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From: Inquiry into Unconventional Gas POV eSubmission Form
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Categories: Green category

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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I am 53, and I am a professional engineer and facilities manager. I have a deep interest in the environment and social justice, and about leaving the planet in a health state for the generation that follow. While i acknowledge that there is a place for business enterprise and the freedom for people to pursue wealth, this cannot be allowed if it is to the detriment of everyone else that currently shares the planet and others that follow.

It is the reason why i have a deep concern and do not support all forms of gas mining including coal seam gas. It seems that there is increasing evidence of the risks associated with some of these methods, in particular with some of the toxic chemicals used in the extraction process. The aquifers beneath us, is a resource that we all own and will come to increasingly rely on if the majority of climate models are to be believed, and to have a minority render this resource unusable to everyone is just plain wrong. (if we were to conduct an audit of the water that is required to grow the food and farm the animals which we rely on to feed, the importance of this resource with the impending changes forecast for our part of the world cannot be disputed).

The importance of the agricultural sector to us maintaining food sovereignty, and the potential source of income through export of agricultural produce is not to be underestimated. We are often able to attract premium prices for our exports due to the uncontaminated nature of our produce. The value of this 'branding' can be seen with the demand for baby formula from china, where the local product has been overlooked due to the lack of confidence in the safety of their own product. The agricultural sector is only too aware of the value of 'uncontaminated' product, and the difficulty to win the trust back once its lost. Therefore from a risk point of view, gas mining poses a threat to the 'clean' reputation of the industry.

The economic benefits from these schemes are often exaggerated. I expect there may be studies out there to verify the numbers involved, but when the potential losses to livelihoods are factored in, the benefits may be

exaggerated. In addition, once the cost to the communities in terms of the conflict, the anxiety and other health related matters, are factored in, the economic proposition may look quite different.

The numbers of people employed in the clean energy sector now in the US, is greater than that in oil and gas. Typically Australia are slow to catch on to changes in environmental sector that is happening elsewhere in the world, but generally we eventually pick up on the trends. Australia in recent years have been shamed on the world stage in our environmental performance, and the move to gas mining will further tarnish our reputation.

There is increasing evidence also that for every kg of gas that is captured, there is significant amount that leaks into the atmosphere. The methane is several fold more potent in the quantity of green house gas produced when compared to CO₂, so there is this additional cost to the environment.

As a body entrusted to make decisions that will likely to have long term repercussions to our health and well being, i urge you to look at the existing experience of similar schemes elsewhere, and take a cautionary approach, weigh up the potential benefits to a few multinational countries and a short term benefit in terms of royalties, against the potential long term degradation and losses to our agricultural sector and fresh water supply

Thanks

Harin

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File1:

File2:

File3: