

I write to object to the Belong Valley Coal Mine on the following grounds:

1. The Department of Planning final assessment report fails to adequately consider:
 - threats to the Bylong River and connected groundwater, threats to other water users and agricultural production
 - threats to state significant heritage landscape values of Bylong Valley
 - threats to ongoing farming enterprises including the pioneering natural sequence farming techniques at Tarwyn Park
 - threats to the Wollemi National Park and Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area
 - cumulative loss of Aboriginal cultural heritage, biodiversity and community in the region
2. The Bylong Valley has been an important source of drought fodder for many years. This production is reliant on an adequate source of water to grow lucerne and pasture.
3. The Independent Planning Commission has a duty to consider the IPCC 1.5 degrees report that was handed down on the same day as the Bylong final assessment report. Keeping global warming below 1.5 degrees means phasing out coal in OECD countries like Australia and South Korea need to phase out coal burning by 2030.
4. This mine has a life span up to 2044 and is not consistent with NSW Government policy which states that, "The NSW Government endorses the Paris Agreement and will take action that is consistent with the level of effort to achieve Australia's commitments to the Paris Agreement."
5. There is no clear or properly costed justification for Bylong Coal Mine. The long term environmental, social and economic impacts including loss of farming capability into the future have not been considered.
6. The loss of 400 ha of prime agricultural land consisting of fertile soils overlaying good groundwater cannot be rebuilt on mine rehabilitation. There is no precedent for this scale of prime land reconstruction anywhere. Likewise the proposed reconstruction of 65 ha of critically endangered ecological community on the rehabilitated open cut mine site is an unproven risk.
7. The potential impact of subsidence from the underground mine has been underestimated and is acknowledged to be a problem. It is inappropriate for the largest biodiversity offset to be on the mine subsidence area. The cumulative loss of threatened species habitat, particularly of the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater, has not been assessed.