



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## Media Release

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### Minerals Council now wants a strategic approach?

In a month of political back flips and about faces, an ABC media report that has come to the attention of the Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor indicates that the Minerals Council of Australia has now joined a growing group of people and organisations calling for a more strategic regional approach to mining applications.

Mr Windsor says this is in stark contrast to the Minerals Council's position only a fortnight ago in influencing the National Party to change its support of an amendment to the Water Amendment Bill 2008 that would have put such a strategy in place after having twice voted for it.

"According to the ABC report today, the Minerals Council of Australia has told a Senate Committee that the Government should look at regions as a whole before mining applications are made to determine what needs to be protected from development.

The report indicates that the Minerals Council's Director of Environmental and Social Policy, Ms Melanie Stutsel said it would give miners a better understanding of the Government's environmental values as opposed to the current arrangements where government assesses the environmental effect of mining operations on a case by case basis," Mr Windsor said.

He says Ms Stutsel is directly quoted as saying, "*If we were to be more strategic and invest those resources either into the scientific work or into the strategic regional assessment to make sure we're looking at the landscape as a whole, we'd get better outcomes from conservation as well as making sure development is located appropriately.*"

Mr Windsor said that his amendment and that introduced by the Australian Greens would have achieved the outcome suggested by Ms Stutsel.

Mr Windsor points to the ABC Country Hour Report on November 28 which said "*When CEO of the Minerals Council of Australia, Mr Mitch Hooke, says if the amendment was passed, it would've been a terrible outcome for mining right around Australia. He says it wasn't about advocating, but instead pointing out how the amendment would affect Australia's mining industry.*"

"Mitch Hooke, CEO, Australian Minerals Councils has said "*there is no need for an extra piece of environmental oversight*", hence no need for a scientific study.

"There now appears to be two opposite positions taken by the Minerals Council.

"The question I ask the Minerals Council is, what is their true position on this issue?

"When it came to the crunch a fortnight ago, they pressured the Nationals into backing down from their support of an amendment that would have delivered what they are now advocating is what the Government should adopt.

"I look forward to clarification by the Minerals Council – perhaps the Chairman might like to provide the definitive position," Mr Windsor said.

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