

## Judith Leslie Wambo-United Objection

I live in Bulga surrounded by 4 ever-expanding mines.

Just last year, coal mines in the Hunter Valley spewed out excessive levels of particle pollution more than 80 times in a single month. Yet there were no stop work orders. No broad community alerts. No significant penalties.

Air pollution is a hidden killer, prematurely ending the lives of 3,000 people in Australia every year – nearly three times the national road toll.

It leads to asthma, heart disease, lung cancer, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, chronic pulmonary diseases and scores of other health problems.

The Postcode of 2330 is host to many coal-mines.

The "Super-Pit" expansion proposal for Wambo-United is the latest insult in a succession of poorly considered projects impacting on the people who live here

### Results of 2018 National Pollutant Inventory for 2330

Emissions rated "High" producing almost 65 million kg of pollutants

#### What is the pollution like in my postcode?

You can check out any suburb in Australia using the searchable table below.

Before you do, we need to tell you a few things about the data.

- This search relies on data from the National Pollutant Inventory, which is a run by the Department of Environment and Energy
- There are some postcodes that are not recognised by the NPI data
- Postcodes that do not have polluting facilities in them, but are near to them, will show "no polluting facilities"
- The data contains information on the amount of emissions from individual facilities and diffuse emissions
- The NPI data shows what is being released from an emissions source, whether those emissions cause pollution can depend on other factors
- The ACF has taken the NPI emissions dataset and mapped it using two variables: the number of polluting facilities in a postcode and the volume of emissions in the air in that postcode
- For consistency, ACF's "total emissions in the air" values are the sum of five key pollutants, which representant the majority of emissions. Other pollutants may be present in small amounts

#### **SORT BY**

Postcode	Number of polluting facilities	Total emissions in the air (kg)	Level of pollution
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2330	14	64332903.4	High

Air pollution is a leading contributor to non-communicable diseases

**Health benefits of transitioning from coal far outweigh any costs. (WHO)**

World Health Organization, Geneva; Dec 5, 2018

**So how does it make any sense at all to approve another massive expansion of the Wambo mine site?**

WHO estimates that more than 90% of the world's population is at risk of air pollution exposure, resulting in 7 million deaths annually worldwide.

The same human activities that are destabilizing the Earth's climate also contribute directly to poor health.

The main driver of climate change is fossil fuel combustion which is also a major contributor to air pollution.

The 2018 IPCC report recommends fossil fuels stay in the ground and a concerted push to renewable energy is made.

It seems our politicians are incapable of forward-thinking and out of touch with the large majority of Australians who want to see significant action against climate change.

**A 2018 Lowy Institute Poll found**

59 per cent of Australians regard climate change as a "serious and pressing problem", while

84 per cent say the government should focus on renewables even if it requires extra spending.

Climate change was rated a "critical threat"

Germany will spend tens of billions of dollars to end its use of coal power within two decades,  
there is a plan agreed to by representatives of the power industry, environmental movements, miners and local interest groups.

Thirty other countries have already set out proposals to cut their carbon emissions by eliminating coal,  
including Britain, Canada and Sweden.

But the scale laid out in Germany, an industrial giant that currently relies on coal for almost a third of its energy needs is truly transformative.

The whole world is watching how Germany —

a nation based on industry and engineering,

the fourth largest economy on our planet — is making the historic decision of phasing out coal,"

This can help end the age of finger-pointing,

the age of too many governments saying:

"Why should we act, if others don't?"

Germany is acting

**If highly industrialised Germany can do it Australia can too.**

In Australia the fear of impacts on the economy by reducing exports and jobs is seen as a major political problem.

Whilst the massive irreparable consequences of climate change are ignored

It should be remembered that the main political benefits seen are royalty payments and jobs.

The total number of dollars in royalties from this mine may sound large but royalties received from all sources in NSW comprise less than 2% of total annual revenue.

A much larger prize is the export dollars that accrue to the non-Australian companies that have honed tax-minimisation to a fine art. And, of course, .....

## **THE JOBS!!**

Traditionally wildly over-stated in any EIS. It should be recognised that with ever-increasing automation already occurring in mining, these jobs are likely to steadily decrease.

In other parts of the world the renewable industry sector is providing more jobs than coal ever did.

