

**Submission  
No 396**

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND IN  
NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Organisation:** Humane Society International

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Humane Society International (HSI) writes on behalf of our 40,000 Australian members with regard to the state government inquiry into the management of public land in New South Wales. HSI is deeply concerned that this inquiry will result in the opening up of significant amounts of publicly owned land to destruction caused by environmentally detrimental mining practices.



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General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5  
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Sydney NSW 2000

August 31, 2012

To whom it may concern,

Humane Society International (HSI) writes on behalf of our 40,000 Australian members with regard to the state government inquiry into the management of public land in New South Wales. HSI is deeply concerned that this inquiry will result in the opening up of significant amounts of publicly owned land to destruction caused by environmentally detrimental mining practices.

In the lead up to the NSW election, the Liberal and National Parties made an election commitment to protect "critical agricultural and environmental assets" from the destructive impacts of mining and coal seam gas development. The proposed land use policy is contradictory to this statement and will leave the state's most critical wildlife habitat and natural areas open to significant degradation.

HSI reminds the Standing Committee that the NSW government is a signatory to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment, whereby the federal and all state governments agreed to the establishment of a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of protected areas. While the NSW government has made significant and commendable progress to date in this regard, many biogeographic subregions remain under represented, and it is imperative that these achievements are not undone through the irresponsible and unnecessary proposed changes to management of public lands policy.

It is essential that leadership is exercised on this important issue, for the benefit of our unique natural environment and communities threatened by unprecedented mining and gas expansion, as our conservation areas are important not only for biodiversity protection, but also for other critical ecosystem services such as fresh water catchment protection, and carbon sequestration.

Humane Society International urges the New South Wales government to withdraw this draft policy and replace it with a policy that: clearly identifies sensitive areas that are off limits to mining and gas development, including important wildlife habitat, strategic farmland, drinking water catchments and urban areas; protects public lands, including state conservation areas and state forests, from open cut mining and coal seam gas development; applies to exploration activities, recognising their very real impacts on land, water and wildlife; and properly manages cumulative impacts of mining and gas development on the environment, water and public health.

Yours sincerely,

Evan Quartermain  
Program Officer