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Julius Timmerman, of Lawson NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

1. Cobbora Coal project is inappropriate investment of \$3.4 billion of NSW taxpayers' money. . It will lock NSW into coal-fired electricity generation until at least 2036.
2. The project justification is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections.
3. The project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts.
4. The coal is extremely poor quality product with high ash content for power stations in the Upper Hunter and Central Coast. The health impacts of using poor quality coal have not been assessed. The people of that area are already suffering higher rates of ill-health due to coal fired power. The state needs to cut down on coal burning not increase it.
5. The mine will cost the NSW taxpayer approx \$3.4 billion and will be run at a loss. The argument for continued coal-fired electricity in comparison to the long-term benefits of renewable energy sources has not been made. Taxpayer's money would be better invested in renewable energy sources.
6. The project has a very large footprint and will cause major environmental impacts on woodland habitat as well as groundwater and surface water sources and loss of at least 79 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. The clearing of 1,867ha woodland habitat will impact on threatened species listed for national protection. The proposed biodiversity offset package has not been finalized and is inappropriately based on mine rehabilitation. The replacement of high conservation value habitat especially tree hollows in slow growing woodland species takes centuries.
7. The project will compete with the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions. The mine will need to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of high security licenced water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries. It could also threaten the long -term security of urban water supply from Windemere Dam.
8. The project will disturb approx 47km2 of land with important high conservation and agricultural value. The cost benefit analysis for the project has not taken into account the social disruption; competition for workforce with other industries, particularly the agricultural industry across western NSW; or the costs of major infrastructure upgrades, particularly rail lines, to accommodate additional coal

transport. The loss of farming community and broadscale food production has not been adequately assessed.

9. Towns and properties along the coal chain will be impacted by additional noise and dust from increased coal train movements.

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Adam Twidell, of St Albans NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

As an annual tourist to Australia, I object to this development.

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Jason Uttley, of Casuarina NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I object to the proposals for the new Cobbora coal mine being built. I am aware if built, will cost taxpayers more than \$3 billion, destroy nearly two thousand hectares of wildlife habitat, as well the loss of agricultural land, damage to groundwater resources and desecration of Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. Also it will provide half-priced coal to our state's polluting power stations for more than 20 years.

With the world on the brink of runaway climate change, it is time to get serious. All governments and industry have a responsibility to step up and make big improvements. Another new coal mine would only thwart efforts in Carbon reductions in other sectors of society. We need a clean energy future for NSW, not an ill-conceived proposal which puts the narrow interests of coal-fired power generators above the interests of ordinary people and the environment.

Thankyou for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Yours Sincerely

Jason Uttley

Copies to:

Premier Barry O'Farrell

Planning Minister Brad Hazzard

81 Prince Edward Street
Blackheath NSW 2785
(02) 4787 8080

15th November 2012

Ref. No: 10-0001 – Cobbora Coal Mine Expansion

Major Planning Assessments
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a resident of Blackheath & a member of Blue Mountains Conservation Society.

I welcome the opportunity to comment on the proposed expansion of the Cobbora Coal Mine, as my family history is embedded in the Mudgee area. My Great-grandfather and several other family members are buried in Mudgee Cemetery and my father was born in the town. Our family frequently visits the town and area.

I cannot understand why the government would consider spending \$3.4 Billion of public money on such an inappropriate project as the expansion of this coal mine, which will lock New South Wales into Coal-Fired electricity generation until 2036. That is a ridiculously long period of time – over 20 years – to commit our community to burning this fossil fuel unnecessarily.

There are many more modern, less polluting & invasive methods of generating electricity that could benefit from such an amount of money. Ask if you aren't aware of what these are.

In addition to the pollution and inappropriate technology, the digging up of the coal in this project will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species.

And, significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites will be destroyed, while this coal project will complete with both tourism in the area and the wine industry, by way of water availability, especially in times of drought. I understand that the mine would have secure water rights to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception.

I urge you to reconsider the viability of this project after taking into account all costs to the community from its operation.

Thank You for your attention,

Paul Vale

Paul Vale

paulvale@ozemail.com.au

CC: Premier Barry O'Farrell

Planning Minister Brad Hazard

Leader of the Opposition John Robertson

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Simon Validzic, of Croatia NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Dear Sir/madam,

I am writing to submit my objection to the Cobbora Coal Mine (Ref. No: 10-0001).

The Cobbora Coal project is an inappropriate investment of 3.4 billion AUD (Australian Dollars) of taxpayers' money. The project will lock New South Wales into coal-fired electricity generation until at least 2036. It will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions conflicting with international plans to reduce climate change impacts and the dependence on fossil fuels.

The proposal is to mine 20 MT (million tonnes) per annum to produce 12 MT per annum of usable coal. It is an extremely poor quality product with a high ash content. The project aims to provide cheap coal to power stations in the Upper Hunter and Central Coast. The health impacts of using poor quality coal have not been assessed.

The justification for the project is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years. Demand has dropped significantly since this project was proposed. The price of black coal on the export market has also dropped below the projections used to justify the need to source cheaper coal for domestic use. The argument for continued coal-fired electricity in comparison to the long-term benefits of sustainable energy sources has not been made. The Cobbora Coal project will cause major ecological impacts on woodland habitat as well as groundwater and surface water sources and loss of at least 79 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. Aboriginals have suffered more than enough in the past and it is time that they had more control over decisions relating to the land.

The clearing of 1,867 hectares of woodland habitat will impact 39 species listed for national protection. Endangered plant species include a 100% loss of the local population of *Tylophora linearis*. Endangered bird species include the australasian bittern, malleefowl, regent honeyeater and the superb parrot. Threatened woodland bird species recorded in the area of impact include the brown treecreeper, diamond firetail, glossy black-cockatoo, grey-crowned babbler, hooded robin, speckled warbler, varied sittella, masked owl, barking owl and powerful owl. Vulnerable microbat species include the southern long-eared bat and the large-eared pied bat. Australia has the worst record in the world when it comes to the extinction of species. This project will disturb a total of about 47 square kilometres of land with important high conservation and agricultural value. The proposed biodiversity offset package has not been finalized and is inappropriately based on mine rehabilitation. The replacement of high conservation value habitat especially tree hollows in slow

growing woodland species is not truly possible due to its complexity.

The mine will need to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries. It could also threaten the long-term security of urban water supply from Windamere Dam.

The cost benefit analysis for the project has not taken into account the social disruption; competition for workforce with other industries, or the costs of major infrastructure upgrades, particularly rail lines, to accommodate additional coal transport. Towns and properties along the coal chain will be impacted by additional noise and dust from increased coal train movements.

In order to reduce my impact on the environment, forests, native animals and indigenous people, I returned to my country of origin in 1992 and encourage others to do the same. I am disappointed by recent news articles stating that about 30 thousand people have emigrated from Croatia over the past 3 years and that Australia is one of the destination countries. Continued immigration into Australia is caused largely by the mining sector and I have written to the minister for immigration regarding this matter. Australia (and North America) have an unsustainable economy and a large per-capita ecological impact and there is no excuse for these countries to be encouraging population growth.

I am also involved in a campaign against the use of coal as fuel in the Plomin C power plant expansion that is planned in Croatia because the coal might come from Australia. If the expansion cannot be avoided, then gas is better than coal because Croatia has some gas reserves and it is a cleaner fuel.

Instead of subsidizing fossil fuels, governments should support the development of clean, ecologically-sound and truly sustainable sources of energy such as solar panels and photovoltaic cells on rooftops. Biomass and biofuels are even more harmful than fossil fuels because they contribute to the destruction of forests and to food shortages.

Please reject the Cobbora Coal project. Thank you for taking these concerns into consideration.

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Rosemary and Layla-Zak Volpato , of North Balgowlah NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Dear Sir/Madam,

I welcome the opportunity to comment on the proposed Cobbora Coal Project expansion. The project appears to be completely at odds with Australia's strategy to mitigate the effects of climate change. Our energy and funding should be directed towards the development of clean, renewable energy, not the outdated coal industry.

In summary, I am strongly opposed to the Cobbora Coal Project for the following reasons:

- 1.Cobbora Coal project is inappropriate investment of \$3.4 billion of NSW taxpayers' money
- 2.The project justification is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections
- 3.The project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts
- 4.The project will disturb approx 47km² of land with important high conservation and agricultural value
- 5.The project will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species
- 6.The project will destroy significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites
- 7.The project will compete with the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions

Thank you for your time in reading my submission.

premier

From: Paul Vonwiller [paulvonwiller@rocketmail.com]
Sent: Friday, 9 November 2012 2:59 PM
To: <office@premier.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Stop Cobbora Coal Project

Dear Premier

I put forward a submission concerning the approval to coal mine the most beautiful and picturesque part of the Cabbora.

The Cobbora coal mine, if built, will provide heavily subsidised coal to six large coal fired power stations, locking in decades of carbon pollution, and delaying investment in clean, renewable energy.

This mine proposal is environmentally destructive and fiscally irresponsible. Wouldn't you rather the NSW Government spent this money on schools, health and public transport?

Also, according to what was shown on 12th April 2010 on ABC Four Corners, the coal mine in the Hunter Valley region is causing serious health problems to the community and workers which is having devastating effects.

Also, reported on ABC News on 16/4/2010, approval was given to coal mine Camberwell in the Hunter region which will ruin the lovely landscape and creek. The Dooralong Valley in the Wyong region, shown on 18/4/10 on ABC News, will also be devastated, having a serious impact on the environment with its significant picturesque atmosphere. This is totally unacceptable suffering for the residents and their children with asthma. I was so horrified to see what harm this is causing to the community. This is going to cost a lot more in the long-term on medical treatment and for residents who need to shift elsewhere.

There is no way that a coal mine should be allowed to harm the environment especially with concerns about Climate Change. We have to think about sustainability; there needs to be a phase out of the coal industry and for it to be taken over with "Green Collar" industry plus renewable energy.

We can't afford to ruin the location and must think in the long-term for a sustainable future.

We must respect the tourist attractions of the environment.

I have grave concerns about the greenhouse gas emission that is mostly resulting from the coal burning that is having a devastating impact on the environment.

