

JUN  
2020

# TIPPING POINT MID YEAR

## DONOR UPDATE



# INTRODUCTION

**We're not even half-way through 2020, yet everything has changed.** Over the summer, thousands of people had their lives torn apart by fire, with most Australians impacted in some way. With the ashes still settling on this unprecedented climate and bushfire disaster, we are now navigating the COVID-19 crisis—a pandemic which has killed hundreds of thousands of people and threatens millions of people's livelihoods.

Tipping Point sees this as a critical moment for our ongoing battles to keep coal and gas in the ground—we cannot miss this opportunity to challenge the fossil fuel industry's effort to consolidate its power in response to COVID-19. Instead we must push for clean energy solutions that put everyday people before polluters.

**Each new crisis that unfolds makes it clearer that we need to build the biggest social movement Australia has ever seen to demand climate justice for all.**

With that in mind, we wanted to share a little about what Tipping Point has been up to over the past 6 months and where we're headed for the rest of this tumultuous year.



In December, School Strikers, parents and Sydneysiders protested outside Kirribilli house calling on Scott Morrison to return home from Hawaii and address the climate fuelled-bushfire crisis.

# 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

## #STOPADANI

Here and globally, Adani's coal mine is one of the most powerful symbols in our struggle for climate justice. The #StopAdani movement has become a symbol of sustained people-powered resistance to the coal industry.

**The fate of the mine is on a knife edge.** Our success in pushing almost 70 companies to walk away from the project has put Adani in the position where they must build their mine in the slowest, riskiest, most expensive way possible. But if Adani is allowed to continue significant work on site over the next 6–12 months, it will become increasingly difficult to stop the mine from being dug.

The project now relies on the Adani family continuing to fund it, which looks increasingly shaky. The COVID-19 crisis is causing chaos in financial markets, Gautam Adani's wealth has fallen by 37% (or USD\$6 billion),<sup>1</sup> and Adani needs to refinance \$1bn of debt on their Abbot Point coal port in the coming year.<sup>2</sup>

**Our job is to push harder than ever to ensure Adani do not have enough support to build the mine and force them to abandon the project.**

The StopAdani movement has already driven major banking and engineering companies to drop Adani and shift their stances on coal. By continuing to pressure the insurance, private finance, and construction sectors to abandon the mine, the #StopAdani movement can also leverage bigger shifts against coal globally.

**The Tipping Point team continues to play a critical role in driving #StopAdani campaign strategy and connecting and supporting the network of 72 #StopAdani local groups—one of the biggest grassroots networks in the country.** Moreover, recent pushes have activated international grassroots networks in Germany, the UK, New Zealand, and the US.

## Pushing Adani's contractors

**A win on GHD!** When we wrote to you last we were on the verge of a big victory with engineering firm GHD—Adani's longest running contractor of 7 years—to rule out further work on the project. On 17th December last year, the news was official.<sup>3</sup>

The win was a massive testament to the power of grassroots action. Insider intel indicated that pressure from our movement, through staff engagement and dozens of actions at their offices, threw the company into chaos<sup>4</sup> and ultimately forced the engineering giant to walk away from Adani.

1 [Pandemic impact, Mukesh Ambani's net worth drops 28% to \\$48 billion in 2 months](#), Economic Times, April 6, 2020 .

2 [Adani in \\$100m debt scramble](#), Australian Financial Review, April 15, 2020.

3 [Global Engineering Firm concludes work on Adani's Carmichael coal project](#), The Guardian, December 17, 2019.

4 [Adani engineering contractor pushed into crisis mode, say some staff, after protests over Carmichael coal mine involvement](#), ABC News, December 4, 2019.

# WIN FOR PEOPLE POWER!

## GHD DROPS ADANI!



**Siemens push:** Over summer news broke that German company Siemens was on the verge of taking a contract to do the signalling for Adani's rail line. We worked with movement partners Galilee Blockade, Market Forces, the Australian School Strikers and the Fridays for Future movement in Germany (the equivalent of the School Strike 4 Climate in Australia) to spearhead a push on the company. Our campaign sparked global protests and created massive media controversy at the Siemens AGM.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> [Siemens AGM overshadowed by Adani protest](#), Canberra Times, February 6, 2020.



6 months of staff engagement and actions big and small forced Adani's longest running contractor, engineering firm GHD, to walk away from the project.

