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CountryMinded, Boggabilla NSW, made the following submission on the project:

[Narrabri Gas Project](#)



Objects to this project

CountryMinded is opposed to the proposed Narrabri CSG development.

In the current economic paradigm there is politically driven conflict around the prioritisation of resources to finite production of extractive industries as opposed to the comparatively infinite production of agricultural industries.

There is a clear political bias toward energy companies and subsequent planning arrangements demonstrate this. In the competition for access to resources for development, agriculture is not proffered the same access or leniency in regards to environmental constraints.

If the proposed Narrabri CSG development were assessed with the same standards applied to any agricultural development it would necessarily not be approved. It is unacceptable that planning arrangements can be inconsistent in this context.

Australia has enjoyed an abundance of agricultural lands with little regard for food security based on consistent export surpluses. However, the global food challenge paints a bleak picture for regional food security into the future. Future demands on agricultural production demand that the natural resources that underpin that production must be protected for future generations.

Extractive industries must operate with a genuine "do no harm" commitment that is not time-framed. It is a matter of strategic national importance and national security.

Clearly the threats to agricultural land vary between the nature of the extraction method, the intensity of the agricultural enterprise and the ability of the two activities to coexist.

It is increasingly apparent that the larger issue around extractive industries and their impact on agricultural production systems is in relation to direct and collateral impacts on ground water assets.

In most agricultural landscapes, water is the most limiting resource. The complexity of the hydrology in ground water systems presents difficulties for the assessment of impacts of a particular activity until after the activity is undertaken and even then it is not always clear what the causes and effects are.

CountryMinded is committed to the prioritisation of agriculture and the protection of agriculturally important natural resources.

CountryMinded is also committed to objective evidence based policy. In the situation of extractive industries and the conflicting science, biased as it may be, the precautionary principle must prevail. Consideration must be given both to the likelihood of a particular outcome and the severity of a particular outcome.

In relation to disruption of essential ground water supplies and its impact on current and future production, CountryMinded is conservative in its view and would necessarily oppose any extractive industry that poses a threat to these resources.

The onus of proof must lie with the extractive industry proponents to prove that their intended activity will have no lasting impact on the productivity of the agricultural landscape.

In response to the issues raised above CountryMinded must:

* Oppose CSG and the extension of coal extraction until there is no risk to groundwater assets, productive agricultural land and human health.

* Prioritise the right of agricultural enterprise over extractive industries in access negotiations.