



Climate-Change Balmain-Rozelle <ccbalroz@gmail.com>

Carmichael Coal Mine: ALP's position

1 message

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To: "Albanese, Anthony (MP)" <a.albanese.mp@aph.gov.au>

Dear Mr Albanese

Best wishes to you for 2018 from Climate Change Balmain-Rozelle.

We have written to you previously on the Adani coal mine proposal and associated ventures, and we thank you for your most recent reply, dated 13th November.

As you are aware, we have pressed for the ALP to declare its clear opposition to the Adani coal mine as well as its opposition to any public funding of a rail link between the Galilee Basin and the Abbot Point coal terminal. You have argued that the mine is unlikely to go ahead as it makes no economic sense, and confirmed your opposition to any funding through NAIF.

And yet, although economists support your argument that the coal could not sell in India at a price to cover the cost of mining it, the Adani company continues with preliminary building work along the rail corridor. It is clear that Adani is determined to open this mine at any cost, as a part of the complex operations and financial manipulations within the Adani group of companies.

Meanwhile, although the NAIF loan to Adani has been effectively ruled out, a loan to rival transport provider Aurizon is apparently still under consideration, either through NAIF or through EFIC.

Bill Shorten told the National Press Club yesterday "we are looking at Adani closely. If it doesn't stack up commercially or environmentally, it will absolutely not receive our support."

By any yardstick - in fact by every yardstick - the Adani coal mine does not add up. You are familiar with the arguments. These are just a few:-

- On local environmental grounds, the amount of water being allowed to Adani, and the risk to the Great Artesian Basin, is unacceptable.
- A number of already threatened species would be put at great risk of extinction at a time when we are learning more and more about the importance of biodiversity.
- The increase in use of the Abbot Point shipping terminal places great risk of pollution to the already-suffering Great Barrier Reef.
- Particulate ash in the atmosphere from burning coal is responsible for up to 100,000 deaths annually in India. Carmichael coal has a significantly *higher* ash content than the Australian benchmark (1).
- On economic grounds, the mine will create very few jobs: many of these would only be in the building phase, and increased automation limits the potential for longer-term jobs. Money would be better spent creating other employment opportunities in the interior, rather than threatening the booming tourist industry on the Queensland coast.
- The barrier to India's developing population getting access to electricity is not the generating capacity in India - it is the distribution network. Localised generation of electricity from renewable sources is the most effective answer, not remote, costlier fossil-fuel generation.

But the overwhelming argument is that the world simply cannot afford to dig up and burn the coal that is still in the ground unmined. The Global Carbon Budget(2,3) shows that at least 90% of Australia's remaining coal must remain in the ground if we are to limit global warming to 2 degrees. That figure is based on all countries contributing fairly according to their economic circumstances. It cancels out any argument that coal not supplied from the Carmichael mine will simply be supplied from elsewhere. We cannot afford not to play our part.

The Turnbull Government has ignored repeated challenges to the Adani proposal and given environmental approvals in the face of these arguments. But Australians are becoming increasingly aware of the effects of climate change and the need to transition to a low carbon economy. They understand that paying lip service to our Paris commitments to reduce emissions, while at the same time encouraging the growth of our coal export market (which well exceeds our total domestic consumption) is - basically - wrong.

Mr Albanese, we urge you to listen to the overwhelming majority of your voters and press for the ALP to take a strong position against *any* further development of coal mining in the Galilee Basin.

Moreover, the arguments against the Adani mine apply equally to any other coal mining proposal, whether by Adani or any other company. Planned or proposed new coal mining capacity in the Hunter Valley alone could exceed the capacity of the Carmichael mine, and if the ALP is indeed serious about addressing climate change, it must embrace a policy of No New Coal. Anywhere.

There will be a Federal election this year or next year - and critical by-elections before then. Now is the time for the ALP to be on the right side of history. Mr Albanese, will you be there too?

yours sincerely

Dominic Case

President

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references:

1 <http://www.climatecouncil.org.au/carmichael-coal-report?vid=4617>

2 <http://theconversation.com/climate-council-climate-health-and-economics-are-against-carmichael-mine-77940>

3 <http://www.globalcarbonproject.org/carbonbudget/index.htm>