

9th July 2015

Re: Unconventional Coal Seam Gas Inquiry

Hello,

My name is Ann Ebbott. My husband and I are local small business and land owners in the beautiful town of Portland, Victoria.

We chose this slice of heaven for its rich beauty – both sea and land, its peace and serenity, and the quality of life that only a clean and pure country town can offer.

Family and environment are vitally important to us and we would like to continue to live in, and leave our family, a clean and beautiful farm to sustain them in the future, and also to be able to rest in the knowledge that UCSG mining – in any way, shape or form, will not be a part of their lives – EVER!

Therefore – I recommend that Victoria ban all unconventional gas drilling permanently (and the benefits of a total ban eg. would give certainty to existing industry (agriculture & tourism), making Victoria a more attractive place for investments in these industries plus new investments such as renewables. This will create more long term jobs in sustainable industries.

Terms of Reference;

1. UCSG would put at risk – water, farmland, community health, food security, environment and jobs in other sectors such as agriculture and tourism for little or no financial gain. Portland relies heavily on agriculture and tourism and this industry would devastate our town and its surrounding beauty.
2. There is absolutely no risk mitigation that can protect humans and the environment against the toxic by-products of this dirty industry – concrete in wells has been proven to degrade and fail in a very short time, proven over and over again in the USA, which has catastrophic consequences for anyone relying on the land and water for their livelihood.
3. Coexistence with this industry would be impossible. The infrastructure required for gas wells – all weather access roads, cleared well pads, compression stations, evaporation dams – would make the day to day running of our farms unviable and unliveable. We have Australia's largest rose farm here (Treloar Roses), which would be completely devastated.

Queensland farmers have been left in an unbearable position due to Fracking on their land – they cannot bear to live there and they cannot sell – **no one wants to live in a gasfield, or next to one. The Government has sold them out and betrayed those poor land owners.**

- (a) Agricultural production would cease to exist with contaminated water and land, which would damage our domestic and export markets.

- (b) **Legal rights of property owners have been completely overlooked** – why should we be forced to go to VCAT to stop these people from invading our farms?!
- (c) Portland and the whole South West region of Victoria, relies heavily on agriculture and tourism – both of these would be devastated by CSG mining – **who wants to live in, or holiday in a Gasfield?**

This industry will not create jobs, but put at risk jobs in these sectors.

Short term gain (if any) for long term contamination of water and land.

4. Unconventional Gas is a **fossil fuel**. This makes it hard to extract. Because they need to be fracked to release the gas from the coal seam or rock, the energy cost of the gas is high compared with conventional LNG. Additionally, with the government plans to export massive volumes of gas through ports in QLD, Victorian consumers will be competing with international energy prices in coming year. So UCG is unlikely to be an affordable energy source for consumers. A much better option is to look at ways we can reduce our need to use gas (for instance through ensuring better energy efficiency standards in new homes and a gov't funded energy efficiency retrofit program for existing houses etc

If the State is interested in contributing to the overall energy resources, why not develop the **renewable** resources?

Wind, Solar and Wave energy are all free, constant, and easy to access – is greed the issue preventing their development?

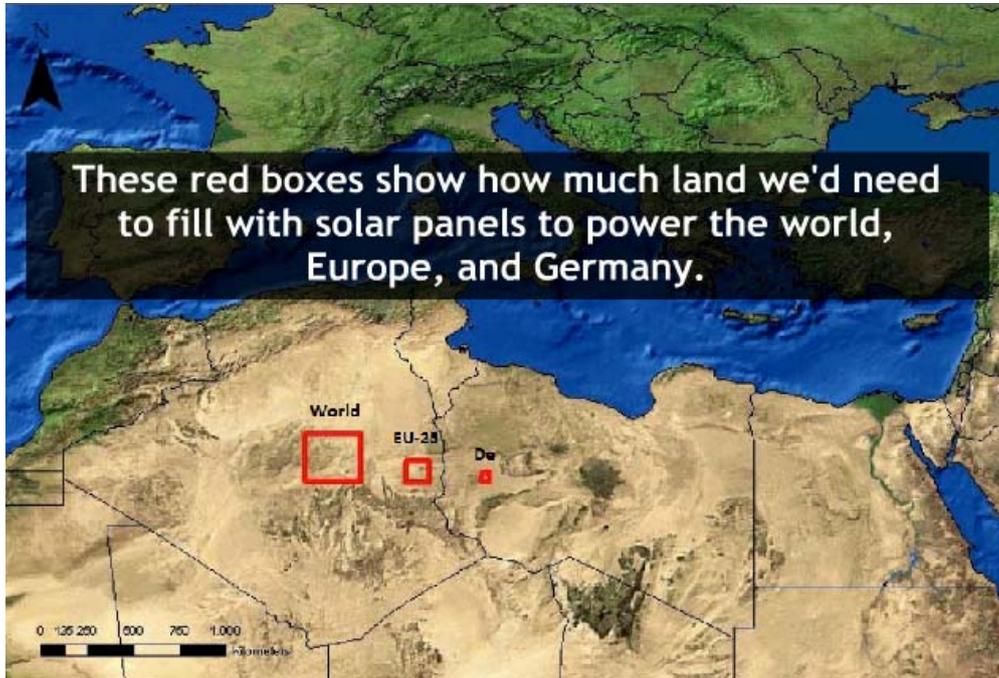

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO POWER A 100-WATT LIGHT BULB FOR AN ENTIRE YEAR?

