

Environment and Public Affairs Committee.

Inquiry into the Implications for Western Australia of Hydraulic Fracturing for Unconventional Gas.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to read my submission. I am a West Australian sustainability student and I am deeply concerned to hear that this government has permitted Fracking in Western Australia. This submission highlights my concerns for Hydraulic Fracturing of Unconventional gas in Western Australia, I urge the committee to reconsider the need for Hydraulic Fracturing for Unconventional Gas in Western Australia.

Firstly, Hydraulic Fracturing is not a safe proven method of recourse extraction. Fracking places unnecessary and highly unacceptable risks on the surrounding environment, groundwater, and air quality. Most alarmingly this process threatens public Health. Furthermore, some of the chemicals used in the Hydraulic Fracturing process are untested and unregulated, this too is unacceptable.

As a Sustainability student I am constantly engaged with the critical issue of decreasing water supply, specifically in the Perth and surrounding areas. Fracking places a high risk of contamination of our groundwater supplies, this is ludicrous considering our future plans for water supply in this State are to rely on our groundwater reserves and aquifers. Ground Water Contamination is irreversible.

I have deep concerns in regard to the proper management of the Environment and health risks of Gas Fracking in WA by our Government. It is my understanding that the regulatory body for shale Fracking is not the Department of Environment but the Department of Mines and Petroleum. This suggests to me that the government is in support of Fracking, as well as ignoring community pleas to firstly assess the environmental impacts that could possibly have devastating effects on ecosystems, farmland, human health, the climate and our children's futures.

Western Australia is blessed with an abundance of Sun, Wind and Waves which could all be harnessed to provide our energy needs. We need to move towards a clean energy Future, we need to capitalize on our natural advantages of clean renewable energy instead of relying on dirty sources of fuel. Evidence is building to suggest that the lifecycle of carbon pollution emitted from gas Fracking can be compared to that of coal. Our future generations cannot afford any addition carbon emissions that will contribute to climate change.

Lastly, I was fortunate enough to spend some time with [redacted] in the South West of WA recently. They both explained to our group how their ancestors have understood for many thousands of years the flow of ground water and how all the aquifers are connected. Some of this science we are only now starting to understand. I urge our government to include and implement the knowledge of the first Australians and apply it to government processes; the Nyungar people have been living on the land for over 40000 year, and have a firm understanding of how to look after and sustain biodiversity, and a thriving environment.

Yours Sincerely
Meegan Overstone