



Stop CSG Illawarra
PO Box 5022, Wollongong NSW 2520
Phone: Jess Moore 0416 232 349
www.stop-csg-illawarra.org
info@stop-csg-illawarra.org

Media Release: 2nd August, 2013

Initial findings from Chief Scientist warrant moratorium

This week the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer, Professor Mary O'Kane, released the initial report from her review into coal seam gas (CSG). The findings – particularly the contaminants involved and risks to water resources – confirm risks that community members have been talking about for years. However, the recommendations from the review are framed by the terms of reference, and focus on *how* to develop the industry, not *if* or under what conditions development is safe. Stop CSG Illawarra spokesperson Jess Moore commented:

"The report confirms risks that community members have been talking about for years, and the need for a moratorium on CSG mining.

"It shows that CSG mining will likely release toxins and salts, and that it can release heavy metals and radioactive compounds.

"The report acknowledges the risks to soil groundwater and surface water systems.

"It raises concern about the industrial development of CSG mining in drinking water catchments.

"Professor O'Kane's call for caution should be taken seriously by the NSW Government."

The report states: *"Produced water brought up from the hydrocarbon-bearing coal seam will likely contain hydrocarbons in the form of volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Concern has been expressed about these compounds, such as benzene toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene (BTEX) chemicals, being volatilised from the liquid phase into the gas phase as an air emission."*

"There is the potential for changes in hydraulic connectivity and conductivity to impact connected groundwater bodies and as well as surface water bodies..."

Moore continued: "Despite the vindication of community concerns in this report, the recommendations are framed by the terms of reference. So they focus on *how* to develop the industry, not *if* or under what conditions development is safe. They cover *what practices should be employed* rather than *should CSG be developed*."

"What is needed is a freeze on development, to assess if and under what conditions CSG mining can be done safely. The community has a right to this information and to the decision about what happens next.

"The risks outlined in the report show the need for a ban on CSG mining in our drinking water catchments."

Media enquiries: Jess Moore 0416 232 349 or Chris Williams 0425 329 963