

To the Senate,

I am writing in regard to the Senate inquiry into the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment Bill 2012.

It should be considered a priority to tighten the laws involved with the protection of our country's water sources. Water is a raw ingredient for life (including drinking, agriculture, economic production) and allowing any slack in regulations to protect these sources is unacceptable.

There is much evidence in the USA, as well as more recently in Australia, that Coal Seam Gas and large scale Coal Production has poisoning impacts on water sources that cannot always easily be managed - especially when contamination occurs underground. Strict environmental standards need to be set and enforced on these rich and highly influential mining companies. Sometimes that may even involve saying no! Additionally, these regulations need to be kept on a Federal Level to ensure standards are maintained.

On a personal level, protecting our water systems is important. As an Outdoor Educator, I get a great sense of well being seeing a healthy waterway and the diverse range of ecosystems it can support and showing this to the children we take into these environments. I also appreciate buying fresh produce from Australian farms, and this would not be possible without a healthy water source, and prime farm land not being taken over by mining companies. Additionally, I had the experience of living rural where my house's water supply was from a bore, and the thought of it being contaminated is unimaginable.

Please make it a priority to tighten Environmental Protection laws on the protection of water sources from coal seam gas and large scale mining projects. It's a must for our country's sustainable future.

Yours Sincerely

Amanda Bennett (Bsc. Environmental Science, Outdoor Educator)