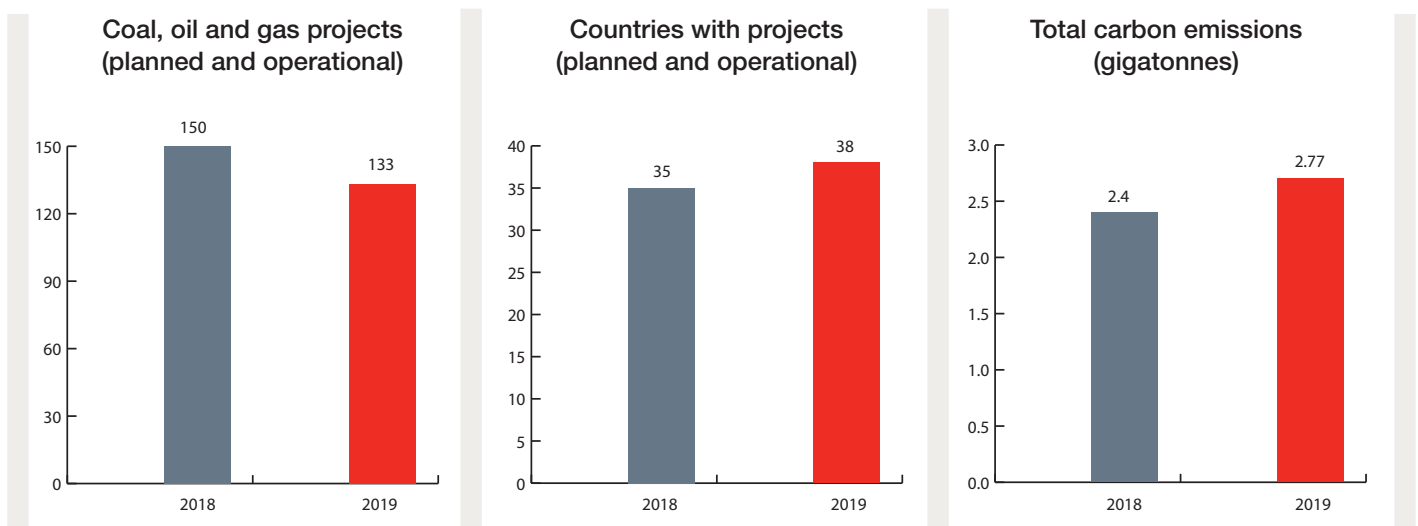
There are 34 operational fossil fuel projects in low income countries that are either wholly or partially owned by ASX listed companies. This compares with ActionAid's 2018 report<sup>12</sup>, where 35 projects were operational in 2017. There has also been a decrease in the period between 2017 and 2018 in the number of planned projects from 115 to 99. This drop in the number of projects is considered to be of small significance taken in the context of typical industry behaviour where projects and companies are regularly bought or sold, and companies delist from particular security exchanges.<sup>13</sup>

*Less projects in more countries with increasing carbon emissions*

The majority of the operational projects are still located in the Asia-Pacific and African regions, with half of all projects concentrated in three countries: Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and South Africa.

Around two-thirds of all operating and planned projects remain concentrated in the oil and gas sector, and of the 20 new projects identified in 2018 approximately three quarters were in the oil and gas sector.

### Updated carbon potential of operational fossil fuel projects



<sup>10</sup> See: Publish What You Pay Australia, *Abundant Resources, Absent Data*, 2017, p. 17.

<sup>11</sup> See annex for a full list of planned and operational coal, oil and gas projects owned and/or run by ASX listed companies.

<sup>12</sup> ActionAid Australia, *Undermining women's rights: Australia's global fossil fuel footprint*, 2018 (based on data from 2017).

<sup>13</sup> Note: the findings of this report relate to the plans of ASX listed companies as disclosed to the market and is not making claims as to the commercial viability of these projects.

## 2018 Fossil Fuel Tracker



Using the methodology developed in ActionAid’s 2018 report, it was possible to calculate the carbon potential of 23 of the 34 operational projects based on reserves and resources statements listed in the companies’ annual reports. The operational fossil fuel projects of ASX listed companies in 2018 have the potential to cause almost 2.8 billion tonnes of carbon emissions. This is roughly a 13% increase in potential carbon emissions from 2017<sup>14</sup> with approximately 370 million tonnes of additional carbon emissions potentially being released into the atmosphere.

While the potential carbon emissions of ASX listed companies’ fossil fuel projects has grown and the majority of new projects being explored by these companies has been in the oil and gas sector, it is important to note that the projects with the largest potential carbon footprints are overwhelmingly in coal and located in the African region. In fact, close to 1.9 of the 2.7 billion tonnes of potential carbon emissions – nearly two thirds of the total - can be attributed to just seven coal projects owned by only three companies in South Africa.

