

From: [REDACTED]
To: [ramсар](#)
Subject: Save Westernport wetlands from AGL's proposed gas terminal
Date: Sunday, 24 November 2019 3:37:43 PM

Dear Committee Members,

While I live in Melbourne, I have spent a significant amount of time travelling to and enjoying the unique environment of beautiful Westernport Bay throughout my life. I represent one of many Victorians with a connection to the local land, and one of many eco-tourists that the Bay stands to lose if further industrialisation of the area goes ahead.

The 2016 Victorian Auditor General's report "Meeting Obligations to Protect Ramsar Wetlands" raised some key deficiencies, and I'm pleased to see the Parliament following up to review the Government's response.

Wetlands play a vital role in the functioning of global ecosystems, from migratory bird and fish breeding to storing carbon from the atmosphere. Victoria is lucky to have diverse wetland environments, all with unique characteristics, plants, animals, fish and insects.

While I look forward to following the work of this committee with regard to all Ramsar wetlands in our beautiful state, I'm writing to make a submission focused on the wetlands in Westernport Bay.

I am deeply concerned by the current AGL proposal to bring a Floating Storage and Regasification ship to Westernport Bay. I feel this ship presents a real threat to Westernport's fragile mangrove ecosystem. This is the most southerly mangrove system in the world and is home to threatened migratory birds like the Eastern Curlew.

I am concerned about AGL's proposal for two key reasons.

First, I'm worried about the proposed ship's direct impact on the mangroves, fish, birds and other life in the bay as a result of being permanently parked in the bay and dumping cooled and chlorinated water. I'm also worried about the potential for marine pests to be brought into the Bay on Japanese ships, an area in which many marine pests are currently not seen, as well as the impact of increased boat traffic to fill the ship on marine animals like whales.

Second, at a time when the impacts of climate change are more and more felt, I'm deeply troubled that our state is considering a new fossil fuel project, let alone in a sensitive and precious mangrove wetland. I cannot understand the need for Victoria to consider importing gas, when we should instead be supporting households, business and industry to transition to renewable energy alternatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to make the committee aware of my concerns about the proposed AGL ship and also to share my passion for wetland conservation across Victoria.

I look forward to great outcomes for our wetlands as a result of this inquiry.

Kind regards

Yours sincerely,
Nikkola Mikocki-Bleeker

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