

**Submission
No 6**

**INQUIRY INTO CLIMATE CHANGE (NET ZERO
FUTURE) BILL 2023**

Name: Ms Hannah Tall

Date Received: 23 October 2023

This bill does not address the 13 coal mine expansions proposed in NSW which, if approved, would emit more than 2 billion tonnes of emissions in their lifetime. That's 14 times the annual NSW emissions. Domestic targets are the least of our worries, with the largest coal port in the world, in Newcastle NSW, being responsible for 1% of global emissions, almost as much as the entirety of our national domestic emissions combined.

The international energy agency (IEA) and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have stated multiple times that if we want to prevent 1.5 degrees of heating and the catastrophic impacts to humans and the ecosystem that comes with it (already at 1.1 degrees), there must be no new coal and gas.

Therefore it is imperative that a net zero bill requires the Commission to advise on all new emission-intensive developments, namely fossil fuel projects. One of the proposed coal mine expansions, Hunter Valley Operations, is seeking approval until 2050, already impeding our ability to reach our own targets set in this bill. If approved, the expanded mine would produce an additional 400 million tonnes of coal by 2050. The vast majority of this coal would be exported and burnt in overseas power plants and generate an additional 1.1 billion tonnes of greenhouse gases over the next 27 years, eight times the volume of NSW's annual emissions. Therefore this aspect is crucial and cannot be overlooked without contravening the very purpose of the bill.

If we are serious about climate action, the bill must be complimented by immediate action to stop dangerous new coal expansions. Policies that not only allow for but promote endless coal mine expansion like the 'Strategic Statement on Coal' by former Deputy Premier John Balilaro must be scrapped. There must also be a pathway for NSW to switch away from gas, by starting the process of developing the roadmap to gas decarbonisation that was promised by the Labor government.

To further strengthen Australia's commitment to The Paris Agreement and advice from the IEA, IPCC and the UN, the bill should require climate considerations in all government policy and decision making. One potential model is the Victorian Climate Change Act (Part 3), where climate considerations are embedded into seven other acts.

Secondly, the targets in the bill are simply too little too late. To "reduce emissions by 50% from the net emissions in 2005" is no where near enough to prevent 1.5 degrees of catastrophic global warming. They must be strengthened in order to align with the scientific evidence. At a minimum, the NSW target should be 70% reduction in emissions by 2035. In addition, given the continually updating evidence base and the fact we have already almost reached 1.5 degrees of warming sooner than anticipated, a mechanism should be included to allow additional interim targets to be set.

Lastly, ending native forest logging is a low-cost, effective and immediate way to take real action on the climate crisis and emissions. Forests are the largest storage banks for carbon on land and older trees are much more efficient at capturing dangerous carbon dioxide than younger trees. Managing old growth forests and regenerating logged and regrowing forests is essential to reducing the impacts of climate change. Ending native forest logging immediately would prevent short-term emissions of 1.8 million tonnes of carbon (CO₂e) per year and long-term emissions of around 76 million tonnes of carbon (CO₂e) by 2050. This is a

carbon mitigation cost of around \$2.5 billion, based on the current low costs of carbon per tonne.

Therefore I can only support this bill with the following amendments:

1. The commission must advise on all new emission intensive developments and therefore inhibit new coal and gas expansion and address the climate impact of coal and gas exports.
2. The bill must enshrine the establishment of a roadmap to gas decarbonisation.
3. The bill should require climate considerations in all government policy and decision making.
4. Targets must be strengthened. At a minimum, the NSW target should be a 70% reduction in emissions by 2035 with a mechanism to allow additional interim targets to be set.
5. The commission must advise on the logging of carbon stores and therefore inhibit native forest logging.