

Submission
No 104

**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**

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

When is it enough?

100% of all old and existing mines are causing environmental damage and risk to human health way above any allowable levels WHY? Because they are allowed to.

Some examples of mines from the bottom of Australia to the top and every where in between.

- **Rosebery** mine in Tasmania - requiring another 285 hectares of pristine bush land to be destroyed , so as to extend it waste rock and tailings facility - environmental vandalism by a Chinese owned company. Decades of protesting about the pollution with no governmental policy change.
- **McArthur river** in Northern Territory Still in operation. An example of another environmental disaster with local indigenous people watching their land being destroyed and the mess is being covered up.
- **Sunny corner** in NSW - continuing environmental disaster. Another waterway being destroyed.
- **Yerranderie** - Sydney's drinking water catchment via the Tonalli River is continuously being polluted. The toxic runoff has been happening for over a hundred years. Scientists have analyzed the extent of the pollution. 400 times allowable levels

Please find below an Abstract from the full scientific report that is attached clearly showing an ongoing level of pollution into Warragamba dam.

Why can't we learn from our mistakes?

Abstract:

Core and surface sediments from the Tonalli River, a tributary of the artificial lake, Lake Burragorang, in the Blue Mountains National Park, New South Wales, Australia, were studied to evaluate the spatio-temporal distribution of pollutants from the Yerranderie silver-lead-zinc mine site, abandoned in the late 1920s. A sediment core was collected in the mouth of the Tonalli River, at its junction with Lake Burragorang, and surface sediment samples were collected in the Tonalli River and its tributaries. The concentrations of Pb, As, Zn, Cu, Cd, Hg and Ag in the sediments were determined by ICP-MS and ICP-AES techniques. Temporal variability of metal concentrations was established through ²¹⁰Pb dating of the core sediments and compared with published historical records, rainfall records and bushfire data. Metal concentrations in core sediments showed an overall increase around the year 1950 as well as increases coincident with heavy rainfall. Spatially, metal concentrations were up to 400 times the guideline limit around mine sites but decreased rapidly with distance downstream of the mines

Innovation not more excavation

We are now living in a time when human suffering and environmental damage can no longer be a consequence of any mining operation. We are at the tipping point.

There should not be any "acceptable" level of pollution leave a mining site.

- Note: Bowdens Zinc, Lead, Silver mine approved to leach 1.6 Mega Litres/day of toxic chemicals into the Lawson Creek Valley, which becomes GULGONG'S DRINKING WATER.
- Bowdens Zinc, Lead, Silver mine approved to allow Lead dust into our air

Ask: Recall this approval

Long term suffering of children shouldn't be seen as collateral damage of mining.

Note: Bowdens Lead mine approved 2km from Lue primary school

Ask: Recall this approval

There needs be more energy spent innovating away from extractive industries and leading the way to rehabilitating and finding solutions to restore and reverse the damage done.

As outlined in Ken Henry's 2016 final report - Independent review into Biodiversity Conservation (see attached)

Find ways to make it safe forever or stop it all together like other countries are doing.

It's not about finding a balance or compromise. It's NO pollution leaving the site anymore!

EPA meeting

A conversation recently had with the EPA, where it was said that no polluting dust or leachates is allowed to leave any mine site.

So why is it happening?

Why does the planning policy allow for an acceptable pollution level?

The mining industry cannot be allowed to continue with business as usual.

Breaches of the EPA licensing should be met with a potential prison sentence for those individuals responsible and enormous financial fines.

Mine stoppage should be a condition of a breach.

Currently the fines are so small that the mining companies supported by government policy are showing a disregard to breaches of their licenses

So called 'Best Practice' seems to be not the correct practice.

IPC hearing

All recent approved green field mines - examples Bowden silver and McPhillamy should be halted, until they can guarantee that absolutely no pollutants will leave the site.

All their reports are to be completed and not pending and, that it satisfies the EPAs licensing and health standards. Not a rule for them and different one for us.

Our rights of appeal on merit should be reinstated. As it's clear that there was political interference with the policy and that the IPC hearing result was wrong, as all the expert reports showed that it should not have been approved.

Is it ignorance, or corruption?

While the government remains captured by the Minerals council and mining companies, and not demanding reports and advice from truly independent consultants with no conflict of interests, we won't have good policy that protects the people they serve.

As it currently stands, we the community, must spend our own money and time to do the governments job.

Why should we trust the government.

They're showing us that they don't care for our children's future.

A blatant disregard for human life and biodiversity losses.

Our Land is talked about by our local indigenous leaders, as still having the energy.

Conclusion

Continued human suffering and death to benefit only the few individuals, fearful of having less must stop.

We are all part of nature, and we are a living reflection of the health of the planet.

Sick planet and sick people. That's where we are at now.

Based on other mining examples the community will be pulled apart, the school children will have to go elsewhere, and farmers will be forced to come to terms with having to leaving the area.

200 hundred years of generational high-quality farming and people enjoying nature, now to be destroyed by a mine that will be around for 20yrs and a forever toxic legacy.

Colonialism has crushed and murdered the indigenous peoples, taken their lands and it continues poisoning the country.

Now it's 2023 you must not allow it to keep happening

Please make the right choices if not for us, but for your future grandchildren.

[Independent Review of the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 – Final Report](https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/tp/files/186428/Independent%20Review%20of%20the%20Biodiversity%20Conservation%20Act%202016-Final.pdf)

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/tp/files/186428/Independent%20Review%20of%20the%20Biodiversity%20Conservation%20Act%202016-Final.pdf>