

I wish to object to the proposed Bylong Coal Project.

The mine would have a devastating effect on groundwater. Not just from destruction of the substrate but from the drawing of water for use for the mine.

Our groundwater exists as large interconnected basins, what affects one affects the others.

Cutting or reducing that flow affects water around the state. Ref map

<http://realtimedata.water.nsw.gov.au/water.stm>

We need to consider the state has a large percent of drought and a history of drought. In 2002 we had over 90% of the state listed as being in drought.

[https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/publications.nsf/0/14207DF7C9F10147CA256ECF00093F38/\\$File/14-02.pdf](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/publications.nsf/0/14207DF7C9F10147CA256ECF00093F38/$File/14-02.pdf)

Our forecasts have stated a return of El Nino and associated drought conditions.

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/emergency/seasonal-conditions/regional-seasonal-conditions-reports/seasonal-conditions/oct-2015>

With a reduction and cutting of groundwater flow this would affect downstream farmers bores.

A release of polluted mine water back into the groundwater would have a worse affect in terms of contaminating water that would otherwise be useable.

But there are also changes to the natural surface runoff patterns. With such a large construction of the mine this greatly affects the rain surface runoff patterns and affects downstream water catchments. With surface runoff already at a low level this would affect downstream creeks and rivers.

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/emergency/seasonal-conditions/regional-seasonal-conditions-reports/seasonal-conditions/oct-2015>

A change in the surface vegetation of the area will affect local weather patterns, reducing rainfall and increasing temperatures and exacerbating drought conditions. Plants process and release water vapour and affect the local climates humidity, temperature and cause evaporative cooling. By removing vegetation the local weather will have a reduced rainfall pattern.

<http://climate.ncsu.edu/edu/k12/vegetation>

Removal of vast quantities of vegetation leads to deforestation and desertification. This is by removal / changes to soil substrate and composition, but vegetation and animal cover and social indicators. <http://archive.unu.edu/unupress/unupbooks/uu17ee/uu17ee06.htm>

A mine will lead to desertification just by the removal of soil organic matter and fertility, the compaction and destruction of soil structure, the decline in quality and volume of ground and surface water, salinization and alkalinization of soils, decrease in above ground biomass, a decrease in animal species and distribution and change in human population and liveability.

With our high extinction rates and increasing reduction in the biodiversity of species we need to protect our havens for species. We have a unique fauna that should be preserved.

Social economic effects on local families and business. The cost to residents to move home, schools, change businesses or restarting from scratch businesses elsewhere, the loss of future economic benefits from an environment that took tens of thousands of years to form but once destroyed will not be able to be reformed for tens of thousands of years.

Tourism from overseas but also Australian travellers can be a large income boost for small towns.

<http://www.tourism.australia.com/documents/corporate/Tourism-Australia-Annual-Report-2013-2014.pdf>

By cutting a major driving thoroughfare it affects all towns that are fed via travellers normally travelling via that route. This means the economy of surrounding towns will have their revenue of tourist dollars reduced.

Overall I object to the proposed Bylong Coal Project as it will have a devastating effect on groundwater and surface water. It will change the surrounding weather patterns and reduce rainfall. It will reduce flora and fauna biodiversity and soil fertility. It will have social economic effects not just on the local economy but also on the surrounding economy of towns that would normally receive tourists coming through the Bylong Way.