

Environment & Planning Committee Inquiry into Nuclear Prohibition in Victoria

Submission via email

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Dear Committee Members

Inquiry into removing prohibitions enacted by the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Act 1983

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to this inquiry. I also submitted my opinions to the 2019 Standing Committee on Environment and Energy in relation to the *Prerequisites for Nuclear Energy in Australia*. Accordingly, I have modified that in line for this inquiry's terms of reference which are extremely narrow and disappointing from this Victorian government.

Addressing the terms of reference:

- (1) investigate the potential for Victoria to contribute to global low carbon dioxide energy production through enabling exploration and production of uranium and thorium;*
- (2) identify economic, environmental and social benefits for Victoria, including those related to medicine, scientific research, exploration and mining;*
- (3) identify opportunities for Victoria to participate in the nuclear fuel cycle; and*
- (4) identify any barriers to participation, including limitations caused by federal or local laws and regulations.*

Introduction

I am an agriculture advocate living in Latrobe Valley at the hub of Victoria's power generation. Too many times poor planning decisions are contributing to significant negative consequences for health, environmental degradation, and economic, legal and social impacts.

As I have been part of a trio of investigative researchers interested in the goings on of Dr John White who headed up John Howard's Uranium Industry Framework and also travelled with John Howard to Washington to help set up the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership it should be imperative that this committee familiarise themselves with the background to the connections, legislation manipulation and proposed education propaganda. The succinct details can be found in Senator Milne's speech to the Senate on 4th December, 2006.

<https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22chamber%2Fhansards%2F2006-12-05%2F0017%22>

Dr John White, with the Nuclear Fuel Leasing Group, provided a submission to Uranium Mining and Processing and Nuclear Energy Review in 2006 which gives their insight 'why nuclear fuel leasing is both desirable and feasible.'

1. Introduction 1.1. This submission has been prepared by the Nuclear Fuel Leasing Group (NFLG) to the Uranium Mining and Processing and Nuclear Energy Review (UMPNER). The NFLG has four founding parties who are Dr John White, Mr David Pentz, Mr Daniel Poneman and Mr Michael Simpson.

These parties and their associates form an international group from Australia, the US and the UK. Over the past ten years they have worked together to find a way in which nuclear energy can play its part in supplying the world's energy needs without at the same time increasing the risks of nuclear weapons proliferation and environmental damage.

http://web.archive.org/web/20070831021553/http://www.pmc.gov.au/umpner/submissions/134_sub_umpner.pdf

Throughout this submission I also include links and excerpts to other relevant articles that I am a part of which are based on fact and give further background and history to the past intentions of lifting Victoria's nuclear prohibition on uranium and thorium. Likewise I have included comments from other documents where relevant which, surprisingly, undermines how the Victorian Government could possibly proceed with managing and regulating a nuclear industry.

The most recent and applicable link is my 2019 submission to the Senate Economic References Committee Inquiry into Regional Inequality in Australia which is relevant for the mining aspect of this Inquiry's TOR. Again, there is significant and important information regarding exploration & mining on private land, impacting surrounding communities, which should be factored into any government decision on the future of expanding a nuclear industry based on mining. Economic, social and legal complications form part on this submission based on mining.

'A government granted exploration licence accords a legal economic privilege to a speculative industry that subordinates existing economic enterprises, through occupation of private property, rendering landholders and communities subservient to the proponent in the absence of the right of veto. So, when a government can enact legislative change (Kennett 1997) to give mining, as a land use, priority and exemption rights over other land uses and other life sustaining resources (water) to facilitate investment will inevitably lead to personal and rural inequality not subjected to in urban areas.'...

Social justice has all but vanished when a government lawfully transfers the rights of the person to a multinational company to exploit and profit while positioning the health of the person and the environment to a distant and lower priority ranking. The transfer of wealth to polluters by governments elected to govern in the best interests of the people is the greatest scandal of our time.

