

## Advice to decision maker on coal mining project

**Proposed action: Sonoma Coal Mine Extension - Diversion of Coral Creek, Collinsville, Queensland  
(EPBC 2011/5800)**

<b>Requesting agency</b>	Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
<b>Date of request</b>	03 December 2012
<b>Date request accepted</b>	03 December 2012
<b>Summary of request</b>	<p>The Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (the department) is currently assessing the proposed project in accordance with the provisions of the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (the EPBC Act).</p> <p>The department advises the Independent Expert Scientific Committee on Coal Seam Gas and Large Coal Mining Development (the committee) of an opportunity to comment on finalised preliminary documentation. Specifically, the department seeks the advice of the committee on whether:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the relevant regulatory processes of the Queensland Government are adequate to ensure the continued provision of ecological services by Coral Creek upstream and downstream of the proposed diversion; or</li> <li>2. additional conditions are required to ensure the continued provision of ecological services by Coral Creek upstream and downstream of the proposed diversion.</li> </ol> <p>The finalised preliminary documentation is publically available and the review period has finished. The department requested for advice to be provided as soon as possible.</p>
<b>Advice</b>	<p><i>It is suggested that this advice be read in conjunction with the committee's advice on the Drake Coal Mine Project.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The committee notes that advising on Queensland Government regulatory processes is outside the scope of the committee but advice is provided of a scientific nature on the potential impacts from the proposed Coral Creek diversion.</li> <li>2. The committee noted the proposed extension of the Sonoma mine is relatively small scale when compared to the existing mine, and therefore, the potential impacts from this extension on water resources are anticipated to be minor.</li> <li>3. The Interim Independent Expert Scientific Committee had previously requested</li> </ol>

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Geoscience Australia to provide additional analysis on this project. Geoscience Australia's analysis concluded "detailed information on the hydraulic and hydrologic impacts of the diversion of Coral Creek was available within the provided documentation and the modelling presented suggests that the detrimental upstream and downstream surface water effects are unlikely on the basis of proposed design parameters." Based on the information available and Geoscience Australia's analysis, the committee considers that surface water impacts from the proposal are likely to be transitory and manageable if the proposed design parameters are implemented.

4. Subject to the full implementation of the management plan and enforcement of approval conditions, the committee considers there is a reasonable basis to consider that the ecological service provided by Coral Creek, upstream and downstream of the proposed diversion should be able to be maintained.

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<b>Date of advice</b>	20 December 2012
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