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Subject: Submission to Object to the Santos Gas Plan in Narrabri Region
Date: Sunday, 9 August 2020 6:21:39 PM

To whom it may concern:

I object strongly to the Santos Narrabri gas plan which is short-sighted, expensive, toxic, wasteful and risky.

Too many experts are concerned about the long term likely negative effects of extracting gas in the region of perhaps the richest farming soil on the planet, and where precious pristine ancient water of the Great Artesian Basin is available for sustaining life. They attest that this gas plan is unnecessary. Santos claims there are no plans 'at this time' to FRACK, but obviously do not rule fracking out.

I believe you will have received many experts' objections regarding:

THE DANGER TO WATER

The availability of water for farmers during drought when gas extraction requires huge amounts of water, the effects on bore water, groundwater, aquifers which have not yet been fully studied or understood, and the grave likelihood of toxic emissions getting into water supplies,

THE LACK OF SOCIAL LICENSE

Farmers, city people and many around Australia alike fear the effects of gas, having seen the disastrous effects in USA, Canada and close to home in Queensland.

THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS NOT ADDING UP

Many of the experts explain that apart from gas being superseded by renewable energy Narrabri gas can never be sold at a cheaper price than the world price.

LACK OF RESPECT FOR ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE.

The local Gamillaroy people fear for their ancient cultural sites, and as we learned from the recent destruction of such ancient sites in West Australia by Rio Tinto not many of us have faith in mining companies to do more than say they're 'sorry' when the destruction occurs.

FEARS FOR BIODIVERSITY IN WHAT'S LEFT OF THE PILLIGA FOREST

This forest has vast diverse life forms of both tropical and temperate inland forests, not found anywhere else on earth. Losing sections of the forest will put many species further at risk of extinction, including the much beloved koala, which itself depends on the wide variety of species in that web of life.

GREENHOUSE GAS AND MASSIVE METHANE EMISSIONS.

Gas companies do not like to admit that not only is the use of fossil fuel gas adding to the dangers associated with climate heating, but that there are now satellite videos showing the huge disparity between the gas producers admission of fugitive gas and the real massive amounts of methane leaking in the process of gas extraction.

HEALTH RISKS

Health risks are many to families AND animals living near to gas extraction sites. Here in Sydney and in Queensland and in the USA etc there are too many cases of illnesses to dismiss the dangers of gas to health.

LOSS OF DARK SKIES FOR OUR WORLD FAMOUS ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATORY

The reason that Siding Springs Observatory was built is because the observatory in Canberra became unusable as the city lights increased. Many discoveries of inner and outer space have come to light through the use of the Siding Springs observatory, home of Australia's largest and highly valuable optical telescopes. The lines of gas flares seen at night in Queensland are evidence enough to see that gas extraction by Santos will put this valuable investment at risk.

FARMERS FEARS OF LOSS OF WATER AVAILABILITY AND POISONED FARMLANDS AND WATER.

Should the land and water be adversely affected, not only will the farmers lose their livelihood and many jobs in the area be lost, but the vast majority of coastal cities and townships will have shortages of food, much of which grows out of the rich, deep black soils of the Narrabri region.

DANGER OF GAS FLARES IN THE PILLIGA FOREST

During the recent drought the danger from the small number of already existing gas flares igniting bushfires in the Pilliga Forest was extreme. Firefighters admit they would not be prepared to enter the forest to fight fires or attempt to save the gas wells.

My submission focusses on the unrecognised ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEM OF WASTE and the relationship between COAL SEAM GAS and unacknowledged CONSUMER WASTE.

(I won't write about Santos tonnes of toxic waste sludge, failed plastic liners of evaporation ponds and the toxic salt, the weight of the Sydney harbour bridge over the mine's lifetime in toxic salt which they're hoping to dump in LOCAL waste tips!).

This is extremely relevant to Santos and Australia.

As a 30 year long ZERO WASTE campaigner my conclusion is:
Climate change is driven by our society's shameful practice of wasting EVERYTHING - NOTHING HAS A VALUE.

We dig ever deeper damaging holes in our earth to extract non-renewable resources, voraciously using up energy, water and toxic chemicals, creating more toxic materials in the process.

We transport these resources long distances off-shore for manufacture which uses more energy, water and toxic chemicals, often creating toxic emissions and waste in the process, adversely affecting poorer communities.

Then we transport these products back by air, ship and trucks using more energy and wear and tear on vehicles and roads.

Then they are sold at the LOWEST possible price, and soon discarded with all that embodied energy and water. There is no way of extending the life of these 'planned obsolescent' objects. There are no longer options for repair, refit, upgrade or refill etc.

I experienced life BEFORE PLASTIC. It's become 'the best thing since sliced bread' - We all carefully washed out those plastic bread bags, hung them on the line to dry for re-use. And before we knew it plastic is EVERYWHERE.

Only now is our community noticing that plastic pervades everything and everyone - clogging the 5 ocean gyres, our beautiful beaches, bushland and city streets.

There are microplastics in the fish, plants and meat we ingest.

The powerful plastics industry even persuades our hospitals to use EVERYTHING DISPOSABLE from surgical equipment to plastic screens and bedsheets.

The other day I saw a new documentary, 'The Story of Plastic'.

To my horror I learned something new: They showed the gas company CEO boasting to his shareholders that while gas use for energy declined there is another GREAT EMERGING MARKET out there for gas in PLASTIC MANUFACTURE!!!!

And guess what? Santos has plans for their gas chemicals to be used for plastic manufacture in Narrabri!

This is outrageous!

Right now because our government has not taken the problem of waste seriously, and believe there's an easy solution there are FIVE PROPOSALS in Sydney for outdated, hugely expensive toxic incineration of 'waste to energy' What a stupid WASTE - burning non-renewable resources for energy. - A QUICK DIRTY FIX.

JOBS AND GAS:

The supporters of gas talk about JOBS.

Those jobs are only available in very limited numbers in the gas industry, and certainly not in Narrabri as most jobs will be 'fly in fly out' jobs which do not advantage the Narrabri community to any great extent.

Do we want JOBS, especially now in difficult times?

Do we prefer ecologically sustainable JOBS?

ZERO WASTE LEGISLATION is the answer. Products manufactured for LONG LIFE will offer never-ending trained and untrained jobs in Narrabri and in every town and city in Australia in repair, refit, reuse, closed loop recycling, refilling, the list goes on.

With this understanding alone SANTOS CSG is neither wanted or needed.

PLEASE REFUSE this MADMAN plan.

Yours faithfully,
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(Former member of NSW State Waste Advisory Committee
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