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This is a submission objecting to the proposed Port Waratah coal services terminal 4 development in Newcastle (10\_0215). **The T4 proposal must not be approved** due to the significant and unacceptable impacts it will have as part of the expanding coal chain.

It is unfortunate that each aspect of the coal chain is addressed as separate development applications. This does not allow for the impact of the totality of these developments. It also means that one aspect of the process can often rely on the need that has been generated by another aspect of the chain to justify additional development. This is very clear in this application for approval. As part of the justification for the T4 they describe the obligation of PWCS to ensure 'terminal facilities have sufficient capacity to meet forecast demands'. This is an example of the coal chain out of control. If PWCS have entered into such a contract, this should not be used as a justification for the building of an additional terminal. This is a problem for PWCS to resolve without impacting on the community.

The T4 development is one of the links in the ever expanding coal chain. This coal chain should be considered whenever any one aspect of the chain is being considered and I contend that this application has considered this only when it justifies the development and not when it considers the negative impacts. The coal chain is having devastating effects environmentally, socially and economically and my arguments on each of these fronts are set out below. As well I have provided comments on some of the more objectionable aspects of the justification.

### **Environmental Impact of T4 as part of the coal chain**

Mining coal and using it to provide energy has irreversible effects on our environment from the point at which it is mined to the unintended consequences of burning it to provide energy. Many mines are dug in crown land areas that may not be national parks but never-the-less provide valuable habitats for our ever dwindling biodiversity.

At the other end of the chain, the burning of coal is a key contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, and as a species we are fast running out of time to reverse the damaging effects of these emissions. We do not have any leeway for further increases.

Locally the building of the T4 will destroy an important habitat for seriously threatened species of waterbirds and frogs including the green and golden bell frogs. The offset areas will not be an adequate substitute.

### **Social Impact of T4 as part of the coal chain**

The mining of coal has health impacts for communities around the coal – when it is mined, and transported and then when it is burnt. Here in Newcastle, residents in suburbs close to Kooragang are impacted by the health consequences of coal dust. The prevalence of asthma and other respiratory ailments is directly linked to exposure to coal dust and emissions. As the cost benefits analysis for this project was prepared, were these costs considered?

The booming mining industry in the Hunter region has had negative impacts on traffic flow on the regions roads. There are two sources of difficulty: coal trucks and the impact of mineworkers and contractors commuting large distances from their homes to their work. This is not sustainable. New roads become necessary (but not desirable – more costs for an already cash strapped government). All road users have longer commutes and fewer hours for leisure and family or community commitments. Greater use of rail facilities by freight trains decreases the possibility of public transport being a viable alternative to private car usage.

Food security is an increasing issue in our world. We cannot afford to loose any more prime agricultural land to mining. Yet the coal chain is continuing to expand and in the process destroy for ever the land where the mines are created. As well water supplies are often threatened and farming communities destroyed. Increasing CO2 emissions further threatens food security across the globe.

And of course there is the stress that is created by the coal mining activity: increased noise, vibration and light pollution, the impact of traffic congestion, the negative economic impact on businesses not related to mining , for example, tourism, fishing, farming.

### **Economic Impact of T4 as part of the coal chain**

Coal mining has been seen as a part of the solution to NSW's economic woes. However, it is a short term solution at best. We know that the mining boom is the cause of the current fast and slow economies that we are experiencing here in Australia. The boom will not last (in fact it is already slowing) but it has already created great harm to the remainder of the Australian economy by pushing up the value of the Australian dollar. This in turn makes it very difficult for other more sustainable export earners (such as farmers, education institutions, innovation and technology and tourism) to compete on the world market. These industries are at risk of being so depleted by the impact of the mining boom that they cannot make a significant and rapid come-back as the economy slows.

The continuing reliance on coal as a cheap source of energy makes little sense when we know that it is a finite resource. It is short sighted. The building of the fourth coal loader is an act of denial of the limits of this resource. Vast sums will be spent on a new coal loader, which will not be operational for some time yet and is unlikely to be necessary for any significant period. And of course, as coal reserves dwindle, there will be less and less need for the loader.

### **Comments on T4 Justification**

An overarching concern in relation to the justification of the T4 project is that when considering the benefits of the development, there is a considerable emphasis on the benefits of the coal chain. But when it comes to considering the costs of the project, a more narrow assessment is considered.

The justification is quick to assert the benefits of coal generated electricity in improving life style for people in economically poor countries. It notes in section 20.3 (p344) that there will be an increased demand for coal until 2035 and that this ongoing reliance on coal will increase CO2 emissions by a further 0.7% and increase climate change risks. However, it proceeds to dismiss this by referring to human development and poverty reduction. This is an argument that appears narrow and short-sighted. On all current predictions any further increases in CO2 emissions are likely to have such an impact on global weather patterns that for generations to come, such benefits of increased access to

electricity may be outweighed by unreliable food production, increasing natural disasters such as floods, droughts and storms, loss of habitat for both our species and many other species.

I take issue with the statement (p348) that because 'very few households would be willing to make such payments (\$5000- \$9500).....the T4 Projects benefits exceed all its costs, including environmental ones'. This is not a logical argument. It is probably true that most households would be reluctant to make a payment such as this. However, conversely, most households would not miss the impact that such increases in state and federal revenue would have if the revenue was not there.

This concept is based on increases to government revenue through company tax and royalties between \$11,995m and \$24,011m. This I suspect is a gross overestimation of the revenue that will be generated. I note that the federal government anticipated that nationwide, company tax would generate \$76,650m in the last financial year. Is this extra coal loader seriously going to generate extra tax revenue of the order of 10-20% of the whole revenue from all companies across the country?

And of course, there is no evidence that the cost to future generations around the world from increased coal use and the associated destruction of our habitat has been considered. The income that has been considered is for households in Australia. The costs to us as members of the International community must account for all the costs around the world.

In making this leap of logic the T4 proposal has not considered any of the actual estimates of the economic, social and environmental costs of the ongoing expansion of the coal industry. And of course, it is not possible to put a dollar value on the impact of loss of the natural environment, both on the species that are impacted and on the psyche of our own species as we contemplate the destruction that we are creating.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, I urge that this application on the basis that the negative impacts on our global community are too costly.

## Declaration

As a submission maker I am required to disclose political donations totalling \$1000 or more in the past 2 years, I can state that **I have not made a disclosable donation.**

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