

Submission to Inquiry into the impacts of mining in the Murray Darling Basin

To: Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts

From: Craig Cox

Background

I am a fifth generation farmer, and together with my wife, daughter and son we are living our dream. Our passion is farming and we farm some of the best country in Australia. When we received a letter from the Government owned Tarong Energy stating they have a Mineral Development Lease over our properties, I was a little flabbergasted to say the least, why on earth would they want to dig up some of the best food producing country Australia has for only approximately 30 years worth of coal. Why not keep this coal deposit as a last resort...

If left untouched by the mining industries Haystack Plain can go on forever producing food, if mined it will never produced like has before ever again. This is of great concern when all our population is doing is growing.

Submission

It is predicted that there will be another population the size of China to feed on our doorstep in Asia in approximately forty years time. It seems to me we need to keep all our best food producing land to keep up with the demand for food, I dread to think what will happened to my children and there families if the government keep allowing prime agricultural land to be taken for mining purposes.

There are potential disasters that could happen if Tarong Energy's MDL 383 on Haystack Plain goes ahead. An mine in the middle of a floodplain, what will happen with the run off from heavy rainfalls, number one is a disaster within its self and that is the damage to the surrounding plain, my guess is it would leave big channels in the soil, destroying the natural floodplain and becoming unmanageable to farm easily, not to mention all the years of work and money Landcare Australia has put into the Haystack Plain to protect it from run off from heavy rainfall. Number two if they decide to do Coal seam gas, the salt which is produced during the process where does it go if there are floods or maybe one of the dams burst, what a disaster for the Murray Darling River system considering we are at the very top of that system.

Summary

We need a plan for future food. Just look what happen without a water usage plan, constant strain on the water system because there was no plan for future water security. We need to secure a plan for future food and for the protection of the Murray Darling river system, without these there will be no communities.

Craig Cox