

Morally culpable

The coal from Mt William will not just sit on East Asian mantelpieces. It will be burnt (ironically, making stuff consumed by us), and release 11.5 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere, further adding to climate change. No adequate technology is in place to prevent this.

Every ounce of carbon has a human price. We estimate mining the Mt William coal will lead to the death of at least 160-190 people, due to its effects on climate change.

Only the morally blind can support unrestricted release of dangerous substances onto the market. If doctors were to line their pockets by selling a ton of morphine on the street, there would be outrage. Those who profit from unrestricted sale of coal are morally, if not yet legally, culpable.

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(NB version submitted 18 June 2012 is below:

To the Editor

Chris Baker is paid by a consortium of miners, "Straterra", to advance their personal wealth. The coal from Mt William will not just sit on East Asian mantelpieces. It will be burnt (ironically making stuff consumed by us), and release 11.5 million tons of carbon into the atmosphere, further adding to climate change. No adequate CCS technology is in place to prevent this.

Every ounce of carbon has a human price. We estimate that mining the Mt William coal will lead in the end to the death of at least 160—190 people, due to its effects on climate change. Only the morally blind can support unrestricted release of dangerous substances onto the market. If doctors were to line their pockets by selling a ton of morphine on the street, there would be outrage. Those who profit from unrestricted sale of coal are morally, if not yet legally, culpable.

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