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**From:** Inquiry into Unconventional Gas POV eSubmission Form  
<cso@parliament.vic.gov.au>  
**Sent:** Friday, 10 July 2015 5:03 PM  
**To:** EPC  
**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

Mr Anthony Walker  
[REDACTED]

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**SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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I am making a personal submission to the inquiry. I am very concerned about the dangers of Unconventional Gas (UCG) and the possible establishment of this industry in Victoria. I oppose this dangerous and destructive industry.

The science around greenhouse gas emissions is absolutely clear that we must rapidly phase down carbon emissions if the world is to have any chance of staying below two degrees warming. The science tells us that we are already facing an emergency. We know climate change is happening, and we know that business as usual will lead to more damage. Given our knowledge of the risk of climate change associated with continued burning of fossil fuels, the backing of new UCG projects in Victoria would be a reckless undertaking, dangerous to the environment and to public health.

I strongly urge the Committee running the Inquiry to recommend that Victoria adopt a permanent ban on all onshore unconventional gas drilling.

I live in a community that has conducted a survey, and the results showed that the community in Fish Creek South Gippsland strongly opposes fracking. This removes a social licence basis for an unconventional gas industry to operate in our area.

I understand the Committee will examine the following issues and my comments are included below:

- o Potential benefits of onshore UCG as an energy source for the State: There are no benefits and plenty of risks for the people of Victoria with an onshore UCG industry, and only profits for vested interests. The Victorian government should make energy decisions in the public interest, rather than facilitating economic interests that trump the common good. Support for UCG as some kind of transition energy industry (instead of coal) has the effect of delaying investment in non-carbon energy sources.

- o Potential risks of onshore UCG: The potential risks are huge and cannot be safely managed. It's a myth that UCG is cleaner than coal. The UCG process leaks methane into the atmosphere, which is a far more potent greenhouse gas than CO<sub>2</sub>. UCG processes can result in increased earthquakes and land subsidence. The toxic and carcinogenic chemicals used in UCG processes can leak into water supplies. An UCG industry necessitates installation of high density, unsightly gas wells, which operate all day and night producing a poison and noise, while industrialising our regional landscape. The road and transport trucks infrastructure required for an UCG industry also causes degradation of the landscape (as clearly evident in North Dakota U.S.)
  
- o Whether an UCG industry can coexist with the legal rights of property owners, and existing land and water uses: The answer is clearly no. UCG production typically involves use of highly toxic chemicals, and also uses enormous amounts of water, which is one of Australia's scarcest resources. The risks posed by extremely high water usage on Victoria's water ecology, aquifers and storage are high, and deleterious outcomes are likely. The whole idea of an UCG industry in a "food bowl" region such as South Gippsland is particularly inappropriate. The region has an established and lucrative dairy and agricultural industry, a commercial fishing industry and tourism industry, all of which would be threatened by an UCG industry.
  
- o How is this issue managed in other Australian & international jurisdictions: There is enormous evidence (for example in Queensland and in North America) of the UCG industry causing widespread, permanent environmental destruction, as well as wreaking social havoc in the communities it intrudes upon.
  
- o Potential changes to our legislative and regulatory framework: It's a mistake for the Victorian government to have anything to do with supporting an UCG industry. The Victorian government needs to show strong leadership and commit to research, development and infrastructure for carbon-free energy industries in order to achieve a managed transition away from the extraction and burning of fossil fuels. The goal of decarbonising Victoria's energy sources is a necessity rather than an option. The destabilisation of the polar icecaps for example, (eg in Antarctica where glaciers are melting at a phenomenal rate) contributes to evidence of the urgency of the climate change situation. Once the process of ice sheet melt is underway it's going to be extremely difficult if not impossible to stop. Top U.S. climate scientist Dr James Hansen reports satellite data that confirms an increasing rate of ice sheet loss, which if it were to continue, would lead to sea level rise of several metres within 40 to 50 years. There would be far less chaos associated with a managed transition to carbon-free energy industries, than for example with the conflicts arising from forced migrations and economic collapse associated with multi-metre sea level rise. There are substantial employment and economic opportunities in developing renewable energies. The Victorian government would benefit electorally by energetically managing the transition to clean energy.

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File1:

File2:

File3: