

NSW Government must defend law and climate from coal industry attacks

An open letter to the Government of New South Wales

Allowing new coal mines in NSW is incompatible with the NSW Government's commendable climate policy aimed at achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. It is also incompatible with reaching targets required to avoid the worst impacts of climate change agreed to under the Paris Agreement.

We strongly urge the NSW Government not to cave in to pressure from coal lobbyists to overrule NSW laws that require the full climate impact to be considered in the assessment of new coal mines. These include the important legal precedent of the *Land and Environment Court* in the Rocky Hill case, and State Environmental Planning Policy requirements to consider emissions from burning coal mined in NSW (Scope 3 emissions), which are the main source of emissions from coal mined in NSW.

We also strongly urge the Government to defend its own *Independent Planning Commission* against unwarranted and misleading attacks.

NSW is already experiencing serious impacts of climate change including increasing extreme heat and longer, hotter fire seasons. The hotter conditions and more extreme heatwaves driven by climate change are worsening the impacts of drought. These impacts of climate change are being made worse by emissions from coal mined in NSW. These mines add around 500 million tonnes of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere every year, almost as much as Australia's entire domestic emissions.¹

¹ NSW coal production 2019, OCE (2019) Resources and Energy Quarterly, <https://publications.industry.gov.au/publications/resourcesandenergyquarterlyseptember2019/index.html>, Australia Institute emissions calculations available on request.

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