

Submission to Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria
by
Ulla Taylor of
[REDACTED]

My name is Ulla Taylor, I was born in Victoria, I live in Melbourne, and own property in the Southern Grampians at Glenthompson, an area renowned for great farming and tourism.

The communities around Hamilton have declared themselves "Gas fields free". This is a clear indication that there is nearly unanimous public opinion that this area, and many others around Victoria, should remain free of unconventional gas mining technology.

Many of the people I know in the Western district earn their living from producing fine Victorian produce for consumption locally, interstate and even overseas. In the Grampians there is also growing industry based on tourism and also Arts businesses, largely due to the attraction of the regions beautiful landscapes and abundant wildlife.

It is clear from the many stories related by land holders affected by onshore gas mining technologies, especially in Queensland, but also across the USA, that this mining industry is very harmful to healthy soil, air, wildlife, people and water. People are getting sick from the unconventional gas industry across the world.

Australia is the driest populated continent. Our water is so very precious and is the essence of all life. Unconventional gas mining technologies are known to use immense amounts of water, and then turn this into immense amounts of toxic poison. In a land prone to flooding, containment dams do not contain this highly toxic poison. Even without flooding, two layers of plastic under a dam do not contain this poison as plastic is a porous membrane, and degrades over time.

We have also recently seen how the poison containment dams can fail, and spill toxic material on prime agricultural land. In May this year Joe Hill's cattle farm in Queensland was poisoned by a large spill and that was not the first time that particular containment had failed.

We have already seen in examples such as the Condamine River in QLD that our pure water is being polluted in another unpredictable manner- the river is bubbling gas! I have never seen or heard of this happening in our history prior to unconventional gas mining. This shocks me terribly as I reflect on years of bush camping experience- drawing water from rivers which traditionally are a source of pure water.

Victoria is prone to devastating bushfires. With many well heads venting gasses, rivers bubbling gas and unexpected leachings of flammable gas added to the danger, our risk of devastating fires is also heightened.

Aside from the seriously toxic “proprietary” chemical cocktails used in the industry, there is the issue that the fracking process cannot be contained; the underground actions cannot be halted, stopped or even monitored adequately as the “fractures” can extend in a haphazard manner over many kilometres. I do not understand how this risk can be mitigated, especially after discussing this with a geologist who confirmed to me that the fracturing of the Earth cannot be limited or even succinctly defined over a specific area.

Emissions and fugitive emissions from gas processing plants also result in serious air pollution which is making people sick.

The multiple sources of pollution created by unconventional gas mining seriously threaten our strong agricultural industry and economy. The immensely invasive associated infrastructure, which adversely affects the amenity of agricultural land, also degrades the natural beauty of our land and thus will negatively impact on our tourism industry.

Natural beauty of the landscape cannot be quantified monetarily, but as an artist and nature lover it is something I personally value very highly.

The CSG industry seems very unsafe to me on so many levels. Aside from the accidents of poison spills, there is the fact that gas wells are known to fail over time. As corporate entities creating gas wells can come and go over time, it seems that the onus of responsibility for maintaining and monitoring aging gas wells will ultimately fall to citizens and their government.

Also of concern to me is that while jobs may be created in this new industry, it is at the cost of many others into the future.

Victoria has many wonderful assets of nature- strong, traditional industries which are the keystone of our economy. The health of our environment, and it’s sustainability under the increasing pressure of population growth, should be of the highest consideration. The unconventional gas industry is incompatible with our fine agriculture and tourism industries, and threatens the future livability of our wonderful country.

As a mother and citizen I want to see a total ban placed on unconventional gas mining in Victoria.

Yours sincerely,



Ulla Taylor

