

Submission
No 789

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

My partner and I strongly oppose Coal Seam Gas mining in all regions of Australia.

I would urge all politicians of Australia to have a good in-depth look at what has happened over the past years in America with the introduction of CSG mining? Must we go down that path as well? Have the politicians bothered to watch the documentary GASLAND that gives many examples of how these CSG sites has contaminated ground water all over America and made their drinking water undrinkable forcing many Americans to buy their own water. Additionally the health implications and correlations with cancer and neurological problems is well documented. In addition people are bought off and held to non disclosure agreements in order to attempt to stop them from going to the media or telling others of what they are experiencing on their land as a result of CSG mining.

We see CSG as a quick fix in terms of fulfilling energy needs within Australia which leads me to a more important question - why are we not funding and moving ahead with exploring renewable energy alternatives instead?

My children on watching the movie Gasland the other night, asked me why are the governments allowing this to happen to people (have their water poisoned) and why do they not care that these CSG mining sites are polluting the atmosphere and making people sick due to the methane emissions? I don't have any good answers to tell them. On telling them that the Australian government is planning on doing the same thing in Australia and at sites even nearby to residential sites to Sydney, they are very fearful. Who could blame them? What would you tell your children? When would Sydneysiders find out their water was polluted? Would it be as people are getting sick and companies try to indemnify themselves? Why are corporate interests coming before the community interests? At what point do we say environment is king, and no environmental degradation will be accepted? Will we just build more desalination plants to feed Sydney drinking water needs when our rivers are polluted, which in turn would require more CSG wells to power them? Is this CSG a path to a cleaner more sustainable planet, or is this just a get rich quick scheme for the big end of town, at the expense of everyone's health? Our gut instinct tells us; NO CSG mining thanks!

While it may make good economic sense in the short term to extract energy in this way, to risk our water supplies and the possible contamination of ground water and major rivers, tributaries and drinking sources JUST does NOT make sense. Water is such an important resource – why does the common man have to point this out to the politicians, why in this century must we point out the obvious and argue that WATER IS NEEDED FOR HUMANS TO SURVIVE AND THEREFORE SHOULD NOT BE TREATED AS A DISPOSABLE COMMODITY! Water is a precious resource. If we start to play with fire and contaminate our water ways then there is no going back. CSG is a huge mistake in any part of Australia and really we need to only look at past history and for that there is already a large amount of evidence based on what has happened in America.

Most people who I talk to do not even know what CSG mining is nor the consequences of it yet and unfortunately if this kind of mining goes ahead, they may only find out about it when they start to drink contaminated water as a result of CSG mining in Australia.

This whole crazy idea of CSG mining reminds me of the famous Native American adage that reads:

*Only when the last tree has died
and the last river been poisoned
and the last fish been caught
will we realise we cannot **eat money***

Could it really be put any more simply than that!!

NO FRACKING WAY TO CSG MINING IN AUSTRALIA.....

I, like many people in the Northern Rivers, moved here from major cities for the clean air, water and fertile land. The thought that CSG companies are looking to do to the Northern Rivers what they've already done to parts of Queensland is frightening. How many farmers and community organisations, whose numbers are growing everyday, have to shout 'STOP'.

Coal Seam Gas mining and their use of fracking is madness. What has happened to common sense? Could it actually be true that our democracy is dead?...that big business has such a stranglehold on government that decisions to go ahead with energy strategies like CSG are actually being considered when there are many alternative clean energy solutions just waiting for funding? This funding would be easily obtainable by simply withdrawing subsidies from the fossil fuel industry. And that's another thing...the government is actually subsidising the fossil fuel industry! This is madness considering what is happening to our fragile biosphere worldwide caused in no small way by our ongoing use of this outdated form of energy. And CSG is no different.

It is becoming increasingly clear to an overwhelming number of people in Australia, and the world, that our resources, not to mention tax money, are being mismanaged. And why? Because government appears to be no longer concerned with the welfare of people and the systems needed to sustain life – clean air, clean water and nutrient rich food (as opposed to poisoned and genetically modified substitutes that have quietly crept into our food supply) but with keeping the GDP growing and pandering to the whims of big business. The GDP is a measure of monetary transactions, which is largely unrelated to the wellbeing of real people and the environment which sustains all life.

As for the benefits of CSG, there is overwhelming evidence of the serious impacts on both the quality and the quantity of our water as well as air. It is impossible to rebuild aquifers and undo water contamination. When the water is gone and the creeks and rivers are dead what do we do then?

Are you aware that food is grown on land being explored by the CSG industry? If you did, then surely the answer to whether we should go ahead with CSG or any other environment destroying industry would be apparent...an overwhelming and infinitely resounding 'NO'.