



MEDIA RELEASE

Independent Expert Scientific Committee Advice Welcomed by Wallarah 2 Project

The Independent Expert Scientific Committee (IESC) advice released today (Monday 18 June 2018) will be considered by the Federal Minister for Environment and Energy in his forthcoming determination of the Wallarah 2 Coal Project under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The IESC gave advice at the draft Environment Impact Assessment phase of the Wallarah 2 Coal Project in May 2013. That advice was addressed in the final Environmental Impact Statement submitted for the Project later in that year and relevant to ongoing Project assessments.

The publication of the Bioregional Assessment for the Hunter sub-region, which was released on 1 June 2018 made it prudent for the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Energy to request a further review by IESC.

This means that all relevant information and assessments will be available to the Minister to assist the determination.

The IESC advice supports the robustness of the scientific investigations undertaken by Wallarah 2. It confirms the thoroughness and integrity of the assessment undertaken by NSW Department of Planning and Environment and the determination made by Planning Assessment Commission. It has recommended measures to support the development and review of the strategies, plans and programs required by the State consent conditions.

Peter Allonby, General Manager for Wallarah 2, has welcomed the advice and said the referral back to IESC was sensible given the release of the Bioregional Assessment and the ongoing consideration of water-related matters since the original IESC advice in 2013.

"It is pleasing to receive further support of the science. Any conditions attached to the EPBC determination are unlikely to have any material impact on the Project's viability." said Allonby.

ENDS

For further information contact Peter Allonby on (02) 4352 7500.

Background

The Wallarah 2 Coal Project was approved by the Planning & Assessment Commission in January this year. It includes the construction and operation of an underground coal mine and associated infrastructure to extract up to five million tonnes of high-quality thermal coal per year.