I am also concerned about your approval for new coal fire powered stations near Lithgow and the Hunter region. According to what I heard on ABC 702 am 27/4/10 that the Blue Mountain National Park near Lithgow is being destroyed from coal mine doing serious harm.

I had put a previous submission when Nathan Rees was Premier concerning the threat to close railway lines by helping to re-open railway lines for more passenger train service. I had also put a previous submission when Morris Iema was Premier to help save Anvil Hill from a coal industrial zone plus the rally I participated in June 2007.

I look forward to your response.

Please notify me what action will be taken to help these issues to be resolved.

Yours faithfully,
Paul Vonwiller

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Pedro Vozone, of CBD Energy, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

After a brief look at the CHC website and fact sheet, along with some more information from other websites and white papers, it can be easily concluded that there is not transparent and equitable basis for such a development:

State investing in Coal is do deliver coal at cheaper-than-market prices is a "de facto" equivalent to a direct subsidy to Coal Power Plants. The current debate in the Energy industry is that we should forge on with Coal, because other forms of energy are not cost-competitive with Coal. However, recent findings in the Federal whit paper (file attachment 1, p91), as well as EIA articles regarding the levelised cost of energy by source (http://www.eia.gov/forecasts/aeo/electricity_generation.cfm) demonstrate that Wind and Solar PV are already cost-competitive with Coal without Carbon Capture. When the state of NSW decides to invest in a coal mine in order to lower the levelised cost of coal, it is in effect distorting the market to support inefficient and expensive energy. It is making a loss in providing cheaper than market coal, which is then supported by the tax-payers.

As has been extensively studied, the best way to lower the cost of electricity is to work within a well regulated Energy Market, in which the cheapest energy source is able to sell their power at a lower cost. By providing subsidized to private coal-fired generators, the State of NSW is taking on a practice that is contrary to most efficient market-based mechanisms to obtain power at cheapest price.

State should not target preferential energy generation type without a clear basis why this choice is better than the competing. If the rationale is that jobs are provided and therefore the country is better off, why not sell the coal on the market and use that profit for something else, thus providing more sustainable jobs, rather than putting together a venture which may well not be financially sustainable in the future.

Leaving aside the discussion of Anthropomorphic Climate Change, it has been well established that electricity Generated by Coal has the greatest cost on Healthcare system of all energy generation types. The Department of the Environment and Water Affairs of South Africa has done a study (File Attachment 2) which demonstrates that the external costs of coal-fired electricity generation is at least 5 times more than the costs from Wind, CSP and Hydro. This in itself places another layer of cost on the taxpayer, which are supporting the National Health System through their own taxes.

Adding to this negative effect, is the death impact of Coal-fired power when compared to other sources of electricity. In a Forbes article (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesconca/2012/06/10/energys-deathprint-a-price-always-paid/>) Coal has a death toll of 170,000 deaths per Trillion kWh generated, versus 440 for rooftop solar,

150 for wind power, and 1,400 for Hydro. Based on these number, why would the State of NSW support a form of energy which causes such a high mortality rate in human beings?

This Project is also completely Contrary to Federal Goal of reducing emissions. The Federal Government has set out the ETS as a market-based mechanism (through the current Carbon Tax, and the future Carbon Market) in order to reduce emissions through the cheapest possible way. As explained above, this subsidy to coal puts those Coal-Fired generators at an artificial price advantage when compared to other forms of energy.

As is well known, one of the main difficulties on utility-scale projects progressing is the current difficulty to obtain PPA's. If Solar and Wind are forced to compete against subsidized coal, this problem will only become worst, and this is completely contrary to any logic of lowering pollution, lowering GHG emissions, and providing electricity at the cheapest possible price.

On the basis of the arguments above, this project should be scrapped from the NSW Government's books in a first instance, and from the DPI's assessment due to the large impacts it will have on human health and mortality.

- Attachment: [10Edkinsetal-External costs IRP2.pdf](#)
- Attachment: [Energy White Paper 2012.pdf](#)

External cost of electricity generation: Contribution to the Integrated Resource Plan 2 for Electricity

MAX EDKINS

HARALD WINKLER

ANDREW MARQUARD

RANDALL SPALDING-FECHER

For the Department of the Environment and Water Affairs.



July 2010
ENERGY RESEARCH CENTRE
University of Cape Town

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Executive summary

By reviewing studies completed on the external costs of electricity generation technologies the following table is suggested as an input to the Integrated Resource Plan 2 (IRP 2) in South Africa.

Units: c/ kWh (2009 cents ZAR)	<i>Coal</i>	<i>Nuclear</i>	<i>Gas – CCGT</i>	<i>Diesel –OCGT</i>	<i>Biomass (incl biogas)</i>	<i>Hydro (small)</i>	<i>Wind</i>	<i>CSP</i>	<i>PV</i>
POWER GENERATION									
GHG emissions	48 (25 – 71)	0.3 (0.2 – 0.4)	27 (11 – 32)	45.5 (24 – 67)	4.3 (1.8 – 5)	0.15 (0.1 – 0.2)	0.8 (0.4 – 1.2)	0.7 (0.3 – 1.1)	2.8 (1.6 – 4.4)
Health impacts	1.35 (1.0 – 1.7)	0.03	0.34	0.22	0.39	0.05	0.09	0.09	0.19
FUEL (Production & Transport)									
Acid mine drainage	2.1* (0.4 – 3.9)	?	?	?	-	-	-	-	-
Biodiversity loss	0.7 (0.6 – 0.8)	0.1	0.39	0.9	0.13	0	0	0	0
Health impacts	0.36 (0.02 – 0.7)	0.15	0.14	0.15	0.05	0	0	0	0
GHG emissions	2.3 (1.3 – 3.3)	0.45	2.8	2.8	1.5	0	0	0	0
TOTAL EXTERNALITY COST (estimate)	~ 55	~ 1	~ 30	~ 50	~ 6	~ 0.2	~ 0.9	~ 0.8	~ 3
Benefits of electrification – positive externalities									
	18 (4.7 – 24.2)	18 (4.7 – 24.2)	18 (4.7 – 24.2)	18 (4.7 – 24.2)	18 (4.7 – 24.2)	18 (4.7 – 24.2)	18 (4.7 – 24.2)	18 (4.7 – 24.2)	18 (4.7 – 24.2)
* A presentation by the Federation for Sustainable Environment (Pretorius, 2009) estimates the water damage externality from Eskom's coal mining needs at about R cents 38/kWh.									

The international studies on energy externalities and the local studies in South Africa suggest that the high impact areas for power generation are impacts of climate change and health impacts of outdoor air pollution. Climate change impacts are by far the greatest. The health costs due to outdoor air pollution are considered quite low based on national studies, though these may be underestimated. Damage cost from acid mine drainage is also thought to be significant, and could be substantially higher than reported here.

External costs of electricity generation are a necessary factor in modelling the IRP 2. To be consistent, external costs must be added to the modeller's reference case and to all policy cases or scenarios. In the multiple criteria decision-making process, the external costs should be reported as a distinct criterion. The weighting of this criterion relative to others (cost, carbon, and access) should be discussed with stakeholders.

Although the external cost presented here are appropriate for input into the IRP 2, an extensive national review must be completed for future IRPs. Furthermore, the Integrated Energy Plan (IEP) should take additional factors into account: health impacts of indoor air pollution (important in poor households, as well as industry); noise from transport, and other poverty-related issues such as wealth impacts of paraffin fires and burns, and social costs of fuel wood scarcity.

1. What are the major externalities in the electricity supply sector?

A recent study of external costs of energy commissioned by WWF South Africa, reviewed the local and international literature for last two decades (Spalding-Fecher, 2009). The international studies on energy externalities and the local studies in South Africa suggest that the high impact areas for power generation are impacts of climate change and health impacts of outdoor air pollution. In terms of the relative magnitude of estimated external costs, the studies generally show that climate change impact are the largest, followed by health impacts of outdoor air pollution. In addition, a study in 2005 (Spalding-Fecher, 2005) showed that electrification creates significant health benefits by displacing other fuels. Although this benefit is not specific to the type of power station generating the electricity (so it would not influence the choice of plants in the IRP), it is an important consideration when comparing electricity to other energy sources. Most of these energy externalities studies are relatively old and must rely on international data quantify many of the impact pathways. Local data on emissions is readily available, but how these emissions lead to specific health and other impacts needs additional research.

2.1 Existing studies of external costs related to electricity supply

Table 2 below shows a review of South African studies assessing the external costs related to electricity supply.

Table 1: Review of South African studies assessing external costs related to electricity supply in South Africa (Spalding-Fecher, 2009)

Study/Impact pathway	Raw Data/ Pollution	Dispersion/ people impacted	Exposure	Dose- Response/ risk level	Physical Impact	Valuation	Monetary Impact (R/yr)
Spalding-Fecher & Matibe (2003)							
Electricity: health impacts	L	I	C	I*	C	I/L	R1.1b
Electricity: climate change	L	NA	NA	NA	NA	I	R7.0b
(Palmer Development Consulting, 2003)							
Electricity: all impacts					I	I	R75-120b
(Bignaut & King, 2002)							
Electricity: climate change	L					I	R7.3b
Van Zyl et. al. (1999)							
Coal mining: water quality	L					L	R0.02-0.01b
Coal mining: climate change (CH4)	L					I	R0.02-1.3b
Coal mining: morbidity and mortality (compensation costs)						L	<R0.01b
Key: L = local source/data, I=international source/data, NA=not applicable, I*=international with some modification to local conditions C=calculated from previous columns, health impacts=health impacts of air pollution, I/L=international data for mortality valuation and local data for morbidity valuation.							

The monetary impact of the South African has been presented as cost impact per kWh of electricity generated in Table 3. Where monetary impact was expressed in a specific year the value was inflated to 2009 Rands. External cost estimates from the South African studies for coal-fired power generation were compared to international studies. The cost estimates for all other power generation technologies are also presented from international studies Table 3). Monetary values in foreign currencies were inflated to 2009 and converted to South African Rands.

Table 2: External costs of electricity generated from different power generation technologies based on South African and international studies

Units: c/ kWh (2009 cents ZAR)	Coal	Nuclear	Gas – CCGT	Diesel – OCGT	Biomass	Renewables (Small Hydro Wind, CSP, PV)
POWER GENERATION						
GHG emissions	7.1 (3.4 - 16.6) ¹ ; 26.5 (9.6 - 129.5)*; 20.6*; 20.1**; 56.9***	0.1*	14*; 11.1**; 9.1****	9*	1.5*	0.3 (Wind, CSP) (0.2 (Hydro) - 2.3 (PV))*
Health impacts	1.3 (1.0 - 1.7) ¹ ; 10.2*; 9*; 10.2**; 9.7***	0.3*	2.6*; 4.2****	2.2*	3.9*	0.9 (Wind, CSP) (0.5 (Hydro) - 7.2 (PV))*
FUEL						
Acid mine drainage	0.37 (0.34 - 3.88) ²					
Biodiversity loss	0.8*; 0.64*	0.1*	0.39*	0.9*	0.13*	0*
Health impacts	0.05 (0.02 - 0.07) ² ; 7.1*; 6.42*; 0.06***	1.54*	14.1*	15.3*	0.5*	0*
GHG emissions	2.4 (1.3 - 3.3) ² ; 2.3*; 2.06*; 1.94***	0.45*	2.83*	2.8*	1.5*	0*
Benefits of electrification – positive externalities	18.3 (4.7 - 24.2) ³	18.3 (4.7 - 24.2) ³	18.3 (4.7 - 24.2) ³	18.3 (4.7 - 24.2) ³	18.3 (4.7 - 24.2) ³	18.3 (4.7 - 24.2) ³
Notes: ^{1,2,3} South African Studies; * EU Studies; ** China Study; *** India Study; *** Brazil Study; ¹ Values inflated from Spalding-Fecher & Matibe (2003); ² External costs per ton from van Zyl et al. (1999) converted to per kWh based on Eskom coal use in 2009 (1.685 kWh produced per ton of coal burnt); ³ External benefits values based on VOLY method by Spalding-Fecher (2005); International studies assume 20.66 Euro/ton CO ₂ and 747.29 euro/ton CH ₄ ; Externality cost estimates per kWh were converted to 2009 Rands by inflating in currency of publication and then applying 2009 exchange rate.						
Main South African Studies: Van Horen 1996; van Zyl et al. 1999; Winkler, Spalding-Fecher & Tyani 2002; Bignaut & King 2002; Spalding-Fecher & Matibe 2003; Spalding-Fecher et al 2005; Spalding-Fecher 2009						
Main International studies: EnergyE 2003; CASES 2006; CASES 2008; NEEDS 2009						

South African studies (Bignaut & King, 2002) (Spalding-Fetcher & Matible, 2003) on the external costs of climate change from coal-fired power generation seem to be outdated compared to international estimates. This is largely due to those studies using too low damage estimates for climate change. More recent estimates of climate change damage costs are in the region of \$30-85/ton of CO₂-eq (Stern, 2006).

International studies out cost local studies by a factor of 10 for health impacts, largely because of different approaches in valuing health between developing and developed countries and rural sitting of South African coal-fired power plants. Similarly the external costs for health impacts from coal mining are higher in European studies than in South African or Indian studies, see Table 3. It must also be noted that the external health cost from PV systems in the European study seems to be remarkably high, largely due to the imbedded energy required in the construction of the modules.

2.2 Best estimates of external costs based on existing studies

By reviewing the local and international literature on the cost of externalities from different electricity generation technologies, the following best estimate of external costs is determined (Table 3).

Table 3: Best estimate of external costs for electricity generation technologies in South Africa

Units: c/ kWh (2009 cents ZAR)	<i>Coal</i>	<i>Nuclear</i>	<i>Gas – CCGT</i>	<i>Diesel –OCGT</i>	<i>Biomass (incl biogas)</i>	<i>Hydro (small)</i>	<i>Wind</i>	<i>CSP</i>	<i>PV</i>
POWER GENERATION									
GHG emissions	48 (25 – 71)	0.3 (0.2 - 0.4)	27 (11 – 32)	45.5 (24 – 67)	4.3 (1.8 – 5)	0.15 (0.1 - 0.2)	0.8 (0.4 - 1.2)	0.7 (0.3 - 1.1)	2.8 (1.6 - 4.4)
Health impacts	1.35 (1.0 - 1.7)	0.03	0.34	0.22	0.39	0.05	0.09	0.09	0.19
FUEL (Production & Transport)									
Acid mine drainage	2.1* (0.4 - 3.9)	?	?	?	-	-	-	-	-
Biodiversity loss	0.7 (0.6 - 0.8)	0.1	0.39	0.9	0.13	0	0	0	0
Health impacts	0.36 (0.02 - 0.7)	0.15	0.14	0.15	0.05	0	0	0	0
GHG emissions	2.3 (1.3 - 3.3)	0.45	2.8	2.8	1.5	0	0	0	0
TOTAL EXTERNALITY COST (estimate)	~ 55	~ 1	~ 30	~ 50	~ 6	~ 0.2	~ 0.9	~ 0.8	~ 3
Benefits of electrification – positive externalities									
Benefits of electrification – positive externalities	18 (4.7 - 24.2)	18 (4.7 - 24.2)	18 (4.7 - 24.2)	18 (4.7 - 24.2)	18 (4.7 - 24.2)	18 (4.7 - 24.2)	18 (4.7 - 24.2)	18 (4.7 - 24.2)	18 (4.7 - 24.2)
* A presentation by the Federation for Sustainable Environment (Pretorius, 2009) estimates the water damage externality from Eskom's coal mining needs at about R cents 38/kWh.									

The major external costs from power generation are climate impacts from GHG emissions and health impacts from nitrous oxides (NOX), sulphur dioxide and particulates. Specific emission factors for the different power generation technologies were identified from (Winkler, 2007) and Bauer et al. (Bauer, 2008). High and low externality costs from GHG emissions were determined by applying the climate change damage cost of 85\$/ton of CO₂-eq (Stern, 2006) and 30\$/ton of CO₂-eq to the technology specific emission factors respectively.

The external costs on health impacts from coal-fired power stations are based on Spalding-Fecher & Matible (2003) and van Horen (1996). For the other technologies health impact costs from power generation are determined from international studies (CASES, 2008) (NEEDS, 2009) and adjusted to the South African context in line with how the health impact costs from coal-powered electricity generation in South Africa compare to the international studies. For PV the external costs from manufacture were excluded.

Four major impacts from fuel procurement and transport for the power generations technologies were identified, namely acid drain mining damage, biodiversity loss, health impacts and GHG impacts. For coal fuel the cost estimates are based on van Zyl et al. (1999) and updated with Eskom's coal use in 2009 (Eskom, 2009). The external costs of fuel for the other technologies are based on international studies (CASES, 2008). It is notable that acid mine drainage may be a much larger external cost than that presented here (Pretorius, 2009). The impact of acid mine drainage or related fuel extractions processes for nuclear, gas and diesel is unknown.

Renewable energy technologies do not have any external costs from their fuel procurement or transport and record amongst the lowest external costs with nuclear for health and GHG emission in power generation (Table 3).

Health benefits from electrification are based on Spalding-Fecher (2005).

3. How should these numbers be used in IRP2?

In the modelling for IRP2, the values presented in Table 3 should be used as externality adders, added to the costs to various power plants. To be consistent, external costs must be added to the base case / modeller's reference case and to all policy cases or scenarios.

In the multiple criteria decision-making process, the external costs should be reported as a distinct criterion. The weighting of this criterion relative to others (cost, carbon, and access) should be discussed with stakeholders.

4. What should be done in future?

External costs of electricity generation in South Africa should definitely be of concern, especially the high estimates for coal (Rc 55/kWh), gas (Rc 30/kWh) and diesel (Rc 50/kWh). The greatest share of the externality costs is from the climate change impact of GHG produced with these power production technologies.

Considering the disparities between the local figures for external health costs and international figures a more detailed assessment of these would have to be undertaken for future Integrated Resource Plans. The local studies may have undervalued the health impacts. Acid mine drainage from coal mines supplying coal-fired power stations needs to be reviewed and quantified in monetary terms, as this externality may be more than 10 times the highest cost reported.

The external costs considered here are for electricity, not all energy. This is appropriate for an input to the Integrated Resource Plan. For IRP, the major externalities are GHG emissions contributing to climate change and health impacts of outdoor air pollution. Taking a broader perspective of all energy, the Integrated

Energy Plan (IEP) should take additional factors into account: health impacts of indoor air pollution (important in poor households, as well as industry); noise from transport, and other poverty-related issues such as health impacts of paraffin fires and burns, social costs of fuel wood scarcity (Spalding-Fecher 2009). Finally, it should also be noted that not all externalities are negative, but that electrification can have positive benefits.

The inputs reflected in this study are based on existing studies and have been compiled under severe time constraints. Future research should examine external costs with more time taken.

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ENERGY WHITE PAPER 2012

Australia's energy transformation

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David Wade, of mudgee NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Supports this project

I'm a 42 yrs old who enjoys sports and outdoors with my wife and daughter. I am a multi skilled operator, operating upto 360 tone excavators, 900 992 loaders, D10r dozers, 16 h-m graders, 789 trucks, 777 water trucks and more plant. Certificates-civil 3 construction,excavator, loader,skid steer, non swing crane, chainsaw, and more. I'm looking for something new where i can be apart of ,To grow as a employee and a person and to have the opportunity to work within this organisation. I have sound knowledge within the mining industry with safety in high regard. please dont hesitate in contacting me for any further information that maybe required.

Yours sincerely ,

David Wade

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Haydn Washington, of Middle Cove NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

The Cobbora Coal project will cost NSW taxpayers \$3.4 billion. The people who voted for you don't give you permission to spend this money in this way. The proposed mine is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections. The demand for electricity has gone down so another coal mine is not justified.

The project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts. Think about the future of our children and grandchildren; leave them with a safe world without more droughts, floods and possibly an environment not suitable to live in.

