QRC

submission

Working together for a shared future

To the Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communication and the Arts

Inquiry into the impacts of mining in the Murray Darling Basin

September 2009

ABN 59 050 486 952
Level 13 133 Mary St Brisbane Queensland 4000
T 07 3295 9560 F 07 3295 9570 E info@qrc.org.au

www.qrc.org.au

Who we are

The Queensland Resources Council (QRC) is the peak representative body for the commercial developers of minerals and energy resources in Queensland.

QRC membership is voluntary and currently extends to more than 150 companies.

QRC works on behalf of members to ensure Queensland's resources are developed profitably and competitively, in a socially and environmentally sustainable way.

QRC full members comprise explorers, miners, minerals processors, site contractors, oil and gas producers and electricity generators.

QRC service members comprise a range of professional service providers to resource sector industries including lawyers, accountants, engineering and environmental science consultants.

A list of QRC Board Directors and member companies is included as Appendix 1.

Key messages

- → The issue of potential mining impacts (broadly defined to encompass petroleum) is an important issue generating significant community interest.
- → QRC welcomes the opportunity for a transparent Senate inquiry process to address some misconceptions surrounding the impact of mining operations on the environment.
- → As a highly concentrated use of small areas of land, mining is one of the most highly regulated industries in Australia. The scrutiny under which the mining industry operates is, rightly, second to none.
- → Despite a complex web of regulations, the industry aspires to outperform minimum standards and invests considerable time and money in ensuring that the industry's performance can be objectively reported and measured.
- → As such, the industry is proud of all the reforms that have been wrought in outcomes – economic, social and environmental – particularly over the past decade.
- → QRC understands the inter-sectoral sensitivities and inter-jurisdictional complexities of improving the health of the Murray-Darling Basin in a timely way.
- → This submission seeks to map out some of the issues for resource operations in Queensland as a basis of providing a body of background evidence to help the committee appraise the range of views, which will inevitably be offered during the consultation process.

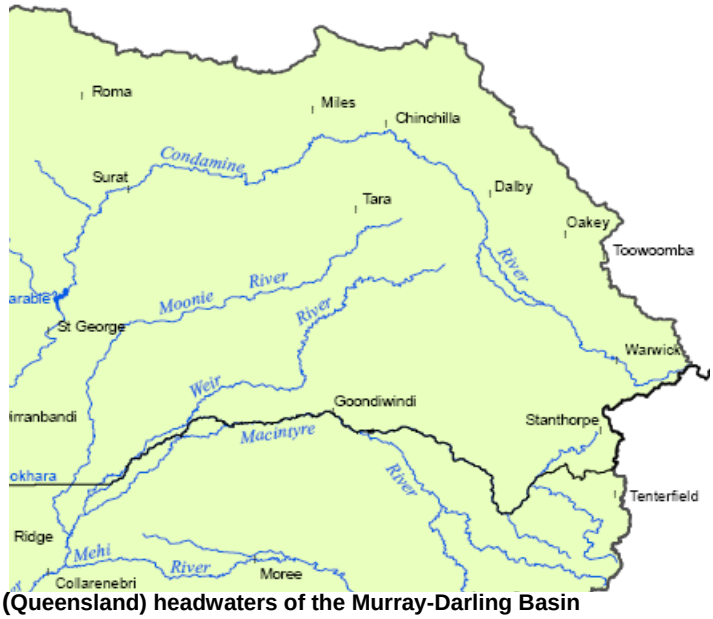
Background

Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts Inquiry
On 12 August 2009 the Senate referred the following matters to the Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts for inquiry and report.

a The potential impacts of current and projected mining operations on all environmental values in the Murray-Darling Basin and, in particular, the potential impacts upon surface and groundwater flows and quality in the alluvial flood plains at its headwaters in the Namoi Valley and the Darling Downs catchments.

b Evaluation of the potential impacts in the context of the Murray-Darling Plan and agricultural productivity.

In these terms of reference, 'mining operations' includes all minerals exploration and all minerals extraction including exploration for and extraction of gas.



(Queensland) headwaters of the Murray-Darling Basin containing current and projected mining operations

Extracted from Murray Darling Basin map
(http://www.mdba.gov.au/files/mdb-map.pdf)

The socio-economic contribution of the Queensland Resources Sector

In 2007-08, the Queensland resources sector is estimated to have *directly and indirectly* (ie through supply and demand relationships with sectors including manufacturing, construction, financial, property and transport) contributed $41.3 billion, or 20 percent of Queensland's total Gross State Product (GSP).

The sector's *direct* GSP contribution to the Queensland economy was 5 percent in 1990-91, 6 percent in 2002-03, and 10 percent in 2007-08. For comparative purposes, agriculture contributed 3 percent and government 5 percent in 2007-08.

Directly and indirectly, the Queensland resources sector represents 20 percent of the Queensland economy and 12 percent of total employment.

In 2007-08 the resources sector is estimated to have directly and indirectly contributed 191,300 full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs, or 12 percent of total Queensland employment. Substantial growth in 2003-08 generated large increases in FTE employment. In 2003, direct and indirect employment was estimated at approximately 72,000 or 6 percent of total Queensland FTE employment.

