Submission to IPC re proposed Santos CSG Mine at Narrabri

To the IPC

From Annee Lawrence

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As a third generation farmer’s daughter from the south west slopes of New South Wales, I have seen my family struggle to survive economically, physically and mentally in the face of the unpredictable effects of climate change. In the past three decades we have faced more and longer droughts, more heat waves in summer, dried up dams, the carting of water to and hand feeding of stock, the disruption of seasonal rain patterns and crop loss. This all adds up. Livelihoods at risk. Food production at risk. Water security at risk.

Australia has one of the highest per capita carbon footprints in the world and we need urgent action to reduce our contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. We need to be winding back all gas (fossil fuel) supply and production in order to meet our Paris Climate Agreement commitments.

The Narrabri Gas Project is predicted to contribute 5 million tonnes annually (127.8 millions of tonnes overall) to carbon emissions. And this for a form of fuel that is no longer required.

This is quite apart from the very real devastating environmental risks the mine poses such as from fugitive gas leaks, chemicals, spills and accidents, water contamination, as well as the impacts caused by the building of pipelines, terminals and wells.

Gas is a fossil fuel and in the extraction phase it contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions (1% a year). This is unacceptable.

Finally, there are all the other unacceptable risks posed if this mind goes head. They include threats to biodiversity in the Pillaga State Forest, problems posed due to waste disposal (solid salt water and heavy metals), fears that it could damage viability of the Great Artesian Basin and local aquifers, and water security concerns due to the planned withdrawal of 37.5 billion litres of water.

In Queensland and other countries we have seen the pollution of methane gas associated with CSG mining to the health of water systems and soils. In addition, there are ongoing real community concerns regarding Indigenous sacred sites, divisive effects on community harmony, and agricultural sustainability if the mine proceeds.

Last summer’s bushfires were a wake up call -- we need to act now to stop all new mining of fossil fuels like the Narrabri Gas Project in this state.