



June 24, 2015

Keir Delaney  
Secretary  
Environment & Planning Committee  
Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria  
Parliament of Victoria  
Spring Street  
East Melbourne VIC 3002

### **Submission Objecting to ALL forms of Unconventional Gas Mining in Victoria**

To Members of The Environment & Planning Committee,

As a greatly concerned resident of Geelong, Victoria, I would like to submit my objection to Unconventional Gas Mining (Fracking) in our state, and request that you make a firm decision to reject Unconventional Gas Mining in Victoria both now and in the future. I wish to make it clear that I do not support ANY form of unconventional gas mining, including coal seam gas, tight gas, shale gas & underground coal gasification and will NEVER support it, no matter what potential regulations are put in place. My concerns regarding the Unconventional Gas Mining industry were initiated with my knowledge of permit PEP163 that has been granted to Lakes Oil Mining Company in order to undertake unconventional gas drilling exploratory operations in the Geelong region. After writing to our local council members in 2014, along with almost 450 others in the City of Greater Geelong, our councillors did their research and once informed about the Unconventional Gas Mining industry and voted unanimously to reject Unconventional Gas Mining in Geelong. I am now writing to express my great concern and objection to the permitting of unconventional Gas Mining ANYWHERE in Victoria. Given the huge area covered by the above permit in my home town of Geelong, which includes suburban residential properties and also country and farmland properties I am extremely concerned about the impact this would have on our region in the immediate and long term future and my concerns are greater now that we are facing the possible invasion of Fracking not just in Geelong, but throughout Victoria. We only have to look at the devastation already caused in Queensland and NSW to see how destructive this industry can be.

As a result of my research, I believe the major negative impacts for our region would be:

#### **HEALTH**

My research indicates that Australian regulations do not require the CSG mining companies to publicly list the chemicals they use in the Fracking process. And although they are willing to publicly list a small number of these chemicals, these are generally those they justify by their statement that these chemicals are found in most households. We should be aware however that the very real risk with Fracking is that these chemicals will end up in our drinking water supplies, and none of them have been checked for safety in this regard. Suggesting or implying that chemicals found in most households somehow makes them 'safe' is

extremely misleading, as this implication is a very different scenario to drinking household cleaning products in our water supply. Household chemicals are designed to clean. Do we really want those same chemicals in our drinking water and in the huge quantities they pump underground as part of Unconventional Gas Mining operations to fracture rock? Of course not! Please note the link below in regard to the health effects of Fracking.

<http://www.tai.org.au/content/fracking-good-your-health>

This lack of regulation by the government and lack of transparency and accountability on the part of the Unconventional Gas Mining industry is of great concern for the Victorian community and negligent on the part of our government, particularly as it has been discovered by victims of Fracking in Queensland and NSW that many of the chemicals used have the potential to cause major health problems to those exposed to them. These chemicals included ethylene, toluene, ethyl benzene, xylene and other known carcinogens. These chemicals are known to contribute to a variety of ailments affecting kidney, heart and lung function, bone marrow and the blood system and also impact on the hormonal and reproductive systems. It should not be overlooked that food producing livestock also suffer the effects of these toxins. This in turn negatively effects the food we eat. Please access the link below for a more in depth explanation of chemicals known to be used by the Fracking industry.

[NTN: Toxic chemicals in exploration & production of gas from unconventional sources 2013](#)

I would also like to draw your attention to the reports from Queensland and NSW where there have been numerous cases of impacts of Coal Seam Gas Mining that pose health and environmental threats to residents in and around those areas. These include the well known examples of children suffering headaches and ear and nose bleeds; toxic chemical contamination due to water spills and contamination of river systems (please see references listed below).

In addition to the well known risks to our physical health, further studies indicate that Fracking poses significant psychological threats to individuals due to the division and stress it causes to communities trying to come to terms with the complexities of this issue and the changes it brings to community life as they know it.

