

Bylong Project

Climate Change and Australia's Role and 'The Paris Agreement'

- Climate change is a fact.
- The majority of Australians have concerns related to climate change and want to see governments at every level take measure to address it.
- According to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Index Australia has been ranked as the worst-performing country in the world on climate action.
 - HOW SO??
- In addition to having **one of the world's highest per capita domestic carbon emissions**, the main reason Australia has fallen to last place is that the SDG Index now factors in Australia's colossal fossil fuel export footprint.
- **As the world's largest coal exporter and 4th largest liquid 'natural' gas exporter, Australia's annual exported CO₂ emissions are 44 tonnes per person, greater than even Saudi Arabia's 35.5 tonnes per person, and much larger than the US' 710kg per person.**
- Despite this, Australia plans to add billions of tons of new fossil fuel production to the mix.
- The rest of the world is committing to and acting upon climate change with the notable exception of Trump's America.
- Countries such as China and India have committed and are already taking specific action (s)
- As this trend progresses much of Australia's fossil fuel projects will end up becoming stranded assets, thus leaving Australian communities and workers worse off.
- Australia expanding its coal exports is not economically efficient. As research in the journal *Nature* shows, for the world to efficiently meet even a weak 2°C target, Australia would have to leave 90% of coal reserves in the ground. This is because winding down coal-burning is *one the most cost-effective forms of climate action*
- Following the economics of supply and demand, increasing coal supply simply reduces the global price of coal.
- China and Germany have created a virtuous cycle by deploying solar and wind and bringing down the costs of the technology for everyone.
- Even as the effectiveness of such an approach is being clearly demonstrated, NSW government actions are putting pressure in the opposite direction.
- Australia expanding its coal is inequitable.

As a rich developed nation that has benefitted disproportionately from fossil fuel burning and extraction, and who can most afford the transition away from them, Australia has a moral responsibility to lead other, less prosperous countries by leaving fossil fuels in the ground.

- The idea that underdeveloped nations “deserve” coal-fired energy is both fallacious and dangerous. Micro-grid solar and wind are effective and pose no health risks unlike coal.
- Underdeveloped countries have already seen the leaps over old technology that can be achieved. For example; Mobile ‘phones are being used even in otherwise poor societies where fixed line ‘phones and telegraph transmission poles were never known
- Commitment to *Intergenerational Equity* requires Government and their agencies IMMEDIATELY take steps to decrease fossil fuel pollution and Greenhouse Gas impacts, both within Australia and globally.
- To even consider, let alone recommend coal-mining take precedence over food production in one of Australia’s most fertile valleys defies logic and is a definite breach of Governmental Fiduciary Duty to today's citizens and even more importantly to their children and grandchildren

Current Examples of Impacts on private citizens living close to coal mines

- Air pollution levels in the Hunter are regularly exceeding safe levels. For example, the cumulative impact upon Camberwell of several open-cut mining complexes and two coal-fired power stations is particularly severe. It is time the NSW government took its’ fiduciary “Duty of Care” to citizen’s health seriously and put that ahead of the relatively small financial gains (less than 2% of State revenue is derived from royalties from all sources). The financial burden of extra health care directly attributable to PM 2.5 and 10 particulates largely caused by mining and coal-power is estimated at \$600 million annually in The Hunter alone. This dollar cost does not include the emotional cost of people seeing their much-loved homes becoming inhospitable and unsaleable (Stranded assets) at the same time as their health deteriorates.

These costs are “externalised” and not included in any EIS. However, it is a fact that the dollar costs for healthcare come from the same coffers that receive the royalties, the emotional costs are simply counted as “collateral damage”

The major prize of course is the profit made on an Australian resource.

Those profits generally accrue to the multi-national company offshore.

90% of Australian-mined coal is exported.

Hunter communities have been decimated by coal-mining and many of the remaining residents have not even been granted acquisition rights which would, at least, give them an opportunity to move to a healthier environment.

Emerging improved technologies and knowledge of harm has led to the modification or transition from many industries and history shows this can be achieved without harmful side effects

Per megawatt-hour generated, renewables create more jobs than the fossil and nuclear sectors, and most of those jobs occur in the home country, not abroad.

Germany already has twice as many people employed in the renewables sector than in all other energy sectors combined.

So, It can be done.

Independent Commissioners of the Planning Assessment Commission have the power to start the process and initiate the mind-set that Australia must follow.

Instead of expanding a harmful and unsustainable coal industry for the profit of Multinationals and royalties that are such a small part of the NSW Government's revenue Australia could lead the world in sustainable technology AND create jobs.

A weighty responsibility to benefit not only future generations of Australians but also to benefit the future of Planet Earth.

For all these reasons outlined,

The Bylong Project should not be approved.

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