

**Submission
No 815**

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

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The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5
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RE: Parliamentary inquiry into Coal Seam Gas

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to add my endorsement to the Stop CSG Sydney Submission. I am extremely concerned about the environmental and health impact of CSG activities for the following reasons:

- Carbon emissions
The CSG extraction process emits considerable amounts of methane which is a potent green house gas and is contradicting the current initiative towards cleaner energy policy.
- Under ground water pollution
The CSG extraction process involves injecting hazardous and carcinogenic chemicals into underground water systems, which are already contaminating the Great Artesian Basin and putting in risk the food production industry.
- Wastage of water
Huge amounts of clean water is pumped out from underground systems and used in the gas extraction process. CSG is expected to extract 7500 giga litres from underground systems in the next 25 years. Can Australia, the driest continent on this planet, afford to waste so much water? And will it still make sense to teach my children to have short showers and turn off the tap while brushing their teeth?
- Pollution of surface water systems
The waste water resulting from CSG mining is disposed in evaporation ponds, which overflow after rain. As a result toxic waste water enters the river systems, destroying the surrounding flora and fauna. The waste water also contains methane, which is flammable gas and increases the risk of bushfires.
- Destruction of aquifers
The damage to the aquifers is irreparable and will mean a huge burden for future generations. Do we really want leave a wrecked environment to many generations to come just for the sake of exporting coal seam gas overseas for the next 25 years?

- Health and social impacts

The evidence from United States of America and Queensland is shocking regarding the health impact of CSG on people's lives. With toxins and methane in the water supply and methane leakage in the air, the mines are already taking a toll in US and Queensland. It means more government spending for health services, more people suffering from fatal diseases and less people in workforce.

I am also concerned about interference of CSG mines with prime agricultural land, proximity of CSG mines to urban areas, stress on existing roads infrastructure and air pollution resulting from heavy mining trucks traffic, economic impacts on farmers and tourism industry, real estate devaluation, forest clearing for gas piping and evaporation ponds and increased seismic activity due to fracturing of the underground rock formations.

Please consider a moratorium on all existing CSG mining activity and new CSG licences until we have:

- An environmental assessment process
- A study of impacts on groundwater
- Waste water treatment regulations
- Incentives for waste water recycling
- Licensing requirements for ground water withdrawals
- Regulations protecting prime farmland, urban areas and all ecologically important environments like forests, national parks, wetlands and coastal areas.
- Involvement of community and local government into approval of new Coal Seam Gas mines.

Regards,

Vesna Spasovski