# Navigating socio-political stakeholder environments

**PROJECT P4-010**

This project addresses CRC ORE's Program 4 emphasis on understanding and managing the complex network of stakeholders whose behaviours potentially impact on mining innovation and related social licence to operate. Development of a multi-perspectival approach to understanding this network of stakeholders is linked to improving the ability of a mining firm to adapt in complex environments and achieve mining innovation and community development objectives.

Specifically, this project had three, interlinked aims:
1. Map the drivers and interactions of the multiple stakeholders operating in the Australian mining sector's socio-political environment.
2. Understand stakeholder perceptions and expectations around 'good mining'.
3. Develop tools to enable multi-perspective understandings and approaches to improving achievement of social licence.



invent. integrate. implement. introduce.

TRL 1 TRL 2 TRL 3 TRL 4 TRL 5 TRL 6 TRL 7 TRL 8 TRL 9

## Project Scope

Our multi-perspectival approach to understanding the socio-political landscape and drivers and interactions of stakeholders focused on the Adani Carmichael Coal Mine as an empirical exemplar of a mine with complex stakeholder interactions.

In line with the aims, our research questions focused on understanding stakeholder perceptions of:
• the key drivers as to why this case was considered to be contentious,
• the interactions amongst diverse stakeholders, and importantly,
• what might constitute 'good' mining.

**Stage 1** involved substantive desktop identification, collation and analysis of public documents, submissions, and news & social media, to identify social and political drivers of key mining stakeholder groups involved in debate around the Carmichael Mine.

**Stage 2** centred on the conduct and analysis of 42 semi-structured interviews with identified stakeholders active in the Adani Carmichael Coal Mine case.

**Stage 3** encompassed the development of tools identified in the research process to distil research learnings and enable nuanced navigation of the social and political environment.

The project delivered **a suite of three tools**: an interactive timeline; a guide to mapping actor networks; and the PREDICT checklist of 'good' mining (see www.extractivestakeholder.com for tools and further information).

**Project team members:** A/ Prof Robyn Mayes, Dr Bree Hurst, and Dr Amelia Hine.

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| Program Manager: | Greg Wilkie, CRC ORE |
| Project Leader: | A/Prof Robyn Mayes, QUT |
| Timing: | Dec 2019 – June 2021 |
| Participant: | QUT |

## Project Outcomes & Learnings

Analysis across Stages 1 and 2 demonstrated:

• Disruption of business-centric stakeholder engagement, and substantial influence on the part of **stakeholders that were not initially identified by the company**.
• A dynamic hierarchy of stakeholder drivers in terms of influence and emphasis, and divergences at the regional, state and national levels.
• Limitations associated with the EIS process play a key role in shaping debate around mining operation.
• There is growing polarisation of stakeholders, and limited communication across ideological divides.
• A strong perception of the role of public media in shaping (mis)understandings of mining operations.

**'Good' mining** - as perceived across the spectrum of stakeholder interviewed - encompasses an **interconnected and dynamic set of best practices involving both industry and government** spanning:

• Increased transparency and trust;
• Improved engagement;
• Accessible information; and
• Processes/spaces to facilitate conversations among stakeholders with who may not recognise shared values.

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