



Customer Contact
1300 COUNCIL (1300 268 624)
07 4679 4000
www.wdrc.qld.gov.au

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Address all
correspondence to the
Chief Executive Officer PO
Box 551, DALBY, QLD 4405
info@wdrc.qld.gov.au

JKT

29 April, 2024

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

EMAIL: ec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary,

SUBMISSION - GLENCORE'S PROPOSED CARBON CAPTURE AND STORAGE PROJECT

Reference is made to the Senate Inquiry into Glencore's proposed carbon capture and storage (CCS) project by its subsidiary, Carbon Transport and Storage Corporation (CTSCo). Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission on this project.

This project proposes to inject liquified carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the Great Artesian Basin (GAB), one of Australia's greatest natural resources and poses a significant risk of threat to our most precious resource - water.

Several nearby landholders, who have large agricultural holdings and who are proposing large scale intensive agricultural projects, have expressed concerns that the CTSCo project risks causing impacts on the GAB and does not consider other developments that are proposing to use the GAB, and more specifically, the Precipice aquifer.

The GAB underpins a significant amount of current economic activity in our region, and whilst the Precipice aquifer is generally underutilised, it is a critical water resource for the expansion of agricultural, industrial, and urban development.

We understand that CTSCo have selected an area of the Precipice where there were no active bores in that aquifer. However, Council is aware of some significant agricultural proposals in relative proximity to the CTSCo injection site that propose to access and rely on the Precipice aquifer. There is an approved large-scale intensive agricultural project in this area, and if developed, has the potential to have considerable economic value for our region. The proponents of the Agricultural use have stated that the Precipice aquifer is indeed suitable for stock use, and their concern is that the CTSCo project will sterilise the water they propose to access and cause the aquifer to be no longer available for their use.

This CTSCo project is unlikely to create any significant economic activity for our region. However, the impacts to the GAB could risk the substantial agricultural developments that are in the pipeline; agricultural uses that have the potential to create hundreds of new jobs and would significantly strengthen our local economy and local supply chains. This is a very high-risk scenario.

In this regard, the impacts of the CTSCo project on the Precipice resource proposed to be used by the rest of the community need to be considered, in terms of any contamination to the aquifer or the effective quarantining of that section of aquifer due to the risk of inadvertent release of the stored CO₂ by other users.

Council acknowledges that we do not have the technical expertise to properly evaluate these matters or to determine the veracity of the proponent's case or the matters being raised by community members. However, these are incredibly high-risk scenarios and of significant concern to Council and the communities of our region. The security of our water supplies must be protected.

The Western Downs Regional Council does not support this or any other project that has the potential to risk the important environmental values of the GAB, the security of our water supplies or would effectively exclude other legitimate users from accessing the GAB for purposes that are productive and that would strengthen our local economy.

I thank you for considering our submission on the matter. Should you have any further queries regarding this submission, please don't hesitate to contact me on

Yours sincerely,

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER