

Inquiry into unconventional gas in Victoria

Name: Amanda Hack

Firstly, I would like to say thankyou to the Environment and Planning Committee for allowing me the opportunity to comment on matters relating to the exploration, extraction, production and rehabilitation for onshore unconventional gas in Victoria.

I am a busy mother, married with two children, one with special needs, living in East Gippsland. I am a health professional who works part-time at the local community health centre in Lakes Entrance. I started to hear about Unconventional Gas some time ago. The more I heard about it and the issues surrounding it in Queensland, the more I became worried for Victoria, and in particular, East Gippsland, if this industry took hold here. I was always going to write to the inquiry with my concerns and urge for a ban on this industry. Today I spent the most glorious day out on the Gippsland Lakes with my son, neice and another family member. We took a boat cruise on our wonderful waterways and watching the children enjoy a magical day, identifying different bird species, has encouraged me to write this submission tonight.

Tourism. From what I have read, seen, listening to from all different avenues, I believe that this industry would have a detrimental impact on tourism for Victoria, and in particular, the Gippsland Lakes which is a Ramsar listed site. Tourism would be affected due to:

- possible contamination of our waterways from chemicals that are used in the extraction process.
- Noise from the extra vehicular traffic going to the exploration sites
- impacts on our 'Clean and Green image'.

Health risks. Again, from my understanding, the potential for adverse health risks are very high. As mentioned already, concerns with the chemicals that are used in the extraction process and what could happen if these chemicals leach into our groundwater or our beautiful lakes. Concerns that Victoria does undergo seismic activity which could lead to instability at the sites (again concerns with our water catchments).

Destabilisation of our community. I have seen what can happen to communities when mining moves in. Rents go up so suddenly and those on lower incomes struggle to stay living in an area and often have to move. A struggling farmer decides to take the cash offered to him by a company so exploration can occur on his land. Yet this has a detrimental effect on his neighbours land (devalues it, the coal seam gas may go under his neighbours property and hence mining occurs under his property). The whole social fabric of a community can be lost. Neighbour against neighbour, etc.

I am thankful for the Victorian Government for putting a Monetorium on Unconventional Gas Mining in Victoria. I also thank the Environment and Planning Committee for considering my views and concerns in relation to the exploration, extraction, production and rehabilitation for onshore unconventional gas in Victoria. I only hope that a ban will be the outcome. I want to be able to continue to enjoy our Pristine Environment, with my family, like I had today.

Thankyou
Amanda Hack