

Super-pollutant mine significantly underestimates emissions: Hail Creek coal mine

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[The Superpower Institute's](#) **Chief Scientist and Emeritus Professor Peter Rayner**, a world-leading atmospheric physicist and pioneer in the global measurement of methane, is commenting on the decision by the Queensland Government to approve the extension of the Hail Creek coal mine.

"Methane is a super-pollutant – 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide, and is responsible for a third of recent global warming.

"This mine is the third highest methane emitter under the Australian Safeguard Mechanism (SGM).

"However, evidence over many years suggests that Hail Creek's self-reported emissions under the SGM are far too low. Two major peer reviewed studies suggested emissions much higher than reported. One of these studies was completed with direct measurement of nearby concentrations from an aircraft, the gold standard for independent estimates of emissions.

"Extending Hail Creek locks in significant emissions for decades to come – which are currently underreported. This endangers pathways to net zero and hence Australia's compliance with the Paris Agreement.

"Australia's emissions monitoring network must include a mix of independent ground-based, in situ, and remote sensing, along with satellite measurements to ensure the integrity and accuracy of decisions relating to methane emissions.

"The economics of an extension such as this would be in question if the Australian government adequately priced pollution, including fugitive emissions.

"The Superpower Institute continues to call for the [**Polluter Pays Levy \(PPL\)**](#), which is a levy on companies that extract or import fossil fuels that are consumed in Australia."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Currently, Australia's National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Scheme (NGERS) relies on self-reported data from major emitters, using emissions factors based on activity levels like the amount of coal mined, or on sparse and nontransparent local measurements. This approach creates significant risk of inaccuracy.

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About the Superpower Institute

The Superpower Institute's purpose is to help Australia seize the immense economic opportunities of the post-carbon world. With unparalleled renewable energy resources and our 'clever country' scientific and engineering capabilities, Australia is perfectly positioned to be a green export superpower in the world of net zero emissions.

The Institute specialises in the policy settings and market incentives needed to make Australia an economic superpower and provides practical knowledge to governments and industry to realise this opportunity.

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