

**Submission  
No 800**

## **INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS**

**Name:** Ms Fiona Sim

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## **Submission to the NSW Legislative Council's inquiry into coal seam gas**

**From Fiona Sim,**

1. Coal seam gas is a major threat to our water resources. The cost of polluting or damaging the Great Artesian basin and other aquifers far outweighs any economic value this industry may bring.
2. Knowledge of Australia's groundwater systems is in its infancy, so there is no certainty in the mining industry's claims that extracting CSG will not affect groundwater.
3. The technology used to extract, store and treat CSG entails toxic by-products, is unproven and the short- and long-term effects are not fully known. A long-term study is required on small scale CSG extraction to determine all effects.
4. When the life cycle of producing CSG is taken into account, per unit of energy released, burning shale gas produces between 120% and 200% of the emissions produced by burning coal.
5. Extraction of CSG requires huge amounts of water – water that increasingly will be needed to produce food or for people.
6. Containment of the saline and contaminated water from CSG wells is a major environmental hazard.
7. Intensive systems of CSG wells (ie 200-400m spacing) are not compatible with agriculture and have a destructive outcome on human habitation, the land surface and on groundwater systems, undisturbed aquifers, and geological stability.
8. The mining boom, of which CSG is a part, has many negative impacts on rural communities (eg drain of skilled labour, pressure on housing and local infrastructure).
9. NSW does not need CSG to meet its energy needs. Instead of selling off our resources overseas, and allowing big business to run the state, the government should be reducing its debt by cutting spending. This can be done by reducing the size of government agencies and eliminating wasteful spending by, and on, bureaucracy.