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Can you name the proposed Galilee Basin mega-mines with all of their approvals?

29 JULY 2015

You might already know that five mega coal mines have been proposed for Queensland's Galilee Basin, but can you name which ones have all of their State Government approvals?

The answer is none.

EDO Qld is often contacted about this issue, particularly after inaccurate or contradicting reports in the media. So we thought we would provide a brief overview for you.

The five mega-mines proposed for the Galilee Basin are Alpha, Kevin's Corner, Carmichael, China Stone, Galilee South and China First.

Each mine likely requires dozens of approvals, some more significant than others.

In our view, a mine is not approved until it requires no further approvals to commence the mining activities on a commercial scale.

What is required for approval?

No coal mine can commence in Queensland without first obtaining both:

- an Environmental Authority under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (Qld) (EP Act); and
- a Mining Lease under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989* (Qld) (MR Act).

We note that all of the Galilee Basin projects are 'coordinated projects' under the *State Development Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (Qld) (SDPWO Act) and therefore also require approval from the Coordinator-General.

This gives the Coordinator-General the power to impose conditions on any Environmental Authority and Mining Lease, but the Coordinator-General approval does not grant the Environmental Authority and the Mining Lease.

Accordingly, even after the Coordinator-General's approval, commercial mining operations cannot commence without separate approval of an Environmental Authority and Mining Lease.

(Details of recently granted Environmental Authorities can be found [here](#) and details of recently granted Mining Leases can be found [here](#). The departments also hold registers of all approvals which can be searched).

Which of the mines require no further approvals to commence mining activities?

We have assessed the status of approval for each of the Galilee Basin projects against each of the Acts mentioned above, based on publicly available information.

	State Development Approval (SDPWO Act)	State Environmental Authority (EP Act)	State Mining Lease (MR Act)
Alpha	Approved 29/04/12	Approved*	Awaiting Approval
Kevin's Corner	Approved 30/05/12	Awaiting Approval*	Awaiting Approval*
Carmichael	Approved 07/05/14	Awaiting Approval*	Awaiting Approval*
China Stone	Awaiting Approval	Awaiting Approval	Awaiting Approval
Galilee South	Approved 02/12/14	Awaiting Approval	Awaiting Approval
China First	Approved 09/08/13	Awaiting Approval	Awaiting Approval

*Subject to legal challenge

Our analysis finds these five mega-mines have been approved by the State Government with respect to approval

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under the *State Development Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (Qld).

However, only one of the mega-mines has the state approval of the Environment Authority, and that is subject to a legal challenge in the Queensland Supreme Court and currently awaiting judgement.

None of the mega-mines have the state approval of the Mining Lease, which would be required, at a minimum, to commence mining operations.

Accordingly, it is accurate to say that none of the aforementioned proposed mines in the Galilee Basin are approved.

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