

Coal and health in the Hunter:
Lessons from one valley for the world



CLIMATE AND
HEALTH
ALLIANCE

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Climate and Health
Alliance

Newcastle
10 June 2015

Report structure

- Local and national and global impacts
- Overview of coal operations in Hunter
- Health impacts of coal in Hunter
- Economic costs of health and environmental damage from coal
- Inadequate regulation with a bias towards approvals
- Case studies – John, Grantley, Wendy, and Nick

Risks to health of the global population

- Coal is a major driver of climate change, which is responsible for 400,000 deaths each year
- Deaths and illnesses in populations overseas where our exported coal is burned

Risks to health of the local population

Health is at risk from declining air quality from:

- coal dust – mines, transport
- blasting
- diesel

There are other risks to health from coal production, including:

- impacts on the quality and availability of secure water
- noise pollution
- negative impacts on psychological health associated with: impact on the landscape; displacement of people / communities as land is acquired for mining; loss of land value; loss of social relationships / friendships

Health damages from PM2.5

SINGLETON AREA



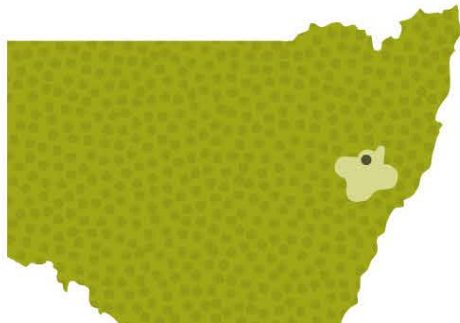
1,305

TONNES OF PM2.5

FROM COAL SOURCES
IN SINGLETON.

COST \$36,000/TONNE
HEALTH DAMAGES

MUSWELLBROOK AREA



1,410

TONNES OF PM2.5

FROM COAL SOURCES
IN LESS POPULATED
MUSWELLBROOK.

THE COST ON
HEALTH

\$65.3
MILLION



HEALTH COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PM10 IN NEWCASTLE

Annual costs from air pollution in Newcastle
= \$63,000 per tonne of PM10.



EXISTING COAL TERMINAL

PRODUCES 210 TONNES
OF PM10 EACH YEAR.

210
TONNES

ADDITIONAL COAL TERMINAL

A FOURTH COAL TERMINAL
IN NEWCASTLE IS
PREDICTED TO PRODUCE
AN ADDITIONAL 210
TONNES OF PM10.

210
TONNES

+

=

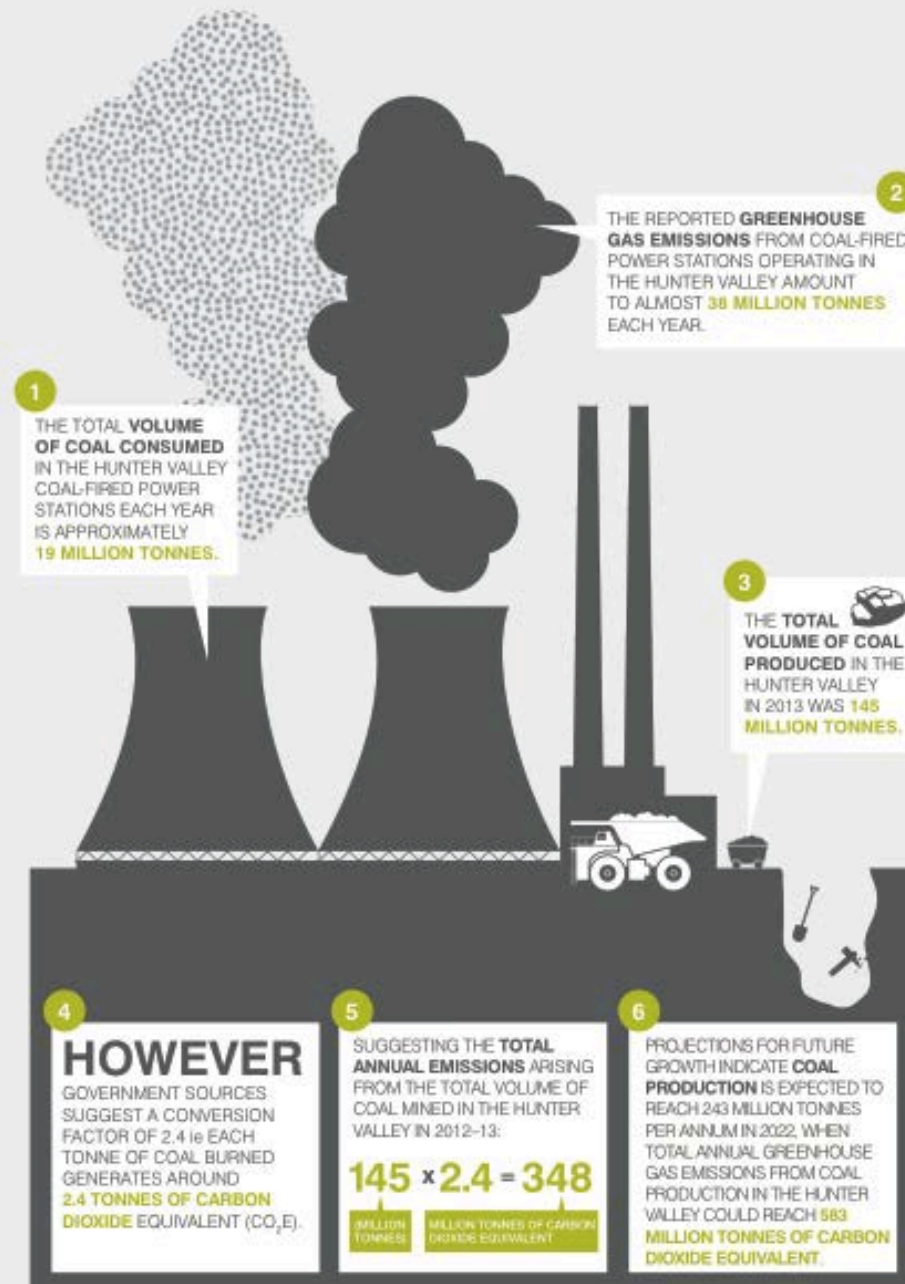
IMPACT ON HEALTH

ECONOMIC IMPACT FROM
PARTICLE POLLUTION
\$32.43M (IN 2013 AUD)
PER YEAR.

\$32.4
MILLION

Carbon emissions from Hunter Valley coal

HUNTER VALLEY COAL



Recommendations for action

- Ban on new coal projects
- Long term transition plan for HV in consultation with the community
- Health impact assessment of current projects to evaluate impacts and ongoing risks
- Comprehensive long term research project
- Stricter air quality standards – inadequate and not being enforced (cover coal trains, limit diesel emissions)
- Reform of planning laws
- Establish national EPA
- Mine fire suppression plans

Open Letter to the NSW Premier

- Calling for an end to coal in the Hunter – no new licences to be awarded
- Signatories include Professor Tim Flannery, Professor Fiona Stanley, Emeritus Professor David Shearman, Professor James Hansen, Professor Lidia Morawska, Michael Moore, Coral Levett, Dr Peter Tait, Dr Liz Hanna, Assoc Professor Peter Sainsbury, Professor Adrian Barnett

What else is possible?

- Transition is **inevitable**
- If the interests of the community are to be prioritised, preparations must **start NOW**
- Much energy can be replaced with renewable energy and energy efficiency
- Contracting coal production will allow other industries to expand
- Low carbon economy and society is **healthier, more sustainable, achievable**