The Hunter has had massive damage done to it from open cut coal mines. Don't destroy this land with important high conservation and agricultural value. The project will compete with the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions. We know that due to climate change there will be less rain. Surely the local townspeople and the farmers deserve to have enough water to continue to live there and carry out their business.

The project will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species. Once these species become extinct they are gone forever. We have a duty of care to protect them for future generations.

As well as damage to the environment the project will destroy significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. We killed Aborigines and destroyed their habitat and food source when Europeans came to Australia but surely today we know better and have an obligation to protect what is left.

From :Matthew Kenneth Washington
87 Wilson St
Lawson NSW 2783
November 9, 2012

To : Mr Hazzard
Planning Minister
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Dear Sir

I am writing to voice my concerns over the planned Cobbora coal Mine. I am a resident of the Blue Mountains and know the value of native bushland and the natural services such areas provide. The Cobbora coal mine, if built, will cost taxpayers more than \$3 billion, destroy nearly two thousand hectares of wildlife habitat, and will provide half-priced coal to our state's polluting power stations for more than 20 years. The impacts on the environment itself will be felt for generations and the value to the state of NSW long term appears to be largely fanciful.

The justification for the mine is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years. But studies show that the demand for coal-fired power has dropped significantly since this project was first proposed, as part of the Keneally government's electricity privatisation deal. Renewable energy technologies, on the other hand are well established, well understood by local industry and effective viable job creators long term.

My perspective is not base, somehow ideologically on poor foundations as is sometimes portrayed by certain parts of the media. As an educated, responsible public servant, I believe that citizens should participate in and contribute to important issues that will effect us all. After all, only through good dialogue, discussion and debate can we hope to achieve better public policy outcomes. But in the matter of this propose coal mine the choices appear to be quite stark! As you know the Cobbora Coal project is proposed in central west NSW north-west of Mudgee and east of Dubbo, an area I know well.

It is a state-owned coal mining project tied to the sale of the power stations. It will in fact lock NSW into coal-fired electricity generation until at least 2036. Hence this mines repercussions will be felt for many many years to come.

Further the proposal is to mine 20mtpa (million tonnes per annum) to produce 12mtpa of usable coal – but it is extremely poor quality product with high ash content. The project aims to provide cheap domestic coal to power stations in the Upper Hunter and Central Coast. But there is also the question of the health impacts of using poor

quality coal which have not been assessed. And if this issue also becomes part of the impacts generated by this mine local voters are unlikely to forgive or to forget.

The justification for the project is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years. Demand has dropped significantly since this project was proposed. Hence initial economic arguments have receded and now appear to be ill founded.

The price of black coal on the export market has also dropped below the projections used to justify the need to source cheaper coal for domestic use.

To top it all the mine will cost the NSW taxpayer approx \$3.4 billion and will be run at a loss! It is a direct subsidy to power generators in NSW, which is another issue the electorate is not likely to ignore when such are raised !. The argument for continued coal-fired electricity in comparison to the long-term benefits of renewable energy sources has not been made.

The current governments closed mind to these real and obvious issues will have consequences at the ballot box that no politicians will enjoy. Clearly the Taxpayer's money would be better invested in renewable energy sources and the natural bushland not despoiled.

And importantly the project has a very large footprint and will cause major environmental impacts on woodland habitat as well as groundwater and surface water sources and loss of at least 79 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

Further the mine will need to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of high security licenced water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries. It could also threaten the long –term security of urban water supply from Windamere Dam. As noted initially the benefits of this propose mine appear to be fanciful.

To summarise I set out key points which should be seen for what they are, very persuasive, ie that :

1. Cobbora Coal project is inappropriate investment of \$3.4 billion of NSW taxpayers' money;
2. The project justification is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections, whereas the price of energy sourced from renewable technologies continues to come down!

To : Mr Hazzard, NSW Gov't Planning Minister, November 9, 2012
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3. The project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts, when clear alternative and less polluting technologies are available now;
4. The project will disturb approx 47km² of land with important high conservation and agricultural value; And it also it appears that national party constituents are waking- up to the issue of the predation upon such valuable arable lands and valuable resources of clean water catchments;
5. The project will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species;
6. The project will destroy significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites;
7. The project will compete with the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions; Any damage to this well known and successful wine industry ,with its spin off value in tourism, will not be welcomed by local voters.

In the light of these matters, outlined above, I urge you to re-consider giving approval to this Cobbora Coal project . It exhibits all the qualities of a what is planning, environmental and a political disaster. It is inappropriate expenditure of taxpayer moneys (given viable and better renewables), will spoil significant natural and heritage areas and my possible cause long term damage to the local community's health.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my submission..

Yours Sincerely,

Matthew K Washington

87 Wilson St, Lawson,
NSW, 2783.

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Prudence Wawn, of Avalon NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I am a secondary teacher at Mosman High School as well as a keen member of the school's environment committee.

We run an "enviro-week" program at this time each year and so therefore have taken the trouble to inform ourselves about alternatives to coal-fired power.

The students are particularly interested in these issues, knowing well that they will be impacted upon more severely in the future, by the decisions made by you today.

We have taught them that just reducing demand for power is a significant strategy and already this change in behaviour appears to be occurring, in the school and the wider society.

Therefore can NSW still justify such a huge spend?

Surely an amount of \$3.4 billion would be better used to fund clean renewable energy?

People certainly wonder why this type of investment isn't already being delivered by the govt. It's increasingly difficult to explain actually.

Beyond Zero Emissions were invited to "enviro-week" and delivered a brilliant presentation showing how, by using technology already in existence, Australia can change over to renewable energy.

When examined, the proposed Cobbora coal mine appears to be riddled with some quite impressive problems.

These include the destruction of many many hectares of woodland that contain precious endangered and vulnerable flora and fauna.

More concerning for many people however is the negative impact on valuable farming land and local communities.

Particularly worrying for the future of this region, is the competition for Cudgegong River water use.

Many students and families from Mosman holiday in the Mudgee area.

Therefore we are at a loss to understand why this beautiful area needs to be

sacrificed for such an unworthy project.

Perhaps someone from your govt. planning dept. could attend "enviro-week" next year and explain why such a decision would be made?

Anyway, as this is unlikely to occur, please consider our strong objections to the development of yet another dirty, polluting and unnecessary coal mine at Cobbora.

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Wendy White, of East Maitland NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I object to the Cobbora Coal Project as it is a totally inappropriate use of \$3.4 billion of tax payers money to subsidise coal-fired power generators, thus generating additional greenhouse gas emissions, an outcome totally at odds with State policy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In addition this project will supply poor quality coal to Upper Hunter and Central Coast power stations when the health impacts of using this type of coal have not been assessed. Areas in the Hunter are already experiencing adverse and serious health effects and do not need an untested potential source of more problems promoted by their own government.

The project will have a very large footprint with 79 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites being lost , the clearing of 1,867ha of woodland impacting adversely on species listed for national protection as well as numerous birds protected under the NSW Threatened Species Act. We could add the mine's projected consumption of water (3,700 million litres of water annually from the Cudgegong river) as another adverse effect, this time to the Mudgee regions wine and tourism industries.

The project should not proceed for the above reasons but also for the crucial fact that the justification for the project is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next ten years as demand has dropped considerably since this project was proposed.

Lesley Wilkins
Po Box U114
Wollongong NSW 2500

10 November 2011

Major Planning Assessments
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam

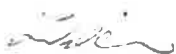
I am writing to comment on the proposed expansion of the Cobbora coal project.

My major objection is that I understand it will destroy nearly two thousand hectares of wildlife habitat, including valuable water sources as well as Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. It is also at the expense of investment into sources of renewable energy, and will generate gas emissions which will add massively to pollution levels.

Please do not proceed with such an ill-conceived plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my comment.

Yours faithfully



Lesley Wilkins

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Sally Wilson, of Newport NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I wish to submit an objection to the Cobbora Coal Mine.

I am a resident in the Northern Beaches in Sydney.

We use renewable energy for about 1/3 of our energy use, this is with Photovoltaics and solar hot water and energy saving measures, we do our best to ensure our environment is supported by using real renewable energy.

I wish to give my objections with the following points:

- Using NSW taxpayers money (my taxes) for a project dirty coal a non-renewable resource is outrageous
- This project will not assist us in reducing our carbon emissions, it will only add to them, this energy is old, dirty and totally out of date.
- Our energy demand in NSW is reduced by many Australians like us using Solar Hot water and Photovoltaics, so there is no justification to spend any money on digging up coal.
- Coal prices are dropping, China is using less of this dirty fuel, in fact they are now the leaders in making Photovoltaic panels.
- The project will disturb and destroy important conservation area, agriculture land and aboriginal sites.
- The Mudgee area is a great tourist area and income from the beautiful landscape and wine areas will be compromised with this mine (we have seen the upper hunter where I come from destroyed by coal mining) .
- This mine will compete with farms and communities in the area for water in times of drought.

Sally Wilson
P.O. Box 630
Newport, NSW 2106

9/11/2012

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Ray Wooster, of Gulgong NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Objection to Cobbora Coal Project

Application No: 10_0001

I wish to comment on this proposal on the basis of the social impacts that are already being felt in this region, and which have not been adequately assessed.

- I live in Gulgong, an historic 19th century town with narrow one-way streets that is being stretched beyond its limits with 21st century mining traffic. We are a tourist-orientated town that is in great danger of losing its character because of this.
- Massive disruption of the rental and housing market has occurred. It was reported recently that nationwide, the Mudgee region was second only to Mackay (Qld) in the percentage increase of cost of housing in the previous twelve months.
- There has been a complete distortion of the workforce with mining taking employment from other industries, especially agriculture.
- The costs of major infrastructure upgrades to railways and roads to meet the needs of the coal industry is enormous, and is at the expense of hospitals, our health and our education budgets. This is a huge social cost now and for the future.
- Increased coal traffic from trains and trucks will lead to health problems in the affected communities from extra noise and dust.
- Health services such as medical and dental services have not kept up with the increase of population.
- The use of 3.7 gegalitres of water by the Cobborah Mine will see the complete destruction in the next drought of the wine and tourist industries in our region. This is simply not on! The mine needs this amount of water as the coal has so much ash. Low grade coal needing this amount of water should stay in the ground.
- There is no thought given to the required doubling of the available water for the Mudgee region as a result of this mine.

