


From: 
To: [Agriculture and Environment Committee](#)
Subject: Consistent standards-based water pricing for effective markets
Date: Friday, 7 October 2016 9:36:56 AM

To: The Agriculture and Environment Committee

This is a submission on the Environment Protection (Underground Water Management) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016

Mining is a commercial activity of private companies performing a service by making the resources of the earth available for various types of use in more refined forms. It's a useful activity. Mining has both inputs and outputs and inputs may be limited resources that have multiple users and uses. One of these is water.

As a commercial activity, I think access to water by mining firms should be on the same footing as farms, residential or industrial use. It is reasonable for a limited resource to be priced and there to be a cost for using water. That price should apply for all users of the water. This allows a fair and efficient mechanism for access.

Where social reasons may exist to subsidize or have the government buy water on behalf of community members, that should be focused on the most vulnerable, and through indirect mechanisms rather than changing the pricing directly. For example, an increase in funding for a hospital might be needed if water prices go up. That allows access to water by the hospital without removing the motivation for them to use water efficiently, which is a great virtue of market pricing. External costs such as to nearby ecosystems should also be a part of water license evaluation.

I see no reason at all to differentiate pricing of Queensland water for mining use specifically, it not being a vulnerable part of society, and it removes an important incentive to use water efficiently. I support legislative measures that simplify the water market and make it more efficient and fair by removing subsidies for mining.

Sincerely
Adam Burke