Queensland Resources Sector Production and Value of Production (A$billion) (nominal)

	2006/07		2007/08		2008/09[f]	
	Production	Value ($b)	Production	Value ($b)	Production	Value ($b)
Alumina (kt)	4,419	1.7	4,291	1.7	4,374	1.5
Aluminium (kt)	328	1.1	328	1.0	329	1.0
Bauxite (kt)	16,952	0.5	16,814	0.5	16,201	0.5
Black Coal (Thermal) (Mt)	73	4.5	72	5.2	68	9.3
Black Coal (Coking) (Mt)	110	12.5	108	12.6	102	27.3
Copper content (kt)	338	2.4	392	3.1	342	3.0
Gold (t)	21	0.5	20	0.5	17	0.8
Lead (kt)	415	0.7	469	1.4	440	1.0
Silver (t)	1,347	1.7	1,504	2.3	1,473	0.9
Zinc (kt)	843	3.1	897	2.3	912	1.9
Coal Seam Gas (PJ)	86	0.3	125	0.4	125	0.4
Crude Oil and Condensate (ML)	640	0.2	632	0.2	632	0.2
LPG (ML)	271	0.1	151	0.1	151	0.1
Processed Natural Gas (PJ)	128	0.4	107	0.4	107	0.4
Electricity (MWh)	50,588,962	1.5	52,152,888	1.5	52,289,205	1.7
Total		31.2		33.2		49.9

Black coal is Queensland and Australia's leading export industry.

Queensland is the world's largest seaborne exporter of coal. Coking (or metallurgical) coal is used in industrial processes such as steel and concrete production. Thermal coal is used primarily for electricity generation.

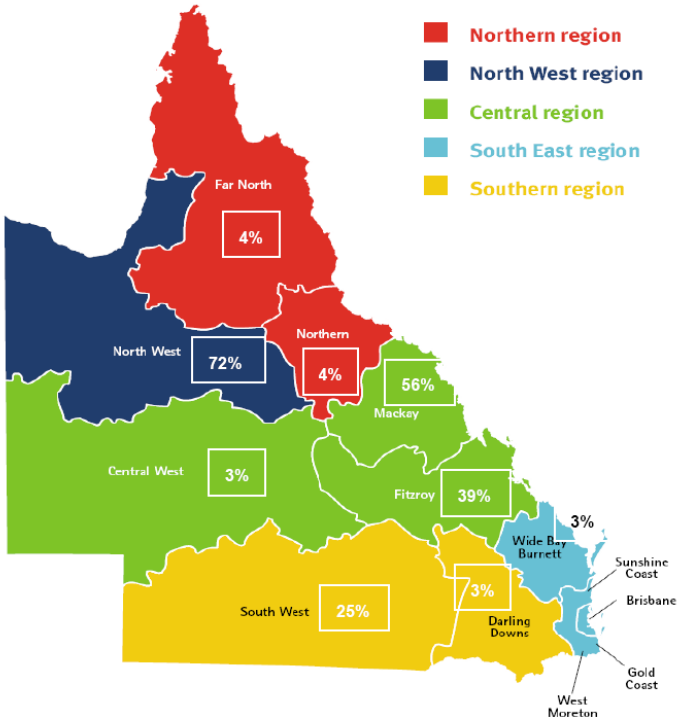
Queensland's largest coal deposits (coking and thermal) are found in central Queensland (Bowen/Galilee Basins) with reserves estimated at 23.2 billion tonnes.

An estimated 6.4 billion tonnes of high-quality thermal coal have been identified in the Clarence-Moreton/Surat Basins of southern Queensland, confirming the region as a domestic and regional energy hub.

While still in its infancy, energy resource development of the Surat Basin has, according to the Western Downs Regional Council, placed around $85 billion worth of new projects on the council's agenda and contributed to the region recording the lowest unemployment rate of any statistical division in Queensland (1.7 percent - May 2009).

This map shows the current economic contribution of mining alone to each of the state's regions.

Percentage Economic Contribution of Mining by Queensland Region

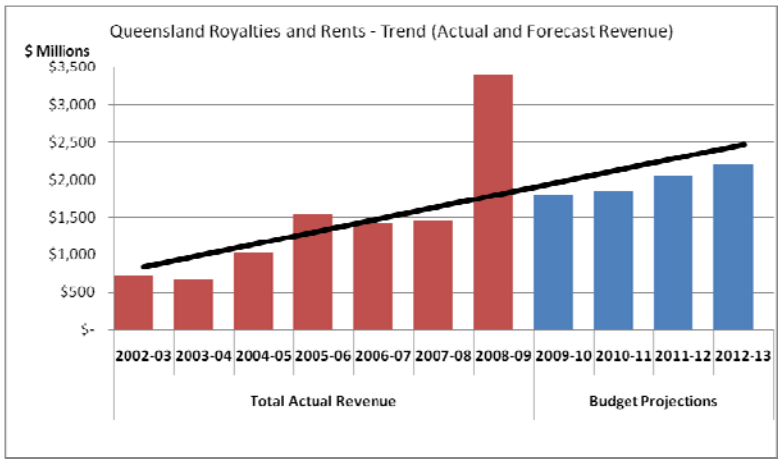


Source: QLD Office of Economic and Statistical Research 2008

In 2007-08 the Queensland resources sector is estimated to have paid approximately $16 billion in wages and salaries to direct and indirect employees.

