Submission No 29

INQUIRY INTO EMISSIONS FROM THE FOSSIL FUEL SECTOR

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Dear Committee,

In order for the 'Emissions from the Fossil Fuel Sector' Inquiry to be beneficial, balanced & factual, differing expert opinions (without vested interests) regarding 'Net Zero,' Emissions Reduction and Fossil Fuels need honest, transparent and scientifically based consideration rather than the typically unsubstantiated, ideological propaganda currently used.

It is essential that reverencing human life - human flourishing - must be prioritised to achieve positive outcomes for the greater good of all Australians.

The whole of life emissions from each source of energy generation must also be accounted for in full for an honest and just comparison.

As Dr. Lars Schernikau writes in his blog.unpopular-truth.com -

"Coal is not the favorite "child" these days. It seems that almost the entire western political world has sworn to send coal to its grave.

Not only have the United Nations and the IEA literally declared "war" on coal, but countless political, activist organizations and even leading financial institutions have pledged, if it had to be in their power, to immediately stop the usage of coal.

The reason for all of this is of course this "terrible" chemical element called carbon (number 6 on the periodic table).

Please remember though that the same carbon is the 2nd most abundant element in the human body and it is a key building block for all life on Earth.

By the way, carbon is not only essential because CO2 is plant food and plants grow best at 1.500 ppm of CO2 in the air (current atmospheric content is 420 ppm), CO2 is also a greenhouse gas, contributing to keeping our Earth temperature temperate and livable.

I have to mention that the prize for keeping Earth livable has to go to water, or better yet, water vapor, the most important and most abundant greenhouse gas.

We all understand that increased greenhouse gas concentrations will contribute to slight warming, though only a few of us have learnt – including me only after studying it – that there are so-called saturation levels to consider which means that higher concentrations of any greenhouse gas have less and less impact on temperature changes (the warming impact logarithmically declines.)"

Our submission highlights the substantial lifecycle emissions, ecological impacts, and infrastructure burdens associated with large-scale 'renewable' energy deployment in New South Wales whilst specifically emphasising the superior benefits of new low-emission, high-efficiency, affordable and secure, Australian coal plants and future nuclear power.

Executive Summary

This submission argues that advanced coal and nuclear technologies reliably deliver low-emission, efficient baseload power solutions aligned with the National Electricity Law and Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023.

By contrast, the vast infrastructure required for solar, wind, battery energy storage systems (BESS), and interconnectors imposes massive, often under-counted emissions and environmental degradation—a heavy burden rarely acknowledged in policy or emissions accounting.

Indeed, out of control, reckless, 'renewables' are causing torturous energy poverty and devastating ecocidal consequences as intermittent RenewaBULLs ARE THE ASBESTOS OF THE FUTURE!

1. Relevance to NSW Emissions Targets & Net Zero Act Objectives

Renewables' promise of decarbonisation is undermined when the embedded lifecycle emissions—from extraction of raw materials, manufacturing, construction, operation, through to decommissioning and disposal—are fully accounted for. Recent evidence shows current NSW net-zero strategies frequently exclude embedded carbon from Solar/Wind/BESS components, mining impacts, and lasting pollution from their persistent and toxic substances such as Heavy-Metals and PFAS/Micro-plastics.

When assessed holistically, the carbon footprint of large-scale 'renewable' energy projects surpasses that of fossil fuel systems - given their large-scale, environmental footprint - particularly when including fossil-fuel-based supply chains and habitat destruction.

2. Scale & Environmental Burden of Renewable Infrastructure

A. Embodied Carbon in Infrastructure

Infrastructure and building activities in Australia contribute one-third of national carbon emissions, with utilities alone accounting for ~5 Mt CO_2e per year in embodied carbon.

Renewable deployments—expansive arrays of PV panels, wind factories, BESS, and transmission lines—all add to this locked-in carbon cost, often neglected in energy transition dialogues.

B. Rare Earths & Materials Intensiveness

'Renewable' technologies demand 10 times the mining for unattainable quantities of rare earth elements and critical minerals—used in PV, wind turbine magnets, batteries, and electronics.

The extraction and processing of these materials inflict considerable environmental harm and emissions, yet are omitted from mainstream lifecycle reporting.

