

FRACKING ENQUIRY SUBMISSION

Don Bacon



Amazing Kimberley Tours

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I have been a resident of Broome for over 20 years. My partner and I are raising 2 children here and teach them to respect and appreciate the unique Kimberley that we live in. I operate a 4wd tour business taking small private groups out to experience our region. I have numerous concerns about the invasion of industry into these pristine areas.

1. **WATER.** Water contamination is a risk with the fracking process. The fracking companies say they use “best practice” to minimise the risks but the risks are still there. We can live without many things but cannot live without water. I believe it is unacceptable to risk polluting our drinking water.
2. **WATER.** The fracking process uses huge volumes of water. The removal of such massive volumes of water will adversely affect the ecosystems of these areas.
3. **WATER.** The on-going extraction of these large volumes of water would also have a detrimental effect on supplies for human consumption. We see around the world, cities who are facing water shortages or water contamination issues. Water should be protected for our future.
4. **POLLUTION.** The toxic sludge that remains in the evaporation ponds is a potential hazard to our environment. There is the obvious risk of the plastic liner leaking chemicals into the ground. Recent storms and rainfall in the Kimberley are a clear demonstration of the power of nature. We have had nearly 2000mm of rain in the first 6 weeks of the year. Vast tracts of land have flooded. Our sewerage treatment ponds have broken their banks and flowed into Roebuck bay. The risk of this happening on a fracking site is not just a possibility, it is a certainty.
5. **RISKS.** Proponents of this technique talk about management of the risks, using modern technology and having systems in place to reduce the risk. Despite this, there is evidence around the world of failures and disasters. All too often we see situations where the companies “self-monitor” their adherence to conditions or an “industry organisation” monitors it but does not enforce compliance or apply harsh penalties for breaches. In the more severe cases, there is no penalty that will remedy the damage that occurs. These companies do not have a good track record for honesty and transparency.
6. **HEALTH.** We see reports on serious health issues of people living in areas where fracking is occurring. I am very concerned that fracking would expose my family to toxins and sickness. The fracking companies are very secretive about what chemicals

are used. They try to brush it off by saying that they are only chemicals that I would find in my laundry cupboard. Even those chemicals are not good to drink!

7. **NATURE.** We have a relatively pristine wilderness area in the Kimberley. It has a huge value in that. We already have many places that have been industrialised. There is no going back. Once a place is destroyed, it can never be re-instated. This is such a beautiful region that it deserves looking after. For us now, our children and future generations.
8. **TOURISM.** The tourism industry employs many people in the north. The image of a pristine wilderness attracts visitor from around Australia and the world to see this region. If the oil and gas industry was allowed to develop thousands of wells and frack throughout the Kimberley, it would destroy that image. Tourism would suffer a major decline. It would severely impact on the livelihood of many businesses and create large-scale unemployment.
9. **LANDOWNERS.** The owners of the land should have the right to say NO to this type of invasive activity. Whether traditional owners or private owners, the oil and gas companies should not be allowed to do whatever they like.
10. **OPPOSITION.** As more and more people learn about what is involved in the fracking process, or are experiencing the negative effects of the industry, they are expressing their concerns and voicing their opposition. The government needs to listen to the people.

I believe the negative effects of unconventional gas extraction and the risks involved are too high.

I would like the government to ban the process in WA.