I really think this mine should not go ahead at all.

Yours sincerely,

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Linda Wright, of Lawrence NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Dear Mr Donoghue,

I am deeply concerned about your government's proposal for the Cobbora coal mine.

If built, this mine will cost taxpayers more than \$3 billion, destroy nearly two thousand hectares of wildlife habitat, and provide half-priced coal to our state's polluting power stations for more than 20 years.

The justification for the mine is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years. Demand for coal-fired power has dropped significantly since this project was first proposed, as part of the Keneally government's electricity privatisation deal.

Linda Wright, 9 Mantons Lane, LAWRENCE 2460, ph. 0266477373

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Susan Wynn, of Mannering Park NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I object to this development on the following grounds.

Cobbora Coal project is inappropriate investment of \$3.4b of NSW taxpayers money that will subsidise coal-fired power generators. It will lock NSW into coal-fired electricity generation until at least 2036. This is locking in climate failure as the project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts.

The project justification is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections as we have seen a real decline in electricity usage and we know there are other ways to meet peak demand on the few days per year it is required such as making all air conditioners turn off for 6 minutes per hour. This will not affect the ambient temperature but provide a real cut in peak demand for electricity.

The project will provide poor quality coal to Upper Hunter and Central Coast power stations. The health impacts of using poor quality coal have not been assessed.

The project proposes to increase train movements through Newcastle by 8 additional trains per day increasing traffic hold ups at Adamstown and Clyde St gates by 40 minutes. Towns and properties along the coal chain will be impacted by additional noise and dust from increased coal train movements.

Some export coal is also expected to go through the port. This could expand significantly.

The open cut coal mine project will disturb approx 47km² of land with important high conservation and agricultural value and significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites. It will cause major environmental impacts on woodland habitat as well as groundwater and surface water sources and loss of 79 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

The clearing of 1,867ha woodland habitat will impact on species listed for national protection, including, but not limited to, Grassy Box Woodland; endangered and vulnerable plants, including 100% loss of the local population of *Tylophora linearis*, endangered bird species including Australasian bittern, malleefowl, regent honeyeater, superb parrot; and vulnerable microbat species such as southern long-eared bat and the large-eared pied bat.

A large number of threatened woodland birds protected under the NSW Threatened Species Act were recorded in the area of impact, these include the brown tree creeper,

diamond firetail, glossy black-cockatoo, grey-crowned babbler, hooded robin, speckled warbler, varied sittella, masked owl, barking owl and powerful owl. Has the cumulative effect of all the mining leases been considered or do we continue to act as if this will not have an effect?

As this project is being determined under the old and much maligned part 3A and is a state-owned coal mining project tied to the sale of the power stations which your government has just announced is going ahead, so wouldn't it be appropriate to allow the 'private providers' to source their own coal at the most competitive price on the market rather than gift them this poor quality coal for we, the residents of NSW to endure for another generation. Surely this would return more royalties to the government. The mine will cost the NSW tax payer approx \$3.4b and will be run at a loss. It is a direct subsidy to power generators in NSW. The Central Coast has endured enough over the last 50 years from coal fired electricity power stations. Let someone else have the pollution, heavy metal residue, ash dams, heated lake water and unknown health impacts from coal dust spent fuel.

Where is the comparison to renewable energy sources over the next 24 years? How can the state government go down this path without this work being done particularly in light of the carbon price.

As the mine will need to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of high security licenced water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries. The project will compete with the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions. It could also threaten the long-term security of urban water supply from Windamere Dam.

The loss of farming community and broadscale food production has not been adequately assessed.

This mine should not go ahead under any circumstances.

Yours truly,

Sue Wynn

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(Name withheld), of Armidale NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Dear Planning officers and Ministerial staff,

I object to the proposed Cobbora coal mine.

New South Wales should be planning to reduce steaming coal production and use as quickly as possible, and to ensure that both public and private energy investments are focussed on development of renewable sources. This proposal is bad for the New South Wales economy because it heads us further in the wrong direction at great expense.

The environmental impacts of the proposed development are quite unacceptable. They cannot be truly offset. I have been involved in assessing coal mines in past decades and learnt then that the impacts of mines vary. While some impacts of some mines are acceptable, others are not. This mine would have many serious impacts that I consider unacceptable, such as the destruction of extensive woodland areas that are known to provide habitat for many threatened and declining species, and the impacts on water resources. High security water should not be used for coal mining. There are alternative ways to meet real energy needs that have less environmental impacts (as well as reducing demand by encouraging efficiency improvements).

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(Name withheld), of Armidale NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

The Cobbora Coal Mine project is obsolete, unsustainable, polluting and a huge cost to the taxpayer. If it goes ahead it will cost taxpayers more than \$3 billion, destroy nearly two thousand hectares of wildlife habitat, and provide half-priced coal to our state's polluting power stations for more than 20 years.

The justification for the mine is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years. Demand for coal-fired power has dropped significantly since this project was first proposed, as part of the Keneally government's electricity privatisation deal.

This project does not make economic sense and is a burden on the taxpayer. Most of all however it subsidises polluting power generation and the opportunity cost will put the State years behind in changing to cleaner alternatives which are most sustainable in the long term.

I object to the project and urge that it be suspended immediately.

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(Name withheld), of Beerwah QLD, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I am amazed and confused as to why we are planning more filthy coal burning to produce power when we should be concentrating on more renewable and sustainable ways to create power.

I am also very disappointed in a Government that would bring in a Carbon Tax and then allegedly support Coal Mining financially.

We need to be smarter and instead of investing money into coal it should be spent on more environmentally friendly options.

The future is our responsibility so let's be responsible !

Thanks

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(Name withheld), of Boambee NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I am strongly opposed to the Cobbora Coal Mine.

This mine, if built, will have a major negative environmental impact. It will destroy 1,867 ha of significant woodland which currently provides habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species. It will disturb approximately 47 km² of land with important high conservation and agricultural value, and destroy at least 79 significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

In addition, the project, if approved, will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions - conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts.

The mine will need to use up to 3,700 million litres of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries. It could also threaten the long -term security of urban water supply from Windamere Dam.

The justification for this project is based on outdated projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years. Demand has dropped significantly since this project was proposed, and the price of black coal on the export market has also dropped below the projections used to justify the need to source cheaper coal for domestic use..

The mine will cost the NSW taxpayer approx \$3.4 billion and will be run at a loss. It is a direct subsidy to power generators in NSW. An analysis of the benefits (or lack thereof) of continued coal-fired electricity vs. the long-term benefits of renewable energy sources has not been made. Taxpayer's money would be far more wisely and appropriately invested in renewable energy sources.

The cost benefit analysis for the project has not taken into account the resulting social disruption, competition for workforce with other industries (particularly the agricultural industry across western NSW), or the costs of major infrastructure upgrades - particularly rail lines - to accommodate additional coal transport. Towns and properties along the coal chain will be impacted by additional noise and dust from increased coal train movements.

This project, if approved, will prove to be disastrous in so many ways, it is vital that it should not be permitted to proceed.

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(Name withheld), of BROADWAY NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I submit that the proposed COBBORA COAL PROJECT, Application Number 10_0001 SHOULD BE REFUSED

on the grounds that

- (1) it is an unwarranted investment of public money;
- (2) the need for additional coal fired power generation has not been justified in the light of reduced demand;
- (3) the focus should be on reduced rather than increased generation of greenhouse gas emissions in the face of rising adverse implications on climate;
- (4) the irreversable damage to significant natural and cultural heritage.

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(Name withheld), of Como NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I am a resident of NSW. I welcome the opportunity to comment on the proposed expansion.

Just recently there was an article highlighting the fact that our electricity demand has actually decreased due to several factors. This project does not fit into the actual electricity as well as coal price projection.

With the renewable energy is getting cheaper, it does not make sense to invest in this project and on top of that the project will generate additional greenhouse gas emission which conflict with both State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impact.

I often travel to Mudgee and going past a few collieries are a real eye-sore. This project will damage Mudgee reputation as the wine country and damage the tourism industry.

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(Name withheld), of Islington NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I object to another coal mine being built in NSW. Open cut mines devastate local habitat and utilise valuable water in this dry region.

An extra 20 million tonnes of coal dug out of the ground and burnt is counter to the actions we need to take to reduce carbon pollution globally.

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(Name withheld), of Malabar NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

The recommendations from the International Panel on Climate Change, as well as Australia's own Climate Commission and the Premier's Office of Environment, highlight that NSW should transition away from using coal as an energy source. I object to the opening of a new thermal coal mine that will perpetuate the operation of the Bayswater, Liddell, Eraring and Vales Point Power Stations. This will result in greenhouse gas emission that are having an effect on many parts of our environment, water security, agricultural performance as well as direct human health. There is greater public interest in protecting agricultural land, the water catchment and threatened species, particularly in a changing climate, and rejecting the proposal for relatively short-term extractive mining. I object to this coal mine proposal under the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD), particularly the precautionary principle and the principle of intergenerational equity, which should be considered as part of the public interest.

To approve a new open cut thermal coal mine stifles investment in sustainable, renewable technologies and industry.

The open cut mine and ancillary ore processing and transportation systems, make dust from the operations a health concern, and can jeopardise the tourism and agricultural industry in this pastoral region. The mine, buying water on the open market, competes with the agricultural sector for water supply, potentially pushing up the price of water as the coal mines purchasing potential based on coal commodity prices is projected to rise. With Destination NSW promoting the wine tours in the region, this open cut mines risks tarnishing the tourism appeal through it's visual and noise impacts as well.

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(Name withheld), of Mangerton NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

The recommendations from the International Panel on Climate Change, as well as Australia's own Climate Commission and the Premier's Office of Environment, highlight that NSW should transition away from using coal as an energy source. I object to the opening of a new thermal coal mine that will perpetuate the operation of the Bayswater, Liddell, Eraring and Vales Point Power Stations. This will result in greenhouse gas emissions that are having an effect on many parts of our environment, water security, agricultural performance as well as direct human health.

