I know that there have been many well written, thoroughly researched and detailed objections made to the Santos CSG project. Like many people I'm also very worried about damage to our water supply, damage to precious and irreplaceable ecosystems, and damage to the agricultural land that feeds people here and overseas. Our first priority must always be to make sure we have clean air, safe water and a secure food supply. If we look after our ecosystems, look after our water table, look after our soil, we can have these things, forever. But if we damage them for the sake of someone else’s profit, they are gone for good.

Sometimes mining companies and politicians argue that mining brings prosperity. But true wealth is not something you dig out or pump up from the ground just once. True wealth is found in the systems and cycles of life that provide clean air, safe water, and a secure food supply. Sometimes mining companies and politicians argue that we need exploitative extraction projects in order to provide jobs. It is well documented that renewable energy projects will provide more jobs than fossil fuel projects. We just need to back them, instead of dangerous, wasteful and damaging projects like the Santos proposal to extract CSG.

There’s plenty of work that needs doing right now. For example, we could put an infection control nurse into every aged care facility in Australia. Overnight there’d be a boost to employment all over regional Australia, and our elderly loved ones would be safer. Or we could build safe and healthy accommodation for the people we need to harvest our crops, and run safe transport to take them to the farm or orchard, so that the fruit can come off the trees and the veges get to market whatever else happens. Or we can invest in great projects like community owned solar hydrogen. There’s so much we could be doing right now that would mean everyone in our community can have a better life.

We don’t need CSG. And mining it will wreck the systems that provide the only things that we do need. Clean air, safe water, a secure food supply, and strong communities.