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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 10 July 2015 4:14 PM
To: EPC
Subject: Unconventional Gas

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria

I would like to make a submission to the State government's Inquiry into unconventional gas.

I believe there is a compelling case for an outright and permanent ban on all onshore unconventional gas drilling in Victoria. The experiences of this industry in other parts of the world, including Queensland and New South Wales, clearly demonstrate it cannot co-exist with agriculture, tourism or urban living. All human welfare and sustainable enterprise requires a healthy environment. Without clean water, clean air and clean nutritious food the future is bleak.

Continued reliance on fossil fuels is foolhardy. It is now undeniable that burning fossil fuels is a major contributor to climate change. Climate change phenomena of drought, fire, flood, violent storms and sea surges will impact us all most detrimentally. Infrastructure worth many millions of dollars will be destroyed, the environment will be severely impacted and the cost to people will never be recouped through the money produced by this industry. It is well known the costs associated with unconventional gas extraction are high and the gas produced will need to bring a very high price to make the industry viable. Not something friendly and beneficial to the local population. It is far smarter to invest now in green energy – industry that will employ more people over a much longer period of time and will benefit the local population in maintaining health and lifestyle.

There are serious concerns about contamination of aquifers which are an important part of farming the arable lands in Gippsland as well as bringing unwanted contaminants to the surface to pollute both the surface and ground water. The people in Gippsland are already deeply concerned about the known serious contamination of our rivers and the Gippsland Lakes through mining and quarrying practices from the 19C to the present time. Pregnant women and other vulnerable people are advised to eat sparingly of fish caught in the Gippsland Lakes. Contaminating other food and water sources would be a very serious retrograde step. Further to this there has been concern about fugitive gas concentrations around UCG operations. Methane leaking into the atmosphere is 20 times more damaging than CO₂. There is a great deal of confusing information about UCG. It seems a lot more concerted effort is required to make a very good case for it, particularly as production is a short term. I went to the information session held by the previous government in Bairnsdale. The groups were full so I went away and returned over an hour later. The groups were still full. I waited a further hour with no place available in these information groups. I was very annoyed. It seemed deliberate lack of genuine will to inform the public fully and impartially. I do not think Victorians are well enough informed about this industry and urge you to ban it as a bad deal for us. It is far better government leadership to have an innovative view of developing sustainable, clean energy.

Yours faithfully

Cheryl Mainard