

To the Environment and Planning Committee,

I urge the Committee to consider a total ban on the establishment of an unconventional gas industry in Victoria, including coal seam gas (CSG). This industry has a record of horrendous accidents and mishaps, and is a proven enormous danger to our resources and our environment. The most serious threat is to our ground water supplies, and hence to public health and to agriculture and the pastoral industry.

As well, the unconventional gas industry involves of course the use of a fossil fuel and hence green-house emissions - at a time when we have been advised that time is running out for high emitting nations like Australia to start making deep cuts to emissions, not add to them. While it is true that burning gas involves fewer emissions than burning coal (especially brown coal), there seems little point spending time and money and resources establishing a new industry which would only have a very short-term useful life.

It would be simpler and more economic - as well as more responsible - to transition directly to renewable energy, making use of our huge supplies of free sunshine and wind to develop these industries of the future. Australia and Victoria could lead the world in this area, and ensure security for agriculture and energy for future generations. Renewable energy would also provide jobs for the long term, not short term ones as the gas industry would. Already there are more people employed in our state making solar panels than in the coal industry.

And already there are around 30 communities who have decided that the dangers involved in unconventional gas extraction are much too great for this industry for be considered for their area.

With thanks for your consideration

Sincerely

Freya Headlam (Dr)

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