

Submission  
No 130

**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

**Date Received:** 5 September 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

Dear Inquiry,

We live on a farm in the Mudgee region and wish to express our concerns regarding gold, lead, silver and zinc mining both near us and also throughout New South Wales due to health damage and living conditions in particular.

Terms of reference we would like to address are water security and quality: toxic tailings dam: acid mine drainage: biodiversity and ecological impacts: dangerous lead exposure: noise/dust/traffic on humans and animals.

#### Dangerous Lead Exposure

There is no safe level of lead in our bodies! Even low levels can have detrimental effects on our health and especially in children. These can include-

- \*Decreased academic achievement, IQ and specific cognitive measures in children.
- \*Delayed puberty and decreased kidney function in children over 12 years of age.
- \*Increased blood pressure, decreased cognitive functions in adults.
- \*Reduced foetal growth, increases in spontaneous abortion and pre term birth.

The Cadia mine example of the tailings dam drying up leading to wind collecting the dust and spreading lead across the country side, indicates the ease with which lead can enter our water supply( tanks, dams, rivers), houses and crops.

To stop the happening, there needs to be plenty of water for damping and extensive regular surveillance by government.

#### Toxic Tailings Dam

Tailings dams can hold millions of tonnes of potentially acid forming tailings including processing chemicals. When these dams are compromised as the Cadia mine was, toxic chemicals will contaminate the environment virtually forever.

#### Water Security and Quality

We live in a drought prone region and the amount of water that mines propose to use would often be unavailable. "Are they going to shut down production when water is not available or compromise the water supply from surrounding land holders?"

As already demonstrated, mining disperses toxins into the environment affecting water quality. Dr. Ian Wright has been doing research on water contamination from the old Sunny Corner mine and is finding concerning levels of toxic chemicals still leaching out into the waterways many years after the mine closed.

#### Acid Mine Drainage

These dangerous chemicals leach into our waterways and can be found quite a distance from the mine adding to compromised water quality.

#### Biodiversity and Ecological Impacts

Mining has severe impacts on biodiversity. Land clearing along with noise and light pollution severely impacts valuable habitat which in turn has adverse affects on the diverse wildlife in the region.

For example- Bowdens mine at Lue are planning on clearing 457 hectares disturbing and fragmenting Critically Endangered Fauna, Box Grassy Woodland and also making major changes to

ground and surface water flows. The impact on koalas is not only going to affect their immediate habitat, but will fragment their habitat and is at odds with the Governments own objectives in the NSW Koala Recovery Plan to reduce decline of koalas in NSW.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.  
We value our health.

Regards