

9 April 2013

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Re: Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment Bill 2013 (Water Trigger)

Dear Sir/Madam

I am fortunate enough to live on the highly productive black soil Liverpool Plains region in NSW. Our farming enterprise produces wheat, sorghum, canola, oats, chickpeas, sunflowers, barley and beef cattle and will continue doing so for generations if this region is safeguarded from the impacts of extractive industries such as coal and coal seam gas mining.

I would like to state from the start that I am emphatically opposed to any mining of coal, coal seam gas or any other extractive industry as this is one of the most highly productive agricultural regions in Australia and therefore should not be compromised to “co-exist” with mining activities but be set aside for the growing of food and fibre.

I am writing this submission to show my support for the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment Bill 2013 (Water Trigger).

Our water resources throughout Australia must be protected for all viable industries especially those critically important ones such as agriculture that focus on the huge task of feeding our growing global populations projected to be at a staggering nine billion by 2030.

In so doing it is imperative that protection of our water resources is not compromised in any way and by the granting of this legislation it is hoped that tighter controls are put into place to guarantee our water resources are adequately protected especially from the mining industries.

The effect of mining on the Liverpool Plains groundwater and aquifers has been studied and researched through the Namoi Valley Water Study.

The concerns raised in this study highlight there would be impacts and in particular, raised alarm bells as to the uncertainty surrounding the potential cumulative impacts of multiple developments. (BHP Billiton have intentions of longwall mining in the region plus coal seam gas companies have also been conducting exploratory drilling in the region.)

This is of great concern to the farming enterprises on the Liverpool Plains as water is an absolute essential element in our ongoing agricultural businesses.

Without a continued supply of clean reliable water we are unable to grow the food to feed this nation and provide food for export.

It is, in fact, agriculture’s life blood!!

Our governments need to set aside and protect by law our precious agricultural land and water resources in this state so I welcome any move in that direction.

Yours sincerely,
Sue Wilmott