



UNITED FOR THE FUTURE

Lock the Gate policy platform for
NSW 2023 election and beyond




Lock the Gate Alliance is calling on all political parties and candidates to commit to the policies outlined in this platform in the lead up to the 2023 election.

It's time to put NSW on a path away from climate chaos and destruction of land, water and culture, and towards clean energy and diversified regional economies.

UNITED FOR THE FUTURE

For the last decade, New South Wales communities have fought tooth and nail to protect land, water and culture from the damage caused by coal and gas mining.

From the city to the bush, people have joined together to call for a rapid shift to renewable energy, economic diversification in mining-affected regions and the pursuit of new opportunities in sustainable agriculture.



The fight has become more urgent than ever, as the massive contribution that coal and gas mining makes to climate change becomes clear, and NSW citizens are hit hard by extreme weather events like the mega droughts, fires and floods of the last three years.

Over the last decade there have been some incredible successes for communities, and their supporters, who stood up to big coal and gas:

1. Many risky coal mine projects have been shelved (Shenhua Watermark, Bylong, Hume, Rocky Hill, South-east Open Cut and Dendrobium expansions)
2. Over 40,000 hectares of proposed new coal release areas have been withdrawn
3. Six proposed coal seam gas projects have been withdrawn including proposals in the Northern Rivers, Gloucester, Hunter and the Illawarra.
4. 49 million hectares of gas licences and applications have been withdrawn



But whilst many of the worst projects have been stopped, many others have been approved, and the consequences for communities and the climate are severe.

People have lived through horrifying experiences and face even more climate extremes in the years ahead, putting families, businesses and the future at risk. Against that awful lived reality, the NSW Government keeps approving coal and gas mining at an extraordinary rate.



THE SCALE OF NEW COAL AND GAS MINES APPROVED IN NSW IS STAGGERING

- Since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2016, the NSW Government has approved 26 new or expanded fossil fuel projects.
- The lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions from these projects are staggering. They amount to more than 30 times NSW's current annual emissions.
- The single largest NSW coal development since the Paris Agreement – the massive Mt Pleasant Optimisation Project in the Hunter Valley – was approved in September 2022.
- Even direct emissions of methane, a gas which is 84 times more polluting than carbon dioxide, from coal and gas projects are virtually unregulated in NSW.
- In 2019-2020, direct emissions from coal mining in NSW (mostly fugitive methane and diesel emissions) were about 14% of NSW's entire reported greenhouse gas emissions.



COAL AND GAS PROJECTS ARE ALSO STILL TARGETING **PRECIOUS HERITAGE SITES**, RICH FERTILE FARMLAND AND CLEAN FRESH WATER, CAUSING DIRECT IMPACTS TO **LAND, WATER AND CULTURE**

Here's what's at risk:

- Santos are pursuing a vast new gas project in the Pilliga forest and surrounding farmland, threatening cultural values for the Gomeroi people and putting vital Great Artesian Basin recharge areas at risk.
- Our national food bowl on the Liverpool Plains is under threat from a proposed Santos gas pipeline and renewed gas exploration licences
- Mining giants Glencore/Yancoal are seeking two massive coal expansions to the Hunter Valley Operations mines, north and south.
- Water resources, farmland and native bushland in north-west NSW is being targeted by Whitehaven Coal for a new coal mine, the Vickery Coal project, and massive expansions of the Narrabri Underground coal mine.

OUR SEVEN-POINT PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Our state is at a crossroads and we don't have time to wait any longer. Regional communities need support to rein in climate change and diversify their economies away from coal and gas mining.

