

## Shenhua addresses IESC Submission

Shenhua Watermark notes the recent release of the Independent Expert Scientific Committee (IESC) Advice on the Watermark Coal Project. The Advice dates back to May 2013 and significant work has been undertaken since then by Shenhua Watermark to ensure concerns raised by the IESC were adequately addressed.

Commenting, Shenhua Watermark Project Manager Paul Jackson said: "Shenhua Watermark has the highest confidence in the Groundwater Impact Assessment and Surface Water Impact Assessment which is one of the most extensive ever conducted for a coal mining EIS in the Gunnedah Basin of NSW. The volume of data collected surpasses any project in the region and the quality of this data meets or exceeds the standards required to confidently assess the

impact of the project on the groundwater and surface water regime.

"Shenhua Watermark has worked closely with and responded to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPAC) regarding the IESC advice on the Watermark Coal Project and following subsequent consultation with the Department of the Environment (formerly SEWPAC) during the Project's Response to Submissions (RTS) phase, the issues raised by the IESC have been answered in detail and no further responses have been requested by the Department of Environment.

"Shenhua Watermark considers that an appropriate degree of salinity assessment has been conducted for the Project, in line with IESC's recommendation.

To reinforce this, Shenhua Watermark integrated the surface and groundwater salinity data and models to provide a holistic salt balance that conforms to the IESC guidelines.

"The total average salt load released offsite in surface runoff and long term seepage will not be significantly increased by the Project and will not significantly impact existing agricultural enterprises beyond the conditions currently experienced.

"The RTS includes more than 120 pages of additional detailed response to all issues raised in respect of groundwater and surface water. It provides further clarity on the original baseline groundwater and surface water data that was included in the EIS and used in the modelling and re-confirms the veracity of the conclusions that have been made."