[file:///C:/Users/A660/Downloads/Sub%20131%20-%20Tracey%20Anton%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/A660/Downloads/Sub%20131%20-%20Tracey%20Anton%20(1).pdf)

The Regional Inequality submission led to an unexpected chance (2hr notice) to sit at a Latrobe Valley panel hearing for regional inequality in Australia on the 21/11/2019. Transcript-

<https://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;db=COMMITTEES;id=committees/commsen/cee768d-147f-4c45-be2c-225bbb5c37e2/0006;query=Id%3A%22committees/commsen/cee768d-147f-4c45-be2c-225bbb5c37e2/0000%22>

1. Investigate the potential for Victoria to contribute to global low carbon dioxide energy production through enabling exploration and production of uranium and thorium;

Mining is such a significant part of our energy future but it is one that is often overlooked as to the impacts especially in the policy & risk assessment stage. The components for solar and wind need to be sourced from the raw product, as does nuclear. Their primary ore bases include quartz (silicon), iron (steel), bauxite (aluminium), zinc (cadmium), copper, rare earth materials, (REM), also known as rare earth elements (REE). Thorium is a by-product of REE recovery from the rare phosphate mineral, monazite, and is slightly radioactive having a small variable content as an oxide (REO) in monazite. Uranium can also be extracted as a by-product from rare earth elements as an unconventional resource but the main source of uranium, as a heavy metal, is found in most rock concentrations. Could this lifting of the prohibition on mining & processing of thorium, separate to uranium, be more to value add to existing mineral sands mining to pander to the mining industry as some of Gippsland's most viable & productive farmland is a source of thorium.

As the following 2014 excerpts show from *Independent Australia* online, thorium really is a significant target.

Bid to overturn the Prohibition on Mining Thorium in Victoria

Clearly, the nuclear lobby is desperate to claw back public confidence after the nosedive it took post-Fukushima. Enter thorium as uranium's 'new black'. As Noel Wauchope [reported](#) recently in Independent Australia:

'... thorium reactors are the latest flavour in nuclear power hype.'

There is no production of thorium in Australia but Australia (Victoria especially) is [ranked](#) as one of the richest sources in the world. Monazite, as a source of thorium, can be found in the Murray Valley and Gippsland and Otway Basins.

So what, exactly, is the stumbling block?

It's called the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Act 1983, which effectively prohibits the exploration and mining of thorium and uranium in Victoria.

It was then that I found a [submission](#) from the Minerals Council of Austral dated March 2012, which recommends the Victorian Government:

'Actively considers the removal of the prohibition on exploring for uranium.'

On checking with Victorian minister for energy and resources, [Nicholas Kotsiris](#), IA was assured that:

'The Victorian government has no plans to undertake a review of the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Act 1983 - s.5. The ban on the exploration for uranium or thorium remains in place.'

The Shadow Minister, [Lily D'Ambrosia](#), was just as reassuring:

'Victorian Labor is opposed to uranium/thorium exploration and mining in Victoria and we have no intention of changing that.'

Thorium-fuelled nuclear power

Then there's the ultimate wet dream of the thorium lobby — a thorium-fuelled nuclear power station drawing its water from that white elephant turned potential golden goose, the [Wonthaggi Desalination Plant](#).

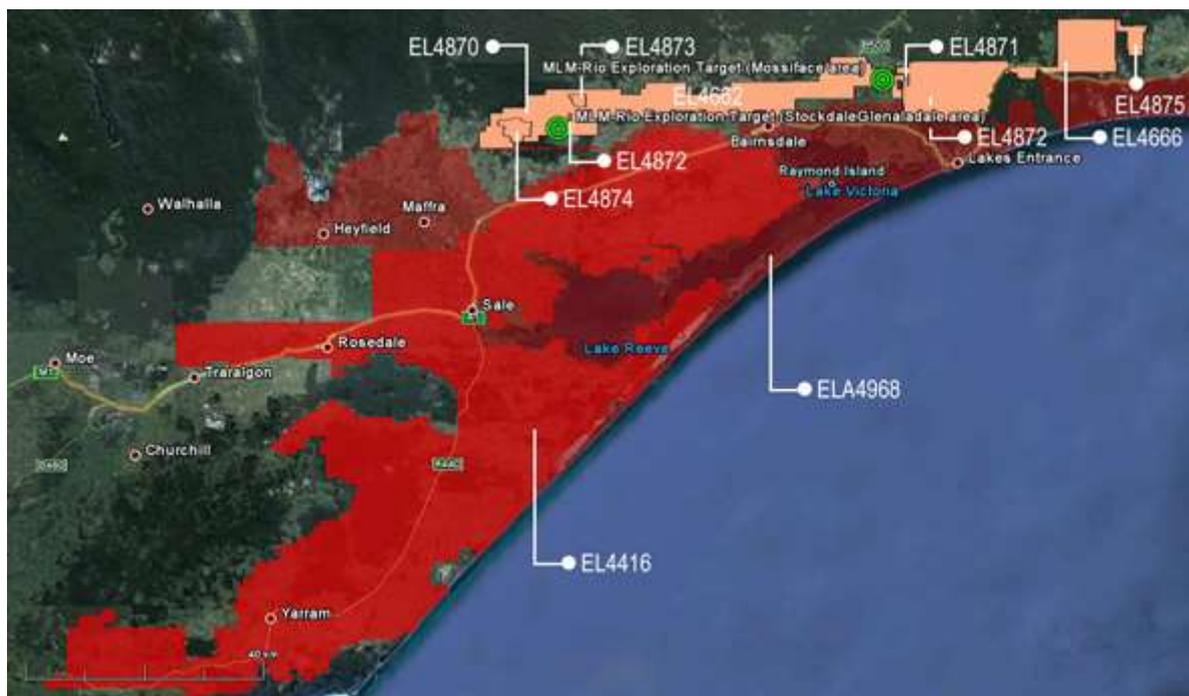
In an [article](#) in SBI Markets, dated 14 December, 2011, Sam Barden questions why the world's second largest producer of uranium has no nuclear power plants and asks whether

'Victoria's white elephant [the desal plant] might, in fact, be the site for Australia's first nuclear power station, and in so doing, create the grounds for a transparent, and dare I say exchange traded market in uranium and nuclear energy?'

Environmental filmmaker Peter Downey told Independent Australia that two unconnected electricians working on the desal plant confirmed that a cable had been laid in the trench to take power away to a potential gas or nuclear plant. And according to an article in the South Gippsland Sentinel Times on 7 November, 2006:

'Wonthaggi was named along with the Latrobe Valley, Avalon, Hastings, and [Portland](#), in a secret report to the Federal Government compiled by nuclear experts.'

<https://independentaustralia.net/environment/environment-display/the-liberal-partys-nuclear-dreams-the-strange-case-of-dr-john-white-and-ignite,6270>



All tenements to the north of EL4416 are prospective for heavy mineral sands.

Interestingly, I totally agree with the following paragraph from the Minerals Council of Australia 2017 report, *Environmental Impacts of Uranium Mining in Australia History, Progress and Current Practice*,

'The finding of this review is clear: the nature of mining practice and regulation are the key determinants of environmental outcomes. The mineral in question plays a far lesser role if any. All mining practices demand proper scrutiny, regulation and the evolution and adoption of leading practices to ensure adequate planning for environmental protection and clear forward liabilities for the management of the site through operations, progressive rehabilitation, closure, and monitoring phases. Regulators should apply scrutiny dispassionately and even-handedly.'

https://minerals.org.au/sites/default/files/Environmental%20impacts%20of%20uranium%20mining%20in%20Australia_May%202017_WEB.pdf p5

However, with my work for mining reform I do find the above excerpt to be a cursory attempt at improving uranium's image. While my experience and input for this Inquiry is based on the mining of mineral sands, which is the source origin of thorium, the Minerals Council just put their foot in it with their following observation from the same 2017 report.

