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Attn: **Executive Director, Resource Assessments Department of Planning and Environment**
GPO Box 39 Sydney NSW 2001

This is a submission to the Narrabri Gas EIS.

I object to this project and I call on the Department for it to be rejected.

I object for the following reasons:

Disposal of produced salt

Santos claims that it will fully treat the contaminated water that will be removed from the depressurised coal seam but it does not explain how it will deal with the secondary problem of disposal of the vast quantity of salt that will be produced.

The gas field will produce, at peak operation, approximately 42,000 tonnes of contaminated salt per peak year. This is an alarmingly large amount of contaminated waste that Santos blithely states can easily be addressed by being placed in landfill. The produced salt will contain heavy metals and radioactive minerals that will be as harmful to the environment as those that were “accidentally” spilled by Eastern Star Gas several years ago. You will be aware that the spill destroyed over a hectare of the Pilliga Forest and that even after spending over a million dollars in remediation the Forest still bears the scar of dead trees and no regeneration of native vegetation.

Wherever Santos proposes to dump its contaminated waste it will create a great legacy for future generations in dealing with the resultant contamination of soil and aquifers.

Threat to the Great Artesian Basin

I find it inexplicable that anyone would risk the integrity and purity of the Great Artesian Basin (GAB) by proposing to drill down through it to reach the toxic water laden coal seams. The million year old GAB is a valuable and vital resource for outback Australia that should not be threatened by puncturing holes through it. The gas well pipes will never conduct 100% of the water from the coal seams to the surface but will instead allow the toxic heavy metal and radioactive minerals to mingle with the pristine (and ancient) water in the GAB and pollute it for ever more!

Once ruined and polluted it can never be un-ruined or un-polluted.

The department must not be complicit in destroying this world renowned natural resource.

Loss of integrity of the Pilliga Forest

The proposed construction of hundreds of kilometres of access roads and pipelines will cause the clearance of over 1,000 hectares of the Pilliga Forest. The effect will be to fragment the largest

temperate woodland in New South Wales, disrupt wildlife corridors and present avenues for the spread of weeds and invasive plant species.

Fugitive emissions of greenhouse gasses

The proposed 850 gas wells cannot be guaranteed to be 100% sound and never leak – witness the vast number of leaking wells in Queensland and reports from elsewhere around the world about fugitive emissions.

Methane is 80 times more potent as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide and every leaking well will significantly contribute to the problem of climate change.

I urge the Department to reject this proposal and take the correct stand to declare the Great Artesian Basin safe from gas mining.

Yours sincerely

Liz Donley