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Subject:	[CoalCommunities] AUSTRALIANS ALL FACE A CRUCIAL CHOICE
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AUSTRALIANS ALL FACE A CRUCIAL CHOICE: HAND YOUR WATER FUTURE OVER TO THE WATER LORDS OR KEEP THE MOST VITAL RESOURCE YOU HAVE UNDER YOUR CONTROL

We live in an upside down world where celebrity matters more than substance. This is the age of the airhead where economic rationalism is considered by most to be 'rational' and for the common good.

Globalisation, economic ‘rationalism’, simply allows water, in our dry land to become a tradable commodity that soon only the very rich will be able to afford in large quantities. It is happening in a thousand subtle ways right before our eyes.

Water: the gossamer web that binds all life together will soon be the new oil.

If Australians let this happen we are in dire strife. Water is our food, our environment, our future, our lives. Why take it down to the market and sell it?

Maude Barlow, up until recently the senior water adviser to the President of the UN General Assembly and Dr Ian Douglas a member of the Special Steering Committee of the Australian Water Network, have co-authored the following OP ED Submission.

This week, Australia has been told, for the first time in a decade of subterfuge, that the privatisation of water is the end game. This game has now seen private global water lords take over supply of water to Adelaide, Ballarat and Bendigo seen the handing over of billions to global companies building desalination plants.

The new Australian Prime Minister has made it clear that Australia will not support the Bolivian peoples battle to retain water supplies and services in the hands of the people.

The gauntlet has been thrown down. It is time for the nation to just wake up.

Over one third of the world’s water is now in the hands of massive water conglomerates. Last year the trade in global water was nearly 75% the value of oil trade.

Huge global corporates with annual turnovers ten times that of the GDP of many countries are after the world’s water. This is done via the ruse of Private, Public Partnerships and a thousand other smoke and mirror means.

The global water grabbers have both the technology and the finance to dominate and Australia is a sitting duck.

The fact of life in todays corporate driven globe is the people, who have the technology and the know-how, run the agenda.

Big waterboys already own a lot of of Australia’s water, mainly via foreign owned agri-businesses and deals with municipal authorities. They also have the controlling say in dozens and dozens of PPP’s.

Stating the bleeding obvious, the forces that control the water control everything.

The erosion of human rights in Australia; the only democratic country in the world to not have a comprehensive code of human rights in place, will be absolute when a government allows water to be privatised.

Op-ed Submission Maude Barlow and Dr Ian Douglas.

On June 17, the Bolivian Ambassador to the United Nations presented a draft resolution declaring the human right to “safe and clean drinking water and sanitation” to a closed-door consultation at the UN General Assembly that will be dealt with over coming weeks. This is the first time the General Assembly has been asked directly to deal with this issue, presenting a huge test for the world and for Australia.

When the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights was written, no one could foresee a day when water would be a contested issue. But in 2010, it

is not an exaggeration to say that the lack of access to clean water is the greatest human rights violation in the world.
Nearly two billion people live in water-stressed areas of the world and three billion have no running water within a kilometre of their homes. Every eight seconds a child dies of water borne disease, in every case preventable if their parents had money to pay for water - and it is getting worse as the world runs out of clean water. A new World Bank reports says that by 2030, global demand for water will exceed supply by 40 percent, a shocking prediction that foretells of terrible suffering.
For several years, international and local community groups fighting for water justice have been calling for a binding UN convention that clarifies once and for all that no one should be denied water for life because of an inability to pay, especially in the light of the water markets now being set up that allow the wealthy to appropriate dwindling water supplies for private profit. The fact that water is not now an enforceable human right has allowed decision-making over water policy to shift from the UN and governments to institutions such as the World Bank, the World Water Council and the World Trade Organization, that favour a market future for water.
Support for the right to water has been steadily growing in recent years but, indefensibly, unlike Australia's important role in drafting the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Australian government has displayed a particularly casual attitude to this fundamental liberty. There are several possible reasons for this. Australian governments would have to clean up their acts in indigenous communities where services, including water supply, are often substandard.
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