

***Submission to The Legislative Council's Environment and Planning Committee***

I am writing to submit my opinion on CSG mining in South Gippsland Victoria.

I am a concerned small land holder in the shire of South Gippsland.

I have many concerns about coal seam gas mining and am not convinced that it is safe and environmentally sound practice.

Firstly my main concern is the environmental effect of Coal Seam Gas mining. All evidence I can find point to large and long term environmental effects of CSG mining that will outlast any revenue gained from the process.

These effects include:

- Pollution of underground aquifers from the chemicals used during the hydraulic fracking process.
- Pollution from dislodged organic compounds in underground aquifers
- The large amounts of water needed during the mining process reducing availability of water for farmers in a drought prone country.
- The salinization and pollution of some of the most productive farmland in Australia.

These effects will not be excluded to just the farms the CSG mining wells are situated on but farmland over a potentially huge area as the underground aquifers that contain the polluted water could be very extensive.

My second concerns is in relation to the property values of properties with CSG wells on them as well as the value of neighbouring properties. Due to council regulation it is hard to build on a property of my size (12.5 acres) therefore the value of my property is larger than the average per acre price usually paid for a farm. I am sceptical that mining companies would compensate me adequately for the loss in property value and

if a CSG well is situated on a neighbouring farm I will receive no compensation at all. I estimate that it could be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars if a CSG well was to be built on my property and maybe less if the well is located on a neighbouring property. I base this estimate on the well-founded assumption that people would find a CSG mine aesthetically unpleasant and may also be concerned about the environmental impact that CSG mining will have on the land they are living on.

My third concern is about the environment globally. As climate change is a proven fact I think that efforts should be made to expand into renewable energy sources instead of relying on fossil fuels. Whether the gas is used in the domestic market or exported it will be utilised in a way that will increase global warming. This moratorium gives us a chance to reduce the extraction and use of fossil fuels in an attempt to slow the process of global warming. That process of global warming will ultimately cost so much more than we would ever gain from any mining venture.

Mrs Michelle Hibberson

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