

**INQUIRY INTO PETROLEUM (ONSHORE) AMENDMENT
(CANCELLATION OF ZOMBIE PETROLEUM
EXPLORATION LICENCES) BILL 2021**

Organisation: Caroonna Coal Action Group Inc.

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Portfolio Committee No. 4 - Industry

Inquiry into the Petroleum (Onshore) Amendment (Cancellation of Zombie Petroleum Exploration Licences) Bill 2021

SUBMISSION: Caroon Coal Action Group Inc.

The Caroon Coal Action Group Inc. was formed in 2006, to object to the issuing of the BHP Caroon Coal Project Exploration Licence, followed by the issuing of Shenhua Watermark Exploration Licence (EL) in 2008, on the Liverpool Plains.

The Liverpool Plains is perhaps the most unique agricultural region of Australia with its rich black vertisol soils, ground and surface water and climate that allows both cropping and livestock to be produced 24/7 twelve months of the year and with important Indigenous heritage sacred sites as well as a significant koala habitat.

The EL licenses were issued without any prior consultation with local knowledge and obviously no investigations into the national importance of the region's agriculture. Therefore, these were the very reasons the community had to take a stand.

BHP relinquished their licence in August 2016, after establishing that their proposed mine would severely compromise the ground and surface water of the Liverpool Plains. This knowledge in hindsight, should have raised red flags and immediately been applied to the Shenhua Watermark licence, but unfortunately, it took five more years at huge expense to the farming community to uncover the science at test bore sites, which we were previously not allowed to access.

Shenhua Watermark Exploration Licence was extinguished April 21, 2021 at Breeza hall with the words of Resources Minister and Deputy Premier John Barilaro 'I am today extinguishing the Shenhua Watermark Exploration Licence and there will be no more mining allowed on the Liverpool Plains, FOREVER'. In the written words of Planning Minister Rob Stokes to the writer: 'I assure you that the NSW Government considers that the agricultural land and water resources in the Liverpool Plains are incredibly important to our State'.

"We must ensure mining does not destroy our environment, agricultural production, people's livelihoods, health and attachment to the land"



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Therefore, with the scientific evidence that has been established for the above and the statement from Minister John Barilaro, coal and gas mining or exploration must be prohibited and legislated, forever, on the Liverpool Plains.

I attach a technical scientific paper from Emeritus Professor Ian Acworth October 2020 which we recommend the Committee of Enquiry read:

"The Old River Mooki Drainage System and its impact on the hydrogeology of the Breeza Area"

Neither the proponents of Shenhua Watermark coal project nor the NSW Government attempted to refute the findings in the above paper.

This paper outlines the reasons behind our submission.

Susan Lyle

Caroona Coal Action Group Inc.

"We must ensure mining does not destroy our environment, agricultural production, people's livelihoods, health and attachment to the land"