

1. The Narrabri Gas Project is likely to affect the all important water aquifer, the Great Australian Basin which is Australia's largest aquifer. Australia is a dry continent and cannot afford to pollute the existing water resources it has. Most of the water for this all important aquifer comes from the area that Santos is targeting for CSG mining – the Pilliga East Forest. In addition, creeks from the Pilliga run into the Namoi River, part of the Murray Darling Basin. If this gas project goes ahead, these all important water resources are likely to be contaminated by drilling spills and salty treated water produced from the 850 proposed wells.
2. The need for climate action is now. CSG mining produces methane – a greenhouse gas 72 times more powerful than CO<sub>2</sub>. In light of the federal government's failure to do anything effectively to take action to reduce global warming, state governments are left with the responsibility of taking action.
3. The Pilliga is a special place for Australia's unique flora and fauna. For example, it is home to over 200 bird species<sup>1</sup> and has been internationally recognised as an Important Bird Area. The gasfield would damage 95,000 hectares of the Pilliga with well pads, drilling, pipelines and toxic effluent. This would affect many of the endangered species that live in the area including – koalas, spotted-tail quoll, black-striped wallaby and Pilliga mouse.
4. It does not make long-term economic sense to approve this. So for whose benefit exactly is this for? The cost of producing renewable energy has now fallen below the cost of coal, gas and oil. As it is, there is now too much supply of gas and not enough demand. <sup>2</sup>If we are looking at the long-term economics of this, every plant, tree, animal, water system that is damaged or destroyed should be properly assessed as a cost factor and built into the equation of the State's overall assets.
5. Farmers and other food producers in the region have been surveyed and over 90% are opposed. Farmers in the region have now become protesters, as Coonamble farmer, Neil Kennedy, stated in The Land "If the government had done its job and protected the Great Artesian Basin from Coal Seam Gas none of us would be having to protest in the Pilliga. <sup>3</sup>
6. In past CSG mining efforts, Santos has shown an inability to protect the environment from toxic spills, for example a report from the EPA revealed that in one incident, water from the groundwater aquifer downstream of

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<sup>1</sup> BirdLife International (2017) Important Bird Areas factsheet: Pilliga  
<http://www.birdlife.org>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-04-06/wind-and-solar-are-crushing-fossil-fuels>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.theland.com.au/story/3773273/csg-protesters-in-ministers-sights/>

a leak was found to contain 20 times the acceptable level of uranium for drinking water.<sup>4</sup>

7. The local indigenous custodians, the Gamilaraay are firmly opposed to the Santos project as Raymond “Bubbly” Weatherall has told media “coal and gas is no good for us and no good for country.”
8. The Sidings Springs Observatory is at risk of being permanently affected from light pollution – this from all the gas flares from the nearby wells. Everyone has heard of Wifi and the role that Australian scientists played in the invention of this all-important technology. Incidentally, this invention has brought in something like up to a billion dollars to the Australian economy. But what not many people know is that it is observatories like this one that have given Australian physicists and scientists the chance to explore valuable theories and technologies. Without spending time at Australia’s observatories, John O’Sullivan and the Wifi team would have never managed to do what they did.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <http://theconversation.com/coal-seam-gas-water-leaks-could-be-a-problem-for-decades-24718>

<sup>5</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_O'Sullivan\\_\(engineer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_O'Sullivan_(engineer))