

Planning for a sustainable future

BHP Billiton Iron Ore submits Strategic Environmental Assessment



A regional assessment process to look at the big picture

BHP Billiton Iron Ore has lodged a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) with the Commonwealth and State environmental authorities over its potential future operations in the central Pilbara.

The SEA is the first of its kind in the Australian mining industry and will provide a framework to consider the regional impacts of the Company's potential environmental footprint over the next 50 to 100 years.

It outlines where iron ore developments may occur in future so any potential impacts on the environment can be assessed and adequately managed for future generations.

Simply put we believe the assessment will enable the Company, Commonwealth and State regulators to

focus on the key environmental issues and for those issues to be managed effectively over the life of development.

Interested stakeholders have the opportunity to comment on the application and supporting assessments prior to its consideration by the Commonwealth and WA environmental regulators.

Part of the Pilbara – we're here for the long term

The SEA will improve the ability of BHP Billiton Iron Ore and other stakeholders to plan for future operations.

The Company has been operating in the Pilbara region for almost 50 years and our iron ore resource underpins an expectation that we can continue to mine for the next 100 plus years.

Extensive environmental knowledge from studies and research undertaken over that almost 50 year period has enabled the Company to develop a unique understanding of our current environmental impacts, how these impacts might continue in the future and the appropriate best practice management strategies.

The SEA demonstrates the Company's ongoing commitment to the Pilbara over the long term.

What it means to our environment

The area under assessment includes a 50 kilometre radius around BHP Billiton Iron Ore's proposed future developments. The assessment also considers reasonably foreseeable developments by third party iron ore producers.

The SEA will enable the assessment of environmental issues at a regional scale and ensure that the important environmental matters are managed effectively over the life of development.

We believe the strategic environmental assessment will deliver better environmental outcomes.

Opportunity for public comment

BHP Billiton Iron Ore invites interested parties to comment on the assessment documents during the public comment periods detailed below.

The public comment period for the Commonwealth assessment process commences on 21 March 2016 for six weeks (closing 2 May).

The public comment period for the State Environmental Protection Authority assessment process commences 21 March and will run for 12 weeks closing 13 June 2016.

Key checks and balances will remain

The SEA process retains all of the essential environmental protection measures that are present in a project by project environmental assessment process. The SEA must meet the same assessment criteria and the Minister will set conditions, some of which will require BHP Billiton Iron Ore to undertake environmental monitoring, reporting and audits to ensure that the conditions and commitments agreed to by the Company are being met.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment is not a guarantee of BHP Billiton investment approval to develop and execute greenfield or significant expansion projects. Production output and future investment decisions will continue to be determined by a range of factors such as market conditions.

Where do I send my comments?

Your feedback is welcome and can be addressed to:

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