*Currently, China has an uncontrolled illegal market segment that supplies 30 per cent of global rare earth demand. The materials are mined with no license or royalties paid, and with no regard for environmental impact. The environmental impacts include the **release of heavy-metal contaminated waste water and leaching solution into the environment and soil erosion, air pollution, water pollution, biodiversity loss and human health impacts**. Every tonne of ore is estimated to result in the **environmental release of 1,000 tonnes of wastewater containing heavy metals and leaching solution**. It has been estimated that the environmental remediation costs of this unregulated practice will **exceed** the market value of the mined products.*

https://minerals.org.au/sites/default/files/Environmental%20impacts%20of%20uranium%20mining%20in%20Australia_May%202017_WEB.pdf p15

If only the author of this report had taken note of what is happening in our own state of Victoria from the Douglas Mineral Sands mine operated by Iluka. This mine has been the subject of significantly lobbying in 2015 by the impacted landowners and Landcare group only to be fobbed off by the relevant Victoria departments - nothing illegal, apparently fully compliant but clearly no different to what is going on in China.

- 1) Pit 23 has been used to receive radioactive waste from the Hamilton Mineral Separation Plant (MSP) and the work plan was changed to exempt Iluka from complying with the original EES by which the waste was to be co-disposal and buried at depth. Hence a massive radioactive dump has been established, without any risk assessment as per geo-technical and hydrological studies in accordance with ARPANSA and ICPR guidelines, on the risk of leachate from pit 23 to ground water streams and hence to the Glenelg River and the Douglas chain of significant wetlands. Pit 23 is on a sand base but is un-bunded. How did Iluka get approvals to use pit 23 like this without a thorough independent risk assessment? What Iluka is doing in pit 23 is not consistent with what the Minister signed off in the 2009 Work Plan variation.

http://www.epa-inquiry.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/329409/Kanagulk-Landcare-Group.pdf

The objects of the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Act 1983 Act are ***'to protect the health, welfare and safety of the people of Victoria and to limit deterioration of the environment in which they dwell by prohibiting the establishment of nuclear activities and by regulating the possession of certain nuclear materials, in a manner consistent with and conducive to assisting the Commonwealth of Australia in meeting its international nuclear non-proliferation objectives.'*** If the current Act cannot protect rural and regional communities what hope have we got if prohibition is lifted?

My immediate concern is the mining of radioactive material from mineral sands. The real problem - work plan variations & lack of rehabilitation are all condoned by Earth Resource dept, Health & Human Services dept and Victorian agency EPA? It appears when it becomes complicated that the above entities accommodate while ignoring compliance, enforcement & basic human rights of the surrounding community.

These depts can justify their ‘do nothing’ approach based on the application of legal advice for what they are or not responsible for in their relevant acts, codes and regulations in contrast **to the acts being flawed.**

Interestingly, the timing of this inquiry coincides with a new mineral sands mine in Gippsland currently going through the Environmental Effects Statement (EES) process. Of course the company would like to value add on the thorium aspect but is prohibited under the Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Act 1983. Gippsland’s major food bowl is 400mt downwind of the Kalbar mineral sands mine¹ with drinking water storage 3.6km also downwind.

Fingerboards Mineral Sands Project Information Sheet – Draft Radiation Study

<https://www.fingerboardsproject.com.au/assets/files/2019/technical-studies/5-radiation.pdf>

This project has already been riddled with changes and area variations while the EES is in process with Mine-Free Glenaladale’s Fact sheet outlining how inappropriate a mine site in this area would be.

Dust contamination of pastures, crops and domestic and stock water is inevitable within several kilometres of any open-cut mine. Bioaccumulation of heavy metals in soils, pastures, crops and stock is a common problem with persistent dust contamination. Kalbar acknowledges it can’t eliminate all the dust.

<http://minefreeglenaladale.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Info-Sheet-Mar-2019.pdf>

A Parliamentary Inquiry in 2011 made 50 recommendations to overhaul the EES process and, according to a recent Auditor-General’s report, none of the recommendations about the process have been implemented. But the government response was also in the beginning stages of deregulation of industry and reducing red and green tape in the early 2012. The Victorian Government is leaving itself open to litigation when it can be proved that its primary assessment mechanism to ensure the health & safety of the person and environment is flawed.