This includes pursuing renewable energy opportunities that are backed by local people and reducing cost of living pressures by shifting away from gas. Here's what's needed to put NSW on a trajectory to the future we need to survive and thrive:

1. Stop CSG in north-west NSW and support renewable alternatives that have community backing
2. Develop a gas decarbonization roadmap and provide support for energy efficiency measures for households and businesses to ease cost of living pressures
3. Withdraw the strategic statement on coal and prevent damaging new exploration and mine expansions proposed by companies like Glencore, Whitehaven and Yancoal
4. Invest in a Hunter Valley Authority to lead structural adjustment, support workers and promote landscape restoration in the Hunter
5. Develop new Aboriginal Cultural Heritage laws – co-designed with First Nations people - to protect cultural sites and landscapes
6. Increase royalties to fund economic diversification, climate adaptation and landscape restoration, and crack down on mine rehabilitation
7. Dramatically reduce direct greenhouse gas emissions from existing coal mines



DETAILED POLICY REFORMS NEEDED

1. Stop CSG in north-west NSW and support renewable alternatives

- Stop the Narrabri Gas Project and extinguish the Petroleum Exploration Licences
- Respect Gomeroi aspirations to protect the Pilliga and its unique cultural values
- Do not provide an Authority to Survey or a Pipeline Licence for the Hunter Gas Pipeline which is opposed by the vast majority of landholders along its route
- Power north-west NSW with renewables by creating a new Community Renewable Energy Zone and switching the Narrabri Special Activation Precinct to be based on renewables not gas

2. Develop a gas decarbonisation roadmap and provide support for energy efficiency measures

- Develop a gas decarbonization roadmap that reduces gas use in NSW by at least 50% by 2030 and reduces cost of living pressures caused by high gas prices
- Provide support for households to move away from gas with appliance upgrades and replacements
- Provide support and incentives for commercial buildings to switch to electric heat pumps
- Eliminate gas use through electrification in key industries where it is highly achievable like the food and beverage sector





3. Withdraw the "STRATEGIC STATEMENT ON COAL EXPLORATION AND MINING IN NSW" and prevent damaging new exploration and mine expansions proposed by companies like Glencore, Whitehaven and Yancoal

- Withdraw the strategic statement on coal which proposes unfettered, ongoing coal mining in NSW and drop proposed new exploration areas
- Prevent damaging new mines and large coal expansions planned by companies like Glencore, Yancoal and Whitehaven Coal in the Hunter Valley, North West, Central West and Sydney's Drinking Water Catchment
- Make precious water resources, fertile farmland, and unique natural areas, as well as culturally significant areas off limits to new mines and expansions

4. Invest in a Hunter Valley Authority to lead structural adjustment, support workers and promote landscape restoration in the Hunter

- Provide funding of at least \$2 billion to create a dedicated, locally-led Hunter Valley Authority based in the Hunter region, as a model for other coal mining regions
- Provide the support needed for the Hunter Valley Authority to operate as a statutory authority that drives economic diversification and supports worker retraining
- Undertake region-wide planning for restoration and rejuvenation of Hunter landscapes
- Develop a zoning system that targets new economic opportunities towards land that is already degraded



5. Increase royalties to fund economic alternatives, climate adaptation and landscape restoration, and crackdown on mine rehabilitation

- Increase royalties on coal mining to fund measures to develop economic alternatives, adapt to climate impacts and manage landscape restoration in affected regions
- Improve mine rehabilitation requirements by setting progressive rehabilitation benchmarks and best practice standards

6. Develop new Aboriginal Cultural Heritage laws – co-designed by First Nations people - to protect cultural sites, values and landscapes

- Pass new cultural heritage legislation that has been co-designed with First Nations peoples and communities
- Enable free, prior and informed consent and the right for Traditional Owners to say no to projects on heritage grounds

7. Dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions from existing coal mines

- Require independent, best practice monitoring and reporting of direct emissions from coal and gas mining
- Introduce measures to urgently reduce greenhouse emissions from existing coal mining including, setting caps on direct emissions at coal mines that reduce rapidly over time AND making renewable energy and electric vehicles mandatory

ATTACHMENT ONE: 26* new fossil fuel projects approved in NSW since the Paris Agreement

