

Mr Mike Young,
NSW Dept. of Planning & Environment,
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY, NSW 2001

7th June, 2017

Dear Mike,

I am absolutely convinced that this Stygofauna report from Peter Serov (enclosed), is another vital link in our scientific proof of how critically important the Pilliga forest is, to protecting our Great Artesian Basin. This groundbreaking report, combined with the GDE submission from David Paull, combined with the earlier Robert Banks GAB Recharge Report, and with Dr. Matthew Currell's Report re the critical value of the GAB Recharge area, right where Santos want to drill - all this *must* now be sufficient evidence and science for any government to realise that they simply *cannot* risk our precious groundwater and our Great Artesian Basin, by approving the Narrabri Gas Project.

There are so many expert scientists now, all providing evidence that the proposed extensive CSG development in the Pilliga, is just not on. The Pilliga Forest area and in particular the area delegated for the Santos Coal Seam Gas development is situated right on the recharge zone of the Great Artesian Basin (via the Pilliga Sandstone Aquifer). It must be now clearly seen that any impact on the groundwater quantity and water quality of the receiving waters of the GAB would have significant intergenerational impacts to the highly sensitive and significant groundwater dependent ecological communities in north-western NSW. (Not to mention the very dependent human communities which also rely totally on our artesian water!).

Due to the slow movement of water through the GAB these impacts would take tens to hundreds of years to be detected, would be impossible to remediate (when they were detected), and would affect all future generations reliant on the quantity and quality of this groundwater for stock, domestic and agricultural uses. It is suggested here that all GAB recharge areas should be given a protection status equivalent to 'National Parks and Wilderness Reserves' that would ban aquifer interfering developments such as coal and CSG in these areas in order to protect the groundwater of the GAB from the high likelihood of contamination from Coal and CSG mining.

Also identified is the intergenerational risk of contamination of the Great Artesian Basin via its recharge beds in the Pilliga Sandstone Aquifer. This point of “intergenerational equity” was clearly highlighted in the recent Acland mine Land & Environment court case, when in his judgment, Land Court judge Paul Smith said the risks to groundwater were just too great. The Land Court judgement concluded that ***“The principles of intergenerational equity are breached.....with the potential for groundwater impacts to adversely affect landholders in the vicinity of the mine for hundreds of years to come”***. This is an extraordinarily strong and important outcome - where the Land Court has recognised that the impacts on our water supplies, our farm businesses and farmland, and the health of our families are simply too great.

So the clear evidence of the critical importance of the GAB is highlighted in the Recharge Report (enclosed), David Paul’s GDE Report (enclosed), Dr. Currell’s groundwater report on how vital the Pilliga recharge area of the GAB is (also enclosed); and the Frontier Economics Report (enclosed) which highlights the incredible economic value of the GAB. So it’s not just the communities who will be displaced (as we literally could not exist out here without the groundwater), and it’s not just the valuable food-producing farmland that would be lost forever (as no-one could farm – or even live – here without our artesian water) - but its also the ‘intergenerational equity’ that would be breached, by destroying our only permanent water source, and our children’s future.

I am almost 70 years old, my husband is almost 75 - there will be enough food and water for our lives!! But I worry desperately about my grandchildren, and indeed all future Australians - as the damage caused to the Great Artesian Basin will be irreparable. There is no way to clean up a polluted aquifer, no way to repair a fractured one, and no way to remove all the corroding, polluting and disintegrating wells from deep underground – where they will be causing massive inter-aquifer leakage forever.

I truly appreciate you and your Department’s genuine impartiality in reviewing this EIS, and I witnessed your genuine distress (at our meeting) when you saw how our MP Kevin Humphries tried to “pre-determine” the independent process by which you review our Submissions, when he had said (several times) to the media that this EIS was just a “tick the box” exercise, and that it would definitely be approved! And I also am still very grateful (as is our whole northwest community), that you and Carolyn took the time and trouble to visit us out here, and see for yourself this wonderful country, and what we stand to

lose. You listened to our concerns, and you took the time to see for yourself what is at stake. We are forever in your debt for that!

I will try to email this to you, but I have huge problems with the internet (and my email system!) so I am going in to town to also post it to you.

Again, many thanks for giving our ecologists the extra time to complete these field studies of the stygofauna and the GDE's, and to include them with our ABWUA submission - as I said, I believe this stygo study is of enormous significance.

Kind regards,

Anne Kennedy

"Yuma"

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President Artesian Bore Water Users Association