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To: [IPCN Enquiries Mailbox](#)
Subject: Submission objecting to Narrabri Gas Field proposed development by Santos
Date: Friday, 31 July 2020 10:59:46 AM
Attachments: [IPC Santos CSG Project .docx](#)

Dear Commissioners

I write this submission on my own behalf and with a very heavy heart. I participated in the current oral presentations where I spoke on behalf of the Wilderness Society Illawarra. During that week I listened to almost all of the presentations. (I attach my presentation.) I am concerned by the enormous toll this proposal has already taken on the people of the Pilliga area, and all those living in a wide arch from the Pilliga to the west, who depend on uncontaminated ground water for their livelihoods, their cultural practices and their ability to even stay on the land they currently occupy.

What concerns me most now is that so much of what we heard from Santos and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment was demonstrated to be unreliable and unsupported by the evidence. For example – the Department states that there is no risk of irreversible harm to the environment and so the Precautionary Principle doesn't apply. And yet there is clearly a RISK of serious and irreversible harm (to the groundwater, to the climate and biodiversity, to farming livelihoods, to the night sky, to Aboriginal cultural sites, etc) There is also a level of scientific uncertainty which would make the Precautionary Principle mandatory in consideration of this development. This argument was strongly put to the Panel by Robert White from the EDO.

Both the Department and Santos failed to acknowledge the severity of the threat posed by any increase in Australia's GHG emissions not just to Australia, but to the entire planet. If we are to meet our commitments to the Paris Climate Agreement and protect our climate into the future, it's not just that we cannot afford to open even one more fossil fuel project, we now have to urgently draw down on what is already in the atmosphere. This project will not just release methane into our atmosphere, but it will clear large tracts of vegetation which act as a carbon sink. Construction will also release the carbon currently stored in the soil. This project will be a major GHG emitter.

This project has been justified by the proponents (and sadly I can only consider the NSW Department of Planning a defacto proponent), on the grounds that we have a critical shortage of gas in NSW and we are paying way to much for it. This was clarified for us by a number of speakers, including Bruce Robertson from the Institute of Energy Economics and Financial Analysis. What we learned was that there is a world glut of gas, tankers carrying LNG cannot find a market to land their cargo, there has been a 73% drop in the number of operating drill rigs in the US in the last year, US LNG exports have halved so far in 2020, Santos has just written off \$950 million from its failed coal seam gas to LNG investments in Australia and has written down nearly \$8 billion since 2014. So we can only ask why on earth has this project even

been proposed?

Then there is the issue of high gas prices on the east coast of Australia. It has been revealed, again by Bruce Robertson, that these high prices are the result of a gas cartel fixing the prices for the Australian domestic consumer and, despite numerous reports on this from the ACCC, our governments have allowed it to continue. If this project goes ahead the price of domestic gas will rise not fall. This really does make me wonder whether Santos is a fit and proper organization.

To make the situation even more concerning it appears likely that the Federal government will subsidise this operation with tax payers money, probably by funding the pipelines the project depends on for its viability. This situation is starting to sound surreal.

I respectfully, but very strongly, urge you to reject Santos' application to develop the Narrabri Gas Field. Our governments have failed us, your decision is our only hope.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in this very important democratic process.

Anne Marett

31 July 2020