C. Toxic Solar, Wind Turbine Blades and Battery Waste

Solar Panels, Wind Turbine Blades and Lithium-ion Battery systems generate monumental piles of toxic waste: Australia currently produces ~3,300 tonnes of lithium-ion battery (LIB) waste annually, expected to exceed 136,000 tonnes by 2036, with only 10% recycled in 2021

Toxic risks are real: PFOS coated Solar Panels leach Toxic Heavy-Metals, Turbine Blades shed Toxic Bisphenol

A (lethal to young children - as toxic as blue asbestos,) and Lithium-ion Battery waste releases hazardous substances—including lithium hexafluorophosphate—into ecosystems, causing serious health risks such as respiratory issues and carcinogenic effects

D. Recycling Limitations

While very limited recycling efforts exist, they remain nascent and insufficient relative to the scale of waste and materials demand - with costly, publicly subsidised trials that will never be cost effective.

3. Coal and Nuclear: Meeting Objectives, Minimizing Footprint

A. New Low-Emission Coal Plants

Modern coal plants incorporate emissions controls and can utilise ventilation air methane (VAM) abatement to reduce fugitive emissions.

With high capacity factors and synchronous inertia, such plants deliver reliable baseload power with fewer moving parts and long lifespans, ensuring emissions remain transparent and contained.

B. Future Nuclear Power

Nuclear power offers exceptionally low lifecycle GHG emissions.

It also delivers high capacity factors, high reliability, and minimal land use impacts. Once deployed, nuclear generation provides stable, emissions-lite power—well aligned with the National Electricity Law, which expects that emissions reductions are genuine and sustainable.

4. STOP Prioritising Inferior, Toxic 'Renewables' when they DON'T WORK MOST OF THE TIME and ARE THE ASBESTOS OF THE FUTURE!

Just as asbestos was once lauded before its hidden health impacts were revealed, 'renewables' currently benefit from optimistic accounting—focusing on operational emissions but overlooking vast upstream and downstream environmental harms.

These include widespread land disturbance, mining impacts, massive infrastructure expansion, waste generation, toxic materials leakage, and reliance on fragile and unethical commodity chains.

The notion that 'renewable' infrastructure "magically" appears and disappears without consequence is misleading—the true ecological and emissions footprint is deeply embedded across its lifecycle and geography.

5. Policy Recommendations

*Mandate full lifecycle accounting:

Include embedded carbon in materials, mining, transport, manufacturing, installation, decommissioning, and waste management when evaluating 'renewables.'

*Prioritise technologies that deliver high power reliability with minimal footprint: New coal and nuclear power plants fit this description far better than diffuse, infrastructure-heavy 'renewables.'

*Consider security and supply chain resilience: Energy infrastructure must not rely disproportionately on unethical, insecure, foreign mining or manufacturing networks.

*Inspect waste and pollution risks: Solar Panel, Turbine Blade and Battery toxicity, Heavy-Metals, Bisphenol A, PFAS, and other hazardous chemical pollutants from 'renewable' infrastructure require robust oversight and long-term management.

*Ensure NEL objectives are maintained: Investments should yield credible, transparent, verifiable results - not just ideological narratives.

Conclusion

When full lifecycle and environmental impacts are properly accounted for, modern coal and nuclear power are demonstrably superior in delivering low-emission, efficient, reliable, affordable and scalable base-load power.

In contrast, the 'renewable' industrial complex—with its extraordinary infrastructure demands, hidden emissions, and ecological costs—falls well short of the genuine emissions reductions required by NSW's targets and the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023.

References:-

**The Starting Step for the Production Of Pure Silicon....SiO2 + C -> Si + CO2 ....IS the Heart of the Solar Panel!

**Coal's Importance For Solar Panel Manufacturing – Watts Up With That?

https://wattsupwiththat.com/2024/05/23/coals-importance-for-solar-panel-manufacturing/

**Why do we burn coal and trees to make solar panels?

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335083312_Why_do_we_burn_coal_and_trees_to_make_solar_panels

**Every step in the production of Solar PV power systems requires an input of fossil fuels - as the carbon reductants needed for smelting silicon from ore, to provide manufacturing p RDSA x2 rocess heat and power, for the intercontinental transport of materials, and for on-site deployment.

https://www.azbackroads.com/around-the-west/rangefire-massive-amounts-of-coal-and-wood-must-be-burned-to-*create-solar-panels/*

From

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