The Lock the Gate Vision

Healthy, empowered communities which have fair, democratic processes available to them to protect their land and water and deliver sustainable solutions to food and energy needs.

Our Mission

To protect Australia's natural, cultural and agricultural resources from inappropriate mining and to educate and empower all Australians to demand sustainable solutions to food and energy production.
I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and their Elders. I particularly wish to thank those Traditional Owners who have guided and worked alongside us in opposing inappropriate mining in every state and the Northern Territory.

This year has been particularly difficult for our movement because many of our farming members are now dealing with a very serious drought. The reality of dealing with drought is different for everyone, and the approaches that each individual takes to manage it will be different.

Many of our farming members have made it clear that they are always responding to the weather, and managing long dry spells is something they prepare for, but the scale and intensity of this drought has been particularly severe.

However, the situation is exacerbated by the fact that the Federal Government does not have a drought policy, and is still ignoring the impacts of climate change and its key drivers - coal and gas mining. The worst aspect is that the mining and gas industries get special access to water resources, outside the rules that apply to agricultural water use.

As a movement, the crucial thing at times like this is to look after one another as much as we can and find a path through this together. In the longer term, we need to build a greater emphasis on regenerative agriculture and resilient communities to create stronger buffers against future climatic extremes.

On behalf of the Lock the Gate Alliance (LTG) Board, I would like to offer thanks to our 25 staff and contractors, and to the volunteers who work so hard for communities across this country. These people can be very exposed to the might of the powerful fossil fuel industries and their multinational backers. It is a testament to the extraordinary determination and resilience of our staff and volunteers and the support of their communities that they keep going. The Board is particularly grateful for the work of the national team, for their commitment and consummate skill in a wide range of critically important areas.

I would like to thank the Board for their dedication and hard work. Board members are volunteers and have willingly applied their many skills to the development of LTG.

Yours truly,

Simon Clough

Chair, Lock the Gate Alliance Board
Lock the Gate

Our Work

Lock the Gate (LTG) is a unique organisation. Our roots are proudly in rural and regional Australia and foundational to our work is the support and empowerment of communities. LTG endeavours to employ local people as coordinators and works hard to help enable local communities and their leaders to advocate with politicians, mining companies and government agencies.

LTG is working with local communities in the face of dozens of big new coal mines and hundreds of gasfield licences across Australia, plus new gas pipelines. Over 37% of the Australian landmass is covered in coal and petroleum licences and applications. We're up against CSG, tight gas, shale gas and coal and oil. We're calling out abandoned open cut mine pollution and fugitive methane emissions. We're taking on some of the biggest mining and extraction companies in Australia. We're standing with locals to stop inappropriate mines and gas drilling. We call on companies to clean up their acts.

The Movement

Lock the Gate is a huge network of networks. From the tip of the Kimberly to the far reaches of Tasmania, the Lock the Gate movement has collaborated to build strong regional alliances. Working together, we have assisted over 460 empowered communities to declare themselves coal and gasfield free. More than 74 local Councils have got involved in standing up to mining projects and applications.

There are hundreds of First Nations people in the network fighting for water, culture and country. Farmers are speaking up while also dealing with a severe drought and facing up to a changing climate. Tourism operators are fighting to keep areas pristine and water clear while trying to run their businesses.

We are truly humbled to be a part of an alliance of incredible people who give up so much to protect water, land, health, heritage and the communities we all value.
Our Team

Lock the Gate has a team of approximately 25 employees and contractors across a variety of full time and part time roles. We all bring unique and broad skills, local connections and committed input to campaigns across the country. LTG staff are passionate about the work they do to protect Australian communities from coal and gas. Our team works to protect land, water and communities across WA, NT, QLD, NSW, SA, and have supported incredible community-driven work in VIC and TAS.

Meet the Board of Directors

Lock the Gate is ably supported by seven volunteer directors who willingly donate their time to oversee governance of the organisation.

Simon Clough

Simon has chaired the board for five years. He has been active in grassroots community work for nearly 50 years, including a significant role in keeping the Northern Rivers of NSW gasfielded free. He served for eight years on Lismore City Council with three years as Deputy Mayor. Simon has worked as a professional mediator for over 20 years.

