

Reply to: Nic Clyde

Sydney 2206

9 August 2019

Independent Planning Commission NSW  
Level 3, 201 Elizabeth Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

By email: [ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au)

Dear NSW IPC,

**RE: PROPOSED 'EXPORT MANAGEMENT PLAN' CONDITION FOR THE UNITED WAMBO OPEN CUT COAL MINE PROJECT AND ASSOCIATED MODIFICATIONS**

Please accept this as my short submission on the proposed 'Export Management Plan' for United Wambo. Whilst I applaud the sentiment behind incremental effort to mitigate the damage caused by climate change on the people of NSW and the world, I urge the Commission to take action commensurate with the problem, which would mean rejecting the proposed expansion.

As the NSW Independent Planning Commission is independent, you have the luxury of paying attention to learned advice from an advisory body established by the NSW Government; advice which – in the words of said advisory body – has been “*largely ignored over the last few years*” (**see Attachment 1**). This body is the NSW Climate Change Council, which exists to provide “*independent, expert insight on climate change-related issues*” to the NSW Minister for the Environment.

According to the NSW Climate Change Council (February 2019):

*“NSW remains one of the most at risk States from climate change, including from bushfires, extreme rainfall, increased summer heatwaves and heat extremes, declining water supplies and sea level rises. This summer is indicative of the challenges we are to face. These impacts place much of the States’ infrastructure at risk and will have devastating consequences on our rural and ever-expanding urban communities. In addition, climate change presents major challenges for key government services, including for our emergency services and our public health system.”*

The vision of the NSW Independent Planning Commission is for “*well executed developments that benefit the people of NSW*”. How can you approve coal mine expansions in NSW that we all know will exacerbate the impact of global heating on the people, economy and ecology of NSW? How can exposing a State - that is already “*one of the most at risk*” - to greater harm possibly be consistent with the vision of the Commission to facilitate “*developments that benefit the people of NSW*”?

We need an independent consent authority. We need leadership. Please ask yourselves: ‘If not me, then who? If not now, then when?’

Yours truly,

Nic Clyde - citizen, parent, taxpayer and resident of one of the most at risk States from climate change

# NSW Climate Change Council

3 February 2019

**PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP  
Premier  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Premier

## **NSW Climate Policy**

I am writing to you on behalf of the members of the NSW Climate Change Council (**the Council**), in my capacity as Chair of the Council. We would like to organise a meeting with you and the Council in the coming weeks to discuss the NSW government's climate change policies and the role of the Council, especially given the pending election.

On behalf of the Council, we want to commend your Government's (and in particular Minister Harwin's) recent comments differentiating the policy position of NSW from the Commonwealth and acknowledging the need for a positive national approach to energy and climate change policies and for a sensible greenhouse gas emissions reduction policy to be embedded in the National Electricity Law.

The Council worked closely with the Baird Government in developing the NSW Climate Strategy, including the "aspirational" goal of net zero emissions by 2050 and its recognition of the challenges and opportunities in pursuing that goal and an effective climate response.

The world's scientific understanding of the urgency of a transition to net zero emissions has been enhanced by numerous reports since that Strategy was launched, not the least of which is 2018's IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius. Governments from the UK to Fiji are reviewing and strengthening their policies on the basis of this greater understanding and the spiralling costs of climate impacts with average global warming of just one degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The IPCC Report affirmed that keeping warming to 1.5°C would require net zero emissions by at least 2050, with far less risk if that was 2040.

NSW remains one of the most at risk States from climate change, including from bushfires, extreme rainfall, increased summer heatwaves and heat extremes, declining water supplies and sea level rises. This summer is indicative of the challenges we are to face. These impacts place much of the States' infrastructure at risk and will have devastating consequences on our rural and ever-expanding urban communities. In addition, climate change presents major challenges for key government services, including for our emergency services and our public health system.

A positive approach to addressing climate change provides an opportunity for all governments to drive economic transformation, leading to a far more climate resilient

economy, creating new growth, jobs and investment. Queensland, ACT, Victoria and South Australia are all well down this path and the opportunity remains for NSW to do the same. That includes major policy reform to support rapid investment in renewable energy, electric vehicles, climate smart agriculture, energy efficiency and productivity, and better management of NSW 's natural capital, while at the same time taking direct measures to mitigate major sources of greenhouse gas emissions and enhance measures for active large-scale carbon dioxide removal from the atmosphere.

