

Harming threatened species & Sydney's water catchment



Over 20,000 people have signed petitions by Sutherland Shire Environment Centre and Greenpeace against the Peabody mine.

25 local community groups and environmental conservation organisations called for the mining permits to be rescinded, including **Nature Conservation Council, Total Environment Centre, Greenpeace, the Illawarra Local Aboriginal Land Council, and Doctors for the Environment.**

The Peabody Metropolitan Colliery mine approval (MP08_0149) was granted 16 years ago. Research on mining impacts has grown considerably. The significant role played by swamps in catchment 'infrastructure' was not fully appreciated when the current longwall operation was approved in 2009. The Coastal Upland Swamps in the Woronora catchment are now listed as a threatened **"endangered ecological community"**. Such swamps are now recognised as "facing a very high risk of extinction in New South Wales in the near future".



Coal sludge waste in a creek running into the Royal National Park

New research published in the last two years has found that damage to swamps from mining is irreversible, and that climate change impacts will exacerbate such damage.

These endangered swamps purify the water, storing it to be released slowly, even as other parts of the catchment become dry. Peabody has now estimated that another six endangered Coastal Upland Swamps could be destroyed as a result of MP08_0149-Mod-4.

The original conditions of approval allow Peabody to purchase offsets if remediation is not possible. Offsets (credits for land purchased elsewhere) cannot make up for the destruction of swamps, which are a critical public asset. Peabody appears to be seeking to bypass the stricter environmental protections that new mining operations are now subject to.

In October 2023 the NSW government's new Independent Expert Advisory Panel for Mining (IEAPM) flagged further concerns about damage caused by Peabody's current operation, and inadequate monitoring:

*"... the Panel **cannot rule out the possibility that the Metropolitan Mine has had a non-negligible adverse impact....** The Panel considers that the depth of analysis provided in the annual and six-monthly reports, while significant, is incommensurate with the uncertainty regarding mining's potential contribution to the degraded water quality and **incommensurate with the consequences of the degradation in terms of the ability of Water NSW to meet the Raw Water Supply Agreement** and in terms of the disruption to operation of the Water Filtration Plant (WFP)."*



Coal sludge waste in a creek running into the Royal National Park, 7 September, 2022



The mine has already caused unacceptable damage

- Surface subsidence cracks caused by longwall mining: pollution and loss of surface water supply
- Polluted mine groundwater emerging in the Eastern Tributary, Waratah Rivulet
- Damage to the Royal National Park

Public outcry about Peabody's mine under the water catchment made every major newspaper in Australia in 2020. In 2022 people across Australia were disgusted to find that Peabody was also discharging coal waste pollution into a creek that flows through the length and heart of the Royal National Park. The Hacking River in turn discharges to Port Hacking, a significant and environmentally sensitive estuary in its own right.

Mining induced subsidence in the Woronora Reservoir catchment causes creek beds to crack.

In our view, Peabody fails to meet the fit and proper criteria test and in addition to its conviction for polluting the Royal National Park:

1. Peabody lied to the Australian Clean Energy Regulator about its emissions in 2022.
2. The company was sued by its own investors for lying in a class action lawsuit, where former employees said Peabody "had a culture of "cutting corners" and pushing safety boundaries before the spontaneous combustion of its best Australian mine". Peabody settled the false and misleading statements to investors case. The settlement was worth over \$4.6 million.
3. Peabody are implicated in a "coal quality" scandal, accused of deliberately falsifying test results in order to fraudulently increase the sale price:
 - [Anglo, Peabody, Glencore targeted in fake-coal claims](#)
 - [Coal producer Peabody implicated in fake coal quality scandal](#)
 - [Coal Cover-up? Wilkie points to Glencore, Anglo, Peabody, MacBank](#)
4. They have been prosecuted and convicted by the EPA for botched mine blasting.
5. Peabody also went to court in the US to try to prove its climate change denial was legitimate, that carbon pollution was positive, and should be subsidised, not taxed (it lost). There is also the extraordinary levels of funding the mine gave to climate denial organisations.

HELP STOP THIS DESTRUCTIVE MINE PLAN

Endangered Species in the Woronora 'Special Area' Catchment

- **Giant Dragonfly** (*Petalura gigantea*),
- **Eastern Ground Parrot** (*Pezoporus wallicus wallicus*),
- **Giant Burrowing Frog** (*Heleioporus australiacus*),
- **Littlejohn's Tree Frog** (*Litoria littlejohni*),
- **Red-crowned Toadlet** (*Pseudophryne australis*),
- **Broad-headed Snake** (*Hoplocephalus bungaroides*),
- **Eastern Pygmy-possum** (*Cercatetus nanus*),
- **Powerful Owl** (*Ninox strenua*),
- **Large Bent winged-bat** (*Miniopterus orianae oceanensis*),

We need your help!

Write to:

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