

## Submission for EIS for Bylong Coal Project

By David Wong (family member of Budden Farm)

I would like to NSW Government to reconsider the proposed coal mine by KEPCO for the following reasons:

1. The predicted long-term impacts on prime agricultural land and water systems in the Bylong Valley are unacceptable and will not be mitigated through proposed offsets and rehabilitation. The renowned Tarwyn Park natural sequence farming processes will be destroyed.
2. A significant area of prime agricultural land will be destroyed: the mine footprint will disturb 2,875 hectares (ha) of land including 440 ha of Bioregional Significant Agricultural Land (BSAL), 260 ha being destroyed in open cut, plus 700 ha of mapped Critical Equine Industry Cluster land. The proposal to replace BSAL at another location is untested and high risk.
3. Impacts on groundwater and surface water will be significant. The highly connected alluvial aquifer system within the stressed Bylong River catchment will have predicted peak losses of up to 295 million litres per year (ML/yr). Loss of base flows to the Bylong River is predicted to be 918 ML/yr. The mine proposes to use up to 1,942 ML/yr which is over 75% of the annual rainfall recharge. The river system is over allocated and local farmers will lose important water supply.
4. The mine disturbance area has very high biodiversity values that will not be mitigated through the proposed offset arrangements. Nationally endangered species recorded in the area include the Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby, New Holland Mouse, Regent Honeyeater and Spotted-tailed Quoll. Three entirely new plant species were recorded. A significant area of critically endangered Grassly Box Gum Woodland will be destroyed along with habitat for 17 threatened birds and 7 threatened plants.
5. The area has Aboriginal cultural heritage significance: 239 sites were recorded in the study area with 25 regarded as being of high local or regional significance (including an ochre quarry, grinding grooves and rock shelters); 144 sites have been identified at risk from mine impacts with 102 within the open cut area.
6. Important European heritage, including the Catholic Church Cemetery, Upper Bylong Public School and a number of historic homesteads and farm buildings will be destroyed in the open-cut. The social impacts on the Bylong community have already been devastating.
7. The mine proposed is an open cut mine, which is known to be the most destructive and anti-environmental type of mining in existence. The fact that this is to be on prime agricultural land is abhorrent. Once the coal mining has begun, this prime agricultural land will never be able to be farmed again. If the proposed mine proceeds, we will lose too much prime agricultural land for growing our food. The decision to allow the proposed mine will be destroying our children's heritage. Please take time to visit <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-03-12/mining-versus-farming-is-about-the-damage/6308490> or see below.
8. As a practicing Catholic, the thought of moving the graves of the deceased that have been buried in the Catholic Church Cemetery is vile, and should absolutely NOT be permitted. I have spoken to many priests about this event, and all have thought it attributing to a criminal offence. The bodies that have been put to rest there should remain at rest. It would effectively mean that you are letting a Korean company dig up Australian graves to fuel a dirty energy for Korea – I cannot see how this meets Australia's best interests?
9. I have grave concerns about the hours of operation this coal mine will be operating. What will this constant low level constant noise do to our cattle, and what effect will it have on them and our neighbour's cattle. Will the mine be permitted to be operating 24/7 or in the night time? What effect will this have on people that are working on the farms?

10. Kepco have not acted in "good faith". They have used fake photos of "Oakdale" to try to push the approval process through. I am aware that they have other dubious past records with other proposed projects as well in both Australia and Overseas. How can we have faith in a company that has already shown that they are ready to falsify claims? How can you have confidence that they will abide by "doing the right thing" if they have already shown they are capable of deceit.

11. I would like the Premier to personally go and see the Bylong Valley before this proposal has been approved, so he can see firsthand, just exactly what will be destroyed, by allowing this proposed mine to be a reality.

I strongly oppose the Bylong Coal Project, as is definitely not in the best interest of Australia, nor Australians.

Yours Faithfully,

David Wong

### **Mining versus farming debate should look at the damage inflicted on farmland into the distant future: Academic**

ABC Rural  
By Michael Condon



Posted 12 Mar 2015, 3:13pm



scrutiny (AAP: Paul Miller)

PHOTO: A Sydney University professor says long term mining issues need more

Media player: "Space" to play, "M" to mute, "left" and "right" to seek.

**AUDIO:** Academic Willem Vervoort says he thinks the debate on farming versus mining does not focus enough on the long term impacts of mining on farmland, water, salinity and soil issues. (ABC Rural)

**MAP:** NSW

**A University of Sydney academic says he thinks the debate on farming versus mining does not focus enough on the long term impacts of mining on farmland, water, salinity and soil issues.**

Willem Vervoort, an associate professor in Hydrology and Catchment Management, said he was worried about the long term.

Earlier this week, the former governor of New South Wales, Marie Bashir, was calling on the women of Australia to protect farmland.

She said foreign ownership of land and mining in farming areas both threatened Australia's ability to produce food.

Professor Vervoort said the current concern regarding mining, including coal seam gas mining, was all focused on the short-term effects.

"The mining companies probably want people to think about the issues that way," he said.

"People are worried about the direct effects, such as the loss of farmland, increased pollution and reduced availability of water resources.

"However, a more important issue is the long-term, intergenerational problems mining poses.

"Farmers and farming families generally try to improve the land for the next generation, whereas mining is extractive.

"Mining has potentially long-term and unaddressed serious environmental impacts on groundwater, salinity and acid drainage.

"The timeframe to return land to a condition that it was in prior to mining could take 100 years or more.

"And the effects of mining can extend for a very large area, way beyond the mine site.

"Water tables can be changed, contamination can spread and soils can be polluted."