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From: Inquiry into Unconventional Gas POV eSubmission Form
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Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

Mr Kees Dogger
[REDACTED]

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Submission to Parliamentary Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to this Inquiry.

My name is Kees Dogger, my wife is Michelle Lee-Dogger. We are both Instrumental Music Teachers in the State Secondary Education system. I have been teaching for 35 years and my wife 36 years. We moved from Melbourne some 28 years ago to live a life in the serenity of the East Gippsland Region and have never regretted this decision.

Over the past year or so we have been informed of Unconventional Gas Mining including Coal Seam Gas, Shale Gas and Underground Coal Gasification and the potential and “real” hazards involved to us and our community.

In this submission we would most strenuously recommend that Victoria ban all unconventional gas drilling permanently. We feel that this will give certainty to our existing industries of agriculture and tourism, making Victoria a more attractive place for investments in these industries plus new investments such as renewables. This will create much more long term jobs in sustainable industries.

We would like to list some of our specific concerns:

Health Impacts – Studies have demonstrated:

- local children have near universal and severe skin irritations and asthma which worsens with proximity to the gas fields. Severe and recurrent nosebleeds are common.
- Severe neurological effects: McCarron found one third of children at Tara had parasthesia (abnormal sensations and numbness) and some had “abnormal movements” (central nervous damage).
- Severe effects on the unborn: US studies have shown 100% increase in neural tube defects and 30% increase in congenital hear defects.
- Huge increase in particulates which are class one carcinogens
- Wide range of toxic chemicals which show levels 10-100x above safe levels
- Existing health reports have suffered from poor methodology such as being based on affected people volunteering information only or intermittent testing which was discontinued, and are also hampered by the confidentiality agreements

Environmental Impacts – studies have shown:

- release of very potent green house gases including methane, that nullify any GHG saving associated with the transition from coal to gas
- unconventional gas extraction uses masses of water, draining our scarce water resources
- aquifer contamination with toxic chemicals
- release of naturally occurring BTEX compounds and other contaminates into the atmosphere and into groundwater
- “produced water” is left in ponds that will inevitably leak or spill or sprayed on local roads
- multiple earthquakes are associated with fracking and csg globally
- toxic acid rain which stops paint off cars (Ph 4.36 McCarron)
- failure rates of gas wells increase each year

Agricultural Impacts – studies have demonstrated:

- contamination of water (flammable water) with toxic chemicals, leading to poisoning of livestock and contamination of our high quality agricultural industry products
- increase in groundwater and soil salinity
- depletion of groundwater
- contamination of water (flammable water) with toxic chemicals

Community Impacts – Studies have shown:

- immediate community impacts include division and mistrust, then falling property values as the industrial process occurs and health impacts start to bite, agriculture being impacted, followed by families being bought out under confidentiality agreements, and communities being closed or relocated.
- unconventional gas extraction has near universal local disapproval, is strongly resisted, and proceeding is against communities self determination

Conclusion

- The strong opposition to unconventional gas mining from communities that have to potentially live in a gasfield is growing; over 60 communities have said NO to gasfields on their land. These voices need to be heeded as these are the people who are most impacted.
- Consideration must be given to the many industries: tourism {in its many forms}, horticulture, agriculture, and fishing (commercial and hobby) and the internationally significant natural resources that could be detrimentally impacted that cannot co-exist with gas mining; the loss side of the equation is significant. Refer to data from the Australia Institute for corroboration.
- Current data shows there isn't a shortage of gas offshore in Victoria and demand for gas by Australian consumers is decreasing. This gas is not destined for domestic consumption and extracting it is what will contribute to increasing the domestic price. The real pressure is that gas companies don't have enough gas to meet their contracts overseas so they are trying to access gas to meet their Asian contracts, hence their interest in Victorian unconventional gas to be piped to Queensland.
- There is insufficient information to ensure the industry is regulated appropriately for Victorian conditions and its geology.
- The documented risks of CSG mining continues to grow and the only safe outcome is for a total ban on unconventional gas mining, or at a minimum, to extend the moratorium for another five years like Tasmania.

We hope that you will consider this submission and you will recommend banning all unconventional gas drilling permanently. This is bad for health, bad for the community, bad for the environment and bad for agriculture.

Thank you.

Kees Dogger B.Ed. B.Arts(hon).
Michelle Lee-Dogger B.MusEd.

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File1:

File2:

File3: