

**Submission  
No 41**

**INQUIRY INTO CURRENT AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF  
GOLD, SILVER, LEAD AND ZINC MINING ON HUMAN  
HEALTH, LAND, AIR AND WATER QUALITY IN NEW  
SOUTH WALES**

**Organisation:** Lithgow Environment Group Inc

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# Lithgow Environment Group Inc.

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*Preserving the Balance of Nature*

Dr. Amanda Cohn MLC  
Chair Portfolio Committee 2 – Health  
Legislative Council

Lithgow, 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

**Ref.: Submission**  
**Inquiry into current and potential impacts of gold, silver, lead and zinc mining on human health, land, air and water quality in New South Wales.**

Dear Dr. Cohn,

Lithgow Environment Group has been advocating environmental issues since 2005 and we welcome the opportunity to contribute to the above inquiry. As members of the Central West Environment Council (CWEC) we fully support their submission.

In particular we stress:

- That during the planning stage, the environment be made priority over economic considerations and that a cost benefit analysis includes the full cost of the environment and people's health.
- That, during the mining operation, the practise of self-regulating by mining companies and their consultants has failed. We need a strong, independent and well-funded EPA to ensure the protection of people and the environment.
- That the necessary remediation post mining is assured and the local environment is reinstated to pre mining levels.

In the Lithgow area the effects from mining have mainly been the damage to our water. Both surface and ground water have been irreversibly altered. High salinity from mine water discharges and the destruction of 'protected' swamps keep being regarded as the 'collateral damage' of mining. Coal mining also emits heavy metals into the air and waterways.

Furthermore, the legacy of decades of two coal burning power stations has left us with massive ash dumps which leach out heavy metals We believe that this inquiry should be extended to include consideration of pollution from coal mining as well coal burning power stations.

We must stop this destruction of our environment because **there will be no economy without an environment.**

Thank you

Thomas Ebersoll

LEG Secretary/Treasurer