

From: [REDACTED]
 To: [State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee](#)
 Subject: Submission on the Mineral Resources (Galilee Basin) Amendment Bill 2018
 Date: Friday, 1 February 2019 3:58:30 PM

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

My address is [REDACTED] Please do not publish my name or personal details.

I am writing this submission in support of the Mineral Resources (Galilee Basin) Amendment Bill 2018.

I am writing on behalf of Stop Adani Byron Shire (SABS), a local branch of the National Stop Adani Alliance. SABS currently has over 400 members. I am writing on behalf of our members, who are all in agreement that there should be absolutely no mining of any thermal coal in the Galilee Basin.

The reasons that we support the Mineral Resources (Galilee Basin) Amendment Bill 2018 are the following:

1. The planet is on the verge of a climate crisis due to human induced climate change. Chelsea Harvey wrote in The Scientific American, 15/2/18 "the pledges world nations have submitted under the Paris Agreement are likely still not enough to keep global temperatures within the 2 C threshold envisioned by the accord. Experts suggest that the pledges may put the world on track to warm by about 3 C, unless significantly greater climate action is promised"

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/extreme-weather-will-occur-more-frequently-worldwide/>

The Climate Council of Australia's Report in 2015 "Unburnable Carbon: Why We Need To Leave Fossil Fuels In The Ground" concluded that over 90% of Australia's remaining coal reserves must be left in the ground, unburned if we are to have any hope of meeting the Paris Commitment of 1.5 or even 2 degrees Celsius.

<http://www.climatecouncil.org.au/uploads/a904b54ce67740c4b4ee2753134154b0.pdf>

2. The burning of fossil fuels are creating an alarming increase in extreme weather events, which are predicted to increase in the coming years. The article in Scientific American, 15.2.18, quoted above, notes that if global temperatures rise by 3 degrees, there are predictions for extreme weather events to increase 3 to 5-fold across 60% of the world.

Scientists from the Climate Commission in Australia wrote a report in 2013 on extreme weather events in Australia. The following article in The Guardian 3/4/13, notes: "The report states that the number of record hot days in Australia has doubled since the 1960s".

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/apr/02/climate-change-carbon-emissions-australia>

Chief Commissioner of the Climate Institute, Tim Flannery, is quoted in the Guardian article above: "record-breaking weather is becoming more common as the climate shifts. Only strong preventative action, with deep and swift cuts in emissions this decade, can stabilise the climate and halt the trend towards more intense extreme weather." This was written over five years ago on the 3rd of April 2013.

Scientists have shown that the amount of water falling in Australian thunder storms is increasing at a much higher rate than expected, two to three times higher than predicted. "Scientists warn intensity of Australian storms has more than doubled and could get worse."

news.com.au/3/7/18.

<https://www.news.com.au/technology/environment/climate-change/scientists-warn-intensity-of-australian-storms-has-more-than-doubled-and-could-get-worse/news-story/e66014d4d8149f163bff43ac8c6fc1bc>

The following points are some of the key findings from The Climate Institute Report, published in 2017, "Cranking Up the Intensity: Climate Change and Extreme Weather Events in 2016." <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/resources/cranking-intensity-report/>

"1. Climate change is influencing all extreme weather events in Australia.

- All extreme weather events are now occurring in an atmosphere that is warmer and wetter than it was in the 1950s.
- Heatwaves are becoming hotter, lasting longer and occurring more often.
- Marine heatwaves that cause severe coral bleaching and mortality are becoming more intense and occurring more often.
- Extreme fire weather and the length of the fire season is increasing, leading to an increase in bushfire risk.
- Sea level has already risen and continues to rise, driving more devastating coastal flooding during storm surges.

3. Across Australia, extreme weather events are projected to worsen as the climate warms further.

- Extreme heat is projected to increase across the entire continent, with significant increases in the length, intensity and frequency of heatwaves in many regions.
- The time spent in drought is projected to increase across Australia, especially in southern Australia. Extreme drought is expected to increase in both frequency and duration.
- Southern and eastern Australia are projected to experience harsher fire weather.
- The intensity of extreme rainfall events is projected to increase across most of Australia.
- The increase in coastal flooding from high sea level events will become more frequent and more severe as sea levels continue to rise.

4. The impacts of extreme weather events will likely become much worse unless global greenhouse gas emissions are reduced rapidly and deeply.

- Burning of coal, oil and gas is causing temperatures to rise at unprecedented rates and is making extreme weather events more intense, damaging and costly.
- Major emitters including China and the European Union are leading action on climate change, but Australia is lagging well behind and is on track to even miss its very weak target of a 26-28% reduction in emissions by 2030.
- Australia is expected to do its fair share to meet the global emissions reduction challenge by cutting its emissions rapidly and deeply.
- Phasing out ageing, polluting coal plants and replacing them with clean, efficient renewable energy sources such as wind and solar is imperative for stabilising the climate and reducing the risk of even worse extreme weather events."

The science is clear and unequivocal. The weather is changing rapidly due to the burning of fossil fuels. Climate change is posing a major threat, not only to human life, but to all life on this planet. As quoted above, "Phasing out ageing, polluting coal plants and replacing them with clean, efficient renewable energy sources such as wind and solar is imperative for stabilising the climate".

3. The majority of Australians want a strong, functional policy on reducing carbon emissions and transitioning to renewables that is effective immediately. According to a recent Reach TEL poll 73% of Australians support a policy to halt the expansion of coal mining and fast track solar power and storage. Nearly two-thirds of Australians oppose the Adani Coal mine going ahead and 57% support a moratorium on any new coal mines as a strategy to address climate change.

https://www.acf.org.au/polling_reveals_australians_support_halting_expansion_of_coal_mining_including_adani_to_stop_climate_change

We strongly oppose any new coal mines opening in Australia. The future of our children, grandchildren and our environment is at stake. Selling coal to be used in Australia or overseas is not a consideration when it is jeopardising the future of humanity.

