

**Submission
No 81**

**INQUIRY INTO 2024 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NET
ZERO COMMISSION**

Name: Ms Suzanne Page

Date Received: 14 February 2025

I am writing to urge the NSW Government to take decisive action in addressing the risks posed by coal and gas expansions to the state's climate targets. As NSW moves toward achieving its legislated emissions reduction commitments, it is critical that decision-making processes align with the goals set out in the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023.

The NSW Government should formally request that the Net Zero Commission (NZC) produce a dedicated report assessing the risks that coal and gas expansions pose to NSW's climate targets. This report should be completed by June 2025 and provide clear guidance on the necessary actions to mitigate these risks.

The report should include specific advice on establishing a coal sectoral emissions reduction target. This target will be instrumental in ensuring that the coal sector contributes to the state's overall emissions reduction trajectory.

Until such advice has been provided by the NZC, approvals of new coal mine expansions should be paused. This precautionary approach will prevent further commitments to high-emission projects that may be inconsistent with NSW's climate goals.

The NSW Government should ensure that the Net Zero Commission provides specific advice and makes recommendations on all proposed major coal mine expansions in NSW. This aligns with section 15(3) of the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023, which mandates the NZC's role in advising on policies and actions that affect emissions trajectories.

A Regulation should be created under the Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023 to impose a statutory duty on key planning decision-makers. This duty should ensure that all decisions contribute to meeting the 2030 and 2035 climate change targets and include restrictions on downstream emissions from fossil fuel projects.

The urgent need to address climate change requires a coordinated and robust policy response. NSW MUST strengthen its commitment to emissions reductions and ensure that future coal and gas projects are assessed with full consideration of their climate impacts.

I urge the government to act decisively in aligning its planning and regulatory framework with the state's climate objectives.