

Submission re: The Galilee Basin (Coal Prohibition) Bill 2018

I thank the committee for the opportunity to comment on the proposed legislation. I write in my personal capacity as an Australian citizen who like many Australians is concerned about climate change and the humanitarian consequences of climate change. I am also a member of an ACF (Australian Conservation Foundation) community group. The opinions in this submission are my personal opinions.

History favours brave governments and parliaments who act for the greater good, especially with environmental crises.

50 years ago, the Federal Liberal government took a stand against oil drilling on the Barrier Reef. They instituted a moratorium on oil exploration on the reef whilst a Royal Commission addressed mining on the reef. Their position was vindicated and the Barrier Reef became the Great Barrier Reef (GBR), a national treasure and a World Heritage site.

The burning of thermal coal from the Galilee Basin will increase greenhouse gases, lead to more coral bleaching and the demise of the GBR, its ecosystems and important fish nurseries.

Opening up the Galilee Basin for thermal coal mining is a humanitarian and moral issue. The burning of coal for energy generation is a major source of CO₂ emissions. The burning of exported Galilee coal is not considered in Australia's emission targets of the Paris Agreement but the burning of the massive coal reserves of the Galilee basin will wipe out any gains from Australia's contribution to reducing emissions. Morally, how can Australia, a rich country and one of the largest exporters of thermal coal add to and intensify global warming. We are compromising our reputation as a global leader and a humanitarian country.

Globally, humanity is at risk from climate change – water security, food security, climate refugees and escalation of tensions. With global warming, we are participating in a dangerous climate experiment for humanity, especially if temperatures rise above 2°C. For this reason, I support the passing of this bill to prohibit the mining of thermal coal in the Galilee basin. I would be immensely proud of our Australian Parliament passing this bill as it is environmentally responsible and an urgent humanitarian action.

Judith Manitzky
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