

[REDACTED]

From: Inquiry into Unconventional Gas POV eSubmission Form
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Sent: Wednesday, 8 July 2015 7:41 PM
To: EPC
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Unconventional gas (UCG) should be banned because:

- A. Greenhouse gas levels are already too high. Any additional greenhouse gas emissions from any source simply adds further to our global warming problem. We already have the technology to supply 100% of Australia's stationary energy needs (see Beyond Zero Emissions stationary energy report), and most transport needs with renewables. Fossil fuels are fuels of last century not this century and need to be phased out as soon as possible.
- B. Evidence from around the world clearly shows that UCG is damaging to:
- I. Aquifers
 - II. The climate
 - III. Health
 - IV. Livestock

Point 1

UCG puts farmland, community, health, food security, environment and long-term regional jobs in such as agriculture and tourism for a little short term financial gain for few players. CSG jobs in Queensland are disappearing much faster than projected.

Point 2

There is no end to the environmental destruction, outside of climate change, that has already been caused by UCG. Consider the following examples:

- Research, consistently denied by the industry, includes the following:
 - o UCG linked to birth defects eg. :

- In Colorado, more congenital heart defects in babies born to mothers living near gas wells.
- Two studies showed infants born near UCG sites in Pennsylvania were more likely to have low birth weight, a sign of developmental problems.
- In Utah, a spate of stillbirths after tests found dangerous levels of air pollution from the oil and gas industry.
 - o UCG causes earthquakes, as are now experienced in the 100s by formerly earthquake free states across the US.
 - o Aquifer contamination is an unconscionable risk as we head into a period of extended droughts. However, there are numerous studies linking fracking to contaminated aquifers, so that this water is irrevocably unusable. So while the gas companies will claim that fracking is safe, when faced with the evidence of contamination they will deny the test results and deny that it was caused by fracking or in some cases admit that nothing can be done to restore the aquifer. Recent examples include that:
 - Santos admits a CSG-poisoned aquifer can't be fixed at Pilliga, NSW
 - In Pennsylvania, methane was found in 115 of 141 shallow, residential drinking-water wells. The methane concentration in homes less than one mile from a fracking well was six times higher than the concentration in homes farther away.

Point 3b

We have seen what UCG has done to agriculture across CSG hotspots in NSW and Queensland. People no longer want to live in these communities. Many LGAs have already declared themselves frack-free with the knowledge of what UCG has caused in other communities. As previously mentioned, CSG jobs are short-lived ones.

Point 3c

UCG can demonstrate a long-term net loss of jobs as these wells are short lived, whereas agriculture and other regional industries are not. UCG destroys farmland, communities and regional industries.

To create long-term employment in regional areas, the government should be investing in large scale solar thermal and other renewable alternatives, offering incentives for domestic and commercial energy efficiency retrofits and any number of other longer-term investment strategies.

Point 4b

CSG offers no greenhouse gas benefits over coal due to leaking methane,.

Point 5

There are no adequate safeguards to UCG that could mitigate the risks to climate, health and aquifers. UCG has not been demonstrated as safe anywhere.

Point 6

There are numerous countries, states and jurisdictions that have banned fracking. Countries and states including France, Scotland, Wales and New York State.

Research conducted for New York State fracking ban over 7 years found that "significant uncertainty remains regarding the level of risk to public health and the environment that would result from permitting high-volume hydraulic fracturing in New York, and regarding the degree of effectiveness of proposed mitigation measures," according to an executive summary. "In fact, the uncertainty regarding the potential significant adverse environmental and public health impacts has been growing over time."

The report cites such impacts ranging from degraded air quality to possible groundwater and surface water contamination to increased earthquake risks associated with fracking.

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File1:

File2:

File3: