



# Sutherland Shire Environment Centre

PO Box 589 Sutherland NSW 1499 | [office@ssec.org.au](mailto:office@ssec.org.au)  
[www.ssec.org.au](http://www.ssec.org.au) | ABN 96 127 431 611

March 13, 2020

Mr Evans MP  
PO Box 536  
Engadine, NSW 2232

To Mr Evans

## **Proposal to drill for coal seam gas**

I write to you on behalf of members of the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre, many of whom are your constituents, to strongly oppose the proposal by Santos to drill for coal seam gas in North West NSW.

The primary reason why this project should not proceed is that it will generate fugitive methane emissions and this negates Santos's claims that gas is a suitable transition fuel.

The risk that the wells pose to the Great Artesian basin, a major source of water in a drought-stricken area, is another key reason why it should not proceed. In addition, coal seam gas (CSG) is likely to damage water due to the concentration of salt and toxic contaminants it releases from the coal seam. Thus far, Santos has not disclosed its plans for disposing of over 400,000 tonnes of waste water. The high risk for water and land contamination makes CSG incompatible with agricultural industries.

Previous arguments that drilling for CSG would address a shortage of gas and drive down domestic prices is utterly inaccurate. The expansion of CSG in Australia is primarily for export. Catering to this export market has increased the cost of domestic gas so dramatically that many businesses have switched to alternative energy sources and AEMO is not forecasting any great increase in domestic demand. With other countries striving to meet their commitments to the Paris agreement and the cost of solar, wind and storage plummeting, there is a real risk that new gas projects will become stranded assets. It is not in Australia's interest to risk long-term food and water security for a twilight industry.

The catastrophic fire season of the past summer has demonstrated unequivocally that we are in the midst of a Climate Emergency. Australia cannot afford to ramp up use of fossil fuel.

To do so defies common sense when there are viable and affordable alternatives, such as wind, sun and storage, in the form of batteries and pumped hydro.

The majority of Australians want to see leadership to address climate change by replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy. We ask you, our elected representative, to heed this call from your constituents and demonstrate a commitment to future generations .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tassia', is positioned to the left of a vertical line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr Tassia Kolesnikow, Chair  
Sutherland Shire Environment Centre  
[tassia@ssec.org.au](mailto:tassia@ssec.org.au)  
0401061544