

Sara Wilson - Moolarben Coal Complex Stage 2

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Date: 2/24/2012 3:32 PM
Subject: Moolarben Coal Complex Stage 2

25 February 2012

Mining and Major Industry Projects
Dept of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

Objection to the Moolarben Coal Complex Stage 2 _ Preferred Project Report:
Project No: 08_0135

I wish to lodge an objection to the above proposal on the grounds of increased gas emissions, loss of habitat, water issues, cultural heritage and social impacts.

I am particularly incensed at what has happened to The Drip and the Corner Gorges along the Goulburn River. These are landmarks, absolutely beautiful. They are high value cultural heritage sites for both indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Selling them to a Chinese mining company is akin to selling Uluru or Kakadu. It is preposterous. They need complete and permanent protection from mining, and permanent access to the public.

Another problem is the huge loss of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sites that will probably occur. We have the oldest living culture in the world and we cannot respect their sacred sites, values and their heritage. This shames us.

The loss of biodiversity that will result from the Moolarben expansion is also unacceptable. The endangered ecological community of Box Woodland is about one per cent of what it was in 1788. Under this proposal an area of 900 hectares of native forest will be cleared, including 123 ha of the Box Woodland. This should not be allowed to happen. Australia has the highest rate of extinctions in the world in our flora and fauna.

Biodiversity offsets should be located in the same vegetation area as where the destruction of habitat will take place. It is not appropriate to locate them in different parts of the country.

I would like to talk about some of the water issues that are involved in this proposal. First is the discrepancy in groundwater assessments between Moolarben and Ulan Coal Mines. This makes me wonder about the reliability of the groundwater modelling.

Water for coal processing should in the first instance come from the surplus Ulan Coal Mine groundwater rather than from the Northern Borefield which is adjacent to the Goulburn River. Also the fact that it will take over a century for the Goulburn River and its connected groundwater systems to recover from the mining shows complete contempt for the natural environment, peoples' livelihoods and future generations.

The Department of Planning needs to appoint an independent expert panel or Planning Assessment Commission to fully investigate the claims, actions and strategies of this project.

In reference to future generations it is galling that while the general public are told to decrease our carbon dioxide emissions, Moolarben Coal Mine are able to increase theirs by 24 million tonnes per

year. I find this very hypocritical and unnecessary. Technologies abound that can take the place of fossil fuels, and do so, just not in Australia. Climate instability as a precursor to climate change is already with us. When we talk of weather today we do so in terms of major events, very frequently occurring in Australia.

In regard to the social impacts of mining, these are obvious to me. Rental accommodation and housing affordability are out of reach of anyone not involved in mining. This has repercussions across society and the economy. There are problems with lagging infrastructure, roads, medical and dental services, traffic dust and noise.

All of these reasons beg extra scrutiny by an independent panel.

Yours sincerely
Diane O'Mara
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