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Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Juanita Hamparsum and my family has an agribusiness located on the floodplain adjacent to the Eastern Pit, our boundary is only 2.7km from the pit and the aquifer we rely on is only 900m from the pit.

I would like to raise some points today in relation to this coal project.

1. Mine Location & Scale – This mine is a 136Km² island in the middle of the alluvium aquifers and the surrounding floodplain which are approx. 448km². The 'ridge country' that the mine will excavate is on average only 50m above the floodplain level and the depth of the pits will be around 260m. This ridge country is approx. one third of the landscape and is an integral and interlocking part of the Hydro geological formations of the soils and water systems of the Liverpool Plains.
2. We access water at a depth between 20 and 40m. This means that the pit depth will be approx. 180m below the aquifer levels and only 900m from the aquifer edge. The size of the mine is enormous; it is equivalent to 4,620 football fields. It will aim for 10million tonnes of coal a year and depending on the strip ratio will excavate between 80million and 120million tonnes of dirt a year to achieve this. The scale is quite simply a 'Mega Mine' and the impacts it will cause will also be substantial.
3. As Tony Windsor said ~~We all know~~ water is a slave to gravity so we must understand that the cone of influence from this massive hole in the ground will cause the surrounding aquifers to respond to this reduction in pressure and flow into the void the pit will make. The question is how much impact will occur? Are we absolutely confident that the water model is accurate? With the significant scale of this development any error in the modelling will also have impacts of a significant scale.
4. This mine is in the wrong place. Yes coal exists in this location however it also exists in less risky and less valuable areas. This EL should never have been released by the corrupt Minister Ian McDonald many years ago. I am not against coal, however blind freddy concedes that there are better places to go and mine the coal where our valuable water assets and fertile soils will not be destroyed. Shenhua paid $300mill for the privelage & if you approve this mine Commission another $3
5. Adaptive Management – this ridiculous concept for groundwater management is being used by the NSW Government as the saviour or back up plan should the water modelling for this Mega Mine be wrong. is due to the NSW govt. It's outrageo
6. Adaptive management only works if you have effective levers to pull to stop the cause of the destructive impact that you are trying to manage. In irrigation it works because you simply just turn off the pumps and stop extracting water. This has been proven to work with the 67% groundwater cutbacks we have endured since 2006 to ensure the aquifers remained sustainable.
7. Adaptive Mgt It does not work and is a flawed approach for large scale coal mining for 2 reasons.

   Firstly there are no levers to pull – there are no pumps that can be turned off, instead there are massive excavated holes to deal with that cannot be easily back filled to stop the interference.

8. Secondly the up-front cost of putting the mining infrastructure in place are so large that when a change is required to stop the interference it is impossible to alter and the mining company simply refuses to stop their activities.

9. The adaptive options therefore do not exist and the interference with the aquifers and the damage it creates will continue. The only people who will be required to 'adapt' will be the poor landholders affected. This is when the insidious 'make good' negotiations start which inevitably lead to the landholder being bought out.

10. (A) So what you might say, Australia will benefit, the local community will benefit all for the good of the nation. Essentially what this process has done is made us pick winners and losers; one person's collateral damage is another's financial gain. If this commission is confident that this trade off will actually be for the economic benefit of the nation and the benefit of our landscapes and water assets in the future, then nothing I say will change your mind.

(A) Why does mining operate under adaptive mgt but irrigators must work within quantified limits and cease to pump rules at all times? It is unfair and puts the resource at risk rather than being sustainable

11. However you must remember that this mine application forces us to do exactly that – choose winners and losers. Make sure that the losers who have been impacted through no fault other than of being in the wrong location are protected and have options to move away with dignity and with the economic means to start again.

if this mine is approved that

12. Shenhua have argued in the response to the PAC that they do not believe that they should be forced to purchase the landholders impacted by their operation because it is too expensive and they don't want to own large tracks of black soil farming properties on the floodplain as it is politically sensitive for a foreign county to do so.

13. This only supports that this is the wrong mine in the wrong place. If Shenhua only want to buy out cheap farming land then go elsewhere. The fact remains that this land is some of the most valuable in the State because it has abundant clean water and is so productive; therefore its expensive. The surrounding landholders deserve to have an insurance policy that should they decide to move on due to being in the middle of an industrial landscape, they should have the option to do so. This means that the mine should be required to acquire them regardless of it being 'politically sensitive' and expensive.

14. My final comments will be to question the accuracy of the adjusted water modelling. The fact remains that no new science through new drilling or monitoring has been included in the model. All that has happened is various 'experts' have adjusted assumptions and model parameters to get a result that proves their case. Please remember garbage in gives garbage out. I implore you to be cautious in your reliance on the model because if you get it wrong there is nothing that will justify the destruction to land, water and people. There are no levers to pull to undo the damage that will occur. Try and live a day without water and you will realise you can't. So I suggest commissioners you don't get the water question wrong. Water is life

15. Please support that this is the wrong mine in the wrong place and do not recommend this mine for approval.