It is also important to note that these figures only take into account the future emissions potential of projects that are currently operational, and not the historical emissions that have already been caused by the burning of coal, oil and gas from these projects. As noted above, there are also a further 99 fossil fuel projects under development or being planned by ASX listed companies that have not been factored into estimates of potential future carbon emissions.

## 4. Following the money to claim back women’s rights

### 4.1 Time’s up for coal financing

The global context is changing, and this has implications for many of the fossil fuel projects being pursued by ASX listed companies, and more fundamentally for many of the companies themselves. As coal projects and the companies that own them come under increasing global scrutiny, there has been a shift in global markets that is creating a level of uncertainty in the fossil fuels sector.

14 In ActionAid’s 2018 report, the carbon emissions of ASX listed companies’ fossil fuel projects was calculated at 2.4 billion tonnes.



As at February 2019, over 100 globally significant financial institutions including global asset managers, public development banks, export credit agencies, national development finance institutions and private banks had developed formal thermal coal mining and/or coal-fired power plant restriction policies,<sup>15</sup> including most recently the European Investment Bank.<sup>16</sup> Global investor and debt capital is fleeing coal at an increasing rate, and it is foreseeable that thermal coal and power plants become uninsurable in the medium term.<sup>17</sup>

The Boikarabelo coal mine in South Africa, being planned by Resource Generation Limited (ResGen), an ASX listed company, is yet to secure the finance it needs to become operational after numerous setbacks<sup>18</sup>. During 2018, Export Finance Australia (Australia's export credit agency, previously 'Efic') ruled out providing financial support for the project<sup>19</sup>, and structural changes within the South African economy are signalling a shift away from coal where it has long been the dominant power source for South Africa's electricity sector.<sup>20</sup> Export credit agencies often provide public finance for overseas projects that commercial banks are reluctant to support. Unlike private banks their lending practices are directly determined by government policy. In the past they have been a consistent financial supporter for overseas fossil fuel projects, however there is evidence this is changing. In January 2018, Canada's export credit agency committed to no longer providing finance for the development, construction

or expansion of coal-fired power plants (unless equipped with carbon capture and storage), or finance for the development, construction or expansion of thermal coal mines or other projects solely focused on supplying coal-fired power plants (such as rail links).<sup>21</sup>

## 4.2 A new era of public financing for Australian fossil fuel projects

Unlike Canada's export credit agency, Export Finance Australia has no blanket restrictions on supporting fossil fuel projects and recent amendments to the governing legislation and the Minister's statement of expectations has left open the possibility for further investment in fossil fuel infrastructure.

In April 2019, the legislation governing Export Finance Australia<sup>22</sup> was amended allowing a significant increase in callable capital from \$200 million to \$1.2 billion<sup>23</sup>. This amendment also included provisions for Export Finance Australia to play a central role in the administration of loans under the Australian Government's centrepiece to its foreign policy 'Pacific Step Up', the Australian Infrastructure Financing Facility for the Pacific (AIFFP).

The AIFFP will provide grants and loans for priority infrastructure projects in the Pacific and Timor Leste. The types of infrastructure projects that will be eligible under this facility are yet to be defined, however there has been no indication at this stage that fossil fuel infrastructure projects will be ruled out.

<sup>15</sup> IEEFA, *Over 100 Global Financial Institutions Are Exiting Coal, With More to Come*, 27 February 2019, [http://ieefa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IEEFA-Report\\_100-and-counting\\_Coal-Exit\\_Feb-2019.pdf](http://ieefa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/IEEFA-Report_100-and-counting_Coal-Exit_Feb-2019.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> The Guardian, *European Investment Bank to phase out fossil fuel financing*, 15 November 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/nov/15/european-investment-bank-to-phase-out-fossil-fuels-financing>

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> ResGen is expecting to achieve financial close on this project by 28 February 2020; Resgen, *Quarterly update for the three months ended 30 September 2019*, 31 October 2019, <http://www.resgen.com.au/component/downloads/send/128-2019/627-quarterly-report-for-the-three-months-ended-30-september-2019>

<sup>19</sup> See: <https://actionaid.org.au/campaign-win/>

<sup>20</sup> International Institute for Sustainable Development, *South Africa: Is a transition away from coal just around the corner?*, 26 March 2019, <https://www.iisd.org/gsi/subsidy-watch-blog/south-africa-transition-away-coal-just-around-corner>

