

## **Re : Expansion of longwall mining at Moolarben Mine**

### **I object to Moolarben Stage 1 Mod 12 & Stage 2 Mod 2**

1. The impacts of doubling coal extraction from underground mining have not been adequately assessed. At first glance the concept of making the pillars smaller, the width and height greater seems very dangerous.
2. The cumulative impact of cliff collapse caused by subsidence in the region has not been identified and needs to be before any more long-wall mining is approved.
3. The groundwater modeling is inadequate. Water is Australia's most precious resource and to damage the aquifers and water table to provide short term gain for a Chinese mining company is absolutely insane.
4. The Central Hunter Valley eucalypt forest and woodland have been identified as critically endangered under the Federal EPBC Act. There is not addressed in this proposal – and it must be.
5. The proposed increase in trains to a peak of 9 daily will have cumulative noise and dust impacts throughout the Hunter coal chain which has not been adequately assessed. The new draft Mining SEPP Amendment now puts social and environmental impacts on an equal footing with economics and social benefits. The health costs due to coal fired power generation, coal mining and transport in the Hunter Valley alone, amount to \$600m per annum. Every precaution should be taken to minimize or eliminate dust production from coal mining and transport. Coal wagons should be covered and washed.
6. The recent unpredicted high-wall collapse at Open Cut 1 has closed a public road. This has caused heavy traffic to be rerouted through the nearby village Wollar, causing significant public cost and threat to public safety. During the public hearings of the Planning and Assessment Commission for Stage 2 of the expansion in February the mine's manager admitted there were problems with the existing high-walls and that they needed to be redesigned. Clearly Yancoal are not managing any of this well and Moolarben Mine should not be granted any further modifications.

7. Job numbers cannot be guaranteed. Nearly every coal mine expansion project in the Hunter Valley in the last 2 years has touted jobs, jobs, jobs as a mantra and a reason for approval yet, nearly all of these projects have cut the workforce once approval has been obtained. The workers are used as pawns in a game played by multinational mining companies to get what they want at any cost. Yancoal has just shed 225 jobs at other Hunter mines, there is no doubt they will shed more.

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Alan Leslie  
339 The Inlet Rd  
Bulga  
NSW 2330  
Australia  
Tel +61 2 65 74 53 05  
Mob 0413 14 56 61