

9 February 2026

To: Department of Environment and Heritage

Re: Great Koala National Park Sterilising Mineral Deposits

Email: gknp@environment.nsw.gov.au

Introduction

The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC) welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the NSW Government's proposal to establish the Great Koala National Park (GKNP).

About AMEC

The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC) is the national peak industry body representing over 600 mining and mineral exploration companies and associated service providers across Australia, with more than 60 member companies actively exploring, mining and developing projects in NSW.

The mining and exploration industry makes a critical contribution to the Australian economy. In 2024/2025, these companies collectively paid \$3.7 billion in royalties and other taxes paid to the NSW Government.

Concerns regarding the Great Koala National Park Proposal

- Exclusion of the mining and exploration sector from the Industry Advisory Panel, and therefore consultation
- Potential loss of access to highly prospective mineral areas
- Declaring a National Park would permanently sterilise these opportunities
- Impact on investment certainty and regional economies

Exclusion of the mining and exploration sector from the Industry Advisory Panels

Three advisory panels have been established to meet regularly throughout the assessment process to provide input on the assessment process and creation of the park.

They are named:

- Great Koala National Park Aboriginal Advisory Panel
- Great Koala National Park Community Advisory Panel
- Great Koala National Park Industry Advisory Panel

The Mining and Exploration industry has not been invited to attend the industry advisory panel, whose members include representatives from workers' unions, Forestry Associations, and Industry representatives, despite being directly affected by the proposal.

Mineral prospectivity of the proposed park area

The NSW Mid North Coast lies within the New England Orogen, a geologically complex and mineral-rich region prospective for copper, gold, silver, tin, tungsten, bismuth, lead, zinc and antimony.

Several exploration licences and applications within the proposed park boundary target antimony, a critical mineral essential to defence, energy storage, electronics and fire-retardant applications. See Appendix A for impacted leases.

Policy alignment and land use consequences

Once land is gazetted as a national park, mineral exploration and mining are permanently prohibited, extinguishing future exploration optionality. This outcome conflicts with national and state critical minerals objectives and risks undermining Australia's strategic supply chain resilience.

This would result in the sterilisation of highly prospective ground. While AMEC supports koala conservation, we caution against using national parks as the default conservation mechanism. Alternative land use classifications, such as retaining these areas as State Forest, can offer strong environmental protection while allowing co-existence with low-impact exploration activity and potentially long-term mining projects, which bring enormous benefits to NSW, including royalties, employment and growth for regional areas.

Investment certainty and regional impacts

The Australian Government is positioning itself as a strategic player in the global critical minerals market through the implementation of its *Critical Minerals Strategy 2023-2030*¹. In September 2024, China, which previously supplied nearly half of the world's antimony, imposed export restrictions, disrupting global supply chains and elevating Australia as a key alternative supplier.

¹ [Critical Minerals Strategy 2023–2030 | Department of Industry Science and Resources](#)

As home to some of Australia's largest critical minerals resources, NSW is uniquely placed to support the national strategy and strengthen its position in the global supply network.

Sudden land-use changes under valid tenure create sovereign risk concerns and undermine investment confidence. Over time, this uncertainty will redirect exploration capital away from NSW, reducing employment, regional development and government revenues.

Final recommendations and closing

AMEC recommends that the Department:

- **Include mining and exploration industry representatives** on the Great Koala National Park Industry Advisory Panel for future meetings.
- **Reassess the revised park boundaries** to exclude areas of high geological prospectivity and existing mineral titles.
- **Consider alternative land use classifications** allowing conservation and responsible exploration to co-exist.
- **Undertake further consultation** before final land tenure decisions.

New South Wales must balance environmental objectives with economic and strategic responsibilities. Ensuring access to mineral-prospective areas under appropriate regulation is in the long-term interests of the State.

We welcome the opportunity to provide further input on this important issue.

Further Information

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Appendix A - Exploration licences impacted by the revised proposed Great Koala National Park boundary

Exploration Licence / Application	Proponent	Primary Commodity Focus	Status
EL 8914	Larvotto Resources Ltd	Antimony	Granted
EL 6465	Scorpio Resources Pty Ltd	Antimony	Granted
EL 8100	Scorpio Resources Pty Ltd	Antimony	Granted
EL 9743	United Antimony Pty Ltd	Antimony	Granted
EL 6388	American Tungsten & Antimony	Tungsten, Antimony	Granted
ELA 6879	Trigg Antimony Pty Ltd	Antimony	Application
ELA 6861	Trigg Antimony Pty Ltd	Antimony	Application
ELA 6868	Trigg Antimony Pty Ltd	Antimony	Application
ELA 9772	Trigg Antimony Pty Ltd	Antimony	Application