<sup>21</sup> Export Development Canada, *Climate Change Policy*, 2018

<sup>22</sup> Australian Government, *Export Finance and Insurance Corporation Amendment (Support for Infrastructure Financing) Bill 2019*, see: [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Bills\\_Legislation/Bills\\_Search\\_Results/Result?bld=r6263](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/Bills_Search_Results/Result?bld=r6263)

<sup>23</sup> Senator Simon Birmingham and Senator Marise Payne, media release, *Helping finance infrastructure in the Pacific*, 21 February 2019, <https://www.exportfinance.gov.au/resources-news/news-events/government-news/2019/february/helping-enhance-infrastructure-in-the-pacific/>

While the Australian Government is committed to considering infrastructure projects that are prioritised by Pacific Island governments, the recent statements from leaders at the Pacific Islands Forum 2019 demonstrate that Pacific Island leaders want a rapid transition away from fossil fuels and for Australia to take greater action in addressing climate change as a priority.<sup>24</sup>

In recent years, Export Finance Australia provided a significant loan to the problematic PNG LNG project (see case study) and considered financing the Boikarabelo coal mine in South Africa. It is also currently considering providing financial support for

the development and construction of an offshore oil field in Senegal<sup>25</sup> by ASX listed company Woodside Petroleum.

As Export Finance Australia emerges as a key funding entity in Australia's overseas assistance, it raises further questions about the level of rigor in the agency's due diligence processes. There is concern that the International Finance Corporation Performance Standards are well below the standards applied to Australia's aid program. Current due diligence applied by Export Finance Australia, and the secrecy surrounding these processes, is insufficient for the scale and purpose of infrastructure investments proposed in the Pacific.



24 Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama quoted in The Guardian, 'Our people are dying': Australia's climate confrontation in the Pacific, 18 August 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/aug/18/our-people-are-dying-australias-climate-confrontation-in-the-pacific>

25 ActionAid Australia, Caritas Australia and Jubilee Australia, *Submission to Efic's consultation on the SNE field development phase 1*, April 2019



## Case study: Papua New Guinea

In the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, patriarchy and the extractive industries work to perpetuate and reinforce women's marginalisation.<sup>26</sup>

"We want to dig our own soil," says women's rights advocate, Alice Arigo. Alice is a Sergeant in the Papua New Guinean police force and head of the family and sexual violence unit in Tari, the capital of resource-rich Hela province. Hela is home to the gas extraction site for the US\$19 billion PNG LNG project, a joint venture between ExxonMobil, ASX-listed companies Oil Search and Santos, and other companies.



Moreen Mokai, women's leader and elected councillor.

Women in Hela want to earn their own incomes from agriculture because they feel they have not benefitted from the PNG LNG project. "I can't see any good from PNG LNG, can't see any empowerment of women," Alice says. She says the women's programs supported by Oil Search have similarly missed the mark. "Sewing, baking and cooking is not empowerment. How does this help?"

"Women must be able to look after themselves," says Alice. "We cannot look to men to support women. Men who receive an income from the PNG LNG project leave their wives and children or buy another wife. Women are treated poorly; treated as a thing, not as a human being."

While landowners have enjoyed some financial benefits from the PNG LNG project – either as employees or suppliers – this has led to significant negative impacts on women and girls. The wages earned by men working on the PNG LNG project provide the cash that fuels inflation of 'brideprice' and the purchase of guns that intimidate reluctant parents or resistant brides,<sup>27</sup> and the abuse and neglect of women and their children.

Moreen Mokai, a women's leader and elected councillor from Hoiebia village near, Tari, says that her local area doesn't benefit from the PNG LNG project. "In Hela we speak one language, we are one tribe of people, and all of Hela should share the benefits from the project but this does not happen" said Moreen.

Despite its natural resource wealth, basic services are almost non-existent – making lies of the promises made to the community that exploitation of its natural resources would translate into transformative local wealth and prosperity for the people of Hela.<sup>28</sup> Instead, landowners are competing and fighting, often violently, to receive any benefit at all. This has significant negative impacts on women through a growing state of lawlessness, and proliferation of guns.

*I can't see any good from PNG LNG, can't see any empowerment of women. Sewing, baking and cooking is not empowerment.  
Alice Arigo, women's rights advocate*

<sup>26</sup> Elizabeth Cox, *Ending violent conflict and violence against women in Papua New Guinea's Highlands Region: the state, extractive industries and civil society* in DAWNinforms, August 2019

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

### 4.3 Finance for climate change action

With ASX listed companies continuing to invest in fossil fuels projects overseas in low income countries, Australia must acknowledge its responsibilities to support the poorest and most marginalised people in countries that are struggling to adapt to climate change. The global community committed to a goal of mobilising US\$100 billion per year by 2020 from public and private sources for climate mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. As this deadline nears, Australia must step up and commit to a target for climate finance that is reflective of its historical and future contributions to carbon emissions, and its fair share of global climate finance.

