

Submission to the Independent Scientific Panel Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracture Stimulation in Western Australia 2017

The people of the Gascoyne oppose hydraulic fracturing and unconventional gas extraction.

I would like to draw the attention of the panel inquiring into the effects on the environment of the process of hydraulic fracture stimulation to petition no 77 of the 39th Parliament. The petition was tabled in the Legislative Council on 17 February 2015. The petition from the people of the Gascoyne (stakeholders) calls for a **prohibition on all unconventional gas activities in the Gascoyne region** because of the unacceptable risk this activity poses to the community, environment and industry in this region. The tabled petition contains 515 signatures.

The wording of the petition is as follows:

PETITION IN RELATION TO PROPOSED FRACKING IN THE GASCOYNE

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

*We the undersigned residents of Western Australia are **opposed to hydraulic fracturing and unconventional gas extraction in the Gascoyne region.***

*Your petitioners therefore respectfully request that the Legislative Council recommend that **there is a prohibition on all unconventional gas activities in the Gascoyne region** because of the unacceptable risk this activity poses to the community, environment and industry in this region. Unconventional gas activity carries a serious threat of groundwater contamination, surface water pollution and depletion of the ground water aquifers we depend on. The Carnarvon food bowl is the largest in the state with the value of production exceeding \$103 million in 2012. It is vital for the food security of Western Australia to ensure that the land and limited water in this important food-growing region is protected.*

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

The recent edition of the *Compendium of Scientific, Medical, and Media Findings Demonstrating Risks and Harms of Fracking* includes over 1200 studies. Studies clearly show that unconventional gas activity carries a serious threat of groundwater contamination, surface water pollution and depletion of the ground water aquifers. The ground water aquifers in the Gascoyne region are already under stress with water rationing at times affecting the regions productivity. The precious water resource of this important food-growing region must be protected. The people of the Gascoyne call upon the panel to ensure the protection of our valuable water sources and food security by prohibiting the practice of hydraulic fracturing and unconventional gas extraction in the Gascoyne and across Western Australia.

References:

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EPA United States (2016): *Hydraulic Fracturing for oil and Gas: Impacts from the Hydraulic Fracturing Water Cycle on Drinking Water Resources in the United States*. December 2016 <https://www.epa.gov/hfstudy>

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