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From: IPCN Enquiries Mailbox
Subject: Lyn Maciver's Submission before speaking at today's Hearing, Saturday 25 /7/20

Submission to the Hearing of the Independent Lands Commission
Saturday, 25 JULY 2020.

Thank you, Commissioners and Staff, for the opportunity to address my concerns related to Santos and its development of an extensive Coal Seam Gas Mining operation in Narrabri.

I wish to express my respect to all First Nations people for their thousands of years of continuous indigenous history and heritage as custodians of this land, and to the Kamileroi people of Narrabri and pay respect to their Elders past and present.

Narrabri has been described as one of the most picturesque inland cities in NSW, located in the heart of the Namoi Valley, one of the richest agricultural shires in Australia, named after an aboriginal word meaning "forked stick" or "meeting of the waters".

This Hearing brings into sharp focus public concern regarding the future of this beautiful region, too valuable in so many ways, to be destroyed by Santos.

The ecological damage done by unsustainable fracking which uses toxic chemicals in the CSG extraction processes will harm rich agricultural land, native flora and fauna and introduced crops, and heavily impact scarce water resources especially the irreplaceable and vital water of the Artesian Basin.

Narrabri is also a highly regarded centre for scientific research. It hosts the University of Sydney's Plant Breeding Institute, the CSIRO's Australia Telescope and the Solar Observatory, all highly productive and internationally recognised.

Santos threatens all that Narrabri encompasses, worthy of protection for the present community and future generations. The proposed 20 years of fracking by Santos will destroy much that is appreciated by locals and visitors and will deliver no short or long term benefits to Narrabri, despite the no doubt often repeated and deceptively misleading mantra of "Jobs and Growth"

It is timely to pause and ask Why? Who will ultimately benefit? These are important questions. No amount of corporate mining rhetoric and lies about harm minimisation actually stand up against the harsh reality and consequences of this particular CSG mining activity.

Santos is not undertaking this activity with benign intention for the betterment of the Narrabri region or people. The sole motivation is monetary.

From my own research into CSG mining overseas, Santos threatens

- * Indigenous heritage and history as did Rio Tinto in Western Australia this year.
 - * Local agriculture and other industries.
 - * Native flora and fauna
 - * Air quality
 - * Scientific research
 - * WATER
- and last, but not least, CLIMATE CHANGE.

The Rural Fire Service has warned that Climate Change is now clearly evident.

We have all witnessed last summer's catastrophic bushfires which caused widespread devastation to lives, homes, communities, native wildlife and agricultural animals and crops.

The bushfires burnt out 97,000 square kilometres of vegetation and habitat for 832 native species. The extinction of so many native animals in Australia since colonisation is a national disgrace.

Ecological experts have been warning us for decades of these dangers. Sadly, politicisation of climate change has impeded serious efforts to move away from burning fossil fuels for energy. Harnessing renewable sources of energy such as solar, wind and ocean waves is the way forward.

Failure to look to the future rather than the past is holding Australia back and to increasing ridicule by more progressive nations embracing renewables and clean energy generation often with far fewer natural resources than we have in abundance.

2020 has been a crucial wake up call for all Australians. We face a crisis driven and unpredictable future if we continue along the fossil fuel path.

And as for Jobs and Growth?

The Climate Council and economic consultants, AlphaBeta, have undertaken new research and conclude that more than 76,000 new "clean jobs" could be created nationally on projects that will challenge climate change in large scale renewable energy projects.

By contrast, the Australian Government has given four times more money during the pandemic to fossil fuel industries than to clean energy.

There is a clear choice.

If, as a nation we are to live, happy, healthy and productive lives, we must preserve, not destroy or squander, our natural resources, especially scarce water on this arid continent.

We may think Australia is an island unto itself, but we are clearly not.

What we do now will have lasting impacts on our own nation and future, but will also impact vulnerable global neighbours, near and far.

THANK YOU.

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