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Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracture Stimulation
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Dear Inquiry Panel members

Submission to Support Hydraulic Fracturing

I am a Yawuru traditional owner and I support hydraulic fracturing.

I work in the resources industry and am aware of how highly regulated it is. The negative hype around fracking has come from disrespectful, unaccountable green activist groups promoting lies who are not subject to the same stringent regulations that hold the resources industry accountable. I've attached some of the misleading statements promoted by these groups at the end of this submission. Hydraulic fracturing is not a new technique and has been used widely around the world, the current negative hype around fracking has come from these green groups stirring up community concern with their deliberately misleading tactics.

I am currently based in Perth working FIFO in the Pilbara. It would be my preference to live and work near Broome in the resources sector but due to the actions of green protesters new resource projects in the Kimberley have been delayed or haven't proceeded. I know of many other Broome locals, indigenous and non-indigenous, who would also like to return to Broome but cannot for lack of decent opportunities. Work in the resources sector pays well and enables me to support my family, make investments, and plan for the future. These are good jobs to have and I would like to see the same opportunities available for all Yawuru and Broome people.

It pains me to see how much tax I have to pay, only to see these green groups, who have charitable status and their donors receive a tax deduction, receive taxpayer funded government grants and act in a manner that can only be described as being devious and counterproductive to the well-being of remote communities. Lock the Gate is active in the Kimberley and is spreading misinformation in the Kimberley through their Frack Free Kimberley branch. This group has received donations from the US based Tides Foundation as well as from an east coast millionaire who has made his fortune from gambling machines. These are known only because of public admission, not because of transparency from the green groups.

There is no transparency about these charitable activist groups, despite them demanding transparency from resource companies. These green groups interrupt lawful businesses that employ people. They target shareholders because this information is publicly available and required to be declared by resource companies through regulations. It doesn't make sense to me why these green groups can act in such a misleading way and get away with it. I ask the Panel to recommend to the state government to police these activists because the Kimberley needs jobs, and these green groups are maintaining the disadvantage in Broome and the Kimberley region by stopping safe activities that would generate employment from happening.

The Kimberley is not a pristine wilderness, despite what tourism brochures may say. While there are some beautiful areas, the majority of the Kimberley is hot, dry, and not particularly attractive.

I am familiar with the areas in the Kimberley where resource operations are occurring and where fracking has been proposed to occur near Broome. Having camped and visited areas around Broome and the Kimberley, I can state matter of factly that these areas hold no tourism potential and you would be lucky to see anyone there. If anything, the resource activities have created access for traditional owners where there was no access before. No one walks around the bush barefoot anymore, they use cars and without access tracks they would not be able to get to many places.

As shown in the background papers to the Inquiry more than 22 State Acts (not including associated regulations and policies) govern the resources industry in Western Australia. It is also overseen by at least 8 government regulatory agencies. This has ensured that the industry operates responsibly and safely. From working in the industry and knowing the applicable legislation I am confident that the sector is regulated properly and that fracking can be carried out safely.

The protection of the environment while undertaking petroleum activities is of importance to the State. The *Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources (Environment) Regulations 2012*, the *Petroleum (Submerged Lands) (Environment) Regulations 2012* and the *Petroleum Pipelines (Environment) Regulations 2012*, (the Regulations), are regulations to the main petroleum legislation in Western Australia and provide specific environmental requirements for operators to comply with.

The Regulations require a petroleum explorer to gain DMIRS approval for, and comply with, an approved Environment Plan (EP) (Regulation 6 & 7). In order to be approved, an EP must meet legislative requirements and DMP expectations, be appropriate for the nature and scale of the activity and reduce all potential impacts and risks to as low as are reasonably practical and acceptable levels.

Under regulation 8, an activity must not continue if a significant new or increased environmental impact or environmental risk is identified. In these circumstances a revised EP must be submitted and approved by DMP prior to continuing the activity. It is an offence under the regulations if an activity is carried out in a way that is contrary to the EP approved by DMP.

Anyone who lives in the Kimberly would understand that water is plentiful. There is more than enough water for drinking water and for use by pastoral and industrial purposes. The *Rights in Water Irrigation Act 1914* provides for a licensing system to take water and construct water wells from artesian sources. All water used in the hydraulic fracturing process that is derived from aquifers is licenced from the Department of Water.

Resource companies are required to declare any chemicals used down wells to DMIRS. The disclosure occurs in an Environment Plan that must be approved by DMIRS using a number of assessment methods to ensure activities have a low impact to the environment, and also complying with applicable legislation. These chemicals are publicly available on DMIRS' website, which is why it is farcical for activists to claim that chemicals used in fracking are toxic and secretive.

A few years ago the Yawuru organisation had a group of experts analyse Buru Energy's Environment Plan. Buru Energy is an oil and gas explorer proposing to use the fracking process on Roebuck Plains. I note the conclusions of the Yawuru expert group reviewing Buru Energy's Environment Plan for the TGS program that:

- The overall findings that the impacts and risks associated with down-hole chemicals are limited (and that Buru Energy's controls are sufficiently protective) are reasonable and appropriate.

- Human exposures to the chemical additives, particularly for community members away from the occupational setting where the hydraulic fracturing is being conducted, are limited and would not be expected to produce adverse health impacts.

The Kimberley region has the highest unemployment levels in the state. The amount of recoverable gas in the Canning Basin is greater than the Browse Basin and could sustain an onshore gas industry for decades. The resource industry has the ability to operate in some of the remote areas where unemployment is the highest, which unfortunately is often in remote aboriginal communities. As with many regional communities people like myself often have to leave for decent work opportunities, having good opportunities for the youth of a town gives them opportunities to stay and be part of the community they grew up with.

From this inquiry I would like to see at least two recommendations from the Panel

1. That hydraulic fracturing, like all activities, can be conducted safely with appropriate regulations; and
2. That activist green groups with charitable status are regulated, and should face penalties for misleading the public and wasting public resources.

I would hope that the Panel recognises the benefits that an onshore industry could have for residents of the Kimberley, and recommends that hydraulic fracturing can occur.

Thank you.

Zach Fong

Environs Kimberley
10 September 2015 · 🌐

A veil of secrecy around fracking in the Kimberley does not bode well for the future, especially when 40,000 + gas fracking wells are estimated for the Canning Basin. There needs to be more openness and transparency from government including being real about the risks.



Buru Energy begins fracking again in WA's Kimberley
Buru Energy has begun fracking in Western Australia's Kimberley region in two shale gas wells.
MOBILE.ABC.NET.AU

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Environs Kimberley
16 July 2014 · 🌐

THE FUTURE FOR THE KIMBERLEY?
Department of Mines and Petroleum has said there could be thousands of frack wells across the Kimberley.
Mines Minister Bill Marmion has refused to protect Broome's drinking water supply from fracking.
This picture gives you an idea of what it would start to look like.
Please LIKE, SHARE and TAKE ACTION -
<http://cleanwaterhealthyland.org.au/node/148882>



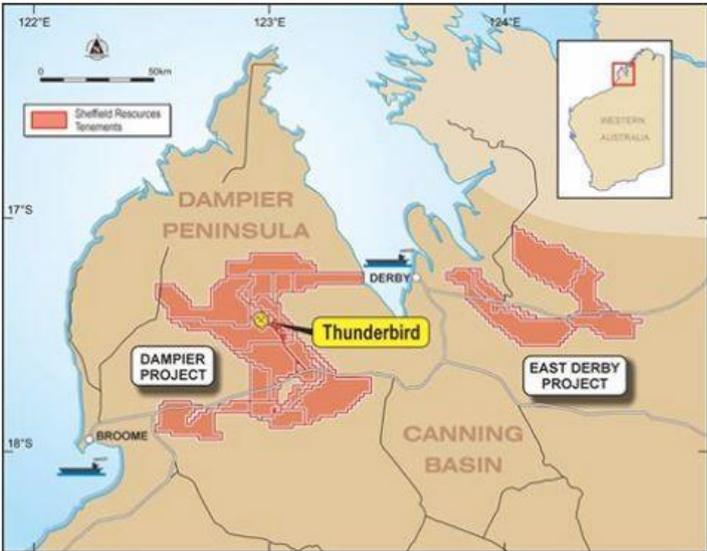
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Creating anxiety in the community when environment plans are publicly available and companies have said only a handful of wells are needed

Environs Kimberley
4 November 2015 · 🌐 · Funny · Thoughts

Heavy mineral sands mining is extremely destructive. It involves strip mining - bulldozing everything and then excavating all the soil at depths of 30 metres plus. It then requires huge amounts of water to separate out the minerals, some of which are radioactive. These are Sheffield Resources tenements on the Dampier Peninsula, as you can see they now cover Roebuck Plains.



Example of misleading claims about the radioactivity of mineral sands mining