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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.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria.

Dr Sam Long
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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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I am very concerned at the failure of the Victorian government to ban unconventional gas fracking. Victoria needs a permanent ban on all unconventional gas.

The Australian Energy Market Operator has provided evidence that there is currently no gas shortage in Victoria or elsewhere in Australia. The opening of the NSW and Queensland LNG markets to overseas buyers following linking of East Coast gas supplies has resulted in dramatic price increases and significant pressure to expand Australia's gas exports - but these pressures are driven by the desire of extractors to sell more of their product overseas and generate a greater income. As a result, pressure to increase gas fracking is predominantly driven by commercial interests tied to increasing export, rather than a desire to provide energy security for existing domestic markets.

This would not necessarily be a reason to oppose fracking per se, but there is mounting evidence that the associated risks to farming land and water resources exist. NSW regulators have established that fracking has led to significant groundwater contamination and increased levels of radioactivity. Experience from Oklahoma in the United States has shown that fracking can seriously impact geological stability and lead to an alarming increase in earthquake activity. Victorian voters have already seen from the Hazelwood mine fire that regulatory systems can fail (particularly given the State's tendency to introduce self-regulation and 'light touch' approaches to regulation), and that failure can lead to environmental and public health disasters. It is not worth the risk to ignore these warnings and continue down this path.

According to the Australian Energy Market Operator, there is no gas shortage in Victoria or anywhere else in Australia, so there is no need to risk the health of crucial farmland just to extract gas that we don't need.

There is growing evidence of fugitive emissions (ie. leaking) from unconventional gas processes, showing that gas is not as clean as once thought, and we are rapidly approaching the point in our planet's history

when all of our attention should be diverted away from new fossil fuel sources of energy. Gas therefore has no place in Victoria's future energy mix. If Victoria is to be considered a leader on climate change, the government cannot allow a new gas industry to be established.

As a result I submit that there should be a permanent ban on gas fracking activity. This is an industry which is not going to benefit Victorians - only the gas producers.

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File1:

File2:

File3: