

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Thank you Ms Kibble, Mr. Gilligan and Mr. Payne.

My name is Catriona Simson I am speaking today on behalf of my family. I am a Farmer and I live at [REDACTED]. We run a mixed Grain and Cattle farming enterprise. My Family have been farming on these Plains since 1887.

You may think I'm here today because we are worried that mining activities in this rich agricultural landscape will decrease the value of our land. We already know it will, but that is not why I'm here.

I'm here today because I passionately believe that we as individuals and as a Community have a responsibility to ensure a Sustainable future for our children in Australia and Globally.

Where do we put this Responsibility?

Is it with the company Shenhua?

Is it with our State and Federal Governments?

Or is it with us the Local people on the ground, who could ensure for future generations that we protect our heritage, our environment, our water, our clean air, our rich soils and our ability to produce food to make it a Sustainable future.

Today we have a unique and rich agricultural area whose farmers have successfully operated good businesses producing an abundance of food crops.

We do not agree with the State Planning Laws and we are very concerned about this proposed mine.

This is a fight about resources, about coal versus water, the environment, clean air and prime agricultural land.

We want a sustainable future for our children, not the vast slag heaps, dead waterways, destroyed agricultural industry, air and noise pollution, and the serious health issues of the Hunter Valley Communities.

Australia is the driest continent on earth, 6% of our land is arable 3% is classed as prime agricultural land. The Liverpool Plains with its mild climate, rich soils and extensive underground water aquifers has the unique capacity to provide both winter and summer crops.

Why are we even considering placing these resources at risk?

Is mining the way of the future, what is the net present benefit to the Community?

We have witnessed the unprecedented rate of expansion of mining in this state and across our nation, 80% of mining is foreign owned, it is an extractive and short lived industry that provides few actual profits for Australians. The Shenhua Watermark mine will last a mere 30 years. The benefit for Government is the Royalty revenue, will this mine pay adequate Royalties, and as Ross Gittins

the economist writing in the SMH outlined profits from coal mining are not adequately taxed. The Shenhua mine already owns the coal, there will be no taxes gained from coal already sold.

And yes there will be jobs on offer and community funded projects, but in real terms mining employs few people. Building new mines is labour- intensive, operating these mines is not.

We have just lived through a massive mining boom in Australia, Where are the new schools? Where are the new Hospitals?

Is there security of tenure in these promised mining jobs? Recently the mines shed more than 500 jobs in the coal mines of the Hunter Valley. Mining employs few people in fact only 2% of our total employment figures.

You would have to ask who is going to benefit?

Don't be fooled, our Governments provide subsidies to coal mining companies, they provide a rebate on excise on diesel fuel, and assist infrastructure construction. Are we being very generous to big foreign mining companies?

Daily we are made aware of the evidence of the effect of coal mining on climate change.

We need to act now to change our present practises, we can do this by embracing renewable energies. There are substitutes for Energy, but Not for clean water, good soils and food. What can we do at a local level to assist these changes for a sustainable future?

We can say ENOUGH is ENOUGH. We don't want to put at risk our future right to clean air good health, water and rich agricultural land.

We need to say No to this proposal for 3 large scale open cut mines beside the Breeza Plain, the Plain where the Superman movie was shot. No it was not Kansas, it was the black soil plains of Breeza.

The proposed Shenhua Watermark mine, Agriculture and the Liverpool Plains cannot co-exist.

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