Energy Source	Quantity
Coal	714 POUNDS OF COAL
Natural Gas	143 POUNDS OF NATURAL GAS
Wind Turbine	1.5 MW WIND TURBINE AT 25% CAPACITY FOR TWO HOURS AND 20 MINUTES

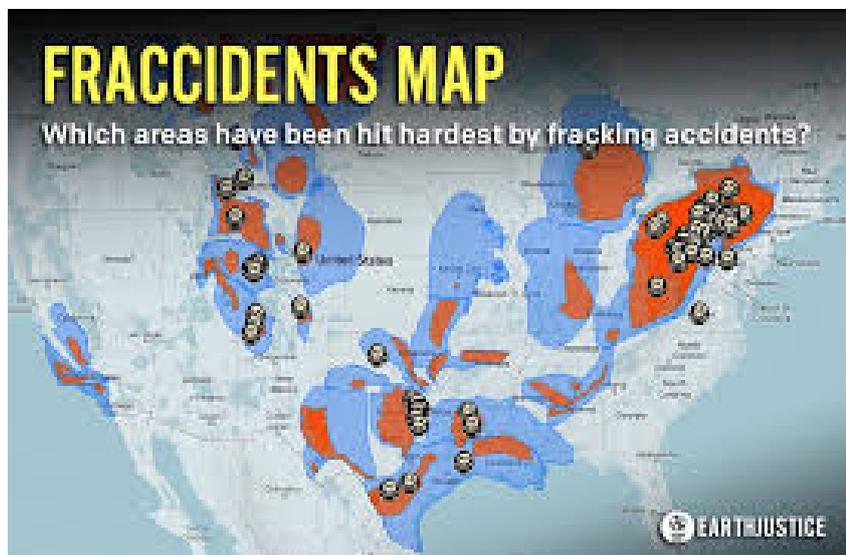
NOW THERE'S A LIGHT BULB MOMENT. #CLIMATEHOPE

Source: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelkanel/2014/10/05/a-light-bulb-shows-how-solar-and-wind-beat-coal/> CLIMATEREALITYPROJECT.ORG

Carbon Dioxide emissions from CSG mining sources are alarming – **greater than those from cars or cattle**. Air pollution from gas treatment plants, has dire consequences for human, animal and environmental health. **Renewable energy sources are clean.**



5. Regulatory safeguards would be impossible to police sufficiently, to prevent disastrous failures. Human error and greed nullifies any safeguards that are put in place.
 - (a) What more scientific work does the Government need?! People all over the world have had their health affected and their land destroyed as a result of Coal Seam Gas mining. **An industry with proven short term gain** – the Governments have sold out their taxpayers and now they are dying – what next?
 - (b) **Performance standards** – however good, or well meant, **mean nothing to large, greedy companies** and even less to their workers, who are often flown in from another country. They are not worth the paper they are written on.



6. Inquiries also mean very little unless action is taken. The Government must listen to its people and respect their views – we are the ones who pay your taxes, and vote for you to be our voice.

UNCONVENTIONAL GAS IS A HIT AND RUN ASSAULT ON FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES AND AGRICULTURAL LAND UNCONVENTIONAL GAS IS THE ASBESTOS OF OUR TIME

Health Impacts

- local children have near universal and severe **skin irritations and asthma** which worsens with proximity to the gas fields. Severe and recurrent **nosebleeds** are common.
- Severe neurological effects: McCarron found one third of children at Tara had parasthesia (abnormal sensations and numbness) and some had “abnormal movements” (central nervous damage).
- Severe effects on the unborn: US studies have shown **100% increase in neural tube defects** and **30% increase in congenital heart defects**.
- Huge increase in particulates which are class one carcinogens
- Wide range of toxic chemicals which show levels 10-100x above safe levels
- Existing health reports have suffered from poor methodology such as being based on affected people volunteering information only or intermittent testing which was discontinued, and are also hampered by the confidentiality agreements

Environmental Impacts

- release of very potent green house gases including methane, that nullify any GHG saving associated with the transition from coal to gas
- **unconventional gas extraction uses masses of water, draining our scarce water resources**
- **aquifer contamination** with toxic chemicals
- release of naturally occurring BTEX compounds and other contaminants into the atmosphere and into groundwater
- “produced water” is left in ponds that will inevitably leak or spill or sprayed on local roads
- **multiple earthquakes** are associated with fracking and csg globally
- toxic acid rain which strips paint off cars
- failure rates of gas wells increase each year

Agricultural Impacts

- **contamination** of water (flammable water) with toxic chemicals, leading to poisoning of livestock and contamination of our high quality agricultural industry products
- increase in groundwater and soil **salinity**
- **depletion of groundwater**

Community Impacts

- immediate community impacts include division and mistrust, then **falling property values** as the industrial process occurs and **health** impacts start to bite, agriculture being impacted, followed by families being bought out under confidentiality agreements, and communities being closed or relocated.

- unconventional gas extraction has near universal local disapproval, is strongly resisted, and proceeding is against communities self determination.

“We need jobs but not ones which poison our children and destroy our future” - Dr McCarron

Sincerely

Ann Ebbott

**Bolwarra Evergreen
Indoor Plant Hire and maintenance.**