In 2008-09 the resources sector was forecast to pay $3.6 billion to the Queensland Government in royalties and rents, free and clear of industry infrastructure charges.

Resource sector royalties are used to fund essential community services including police, education and health. The Queensland Treasury forecasts that royalties will bring in nearly $7 billion over the ensuing three years.



Queensland electricity demand is currently 53,000 GigaWatt Hours (GWh) per annum, or 24 percent of the national total demand. It is projected to grow to 125,000 GWh or 30 percent of national demand by 2030. (Source: Coolibah Consulting, 3 August 2009).

In the wake of the Global Financial Crisis, a global economic turnaround is inevitable and will place increasing pressure on the availability of skilled sector workers.

Pre-downturn research determined that approximately 20,000 additional personnel would be required in the mining industry in Queensland by 2020 to meet expected demand.

This research did not incorporate employment demand for the subsequent emergence of the coal-seam gas- liquefied natural gas industry (CSG/LNG).

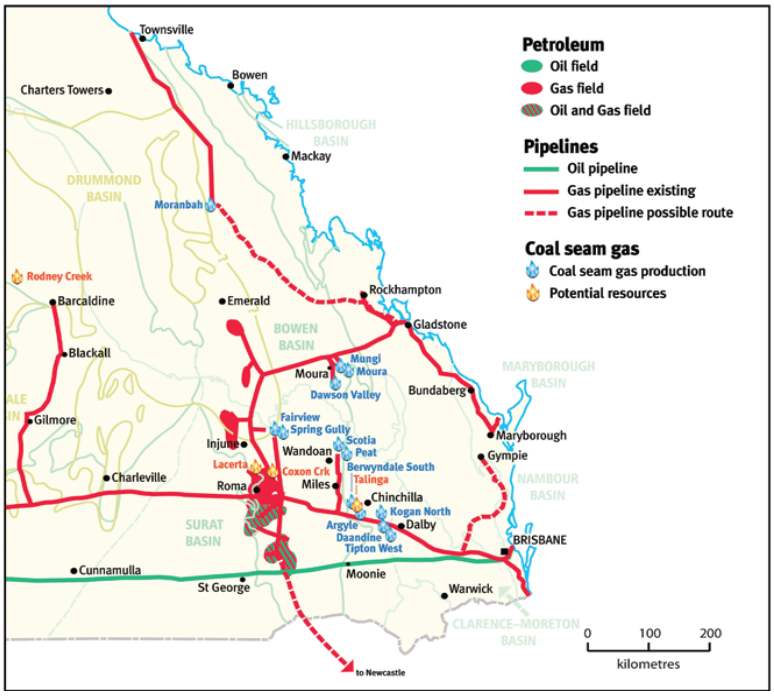
Queensland has the largest share of eastern seaboard coal seam gas reserves, estimated at more than 250 trillion cubic feet. The next largest gas reserves (175tcf) are located in the North West Shelf region of Western Australia.

The Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (APPEA) said in a 30 June 2009 media release: 'Australia currently has over $200 billion worth of oil and gas projects on the drawing board with the potential for creating 60,000 jobs nationwide.'

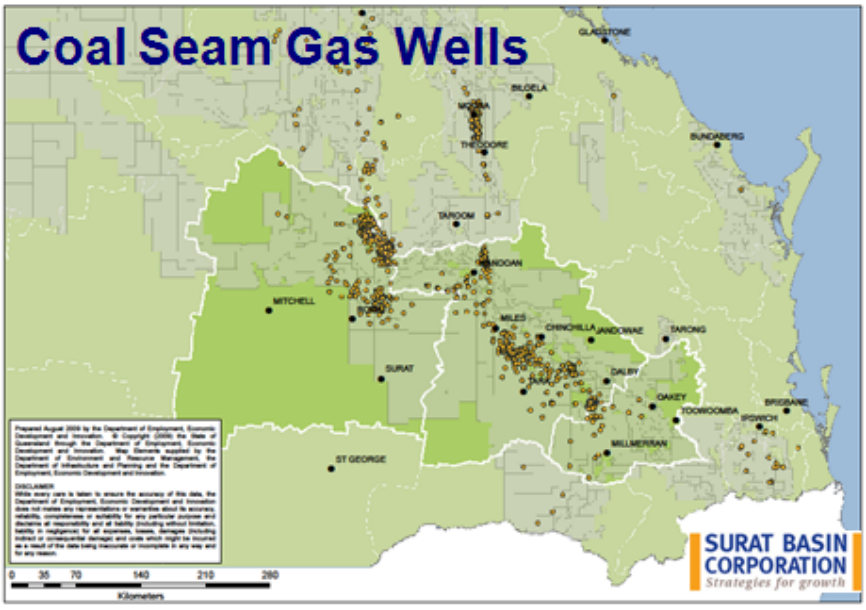
In Queensland, the Surat Basin to Gladstone corridor has emerged as the centre of the state's emerging new CSG-LNG industry, representing the north-eastern axis of the nation's oil and gas projects.

