

**Submission
No 643**

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

Name: Mr Chris Woolley

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LEGISLATIVE
COUNCIL

The Director

30/08/2011

General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5

Parliament House

Macquarie St

Sydney NSW 2000

To whom it may concern,

CSG mining represents a serious threat to water resources due to:

1. The potential for drawdown and contamination of groundwater aquifers, including potential for major cumulative impacts on the Great Artesian Basin.
2. The pollution of surface water systems from 'waste' water, leading to serious reductions in water quality.
3. The use of large volumes of water for drilling and fracking in water systems that are already over-allocated, such as the Murray-Darling Basin.
4. The location of CSG wells on sensitive floodplains and in water catchments.

CSG mining represents a serious risk to human health:

1. Due to potential contamination of water used for human consumption and agricultural production with chemicals used in drilling or fracking as well as those present in the coal seam.
2. From leakage of toxic methane and other gases during gas production and migration of methane into water supplies.
3. Through poor management of chemicals and use of toxic chemicals without full disclosure, particularly during fracking and drilling.

CSG mining produces vast quantities of waste that represent a serious environmental risk:

1. Management of waste water is highly problematic and leads to environmental degradation where storage, leakage, spillage and discharge occurs.
2. Treatment of waste water results in the production of a highly concentrated 'brine' by-product, that is extremely difficult to dispose of without causing harm.

I ask 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 to be made subject to all relevant environmental legislation, including the native vegetation and water management laws. The 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. The 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. A prohibition on coal seam gas exploration and mining in important bushland, valuable farmland, groundwater aquifers, residential areas and public lands. 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.

With Regards

Chris Woollev.