Unfortunately, the Siemens office in Australia cracked under pressure from the coal industry, and signed the Adani contract. This triggered further global uproar, with the Global CEO indicating it is not what the global office would have done, the contract could not be legally broken. The campaign remains unresolved, with our friends in Germany keeping the global office under pressure to exit the contract as soon as is legally possible.

**Greyhound win!** In January, we worked with School Strikers and other movement partners to run a short, sharp and successful campaign to force the bus company Greyhound to give up on their plans to transport workers to the Adani mine site.<sup>6</sup>

**Taking on the global insurance industry, starting with Marsh:** In February, we set our sights on Marsh—Adani's insurance broker and the world's largest broker—calling on them to rule out working on Adani's coal mine. There have been weeks of flyering, actions at almost all of their Australian offices, actions at their global offices including their headquarters in New York, grassroots outreach to thousands of Marsh staff, and direct phone conversations between members of the grassroots in Australia and Marsh executives in the US, plus much more.

At their AGM last month, Marsh was forced to respond directly to the #StopAdani pressure and released this set of [client engagement principles](#). These principles have opened the door to push Marsh to review their relationship with Adani based on their commitment to take action on 'climate change mitigation'. A win on Marsh would cut Adani off from global insurance, and would also set the precedent of the world's biggest insurance broker ruling out work on a coal project. This would be a major signal to the global insurance market. **The push on Marsh is the key focus of the #StopAdani movement in the coming months.**

<sup>6</sup> [Greyhound cuts ties with Adani mine after backlash from climate activists](#), The Guardian, January 28, 2020

**Moving online:** When the COVID-19 crisis forced our actions off the streets, we responded quickly, supporting the #StopAdani movement to pressure Marsh staff and key decision makers in new, creative ways including:

- **Adopt an Executive program** which targets individual Marsh executives and staff through a tailored program. Local groups conduct detailed research about a Marsh executive and pressure them through email, LinkedIn, Twitter, phone calls, and other avenues. This has included grassroots groups in Sydney connecting with university campus groups in Illinois to pressure a Marsh board director who is also the President of their university.
- **Training 120+ activists** in new online tactics like connecting with Marsh staff over LinkedIn—the platform that Marsh are most active on.
- **Hosting #StopAdani’s first online rally:**
  - Attended by 676 people on Zoom and watched by 10,000 people via the livestream on Facebook (the views continue to climb!)
  - Generated 3,200+ tweets that got the **#MarshDumpAdani** hashtag trending number 1 in Australia on Twitter.
  - Generated 1,700 comments on Marsh’s Facebook and LinkedIn pages.
  - Supported hundreds of people to make phone calls to the direct answering machine of the CEO of Marsh and the CEO of their parent company Marsh & McLennan Companies.

*“It was the most exciting zoom I’ve ever been on! The rally was so well organised! Congrats!”*

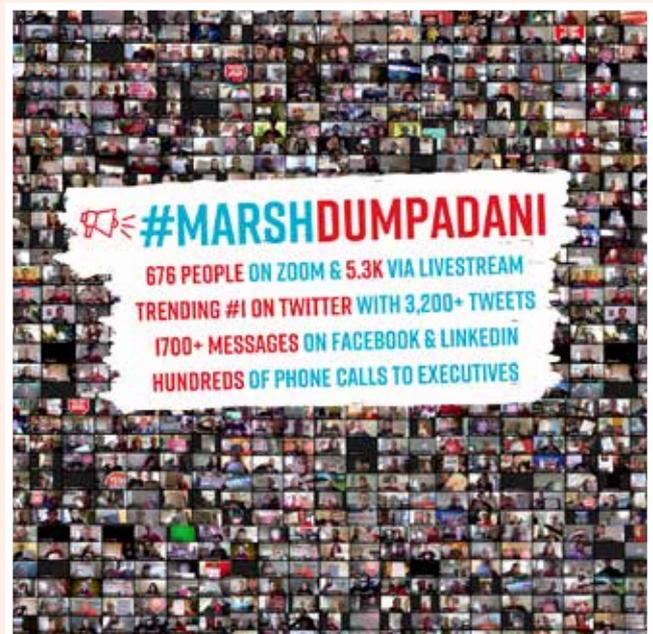
**—Fiona Lee**

*“Best online action I’ve been on by far—Intense, fun, felt productive. A fantastic event—thank you all.”*

**Jenny Fitzgibbon—#StopAdani Maleny leader**

*“Just a thank you to Carrie and everyone at Tipping Point for a really well-organised rally. I would never expect less from Tipping Point, but you guys are amazing. Congratulations and thank you.”*

**Angela Michaelis—#StopAdani leader from Climate Change BalmainRozelle**



Almost 700 people joined #StopAdani’s first online rally calling on Adani’s insurance broker Marsh to dump Adani. Over 10,000 people watched the rally via the livestream.

