

Impacts of mining in the Murray Darling Basin

We are the parents of a large family who moved to the Western Darling Downs to remove ourselves from chemical pollution and live in a relatively untouched environment. We are now dealing with dangerously heavy traffic on our roads, dead wildlife and the risk of pollutants in our dams and waterways and many other unspecified health issues. We purposely chose to move to a green zone and are seeing unregulated vegetation clearing and the profound social issues attached to a mining development in a rural residential area.

In our area coal seam gas water is being produced in mining. We have personally seen it locally in evaporation ponds built on the Condamine flood plains and from trucks spraying it on our roads. CSG water is being disposed of in an inappropriate manner, that is, repetitive spraying on both bitumen and dirt roads in some cases in half hour intervals causing a culmination of salt in the dry season.

Contrary to information being given to us at a meeting with a mining company the EPA has already disclosed in a letter to us that some of this water was exceeding the TDS limits. Pollution has also been detected in several creek systems and is being investigated by the EPA.

We have read in QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT POLICY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF WATER PRODUCED FROM COAL SEAM GAS PRODUCTION May 2009 <http://www.dip.qld.gov.au/growth-strategies/management-of-coal-seam-gas-water.html> that “The use of evaporation ponds as a primary means of disposing of CSG water is to be discontinued.” Yet in August 2009 we watched a frantic building of yet another evaporation pond on the Condamine flood plains south of Chinchilla.

In conclusion we have serious concerns of the implications of the environmental harm CSG water is already doing and future harm as the production of this water increases.

We are of the opinion that mining companies are not forthcoming with the true impacts of their operations and sometimes only follow regulations and policies when observed.

Continuation of mining in the Murray Darling Basin will only lead to greater salinity and further degradation of the M.D.B. both river and ground waters, causing water and food issues for a major part of Australia and for future generations.

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