

Public Submission Narrabri Gas Project

To whom it may concern,

I, Ben McCoy, object to the Narrabri Coal Seam gas project.

Santos has admitted that their business plan is based on 4 degrees of global temperature rise [1], where the Australian government has agreed, on behalf of Australians, to reduce global emissions to that of 2 degrees [2]. This means that other companies, organisations, institutions, and tax payers will have to compensate for Santos's negligence and ignorance over the next few decades during the switch to a zero-carbon economy. On this basis alone, Santos should not be allowed to operate as a company until they have a clear, committed, public plan on how they are planning to move forward with the rest of Australia and achieve no more than 2 degrees of temperature rise.

Coal Seam Gas is one of the most damaging and impactful methods of resource extraction in Australia and has been proven to leak methane into the nearby rivers and the atmosphere [3]. Methane is a gas which has over 20 times the Global Warming Potential of carbon dioxide [4]. Coal Seam Gas pollutes the water and the atmosphere and Santos will not be responsible for these emissions so again the responsibility will fall on the tax payer to cover Santos's pollutants.

The export of Australian LNG to Japan has led to shortfalls of natural gas within our own country. If companies like Santos are going to extract resources at the expense of the public's environment, they should at least use the gas extracted domestically. However, the majority of gas being extracted within Australia is being exported to countries like Japan, where despite huge shipping costs, the gas is still being sold at wholesale rates lower than here in Australia [5]. Australians don't even get to benefit from resources extracted at the expense of their environment.

The price of natural gas has skyrocketed in recent years due to over exporting of LNG to East Asia, there is no evidence that the gas extracted in this project will be used domestically and will not be exported overseas, further increasing the domestic cost of natural gas.

Some specific concerns about this project that I have are:

- Over 35 billion litres of toxic ground water will be extracted, creating tens of thousands of tonnes of salt for which there is no safe disposal plan.
- The Pilliga is a fantastic natural reserve home to unique wildlife, and this project will clear over 1,000 hectares of Pilliga forest.
- The great Artesian basin is already under threat from the Adani coal mine (which has unlimited access to water in the aquifer) and this project will cause diversion of water from a recharge aquifer to the basin.
- The Gamilaraay peoples of the local area consider this location crucial to the spiritual, cultural and social life of the community.
- There has been no investigation into the health impacts of Coal Seam Gas, especially when peer-reviewed research is coming out of the USA stating the CSG has negative effects on health.

I hope these concerns are taken seriously, especially given that Santos has no social license to operate by being at odds with the entire population and government of Australia by operating on a 4 degree business plan. Finally, the Australian public seems to lose more than they could benefit if this project goes ahead given the current over exporting of LNG, the release of harmful methane into waterways and the atmosphere and the lack of a detailed plan from Santos.

Kind regards and thanks for your time,

Ben McCoy

[1] <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/may/05/santos-admits-business-plan-based-4c-global-temperature-rise>

[2] <http://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change/international/paris-agreement>

[3] <https://www.csiro.au/en/Research/EF/Areas/Oil-gas-and-fuels/Onshore-gas/Coal-seam-gas-fugitives>

[4] <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/understanding-global-warming-potentials>

[5] <http://www.news.com.au/finance/business/mining/the-absurdity-of-australia-facing-a-gas-shortage/news-story/7ce0d2e9bf0029d6049a90bcfa4243a3>