

Scott Monro
2 Geneva Street, Berowra
New South Wales, 2081
18/05/2017

Attn: Executive Director
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39, Sydney
New South Wales, 2001

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter **in objection** to the Narrabri coal seam gas project as proposed by Santos Ltd. I believe that there will be detrimental environmental and social impacts if this project continues, regardless of any attempted effort to offset or mitigate them. Some of my main concerns are:

- Trauma to the local indigenous community and the traditional owners – the Gamilaraay people – due to interfering with land that holds spiritual and cultural significance to them. This impact cannot be quantified nor compensated, as the connection to country is irreplaceable and invaluable.
- Clearing almost 1,000 hectares of the Pilliga forest, causing fragmentation of the remaining temperate woodland. This will negatively impact the health and function of the ecosystem while releasing carbon and reducing ecosystem services. It will also threaten the survival of species including the Koala, Spotted-tailed Quoll, Eastern Pygmy-possum, the endemic Pilliga Mouse and critically-endangered Regent Honeyeater, by the destruction of their already scarce habitat.
- Risks to groundwater of the Great Artesian Basin and contamination of tributaries of the Murray-Darling Basin. The extraction of 35 billion litres of water and subsequent depressurization will likely alter groundwater flows, preventing recharge of surface springs and bores, and causing an overall drawdown of the watertable. Tributaries feeding to the Murray-Darling could be contaminated from drilling fluid leaks and spillage from brine wastewater ponds. It is not fair on the communities that rely on these water resources to have them threatened in this way.
- Creation of thousands of tonnes of salt waste, up to 115 tonnes a day, with no way to dispose apart from containment in landfill. This amount of waste shows an extremely inefficient method of production and sending it to landfill is unacceptable as we need to move away from this 'disposable' attitude. We need technology that does not create such a high amount of waste – such as renewable energy.
- Farmers have shown enormous opposition to the project and fear threat to their agricultural productivity from the potential impacts on groundwater – putting state food production in jeopardy and causing stress for farmers.
- Coal seam gas is still contributing to global warming through the release of greenhouse gases – both carbon dioxide from combustion and methane from

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fugitive emissions. Flaring will have to be performed and this imposes a fire hazard in the region which, when coupled with climate change, will result in conditions for extreme weather and disastrous fire events.

- The blatant lies of the gas industry in generating the 'gas crisis' scenario. There is no need for new gas production in Australia as we know there are plentiful gas resources being tapped into and the majority is exported. Domestic prices have risen dramatically, and this is a direct result of the actions of the industry in pursuing greedy motives. If we need gas, we can redirect it to domestic instead of overseas; however we should be striving for renewable energy, NOT more fossil fuels.

Overall, I strongly believe that the potential environmental impacts to land, water, biodiversity, and climate change are reasons enough to prevent this project going ahead. Combine them with the guaranteed social impacts on indigenous culture and farming communities – it further reinforces that the negatives outweigh the positives in this project. Furthermore, the justification that more gas wells are needed in order to ease the supposed 'gas crisis' in NSW and assist with reducing energy costs is flawed.

I urge you to strongly consider these points, in particular recognising the need to move away from fossil fuels in order combat the threat of human-induced climate change; but also that the social impacts to individuals and communities of all backgrounds – particularly indigenous – cannot adequately be quantified nor compensated. On these grounds I recommend that this project **be rejected**.

Kind Regards,

Scott Monro

Phone: 0426814148

Email: c3132694@uon.edu.au