As can be seen in the following maps, current and proposed Surat Basin coal, gas and power developments lie roughly along and north of a line from Toowoomba west to Dalby, Chinchilla, Miles and Roma.

The Surat Basin interface with the headwaters of the Murray-Darling System is therefore arguably mainly proximate to the Condamine River and its catchment.



Source: Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation, Queensland Mines and Energy, Queensland Government Mining Journal, March 2008: www.dme.qld.gov.au/mines/coal_seam_gas.cfm



Industry regulation

Mining and petroleum industries are subject to the most broad ranging and complex regulatory regime across the various stages of exploration, project development (operations and production) and post-closure and remediation.

The framework needs to be robust to ensure that mining and petroleum industries meet the high standards expected by the wider community, including interaction with other legislation, regulatory approvals and impacts on local communities.

Unnecessary and inefficient regulation manifests itself in unnecessary project delays with real costs to Queensland's economy in the form of lower employment, lower tax and royalty revenues, and a lower standard of living than could otherwise be achieved.

Highlighting the range of legislative and regulatory requirements that individual companies need to take into consideration for Queensland resource sector projects, the following represents a non-exhaustive scan of regulatory requirements for the mining and petroleum industries.

While certain regulations listed may not necessarily apply to current and planned resource sector operations in terms of interaction with the Murray-Darling Basin, it is difficult to exclude regulatory requirements as many large resource sector projects include transportation to several possible export port locations throughout the state.

Summary of legislative and regulatory requirements

Queensland Legislative requirements

- → *Environmental Protection Act 1994*
  - *Environmental Protection Regulation 2008*
    - *Environmental Protection (Air) Policy 2008*
    - *Environmental Protection (Noise) Policy 2008*
    - *Environmental Protection (Water) Policy 1997*
    - *Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Policy an regulation 2008*
- → *Explosives Act 1999*
  - *Explosives Regulation 2003*
- → *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*
  - *Coal Mining Safety and Health Regulation 2001*
- → *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999*
  - *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Regulation 2001*
- → *Offshore Minerals Act 1989*
- → *Greenhouse Gas Storage 2009 (coordination mechanisms)*
- → *Coastal Protection and Management Act 1995*
- → *Integrated Planning Act 1997*
  - *Integrated Planning Regulation 1998*
    - ERA 8 Chemical Storage
    - ERA 9 Hydrocarbon Gas Refining
    - ERA 10 Gas Producing
    - ERA 14 Electricity Generation
    - ERA 15 Fuel Burning
    - ERA 16 Extractive and Screening Activities
    - ERA 17 Abrasive Blasting
    - ERA 18 Boiler Making or Engineering
    - ERA 33 Crushing, Milling, Grinding or Screening
    - ERA 38 Surface Coating
    - ERA 43 Concrete Batching
    - ERA 47 Timber Milling and Woodchipping
    - ERA 50 Bulk Material Handling
    - ERA 55 Regulated Waste Recycling or Reprocessing
    - ERA 56 Regulated Waste Storage
    - ERA 57 Regulated Waste Transport
    - ERA 58 Regulated Waste Treatment
    - ERA 60 Waste Disposal
    - ERA 61 Waste Incineration and Thermal Treatment
    - ERA 63 Sewage Treatment
    - ERA 64 Water Treatment
- → *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*
- → *Mineral Resources Act 2004*
  - *Mineral Resources Regulation 2003*
- → *Marine Parks Act 2004*
  - *Marine Parks Regulation 2006*
  - *Marine Parks (Declaration) Regulation 2006*

- → *Nature Conservation Act 1992*
  - Nature Conservation (Administration) Regulation 2006
  - Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Regulation 2006
  - Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Regulation 1994
  - Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006
  - Nature Conservation (Wildlife) Regulation 2006
  - Nature Conservation (Koala) Conservation plan 2006
  - Nature Conservation (Estuarine Crocodile) Conservation Plan 2007
  - Nature Conservation (Macropod) Conservation Plan 2005
  - Nature Conservation (Macropod Harvest Period) Notice
  - Nature Conservation (Protected Plants) Conservation Plan 2000
  - Nature Conservation (Whales and Dolphins) Conservation Plan 1997
- → *Petroleum Act 1923*
  - Petroleum Regulation 2004
- → *Petroleum & Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004*
  - Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Regulation 2004
- → *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982*
- → *Vegetation Management Act 1999*
  - Vegetation management Regulation 2000
    - Policy for Vegetation Management Offsets 2007
- → *Water Act 2000*
    - Water Resource (Great Artesian Basin) Plan and Great Artesian Basin Resource Operations Plan
- → *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*
- → *Wild Rivers Act 2005*
    - Moratorium notice 2007 - Cape York Peninsula Area
    - Amendment moratorium notice 2008 - notice of intent for the Wenlock Basin
- → *State Development & Public Works Organisation Act 1971*
- → *Land Act 1994*
- → *Native Title (Queensland) Act 1993*
- → *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*
- → *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*
- → *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994*
- → *Transport Planning and Coordination Act 1994*
- → *Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995*
- → *Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995*
- → *Dangerous Goods Safety Management Act 2001*
- → *Fisheries Act 1994*
- → *Forestry Act 1959*
- → *Electricity Act 1994*
- → *Food Act 2006 & Public Health Act 2005*
- → *Local Government Act 1993*

