

## fracking inquiry

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**From:** julie taylor <campaigns@good.do>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 30 January 2018 11:54 AM  
**To:** fracking inquiry  
**Cc:** Chief Minister; Minister Fyles; Minister Vowles; Minister Moss  
**Subject:** Written submission on the NT Fracking Inquiry draft Final Report

Dear Justice Pepper and Panel,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written feedback on the draft Final Report of the NT Fracking Inquiry. I am dismayed that in spite of an overwhelmingly negative response from people in NT, that the report seeks to continue support for fracking exploration

Whilst the Panel's report makes many important recommendations in the face of the 115 risks identified and has made 19 recommendations relating to the NT's water resources, the draft report acknowledges that RISKS REMAIN, even with these recommendations.

Further, I continue to hear arguments put forward by politicians about jobs and economic stimulus. This is highly debatable and no-one is acknowledging that support for alternative energy supply industries would provide more-than adequate and longer-lasting boost for both jobs and growth.

Groundwater is critical in the Northern Territory. Many high yielding aquifers within the NT are close to their full allocation already. Many are under further pressure from resource development (page 105). Even hydrologists/water experts can not trace the paths that water takes to collect into underground reserves. I do not believe it is possible for ANY exploration/fracking company to guarantee that drilling & subsequent pressure of fluids inserted will not interact with underground pathways of potable water through rock layers underground.

How can anyone contemplate ANY risk associated with possible disruption and contamination of underground rock/shale/water pathways.

The draft Final Report outlines significant knowledge gaps for groundwater, biodiversity, landscape and health impacts. These gaps need to be rectified and baseline studies completed. Appropriate no go areas must be legislated and in place before exploration fracking should be considered.

We must avoid delays to the protection of the Northern Territory's water, landscapes and people. Given our past experiences of the track-records of various mining companies and inadequate re-habilitation of large tracts of landscape – not to mention above ground water reservoirs still holding toxic waste products, we have no faith in governments to take on the responsibility of applying safe-guards and regulation policies.

Since many exploration activities are virtually identical to production activities, eg. chemical use and high pressure hydraulic fracturing through aquifers, water use along with associated risks are involved. Any regulatory safe-guards should apply to ALL stages of gas development.

The draft Final Report shows Origin energy identified exploration and appraisal could include 8-16 wells and 24-48 wells for delineation (page 167).

Origin alone could drill and frack up to 64 wells across their tenement, all before critical improvements are made to the regulations. With fracking companies combined, we could have a situation in the NT where there

are over a hundred fracked gas wells across the landscape. That's all before production – before key law changes or baseline studies are complete.

Critical studies identifying no go zones will prove difficult to achieve in an area already littered with fracked gas exploration wells!

I support the new regulations and legislation required to try and protect landholders and water. However, time must be given to enable this to happen BEFORE the oil and gas industry is permitted to start fracking in the Northern Territory again.

The below critical recommendations must be improved and work completed BEFORE EXPLORATION fracking takes place.

Recommendation 5.1 (Enforceable code of practice for abandonment of onshore gas wells)

Recommendation 5.6 (Wastewater management framework)

Recommendation 7.1 (Water Act amended for shale extraction licence and payment for water)

Recommendation 7.4 (Strategic regional environmental and baseline assessment (SREBA), including a regional groundwater model, be developed and undertaken)

Recommendation 8.4 (Fire management plan and 10 year baseline assessment)

Recommendation 9.2 (Code of practice be developed and implemented for monitoring, detection and reporting of methane emissions)

Recommendation 10.1 (Human Health Risk Assessment prepared and approved)

Recommendation 12.11 (Social impact management plan) This recommendation should also be extended to allow for the legal right to say 'no' to fracking.

Recommendation 14.1 (Design and implement a full cost recovery system for fracking regulation)

Recommendation 14.16 (Legislation to regulate seismic surveys, drilling, hydraulic fracturing, and well abandonment)

Recommendation 14.18 (Fit and proper person test)

Recommendation 15.1 (Strategic regional environmental and baseline assessment (SREBA) undertaken and no go zones implemented)

We must avoid delays to the protection of the Northern Territory's water, landscapes and people. Given our experiences of the track-records of various mining companies and inadequate re-habilitation of large tracts of landscape – not to mention water reservoirs still holding toxic waste products, we have little faith in the ability of governments to take on the responsibility of applying safe-guards and regulation policies – especially after the event.

In the NT there is a saying, "Once you frack you can't go back." Exploration fracking is no different. The studies, legal improvements and no-go zones suggested by the panel are critical. They must be actioned before any further fracking exploration.

Let's not wait until the production phase to put in place critical new regulations and laws that are EFFECTIVE and REALISTIC.

Thank you for considering my feedback on this critical matter for the future of the Northern Territory.

Yours sincerely, julie taylor East Side, Northern Territory, 0870, Australia

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