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**Submission of objection**

**Dungowan Dam and Pipeline Project SSI - 10046**

I am lodging my comments on the new Dungowan EIS because my family is very concerned about the direction the NSW government wants to take in regards to drinking water availability in the region. This is against a background of the recent drought and the expansion of Tamworth to 100,000 inhabitants. Viable solutions are required now, the dam will not be available until at least another 10 years from now. We don’t want to be in the same situation as at the end of the last drought – no water left, delivery of tank water never turning up, no proper coordination and a lack plan B from any (government) body. I run a small horse breeding enterprise for boutique horses, which was badly affected by this situation. This situation happened despite scientific proof that we are facing a changing climate to which we must adapt.

The new Dungowan Dam is economically totally un-feasible, a return figure of around 25 % is totally unacceptable for such a little bit of water – only an increase of 14 GL will be provided by this dam, IF enough rain falls in the catchment. No project will go ahead when such a poor return is obtained. The cost of the dam will be equivalent to $ 60 per inhabitant of Australia. I think this is unjustifiable especially when other proven methods of obtaining water have been used elsewhere in Australia and the world.

Water is the scarcest resource on the planet. Only 1.2 % of water is drinkable. Creating another dam will take another quantity out of the environmentally available water, which to my information is already overcommitted. Against a background that the world population is using 1.7 times the resources available at the moment on this planet, this is a threat to human kind, and this figure is predicted to increase.

None of the alternatives mentioned have been studied to the depth that is required to provide alternatives have been included in the business case and are not in the EIS. Some alternatives have not even been mentioned. The purpose of a Business Case is exactly that: Indicating to the stakeholders that the recommended solution(s) is the best approach. This needs to at least include Economic, Environmental, Legal, and Technical feasibility. Subsequently, I need to mention that the stakeholders in this case are the local council, TRC ratepayers and local business.

Water usage in Australia per capita is already one of the highest in the world. We need to urgently put measures in place to reduce our water usage. Education and User pay system must be implemented asap. Our water usage ranks 9th in the world, and we are one of the driest continents. As a comparison, Australia uses 523 cubic metre of water per year per inhabitant, the UK uses 123.

The building of this dam does not adhere to the concepts of a Circular Economy. The strategies involved in circular economies aim at reusing components with minimal or no waste. This also applies to water. Building a dam just adds to the resources used for the supply of water rather than re-using the water by recycling. Recycling has the added bonus that other waste products can be removed and be used as input in other products such as the manufacture of fertilisers, compost and generating energy (methane).

There are several ways to reuse water or capture water that is otherwise lost. Strategies are storm water capture, piping water from other (large) dams, storage by businesses and homes on site, purifying water on site or neighbourhood and/or have separate water supply systems for different purposes. Many of these projects are done around the world and discussed on the World Economic Forum website as well by industry groups and community groups around the world. Recycling will still provide water during droughts, where dams run empty.

By investing 1.3 billion on a dam, the risk of limiting other much lower cost solutions is very real. A current example is already happening where TRC is proposing recycling industry water, mainly used by abattoirs in the Tamworth region. This will be limiting the use of drinking water for this purpose – currently 45 % of Tamworth’s drinking water. A request for funding by TRC to the government of a $ 100 million has so fare not been awarded.

**I do strongly request to NOT building this expensive, low result solution.**