

# The Australian Government does not hold back!



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## Environmental

This case focuses on a New South Wales mining company causing damage to a national ecological community.

An investigation by the federal environment department found that the long wall coal mining operations of Centennial Coal on the Newnes Plateau, near Lithgow, had caused a significant impact on the endangered Temperate highland peat swamps on sandstone conservation area.

The mining activities caused a loss of ecosystem function shown by loss of peat, erosion, vegetation dieback and weed invasion in three swamps. They also caused the formation of a large slump hole, several metres wide and more than one metre deep, at the East Wolgan swamp.

These changes mean the swamps can no longer serve their important hydrological role of acting as water filters and releasing water slowly to downstream watercourses.

The payment will be made as an 'enforceable undertaking' under national environment law – the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

This demonstrates the quick actions being taken by the Government as an effective way to hold companies accountable for environmental damage without going through lengthy and costly legal proceedings.

### Facts:

- Centennial coal, New South Wales Mining Company.
- The Australian Government takes environmental protection seriously and will not tolerate companies causing needless damage to the environment.
- Loss of ecosystem function identified from mining activities threatened the environment.
- \$1.45 million payment ordered for damage caused.
- The money will fund a research program to provide a better understanding of the impacts of land use change.

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