# CAPACITY BUILDING

## Planning Days

In February we hosted planning days with 150+ #StopAdani leaders, representing 55 groups. Participant feedback at these gatherings (which we host every 6 months) continues to be positive with 87% leaders rating the day as excellent or very good, and naming networking, a sense of solidarity and clear direction as the most valued aspects.



#StopAdani Planning days continue to play an important role in building relationships across the movement and setting direction for the months ahead.

## Leadership Development During Covid

The #StopAdani movement (in its current form) is just over 3 years old. A big focus of the movement to date has been mobilizing—planning and executing hundreds of large and small actions to pressure key campaign targets.

The lockdown period has provided us with an opportunity to think deeply about how we find and support grassroots leaders over the long term. To **deepen the skills, capacity and connectedness of the movement during lock-down** Tipping Point has:

- Held national and local movement webinars to check in on each other, brainstorm ideas together and re-orient our movement in these challenging times

- Supported leaders to continue to be active online by holding trainings on how to use Zoom and host effective online meetings
- Run a training on **Social Media Activism 101**—attended by 120+ people
- Launched two national hubs—**the Digital Hub and the Contractor Hub**, to skill up the most active members of our movement, provide them with training and facilitate peer to peer support from other leaders playing a similar role in other groups across the country.
- Supported 50 of our most active leaders to use Slack—an online platform that allows for better collaboration and cross-fertilisation among groups.



Tipping Point Movement Builder and leader of Coffs Coast Climate Action Liisa Rusanen with 30 grassroots leaders from 4 different groups across the region.

# CLIMATE STRIKE

Despite a challenging organising context and the inability to take to the streets, the school strikers continue to grow from strength to strength, responding to key momentum, staying connected and learning new skills to be stronger community organisers and campaigners.

As of February, Tipping Point is the sole NGO supporting the strikers with training, leadership development, communications (media and digital), community organising, structure and strategy development. We collaborate with movement partners around major strike mobilisations.

**The School Strike movement has active groups of students in over 150 cities and towns across Australia**—from fossil fuel communities in Central Queensland, the Hunter Valley and the Latrobe Valley to tiny country towns in Western NSW, far north WA, the desert of SA and all of the major urban centres.

## National School Strike Summit

In January, Tipping Point and the Australian Youth Climate Coalition worked with 100 strikers to organise their inaugural face to face Summit in Redfern over three days. The Summit deepened relationships across the network and supported strikers to learn new skills and discuss longer-term plans and strategies.

The biggest outcome of the Summit was the connections and relationships built. The student strike movement, without knowing each other, has mobilised 500,000 people across Australia. Imagine what they can do now that so many have met and planned together in person.

It was exciting to have nearly **60% of the students from rural and regional areas**. It was a great opportunity for city strikers to hear and understand the specific challenges faced by students organising in these contexts.

Participant feedback demonstrated an increased understanding of the importance of strategy and community organising with **90% of strikers rating the overall experience as 4 or 5 out of 5**.

*“The opportunity to meet fellow strikers face to face (at the summit) was probably one of the best opportunities many in the movement have received. Putting names to the faces of people I’d previously only ever talked to online was a rewarding and strengthening experience.”*  
—**School Striker**



Tipping Point supported 100 school strikers to come together for their first face to face national summit in January

