

**Submission  
No 40**

## **INQUIRY INTO BENEFICIAL AND PRODUCTIVE POST- MINING LAND USE**

**Organisation:** Idemitsu Australia Pty Ltd

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**SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON STATE DEVELOPMENT****NSW PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY INTO BENEFICIAL AND PRODUCTIVE POST-MINING LAND USE**

Dear Standing Committee Members,

Idemitsu Australia welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the NSW Parliamentary inquiry into beneficial and productive post-mining land use.

In preparing this submission Idemitsu Australia would like to recognise the initiatives of Minister Houssos and the NSW government's recent engagements with key stakeholders during the coal reliant regions Future Jobs and Investment Authorities Roundtables, particularly those held in Cessnock and Gunnedah.

This submission has been prepared in the context of Idemitsu having contributed to, and very strongly supporting the NSW Minerals Council submission to the Standing Committee on State Development in its inquiry into beneficial and productive post mining related land use.

Idemitsu has been operating in Australia for over 45 years with our core business starting via coal mining operations in New South Wales and Queensland, producing both thermal and metallurgical coal for export.

In recent years our business model has undergone a dramatic transformation, with a long term focus on advancing local renewable energy generation and green energy export opportunities through *Idemitsu Renewable Developments Australia* and developing critical battery minerals value chains through *Idemitsu Minerals Australia*. We are now substantially progressed in our efforts to decarbonise our operations by investing in renewable energy solutions including pumped hydro, hydrogen, biofuels, solar generation and energy storage.

#### Beneficial and productive post-mining land use

The opportunity for productive post-mining land use is something that has been at the forefront of Idemitsu Australia's focus for the past five years. We recognise that rehabilitation is an integral part of the mining process and planning for closure and rehabilitation occurs throughout the life of the mine, ensuring a positive legacy for future generations.

We also agree with the approach by the NSW government for post mining land use with multiple successive land uses, bringing positive benefits for local communities, the economy, business, industry, and the broader state.

#### The need for long term integrated planning

Idemitsu Australia is assessing potential significant investments across all these key areas and is working with the NSW government to ensure we maximise the benefits available.

In order to do this, we respectfully suggest that this be done with coordination, alignment and better long-term planning across relevant government departments, supporting industry to propose, plan and invest in projects which can better:

1. result in planned mine rehabilitation inclusive of leaving established infrastructure in a way that maximises use of a former site for new post mining land use development; and
2. allow for faster, co-ordinated planning processes which provide for accelerated and timely conversion of the former site to its new purpose supporting community and economic needs.

By way of example, Idemitsu's planned conversion of the former Muswellbrook Coal mine site to a clean industries precinct is currently advancing the assessment of pumped hydro (400MW/8hr long duration storage) and solar (135MWac) projects aiming to:

- deliver reliable, low-cost electricity with the potential to integrate pumped hydro, solar within a technology/industrial precinct; and
- produce 400 MW of clean energy and will be a significant contributor to the NSW Government's goal of reaching 100% renewable energy by 2030, conditional on timely planning approvals.

In hindsight, if a clearer vision for the industrial and economic needs for the Hunter were available earlier, such a project might well be further progressed from a planning and approvals perspective, with the potential benefits flowing in time to meet more than just the government's renewable energy targets.

Any hybrid model where all relevant government departments could come together and agree on the merits of particular projects, thus cutting the time taken for the necessary approvals would be greatly beneficial to attract industry investment, for communities, economies and training institutions alike.

#### Investment and growth in Post Mining Training and Skills

Idemitsu Australia agrees that initiatives responding to changes in land use potential and demand in established or traditional mining areas, particularly those generated by the decarbonised economy, renewable technology, manufacturing, defence and skills all require the right training.

The sooner we understand these needs, the sooner we will have a workforce ready to manage and maintain the infrastructure needed in response to those needs.

#### Expectations of coal reliant Communities and sharing benefits from Innovative Post Mine Land Uses

We believe the benefits from innovative post mining land uses, such as jobs and contributing to regional economies are essential for the future of these communities.

We are committed to working with the local community, local councils, landholders, and the NSW Government to achieve this goal.

We understand communities' expectations regarding post-mine land use and are committed to balancing these expectations with the innovative reuse of existing infrastructure.

### Conclusion

1. Idemitsu Australia supports the development of a State level planning policy specifically for mine rehabilitation and closure, as it relates to post mining land use.
2. Idemitsu Australia supports the future establishment of a unified government organisational structure or planning consent authority who maintains and advances better clarity around future needs for post mining communities and economies.
3. Idemitsu Australia welcomes further engagement with the NSW Government and other stakeholders to contribute to developing such a framework.

We believe that with continued support from the NSW Government and collaboration with the local community, local councils, and landholders, we can achieve our vision for post mining land use sustainable development & innovation, which is also more aligned to the NSW Government objectives.

We look forward to further discussions on these matters and appreciate your consideration of our views. We would also like to extend an invitation to members of the committee to visit our Muswellbrook site to observe and further understand our development plans.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Kovac  
Chief Executive Officer

Idemitsu Australia