

Spotlight on Newman as Bligh saves Nature Refuge from Palmer Mine

Friday March 23rd 2012

Greenpeace today welcomed the announcement from Anna Bligh that she would protect nature refuges from mining, including the stunning Bimblebox nature refuge in the desert uplands region of central Queensland.

"This is welcome act of leadership to protect some of Queensland's natural living treasures from the devastating impacts of open-cut mining", said Greenpeace campaigner, John Hepburn.

"The Bimblebox nature refuge is an important ecological refuge that is home to a number of threatened ecosystems. It is ludicrous that nature refuges like this are not protected from mining".

The announcement by Anna Bligh puts pressure on LNP leader Campbell Newman, whose biggest donor, Clive Palmer, is proposing to build a massive open cut coal mine on top of the Bimblebox nature refuge.

Earlier this week, in response to a Lock the Gate survey, Campbell Newman made a commitment that if he wins the election, mining would not be allowed in high conservation value areas but has so far failed to clarify if this would include Bimblebox, even though it has high conservation values.

"The spotlight is now on Campbell Newman to rule out giving special exemptions to his biggest donor – Clive Palmer," said Hepburn.

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Background information:

Clive Palmer's Waratah coal is proposing to build the "China First" coal mine (also known as the "Galilee Coal Project" on top of the Bimblebox nature refuge. If built, it would produce 40 million tonnes of coal per annum and would be twice as big as the biggest coal mine currently operating in Australia. Greenpeace and many other environmental groups have been extremely concerned about this proposal due to the precedent it would set for destroying nature refuges, as well as for the climate change impacts of the mine.

Waratah coal website: <http://www.waratahcoal.com/>

Bimblebox nature refuge website: http://bimblebox.org/?page_id=2

Analysis of the climate impacts of the China First mine: <http://www.greenpeace.org/australia/en/news/climate/Mega-mine-Mega-disaster/>