## Strike School

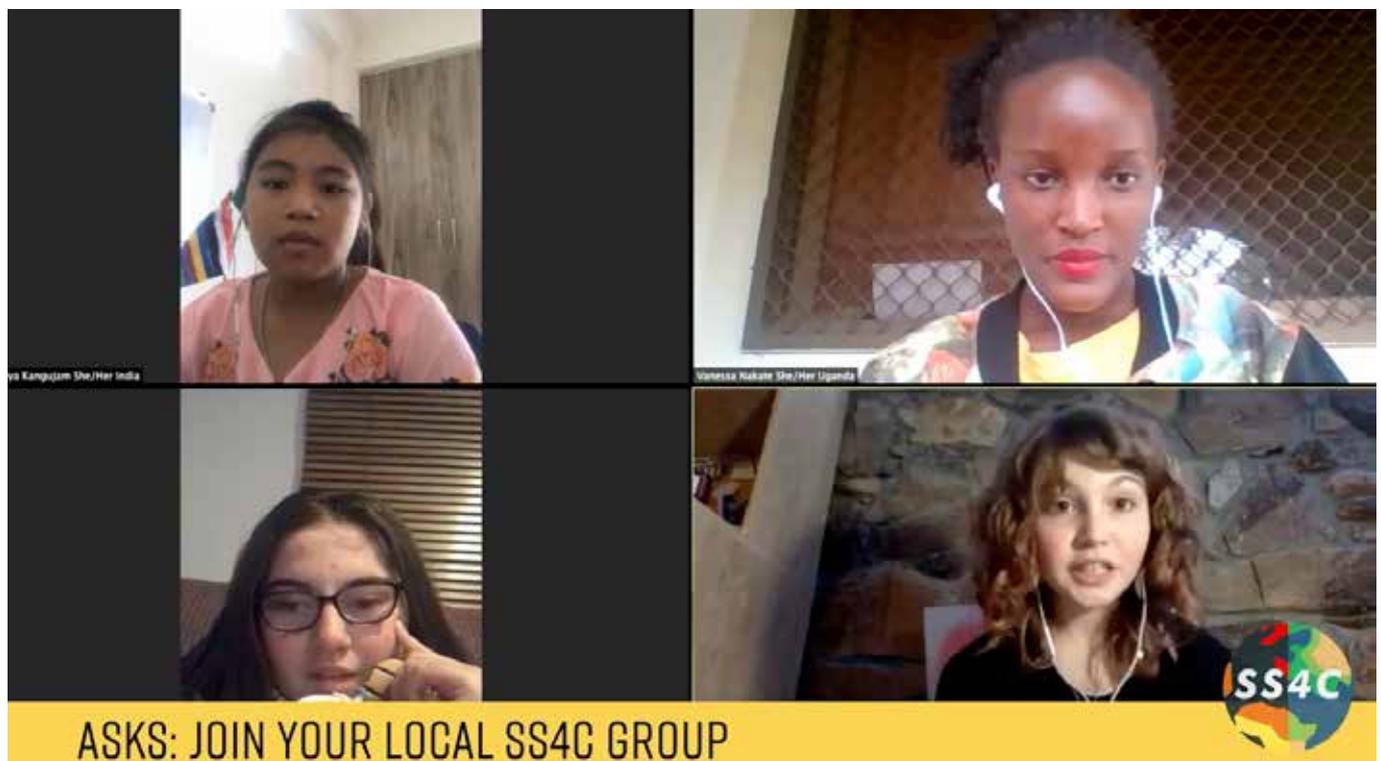
Since April, we have rolled out an [online Strike School](#) to train students in community/relational organising, climate justice and digital organising.

We've hosted two classes each week and a mid-week craft/hangout space for students to connect and build relationships. We've just launched the second semester of Strike School and are collaborating with movement partners to deliver cutting edge organising and strategy training. Strike School has been incredibly popular with almost **600 school strikers attending so far**.

## May 15 Livestream

Before the COVID-19 crisis, strikers had planned to turn out hundreds of thousands of people in the streets on Friday May 15 for their biggest #ClimateStrike. The pandemic posed multiple challenges, but they rose to the occasion and pulled off an incredibly sophisticated four-hour online livestream instead. The high energy program included union leaders, First Nations leaders, rural and regional communities, high profile climate scientists, live performances and interactive activities and campaign ads throughout.

**The livestream was viewed by over 50,000 people and provided a platform to those on the frontlines of the COVID-19 and climate crises.** Feedback indicated this was deeply appreciated, and has built stronger relationships. Hundreds of new students joined the movement through an online sign up process advertised during the livestream.



13 year old Armidale striker Arlie (bottom right) hosts a session on the May 15 livestream connecting with amazing student strikers from across the globe—Licypriya from India, Vanessa from Uganda and Ash from New Zealand

## Mentors and support hubs

Given Tipping Point is such a small team (the equivalent of 2.5 full time staff support the 150 local strike groups) we have come up with innovative ways to support the network. This has led to the creation of **17 regional hubs** comprising several school strike groups in a similar geographic region.

