

The Coordinator-General
Attn. EIS project manager – Galilee Coal Project
Significant Projects Coordination
Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation
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Dear Coordinator-General,

Submission on EIS for the Galilee Coal Project (Northern Export Facility), also known as China First Coal Project

My comments here relate to the overwhelmingly negative impacts that the proposed Galilee Coal Project would have on Bimblebox Nature Refuge.

Impacts of project: The Galilee Coal Project would irreversibly devastate Bimblebox Nature Refuge. The EIS describes how an open cut mine would directly destroy 52% of the property, and that underground mining of the remaining 48% would cause subsidence and impacts on the soil profile and hydrology (Executive Summary, section 3.1.8.2, page 35).

Values of Bimblebox Nature Refuge: With nearly 8000 hectares of remnant woodland, Bimblebox Nature Refuge is one of the largest intact areas of native ecology in Australia's iconic Desert Uplands bioregion. The conservation values of the property were recognised by both the State and Federal governments when Bimblebox Nature Refuge was established a decade ago. Approximately \$286,000 taxpayer dollars went towards the purchase of the property to preserve it from land clearing and over grazing, and with the understanding it would be protected in perpetuity. A vital refuge for a range of threatened and significant species, Bimblebox has also become a valuable study site for agencies like CSIRO, Queensland Herbarium and Birds Australia. Since it also operates as a minimal-impact grazing property, Bimblebox is a highly valued model of ecological land management.

Inadequacy of offset proposal: The offsets proposed by Waratah Coal to compensate for the impact on Bimblebox Nature Refuge are entirely inadequate to redress the loss that would occur. Offsetting is a highly contested approach to dealing with impacts on biodiversity and Waratah Coal has failed to demonstrate the existence of an offset area that is of comparable size and conservation value as Bimblebox Nature Refuge. There is also no guarantee that any such offset would not be subject to mining in the future.

Mining threats to nature refuges: Bimblebox Nature Refuge is the first nature refuge to be threatened by the rapidly expanding coal industry in Queensland. It is imperative that a precedent is not established that would jeopardise these important conservation areas across the state.

I implore you to look beyond expediency and short-term gain and act in the interest of Queensland now and in the future. For all the above reasons, the project should be refused.

Yours sincerely,

Signature :
Name (printed in full) :
Date :
Address :