



From our own observations, both locally and in the Hunter Valley we have visibly seen the increase in particulate pollution.



Image: Particulate Pollution in Leard Forest Mining Complex - Maules Creek Mine May 2016.

We believe this must stop and are hopeful of a change- particularly by applying limits on coal mining. We empathize with the issues faced by our neighbouring Hunter Valley and are deeply concerned that the issues they are laboring under are rapidly becoming our issues as well.

We recognise and are aware that in the last ten years, an intensification of open-cut coal mining in the Hunter Valley has coincided with an accelerated increase in particle pollution, which is damaging people's health in the Hunter Valley and

beyond. Pollution by particles 10 micrograms or less, known as PM10 pollution has increased 48% since 1992 but three quarters of this rise has occurred in the last twelve years.

As the EPA has recognised, the national standard for the smallest and most dangerous of these particles, (of less than 2.5 micrograms in size)

“is unlikely to be attained in Singleton and Muswellbrook into the future as coal production in the Hunter Valley is expected to continue to increase.”

We agree that it doesn't have to increase. Coal is a public resource and we expect the Government to manage its consumption in a way that doesn't send hundreds of people to an early death.

We must move forward. We have consulted in the wider community and agree that **the Government should impose a cap on coal production volumes at lower than the current levels as an urgent public health priority.**

Further,

- We support NSW expanding and strengthening the load based licencing scheme by applying to coal mining and making sure the fees they pay for this pollution reflect the damage it does in the broader community.
- agree that the EPA should manage the Hunter Valley as a “critical zone” for air pollution and coordinate load-based licencing of air pollution with tight limits imposed via other licences and the development consent process to ensure national standards are being met.
- We support increased action to reduce particulate emissions from coal mining, including controls on off-road diesel engines, set-backs for coal mines from villages and sensitive land uses and a limit on the overall number and scale of coal mining that can be undertaken at any time.
- We support the imposition of US non-road diesel standards in Australia.
- We support action to reduce emissions from coal-fired power stations. The ten-year time frame proposed by the clean air plan complements the time frame needed for implementation of our greenhouse and climate change commitments. Scientists have suggested that to meet the commitments under the Paris Agreement, all OECD countries must be coal-power free by 2030.
- The Clean Air Summit should discuss how to implement a timetable to begin closure of NSW coal fired power stations, ensuring there is a just transition for communities in the Blue Mountains, Lake Macquarie and the Hunter Valley.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to express our support for actions that will result in clean air for NSW and improved health outcomes for families. We see this as a scheme that will enhance the value of country living, especially to health and welfare.

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