



# The Sustainable Engineering Society

...engineering in harmony with ecology



ENGINEERS AUSTRALIA

22 December 2014

Sustainable Engineering Society  
Engineering House  
11 National Circuit  
BARTON ACT 2600  
info@seng.org.au

The Hon Campbell Newman MP  
Premier of Queensland  
PO Box 15185  
City East  
QUEENSLAND 4002

**Re: Government Funding for Adani Coal Projects**

The Sustainable Engineering Society (SENG), a Technical Society of Engineers Australia, is extremely disappointed at your Government's decision to spend tax payers' funds supporting a proposed commercial coal operation in Queensland.

While supporting infrastructure investment is a critical and important role of government, this investment should provide as broad a public benefit as possible and serve wider productivity, economic, social or environmental aims. Funding directed to individual commercial coal mining operations fails the majority of these simple tests.

As an organisation dedicated to advancing sustainability initiatives through engineering practice, we believe that an investment of this scale would be far more productively employed directed toward clean energy projects and innovative energy generation activities.

While investment in 'green energy' and low carbon generation options are often misrepresented and maligned as fringe issues, this is far from the case; the case-in-point being the Australian Government's Clean Energy Finance Corporation (CEFC). The CEFC has proven phenomenally successful in providing a commercial return on financing innovative clean energy projects.

The wide range of projects co-funded by the CEFC provide the sort of success that narrow subsidies and funding, such as that proposed for the Adani mine project, have historically failed to realise.

In many cases, CEFC projects are also providing struggling regional communities with a viable economic future. Very often, investment of this kind means the difference between a dying regional economy and a thriving regional community.

The CEFC experience has proven beyond doubt that it is commercially viable for targeted co-investment in innovative technologies to deliver energy productivity, energy efficiency, and environmental, social and bottom-line financial outcomes, all the while earning a commercial rate of return. This is the kind of high value-add investment that Queensland should be aspiring to.

Adani's proposal has been rejected by major international banks, which have deemed the carbon emission and reputational risks of investment too high. The United States and China have just signed a treaty committing both countries to cutting greenhouse gas emissions. This will further increase the risk that the Adani mine, and associated rail and port facilities, will become stranded assets.

SENG recommends that the Queensland Government develops and implements a comprehensive plan to assist the Queensland economy to transition to more sustainable industries, such as renewable energy. Investing in advanced clean energy technology will place Queensland and our engineers at the forefront of a rapidly expanding global industry. This would be true and lasting investment in Queensland's future.

SENG is committed to creating a meaningful dialogue with all sides of politics on this critical issue, and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss our views with you or your representative. We can be contacted by email at [info@seng.org.au](mailto:info@seng.org.au) or our Executive Officer can be contacted by telephone on 02 6270 6108.

Thank you for considering our views. I look forwarding to discussing this matter further with you or your representative.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Alice Howe**  
SENG National Board Chair  
On behalf of the SENG National Board



**Sandy Stewart**  
SENG Queensland Branch Chair  
On behalf of the SENG QLD Branch