FACT SHEET

The uranium mining ban in Western Australia

Who is Cauldron Energy?

Cauldron Energy Ltd (Cauldron) is an Australian mineral exploration and resource development company listed on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX:CXU). The company focuses on exploring uranium, a resource that is critical to the nuclear power renaissance occurring globally.

Cauldron's flagship project is the world-class Yanrey Uranium Project located in northern Western Australia (WA), which encompasses three separate uranium deposits – Bennet Well, Manyingee South and Manyingee North. In addition, Cauldron holds several sand tenements in the Onslow region of WA.

Subject to policy change in WA, Cauldron proposes to mine uranium via the in-situ recovery (ISR) mining method at Yanrey.

For further information, see our factsheet: 'In-situ recovery mining of uranium'.

Why is there a ban on mining uranium in Western Australia?

Western Australia currently prohibits new uranium mining projects, despite holding some of the world's largest undeveloped uranium resources and despite WA being globally recognised as a top tier mining jurisdiction generally.

The ban is a policy position of the current WA Labor Government. It is not a legislative prohibition. It is enacted through Ministerial direction and refusal to grant new mining approvals for uranium, rather than through a specific Act of Parliament.

The ban was introduced in June 2017 following a change of government. Its rationale at the time included:

- Perceptions of nuclear energy
- Community sentiment
- Market conditions
- Historical legacy issues.

These drivers are now no longer relevant and the ban should be reconsidered.



Perceptions of nuclear energy

In 2017, nuclear power was not widely recognised as a green, zero carbon energy source.



Community sentiment

Public understanding of uranium and radiation was lower, and concerns were more prevalent.



Market conditions

Uranium prices were extremely low (around US$20/lb), making projects uneconomic.



Historical legacy issues

Early era uranium mines in the Northern Territory (Rum Jungle and Ranger Mine) created negative perceptions, despite modern standards being vastly improved.

How is the ban enacted?

The ban is administrative, not legislative. It is implemented through:

- Refusal to approve new uranium mining projects
- Ministerial policy direction to regulators
- Restrictions on progressing uranium projects beyond exploration.

This means that no specific change in legislation is needed to remove the ban – a simple direction (memo) from the relevant Minister (or Premier) to the executive of the WA Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration would suffice.

Existing projects approved before 2017 (for example Yeelirrie and Kintyre (Cameco), Wiluna (ISO Energy) and Mulga Rock (Deep Yellow)) were allowed to continue under 'grandfathering' arrangements subject to meeting substantial commitment obligations, but no new approvals can be granted.

To date, only the Mulga Rock Project owned and operated by Deep Yellow Ltd has met its substantial commitment obligations.

History of uranium mining in Western Australia

Western Australia has a long exploration history but no commercial uranium mine has ever operated, despite uranium mining being legal for long periods.

Exploration across WA slowed dramatically after the ban was enacted in 2017. Cauldron remained active, while most other explorers paused or exited WA. Under the ban, Cauldron:

- Continued heritage surveys
- Drilled uranium targets
- Advanced geological modelling
- Increased Joint Ore Reserves Committee (JORC) Resources
- Progressed in-situ recovery (ISR) related technical work.

This work was funded in part by grants totalling $217,750 awarded under the WA Government's Exploration Incentive Scheme (EIS) in April 2026.

The history of uranium mining in Western Australia

1970s
Significant exploration occurred across WA
Extensive exploration programs were undertaken across the State, identifying numerous uranium prospects.

1980s–2000s
Uranium mining policy fluctuated between governments
Policy settings changed several times, creating uncertainty for industry and investors.

2010–2016
Several WA uranium projects received environmental approval
A number of uranium mining proposals were assessed and granted environmental approvals to proceed.

2017
The current ban was enacted
The Western Australian Government enacted a ban on uranium mining in the State.

Since 2017
Exploration has slowed dramatically due to the ban and low prices
Exploration activity has dropped significantly, with few new programs undertaken across WA.

Why the ban should be overturned

There are many compelling arguments why the uranium mining ban should be overturned in WA. These arguments are summarised below and detailed in Cauldron's submission to the WA Government's Decarbonisation Inquiry in 2025.

THE DEEP DIVE PODCAST · 21 MINS
Breaking down the WA Uranium Mining Ban
Listen at cauldronenergy.com.au



Cauldron's submission to the WA Government's Decarbonisation Inquiry, 2025

Nuclear energy is now globally recognised as green

EU | UK | US | Canada | Japan | and others

- Nuclear is formally classified as clean energy in the European Union (EU), United Kingdom (UK), United States (US), Canada, Japan and others.
- Uranium is therefore a green fuel, directly aligned with WA's decarbonisation objectives.

Western Australia's major trading partners urgently need uranium

China | South Korea | Japan | India | US | EU

- China, South Korea, Japan, India, the US and the EU are all expanding nuclear capacity.
- Most are net short uranium — they consume far more than they produce.

Uranium export is the highest impact decarbonisation action WA can take

415 Mt CO_2 offset per year

WA's entire annual emissions	**1×**
WA uranium exports could offset	**about 4.5×**

- Under Chamber of Commerce and Industry WA (CCIWA) modelling, WA uranium exports could offset about 415 million tonnes of CO_2 per year (about 4.5× WA's entire annual emissions).

Market conditions have fundamentally changed

Uranium price		Global demand	
2017	**US$20/lb**	2017	**94 kt**
Today	**>US$80/lb**	2025	**150 kt**

- Uranium prices have risen from US$20/lb in 2017 to greater than US$80/lb today – a 4× increase.
- Global demand forecasts have surged from 94 kt (2017) to 150 kt (2025).

Western Australia can mine uranium safely

- South Australia has a **40-year** track record of safe uranium mining.
- Western Australia already manages significant radioactive materials through mineral sands, rare earths, oil and gas, and medical sectors.
- Western Australia has a world-class waste facility (Tellus Sandy Ridge).

Economic benefits are large and immediate

Up to 9,000
jobs

Greater than $1 billion
per year in direct economic contribution

- Diversification of WA's royalty base
- Exploration boom expected immediately after lifting the ban.

Community sentiment

Community sentiment has shifted significantly since the uranium mining ban was introduced in 2017. Public support for nuclear technologies in Australia has been rising in several recent polls, driven by climate goals, energy security concerns and growing awareness of modern nuclear technologies. Many Australians now view uranium mining as a responsible, regulated industry that supports decarbonisation and regional jobs.

In a recent poll, more than two-thirds of New South Wales voters (67%) supported uranium mining in the State if it helped address climate change, according to research conducted for the Minerals Council of Australia. It is likely that this result would be similar (or possibly higher) in pro-mining States such as Western Australia and Queensland.

67% **of New South Wales voters support uranium mining in the State if it helps address climate change**

If South Australia can mine uranium safely… there is no question about Western Australia's ability to do the same.

Contact us

Cauldron Energy Ltd (Cauldron) is an Australian mineral exploration and resource development company listed on the Australian Securities Exchange (ASX:CXU).

Email: jonathan.fisher@cauldronenergy.com.au
Phone: +61 407 981 867
Website: https://www.cauldronenergy.com.au/

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