Below please find my submission

Submissions to Senate Inquiry into the federal Government's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment Bill 2013 [Provisions]

I strongly support the Bill and would like to see it passed quickly in the Senate. I am also happy 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.

I would like to see that the exemptions contained in the Bill are minimised, and that key projects, such as The Arrow Coal Seam Gas project in Queensland and Camden in Western Sydney, are not exempt from it. Therefore, it would require minor amendments to remove s22 2b and d.

There are other amendments to the bill that may be required in the future, such as the following:-

1. The Bill is strongly supported and we would like to see it passed quickly through the Senate.

2. We are 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. We 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 Queensland and Camden in Western Sydney, are not exempt from it. Therefore, we would still like to see minor amendments to remove s22 2b) and d).

4. We 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