

Submission
No 120

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

Name: Mr Phil Laird
Organisation: Maules Creek Community Council Inc
Date received: 01/09/2011

Maules Creek Community Council Inc
Re: Coal Seam Gas and the Murray-Darling

Maules Creek Community Council Inc
upthecreek2382@gmail.com

29 August 2011

The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5
Parliament House
Macquarie St
Sydney NSW 2000

Re: Coal Seam Gas Inquiry

Dear Sir/Madam;

We are writing to you on behalf of the Maules Creek Community regarding coal seam gas (CSG) exploration in our area. We have serious concerns about the CSG industry, the lack of contemporary regulation and the risky operational practices, which are standard for the industry. Our generic concerns are outlined in Appendix 1.

We have serious concerns as to the location of PEL 459. This PEL covers the Kaputar National Park and the associated Nandewar Range. This PEL is located in the headwaters of the Maules Creek Catchment which is a tributary to the Namoi River and the Murray Darling Basin.

The evidence to date shows that the extraction processes for CSG, the risk to ground water and the contamination of the surface from "produced water" (See Appendix 2) makes this land use patently unsuitable for highly sloping land at the top of a major water catchment.

In addition researchers have found that the Maules Creek Catchment that flows from the Nandewar Range contains a unique Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE) that can be seriously impacted by changes in groundwater levels or groundwater chemistry. Either impact is a normal part of the CSG industry that requires drilling with drilling fluids and dewatering the coal seams.

The GDE of the Maules Creek Catchment are nationally significant and are currently being assessed as a threatened Ecological Community under the EPBC Act.

Given that the company involved, Macquarie Energy is largely foreign owned and the gas will be exported leaves us in no doubt that any CSG developments in this area are unlikely to positively improve the environment or the welfare of our district and for this reason we are totally opposed to the development of this exploration lease.

This lease has expired and now is the time to retire the lease. Letters have been written to the relevant minister (see Appendix 3) without reply and we are anxious that our community's views are heard and acted on.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. Should you wish to discuss it further, please contact any of the individuals listed above or go to www.maulescreek.org.

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Regards
MCCC Inc