

Asia Pacific Strategy

9 January 2013

Attn.: Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications.

Dear Sir/Madam,

A Senate Inquiry inviting public submissions relating to extreme weather frequency and preparedness has been invited. Asia Pacific Strategy is pleased to respond to TOR Items (b)(ii) and (f) as follows:

All reputable climate modelling studies predict longer and more extreme global weather events such as the El Nino – Southern Oscillation cycle in the Southern Hemisphere due to increasing anthropogenic greenhouse gas (AGHG) emissions. Combustion of fossil fuels for electricity generation and iron making is a major contributor accounting for about 35% of global AGHG emissions. Australia exports about 80% of its fossil fuel production and is the largest exporter of metallurgical coal used for iron making and the second largest exporter of thermal coal used for electricity generation. Black coal exports from Queensland and NSW account for most of the mining royalty income for these States. Most coal exports from these States are shipped through the Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea Marine Reserves.

It is the responsibility of the States to administer preparation of environmental impact statements (EIS) by proponents of coal export projects for consideration by the Federal Government in its administration of the EPBC Act. Tension exists between the Queensland Government's objective to maximise royalty income in the short term and the Federal Government's obligation to sustain tourism resources such as the Great Barrier Reef and Australia's marine environmental resources in the long term.

This Asia Pacific Strategy submission consists of correspondence exchanges highlighting shortcomings of the EIS and supplementary EIS (SEIS) relating to a joint venture project entitled the Alpha Coal Mine and Rail Project, EPBC 2008/4648, otherwise known as the Kevin's Corner Project. An initial public submission dated 25 November 2011, a SEIS response from the proponents and a response to the SEIS dated 16 November 2012 are provided for the Standing Committee's consideration.

This extract from the SEIS suggests the project's proponents are attempting to use an accounting convention loophole to avoid assessment of some 95% of AGHG emissions stemming from approval of this project at the expense of the future wellbeing of all Australians. Science underpinning global warming and climate change modelling is not subject to the accounting conventions of The National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act. (2007).

Yours sincerely,

R.J.Koerner
Principal Associate