Relevant state planning policies

- SPP 1/92 Development and conservation of agricultural land
- SPP 1/03: Mitigating the adverse impacts of flood, bushfire and landslide
- SPP 2/02: Planning and managing development involving acid sulphate soils
- SPP 2/07: Protection of Extractive Resources
- SPP 1/02: Development in the Vicinity of Certain Airports and Aviation
- State Coastal Management Plan (SCMP) - Queensland's Coastal Policy
- Curtis Coast Regional Coastal Management Plan

- Regional Plans:
  - Central West Queensland Regional Plan (statutory)
  - South West Queensland Regional Plan (statutory)
  - Maranoa Balonne Regional Plan (to be finalised by late September) (statutory)
  - North West Queensland Regional Plan (draft) (statutory)
  - Townsville-Thuringowa Plan (non-statutory although largely out-dated)
  - Central Queensland A New Millennium Regional Growth Management Framework (non-statutory)
  - Whitsunday Hinterland and Mackay Regional Plan (non-statutory)
  - Gulf Regional Development Plan (non-statutory)
  - South East Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 (statutory)
  - Far North Queensland Regional Plan 2009-2031 (statutory)

Commonwealth legislative requirements

- Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Native Title Act 1993
- Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981
- Commonwealth Civil Aviation Regulations 1988
  - Civil Aviation Safety Regulations 1988
- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975

International agreements

- Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of Japan for the Protection of Migratory Birds and Birds in Danger of Extinction and their Environment (JAMBA)
- Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Government of People's Republic of China for the Protection of Migratory Birds and their Environment (CAMBA)
- Agreement between the Government of Australia and the Republic of Korea with respect to migratory bird conservation and the protection of migratory shorebirds and their habitat (ROKAMBA)
- Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention)
- Convention of the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention)
- International Convention for the Protection of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 (MARPOL 73/78)
- International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response, and Co-operation (1990)
- United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982)
- Kyoto Protocol
- London (Dumping) Convention (1972)

Resource industries must demonstrate how they comply with environmental regulatory requirements of both state and federal governments.

This is generally considered within environmental impact assessments undertaken as part of the approvals process, and companies lodge significant financial assurances against their rehabilitation commitments.

Following is an excerpt from a QRC address to 2009 Agforce State Conference, Brisbane, 12 September 2009 (full speech attached for reference), which gives a brief summary of this issue

'Two years ago, QRC signed off on arrangements with the state government to establish a formal system for certification of progressive rehabilitation.

'This means that a mining company can reform and restore mined land to its previous standard as they proceed, and receive confirmation from the government that their rehabilitation requirements have been met.

'Up until two years ago, this system was not available as a formal regulatory option, which meant that companies had less encouragement to rehabilitate continuously.

'Notwithstanding that progressive rehabilitation is now a far more attractive option, all rehabilitation must be completed at the direction of and to the satisfaction of the EPA, now the Department of Environment and Resource Management....

'The government of the day determines, regulates and monitors the standard to which land should be rehabilitated, taking into account a range of environmental, economic and social objectives.

'The state government's financial assurance system also means that the state and the people of Queensland are protected if a mining company walks away from its land rehabilitation responsibilities.'

There are several aspects of the Commonwealth's environmental legislation that need to be examined for effectiveness and regulatory efficiency.

These have been identified by independent research conducted by the Australian National University's Australian Centre for Environmental Law (Andrew McIntosh, 7 September 2009). The media release accompanying the report's release is attached to this submission.

In summary, the report notes that the Commonwealth's Environmental Impact Assessment generates a massive compliance burden for industry that substantially overlaps with state government regimes.

Of greater concern is that the Commonwealth's processes are failing to get significantly better environmental outcomes despite an estimated $700 million compliance cost incurred during its nine years of operation. Federal government costs are estimated to be around $200 million, with project proponents incurring around $500 million.

Through Environmental Impact Assessment processes, resource project proponents in Queensland are required to give consideration to community and social impacts and provide opportunities for stakeholders and community members to be involved and provide feedback to their Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Through a Sustainable Resource Communities Policy released in September 2008, the Queensland Government has committed to strengthening social impact assessment within the existing assessment processes.

It is anticipated that this will enable a coordinated response by the state government to mining and petroleum tenure applications, enhancing government's decision making and better informing planning in resource areas.

The resources sector is working closely with government as improvements to social impact assessment are implemented.

QRC is providing substantial input to the establishment of Social Impact Management Plans, which are expected to assist in improving the social impact assessment process and ongoing management of social benefits and impacts of resource sector projects.

QRC was a driving member behind the Sustainable Resource Communities Partnership Agreement between the Queensland Government, the QRC and the Local Government Association of Queensland to encourage cross-sector communication and coordination and provide a forum to identify and discuss strategies to address current and emerging social issues facing resource communities.

This approach encourages alternative approaches, including partnership models to help address social impacts, including cumulative impacts in resource areas of Queensland, including the Surat Basin.

