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Friday 1 February 2019

Committee Secretary  
State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development  
Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000  
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Dear Committee,

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

### **Introduction**

This submission has been prepared by the Animal Justice Party (AJP) in response to the proposed *Mineral Resources (Galilee Basin) Amendment Bill 2018* ('the Bill'). The AJP thanks the Committee for the opportunity to comment on the Bill and commends the Member for Maiwar for introducing it. We use this opportunity to advocate for respect and consideration of the natural environment and the wildlife that inhabits it. It is imperative that the Queensland Government does its share to stop dangerous climate change and this Bill is one part of the solution.

The AJP believes humans can thrive while simultaneously reducing our adverse impacts on the natural environment. We consider Australia's coal mining and use of fossil fuels to be incompatible with any vision for a healthy planet or environment. We recognise that an end to coal mining will be a staged process however, we cannot afford any new mines in the Galilee Basin.

The Queensland Government must end mining in our state and prevent the mining of the Galilee Basin due to the irreversible damage caused to local waterways and habitat, climate, threatened species, Aboriginal heritage sites and the Great Barrier Reef (which is already under enormous man-made pressure).

A Federal Government report on local consequences of proposed mining in the Galilee Basin predicts that:

- groundwater drawdowns affecting aquifers, springs and streams may impact up to 3% of groundwater-dependent vegetation; and
- 148 ecological assets will become ‘more at risk of hydrological changes’, including potential habitat of 12 threatened species and two threatened ecological communities.<sup>1</sup>

The development of the Galilee Basin creates unacceptable risk to the local environment.

Furthermore, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) *Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C* urges governments to reach a target of zero carbon emissions by 2050 in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C. The extraction and burning of the massive coal reserves within the Galilee Basin are inconsistent with this goal. We note that the report also urges widespread social change, including ‘broad transformations in the energy; industry; transport; buildings; and agriculture, forestry and other land-use (AFOLU) sectors’.<sup>2</sup>

To limit the impacts of climate change, a viable solution must include immediate action on coal together with rapid reductions in land clearing rates and the emissions caused by animal agriculture. The rate of land clearing in Queensland alone is known to undermine the Federal Government’s GHG emission reductions.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, 93% of Queensland

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<sup>1</sup> Evans T, Brandon C, Lewis S, Pavey C, Holland K, Beringen H, Schmidt RK, Post DA and Henderson BL (2018) Assessing impacts of coal resource development on water resources in the Galilee subregion: key findings. Product 5: Outcome synthesis from the Lake Eyre Basin Bioregional Assessment. Department of the Environment and Energy, Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO and Geoscience Australia, Australia. <http://data.bioregionalassessments.gov.au/product/LEB/GAL/5>.

<sup>2</sup> J. Rogelj, D. Shindell, K. Jiang, S. Fifita, P. Forster, V. Ginzburg, C. Handa, H. Khesghi, S. Kobayashi, E. Kriegler, L. Mundaca, R. Séférian, M. V. Vilariño, 2018, Mitigation pathways compatible with 1.5°C in the context of sustainable development. In: Global warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty [V. Masson-Delmotte, P. Zhai, H. O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P. R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J. B. R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M. I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, T. Waterfield (eds.)]. In Press. [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2018/11/SR15\\_Chapter2\\_Low\\_Res.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2018/11/SR15_Chapter2_Low_Res.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/06/queensland-tree-clearing-wipes-out-federal-emissions-gains>

land clearing is used for 'pasture' or animal agriculture.<sup>4</sup> The impact of methane from animal agriculture is 105 times greater than that of carbon dioxide.<sup>5</sup> A rapid end to coal is vital but alone, insufficient to combat dangerous climate change.

We urge the Queensland Government to be bold enough to protect our natural environment and all the human and non-human animals that depend on it. This will require significant changes including a rapid end to coal mining, land clearing and animal agriculture.

### **Our position on the Bill and further recommendations**

The AJP is supportive of the objectives of the Bill introduced by Michael Berkman MP, Member for Maiwar, as described:

- prohibit the granting of a coal mining lease for land in the Galilee Basin;
- terminate any existing coal mining leases for land in the Galilee Basin;
- amend any existing coal mining leases which overlap with land in the Galilee Basin to exclude that land;
- confirm that no compensation is payable to the mining lease holders affected by the Bill; and
- require the Minister to table a report in the Legislative Assembly summarising the actions taken under the provisions of the Bill.

Ideally, these objectives would be applied beyond the Galilee Basin to transition away from fossil fuels across Queensland and as quickly as possible.

We recommend the Bill be passed with the following amendments:

- provision for the 100% restoration of land already destroyed in connection with a mining lease;

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<sup>4</sup> Queensland Department of Environment and Science. 2018. Land cover change in Queensland 2016–17 and 2017–18: a Statewide Landcover and Trees Study (SLATS) Summary Report. DES, Brisbane.  
[https://www.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0031/91876/landcover-change-in-queensland-2016-17-and-2017-18.pdf](https://www.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0031/91876/landcover-change-in-queensland-2016-17-and-2017-18.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Drew T. Shindell, Greg Faluvegi, Dorothy M. Koch, Gavin A. Schmidt, Nadine Unger, Susanne E. Bauer. 2009. Improved Attribution of Climate Forcing to Emissions. *Science* Vol 326, Issue 5953.  
<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/326/5953/716>

- provision for the Bill to apply to all coal mining leases statewide by 2030; and
- provision for increased independent monitoring of environmental destruction associated with mining leases.

We also implore the Queensland Government to take urgent action on climate change through policy change addressing coal, land clearing and animal agriculture.

### **Conclusion**

The AJP recommends that the Queensland Government enact the Bill with the above amendments, extending its reach over time and ensuring that existing damage is repaired. We also call for immediate and far-reaching policy changes regarding coal, land clearing and animal agriculture to prevent the oncoming climate disaster.

Yours sincerely,

*Belinda Hardy*  
Federal Senate Candidate  
Animal Justice Party