

Making a bad decision worse

As a farmer in the Boggabri district I have been privileged to live and work in a tight knit and parochial community, prior to coal and also after its arrival.

I have seen the eastern side of our community empty out of farmers. I have seen a drop in agricultural production and community involvement.

I have seen local businesses struggle to hold skilled staff that are poached by mining companies.

I have had to pay the extra \$ so that our local businesses can pay higher wages in order to retain staff.

The environmental degradation is a real and continuing issue, and the drain on our precious water resources used or disrupted by coal mining is mind boggling.

All of these issues are real and important.... but like deck chairs on the titanic ... the major issue is **where we are headed**, ...not how comfortable we are seeking to be, before getting there.

The proponents of this scheme are enthusiastic in their pursuit of economic gain for employees and shareholders. But as with any development that impacts an agriculturally productive region, it's very much a buy now and pay later scenario...

Most people have heard of the Paris climate agreements and targets, where world leaders agreed to limit global warming to 1.5 degree C.

Less well known is the Intergovernmental Panel on climate change (or IPCC). They were a united nations commissioned group of 91 eminent scientists from 40 different countries, who were commissioned to investigate the effects of a 1.5 degrees C increase in world temperatures (as per the Paris agreement) They handed down their report last year. Their report was alarming.

The IPCC says that 1.5 degrees C is looking like our best case scenario if we are quick. We have less than 15 years to take some very drastic actions to stop the world warming past 1.5 degrees C .

The world has so far warmed by 1 degree C , and we see every night on the news the unstable and dramatic climate linked effects that are being experienced world wide. Wild fires in Tasmania and Greece and California. Droughts in Australia and Europe. Major hurricanes in USA and storm events in Townsville. The IPCC says that there is already

another 50% (a half of 1 degree C) more change likely to affect us in the relatively near future

These scientists are not mucking us around. There really is a very serious threat to the stability of the worlds climate .

If you look up the IPCC website you will see that Carbon emissions need to be cut by around 45% by 2030, and brought back to zero net emissions by 2050. That's just to meet a target that will accept all the current major climatic events as a new normal...

There are huge economic and development benefits for those who undertake decisive and aggressive climate action, ..over \$20 trillion dollars in economic activity. But we have to act now and coal is not the answer.

Now I know That as soon as I say coal is not the answer a part of the audience yawns and goes out for a smoke. But if you have children or grandchildren or great grandchildren you must realise that our inaction in our lifetime will drastically affect the lives of the generations who follow us .

My wife and I have been blessed with 3 daughters 15 yo , 19 yo, and 21 yo.. They say "...what are ARE our decision makers thinking dad?? Why is it that we pay more attention to mining executives and government officials and politicians, rather than 91 of the worlds best and brightest scientists.... Can't they see that WE are the ones that are going to have to clean up the mess AND live with the consequences of climate change. "

Right now us oldies have an opportunity to change direction and ensure our younger generations have a fighting chance for a real future.

Expanding a huge coal mine into something even bigger makes NO SENSE AT ALL, and limiting global warming to 1.5° is imperative.

Falling short would lock in climate impacts catastrophic to our world

As a young person in the recent school strikes so eloquently wrote on their plackard..

..... there is no planet B.