Coal-seam gas water

The CSG-LNG industry releases significant volumes of water as a rich by-product of gas extraction. The chemical qualities of this water vary, salinity and mineral content is often well within the range for desalination technologies being deployed as part of water supply measures. The potential for a new spin-off industry is therefore emerging. However, the industry is again required under Queensland's regulations and the coal seam gas water policy to either process that water for other uses eg coal washing, agriculture, potable water for local community supplies, or to reinject the treated water into stable natural underground storages.

The Surat Basin – a regional plan?

QRC has formally requested that the Queensland Government initiate a regional plan for the Surat Basin area, recognising the potential role this could play in providing a coordinated approach to meeting the challenges associated with growth, development and population changes. Regional plans can play a very important role in communicating and generating understanding among stakeholders and the broader community regarding the future direction of the region. In this way, sound and accurate regional planning can help describe and place context around the potential industry development and growth in the region, generating greater community ownership and support for development activities.

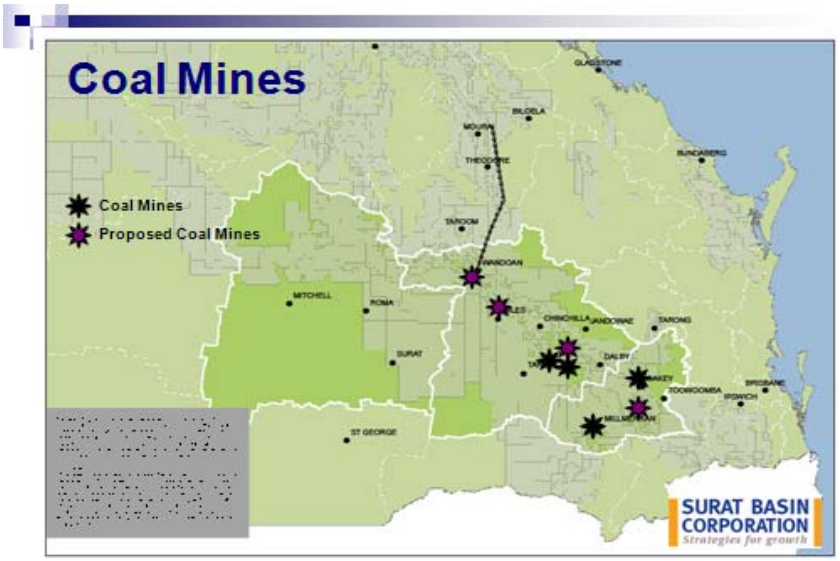
QRC supports the ongoing development of regional planning based on sound planning principles and robust consultation with all stakeholders, including the resources and agricultural sectors. QRC firmly believes ongoing regional planning should consider all catchments and boundaries, rather than arbitrary council boundaries. This will ensure a more coordinated approach across multiple local government areas, and ensure consistent policies and applications.

In examining the mining impacts on this basin, it would be remiss to not consider the wider cumulative impacts of other forms of long-established land-use on environmental values. The intensive broadacre farming development of the Darling Downs since European settlement has already effectively overlaid western agricultural practices on the area's former natural environmental values.

The QRC contends that the emerging land use conflicts between mining and agriculture can be addressed under regional planning and existing project approvals legislation, including make-good requirements of environmental impact statements for approved mining or gas leases.

QRC notes the argument of some agricultural interests that mining destroys the farming value of some of this cropping land, however experience in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales and in other countries is that the cropping value of land has the potential to be returned after quality rehabilitation.

The approvals process, including EIS and financial assurance processes in particular, is the vehicle for government to permit industry to demonstrate its bona fides and that it can successfully rehabilitate any such land that may fall within an approved project lease. Proposed projects are comparatively few.



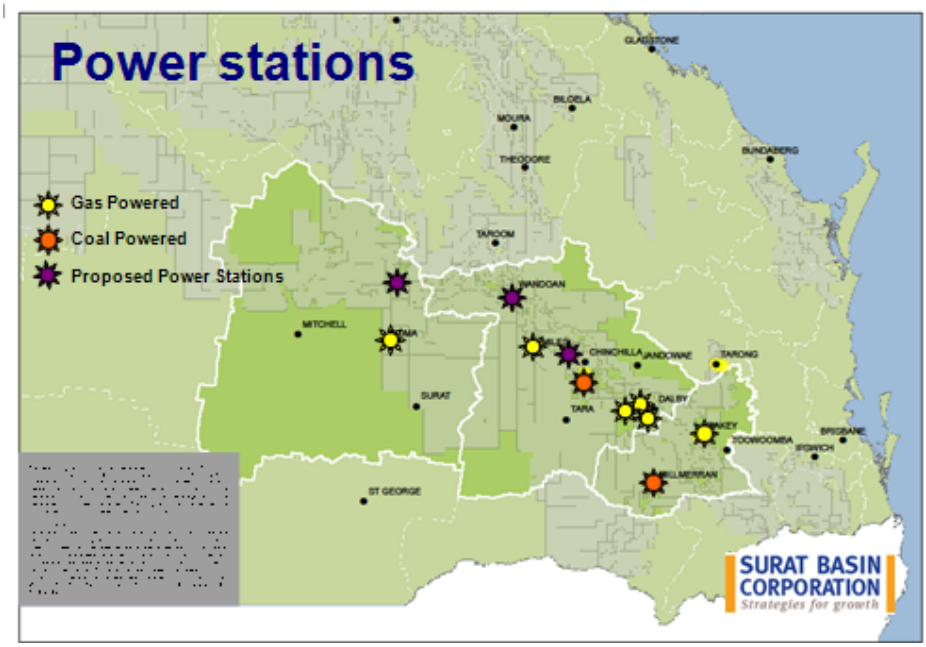
CSG-LNG and the emerging underground coal gasification (UCG) industry also offer the benefits of even lower-impact resource recovery and utilisation than traditional open-cut or underground mining activities employed appropriate to more marginal lands.

