

**Water use by the extractive industry- G Pechey  
Landowner, citizen.  
Submission**

On 18 October 2017, the Senate referred the following matters related to the Environment and Communications References Committee for inquiry and report by **27 March 2018**: The closing date for submissions is **15 December 2017**.

**Terms of Reference**

The adequacy of the regulatory framework governing water use by the extractive industry, with particular reference to:

- a. the social, economic and environmental impacts of extractive projects' take and use of water; **MY RESPONSE:** I ask you to outline your response to this question, so that I understand what you expect of such a vast question. Many of us are very interested in how the Government is dealing with these issues, but we are not well enough informed to be confident of participating meaningfully. There is so much misinformation out in the community and so much apparent power in debunking science and research. It is vital that ordinary people have access to readable information on matters such as these. Although I am not an expert I understand how important it is that we have responsible government oversight and regulation of water use by the extractive industry.
- b. existing safeguards in place to prevent the damage, contamination or draining of Australia's aquifers and water systems; **MY RESPONSE:** I believe Qld's regulations are reasonable, though not yet guaranteeing ESD in some cases. Further, there is as yet no method to measure a cumulative impact of several projects in proximity to each other. There is more work to do.
- c. any gaps in the regulatory framework which may lead to adverse social, economic or environmental outcomes, as a result of the take and use of water by extractive projects. **MY RESPONSE:** I understand that Qld Palaszczuk Government has restored fairness to the negotiations between mining companies and landowners. Fairness and accountability are vital.
- d. any difference in the regulatory regime surrounding the extractive industry's water use, and that of other industries; **MY RESPONSE:** The regulations of primary producers differ from regulations relating to extractive industries. Qld much move to regulate all industries similarly.
- e. the effectiveness of the 'water trigger' under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, and the value in expanding the 'trigger' to include other projects, such as shale and tight gas; and
- f. any other related matters. **MY RESPONSE:** I believe there must be triggers added to the EPBC Act to include shale and tight gas, and emerging challenges like carbon emissions. These triggers should cover the gaps that occur in State Legislation.

END

