

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the modification of a mine near Wollongong, proposed by Peabody.

I strongly **OPPOSE** this modification. It was extremely irresponsible for the original coal mining approval to have been granted in the first place, many years ago, as this mine extends under the Sydney Water supply catchment area - unbelievably! – risking the city's water supply!

One immediately thinks “what could possibly go wrong?”, and, of course, the answer is: PLENTY!

The well-documented litany of disasters this particular longwall underground coal mine has caused include the following:

- Subsidence and cracking of the surface sandstone above, leading to:
- Draining of upland swamps, creeks and streams;
- Heavy metal contamination of surface water flowing into the Woronora Reservoir, one of Sydney's water catchment dams!
- Irreversible damage to the water filtration system provided by upland swamps on the surface – when they dry out that's the end;
- As such, the ecosystems supported by the fragile upland swamps will go extinct;
- Coastal Upland Swamps are listed as an Endangered Ecological Community, serving as habitat for many animal species, including the Giant Dragonfly, the Eastern Ground Parrot, the Giant Burrowing Frog, Littlejohn's Tree Frog and the Red-Crowned Toadlet. When the swamps dry out due to the coal mining operation below, these species are pushed a little further down the road to extinction. This is not what anyone wants.
- Coal mining and water catchments are incompatible – there have been numerous major coal waste spills into the waters of the Royal National Park, which is nationally precious, and should not be subjected to such things;
- This causes thick black coal sludge to form, which is near impossible to remediate; Peabody has been hit with paltry fines for this pollution, which does nothing to deter their sloppy operations. There is no reason to give them so many “second chances”.

Peabody are making/have made billions of dollars profit from coal mining, and understandably want to continue to do so, even though by now everybody on earth knows that we have to stop mining and burning coal due to the Climate Emergency. This extension should NOT be approved for that reason alone. It is INSANITY to keep mining and burning coal when the science tells us it is an existential threat to humanity and the planet. The government shouldn't even be considering approval of such a climate-wrecking project extension (wrongly called a “modification”).

At some point, we all have to get real about Climate Change action.

At some point, we all have to say “NO” to coal mining projects.

And for goodness' sake, do not go down the road of allowing Peabody to create/buy “offsets”, which are pure greenwashing, allowing polluters & destroyers to “kick the can down the road”, ie, delay the inevitable, while continuing to make rivers-of-gold profits.

Hopefully, either the NSW government or the Independent Planning Panel will see sense and think of the future! If not for themselves, maybe for their children and their grandchildren. It is that personal. Water is precious! Don't risk it (any more); and remember that there is no “Planet B”.

Once again, thanks for the opportunity to comment.