There is greater public interest in protecting agricultural land, the water catchment and threatened species, particularly in a changing climate, and rejecting the proposal for relatively short-term extractive mining. I object to this coal mine proposal under the principles of ecologically sustainable development (ESD), particularly the precautionary principle and the principle of intergenerational equity, which should be considered as part of the public interest.

To approve a new open cut thermal coal mine stifles investment in sustainable, renewable technologies and industry.

The open cut mine and ancillary ore processing and transportation systems, make dust from the operations a health concern, and can jeopardise the tourism and agricultural industry in this pastoral region. The mine, buying water on the open market, competes with the agricultural sector for water supply, potentially pushing up the price of water as the coal mines purchasing potential based on coal commodity prices is projected to rise. With Destination NSW promoting the wine tours in the region, this open cut mine risks tarnishing the tourism appeal through its visual and noise impacts as well.

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(Name withheld), of Manly NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Objection to Cobbora Coal Project - (state owned open cut coal mine proposal)
Application No: 10_0001

Major Planning Assessments
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Objection to Cobbora Coal Project

I strongly object to approval being given for this project to proceed. I feel that the following key points need to be taken into account both in considering whether this project should go ahead, and if it does go ahead despite strong community objections, in considering any conditions which should be placed on approval.

Key Points of Objection:

1. Cobbora Coal project is an inappropriate investment of \$3.4b of NSW taxpayers money that will subsidize coal-fired power generators.

The mine will cost the NSW tax payer approx \$3.4b and will be run at a loss. It is a direct subsidy to power generators in NSW. The subsidies needed to keep the mine running will unfairly disadvantage renewable energy, which will be forced to compete against power stations fuelled with below-cost coal. This will result in a market distortion, with huge environmental and employment costs. Billions of taxpayers' dollars will be ripped off and given to the private power station operators, prolonging the State's addiction to coal and perpetuating and growing the 60 million tonnes of CO2 that the State's electricity industry pumps into the atmosphere every year.

The argument for continued coal-fired electricity in comparison to the long-term benefits of renewable energy sources has not been made. Tax payer's money would be better invested in renewable energy sources. A sound feed-in tariff for solar power for domestically generated power is very important for our economy. Solar power is providing extra energy during times it is most wanted and it is generated very close to where it is being used. It helps to reduce the need for more expensive infrastructure in form of massive ugly high voltage powerlines. Solar power helps to reduce peaking demand and costs during hot summer. In fact feed-in tariffs should be extended to mini power station using ceramic fuel cells (Bluegen etc.) to help

reduce our dependence on a few massive power stations and an extensive power grid.

By deciding to retain ownership, the government forgoes the possibility of generating revenue from the sale of the mine and it is not clear what, if anything, the generators will contribute towards the development costs of the mine?

As a tax payer I demand that the government reveal the price it will guarantee to the power stations for supply of this subsidized coal?

2. The project justification is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections

The justification for the project is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years. Demand has dropped significantly since this project was proposed.

The price of black coal on the export market has also dropped below the projections used to justify the need to source cheaper coal for domestic use.

Does Treasurer Mike Baird stand by the comments he made in early 2011 to the New South Wales upper House inquiry into the gentrader contract - that there are significant risks and costs being imposed on the whole of New South Wales through the Cobbora development? He said that the most substantial of these were:

"Ongoing losses in the project--the market estimates that the total losses incurred from selling the coal at less than what it costs to mine the coal will be more than \$1 billion. A Merrill Lynch research report said the operating cost ... will equate to about \$50 a tonne. This is a \$17 a tonne cash loss to the Government, and on 138 million tonnes that is a potential cost of up to \$2 billion, well above the market estimates, and that excludes what your long-term view on coal prices may be. "

Apparently, the Treasurer's views at the time were supported by the Tamberlin inquiry. What has changed?

Is it true that only 5.5 million tonnes of coal from the Project are contracted to a non-State entity and the remaining 6.5 million tonnes are either not contracted or committed to a State-owned generator? If this is the case, a simple instruction from the portfolio Minister under section 21N of the State Owned Corporations Act could cancel the contract. The current government is not committed to the previous government's contractual arrangements.

3. The project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts.

The project will lock NSW into coal-fired electricity generation until at least 2036. Professor Ross Garnaut said in a speech in Canberra last week that the move could undermine the impact of a carbon price. "Media reports that New South Wales is considering allocation of coal to electricity generators, on the condition that the coal is not sold on the open market, are of note and concern," Garnaut said. "The implicit subsidy to coal-based generation within these arrangements could work against a carbon price, and be much larger than the highest carbon price that has been suggested in the Australian policy discussion."

4. The project will provide poor quality coal to Upper Hunter and Central Coast power stations. The health impacts of using poor quality coal have not been assessed. The proposal is to mine 20mtpa (million tonnes per annum) to produce 12mtpa of usable coal for 21 years - it is extremely poor quality product with high ash content. The health impact of using poor quality coal through the power stations has not been

assessed. The project should not be allowed to proceed before an assessment is made of the cumulative impact of coal burning power stations on the health of the Upper Hunter and Lithgow communities.

The findings of the Camberwell Cumulative Impact Review which show unacceptable health impacts, need to be taken into account before any further expansion of coal mining is permitted. I support the calls for an independent, cumulative study across the Upper Hunter and the Lithgow areas to examine the health impacts of the rapidly expanding coal and power industries.

5. The project proposes to increase train movements through Newcastle by 8 additional trains per day increasing traffic hold ups at Adamstown and Clyde St gates by 40 mins.

The project will cause increased coal train movements in the Hunter Valley and Newcastle rail corridors. Towns and properties along the coal chain will be impacted by additional noise and dust from increased coal train movements, the cumulative impact of these additional movements on local communities has not been adequately assessed.

6. The open cut coal mine project will disturb approx 47km² of land with important high conservation and agricultural value and significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

The NSW Government has purchased 68 of 90 properties in the affected area. The loss of farming community and broadscale food production has not been adequately assessed.

The project has a very large footprint and will cause major environmental impacts on woodland habitat as well as groundwater and surface water sources and loss of 79 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

The preliminary environmental risk and impact assessment for the revised proposal admits that there is potential for additional Aboriginal sites to occur within the pit area - revealing the inadequacy of the archaeological survey work undertaken to date. A full survey of the entire pit area should be undertaken to identify all Aboriginal sites and areas of archaeological potential, and the significance assessment for all sites should take into account the cumulative destruction of sites which has already occurred on a regional basis.

The complex of sites along Sandy Creek and Laheys Creek should be formally protected by a gazetted Conservation Area, and independently managed by representatives of the relevant local Aboriginal communities.

7. The project will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species.

The clearing of 1,867ha woodland habitat will impact on species listed for national protection: eg Grassy Box Woodland; endangered and vulnerable plants, including 100% loss of the local population of *Tylophora linearis*, endangered bird species including australasian bittern, malleefowl, regent honeyeater, superb parrot; and vulnerable microbat species - southern long-eared bat, large-eared pied bat

Also a large number of threatened woodland birds protected under the NSW Threatened Species Act were recorded in the area of impact - brown tree creeper, diamond firetail, glossy black-cockatoo, grey-crowned babbler, hooded robin, speckled warbler, varied sittella, masked owl, barking owl, powerful owl.

The environmental impact assessment has identified that the proposal area occurs on

"the edge of a potential growth region for coal mining" and that "impacts from the Project may accumulate with existing and future mining projects within the region, particularly for TEC's , threatened flora and fauna". However, the project proposal has failed to assess those cumulative impacts in detail or demonstrate that there will be a beneficial cumulative impact from the project.

In fact, the environmental impact survey has identified the need for "further surveys and additional offsets" to meet the requirements for species credits for a number of threatened species. If the project goes ahead further offsets - in the form of conservation of increased areas of appropriate, connected habitat should be required. The alternative of reducing the outcome goal to "a mitigated net loss" is not acceptable.

The survival of our beautiful native species and the health of the landscape of NSW depend on us creating a network of connected woodland areas as part of a new reserve system. Their protection is critical. Protecting and maintaining these vital woodlands will ensure that the wildlife, farmland and rivers of western NSW are healthy and productive long term. The survival of our beautiful native species and the health of the landscape depend on it.

The alternative of adding these significant areas of habitat to nearby conservation areas should be further assessed.

8. The project will compete with the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions .

The mine will need to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of high security licenced water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries. It could also threaten the long -term security of urban water supply from Windamere Dam.

Surface and groundwater supplies will be heavily compromised by the mine, potentially destroying the local agricultural industry and, in turn, tourism in the area. This region has a \$200 million agriculture industry and a \$250 million tourism industry. Both industries which have long-term, sustainable benefits to the community which outweigh the short-term benefits of coalmining.

I support the call for a the appointment of a hydro-geologist to review the impact of the mine on water supplies. Because the government is both the owner and approving authority of this mine, independent review and assessment is critical.

I maintain that allowing the Cobbora Coal Project to proceed is a short-term option, which does not adequately address the cumulative impacts of the proposal on the natural environment, Aboriginal cultural heritage or local communities and does not address the urgent need for the development of long-term sustainable energy solutions.

Yours sincerely

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(Name withheld), of Marks Point NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

To Whom It May Concern:

While reviewing the Ecological Assessment for the above proposal I wish to raise the following concerns.

I believe that unacceptable impacts will occur on *Zieria ingramii*, *Tylophora linearis* and *Homoranthus darwinoides*, in my opinion, which is supported by the definition of a 'local population' by Keith (2000) that for each of these species, numerous local populations will become completely extinct. This should trigger the need to produce a Species Impact Statement (SIS) under the NSW Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995, which I could not find in the attached documentation above. These species are also listed under the federal Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and in using the Significant Impact Criteria, I feel that the above documentation does not adequately address impacts on Matters of National Environmental Significance for these species. Therefore the current documentation should be seen as inadequate for completing an impact assessment on these species under both State and Federal Legislation.

