

**Submission
No 178**

SUSTAINABILITY OF ENERGY SUPPLY AND RESOURCES IN NSW

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Submission to Inquiry into Sustainability of Energy Supply and Resources

To Whom It May Concern,

I write this submission on the last day available as I have been giving it much thought. No matter what side of the fence you sit regarding coal, emissions, power and land use, environment, climate, world-wide demand for one of Australia's hitherto greatest exports: coal, is waning, and is waning outside of our control. You don't need much of a clue to understand that this is a dangerous place to sit. To continue to rely on significant funds through a stream exposed to many factors way out of our control could spell disaster for those relying on those funds.

I live in the Hunter. Nowhere is more exposed.

I have spent some good time examining the *Hunter Renewal Roadmap*. This document has been so well researched and executed and has included community consultation and collaboration, and consideration of ALL factors and ALL those affected to an extent that I would posit well surpasses anything that precedes it. I really don't feel that there is much more to offer except to say that as a local to Newcastle, I fully endorse the *Hunter Renewal Roadmap* (https://www.hunterrenewal.org.au/road_map) and request that the recommendations therein are taken seriously and moving forward, are recommended for speedy application by the inquiry.

Of primary importance is the inclusion of local voice, leadership and participation. Hunter people know their strengths, their challenges, their land and their networks, it would be astute to harness this and will increase the likelihood of success of any plan many times over. The best way to gain effective action is by providing self-responsibility and ownership, also contributing to local pride, integral to a strong and active community.

The times ahead for The Hunter will bring great change. We have so much more to offer than mineral resources but will need significant funding support for the many factors required for a successful transition: establishment of clear and consistent policy (with local voice), plans for economic diversification, retraining and re-employment of impacted workers and communities. Importantly, we need to drive this NOW. We know the writing is on the wall, and to be fair we should have started sooner, but if you didn't plant it 20 years ago, the next best time to plant a tree is now. We must be proactive, reactive action will be more costly and so much less effective.

For my two bobs worth, I would like to see policy and rulings around dismantling mines rather than simply allowing big companies like BHP to divest. The smaller companies who rush in for the crumbs and purchase mines sold are not well enough resourced to rehabilitate mining areas effectively. Rehabilitation needs to be held as of primary importance.

The Hunter, with its temperate climate is well placed to become a mecca for regenerative agriculture, producing nutrient dense food on land drought proofed through regenerative practices and transported on existing mining rail infrastructure. Research into mine rehab through regenerative agriculture and application of regenerative agriculture practices would go a long way to fill the hole left by mining and to heal the damage created by emissions. Our world has only 10% of the humus we had in pre-industrial times. Regenerative Agriculture produces humus; beyond

providing optimum growing conditions and nutrients for plant growth, humus is an exceptionally efficient sequester of atmospheric carbon.

As a lay person who knows that submissions are being made by groups and folk with amazing technical knowledge and access to information beyond my scope, I believe that my cause is best served by making this submission brief. So to summarise, my points follow:

- Ensure that any changes are community driven and that the inquiry is held amongst the communities it will affect
- Ensure that sufficient funding is allocated to allow for success
- Encourage and fund training in diverse industries: renewable energy, regenerative agriculture, tourism – think outside the square for more, Make detailed economic plans to ensure success
- Insist on effective mine site rehabilitation, include the newly burgeoning industries in the rehabilitation solutions
- Ensure that clear, consistent and fair policy is formed and activated
- The sooner the better!!!!

Finally, be sure that the folk who developed the *Hunter Renewal Roadmap* are involved and that their respect for community and understanding of the necessity of authentic community involvement is a part of the ongoing strategy AND that the key points of their fantastic road map are followed.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission. I am very happy to provide any clarification required and to be contacted regarding this submission and to speak publicly on my views.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Teagle
Director,
Mayfield Medical Connection

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