

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 1/09/2011

Partially Confidential

Please accept this as my submission regarding the Coal Seam Gas Industry

I believe that a full moratorium on all forms of coal seam gas drilling until the environmental, social and health impacts have been rigorously and independently assessed.

Coal seam gas exploration and mining should be made subject to all relevant environmental legislation, including the native vegetation and water management laws.

There should be a provision of standing to ensure that the community has full legal rights to challenge and enforce environmental laws under which coal seam gas companies are operating.

There should be a provision of a right in the Petroleum (Onshore) Act to allow landholders to refuse consent for coal seam gas exploration or production on their land.

There should be a prohibition on coal seam gas exploration and mining in important bushland, valuable farmland, groundwater aquifers, residential areas and public lands.

There should be a requirement that all chemicals used in coal seam gas drilling or fracking must be assessed by the chemical regulator for use for that purpose before being approved for use.

If there are any questions about the CSG industry and negative impacts to people health, water quality and food security then the process should not be allowed. I work for a solar power company and would like to see more subsidies given to this more environmentally source of energy.

There is proposed gas mining at Talma site near Whiporie. The area is rich in biodiversity. Please see an excerpt from the Draft Plan of Management for the Bundjalung SCA:

2.3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The SCAs are considered to be of significance due to the following:

Landscape/Catchment Values: • The SCAs are part of the catchment draining into the Bungawalbin wetland

cluster. The Bungawalbin wetland cluster has been identified as the 'largest tidal water pool in Australia' (DECC 2008a). The SCAs are part of the catchment for the Lower Bungawalbin Creek, which listed as a wetland of national importance (Environment Australia 2001).

Biological Values: • The SCAs contain wetland, lowland and heath vegetation which provides highly significant habitat and a food source for many threatened fauna species (DECC 2008a).

• Old growth forests within the Upper North East Region Comprehensive Regional Assessment (which includes the SCAs) are listed under the state heritage inventory because of their historic significance in demonstrating the history of their use and exploitation as well as evidence of Aboriginal occupation over a long period of time. Other reasons for their listing is their aesthetic value, their potential to teach us more about eucalypt forests and their value in providing habitat to threatened species (New South Wales Heritage Branch 2000).

• The SCAs contain core habitat areas which form part of a regionally significant forest habitat corridor for priority fauna species (Scotts 2003).

• The SCAs are an important part of the Bungawalbin catchment, one of the most significant areas of fauna biodiversity in north-east NSW, with a high marsupial population, high arboreal mammal distribution and large numbers of threatened species (NPWS 1995).

• The SCAs provide habitat for 54 threatened fauna species listed under the TSC Act, 11 species under the EPBC Act and nine migratory species under the EPBC Act.

- There are two endangered ecological communities and 12 threatened flora species within the SCAs which are listed under the TSC Act. Five species in the SCAs are listed ROTAP species (Briggs and Leigh 1996).

Bundjalung SCA and Jackywalbin SCA: Draft Plan of Management⁴

Aboriginal Heritage: • The SCAs are of spiritual significance and contemporary importance to the

Bandjalang Aboriginal people.

Research/Education Values: • The significant biological values and diversity of plant communities in the

SCAs provide opportunities for scientific research for educational programs and tertiary research projects on plant community relationships, and the flora and fauna of differing plant communities.

It's not just our water and food security are at risk from CSG drilling, our endangered animals will be affected as well.

We should be focused on Solar Power and other renewable energy sources. Northern Rivers has the chance to lead in clean renewable energies instead of wasting money on a 30-40 year industry that could do irrevocable damage to our quality of life. Furthermore the plan seems to export this resource to China instead of supplying our needs into the future. Not a real good business model for Australians.

Regards,