Furthermore the offset lands contain extensive areas of cleared land, which while the documentation states that they will be revegetated over time, current knowledge as supported in a recent review paper in the journal Biological Conservation by Cristescu et al (2012) in considering the rehabilitation success on mined (or cleared land) found that current activities had little benefit to threatened species. Within an already overcleared landscape, further removal of large areas of remnant woodland may result in significant impacts on local populations of threatened woodland birds including the Brown Treecreeper, Speckled Warbler and Barking Owl. Impacts will also occur on Grassy Box Woodlands, which are listed as Critically Endangered Ecological Communities under the EPBC Act 1999, thus any significant removal should be seen as unacceptable. Due to these issues the current proposal should be rejected due to unacceptable impacts on matters of national environmental significance, inadequate conservation offsets and the lack of an SIS for the three aforementioned threatened flora species.

References

Keith (2000) Ecological Management and Restoration 1, 125-139.
Cristescu et al. (2012) Biological Conservation 149, 60-72.

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(Name withheld), of Merriwa NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Dear Sir/Madam

Enough is enough!!

When will the government realise the damage they are allowing, even encouraging to happen to our beautiful country, and its unique fauna and flora?

When will the government realise what damage they are doing to the health and well being of men women and children that live and work in this wonderful country?.

All for the 'mighty' dollar.....which will not grow any food to feed this nation, which will not cure the health problems of its people, which will not replace the fauna and flora wiped out?

Enough is enough!

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(Name withheld), of Mount Pleasant NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

9 November 2012

Major Planning Assessments
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are residents of the Illawarra in New South Wales and members of the NSW Greens, and we are writing to object to the Cobbora Coal Mine.

We believe that the Cobbora Coal Mine is an inappropriate investment of \$3.4 billion of NSW taxpayers' funds, and that far better uses could be found for those funds given the tight budget in NSW at present.

The project is environmentally very inappropriate. It will disturb around 47 square kilometres of land, much of which has important biodiversity/environmental or agricultural value, and should not be mined. In particular, the project is identified as destroying 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species. The Cobbora Mine, if it goes ahead, would completely wipe out the local population of *Tylophora linearis*, as well as destroying areas of Grassy Box Woodland, and the habitat of nationally endangered species such as the Regent Honeyeater, Australasian Bittern and Superb Parrot.

Unfortunately, the 'pay-off' for this destruction is also negative: increased greenhouse gas emissions from the mining process itself as well as from the coal that is mined, and extraction of low-quality coal. This is completely at odds with State and Federal policies to reduce climate change impacts.

Finally, the idea that destruction of the vital natural areas mentioned above could be offset via rehabilitation of mined lands is completely wrong-headed. These natural habitats would take hundreds of years to re-establish. For example, it takes up to a century for an old eucalypt tree to develop hollows that are suitable for nesting birds and animals.

Yours sincerely,

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(Name withheld), of Mudgee NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I object to the Cobbora Coal my objection are below

Key Points of Objection:

1. Cobbora Coal project is inappropriate investment of \$1.5b of NSW taxpayers money
2. The project justification is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections
3. The project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions, approx 25m tonnes per year, conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts
4. The project will use over 3,000ML of high security water from the Cudgegong River and compete with the general security licence holders including the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions
5. Up to 10 coal trains a day will pass through Gulgong to Ulan, Wollar, Bylong and additional export product could be sent through Mudgee in the future.
6. The NSW Government has purchased 68 of 90 properties in the affected area. The loss of farming community and broadscale food production has not been adequately assessed.
7. The large open cut mine will disturb approx 47km² of land with important high conservation and agricultural value
8. The project will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species
9. The project will destroy significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites

Background:

Cobbora Coal project is proposed in central west NSW north-west of Mudgee and Gulgong.

It is a state-owned coal mining project tied to the sale of the power stations. It will lock NSW into coal-fired electricity generation until at least 2036.

The proposal is to mine 20mtpa (million tonnes per annum) to produce 12mtpa of usable coal over 21 years - it is extremely poor quality product with high ash content. The project aims to provide cheap domestic coal to power stations in the Upper

Hunter and Central Coast.

The justification for the project is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years. Demand has dropped significantly since this project was proposed.

The price of black coal on the export market has also dropped below the projections used to justify the need to source cheaper coal for domestic use.

The mine will cost the NSW tax payer approx \$1.5b and will be run at a loss. It is a direct subsidy to power generators in NSW. The argument for continued coal-fired electricity in comparison to the long-term benefits of renewable energy sources has not been made. Tax payer's money would be better invested in renewable energy sources.

The mine will need to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of high security licenced water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries. It could also threaten the long -term security of urban water supply from Windamere Dam.

Towns and properties along the coal chain will be impacted by additional noise and dust from increased coal train movements.

The open cut coal mine has a very large footprint and will cause major environmental impacts on woodland habitat as well as groundwater and surface water sources and loss of at least 79 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

The clearing of 1,867ha woodland habitat will impact on species listed for national protection: eg Grassy Box Woodland; endangered and vulnerable plants, including 100% loss of the local population of *Tylophora linearis* , endangered bird species including australasian bittern, malleefowl, regent honeyeater, superb parrot; and vulnerable microbat species - southern long-eared bat, large-eared pied bat

Also a large number of threatened woodland birds protected under the NSW Threatened Species Act were recorded in the area of impact - brown tree creeper, diamond firetail, glossy black-cockatoo, grey-crowned babbler, hooded robin, speckled warbler, varied sittella, masked owl, barking owl, powerful owl.

The cost benefit analysis for the project has not taken into account the social disruption; competition for workforce with other industries, particularly the agricultural industry across western NSW; or the costs of major infrastructure upgrades, particularly rail lines, to accommodate additional coal transport.

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(Name withheld), of Mudgee NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Key Points of Objection:

1. Cobbora Coal project is inappropriate investment of \$1.5b of NSW taxpayers money
2. The project justification is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections
3. The project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions, approx 25m tonnes per year, conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts
4. The project will use over 3,000ML of high security water from the Cudgegong River and compete with the general security licence holders including the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions
5. Up to 10 coal trains a day will pass through Gulgong to Ulan, Wollar, Bylong and additional export product could be sent through Mudgee in the future.
6. The NSW Government has purchased 68 of 90 properties in the affected area. The loss of farming community and broadscale food production has not been adequately assessed.
7. The large open cut mine will disturb approx 47km² of land with important high conservation and agricultural value
8. The project will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species
9. The project will destroy significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites

Background:

Cobbora Coal project is proposed in central west NSW north-west of Mudgee and Gulgong.

It is a state-owned coal mining project tied to the sale of the power stations. It will lock NSW into coal-fired electricity generation until at least 2036.

The proposal is to mine 20mtpa (million tonnes per annum) to produce 12mtpa of usable coal over 21 years - it is extremely poor quality product with high ash content. The project aims to provide cheap domestic coal to power stations in the Upper Hunter and Central Coast.

The justification for the project is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years. Demand has dropped significantly since this project was proposed.

The price of black coal on the export market has also dropped below the projections used to justify the need to source cheaper coal for domestic use.

The mine will cost the NSW tax payer approx \$1.5b and will be run at a loss. It is a direct subsidy to power generators in NSW. The argument for continued coal-fired electricity in comparison to the long-term benefits of renewable energy sources has not been made. Tax payer's money would be better invested in renewable energy sources.

The mine will need to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of high security licenced water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries. It could also threaten the long -term security of urban water supply from Windamere Dam.

Towns and properties along the coal chain will be impacted by additional noise and dust from increased coal train movements.

The open cut coal mine has a very large footprint and will cause major environmental impacts on woodland habitat as well as groundwater and surface water sources and loss of at least 79 Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

The clearing of 1,867ha woodland habitat will impact on species listed for national protection: eg Grassy Box Woodland; endangered and vulnerable plants, including 100% loss of the local population of *Tylophora linearis* , endangered bird species including australasian bittern, malleefowl, regent honeyeater, superb parrot; and vulnerable microbat species - southern long-eared bat, large-eared pied bat

Also a large number of threatened woodland birds protected under the NSW Threatened Species Act were recorded in the area of impact - brown treecreeper, diamond firetail, glossy black-cockatoo, grey-crowned babbler, hooded robin, speckled warbler, varied sittella, masked owl, barking owl, powerful owl.

The cost benefit analysis for the project has not taken into account the social disruption; competition for workforce with other industries, particularly the agricultural industry across western NSW; or the costs of major infrastructure upgrades, particularly rail lines, to accommodate additional coal transport.

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(Name withheld), of Mudgee NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I wish to lodge an objection to the Cobbora Coal Project as I don't believe the government should be investing in a new large coal project at this time. Globally we need to be reducing greenhouse gases and thus coal mining isn't an appropriate activity. The government ought to be investing in clean renewable energy sources - demand and price for coal is already going down and we will be locked into a power generation system that is becoming superseded. This coal project will be a drain on government funds while at the same time putting our groundwater reserves at risk. It's short-sighted to continue investing in this Cobbora Coal Project and the government should pull out now.

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(Name withheld), of Muswellbrook NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

This whole mine project will add many millions to the tax burden of the NSW state .If it is not on sold when operational the mine contracts costs will need to be recouped by the price of electricity provided by the power generators. Unless the State is going to operate the mine itself as a department of the State. The economics of this project do not stack up under scrutiny.

There is no guarantee that the electricity generated by the coal will be needed or that the coal produced can be sold on the export markets .To get the coal mined anywhere is going to need new significant infrastructure that is not there already.

The Rivers SOS Group oppose any unjustifiable destruction of rivers and their catchments. The destruction of productive farmland by taking the water it relies on comes under this heading. And the native vegetation that is also part of a healthy ecosystem will be in jeopardy from the depleted supply of water. If this mine is approved it would use in excess of 13megs of water a day for the coal production. This at a time when there is already stress on the whole of the Murray Darling basin. And after the cessation of mining the water allocations bought by the mine would be in their hands and could be owned by a foreign entity with no regard to local farm production.

Any jobs provided by the mine would be at the expense of the extensive agriculture workforce that is employed in the area now. And would only be temporary at best. But the permanent damage to the area could not be repaired to enable the resumption of agriculture production of any consequence to take place. This area would be in excess of 47skms. A huge area in this age of proven food security problems effectively taken out of production.

