

I am writing as a concerned rural resident from the Tooraweenah district regarding the rapid expansion of the coal seam gas industry, as I feel its impacts will be widespread and irrevocable. As a landholder, my primary concern is that the environment in which we live and make our living from continues to exist in a sustainable and productive state for years to come. We run a livestock and small cropping enterprise, and also have an olive grove consisting of over 3,500 trees. These trees require watering at certain times throughout the year, so our reliance on our water supply is imperative. We take a conservative approach to how we manage our natural resources, and are always striving to improve the condition of both our resources and enterprises. We have improved pastures, replaced irrigation systems to make them more efficient, reduced paddock sizes, and increased the number of watering points for stock, with our overall aim being to care for our country. I fear the mining companies will not have the same respect or consideration for the land or water if they are allowed to establish mining in this prime agricultural district. My main concern in particular is that any damage done to underground aquifers as a result of mining for coal seam gas will be irreparable and will completely destroy not only many people's livelihood, but also the environment. Without guarantees that no harm will be done, I feel this risk is too great to take, and that governments have a responsibility to protect their citizens and the country in which they live. As a parent, I am extremely concerned about potential health risks that come with a coal seam gas industry. Having read and watched a number of disturbing reports, I feel this is an area that requires further study and that extreme caution should be taken by governments to ensure that every possible risk has been assessed before giving mining companies any form of approval. I am strongly opposed to the introduction of mining for coal seam gas in this area of the Murray Darling Basin, and wish to inform the Inquiry of my concerns.

Kind regards,
Alicia