The report of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee (ENRC) Inquiry into Victoria’s Environment Effects Statement (EES) process has recommended comprehensive reform, noting that the need for reform is both widely recognised and overdue. The Inquiry determined that reform would establish much-needed legislative clarity and provide a more robust basis for protecting Victoria’s environment.

<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/303-enrc/inquiry-into-the-environment-effects-statement-process-in-victoria-sp-515>

Who in Earth Resources has the technical expertise, knowledge and legal qualifications to provide the much needed skills for risk analysis, management, policy proposals and legislation reform?

There are publically available reports about geo-technical failures of the Latrobe Valley open cut coal mines concluding that the relevant resources department did not have the internal capacity and experts. The following is from the 2008 Mining Warden- Yallourn Mine Batter Failure Inquiry.

¹ <https://www.fingerboardsproject.com.au/>

There was a major variation to the Mining License in 2002. The new conditions included elements such as provision for an annual peer geotechnical review and this review was to report to the Environmental Review Committee (ERC). It is considered the ERC does not have the requisite expertise to either fully understand or question a peer geotechnical review report. Similarly any dewatering and groundwater monitoring were also to report to the ERC. It is noted that the ERC included representatives from Southern Rural Water. However given the discussions elsewhere in this report about the geotechnical and hydrogeological models and the implications for batter stability it is also questionable whether the ERC has the requisite expertise to effectively deal with the geotechnical and groundwater issues in regards to the Yallourn Mine stability.

It is questionable whether the DPI has the requisite skills or can acquire and maintain a high enough level of skill in this booming mining environment to adequately manage and review complex technical areas, given the failure of the system that has occurred in relation to the NE Batter.

The question then is how can the government effectively manage these issues?

4. Technical

The issues exposed by the NE Batter failure highlights the need for the mine and their advisers to:

- (e) The last recommendation is perhaps more nebulous but is probably the most important. It is critical for maintenance of future stability in mining that the historic experience and understanding is not lost but effectively captured in the new and evolving models of understanding.

<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/papers/govpub/VPARL2006-10No156.pdf> p103-4

Until Earth Resources Department can prove that they have the required prerequisites to actually plan and manage mining safely the so-called social, economic benefits are only subjective.

2. Identify economic, environmental and social benefits for Victoria, including those related to medicine, scientific research, exploration and mining;

Economic –

Whilst the argument is all about base load generation as the reasoning to need nuclear, the market is also moving towards micro grid infrastructure, therefore decentralising the load capacity that solar and wind can manage. Can this argument to create a nuclear industry then be justified in the absence of decentralised consideration? If the scale of the electricity grid and the arguments for nuclear are based on a centralised system only, then this inquiry will be seriously misinformed.

As with any new power generation work opportunities come throughout the whole cycle that would contribute to gross regional product & more with value adding. However, whilst exploration/mining is a viable stand-alone industry it does, however, come at the expense of existing tourism, community renewal and agricultural enterprises as most mining is in rural/regional areas. What is more devastating for the landowners is the fact that legislation is set up that the landowner has no rights over the land they enjoy with exploration, renewal & mining potentially holding a binding tenement for 20-30 years noted in the Introduction in my *Regional Inequality* submission.

[file:///C:/Users/A660/Downloads/Sub%20131%20-%20Tracey%20Anton%20\(1\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/A660/Downloads/Sub%20131%20-%20Tracey%20Anton%20(1).pdf)

All thermal energy generation has an effect and cost on land use changes (agricultural land to industrial), conflict from over extraction of groundwater, buffer zones; land acquisition, accessing insurance for the project and those living nearby to name a few. It would be expected that significant costs would be passed on to consumers. To what end would be dependent on taxpayer investment funding research & development, construction/wage costs, transmission and distribution and decommissioning to name the obvious. The legacy of nuclear waste & its storage is a whole other complex issue which involves huge economics that could not be feasibly quantified because it proceeds generational lifetimes. How can Government expect society to have confidence in effective nuclear energy policy when underground storage of High Level Waste (HLW) is still being investigated?