Against a national unemployment rate of 5.8 percent (*ABS August 2009*) unemployment in the Labour Force Region of Darling Downs – South West was 1.9 percent.(DEEWR, ABS Labour Force Survey, July 2009)

Darling Downs-South West Labour Force Region

While uncertainty exists around the costs and final form of the Australian Government's emissions trading scheme, and research on commercially sustainable carbon capture and storage technologies capable of being retrofitted to any new coal-fired power station continues, no further significant capital investment in new coal-fired electricity generation is anticipated in Queensland.

Coal-seam gas on the other hand is seen as a promising transitional form of low-emission fossil fuel for new power generation. Given the growth in electricity demand projected for Queensland, further gas-fired power station projects may be expected in the Surat Basin region. (See Appendix 2 and following map)



The QRC submits that any potential impacts on the environmental values in the Queensland section of the Murray-Darling Basin are already being mitigated under the existing legislative and regulatory controls imposed by the Australian and Queensland Governments, and the best practice of companies whose ongoing social licence to operate is heavily dependent on continuing public confidence in their environmental practices.

Michael Roche
Chief Executive

APPENDIX 1

FULL MEMBERS

ACC EcoMinerals Limited
Ambre Energy Limited
Anglo American Exploration
Anglo Coal Australia Pty Ltd
Aquila Resources Ltd
Barrick Gold Of Australia Ltd
BHP Billiton Cannington
BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance
Birla Mt. Gordon Pty Ltd
Cape Alumina Pty Ltd
Cape Flattery Silica Mines
Carbon Energy Ltd
Cement Australia
Citigold Corporation Limited
Cockatoo Coal Limited
Consolidated Rutile Limited
Cougar Energy Limited
Deep Yellow Limited
Diatreme Resources Limited
Downer EDI Mining Pty Ltd
Ensham Resources Pty Limited
ERM Power Pty Ltd
Exco Resources Ltd
Felix Resources Pty Ltd
Gladstone Pacific Nickel Ltd
Golding Contractors
Hancock Coal Pty Ltd
Incitec Pivot Limited
Jellinbah Resources Pty Ltd
John Holland Pty Ltd
Lady Annie Operations Pty Ltd
Lagoon Creek Resources
Legend International Holdings
Lihir Gold Ltd
Linc Energy Limited
Macarthur Coal Limited
Macmahon Holdings Pty Ltd
Mega Uranium Ltd
Metallica Minerals Ltd
MetroCoal Limited
Millmerran Power Management Pty Ltd
Mitsubishi Development Pty Ltd
MM Mining Pty Ltd
New Hope Coal Australia Ltd
North Queensland Metals Ltd
Northern Energy Corporation
Norton Gold Fields Limited
Origin Energy
OZ Minerals Limited
Paladin Resources Limited
Peabody Energy Australia
QER Pty Ltd
QGC Limited
Queensland Nickel Pty Ltd
Republic Gold Limited
Rio Tinto Alcan
Rio Tinto Coal Australia
Santos/TOGA Pty Ltd
Sonoma Mine Management
Southern Uranium Limited
Stanwell Corporation Limited
Summit Resources Limited
Superior Coal Limited
Syntech Resources Pty Ltd
Tarong Energy Corporation Ltd
Thiess Pty Ltd
Universal Resources Limited
Vale
Waratah Coal Pty Ltd
Wesfarmers Resources
Xstrata Coal Australia
Xstrata Copper
Xstrata Zinc Australia

SERVICE MEMBERS

ABN AMRO Morgans
ACIL Consulting
Adagold Aviation
AECOM Australia
Allens Arthur Robinson
AMC Consultants
Ausenco
AustralAsian Resource Consultants
AXCEN - Australia-China Business Development
BBI (DBCT) Management
BDO Kendalls (QLD)
Bechtel Australia
Blake Dawson
Bovis Lend Lease
Calibre Global
Centre For Mined Land Rehabilitation
Clayton Utz
Coffey Mining
Cooper Grace Ward Lawyers
Corrs Chambers Westgarth
CQ Field Mining Services
CQUniversity
Davidson Recruitment
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu
Dingo
Downing Teal Pty
Environmental And Licensing Professionals
Envisage Training
Ernst & Young
Ferris Management Consultants
Freehills
G&S Engineering Services
GHD
GijimaAst
Golder Associates
Hansen Bailey

Cont.