If this mine should start the social costs to the large area around it would be by experience massively destructive. It would require a workforce around the 1500 mark. Again using similar mines these would be long distance commuters and or live in workers camps The documented problems of a mine this size show that the locals would have little experience dealing with the disruption of these workers. They would be forced out of the area by the social problems and the cost of living.

All in all this mine proposal should not be granted with a mine licence as the risks involved to the state are immense and an unwanted burden on the people of the state.

Yours.

Graham Brown.

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(Name withheld), of Ocean Shores NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I wish to STRONGLY OBJECT to the proposed Cobbora coal mine. Climate change IS affecting us now and will make life on our planet impossible. We must change from all forms of fossil fuel use as soon as possible. This proposal will destroy 1,850 hectares of woodland. Trees reduce carbon emissions. This proposal will not only destroy trees but will produce decades of carbon pollution at a time when we are rightly setting reduced carbon reduction targets. This is not the time to be subsidising any existing fossil fuel operations, let alone considering setting up and subsidising such a huge, expensive, dirty and destructive new carbon producing mine such as this proposal at Cobbora. This is the time to be building solar thermal, wind and wave power producing operations instead. Solar thermal will create jobs. It will produce power with no carbon emissions. It will produce cheaper power, sustainably. It can happen now. The technology is here now. 4 million Australian homes have solar PV panels on their roof. Does this not tell you that the people of Australia want renewable energy - that the Australian voters want change? You must abandon this environment polluting, expensive, destructive and totally inappropriate proposal. It will cause damage to groundwater resources and you know water is a precious commodity that we must not waste and or pollute. This proposal will desecrate Aboriginal heritage sites and take away hectares of precious agricultural land. This proposal is wrong and must not be approved. Please listen to your voters and do the right thing by our beautiful planet. I end by saying again, please, you must completely reject this proposal. Thank you.

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(Name withheld), of Quakers Hill NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Below are points of Objection:

We should divert this money towards renewable energy and avoid investing further in coal which is a huge cost to human being.

- * The project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts
- * We should invest more in renewable energy compare to conventional energy while climate change is quite on the rise.
- * The project will disturb approx 47km² of land with important high conservation and agricultural value
- * The project will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species
- * The project will destroy significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites
- * The project will compete with the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions
- * Cobbora Coal project is inappropriate investment of \$3.4 billion of NSW taxpayers' money
- * The project justification is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections

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(Name withheld), of Queens Park NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

OBJECTION:

I do not support and am concerned about the possibility of the NSW Government developing a state-owned coal mine. The cost for this is outrageous and will destroy wildlife habitat, and will continue to pander to coal companies. When will the government start thinking about the environment and our future, and not big power companies?

The Cobbora coal mine, if built, will provide heavily subsidised coal to six large coal fired power stations, locking in decades of carbon pollution, and delaying investment in clean, renewable energy.

This mine proposal is environmentally destructive and fiscally irresponsible and I object to this going ahead.

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(Name withheld), of Rylstone NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

Dear Department of Planning

I am writing to object to the proposed Cobbora Coal project.

Instead of investing in this coal mine, or encouraging private developers to do so, the NSW Government should invest in renewable technologies that are sustainable in the long term.

The Government should be leading the way in implementing sustainable technologies for generating power, and in reducing overall demand for power. This is all possible and should not be ignored just to reap a short-term profit. It's time to move away from a 'dinosaur' approach to using fossil fuels.

One of the most serious problems with the proposed mine is its use of water. The NSW Government should protect our scarce water resources and make sure we have enough water to support all sectors of the economy well into the future. Depleting our water resources for an unsustainable activity such as the proposed mine, at the expense of our long-term water security, is simply not acceptable. We need the government to show leadership and plan for the long-term benefits of the community as a whole. This includes taking better care of the environment and reducing carbon pollution.

Please scrap the coal mine proposal and do something better to meet our power needs -- the technology and the knowledge is available.

Regards

Jennifer More

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(Name withheld), of Tatton NSW, made the following submission on the project:

Cobbora Coal Project



Objects to this project

I think that this mine proposal is environmentally destructive and fiscally irresponsible. I would rather the Government spent this money on schools, health or alternative energy generation. Please think and act responsibly with our environment and our future in mind.

Major Planning Assessments
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Attention: stephen.o'donoghue@planning.nsw.gov.au

RE: Objection to Cobbora Coal Project –
(state owned open cut coal mine proposal)
Application No: 10_0001

Monday, 5 November 2012

Dear Sir,

I object to the above development for the following reasons,

1. Cobbora Coal project is inappropriate investment of \$3.4b of NSW taxpayers money that will subsidise coal-fired power generators. It is a direct subsidy to power generators in NSW. The argument for continued coal-fired electricity in comparison to the long-term benefits of renewable energy sources has not been made. Tax payer's money would be better invested in renewable energy sources
2. The project justification is based on outdated electricity demand and coal price projections, demand has dropped significantly since this project was proposed.
3. The project will generate additional greenhouse gas emissions conflicting with State and Federal policy to reduce climate change impacts. It will lock NSW into coal-fired electricity generation until at least 2036.
4. The project will provide poor quality coal to Upper Hunter and Central Coast power stations, and the health impacts of using poor quality coal have not been assessed
5. The project proposes to increase train movements through Newcastle by 8 additional trains per day increasing traffic hold ups at Adamstown and Clyde St gates by 40 mins.

And with some export coal also expected to go through the port, this could expand significantly.

6. The open cut coal mine project will disturb approx 47km² of land with important high conservation and agricultural value and significant, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.
7. It will destroy 1,867ha of significant woodland providing habitat for 39 threatened species, including nationally listed endangered species : eg Grassy Box Woodland; endangered and vulnerable plants, including 100% loss of the local population of *Tylophora linearis*
8. The endangered bird species include the Australasian bittern, malleefowl, regent honeyeater, superb parrot; and vulnerable microbat species (southern long-eared bat and large-eared pied bat). Also a large number of threatened woodland birds protected under the NSW Threatened Species Act were recorded in the area of impact - brown tree creeper, diamond firetail, glossy black-cockatoo, grey-crowned babbler, hooded robin, speckled warbler, varied sittella, masked owl, barking owl, powerful owl.
9. The NSW Government has purchased 68 of 90 properties in the affected area. The loss of farming community and broadscale food production has not been adequately assessed.
10. The project will compete with the Mudgee wine and tourism industry for water supply during drought conditions. The mine will need to use up to 3,700 ML (million litres) of water per year from surface water and groundwater interception. The use of high security licenced water from the Cudgegong River will threaten the water security of the Mudgee region wine and tourism industries and it could also threaten the long term security of urban water supply from Windamere Dam.

Yours sincerely,

Attention: Stephen O'Donoghue
Major Planning Assessments
Department of Planning and Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
Sydney 2001

Subject: Objection to Cobbora Coal Project
Ref: Submission No. 10-0001

10th November 2012

Dear Sir,

I wish to strongly object to the proposed Cobbora Coal Project. The reasons are as follows:

1. It flies in the face of all the scientific evidence that points to carbon dioxide emissions as causing global warming. The carbon emissions causing global warming mainly come from coal fired power stations. The NSW government itself has pledged to reduce the state's carbon emissions, and yet this project will commit NSW to a minimum of 20 more years of carbon pollution. The emissions attributed to this project and the coal extracted will amount to more than 25 million tonnes per year for the next 20 years. Why are we trying to prop up aging coal fired power stations with cheap coal, just to negotiate a sale of the very same?
2. Committing ourselves to more carbon emissions is only going further to guarantee a greater sea level rise in the future. This sea level rise is going to cost the NSW government hundreds of billions of dollars in infrastructure in the future. As an example, the iconic Opera House will be more than likely under water within a century. Our children are going to have to pay for this folly. It is imperative that NSW looks at renewable sources of energy, instead of just looking out for the next 4 years or so of management.
3. This project is committing 3.4 billion dollars of taxpayer's money to something only to benefit corporate entities. This is a huge waste of scarce government funds, and should be directed to something that will benefit the community, not line corporate pockets. If money has to be spent in the energy sector, it should be spent on renewable energy. I understand that it will still cost the taxpayer if this doesn't go ahead, but the amount will be much less.
4. The amount of water that the project will draw from the Cudgegong River is unsustainable. The project will get high security water, which will mean that agriculture along the Cudgegong River will miss out in the dry times. You can't eat coal. How can a water licence be practically transferred from downstream where there are several rivers supplying the water to a single river that doesn't have the flow? The year 2010 was one of only 6 years in the past century where Mudgee received more than 1000mm of rainfall. This rainfall only raised the Windamere Dam level by 25%, a mere drop compared to what the Macquarie did to the Burrendong Dam during the same period. Most of the water of the downstream licence came from the Macquarie, not the Cudgegong. Then there are the losses incurred in transferring 3.3 gegalitres from the Windamere Dam downstream to the extraction point. It has been estimated that around one third of the release will be lost into underground aquifers, so more than 4 gegalitres will have to be released from the Windamere Dam, not the 3.3 gegalitres. The Cudgegong River doesn't have the flow rate to accommodate this huge extraction.

5. Any future development along the Cudgegong River that requires water will not be able to go ahead, as all of the water allocation from the river will have been used, and then some. This project will stifle future growth in the Mudgee region for decades to come.
6. Aboriginal artifacts and heritage sites are going to be destroyed by this project. We need to preserve these areas for future generations.
7. More than 1800 hectares of woodland will be destroyed by this project. Enough woodland has been destroyed by coal mines in the Mudgee region already. It's time this ended.

I challenge you to do a cost comparison of the total 50 year lifetime input costs between a coal fired power station and a solar thermal power station with heat storage. You will find that the lifetime cost of a solar thermal power station is around half that of a coal fired power station even with cheap coal, because once the solar thermal power station is built, there are very few further input costs, whereas the coal fired power stations needs to be continually fed coal.

Mike Baird, the NSW treasurer, declared that this was a huge waste of taxpayer's money when he was in opposition. That is still the case. This project should be rejected on environmental, monetary and sensibility grounds. The money saved should be directed towards renewable energy.

Yours sincerely,