

Submission to IEPMC (personal details redacted)

I write to express my concern about further mining damaging the Sydney's Water Catchment Area.

The Sydney Water Catchment is vital for our survival. NSW is in drought. Total water storage is below 60%. The desalination plant has been switched on. Climate change is impacting on our water catchment. Increase population is stressing our water resources. We need water security now. Water affects everyone and we need to protect it.

Water loss and subsidence because of coal mining is damaging to our water catchment area. Coal mining is short term and should not affect our permanent water source. NSW's Chief Scientist has said that our catchment is the only publicly owned drinking water catchment in the world where coal mining is allowed. The Special Areas of the water catchment should be protected from coal mining for future generations. The risks to the Sydney Water Catchment, as outlined in the Independent Expert Panel for Mining in the Catchment, are unacceptable to me. The report quantified current average daily water loss of over 7.5 ML per day into Dendrobium mine and 0.5 ML per day into Metropolitan mine. This 8 ML per day is the equivalent average daily usage of over 27,000 people. The overall loss of water from the catchment may be much higher.

The damage caused by mining to the water catchment area is permanent. We should not be discussing the amount of acceptable damage or water loss due to coal mining, there should be no damage or water loss.

The panel only considered two of the four mines in the Special Areas and acknowledged that water loss could not be reliably quantified. New coal mining projects and expansions are approved by the NSW government despite a lack of understanding of the impacts and cumulative effects of mining in the water catchment. NSW is currently in drought and the Sydney water storage dam levels have fallen below 60%. Residents are paying for the operation of the desalination plant to supplement drinking water lost into coal mines. The desalination plant will only provide water to a limited number of suburbs in the Greater Sydney area. I value the Greater Sydney Water Catchment over the mining of coal. I ask you to recommend a ban on all mining in the Special Areas and in the greater water catchment. There should be no coal mining impacts on our water quantity and quality.

Yours sincerely

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Stephen Young