

Dear Senate Inquiry,

This week ABC's Four Corners thankfully confirmed what most informed Australians suspected was true from the very beginning - we are seeing a reckless and rampant 'coal and gas rush' that has no regard for public health & safety nor the preservation of our most essential resources, namely our ground water, clean air, food security and a stable climate.

Like most I imagine, I wonder why this is even the subject of an inquiry. Pure common sense should prevail here, let alone the precautionary principle. Ofcourse the water trigger should apply to all projects, regardless of what stage they are at. How for instance do we remediate the poisoning of the Great Artesian Basin? This is a prehistoric resource that should have supported our nation for thousands of years. If we could put a monetary figure on the loss of this resource what would that be?

We hear the industry repeatedly justifying its actions with the everpresent threat of job losses and the relentless need for economic growth but where is the balanced view? What of the industries that this rampant mining industry is crowding out? Our struggling farming industry for one – which actually supports life rather than destroys it. With an over population crisis looming and dwindling finite natural resources, why isn't 'sustainability' now seen as the most important aspect – the key ingredient to any and all political decision making? This 'growth and jobs at any cost' mentality must now end.

This is no doubt the defining issue in our upcoming federal election and it's a stark choice. Do we want a country that will prosper and support us into the future OR do we allow the mining industry to continue on their free ride and transform Australia into a toxic, largely foreign owned quarry / gas field.

As the Greens have stated, the fossil fuel age is rapidly drawing to a close. We are seeing the effects of radical climate change on a weekly basis – it is undeniable - so its clear that those individuals supporting fossil fuels could only have a sinister vested interest. The invasive mining industry has done its best to conceal the truth by rushing approvals and ignoring environmental protection processes but there is no hiding the fossil fuel footprint and the damage to Australian communities through industrialisation. The industry was negligent in avoiding the responsibility of securing baseline data prior to its activities but the evidence is now seen across many fronts including human health.

I, like the vast majority of Australians, support innovative new thinking and sustainable development. Ofcourse its time to protect our land and water and not only legislate against invasive mining practices BUT ENFORCE THESE REGULATIONS TOO. We as a nation need to see our leaders working for the good of all Australians and start viewing growth and development in a sustainable context.

Here's to a clean green sustainable future for all.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr Brendan Shoebridge