According to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Index, Australia is ranked as the worst performing country in the world on taking climate action. It has been ranked last due to our massive fossil fuel exports. We are the largest exporter of coal in the world. This affects other countries emissions due to the 'spillover effect', the effect we have on other countries' ability to meet SDGs. Reference: "Australia's fossil fuel export trilemma" by Alex Lenferna, "Renew Economy", 23/8/18.

Our Stop Adani group, SABS, maintains that the job of politicians is to represent the health and wellbeing of the population and the environment above the interests of their own parties. The overwhelming majority of Australians agree with that sentiment.

4. The Great Barrier Reef, our World Heritage Area, will be irreversibly damaged by the burning of more fossil fuels. In 2016 and 2017 half of the Barrier reef experienced severe coral bleaching due to the warming of the ocean. Scientists estimate that within 20 years, coral bleaching will occur on parts of the reef every second year. This will eventually kill the reef as it needs 10 years without a bleaching event for the coral to recover. Apart from the invaluable importance of sea life that the reef supports, there is a tourism industry dependant on it. Tourism on the reef employs over 64,000 people. It provides far more jobs than any that may be provided by coal mining in the Galilee Basin. The number of coal mining jobs will rapidly decline in the near future, as they are slated to become automated.

5. The science and technology for high quality renewable energy is available and has been proven as efficient for creating renewable solar and wind energy. The cost for renewable energy is on par with coal fired energy. Our group SABS, is demanding that the QLD Government opens new wind and solar farms to create a supply of renewable energy rather than opening any new coal mines and coal fired power stations. This will provide safe, clean energy for the needs of the Australian population & provide jobs to replace those in the coal mining sector. Existing coal mines must be gradually phased out.

6. In addition to the overriding concerns about Climate Change outlined above, our group has major concerns with the Adani Carmichael mine in particular. The Galilee Basin in central Queensland contains an estimate 29 billion tonnes of coal. There are 8 other mines proposing to operate in this Basin. Operation at these additional 8 mines will go ahead if the Adani mine builds a rail link to Abbott Point and begins operations. The 9 mines proposed for the Galilee Basin have a combined production capacity of over 300 million tonnes of coal per annum.

Senator Larissa Waters stated in her speech to the Senate 5/12/18: "We know that if the entire Galilee Basin is developed it has the potential to add more than 700 million tonnes carbon dioxide (CO₂) to the atmosphere each year. Australia currently emits around 400 million tonnes per year. If the Galilee Basin were a country, it would be the seventh highest CO₂ emitter in the world, sitting just behind Germany and well above Canada and the UK."

If the Australian Government allows this amount of coal to be mined, creating such massive CO₂ emissions, it will be a total neglect and disregard of the duty of care that the government has to protect Australian citizens. It will be an extremely selfish act that disregards the health of all life on earth.

7. The Adani mine will have irreversibly damaging impacts on vegetation and the habitat for animals if it goes ahead. Australia is one of the country's leading the world in animal extinction rates. The main points regarding the Adani Mine proceeding are summarised below, information sourced from stopadani.com

- Clearing of vegetation on up to 20,200 hectares of land.
- The proposed underground mines will create subsidence in the surrounding areas
- Threatened species such as Koalas and Echidnas would have their habitat of mature woodland and bushland destroyed.
- The Southern Black-Throated Finch is an endangered species. There are only two populations in existence and one population is located on the Adani mine site.
- Habitat for other endangered species such as the Ornamental Snake, the Yakka Skink and migratory birds would be destroyed by the mine.

8. Queensland is in the grip of the worst drought in recent history. Over half of the state is drought declared. Some of the impacts on Queensland Water resources, if the Adani mine goes ahead, are noted below.

- The Adani mine will potentially take up to 9.5 billion litres of water per annum from groundwater sources.
- Billions of litres of groundwater will be taken from the Great Artesian Basin over the 60 year lifetime of the mine. Artesian Basin water is an invaluable resource for farmers and country towns that rely on it in central Queensland. It took hundreds of thousands of years to accumulate and is only replenished by several millimetres a year.
- The water table is estimated to drop by 300 m within the mine site and 20 -50 m beyond the mine. 10km away it is estimated to drop by over one metre.
- The mine will require up to 12 billion litres of water per year from the Suttor River and floodwater harvesting. This will deprive the downstream water users and the environment of this vitally important water. Our farmers and our food production will suffer if this water is taken.
- The Doongmabulla Springs complex, which is of national importance as one of the last pristine desert oases in the world, occurs close to the mine site. The springs will suffer irreversible damages due to loss of water from underground aquifers and its nationally important flora & fauna will die if the mine goes ahead. The Mellaluka Springs also on the mine site, are expected to dry up completely.
- When the mining is finished, the Adani Corporation doesn't plan to fill in the mine pits. Therefore, the voids that they leave, up to 200 m deep will act as permanent sinks for groundwater. The pits will be lower than the surrounding aquifers, therefore the surrounding groundwater will permanently flow into the pits and evaporate. This will create a permanent drain & loss of this precious groundwater.

Information from: https://www.stopadani.com/robs_our_water

For all of the vital reasons listed above, Stop Adani Byron Shire fully supports Mr Michael Berkman's Bill, the "Mineral Resources (Galilee Basin) Amendment Bill 2018". We appeal to whoever is assessing this Bill to progress it, so that it passes into legislation. Thank you for consideration of our submission.

Stop Adani Byron Shire