



I N L A N D
R I V E R S
N E T W O R K

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Wednesday 12 July 2023

Submission of Objection
Cowl Gold Operations Open Pit Continuation: SSD 42917792

The Inland Rivers Network (IRN) is a coalition of environment groups and individuals that has been advocating for healthy rivers, wetlands and groundwater in the Murray-Darling Basin since 1991. IRN's work has included substantial comment on water reform and management, including Regional Water Strategies, Water Sharing Plans, water legislation and wetland protection.

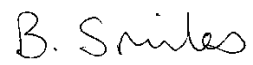
IRN notes that the Lake Cowl wetland values have been recognised by its listing as a Wetland of National Significance, and worthy of listing as a wetland of international significance under the Ramsar Agreement to which Australia is a signatory. Located in the central Lachlan catchment region, the lake is fed by high river overflows across the Jemalong Plain from the Lachlan River and the Bland Creek, draining north via Nerang Cowl towards the Lachlan River. The lignum areas in the northern part of the lake are an important breeding site for colonial water birds while the Lake and region are important for migratory birds under the Australia Migratory Bird Agreements with China, Japan and Republic of Korea.

IRN is opposed to any extension of mining into this significant wetland area, noting specifically that:

- Loss of the unique attributes of Lake Cowl, determined by its geographical location and history, cannot be compensated for by 'off-setting'.
- The predicted increase in extreme weather events as climate change intensifies increase the risk of catastrophic harm locally and downstream should there be a major or environmentally damaging spill because of mine management or weather factors.

IRN urges that the 'no go' approach, in keeping with best practice environmental assessment processes, be invoked given the important values of the Lake Cowal region.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "B. Smiles".

Beverly Smiles
President