Some countries are at the preliminary stages of their consideration of disposal for ILW and HLW, whilst others, such as Finland and Sweden, have made good progress in the selection of publicly acceptable sites for the future disposal of radioactive waste.

<https://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/nuclear-fuel-cycle/nuclear-waste/storage-and-disposal-of-radioactive-waste.aspx>

'What other private commercial entity can enter your land without your permission for the sole purpose of making a profit and, adding insult to injury, eventually leave your property worthless?'
- John Nader QC (The Land Article, 'Mining Acts Need Severe Surgery')

Environmental

Even though the major consideration for all governments is one of attracting job security for a region the balance between nuclear impacts and benefits cannot be determined based on the existing flawed lack of full cycle analysis where the environment is given no monetary or capital worth to those other industry dependent on the environment's health.

This is relevant as the World Nuclear Association state that nuclear power produce zero greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) for power generation technology. This is not in consideration of the full cycle from mining the ore, the quality & grade of the ore, increased processing of lesser quality ore, production, through to the end waste product. GHG emissions occur at the mining stage, transportation, processing before it even gets to the fuel cycles.

But the elephant in the room is its high water use so in an increasingly variable climate mining for thorium & uranium, processing, generating electricity via a nuclear reactor and storage would need to take precedent over available water resources regardless of drought or fires and that is not acceptable. Had decentralisation of the grid not been an option or technology advances in solar & wind then nuclear economics may have stacked up better but never enough to outweigh the consequences of rendering farmland into waste pits, impacting our water resources into perpetuity and leaving a hazard waste dump as a forever legacy.

The following paragraphs come from a 2013 NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE REPORT

***Nuclear waste disposal.** A process of broad community consultation, sound engineering practice and careful construction with rigorous regulatory support has been shown as the best way to manage the challenge of safe permanent nuclear waste disposal in other countries. One well developed model of sound political and technological practice, from which Australia could take guidance, is that of Finland.*

***Waste disposal and plant decommissioning costs.** The Conference respected the proposition, adopted by other nuclear nations, that the long term costs of high level nuclear waste disposal and eventual plant de-commissioning be provided for by a levy on the wholesale price of nuclear generated electricity, accumulated over the plant life.*

<https://www.atse.org.au/research-and-policy/publications/publication/nuclear-energy-for-australia-conference-report/>

In consideration of the inability of federal and state governments to resolve how to decommission and rehabilitate a coal pit void how they could plan for the challenges to decommission a nuclear reactor with the economic, legal and social implications while being transparent and accountable to the people would be a planning nightmare. It is not good enough to transport asbestos by road to appropriate sites because it is a hazardous material with all sorts of arguments posed of potential transport mishaps so I look forward to hearing how transporting nuclear waste will be deemed safer.

3. Identify opportunities for Victoria to participate in the nuclear fuel cycle

Interesting I wrote an online article about this particular issue in May 2016 at Independent Australia,²

White's most grandiose venture was to [produce nuclear energy](#) for the world by turning uranium into nuclear fuel rods, leasing them and bringing back the waste (including plutonium from the U.S. weapons industry). It's interesting that Ignite holds leases for [thorium](#) adjacent to the iconic [Ninety Mile Beach](#) in Gippsland. [Thorium](#) – uranium's young sister – is hailed by nuclear proponents as the green energy source of the future.

*Only problem is, its exploration and mining is banned in Victoria. Bizarrely, when IA's Sandi Keane and I [reported](#) on White's involvement in Ignite ('Victorian government ignores Gippsland gasfield concerns'), the Minerals Council of Victoria rather stupidly tried to get the article pulled. They claimed we'd got the WRONG John White. We didn't. It was a desperate act by MCA. You can find the whole story [here](#). **It seems the reason they wanted us to pull the article was because they'd applied to the former State LNP Government to have the legislation banning exploration and mining of thorium and uranium repealed, and didn't want White's name mentioned.** Welcome to the shadowy world of Dr White.*

