



RECEIVED 8 JULY 2015

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

4<sup>th</sup> July 2015

Submission to the State Inquiry into Unconventional Onshore Gas Mining.

Dear Sir,

I am a resident of Stratford in Central Gippsland. I am actively involved in community activities in the town including tourism, Landcare, and the Segue Community Hub and Arts Café.

I write to tell your committee that I am gravely concerned at the potential impact on the economy of our town and district if unconventional gas mining (UOGM) activity is allowed in the area between Stratford and Bairnsdale just North of the Gippsland Lakes. This area is currently subject to an exploration licence held by the mining company Ingnite Energy.

I do not support this activity for many reasons:

- In a recent survey local farmers and residents in the area have overwhelmingly rejected the proposal for any form of unconventional gas mining in the district. Residents should have the right to say no!
- There are well documented risks to ground water supply. Food and fibre production and the health of the Ramsar Listed Gippsland lakes should be paramount!
- The Gippsland Plains Grassy Woodlands EVC is critically endangered. Anything that poses additional risks to this is an insane thing to be contemplating!
  - chemical leaching into ground water from fracking; mining waste adjacent to the Gippsland Lakes System and flaring and fugitive gas emissions posing bush and grass fire threats.
- There are farmers and community organisations in this area who have been working hard over the last 30 years of Landcare activities to repair the damage done by farm practices in the past. The significant economic and environment benefits that have flowed from this activity cannot be underestimated. Thirty years of best practice farming cannot be swept aside for an industry that cannot coexist with the existing landscape.
- The Stratford community benefits economically and socially from a strong and resilience local farming and tourism sector. The health and production of our landscape and communities cannot be jeopardized.

Please consider my concerns when decisions are being made. Say no to the development of the (UOMG) industry here in East Gippsland and across the whole state.

[Redacted signature]

Beth Ripper