Sarah Moles

Sarah has been a member of the Board since its inception. She has a long history of involvement in natural resource management and water issues across the Murray Darling and Great Artesian Basins. Sarah lives on the Darling Downs.

Ross Joseph, B.A (Syd); MHP (UNSW)

Ross has been a Board member since 2014. He is a landholder from the Bentley area which rejected gas drilling by Metgasco. He worked for over 30 years in the area of Health Services Management & Planning both in Australia and overseas. Senior Management roles included Deputy CEO of the Benevolent Society of NSW & of Lismore Base Hospital and CEO of St Vincent’s Hospital Lismore. For a further 20 years Ross was a senior consultant at national, provincial & remote rural levels in S-E Asia (China, Philippines, Cambodia & Vietnam) and the Pacific (PNG, Tonga, Samoa, Marshall Islands, Fiji, Solomon Islands & Vanuatu).

Steve Bolt

Steve is a solicitor. He has been a member of the Board for 3 years. After 12 years at Redfern Legal Centre and then at the Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre, Steve is now in private practice in Lismore.

Adam Blakester

Adam is a sustainability entrepreneur and social change strategist with diverse environmental, community, business and government experience. With qualifications originally in accounting and taxation law, Adam brings strong business and organisational acumen with expertise in leadership, management, community development, facilitation and communication.

Libby Connors

Libby has a history of peace and environmental campaigning over more than 30 years. Professionally she is associate professor of history with research expertise in the history of the Australian environment and in Australian legal history. She joined the Lock the Gate Board in March 2018.

Rob Tulloch

Rob is a Chartered Accountant who has been in professional practice for over 35 years. In his practice he has been involved with many Charitable and Not-For-Profit (NFP) organisations both as an auditor and as an advisor.

Rob has also sat on the boards of numerous charitable and NFP organisations and was one of the founding directors of OzHarvest. Rob became involved in Lock the Gate through the WAGE (Wollombi against Gas Extraction) campaign in the Hunter. He is committed to community service having been closely involved in a number of sporting organisation and has been a volunteer member of the NSW Rural Fire Service for over 30 years.
Chairperson’s Report

One of the Board’s most important roles has been to provide support and assistance to our staff, contractors and volunteers to ensure their needs for health and safety are met. To this end the Board has been developing a strong culture and policy around work and safety issues. The Board and its Governance and Compliance Committee have been committed to improving systems of compliance and appropriate policies such as the recently completed Board Charter.

The Board has been challenged with the federal coalition launching repeated attacks on not for profit (NFP) organisations this past year. LTG has joined the Protect Our Charities coalition which is a collaborative effort across the NFP sector. We have also become a member of the Community Council for Australia. There has been a positive side to this in that there is growing strength, proactive collaboration and political awareness in the NFP sector.

Coordinator’s Report

From signs on gates, to access to legal and scientific support, this year Lock the Gate has been in community halls, council offices, in the media and at Parliament. In the past 12 months we have engaged dozens of scientists, lawyers and economists to help make the case for Australian land and communities, where water is protected. Damaging projects have been stopped in their tracks or met with a far greater level of scrutiny.

Campaign Snapshot for 2018

Community groups across Australia are working on hundreds of campaigns to protect land and water from inappropriate mining.

The below list gives a snapshot of just some of these incredibly important campaigns.

NT Fracking

This year, the NT Government decided to defy community concerns and opposition to fracking in the Northern Territory and lift the fracking moratorium, despite the fracking inquiry finding that the vast majority of people in the NT were opposed to it. Just weeks after the ban was lifted, community pressure saw the NT Labor Party vote with a 2/3 majority to ban fracking at their annual conference.

We’re building ongoing relationships with Traditional Owners, pastoralists and tourism operators across the Territory to unite and amplify the voices of impacted regions in the battle to protect land, water and communities from fracking gasfields.

