

**Submission
No 23**

**INQUIRY INTO PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT
OPERATIONS AMENDMENT (CLEAN AIR) BILL 2021**

Organisation: Kariong Eco Garden

Date Received: 30 June 2021

Kariong Eco Garden opposes the extension of the licence to Vales Point Power Station because it is being allowed to pollute at unacceptable and unsafe levels.

We support a transition to achieving net-zero carbon dioxide emissions as soon as humanly possible. We believe these changes are needed urgently to address the climate emergency. Coal fired power stations will not be with us forever, but while they are we need to make sure they are as safe as possible.

We are concerned about the impact that air pollution has on community health – especially the incidence of asthma among children in the Lake Macquarie and Central Coast region.

Emissions limits that apply to the NSW coal fired power stations must be reduced to force the power stations to install best practice pollution reduction technologies.

No coal fired power station should be exempt from the standards proposed in the Clean Air Bill. Our standards are far too lenient as they are.

Shouldn't we be able to expect at least as good levels of air quality as the EU, Japan and South Korea? Why are we letting Vales Point Power Station pollute at around 10 times the acceptable standard in these other countries?

Coal fired power stations should not be permitted to externalize the cost of operating. They are creating air pollution and subsequent health problems for which the wider community is bearing the cost – through poor health and increased costs for our health care system.

We call on the NSW government to legislate strongly to ensure that all coal fired power stations are required to install best practice pollution control technology regardless of their age. It is totally unacceptable that private owners of power stations can make huge profits and not be required to invest some of that money back into cleaning up their facilities!

Please make the necessary changes as soon as possible.