

1. The Bill is strongly supported and I would like to see it passed quickly through the Senate.
2. I am very pleased that the bilateral approval provisions of the EPBC Act cannot apply to coal and coal seam gas developments that impact on water resources, and that there have been some improvements to the exemptions.
3. I want to ensure that the exemptions contained in the Bill are minimised, and that key projects, such as the Arrow Coal Seam Gas project in Qld, Camden in western Sydney and the Acland coal mine expansion in Qld, are not exempt from it. Therefore, we would still like to see minor amendments to remove s22 2 b) and d) if possible.
4. I recognise that there are other amendments that would substantially improve the Bill that may be required in the future, such as:
 - Amending the Bill to cover all unconventional gas mining, including shale gas and tight gas, and unconventional coal mining
 - Strengthening the role of the Independent Expert Scientific Committee
 - Defining significant impacts on water resources
 - Introducing a set of requirements for the Minister to consider when making decisions on water resource impacts
 - Including a requirement for bioregional assessments prior to approval
5. **24E Offences relating to water resources** - Penalties for offences relating to water resources do not go far enough. Mining companies and their CEOs are never held to account but the water resources near mining operations are ruined forever. Heavier penalties are needed as a deterrent, i.e. 10 yrs imprisonment, more accountability is required.