Hastings Deering (Australia)
Hetherington Exploration and Mining
HMP Constructions
Holding Redlich
HopgoodGanim Lawyers
John T Boyd Company
Klohn Crippen Berger
Konekt Australia
KPMG Brisbane
Leighton Mining
Marsh
Matrixplus
McCollum Environmental Management Services
McCullough Robertson
Mincom
Minter Ellison
Monadelphous Engineering
National Safety Council Of Australia
Open Door Consulting
Orica Mining Services
Pacific National (Qld)
Parsons Brinckerhoff
Phillips Group
Phoenix Drilling Services
Port Of Townsville
PricewaterhouseCoopers
Prospect Consulting Group
QR Network
QRNational Coal
Ranbury
Resource Strategies
Rio Tinto Technology and Innovation
Roberts and Schaefer Australia Pty Ltd
Rowland
Runge
Sedgman
Sinclair Knight Merz
SNC-Lavalin Australia
Snowden
Sparke Helmore Lawyers
Stellar Recruitment
Sustainable Minerals Institute
Tenement Administration Services (TAS)
TressCox Lawyers
United Group Resources
URS Australia
WorkPac
WorleyParsons

Gas power means 'lights on' for Queensland

Appendix 2

Queensland's new gas-fired Braemar 2 Power Station, near Dalby, will produce enough electricity to power three per cent of Queensland and New South Wales.

At today's official opening, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning Stirling Hinchliffe said the $546 million, 450 megawatt, power station would cut carbon emissions by up to 50 per cent and water consumption by up to 90 per cent compared with coal-fired stations.

"Under the Government's new Renewable Energy Plan, Queensland is set to lead the nation in renewable energy, with solar, geothermal, wind and hydro all to play important roles in our future energy mix," Mr Hinchliffe said.

"The plan has the potential to attract $3.5 billion in investment in the renewable energy sector and create up to 3,500 new green jobs over the next 10 years.

"Gas strikes the right balance between being able to meet Queensland's electricity needs and significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"With more than 2,000 people moving to Queensland every week, the demand for electricity is booming and is expected to continue into the future.

"The addition of Braemar 2 to the Queensland power grid will help deliver a long-term, reliable and secure power supply to the market."

The opening of the power station follows the August 20 release of the Bligh Government's revised climate change strategy - ClimateQ: toward a greener Queensland.

"ClimateQ sets out the next crucial steps for Queensland's transition to a lower carbon future," Mr Hinchliffe said.

"The revised strategy will ensure Queensland remains at the forefront of the national climate change response.

"It includes a raft of new measures designed to ensure world's best practise in low emissions technology for coal fired electricity and accelerate the development of Queensland's renewable energy sector."

Mr Hinchliffe praised joint owners ERM Power Pty Ltd and Arrow Energy for their leadership in deploying cleaner, lower carbon gas-fired power stations.

He said the project brought approximately $60 million to the local economy and employed around 400 Queenslanders during peak construction.

Braemar 2 has the capability to operate as a peaking, shoulder or base-load generator by making use of its large gas storage capacity and long-term gas supply contracts.

Media contact: Minister's Office: 3224 875

Environmental scheme costly and ineffective: study **Appendix 3**
Monday 7 September 2009

The Commonwealth Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process is costing industry and government dear, has substantial overlap with state regimes and is failing to get significantly better environmental outcomes, according to a new study from The Australian National University.

The study, conducted by Andrew Macintosh from the Australian Centre for Environmental Law at ANU, surveyed more than 150 proponents of projects which were referred and approved under the EIA regime. According to the researchers, the responses paint a picture of a scheme where costs are both substantial and variable, where there is a duplication of effort and a relatively low level of environmental effectiveness.

Mr Macintosh said the research highlighted a number of problems with the EIA regime – a scheme that seeks to target matters of national environmental significance.

“Our research suggests there a number of problems with the regime,” he said. “Firstly, it isn’t capturing the projects and activities that pose the greatest threat to biodiversity and heritage – they aren’t being referred to the Minister. Secondly, when projects are referred, the Commonwealth EIA process isn’t adding great environmental value. The survey results indicate that only in around 10 per cent of cases is the EIA process actually generating significantly better outcome,” he said.

The study also indicates that the EIA process has proven expensive for both government and those that need to go through it. “Over the nine years that the EIA process has been running, it has cost the Federal Government around $200 million. Our research suggests that the costs incurred by proponents are likely to be over $500 million,” said Mr Macintosh.

He added that although the study suggested the EIA regime was problematic and costly, the role of the Commonwealth in protecting matters of national environmental significance was essential, and could be improved.

“The Commonwealth has an important role to play, but it has to ensure greater cost-effectiveness and a fairer system for all players. It could do this by greater use of regional planning processes, persuading state and territory governments to raise the standard of their own processes and then accrediting them, and providing greater clarity about when projects need to be referred to the Minister,” he said.

The study was instigated by the Australian Centre for Environmental Law at ANU and received support from the Australia Institute and the Minerals Council of Australia.

Filed under: Media Release, ANU College of Law, Environment, Law, Politics, Public Policy

Contacts: For interviews: Andrew Macintosh – 0403 804 540 For media assistance: Martyn Pearce, ANU Media Office – (02) 6125 5575 / 0416 249 245