



Environment Council of
Central Queensland Inc.

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19th December, 2018

The Committee Secretary
State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee
Parliament House
Cnr George and Alice Sts.
Brisbane Qld 4000

Email: sdnraidc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Re: The Mineral Resources (Galilee Basin) Amendment Bill 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Amendment to the Bill described above.

The principal purpose of the Environment Council of Central Queensland (ECoCeQ) is to educate and advocate for the protection of the natural environment including our air, land, sea and waterways and for the species that rely on the health of these ecosystems, including ourselves.

We request that you endorse the 2018 amendment to the Mineral Resources Act 1989, since it is nearly 30 years since the Act was created during which time global consequences from the burning of fossil fuels have escalated to include 'unprecedented' and catastrophic' in the common description of these events.

Points of note:

1. Twenty of the warmest years on record occurred in the last 22 years, while the "top four" took place in the last four years, 2015 -2018..
2. The greatest contributor (80%) to Green House Gas emissions is burning of fossil fuels.
3. Global emissions need to peak by 2020 and then reduce to have any chance of keeping global warming below a 1.5 degree increase.
4. Energy alternatives to coal already exist, are competitively priced, and are more easily distributed than central coal fired power stations
5. Jobs in central Queensland – Mining is 3rd bottom of all industry for employment according to ABS. The 'jobs' myth should be unravelled.
6. Royalties and political influence/donations are at the bottom of mining approvals. Trinkets from the rich and powerful when considering the cost of what we lose. We must look at the other side of the ledger.
7. The consequences of not limiting global temperatures could be ecological collapse
8. By 2040, 80% of energy for the 'poor in India' will be from renewables
9. 'Sovereign Risk' is a furphy. There is incalculable and infinite risk in accelerating climate catastrophes.
10. We ignore the warnings of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) at our peril

Climate change, or global warming has been a concept that people have struggled with because it was not tangible. That is no longer the case, as we witness the coral bleaching of the Great Barrier Reef, and the subsequent death of 50% of the coral cover in the last couple of years. We are anticipating further bleaching this coming summer, and not only do we stand feebly by and watch this global icon die, we are actively cooking the Great Barrier Reef as we heat the planet through digging and burning fossil fuels. No professed royalties are worth that.

Queensland is entering the 8th year of crippling drought, and has just suffered unprecedented bushfires. In Eungella National Park, a tropical rainforest of enormous scientific significance, and unused to fire, lost 110,000 hectares of the forest as fires travelling at 50kph ravaged the area. A UQ fire ecologist, Phillip Stewart indicated that recovery would take hundreds of years even under favourable conditions. This year too we have witnessed raging fires in Sweden and the Arctic Circle, and in the Amazon rainforest that was previously considered fireproof. Our global climate is changing, we know why, and we know how to limit the devastation. We can see climate change now, in the changes to the Reef, in our landscapes, in our loss of species. We should not be complacent about these things happening on our watch

It is straightforward to wind back the burning of thermal coal since there are competitive renewable energy sources readily available. While Labor has some good ambition and policies on developing renewable energies, ignoring the contribution of developing coal, gas and petroleum industries to global warming gives Labor a somewhat Jeckyll and Hyde character. If climate change is a serious and urgent issue, as is the case, then it does not make sense to stoking the fires. Delaying the cessation of fossil fuel combustion and allowing global temperatures to escalate will be to plunge the planet into a cycle of interactive climate events that we cannot properly anticipate because of the feedback mechanisms. It will be climate chaos.

Not only must we not allow any greenfields fossil fuel projects such as the Galilee Basin to proceed because of the effect on global temperatures, but we must also begin to train real people for real jobs to transition us away from existing fossil fuel industries.

Governments consistently talk about jobs when talking about mining, but ABS figures show that while mining is a big earner, it employs very few people compared to other industries.

Governments relying on coal royalties are not good at considering the other side of the ledger. Cyclone Debbie clean-up last year cost \$1.7 Billion in insurance costs, though talking in dollars does not reflect the true cost to people's health and wellbeing and livelihoods. Ignoring costs on the other side of the ledger is true of drought, bushfire, floods – any disaster relief falls short of the real cost to people, places and ecosystems. Royalties are poor compensation. It will take courage for a Government to surrender royalties, but doing so will allow other industries that are currently stifled to emerge. We do need a transition plan though.

There is no sovereign risk in creating government policy. This is what governments do. They should be responsive to changes in local and global conditions, whether it is in relation to health, water, war or climate change and adapt their policies accordingly.

We are the last generation that can do something to stop this relentless spiral into catastrophic climate change, and we can start by recommending the Amendments to the Mineral Resources (Coal Prohibition) Amendment Bill 2018.

Christine Carlisle
President
Environment Council of Central Queensland

[Last 4 years were the hottest](#)

[Greatest contributor to global warming is fossil fuels](#)

[Global Emissions need to peak by 2020](#)

[Alternatives to coal](#)

[Jobs myth](#)

[Royalties](#)

[Ecological Collapse](#)

[Indian energy poverty](#)

[You can't call any risk 'sovereign risk'](#)

[What is sovereign risk](#)

[12 years to limit climate change](#)

[IPCC Report October 2018 summary](#)

[Amazon rainforest fireproof](#)

[Cyclone Debbie 2017](#)