



Review of Coal Seam Gas Activities

Sue Wilmott to: csg.review

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History:

This message has been replied to and forwarded .

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find attached my submission into the Review of Coal Seam Gas Activities in NSW.

Kind regards



Sue Wilmott Review of Coal Seam Gas Activities Submission.doc

Sue Wilmott
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9 April 2013

To the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer and the review team

Re:-Review of Coal Seam Gas Activities with a focus on the impacts of these impacts on human health and the environment.

I am fortunate enough to live on the highly productive black soil Liverpool Plains region in NSW. Our farming enterprise produces wheat, sorghum, canola, oats, chickpeas, sunflowers, barley and beef cattle and will continue doing so for generations if this region is safeguarded from the impacts of extractive industries such as coal and coal seam gas mining.

I would like to state from the start that I am emphatically opposed to any mining of coal, coal seam gas or any other extractive industry as this is one of the most highly productive agricultural regions in Australia and therefore should not be compromised to “co-exist” with mining activities but be set aside for the growing of food and fibre.

Our water resources throughout Australia must be protected for all viable industries especially those critically important ones such as agriculture that focus on the huge task of feeding our growing global populations projected to be at a staggering nine billion by 2030.

In so doing it is imperative that protection of our water resources is not compromised in any way and by this review into coal seam gas activities it is hoped that tighter controls are put into place to guarantee our water resources are adequately protected.

The effect of mining on the Liverpool Plains groundwater and aquifers has been studied and researched through the Namoi Valley Water Study.

The concerns raised in this study highlight there would be impacts and in particular, raised alarm bells as to the uncertainty surrounding the potential cumulative impacts of multiple developments. (The Shenhua Watermark Project EIS is at present asking for submissions plus BHP Billiton have intentions of longwall mining in the region adjoining the Shenhua Project, and coal seam gas companies have also been conducting exploratory drilling in the area.)

This is of great concern to the farming enterprises on the Liverpool Plains as water is an absolute essential element in our ongoing agricultural businesses.

Without a continued supply of clean reliable water we are unable to grow the food to feed this nation and provide food for export.

It is, in fact, agriculture’s life blood!!

In 2011 I attended a seminar at the University of Sydney “Agricultural soil and Mining” looking at agriculture and coal seam gas mining.

This seminar dealt with the facts and greatly influenced my understanding of the environmental impacts of coal seam gas.

Associate Professor Stephen Cattle, University of Sydney Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources stated that the water debate has already started regarding agriculture and mining, but the soil debate hasn't really begun.

He said there was a need to quarantine our soils and the Liverpool Plains has the best soils in the country.

Issues posed by Coal Seam Gas:-

- Loss of arable land for life of wells
- Alter groundwater/aquifer depths and quality
- Fate of saline water or salts extracted from water
- Fate of soil and water pollutants used in the fraccking process.
- Will hamper farmers ability to produce the quantity of food we'll need into the future for our growing populations

Also at the seminar Dr John Williams, NSW Natural Resources Commissioner, Wentworth Concerned Scientists stated that there is a need to work out up front, where we can and cannot mine as our river systems plus our food and fibre production will be impacted by coal seam gas.

He stated our need for an integrated science based approach and legislative frameworks to do a lot better job than what has occurred in the past.

He stated we need good long term regional land use management planning including no go areas and we need to take a holistic approach to the issue of land management and land use.

Associate Professor Ruth Colaguirri also spoke from the Medical School, Sydney Uni. Her life's work has been involved with chronic diseases that are generated in the environments where we live. These go hand in hand with environmental damage. She stated that at present we have to eat twice as much food to get the same nutrients as we did a generation ago.

She stressed the need to look after our soils for food growing and mentioned that the chemicals used in fraccking haven't even been assessed.

She stressed that health is the most valuable thing society has and emphasised the need for serious public debate into physical and mental health issues associated with mining and coal seam gas.

These speakers are leading experts in their fields and raised serious concerns as to the impacts of the coal seam gas industry. These concerns must be addressed.

As our NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer you have the responsibility to make sure the government will do all it can to protect our most valuable assets- our water, our environment and our health.

If there is the slightest possibility that damage will be done through coal seam gas activities then this industry needs to be brought to a halt.

Please do all you can to ensure we set aside and protect our precious highly productive agricultural land and water resources in this state not only for our present generation but for future generations to come.

Yours sincerely,
Sue Wilmott