

Submission by Allen and Barbara Clark of 'Echo' Roma to the Inquiry into the management of the Murray Darling Basin – impact of mining coal seam gas

8th July 2011

We wish to raise our significant concerns regarding the potential impact of mining development in our region on:

- 1. Water – current and future water usage and water contamination**
- 2. Property Rights – the violation of land holder rights and the impact on business and family**
- 3. Productivity – the reduction or dissolution of family-centred business**
- 4. Health – negative outcomes as a result of the above.**

1. Water – current and future water usage and water contamination

- a) Cross contamination of water aquifers with introduced chemicals
- b) Contamination by naturally occurring chemicals which are destabilized by mining activity with detrimental effects
- c) Fracking may include use of unacceptable chemicals
- d) Water depletion
- e) Use of recycled water
- f) On property quality assurance of water

2. Property Rights – the violation of land holder rights and the impact on business and family

- a) Unfair entry
- b) Rights “lie with the land” once an agreement for compensation is entered into and will limit you, your children and future purchasers of the land
- c) Freehold land – detrimentally effected
- d) Value of business and property will be effected
- e) Equity in business and property will be effected
- f) Lack of respect
- g) Unfair compensation
- h) Inadequate “make good” provisions
- i) Minimal valuations – not accounting for loss of future planned and anticipated family business or capital investment losses
- j) Time frames - the landowner is forfeiting rights to that land which he owns for the time ordered and altered at the whim of the mining company
- k) Notification should be personal – not just in local paper with critical documents in local public library for comment
- l) Trustworthiness of various companies
- m) Company entering private property with the best interests of their share holders in mind- not the best interests of the landholder
- n) Drilling life – company could pay % of gas/coal output from that specific enterprise to property owner - which may limit the excessive investigative drilling
- o) Explorative company – change of ownership alter veracity of agreements with landholders
- p) Some companies have been found to be deliberately deceptive and misleading
- q) DERM does not contact landholder to clarify impacts
- r) Lack of prospects for landowner, business and environment
- s) Environmental impact studies on specific locations

3. Productivity – the reduction or dissolution of family-centred business

- a) Contamination results in loss of productivity
- b) No guarantee there will not be contamination
- c) No guarantee that, if contamination occurs of the time frame of impact on our business
- d) Community may not require/have a use for the resulting recycled mining water
- e) Impost time for landholder - interrupted work means interrupted cash flow
- f) Lax or ineffectual rehabilitation

4. Health – negative outcomes as a result of the above

- a) Mental health
- b) Agonizing uncertainty
- c) Loss of privacy
- d) Personally invasive “freight train” impact
- e) Community will not be funded for impacts on “health infrastructure” until the impacts have been measured- long after the families and their businesses have been crushed or gone bust or imploded because of the massive changes in their lives which they did not seek, and which do not materially benefit their businesses or lives
- f) Open cut mining close to occupied dwelling – health risks especially relevant for aging rural population see Acland experience