

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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The case against Unconventional Gas in Victoria seems so overwhelming that it is hard to understand why it is even an option in to a responsible Government today's world. I suppose greed and short-term expediency are the drivers.

Coal seam gas is not needed as an energy source, as solar and wind options are available and technologically feasible, renewable and not harmful to the natural environment or human health, or to the future of farming and water supplies.

As a specialist in land use, I have seen the ill-effects of drilling and exploitation on farming enterprises in Australia and in the USA - and the cost of these damages vastly outweigh any short-term economic advantages to communities or government that may be 'hoped for'.

One of the many known risks of developing coal seam gas in Australia is the damaging effect of the mining and extraction on hydrology and water supplies in surrounding areas. These effects are often uncertain and unpredictable from previous testing - but always cause deleterious (and sometimes pollution) of water supplies.

Water-tables in Victoria are already over-utilized in most areas, and CS gas extraction can only worsen this situation. In addition to water for farming, livestock and towns-people, groundwater is vital for the health of vegetation and for reducing the decline in biodiversity that is already occurring through climate change, lower rainfall and higher temperatures).

With regard to climate change, our country needs every litre of water to sustain the vegetation cover that is essential to sequester carbon to counter our massive rate of carbon emissions. Reducing water and increasing mined areas will only reduce the health of trees and other vegetation.

The CSIRO/BOM (2014) report 'State of the Climate' shows that most of Victoria's rainfall has fallen by 15-

205 in the past 20 years, and temperatures have risen, and the incidence of extreme hot (fire) days has significantly increased. Farmers (and townspeople) need every drop of water we have (and more) to produce crops and other products, to fight fires and for domestic and stock water. Extraction of coal seam gas is known to deplete water supplies, often to a very damaging effect, in many locations around the world.

I repeat - the evidence is overwhelming that unconventional gas extraction should not be allowed. Governments need to inform the public in all honesty that our children will have no healthy future at all unless over 70% of fossil fuels are left in the ground. We are heading for 2°C temperature rise now, but if we keep extracting C-rich fuels we are doomed to 4-6 degrees later in this century. To allow extraction of UC gasses would be irresponsible and send completely the wrong message to our society - that the status quo is fine.