

I live on the fertile Liverpool Plains of New South Wales between Caroona and Breeza. We are facing the reality of open cut mines owned by Shenhua and BHP being approved in the near future. We will also undoubtedly face the approval of coal seam gas wells as this industry eagerly looks to expand across the Liverpool Plains.

I will live less than 3km from these coal mines; BHP to the West and Shenhua to the North. It doesn't look much better for me in regards to coal seam gas because the NSW Government provides no protection for my place of residence in its recent proposed amendments to the State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007.

There are many elements of coal and coal seam gas mining that concern me. I hold grave fears for the Liverpool Plains and my way of life if coal and coal seam gas projects are allowed here. One of these grave concerns is for the water that nourishes the Plains.

I am writing to you in regards to the 2013 Proposed Amendment to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). I am writing to ask that you support this Bill to ensure that the water resources of the Liverpool Plains and my way of life are protected.

Second only to air, water is essential to life. I cannot live without clean, available water? Here on the Liverpool Plains I am lucky enough to have clean water available all year round. Water forms the basis of all I do in my everyday life here and life for me on the Liverpool Plains would cease without water. Coal and coal seam gas are the main predators to the Liverpool Plains' water. These industries will destroy it and they will void the Liverpool Plains of its lifeblood.

I love to garden. Because of the water, I have gardens that provide me with much of my fresh food all year round. My garden provides me with immense happiness. I spend hours losing myself in the relaxing environment that is my garden. There is nothing as rewarding as watching my seeds grow into magnificent plants, which I then harvest and turn into meals for my family. How do I garden and nourish my family if I don't have access to water?

I am passionate about sustainable agriculture. Agriculture is in my blood. I am a farm girl born and bred and I always will be. I plan to buy land on the Liverpool Plains that will fulfill my dream of operating a sustainable agricultural enterprise. How do I realise my dream without available clean water?

I have health issues that have plagued me for over 10 years. Water forms the basis of the healthy lifestyle I must adhere to, to keep functioning at an acceptable level. To lose one's health and then try to regain it back is a long, arduous road. It is a road that I wish to not travel again. How do I stay healthy and not relapse into ill-health without water that is clean and readily available?

I am always in awe of the spectacular landscape, flora and fauna that the Liverpool Plains sustains. This area is beautiful, and its beauty is completely reliant on the water that feeds it. I believe that being in touch with nature is a powerful antidote to the stresses of modern life. The Liverpool Plains provides this antidote in spades and I am living surrounded by it every single day. How do I stay in touch with nature and live in harmony with it when there is no water to sustain it?

The threat to the Liverpool Plains' terrifies me enough to keep me awake at night. I often think "Where do I go if the Liverpool Plains is lost to coal and coal seam gas?"

The answer is unclear because there is nowhere else I can imagine living other than right here. The Liverpool Plains fulfills a sense of home that I lost when the farm I grew up on was sold in 2002. I lost a part of me when my childhood home sold, and I only regained that piece when I settled here on the Liverpool Plains. This place brought back a sense of home and provided me with the purpose that was taken away from me 10 years ago. If the water is lost on the Liverpool Plains I cannot live here and once again, I lose that part of me, that sense of home and purpose, I have so luckily found.

I urge you to support the 2013 Proposed Amendment to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act). I hope my sincerity and love for the Liverpool Plains has been evident in my correspondence to you. This Bill when passed as law will be significant in the protection of the Liverpool Plains' water and it will be significant in my fight to save the life I so dearly love here.