

I am opposed to The Narrabri Gas Project, as it is a poor investment for Australians.

Any short-term economic benefit will accrue to a minority of stakeholders: Santos' shareholders, Santos' executives and foreign consumers of dangerous climate change inducing gas. This project will do nothing to ease any coming Australian gas shortage, as the extracted gas will be exported.

The costs of the project will be unfairly borne by the environment, local communities and existing businesses including tourism and farming. Excessive risks, including the risk of Santos' history of poor practices will be borne by the Environment and all current and future generations of Australians.

The role of Government is to protect the people of Australia, as such, The Narrabri Gas Project is a very poor investment choice.

The project significantly risks the environment

The Narrabri Gas Project risks precious water sources, including the Great Artesian Basin—Australia's largest groundwater aquifer

The Narrabri gasfield poses a real risk to our two most precious water resources: the Great Artesian Basin and the Murray-Darling Basin. The area of the Great Artesian Basin with the highest recharge rates is almost entirely contained within the Pilliga East forest. In a worst-case scenario, the water removed for CSG extraction could reduce water pressure in the recharge areas—potentially stopping the free flow of waters to the surface at springs and bores across the whole Great Artesian Basin.

Creeks in the Pilliga run into the Namoi River—a part of the Murray Darling Basin. This system is vulnerable to contamination from drilling fluid spills and the salty treated water produced from the proposed 850 wells.

Thousands of tonnes of salt waste will result from the project

Santos has no solution for disposing of the hundreds of thousands of tonnes of salt that will be produced. Between 17,000 and 42,000 tonnes of salt waste would be produced each year. This industry would leave a toxic legacy in NSW.

The project is proposed in the Pilliga, a haven for threatened wildlife

The Pilliga is one of 15 nationally listed 'biodiversity hotspots' and is vital to the survival of threatened species like the Koala, Spotted-tailed Quoll, Black-striped Wallaby, Eastern Pygmy-possum, Pilliga Mouse and South-eastern Long-eared Bat. The forest is home to over 200 bird species and is internationally recognised as an Important Bird Area². The Santos gasfield would fragment 95,000 hectares of the Pilliga with well pads, roads, and water and gas pipelines—damaging vital habitat and threatening the survival of endangered species.

The project is directly counter to the wishes of the local community

The Gamilaraay Traditional Custodians are opposed

There are hundreds of cultural sites as well as songlines and stories connecting the Gamilaraay to the forest and to the groundwater beneath. Gamilaraay people are deeply involved in the battle against CSG, and have told Santos they do not want their country sacrificed for a coal seam gas field.

Farmers and other local community reject the project

Extensive community surveys have shown an average of 96% opposition to CSG. This stretches across a massive 3.2 million hectares of country surrounding the Pilliga forest, including 99 communities. Hundreds of farmers have participated in protest actions unlike any previously seen in the region.

The project risks human health and wellbeing

Human health is compromised by coal seam gas

A range of hydrocarbons and volatile organic compounds can be released into the air from coal seam gas operations, including flaring of gas wells. The effects of volatile organic compounds vary, but can cause eye, nose and airway irritation, headache, nausea, dizziness and loss of coordination⁴. These impacts have been documented in human populations nearby to existing gasfields in Queensland, Sydney and in America.

The long-term costs and risks involved in this project are excessive

Coal seam gas fuels dangerous climate change

Methane is by far the major component of natural gas, and is a greenhouse gas 72 times more powerful than CO₂. CSG fields contribute to climate change through the leakage of methane during the production, transport, processing and use of coal seam gas.

The Narrabri Gas Project has a long history of spills and leaks of toxic CSG water—Santos cannot be trusted to manage the project safely

Santos has already contaminated a freshwater aquifer in the Pilliga with uranium at levels 20 times higher than safe drinking water guidelines, as well as lead, aluminium, arsenic and barium². In addition, there have been over 20 reported spills and leaks of toxic CSG water from storage ponds, pipes and well heads. Santos cannot be trusted.

Yours Sincerely