

**Submission
No 153**

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

Name: Ms Victoria Hamilton

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I am writing this submission on behalf of all the North West NSW farmers including our family who are demanding our combined voice be heard and noted by the State Government of NSW for an immediate Moratorium on the exploration and production of Coal Seam Gas in this State .

The most officious stance is evident , from some sections of the Parliament of this State toward the mitigation of the mining industries duty of care, over and above the democratic rights of the people of this state to be guaranteed a clean, fresh availability of food and water by the farming families of this State for this present generation and the vast generations of Australians yet to be born .

How has this situation been allowed to develop in NSW where the indisputable, essential service of food and water supply is at this very moment at grave risk of at least contamination and worst total annihilation.

The inability of broadacre farming and irrigation to coexist with the unproven safety of CSG production on these food producing farming and grazing lands must be addressed now, for the present and very long term far reaching effects that will occur.

Broadacre farming in our districts relies on farmers being able to make decisions about the crop that is in the ground today, the crop that will be grown in the paddock next rotation or the fallowing of that paddock.

Can the State Government guarantee that a farmer WILL be able to 'burn his stubble' in a paddock with a possible, probable of at least 15 gas wells per 1500 acres? NO, even one gas well would make it impossible, believe us when we state these problems, we are the ones that know, we are at risk.

In the case of last year ,when the floodwaters covered the unharvested crops, the result was many farmers had to burn the eventual dried out ruined crop to allow the sowing of the new crop.

The controlled traffic method of farming which prevents soil compaction is now broadly used. How is the right of mining companies to make roads between wells for their use compatible with our practises? It is not compatible and we strongly object to any interference to our capabilities to farm effectively, by any type of roads being placed across our paddocks. These are all points that only farmers have the exact knowledge to know of and the true understanding of, there are many more.

The very process of vertical and horizontal drilling fracturing and hydraulic fracturing ,in one instance, being proposed for 550 gas wells in the Pilliga by Eastern Star Gas , soon to be SANTOS, in itself may cause the so called patency of the different aquifers to be fractured ,allowing the depressurizing of essential water into the lower aquifers. The farmers , the private and government bodies , scientists and the peoples of this State have grave reservations about this safety. The mining companies know the effects are unproven. Who is monitoring this self-regulating industry, on the ground, at their sites?

The Governments who have the legislative abilities must follow the Precautionary Principle for the generations who are relying on them to protect their basic needs of food and water security.
MORATORIUM NOW till answers are found and proven in a timely and scientific manner.

Thankyou,

VICTORIA HAMILTON