Each hub is supported by 1–2 volunteer mentors who check in with students regularly, help them make plans and look out for their welfare. This has enabled us to provide greater distributed support to the network to **allow us to scale** and also implement stronger processes around safeguarding and looking out for the wellbeing of these incredible young leaders.

## Our Impact over the past 6 months

- **National Strategy Process and Decision Making:** students now have established structures and processes for making and deciding on national strategies as a network. No small feat in a highly distributed grassroots network!
- **Deeper Understanding of Climate Justice:** Through Strike School and the Summit students are forming a deeper understanding of the difference between climate action and climate justice and the ways in which climate change impacts upon certain groups of people more than others. Many students mentioned in their feedback on Strike School that they have plans to actively centre climate justice in their local groups and future strikes.
- **Leadership Development:** We have supported the students to step up their involvement in lots of different ways over the past 6 months:
  - Forty two students took on a range of roles during the summit
  - Almost two dozen students have stepped up to co-facilitate sessions as part of Strike School
  - A team of over 100 students stepped up to deliver the May 15 livestream in a range of areas from the highly complicated tech arrangement to developing the program of speakers, communications and social media.

# WHERE TO FROM HERE?

## #STOPADANI

We need to use the power and profile we have built through the #StopAdani campaign to finally stop the mine AND continue to win bigger shifts to move Australia and the world beyond coal.

Our new approaches on mining contractors and insurance companies are working—sparking significant sector wide conversations about involvement in coal projects and continuing to remove the social licence of coal.

### Key priorities for the next 6 months:

- **Focus grassroots pressure on insurance broker Marsh** to rule out Adani and become the first major broker to create a position on climate change and coal.
- Help launch a global strategy to get key potential insurers out of fossil fuels.
- **Explore opportunities to pressure major banks and investors** to rule out coal financing, using Adani's Abbot Point Port as a critical test.
- **Launch the #StopAdani leadership Skill Up program for leaders of priority groups** to build the knowledge and skills to build strong groups that last.
- **Host a #StopAdani Summit online mid-2020** to bring #StopAdani groups from across the country together to connect, get the latest intel, receive training and strategise about building the power of the broader anti coal movement.

## SCHOOL STRIKE

As students build their skills in community organising and climate justice through Strike School, we are also working with them to discuss and develop short and longer term strategies to grow the size and power of their movement, alongside key allies.

### Key priorities for the next 6 months:

- **Strategy development:** navigating the constantly changing landscape we find ourselves in with COVID-19 and the climate crisis and supporting young new activists to develop strategies. This could include identifying opportunities for strikers to drive and lead key climate components of the Covid People's Recovery work.
- **Impact whilst online:** this is a challenge for the movement as a whole. We are working with the strikers to put ourselves in the shoes of our opponents and develop tactics and plans that pressure them during lock-down.

- **Scaling support:** as the Strike movement continues to grow, Tipping Point needs a way to continue to grow the number of hubs and volunteer mentors supporting the strikers. Our goal in 2020–21 is to ensure each regional hub has at least 2 mentors supporting it.
- **Leadership development:** as new activists, there are many skills and qualities that students want to learn and to deepen their work. The success of the next phase of the movement will require more investment in this leadership work so that the strikers can take their network to the next level. This will include continuing Strike School and extending it into ongoing training programmes to meet the student’s needs.

## OUR TEAM

The Tipping Point Team is now 10-organisers strong, comprising our 2 core campaign teams: StopAdani and ClimateStrike, supported by 6 Tipping Movement Builders dedicating 1–2 days per week to support the #StopAdani movement.

Over recent months, we have been reviewing our organisational purpose and culture, prioritising a greater focus on team diversity and systems that will enable our team to scale the impact we have with the networks we support.

**Tipping Point is funded by the movement for the movement.** With your generous donation we can keep supporting these incredible grassroots networks to grow and take impactful and strategic action to solve the climate crisis.



From left to right:

Back: Josh Creaser,  
Moira Williams,  
Zoe Buckley-Lennox

Middle: Matt Ross,  
Charlie Wood, Aimee  
Bull-McMahon

Front: April Broadbent  
& Maddie Sarre  
(Tipping Point  
Movement Builders),  
Mick Mcgrath

Very Front: Isaac Astill,  
Nina Atkinson