

I would like to make a submission to the Senate committee on the Murray Darling Basin regarding Coal Seam Gas.

We have a Petroleum Lease over our cattle property (Portion 11 AB55). Origin Energy have currently drilled one well supposedly to monitor water in the Precipice Sands which is the water bed above the coal seam gas. The first attempt at this hole failed to get past the Hutton Sands because of lack of circulation due to the amount of water encountered in this stream. The driller told me that they have cased this hole and will use it to monitor the Hutton instead. I have since received information via the Origin PR man that the rig will be back about the middle of June to drill another hole adjacent to the first one and attempt to get to the Precipice using a different drilling method. This is all very good because we need to know what affect the pumping of all the water off the CSG is doing to other water tables. The only thing is Origin have not approached me officially about the drilling of the second hole or on the failure of the first attempt. I have referred the matter to my solicitor. I know they seem to have the right to do as they like but it is a bit rude. I would like to know who they report any findings to regarding changes in water level or quality, is it just to themselves or is there some authority they are responsible to? Origin are very secretive about what they do and are reluctant to be open and honest. I am also in the process of negotiating an agreement for an exploratory gas well and I have refused to sign an agreement containing a confidentiality clause. Origin refuse to enter into a compensation agreement without one. By this means they try to dominate the individual who may not have the means to fight them. It is a case of divide and rule. There needs to be legislation to protect the individual from having to risk going broke in an extended court case.

On another matter. How can you justify imposing a carbon tax while digging up coal as quickly as you can and exporting carbon all over the world to countries that have no intention of limiting their emissions? It will make no difference to global warming imposing a tax on Australians. If you feel that bad about it just shut down the coal mines and stop future development. The tax is only a money grab and the average Australian knows it. We may be slow but we aren't stupid.