



Wednesday, 10 June 2009

Letter to the Editor of the Sydney Morning Herald

Clearly it is crucial to carefully consider the potential environmental impacts of large-scale mining proposals such as the Gujarat NRE project, and that is precisely what the Government's planning assessment process will do ('Longwall mine plan a threat to water supply' – SMH, 10/6/09).

As explained to the Herald, the proposal that has been lodged with the Department of Planning does not propose long-wall mining under the Cataract Dam. As a result, it is not possible to definitively claim, as the article does, that the proposal would lead to "unknown – though almost certainly negative – effects on the water supply".

The assessment process for this proposal is still in its very preliminary stages. The Department has issued a set of strict requirements for environmental assessment, which the proponent will need to address in its formal proposal. These include the issues of subsidence and any potential impacts on water resources in the area.

Until the proposal has been subject to a thorough assessment, including careful consideration of all the relevant issues, it is premature to make conclusions about the proposal based on speculation rather than rigorous, scientific assessment.

Yours sincerely,

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