

Good morning IPC Chair, IPC panel members.

I'd like to first acknowledge we are speaking today on Wonoruah land, and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

### **Air pollution**

Children in Singleton are breathing 2.5 cigarettes per week of fine particle pollution, worse if they live in Singleton Heights, Maison Dieu or Camberwell

We have a higher rate of childhood asthma than national average, 18% compared to 13%.

Air pollution assessments continue to tell us that no single mine is going to cause exceedances at the private residences in town, yet we are now above the NEPM for Singleton, Maison Dieu, Camberwell. Over 1000 daily exceedances of PM10 occurred last year. The EIS modelling hasn't been borne out correct in terms of the air pollution we are seeing in Singleton.

A minimal cumulative impact might mean the difference between a few extra children hospitalised with breathing difficulties or a few extra diagnoses of lifelong asthma.

Minimal does not mean insignificant. You already know this. Glencore already know this. It's time both of you started to care about it.

### **Climate change**

Bushfire devastation is climate change. Lives were lost, homes were lost. These fires are unprecedented and have fundamentally changed the national discourse on climate change.

We now need a new biodiversity assessment for all pending state significant projects, following a loss of 1 billion native animals and millions of hectares of habitat loss.

"Minimal cumulative environment impact" is insulting.

Greenhouse gases need to be rapidly decreasing, not incrementally increasing. To stay under our carbon budget allowed for up to 1.5C warming, global average GHG emissions need to decrease by over 7% per year. Even ignoring the disastrous effect Australia's scope 3 emissions are going to have, to be even considering a project that increases Scope 1 and 2 emissions, however minimal, is a form of intergenerational inequality and to put it bluntly, it's a form of ecocide.

This project is not just a simple modification. It's setting up the Glendell mine for an expedited transition to the 20 year extension currently up for consideration. To approve this modification is essentially a nod to Glencore that they have a social licence to keep proposing extensions.

### **Economics**

Glencore claim that the NPV and 300 jobs are worth the environmental and health costs of this project. The royalties which go to NSW come nowhere near close enough to compensate for the damage we are seeing from climate change.

It is also worth noting that Glencore had a three year aggregate profit from 2014-2016 of \$28 billion dollars. For this period they claimed zero taxable income and paid no tax. They fell off the tax avoidance radar by paying a measly \$1000 tax in 2017. Glencore have a history of dodgy accounting that converts high profit to low revenue and as such pay an unfairly low amount of tax.

What this modification is doing is blocking effective transition. Successful transitions have historically happened over 10 years. When employees are promised full time jobs in thermal coal whilst attempting transition, they aren't supported in seeking alternative employment or training.

Blackrock, JP Morgan, ANZ, Anglo American. All these companies have in the last few months sounded the warning that the economics of thermal coal are not going to withstand effective action on climate change. They join hundreds of companies who are refusing to invest or be associated in new thermal coal projects.

The negative economic impacts of not planning for a rapid transition for the Hunter Valley thermal coal workforce will be in the millions to billions. The tunnel vision approach to economic assessment of this modification is doing a disservice not just to current employees, but to future generations.

### **Heritage**

There has been a lazy and rushed approach to aboriginal heritage assessment.

Issues have since been raised by native title holders about the Ravensworth Homestead and the heritage assessment that was completed by the proponent for the continued operations.

Given the discrepancies raised in submissions the Department of Planning on this modification, serious attention needs to be placed on this issue. I believe the IPC is not being given sufficient information by the department to make a fair assessment on Aboriginal heritage.

### **Summary**

What will be the legacy we leave our children not just in Singleton, but the wider Australian and international community?

You have the opportunity to be on the right side of history here. You have the opportunity to tell thermal coal miners that now is the time for transition and rehabilitation, not modification and extensions.

Australia is currently the climate change pariah for the developed world, stifling progress at international talks and advocating for accounting tricks to meet emission reduction targets.

The world is watching us. What are you going to do?