***Australian fossil fuel companies will increasingly come under scrutiny for their role in global carbon emissions, with some suggestions emerging that such funds could be liable financially and legally for their role in exacerbating the climate crisis.***

Australia's previous leadership in the establishment of the Green Climate Fund has been diminished as its pledge of \$200 million made in 2014 is unlikely to be met.<sup>29</sup> With contributions again due in 2019, conservative estimates from the World Resources Institute<sup>30</sup> suggest that Australia should be pledging close to AU\$1 billion (US\$679 million) to ensure the fund can operate effectively.

With climate change impacts being increasingly felt around the world by the poorest and most vulnerable, low income countries and civil society are also using the United Nations Framework Convention on

Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP25, convening in Madrid, Spain this year, to call for a financing facility to address the loss and damage caused by climate disasters in low income countries.<sup>31</sup>

Australian fossil fuel companies will increasingly come under scrutiny for their role in global carbon emissions, with some suggestions emerging that such funds could be liable financially and legally for their role in exacerbating the climate crisis.<sup>32</sup>

### 4.4 Strengthening corporate accountability

While fossil fuel companies continue to shirk their responsibility for the climate crisis and the Australian government fails to provide adequate finance to support those most affected, we must look to strengthen the accountability of these companies for their human rights impacts.

The Australian government recently implemented reforms to Australia's National Contact Point<sup>33</sup> – a non-judicial remedy process for extraterritorial Australian business activities established under the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

An independent review of Australia's National Contact Point conducted in 2017 found that it ranked among

***Reforms fall short of the independent corporate human rights ombudsperson needed to compel Australian companies to seriously address their human rights impacts overseas.***

<sup>29</sup> The Guardian, *Morrison says Australia won't provide more money for global climate fund*, 8 October 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/oct/08/scott-morrison-resists-calls-to-withdraw-from-paris-climate-agreement>

<sup>30</sup> See: <https://www.wri.org/resources/data-visualizations/green-climate-fund-contributions-calculator-20>

<sup>31</sup> ActionAid, a core member of the Civil Society Equity Review, has released a report in the lead up to COP25 on loss and damage, see: Civil Society Equity Review, *Can Climate Change Fuelled Loss and Damage Ever be Fair?*, November 2019 <http://civilsocietyreview.org/report2019>

<sup>32</sup> See: <https://makebigpolluterspay.org/>

<sup>33</sup> For more information, see: <http://www.ausncp.gov.au/complaints/ausncp-procedures> and <http://www.ausncp.gov.au/appointment-inaugural-ausncp-independent-examiner>



the poorest performing National Contact Points internationally.<sup>34</sup> It did not provide an effective remedy and had a poor record of resolving disputes.

The changes made by the Australian government to the National Contact Point have been broadly welcomed, however ActionAid Australia recognises that these reforms fall short of the independent corporate human rights ombudsperson introduced by the Canadian government<sup>35</sup> that is needed to compel Australian companies to seriously address the human rights impacts of their activities overseas<sup>36</sup>.

Only time will tell whether these reforms result in better outcomes for affected communities and the level of accountability required to drive better practices within the corporate sector.

## 5. Conclusion and recommendations

The Australian government continues to have a role in ensuring that Australian companies operating overseas respect the rights of local communities, and that it meets the commitment to limit global heating by no more than 1.5°C as under the Paris Climate Agreement.

The extent to which the Australian government is meeting these obligations and promoting good corporate practice is limited as shown in the table below which assesses progress made to date in implementing the recommendations from ActionAid's 2018 report.

Assessment of progress against ActionAid Australia's 2018 recommendations from "Undermining women's rights: Australia's global fossil fuel footprint"

Very little progress has been made to strengthen accountability of ASX listed companies' fossil fuel projects operating overseas in the past year. With the deadline for fulfilling our commitments under the Paris Agreement looming and only a decade left to avert catastrophic climate change, the Australian government has no time to lose to act.

