

**Submission
No 31**

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

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Parliamentary Inquiry into Coal Seam Gas.

"It's the water, Stupid!"

Australia is the driest and hottest continent on the planet and water is by far our most valuable resource and essential to life! To even contemplate drilling and mining prime agricultural land, is beyond belief. This arable, food producing country should be sacrosanct and activities, other than farming, banned. National Parks are created, native forests are protected, so let us preserve and protect our prime agricultural land from short-sighted mining companies, whose only interest is great wealth.

Let's protect farmers from the temptation of selling their properties to mining companies who can afford to offer, in some cases, triple the value of the land they own, e.g. Bylong Station in the Bylong Valley. We need to legislate to prohibit drilling exploration and/or mining on prime agricultural land.

Anyone who has seen the documentary "Gasland", will be in no doubt that you cannot pump polluting chemicals into our aquifers and the Great Artesian Basin, without causing permanent and irreversible damage to this life-giving, natural resource. This is a large continent, and perhaps mining companies could explore in other areas where land degradation will not be quite so devastating.

We do not want to turn our prime food-producing country into a toxic wasteland, all in the pursuit of the almighty dollar. Some things are far more important than money. We can print money, but without water, we cannot exist.