Project	Date approved	Additional ROM coal approved (Mt)	Total Scope 1 GHG Mt CO2~e	Total Scope 2 GHG Mt CO2~e	Total Scope 3 GHG Mt CO2~e	Total GHGs (lifetime) Mt CO2~e	Reference
Mount Pleasant Optimisation Project	9/6/2022	247	13.9	2.17	860.15	876.21	Departments Assessment Report Final
Wongawilli Coal Mine - MOD 2	4/13/2022	2.43	0.21	0.11	7.45	7.77	Wollongong Coal, 2 December 2021
Narrabri Underground Stage 3	4/1/2022	82	31.19	2.79	455.62	479.57	Narrabri Underground Mine Stage 3 Extension Project Development Consent
Dartbrook Coal Mine MOD7	12/21/2021	37.4	1.1	0.5	113.83	115.43	Dartbrook Mine for Sparke Helmore Lawyers October 2021
Mangoola Coal COP	4/26/2021	52	3.25	0.4	104.29	107.94	SSD 8642 Development Consent
Tahmoor South	4/23/2021	33	19.31	1.24	65.8	86.35	Instrument of Consent
Maxwell Underground Project	12/22/2020	148	9.9	1.1	326	337	SSD 9526 Development Consent
Russell Vale Underground Expansion Project	12/8/2020	3.7	1.4	0.1	9.6	11.1	Russell Vale UEP Development Consent
Narrabri Gas Project	9/30/2020	GAS	15.5	18	94.3	127.8	SSD 6456 Development Consent
Vickery Extension Project (new mine)	8/12/2020	33	3.1	0.8	366	369.9	Vickery Extension Project Development Consent
Glendell Coal Mine pit (expansion) MOD4	3/4/2020	1.97	0.1	0.1	3.9	4.1	MOCO Mod 4 Consolidated Consent
Rix's Creek South Continuation (expansion)	10/12/2019	25	0.8	0.2	71.5	72.5	Rixs Creek SSD 6300 SoR
United Wambo Open Cut Coal Mine MOD 16 &3	8/29/2019	150	5.8	0.8	259.3	265.9	UWVJ SoR FINAL
Ulan Coal MOD4	7/17/2019	6.4	0.03	0.07	16	16.09	Ulan Coal Mine Modification 4 Statement of Reasons
Moolarben Stage1_Mod 14 Stage 2_Mod 3	6/19/2019	54	0.46	0.22	131.4	132.08	Air Quality appendix B to the EIS gives the increased Scope 1 and Scope 2 figures, on pg 45
Rix's Creek South Coal Project MOD10	6/12/2019	1.9	0.03	0.01	2.94	2.984	Rixs Creek Mod 10 Statement of Reason Final
Integra Underground Mine MOD 8	4/16/2018	9.9	3.87	0.12	27.3	31.29	Jacobs AQ & GHG Assessment
Hunter Valley Operations South MOD5	2/28/2018	56.8	6.94	1.67	502.5	511.11	ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Invincible Coal Mine Southern Extension MOD5	2/2/2018	2.7	0.18	0	6.47	6.66	Environmental Assessment 03
Wallerah 2 Coal project	1/16/2018	125	1.66	1.48	360.87	364	EIS Appx L, Tables C1-5
Wambo Mine MOD 17	12/20/2017	18	0.93	0.15	Data not available	1.08	EIS Appx J.
Wilpinjong extension	4/24/2017	112	1.97	0.24	346.34	348.55	EIS Appx B, p56
Springvale Mine Extension MOD1	4/19/2017	11.5	0.05	0	28.04	29.09	STATEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS, Vol 1
Airly Mine Extension Project	12/15/2016	36	0.21	0.25	8.56	9.01	EIS Appx L GHG Assessment
Bulga Coal MOD 3 and MOD 7	7/16/2020	63	4.26	0.39	109.72	114.37	Notice of decision final
Total		1312.7	126.15	32.91	4277.88	4427.884	

*Lock the Gate considers Dartbrook to represent 2 coal project approvals as a 3-yr continuation of mining was approved in August 2019 with a further 5-yr extension approved by the L&E Court in December 2021. GHG data is provided in consolidated figures for the December 2021 approval.