Adani Coal Mine

Our team has been thoroughly scrutinising the water entitlements of Adani for the proposed Carmichael coal mine. We’ve exposed the huge impact that Adani’s coal mine will have on water resources, and the disastrous decision by the Federal Government to allow Adani to bypass the Federal water trigger despite their plans to take 12.5 billion litres of water from the Suttor River. We’ve worked with local landholders and scientists to highlight the hypocrisy of giving huge volumes of free groundwater to Adani while our farmers suffer through a terrible drought.
South East SA Fracking

This year the Liberal Government voted in support of a bill to ban fracking for 10-years in the Limestone Coast. This is an incredibly important step along the path to making the region gasfield free. Big congratulations are due to the Limestone Coast Protection Alliance, who also forced Beach Energy to extend the submission period on their proposed conventional gas well in the region and have prepared a detailed submission exposing the risks.

In the coming year, we will continue to support community action across these campaigns and more to protect land and water from inappropriate mining activities.

QLD Mine Rehabilitation

We've been pushing hard for the Queensland Government to strengthen its mine rehabilitation laws and create thousands of regional jobs in the process. We've exposed the weaknesses of the new draft rehabilitation legislation in the media and we've had billboards up in north Queensland calling for action.

CSG Waste Dump in QLD

This year we've been working with the Cameby Concerned Citizens and Western Downs Alliance to get more scientific advice on the impacts of the We Kando salt dump which plans to dispose of 15 million tonnes of CSG salt and other toxic waste just 100m from Stockyard Creek, near the headwaters of the Murray Darling water catchment.

Narrabri Gasfield and #Time2Choose

This year we commissioned a renewables report that showed solar and wind energy for Narrabri region would create three times more than the local operational jobs in the Narrabri gas project. Plus the solar jobs would last much longer than gas jobs. We helped support the fantastic stall at AgQuip and we've just worked with the local community to door-knock every home in Narrabri with a survey on CSG vs renewables. The results showed an overwhelming majority of people in favour of renewable energy compared to less than a third that want CSG.

To keep the pressure building in Sydney to support the regions, this year we hosted a 10,000 strong rally of people to call on the NSW to take action to protect land and water from coal and gas, and to support renewable energy instead. We've also had a stall and LTG speakers at the massive Taste of Coogee festival, raising awareness about the risks for the Narrabri CSG project and the Time2Choose campaign.

Wide Bay Burnett Fracking

The opposition to unconventional gas in the Wide Bay Burnett is growing fast, with farming groups from the region speaking out strongly against it and a new report revealing the major risks it would pose to water resources. The licences in the region are up for renewal at the end of December, and we're calling for them to be relinquished or not-renewed.
Financial Report

It is my pleasure to provide the following report for inclusion in our Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2018.

Income for the financial year was slightly down due to a reduction in Grants Received. Grants are received each year to conduct various campaign programs & activities. Grants are hence variable as they are dependent upon the current programs & activities of the company.

Employee Benefits Expenses has increased by $379,345 as the result of the conversion of several contractors to employees.

The Balance Sheet reflects a healthy position with cash on hand of $1,228,251. Given the company’s employment and other contractual commitments, reserves of approximately 6 months of expenditure, is deemed appropriate by the Board for financial stability.

WA Fracking

In WA, a rally of over 600 people at WA Parliament saw a hand signed petition of over 13,000 names demanding a legislated state-wide ban on fracking presented to the Government. We’ve been pushing hard on the fracking inquiry and encouraging local MPs to announce their support for a state-wide ban on unconventional gas in WA. For example, Josie Farrer, the ALP MP for the Kimberley, spoke out supporting a total ban after our media expose of radionuclides in fracking waste water in the Kimberley.

Bylong Coal Mine and Hunter diversification

Across the Hunter, we are deepening our engagement with people in the region and building support for moving the region beyond coal. Lock the Gate staff and volunteers have hosted community dinners and completed door-to-door surveys of 1,000 people in Singleton and Muswellbrook, talking about the damage of the mining industry, with 9 out of 10 respondents calling for a plan for a post coal economy.

We’ve also been working hard to prevent the Bylong coal project this year. We’ve exposed suppressed warnings that the mine will cause the Bylong River to dry up, worked in partnership with the Bylong Valley Protection Alliance and EDO NSW to secure the analysis of economic, water and other experts, coordinated field trips and created videos and other visual content to spread the word.