ActionAid Australia reaffirms the recommendations made in 2018 as outlined above. It also calls on the Australian government to:

1. Rule out support for fossil fuel projects from the AIFFP;
2. Recognise the unique impacts of climate change on women and ensure their participation in, and resourcing of their networks to, drive climate justice at local, national and international levels;
3. Ensure adequate public financing for climate change adaptation and compensation mechanisms for loss and damage in low income countries.<sup>37</sup>

Limiting global heating to 1.5°C requires rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban, infrastructure and industrial systems, and deep and immediate cuts in global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.<sup>38</sup>

This means that no new coal mines or oil and gas fields should be developed;<sup>39</sup> a demand that women and women's rights organisations are committed to but governments have been slow to come to the table on.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Alex Newton, *Independent review Australian National Contact Point under the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises*, 2017

<sup>35</sup> Canadian government, *The Government of Canada bring leadership to responsible business conduct abroad*, 2018, <https://www.canada.ca/en/global-affairs/news/2018/01/the-government-of-canada-brings-leadership-to-responsible-business-conduct.html>

<sup>36</sup> ActionAid Australia's report *Towards effective non-judicial remedy in Australia: principles for reform* (October 2018, with Jubilee Australia) outlines the principles we believe are important to ensure the effectiveness of non-judicial remedy mechanisms

<sup>37</sup> For more detail, see: Civil Society Equity Review, *Can Climate Change Fuelled Loss and Damage Ever be Fair?*, November 2019 <http://civilsocietyreview.org/report2019>

<sup>38</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Summary for Policymakers: An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty*, 2018.

<sup>39</sup> Oil Change International, *The sky's limit: why the Paris climate goals require a managed decline of fossil fuel production*, September 2016

<sup>40</sup> See: ActionAid Australia, *Women's vision for reform: an agenda for corporate accountability in Australia's mining sector*, 2018

Strengthening accountability of ASX listed companies operating overseas is essential to securing women's rights. However, without drastic changes in government policy that continues to support the

expansion of Australian owned and operated fossil fuel projects overseas, the climate crisis is set to further exacerbate the inequalities and injustices women are experiencing in low income countries and drive them further into poverty and insecurity.

Recommendation	Progress
<p>Introduce a mandatory carbon risk disclosure framework that applies to all ASX listed companies involved in fossil fuel projects both overseas and in Australia</p>	<p>No progress made.</p> <p>However, the ASX Corporate Governance Council's Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations now encourages companies to consider whether they are exposed to climate change risks consistent with the recommendations of the Climate-related Financial Disclosures Task Force<sup>41</sup></p>
<p>Cease public financing of fossil fuel projects, including the alteration of Export Finance Australia's mandate to explicitly prohibit support for fossil fuel projects</p>	<p>No progress made.</p>
<p>Ensure transparency of mining projects, including fossil fuel projects, by developing legislation that requires companies to report all their subsidiaries and all payments to governments at a country and project level</p>	<p>No progress made.</p>
<p>Introduce corporate accountability regulation and policy that will limit and mitigate the risk of human rights violations and women's rights impacts posed by Australian companies' fossil fuel projects overseas, including:</p>	
<p>Providing better access to remedy for women and their communities impacted by the operation of Australian mining companies overseas</p>	<p>Partial progress with reform of the Australian National Contact Point (see section 5.4)</p>
<p>Supporting the development of an international legally binding treaty on business and human rights</p>	<p>While discussions are still underway globally, Australia has yet to make progress to support the treaty</p>
<p>Developing legislation that requires Australian mining companies operating overseas to conduct gender-sensitive, human rights due diligence</p>	<p>No progress made</p>

<sup>41</sup> ASX Corporate Governance Council, Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations, February 2019

## 6. Methodology

This report is based on information publicly available from the ASX website, individual company websites and each company's 2018 annual report.

As this report seeks to examine the impact of the fossil fuel industry on low income countries, projects that were located in high income countries according to World Bank classification were excluded.

Potential carbon estimates were made for each operational project through company listed reserves and resources estimates in published in company annual reports. The figure used to estimate carbon potential was 90% of the proved, 50% probable, and 10% of possible reserves figures published by companies.

For oil and gas, 1P was taken as proved, 2P proved and probable, and 3P proved, probable and possible. For coal projects only proved and probable reserves figures were used, as possible reserves were generally not reported. Where only resource figures were available for coal projects, measured resources were taken to be equivalent to proved reserves and indicated resources equivalent to probable reserves.

The calculations for converting different units of fossil fuels to carbon emissions potential is based on the IPCC's Default IPCC Tier 1 emission factors methodology as recommended by the World Resources Institute.<sup>42</sup>

Of course, there is a high degree of uncertainty involved in how much of any given project's reserves will actually be sold and then burnt, and so the potential carbon emissions figures given should be taken as an estimate based on information available to the market.

<sup>42</sup> World Resources Institute (WRI), *A recommended methodology for estimating and reporting the potential greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel reserves*, December 2016

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