

From: Kelly Lee
To: [fracking inquiry](#)
Subject: Submission to Inquiry
Date: Wednesday, 22 March 2017 1:44:59 PM

Dear Members of the Hydraulic Fracturing Taskforce,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to any and all exploration and extraction of onshore gas in the Northern Territory, in particular shale and coal seam gas extraction.

I am a long term Northern Territory resident, having grown up in Darwin and lived for several years in Alice Springs. I have a deep love for our home Territory, and have spent many years of my life working in the community development and arts sector, representing Territory interests at festivals and conferences nationally and internationally.

I am certain that the gas industry would have a significant detrimental impact of the lands, people and culture of the Northern Territory, and believe that the risks associated with this industry are too great to make it in any way a safe or viable option for anywhere in the Northern Territory.

My greatest concerns are the risk to water. Every community south of Katherine, including Alice Springs is 100% reliant on groundwater. Shale gas exploration poses significant and long term risks to this water, threatening the livelihood and lives of everyone in affected regions for multiple generations. There is no way that we could ever be certain that this industry would keep our water safe, and therefore I am completely opposed to allowing it to threaten our safety.

As detailed in your paper there are a number of risks to public health through impacts on land, air quality, surface water and to community wellbeing, particularly of Aboriginal communities. Such risky and harmful industries have no place in our community.

Climate Change is a significant threat to communities across the Territory, affecting industries, health and lifestyle of all residents. Gas also is a significant contributor to climate change, and the Paris Climate Agreement recognised that in order to meet our carbon targets we must keep all existing fossil fuel reserves in the ground. In order to protect the health and livelihood of all Territorians, now and into the future we must not adhere to these targets by refusing to develop our gas resources.

I note that there is possibility of disparities in the distribution of economic benefits of the industry, and note that in the US and QLD that the gas industry has often further entrenched existing disadvantage, leaving many vulnerable community members with poorer health and less access to resources. Furthermore the gas industry threatens many existing industries and sources of livelihood including agriculture, pastoralism and tourism.

The majority of community members consulted in door to door surveys by frack free NT have opposed the development of unconventional gas. I also

note that many traditional owners across the Northern Territory oppose the development of unconventional gas, citing concern for their lands, culture and communities. Approval of development of an industry with so much opposition from communities shows a great disregard for the rights, views and democratic processes of our Territory.

In summary, my opposition to any and all development and exploration of unconventional gas in the Northern Territory is based on the significant and long term risks to our communities, culture, country and economy, and widespread opposition by both community and traditional owners.

We have so much opportunity to develop and show leadership in renewable energy industries both for export and domestic use, with abundant solar, geothermal and offshore wind resources. We also have significant opportunity to develop our tourism, cultural, pastoral and agricultural industries, which provide widespread and long term sustainable economic development opportunities for all Territorians.

I thank you for the opportunity to contribute to your inquiry and am happy to respond to any further queries.

Kind Regards,

Kelly Lee Hickey

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