

**Submission
No 25**

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

Name: Ms Sasha London Welker

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Dear Parliament of New South Wales and the Director of the General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5,

I am writing this letter to voice my strong concerns against Coal Seam Gas (CSG) in New South Wales.

As everyone well knows by now Coal Seam Gas mining has been proven to pollute our water, air, and land. I am extremely concerned about the risks involved in extracting the gas and strongly feel that the negative effects of this process outweigh the positive. Our water is far too important in Australia to risk any kind of contamination, our air is public property there for each and every one of us has the right to breath a clean, chemical free environment, and our land is one of the best assets we have. Why destroy the integrity of all three for an unrenewable, unsustainable fossil fuel that benefits not the people but the corporations that profit from it.

Did you know that in order to mine for Coal Seam Gas the water in the coal seam must be first extracted? This water comes out toxic and extremely saline. It is full of carcinogens and heavy metals. Not to mention all the chemicals used in the drilling and fracturing process. Eventually this draining of the water in the coal seam will lead to depletion of connected aquifers which are used for agriculture, drinking water, and by animals and fish.

My partner and I have a small Certified Organic farm and selling Organic fruits and vegetables is our livelihood. If a Coal Seam Gas mine comes onto our land or our neighbour's land we are finished as an Organic farm and thus out of a job. I find this thought very disturbing as we are just one small farm and are surrounded by farms. We will all be contaminated! The CSG mining companies have said that they will bring jobs into the community and be a benefit for all of us but it seems that for the agriculturally employed it would be the complete opposite. Not only will small business like ours be destroyed, we would all suffer the disaster because we all rely on the food chain. Every household in our valley relies on farming for most or all of their income. If CSG is allowed every single person will be compromised in some way or another and most defiantly so will their children. Amazing, there is no amount of compensation for our health, our children's health, and the health of our environment. We know for a fact that in Queensland over 50% of wells tested leak methane. People have had methane coming out of their taps. **This is not safe and since it is not safe it should not be happening.**

The General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5 has said that they will *"inquire into and report on the environmental, health, economic, and social impacts of Coal Seam Gas activities."* I must comment that in my eyes there is no separating the four. Without a healthy environment we cannot produce healthy food or healthy animals and thus will not be in good health ourselves. Without good health society cannot function smoothly and thus the economy will be affected. A person will never have as much stamina if they are unhealthy as a healthy person would. In fact they will become a burden on the system and become a detriment to the economy. Across the globe there have been overwhelming numbers of cases of illness both in adults and children as a direct symptom of mining. One of the major chemicals used in drilling for coal and used to frack has been linked to child leukaemia. Plus it has been proven again and again that once people are estranged from their land they are prone to social problems such as depression, alcoholism, violence, etc.

I urge Parliament and the NSW Government to say NO to CSG in NSW. Instead of fighting the uphill battle involved with unrenewable energy, invest heavily in some kind of alternative renewable energy ie: solar, wind power, etc. Once this is done, expect overwhelming support from the people. The time is here to stop depending on something that is clearly outside of everyone's best interest, stop degrading the very planet we live on, and stop destroying the future for further generations. We are all ready to cross over to a new way of life that will be sustainable and positive for the planet. We are all ready to say good bye to our dependence with fossil fuels and say hello to our independence with clean energy.

The bottom line is that people don't want anything to do with CSG and our voices are going unheard. We are very clear that we do not want CSG in our area and we deserve to have the final say on what happens in our community. If in Western Australia Land holders have the right to refuse entry to mining companies, why can't this be the case in NSW?

Thank you,

Sasha London Welker