### WATER SUPPLIES

Not only is there millions of litres of our water supply used in the Unconventional Gas Mining process, but there is also the real threat of contamination of our underground water aquifers as a result of the mixture of chemicals, water and sand pumped underground to fracture the rock. If areas of our state no longer have a drinkable water supply we have lost our basic need for survival.

Also given how prone our state is to drought, it is absolutely criminal to even consider allowing mining companies to use millions of litres of our drinking water for their fracking process.

### THE ENVIRONMENT

Threats to farmland, with the possibility of contaminated water and air and the noise and air pollution arising from trucks entering the mining areas have the potential to negatively affect the production of clean, healthy food. This coupled with the emissions from gas fields may result in the greenhouse footprint worsening and contributing significantly to climate change in Australia. Organic farming, if affected will no longer be possible, and the health impacts mentioned above on humans will also be experienced by

farmland cattle and sheep, thus threatening the “clean, green” status of dairy producers such as in the Western District of Victoria and beyond.

Methane gas, which is produced through the Unconventional Gas Mining process is known to have an increased effect on global warming. What then are we leaving our next generation if we are covering our planet with gas wells emitting methane gas into the environment?

Experience in other states of Australia has shown us that chemical filled water used to pump into the Fracked well has not been disposed of adequately and neither has there been regulation by the governments responsible. This is not good enough!

Given that the Unconventional Gas Mining industry is relatively new, and all the dangers mentioned have not been resolved in any way over the course of the Fracking industry’s attack upon our planet, it makes no sense to even consider it in Geelong until such time as we have waited until it is proved beyond doubt that it can be carried out safely. Santos has already been fined for contamination resulting from fracking in NSW and it is clear that this type of issue must be addressed before any moratorium is lifted in Victoria. For further information please view the link below.

<http://mobile.abc.net.au/news/2014-01-10/santos-fine/5194320>

### BENEFITS

As far as I am aware there are simply no known benefits or advantages for the local community as a result of unconventional gas mining. Although it may be expected that more jobs would be created as a result of the Fracking industry, one doesn’t have to search too far to find evidence that this is clearly not the case. It is well known that these companies bring their own employees with them, who are experienced in this unique type of industry to avoid the time and money required to train local workers.

Any benefits to local business would at best be temporary and would not provide any long term gain to the community as a result of the sometimes fleeting nature of the industry’s presence in a township.

It should also be noted that any gas mined will be exported to East Asia. The gas will not benefit those local communities who sacrifice so much for this unaccountable and poorly regulated industry. In fact local gas prices are most likely to increase as a result of these exports. I have included the link below to a United States report on the impacts of Unconventional Gas Mining. This industry has been operating in The United States with detrimental effects for a number of years.

[http://www.environmentamerica.org/sites/environment/files/reports/EA\\_FrackingNumbers\\_scrn.pdf](http://www.environmentamerica.org/sites/environment/files/reports/EA_FrackingNumbers_scrn.pdf)

### OUR COMMUNITIES HAVE SPOKEN

In the last twelve months a number of our local communities have been surveyed and below are the percentage results of the survey in the listed towns. Therefore it can clearly be seen that there is no social licence for this industry in our region.

Towns declaring themselves Gasfield Free:-

Moriac - 97% of residents object to Unconventional Gas Mining.

Mt Moriack – 96% of residents object to Unconventional Gas Mining.

Paraparap – 92% of residents object to Unconventional Gas Mining

Freshwater creek – 93% of residents object to Unconventional Gas Mining

### IN CONCLUSION

I am aware that a moratorium has been placed on the current permit PEP163 in my home city of Geelong until October this year, but I do not feel this offers residents any sense of security, knowing that a moratorium at best is only temporary and can be lifted at any time by the government without public approval.

I am asking you as the representatives of the people of Victoria to reject all forms of all forms of Unconventional Gas Mining in the state of Victoria and to revoke all permits granted to Unconventional Gas Mining companies in Victoria. Please do what is right for our future and yours.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Lynley Manson