In 2006, the Standing Committee on Industry and Resources tabled its report on the Inquiry into developing Australia's non-fossil fuel energy industry *Australia's uranium: Greenhouse friendly fuel for an energy hungry world*. Chapter 12 consisted of Value Adding:

A 'Nuclear Fuel Cycle Complex' and fuel leasing

² <https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/turnbulls-innovation-and-ideasboom-is-to-flog-fossil-fuels-kaboom,9038>

12.81 *The Australian Nuclear Association (ANA) proposed the eventual development of a 'cradle to grave' concept for Australia's uranium, which would involve the construction of an 'Integrated Nuclear Fuel Cycle Complex' (NFC Complex) in Australia. The concept would:*

... take Australia's uranium through the front end of the nuclear fuel cycle to the production of fuel elements which would be leased to overseas nuclear power programs. The spent fuel would be returned to Australia, stored, reprocessed and the unused uranium and plutonium recycled into MOX fuel for lease to overseas nuclear plants. The high level waste would be converted into Synroc and placed in a deep repository in the most suitable part of Australia.

https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=isr/uranium/report/chapter12.htm

Are we returning to this concept 14 years too late where the states need to lift nuclear prohibition for the mining of the required ore to enable the above concept to more than a thought bubble?

If Victoria was to participate in the nuclear fuel cycle, that would be some serious transport by sea of radioactive material from wherever in the world, transported overland (by rail/road) then to one hell of a storage pit in the middle of Australia. What potential benefits could this be? Knowing that we have no nuclear industry we are, therefore, not a significant player in the industry which means the technical experience needed to create and maintain a nuclear power industry is too far off to build a nuclear facility. Given the focus is/should be on providing electricity generation for Victoria at what time frame could this occur is the big question. To become part of the nuclear fuel cycle is quite absurd when we consider these basic prerequisites.

We already have plenty of uranium but it is the thorium that is in contention here. The issue of Australia contributing to the nuclear fuel cycle is dependent on strip mining viable farmland in areas deemed important for Victoria's future food security. Jaclyn Symes, Minister for Agriculture, Regional Development and Resources, made the following comments in her Foreword of the 2019 report, *Accelerating growth for the Gippsland food and fibre industry*.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed and passionate to support the growth of Gippsland communities – from our paddocks to our local businesses, we know the importance of investing in what matters most to locals...

We have set an ambitious target to increase food and fibre exports to \$20 billion by 2030 by improving market access, supporting regional businesses and cutting red tape...

The future of the sector also requires a partnership to respond to the challenges of fire, flood and drought...

<https://assets.kpmg/content/dam/kpmg/au/pdf/2019/accelerating-growth-gippsland-food-fibre-industry.pdf>

There is no potential benefit in pretending that agricultural can co-exist with mining when mining, under current relevant Victorian acts, prioritises mining over every other land use and water access rights through straight out bullying, unjust application of flawed legislation, irresponsible planning and management of our water resources. The Kalbar mining project covers a multiply catchment area that will be bled dry of our precious water resource over the next 30-50 years just to fill pit voids for rehabilitation of Latrobe Valley open cut coal mines let alone more mines to rehabilitate in the future.

4. Identify any barriers to participation, including limitations caused by federal or local laws and regulations.

As noted throughout my submission, mining of nuclear materials and the available water resource is the real issue. Will Government choose mining expansion of mineral sands to the detriment of agriculture? Meeting our future energy needs will be expensive but unless government and industry stakeholders can be more transparent & accountable to the people my opinion is that the nuclear industry has missed the boat. As an add on to the current energy mix in the absence of a nuclear technical workforce and the ongoing damage that mining is causing investment can be better utilised for grid infrastructure.

Community engagement will always be a challenge when Fed and State governments have poor regulatory oversight and the environmental is not accorded the protection its needs even though an adequate regulatory framework is supposedly in place. The public have good reason to not trust their elected leaders through past mismanagement of project development and gaining acceptance of a nuclear future would seem a long way off.

Yours sincerely

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