More specifically, we see there is an opportunity for the NSW Government, in the lead up to the upcoming NSW election, to strengthen its position by presenting a more holistic approach to climate change which creates substantial investment in NSW and significant employment. In particular, by taking leadership on the transition of NSW to a net zero emission economy there is are enormous opportunities to lead Australia on the economic growth potential arising from for example renewable energy, electric vehicles and the development of hydrogen export economy. In addition, by bringing renewable energy to regional centres this creates further opportunities for new industries such as data centres, whilst delivering cheaper power prices to communities.

We suggest this should include a commitment to:

- Develop a comprehensive NSW Climate Change Act with clear obligations, portfolio responsibilities and goals (the Victorian Act is an example). The Act should:
  - Include the current aspirational 2050 zero carbon economy goal as a NSW Government target. This target should be supported with interim targets and review processes to provide clear signposts to investors and the community. It should include a trajectory and measures to manage that transition to maximise the economic opportunities and provide support across the state, but especially for those communities where transitional challenges will be significant.
  - Ensure all material government decisions take climate change impacts and risk into account. This is a critical step towards integrating resilience as a core principle in the design of buildings, infrastructure and communities, by providing a standard policy framework for incorporating forward-looking climate data into the design phase - ultimately saving money by planning for future risks. All large-scale projects to undertake a full climate change risk assessment and adaptation measures to ensure a resilient design specific to the facility/asset/infrastructure.
- Establish an independent statutory authority which has sole responsibility to implement the NSW climate change strategy. The Authority would address mitigation, adaption and resilience challenges through the oversight of funding and programs. The authority should:
  - Develop an updated NSW climate change strategy to implement regulation, policies and measures to drive investment into energy efficiency, energy productivity, renewable energy, electric vehicles, agriculture and implementation of the NSW zero carbon target.
  - Establish incentives and support for markets and services that assist in delivering low carbon and resilience bonds.

- Reports to yourself the Premier. It can be overseen by the NSW Climate Council, acting as the formal Board.
  - Be fully funded through entirety of the Climate Change Fund annual budget (approximately \$300 million per year). This is not new funding just a relocation of existing funds, that would remove the current ad hoc and contentious approach to use of the Fund.
- Develop long term policies that introduce effective measures to build resilience, such as the Farm Innovation Fund, which has been demonstrated to be successful in improving resilience for farmers to cope with drought periods.
  - Developing measures to stop land clearing, restore degraded land and forests, and preserve ecosystems and natural resources under changing climate conditions whilst providing opportunities for the regions in carbon dioxide removal and offset markets. This is particularly important for regional NSW especially given the challenges the Murray Darling Basin faces.
  - Protect the State's AAA rating by accounting for physical, transitional and liability risks of climate change in key financial and infrastructure decisions.
  - Effective engagement of the NSW Climate Council to assist NSW in the transition to a vibrant, low carbon economy. This could include a formal statutory and review role as in the UK's climate legislation which has just celebrated a decade of effective results and greater certainty in investment.

The NSW Climate Change Council was established in March 2004 to provide independent advice to the Premier's office on climate change matters. Its members are highly respected independent leaders in their respective fields and represent diverse stakeholders, have significant expertise and experience in a wide range of sectors and have deep reach into business, government, academia and investment communities.

Other than outlined above, the Council has been rarely engaged and the advice we have given has been largely ignored over the last few years. Therefore, we urgently need clarity on the role of the Council prior to the next term of government to justify its continued existence, given the commitment that has been made by those who sit on it and the reputational risks an operationally defunct Council presents.

We remain willing to assist you in developing a leading, coherent climate change policy. We sincerely believe your Government can be a leader on responding to climate change and do so in a way that provides rapid economic growth, lower power prices and creates better opportunities for regional NSW.

Yours sincerely



Signed on behalf of  
**NSW Climate Change Council Members**  
Martijn Wilder AM  
Chair

