

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
 Industry Portfolio
 Budget Estimates Hearing 2014-15
 2-3 June 2014

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: CSIRO

TOPIC: Impact of Coal Seam Gas on Groundwater

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Waters

QUESTION No.: BI-161

1. When is CSIRO's work on CSG impacts on groundwater expected to be completed?
2. Have the Federal Budget cuts affected the CSG study in any way, including but not limited to timeframe, staffing, resources, expertise available?

ANSWER

1. The CSIRO is currently conducting a number of projects or bodies of work that involve researching the impacts of coal seam gas (CSG) on groundwater. Information on these projects or bodies of work and their expected year of completion are provided in the following table:

Name of project or body of work	Description	Expected year of completion
Bioregional Assessments Programme	The aim of the Bioregional Assessments Programme is to assess the likely impacts of CSG and large coal mining developments on water resources and water-dependent assets in eastern and southern Australia.	2016
Gas Industry Social and Environmental Research Alliance	<p>The Gas Industry Social and Environmental Research Alliance is researching the environmental, social and economic impacts of the natural gas industry and includes surface and groundwater research.</p> <p>Four projects are currently in progress:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Geochemical responses to groundwater reinjection. 2. Re-injection of CSG water. 3. High performance groundwater modelling. 4. Isotope and geochemical groundwater baseline study. <p>A fifth project is about to commence:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Review of dissolved hydrocarbons in groundwater in the Surat and Bowen Basins. 	<p>2014</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2014</p> <p>2015</p> <p>2015</p>
Review of impacts of coal seam gas extraction on deeper groundwater.	This work is being led by the Department of the Environment. The CSIRO is reviewing the information needed to assess the impacts of coal seam gas extraction on deeper	2014

	groundwater.	
National Assessment of Chemicals Associated with Coal Seam Gas Extraction	The CSIRO is contributing research to assist the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme to assess the environmental effects of chemicals associated with CSG extraction.	2014

2. The recent Federal Budget cuts have not affected the studies above in terms of timeframe, staffing, resources or expertise available.