

# THE NIMBIN GOOD TIMES

Your FREE community paper

Giant Devils Fig Edition

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# Rising Tide blockade of coal port



Photo: Robert Ensby

by Chibo Mertineit

The Transport for NSW department imposed a maritime exclusion zone on Friday, just four days before the 'Climate Justice Protestival' was meant to start next to Horseshoe Beach in Muloobinba/Newcastle.

After last year's successful 30-hour blocking of the shipping lane for the huge coal ships in agreement with the police through long negotiations, this year Rising Tide, an environmental volunteer based action group organising the People's Blockade, aimed to do it for 50 hours.

They are saying that our government is not doing enough to fight global warming, and as we learnt in March, our Great Barrier Reef has just gone through its fifth mass bleaching in eight years, where up to 72% died, caused by the high water temperatures.

We have not achieved the aim of the Paris climate agreement to keep the temperature rise below one point five degrees, because most countries have not fulfilled

their commitment towards this.

On Thursday afternoon, while I was driving to Newcastle, I got the message that Alexa Stuart, a young member of the organising team, was successful when she took the matter to the Supreme Court and won. The NSW government should not have used the Maritime Safety Act for this situation, and we were allowed to go into the water. That was just in time, because the blockade was meant to start on Friday morning.

The protestival was longer, bigger and better and there was a large contingent of Northern Rivers residents who joined, organised and facilitated. A few locals were the driving force behind the organising of our regional hub, water safety, affinity groups and the spokescouncil, an alternative model of direct democracy.

Many locals also played significant roles as volunteers in the blockade including water safety, first aid and cooking.

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