

I object to the Bylong Coal Project for the following reasons:

- The gateway certificate is all about the impact of this coal mine on the strategic farmland and precious productive groundwater of the Bylong Valley.
- The certificate was given a 5-year used-by-date for a reason: because we cannot just give mining companies open-ended open gates to our best farmland.
- The Commission should stick to its first instincts and tell KEPCO it must go back to the soil and water scientists for a new gateway certificate.
- The Biophysical Strategic Agricultural Land at Bylong is too precious to mine, and there is simply no credible evidence that these extraordinary soils can be restored after mining. KEPCO's mine would take out 688 hectares of it which is nearly 13% of the BSAL land in the Bylong Valley.
- The *State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007* refers specifically to the protection of strategic agricultural land in one of its aims.

Given that the world accepts the science of climate change no government can claim they did not know the dangers of coal and all fossil fuels and attendant operations. This makes the potential of future litigation a highly likely probability as younger generations grow up and realise what we have bequeathed them in terms of the catastrophic filthy legacy that are coal mines and all fossil fuel industries.

Given the abundant evidence that we are all privy to, any government that approves such a project as the Bylong Coal Project is culpable of ecocide and associated social and cultural devastation. To allow such a project is unconscionable. To approve such a project does not meet our obligations to our future generations.

The Bylong Valley is a spectacular part of the Upper Hunter where productive alluvial soils are surrounded by dramatic sandstone escarpments. It is a landscape rich in the paintings, shelters, arefacts and ochre quarries of the Wiradjuri people. It hosts a 'living laboratory' of the experimental Natural Sequence Farming technique, mastered at historic Tarwyn Park by Peter Andrews. It beggars belief that you, the New South Wales government, would even for a moment consider ripping up these rich agricultural soils and drawing down a productive aquifer till the water might run out altogether.

I object to the Bylong Coal Project and remind you again that the world no longer has an appetite for such projects and already we are seeing litigation being commenced by young people who recognise how their futures have been significantly compromised by today's greedy politicians and multi-national companies.

Kind regards,

Sue Abbott

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