

DATE: 9 July, 2015

Keir Delaney
Secretary
Environment & Planning Committee Parliament House
Spring Street, Melbourne
VIC 3002

Dear Keir,

RE: Risk v Reward of unconventional gas at Moriac in the Surf Coast

I wanted to write to you to express my concern that there is this much consideration into onshore unconventional gas drilling in Victoria when both in the USA and Queensland have shown what damage is caused, not just socially but environmentally. Moriac and it's surrounds are an idyllic place to bring up a family and I speak first hand being a Moriac resident with a young family, an active community participant who helps out as assistant Coach at Auskick and assisting each week at the primary school. In addition, I have provided support to the local community where I can in environmental issues on a pro bono basis to protect what we have. I have participated in active working groups with prior issues and assisted with a good resolution for the community.

My career has involved large and small scale projects including many for the interests of the Victorian Government. I have been involved in the Environmental Impact Assessments, Flora and Fauna assessments and Environmental Planning phases and Construction Management of considerable projects including but not limited to the following:

- The Goldfields Superpipe (water pipeline between Ballarat and Bendigo) Flora and Fauna assessments working for Earth Tech Engineering
- Environmental Approvals Responses Review for the Victorian desalination project (sub-consulting under MWH and CPG to Davis Langdon); and more recently
- Regional Rail link (Construction Management-Fauna components) working for MWH.

Overall, these projects resulted in improvements and long term future planning for many Victorian residents. I now have a small business to which I am still doing work for State Government, Local Governments and the CMA's. I also support through sponsorship the local Corangamite Landcare: Surf Coast and Inland Plains Network (SCIPN).

I see the unconventional gas drilling techniques as short-term gain with high risk to the environment long after the gas extraction companies have left. The gas drilling requires the use of a large quantity of water and is inefficient with high risk to the water quality and therefore to local farmers and to the environment. I know of several nearby locations that support habitat and communities for the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) vulnerable listed and Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee (FFG) Act 1988 listed as threatened Growling Grass Frog *Litoria raniformis*. This species is highly susceptible to changes in water quality as it is high in the food chain. In addition, there are some endangered Ecological Vegetation Communities Listed both federally and state as endangered that may come under threat during the procedures associated with gas drilling and extraction.

For the community, just transport of the gas itself will result in thousands of truck trips using our roads, polluting and making the roads busier and requiring more maintenance. The roads are already well traversed with heavy haulage of gravel from nearby gravel mines, more trucks will increase risks to safety. Locally, there will be few people benefitting from the temporary influx of construction and drilling workers which will leave their mark on the land forever. Yes, the odd farmer who gets a good deal and some local pubs and motels but the general public will be poorer for it, particularly through health issues and dropping house prices. We do not want this addition to our small, happy community. It is my understanding that the Gas company will be shipping the gas offshore anyway and the Moriac and nearby communities will not benefit.

Rather than gas extraction we should be investing in clean, alternate energy. Please support local jobs for alternate energy using wind turbines in the area. This is where the Federal and State Governments need to look for the future.

Please put a permanent ban to Gas extraction activities in the Moriac/Gherang/Modewarre communities and other locations nearby in the Surf Coast and City of Greater Geelong Shire areas. It appears we have both the



Liberal Federal Member for Corangamite Sarah Henderson supporting us, will the Victorian Labor Government also do so ?

Yours Sincerely,



Michael Aberton, PhD, MEIANZ, CEnvP
Principal Ecologist



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