

## INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

## RE Coal Seam Gas Mining, (CSG)

I would like to express some concerns as to CSG namely because I do not believe that there is adequate information as present to understand and evaluate the social, and environmental effects of CSG mining. As such there should be a full moratorium on all forms of coal seam gas drilling until the environmental, social and health impacts have been rigorously and independently assessed.

The environmental effects are of concern to many people both during mining and afterwards in ground water and the subsequent effects from changes in water supply and quality be it drinking supplies for humans, other animals or in agricultural uses. Health concerns also include air quality for those living near well sites. All potential side effects of CSG need to be understood before CSG continues.

The long term environmental effects are not known and the potential damage needs to be quantified. Some environmental effects may be irreversible and this is an issue that can not be gambled especially to give some people a quick financial profit at the expense of the ecology, the health of current people and possibly that of generations to come, and at the expense of other forms of sustainable land uses that may then be destroyed. Likewise important bushland also needs to be protected. Therefore CSG exploration and mining MUST be made subject to all relevant environmental legislation, including the native vegetation and water management Acts. There needs to be a mechanism in place to ensure that there is proper compliance to environmental regulations and if there are any failures to comply that there will be severe penalties and claims for restoration if possible.

The rights of landowners also need to be clarified and fair consideration given to the landowners, especially if there are environmental concerns raised as to exploration and drilling practices. Prime agricultural land must be retained and not exposed for CSG mining. State boundaries makes the whole CSG issue difficult with different regulations and rights but CSG being underground knows of not such surface differences.

Health and environmental issues can not be addressed after the fact. These issues must be considered beforehand and given the evidence that is emerging from overseas where CSG has been undertaken for sometime Australia can not say it was not aware of potential detrimental effects. As the government you have a duty of care to the people of NSW and the environment, therefore I urge you to proceed cautiously rather than at haste from pressure of mining companies and short term revenue realisations.