



History:

This message has been replied to and forwarded.

NSW is at a cross roads, it will either adequately address the dangers of CSG or gloss over them, paving the way for widespread contamination of our land and water resources. Particularly our underground water.

The terms of Reference set by the NSW Government are inadequate to genuinely assess the risks of CSG. For example it assumes in ToR 1. that CSG is a fait accompli... the Chief Scientist will assess it after it is operational. It is vital that a rigorous assessment occurs beforehand of the risk.

Similarly there are no baseline studies. The University of Southern Cross now has the technology to measure ground level methane. This should be done everywhere CSG drilling is proposed so there is proper baseline information.

ToR 2. It is only possible to assess and identify knowledge gaps and management issues where there is baseline information. For example, is there a map of all the groundwater sources and it's interconnectivity? Surely part of the risk management must be that there are some areas off limits.

ToR 3. A thorough study needs to be made of the Tara area in Qld. It is clear that where CSG is in close proximity to residences there are a whole raft of health problems. The same will happen in NSW. Communities should have the right to say no to CSG in their water catchment, near their homes or other infrastructure.

ToR 4. We don't want a CSG industry in NSW. We don't need it.

ToR 5. The inspection of drilling techniques etc should be occurring elsewhere so see just how safe the industry is. Statistics from the industry in the USA is that show that more than 1 in 20 wells fail and leak. When this happen there is serious methane escape. Experience from other drilling industries is that over time this figure increases. The cement shrinks, moves etc and inevitably there is leakage. In the case of CSG we are talking about the movement of contaminants into potable water. Once an aquifer is contaminated that is forever. The chief scientist needs to be very very sure. It's a big responsibility.

ToR 6. Sounds like the chief scientist is going to be chief propagandist. We want genuine research not spin. Elsewhere in the world CSG is fracturing communities just as the drilling is fracturing the earth. There are countless examples of health problems, subsidence, well leakage, water contamination etc. If the chief scientist finds these problems are real then what is needed are not information sheets, but advice to government to stop this dangerous activity. If the chief scientist finds that while these problems exist everywhere else they won't happen in NSW, then the chief scientist is obviously more concerned about the pay packet than the people.

The Chief Scientist has an opportunity to present some science instead of corporate spin. If she chooses to do so, then our land and water stands a chance of being worth passing on to our children

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