

fracking inquiry

From: Sharyn Munro <campaigns@good.do>
Sent: Sunday, 28 January 2018 8:36 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,

I thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Final Report of the NT Fracking Inquiry.

Having seen the damage from fracking in other states I appreciate that the Panel's report makes many important recommendations in the face of the 115 risks identified.

Water is of course a precious resource and I note the Panel has made 19 recommendations regarding the NT's water resources. Nevertheless the draft report does acknowledge that risks would remain.

In the Northern Territory, groundwater is critical, allocated for residential needs, existing industries and environmental flows. Many of the NT higher yielding aquifers are close to full allocation already, and many are under pressure from resource development.

But the draft Final Report outlines significant knowledge gaps for groundwater, as well as for biodiversity, landscape and health impacts. These gaps must be rectified and baseline studies completed. That should lead to appropriate exclusion areas being legislated and in place before exploration fracking should even be considered.

Most exploration activities are almost the same as production activities. The damage is the same. Chemical use, high pressure hydraulic fracturing through aquifers, water use and associated risks are involved. Any regulatory changes 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. Origin alone could drill and frack up to 64 wells across their tenement, all before critical improvements are made to the regulations.

Cumulative impacts matter. With the various fracking companies combined, a situation could develop in the NT where there'd be over a hundred fracked gas wells across the landscape before production, without key law changes or baseline studies complete.

Critical studies identifying recommended no go zones would be ineffective, a sick joke, in an area already littered with fracked gas exploration wells.

I do support the new regulations and legislation required to try and protect landholders and water. BUT that work must happen before the oil and gas industry is permitted to start fracking in the Northern Territory again.

It is only commonsense that the following 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)

The studies, legal improvements and no-go zones suggested by the panel are critical and must be actioned before any further fracking exploration.

Please do not wait until the production phase to put in place those critical new regulations and laws. Please do not avoid delays to the protection of the Northern Territory's water, landscapes and people.

I may not live in the NT but it is a special place for all Australians and our water and landscapes are national resources and treasures. Thank you for considering my feedback on this critical matter for the future of the Northern Territory.

Yours sincerely, Sharyn Munro Wingham, New South Wales, 2429, Australia

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