**NARRABRI GAS PROJECT SUBMISSION**

I am writing this submission to set out why the Narrabri Gas Project must be rejected on the basis that it is totally Environmentally Irresponsible on a number of accounts and is not required.

My reasoning is as follows: -

**WATER SECURITY**

NSW has experienced a long severe drought as a consequence of changing climatic conditions that are expected to prevail into the future. Already we have seen regional communities running out of their normal water supplies and having to have water transported in to sustain their existence. Water has become our most precious resource and should be prioritised for sustainable management in front of other resources.

Exploration and production of Coal Seam Gas (CSG) has resulted in well documented adverse impacts on water resources in Australia and overseas. The proposed Narrabri Gas Field is located above a significant aquifer that provides a clean water supply for communities in the area and surrounds. Drilling through the aquifer searching for gas deposits has the likely potential to disturb the integrity of the aquifer leading to the loss of available water resources and result in the pollution of existing reserves.

Fracking of the subterranean strata to increase the release of CSG also has the likely potential to disturb the integrity and pollute water resources in the aquifer. Subsequent gas extraction from within the strata to increase the release of CSG also has the likely potential to disturb the integrity of the aquifer and pollute water resources. Subsequent extraction of gas from within the strata is accompanied by large volumes of ground water polluted with hydrocarbons. This water, an unwanted by product of the gas extraction, will substantially diminish ground water reserves. No satisfactory method for filtering or rehabilitating this water is currently available. Recent studies indicate that water treated by energy intensive reverse osmosis filtration, used for irrigation has long term harmful effects on soil biosystems and fertility.

In summary no developer is in a position to guarantee that water supplies and quality will not be compromised by CSG activities.

**DESTRUCTION OF FOREST AND ANIMAL HABITAT**

The proposed Narrabri Gas Project is located within and around the Narrabri Forest. Site clearance for drilling, well construction and access corridors will destroy the integrity of this valuable natural and wildlife environment. NSW has seen massive destruction of forest and native bush land in the recent bush fires and significant loss of our native animals and vegetation. It is crucial that all existing forest and bush land areas are preserved in the future to provide refuge for the surviving wild life and native plants to assist in their recovery from this catastrophic event. The fact that there is mention within the scientific community that our unique and iconic Koala could be extinct by 2050 indicates the urgent and desperate need to preserve the remaining areas.

**CONTRIBUTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

There is now overwhelming evidence linking disruptive climate change to human dependence on the burning of fossil fuels for energy generation in support of our current lifestyle. Already Australia (NSW in particular) is experiencing protracted drought and increased severity and frequency of adverse climatic conditions disrupting our lifestyle and economy. CSG extraction results in significant greenhouse gas emissions and the associated adverse climate change events. Recent studies have shown that fugitive gas emissions both during the exploration and harvesting periods for gas extraction are substantial and that methane gas is many times more harmful than carbon dioxide in contributing to global warming.

Australia has made an International Commitment through the Paris Agreement to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions progressively over the next few decades, this project is incompatible with those commitments and if it were to go ahead will lock in highly polluting activities for decades ahead.

**GAS SURPLUS TO REQUIREMENTS**

Australia has a net surplus of gas and is the largest gas export nation in the world, from our existing reserves. NSW requirements can be adequately met into the future by reallocating supply for domestic consumption prior to servicing export markets. There are already signs that the worlds economies are reducing their dependence on fossil fuels for energy generation and Australia restricting export volumes will assist that objective.

I am grateful for the opportunity to communicate my views on this project and hope they will be given appropriate consideration. The IPC is no doubt aware that it has been recorded that approximately 23,000 submissions were recieved by the NSW planning Authority in relation to the EIS for this project and that approximately 97% were against the project proceeding. This indicates that a substantial proportion of the community does not support this project going ahead.

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