There are huge numbers of people employed in renewable energy jobs.

about 10 million around the world.

The benefits of renewable energy are obvious: it's giving us a cleaner, healthier and more sustainable planet to live on.

But clean energy is also a massive contributor to the economy.



from IRENA's (*International Renewable Energy Agency*) fifth *Renewable Energy and Jobs – Annual Review* (2017)

“Renewable energy has become a pillar of low-carbon economic growth for governments all over the world, a fact reflected by the growing number of jobs created in the sector.”

The advanced energy industry, which encompasses energy sources, technologies and services that are clean, affordable and secure, is also growing much faster than the world economy overall –

**7% versus 3.1%. More than double.**

The Union of Concerned Scientists made a very pertinent point in *recent articles* on renewable energy:

“Compared with fossil fuel technologies, which are typically more and more mechanised and capital-intensive, the renewable energy industry is more **labour intensive**.

Solar panels need humans to install them;

wind farms need technicians for maintenance.

This means that, on average, more jobs are created for each unit of electricity generated from renewable sources than from fossil fuels.”

This is true even when wind and solar power are provided at **cheaper** prices to the consumer than coal or gas.

This logic is prevailing all over the world and accelerating the move away from coal.

“These figures are important because they help to counter the perception in many countries that shutting fossil fuel power plants, necessary to help reduce emissions to meet the Paris agreement targets, will lead to a net loss of jobs.

“By providing policy makers with this level of detail about the composition of renewable energy employment and skills requirements, countries can make informed decisions on several important national objectives, from education and training, to industrial policies and labour market regulations.” (IRENA)

### **Human Welfare**

It is ironic that it was Peabody that coined the self-serving platitude “Coal is good for humanity” based on the, now proven to be false, premise that coal-fired electricity would improve the lives of those living in poverty and forced to use animal dung and kerosene for heating and lighting to the detriment of their health!

No government in the world sees economic benefit in generating coal-fired electricity and carrying it on poles and wires to their poverty-stricken citizens, and they never will!

Another economic benefit is its' scalability. For example;

There are over one billion people who don't have access to electricity. Giving them solar power gives them access to something that can improve their lives. Even in the poorest countries, solar's flexibility is making it desirable.

**In Bangladesh**, more than 3.5m home solar systems have been installed in rural villages.

The Australian Energy Market Operator is creating a new technical division to navigate the clean energy transition, and has appointed the former CSIRO energy chief, Alex Wonhas to be the division's inaugural chief officer.

"The transformation of Australia's energy sector is gathering momentum like an avalanche," he wrote recently.

The Australian grid is facing a dramatic and rapid transition. The amount of wind and solar on the grid will have doubled in three years to the end of 2020, taking its total share to more than 35 per cent.

Australia's leading scientific research group and the country's energy market operator (CSIRO and AEMO) have released a benchmark study that shows the cost of new wind and solar is "unequivocally" lower than the cost of new coal generation.

Even when storage with batteries or pumped hydro is added, it still leaves the cost of "firm" solar and wind power cheaper than any fossil fuel alternative.

There is no doubt the renewable energy sector will continue to grow and jobs with it.

There are service jobs aplenty in a carefully planned transition that stops the savage rape of The Hunter's beauty and prioritises retaining the remaining beauty of the Hunter for tourism.

Despoiling the landscape and generating noise and dust threatens tourism, driving down job opportunities in that sector.

Moreover, tourism jobs are generated by Australian entities and the profits stay in Australia.

Pollution from coal-mines is a life-shortening filthy curse visited upon communities forced to live with it.

This commission has a large responsibility for today's increasing air pollution in the Hunter generated by approvals for these mine expansions.

It is Time to STOP

Enough is enough.

It is unreasonable to continue to expand this industry putting citizens lives at risk and further despoiling The Hunter.

Particularly when orderly transition maintaining employment is possible.

Not to forget that, wherever this exported coal is sent

it will contribute to Global Climate Change which is the

**most major existential threat this planet faces**

This Development proposal MUST be DISALLOWED

It threatens the citizens of Bulga and threatens peoples of the world wherever the coal goes.

Australia's massive coal exports threaten the entire planet contributing disproportionately to Global Climate Change

with minimal benefit to Australian citizens.

J Leslie

Judith Leslie

BULGA 2330.