

Objection to Moolarben Coalmine Extension to Open Cut 3

I object to this proposed coalmine extension. I am gravely concerned to consider the certain consequences of increased coal extraction and burning for energy on our greenhouse gas levels and increasing global heating. It is totally inappropriate to approve this proposal to produce an additional 40 million tonnes of coal and increase greenhouse gas emissions by 86.59 Mt CO₂-e when the imperative is to cut emissions.

The International Energy Agency issued the clear directive late in 2021 that the world cannot afford to approve any more extraction of fossil fuels if we want a chance of holding warming to 1.5 degrees. We have already seen and felt the havoc wreaked by the extreme weather events precipitated by climate chaos with our current level of ocean and atmospheric warming. This proposal should be refused on the basis of climate change impacts alone.

Further reasons to refuse this proposal clearly include the impact on biodiversity. It is absolutely outrageous to consider clearing nearly 480 hectares of the Critically Endangered Ecological Community Box-Gum Grassy Woodland and a further 140 hectares of native vegetation also. Critically endangered means precisely that. This ecosystem and the habitat it provides to support biodiversity is in danger of extinction. Destruction of this vegetation cannot be offset, there is simply not enough of this ecological community in existence. If the threatening processes such as clearing and anthropogenic induced climate change are not abated this ecological community will become extinct.

The loss of over 620 hectares of native vegetation by this proposal in an area already heavily impacted by current approvals should not be approved. There would be ecosystem habitat loss for 22 threatened fauna species including: Regent Honeyeater (*Anthochaera phrygia*), Koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*), Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*), Large-eared Pied Bat (*Chalinolobus dwyeri*). The Regent Honeyeater population could be down to 300 individuals.

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/mar/17/how-an-endangered-australian-songbird-regent-honeyeater-is-forgetting-its-love-songs?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other&fbclid=IwAR1tJo4VDdRa2l-VJqZHLHgX3Fy_Nj5ZXXnn79bjTvkRiBXDLUp3NbBtETw

The Koala population was so affected by Black Summer both directly and indirectly by being burnt to death and having extensive areas of habitat burnt that it is now listed as endangered. IT is in danger of extinction.

<https://www.edo.org.au/2022/06/27/nsw-follows-suit-and-lists-koalas-as-endangered/>

There is also a predicted loss of baseflows to the Goulburn River of between 180 – 225 million litres / year and 600 million litres in wet years. This is an unacceptable impact on river health and downstream water users, including Goulburn River National Park. This is so clearly also not in the public interest.

The proposal should be rejected.