

srlup - Strategic Regional Land Use Policy - Have your say

From: "caz stott" <cazstott@australiamail.com>
To: <srlup@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 11/8/2013 8:36 PM
Subject: Strategic Regional Land Use Policy - Have your say

I am concerned about the new laws and policies relating to Strategic Regional Land Use, and in particular regulating the Coal Seam Gas industry. To be implementing such laws and policies is at least acknowledgment by the NSW government of the grave risks associated with CSG mining. That these risks might be "monitored and managed" under new CSG Industry Codes of Practice would, in my view, be cold comfort to those actually exposed to those risks.

The new laws seem blinkered to only three land uses - mining, agriculture and residential. There seems little consideration of land simply as a natural environment nor of the importance of biodiversity nor of the valuable tourism industry. The NSW government claims to have the strongest CGS laws in the country but in taking these steps to pre-emptively protect "high quality" agricultural land and "critical" water resources there is a risk that land not "mapped" (and therefore protected) is then more vulnerable. If the risks are the same, why shouldn't an equally vigorous regulatory system be applied to the assessment of individual applications relating to land which happens not to have been subjectively judged as high quality or critical (surely all water resources are by their very nature critical)? This is particularly important because while the numbers used in describing the "mapped" land sound large, when you look at the maps the areas being protected appear to be very small.

A better way of giving certainty to mining and CSG industries is to just say no. There are other avenues we can look to for energy, employment and funds for the State government. While there may be some short term losses in revenue, the longer term gains of a categorical no to coal are potentially enormous. While the mining companies may see dollars (and governments the royalties) in a coal export industry, it is worth being mindful of the fact that China is becoming a world leader in renewable energy manufacturing and power generation. The market may not be there in the future and we'll be left with coal we can't eat and gas we can't drink. I'd rather policies and laws which place a moratorium on any future coal and CSG mining and see NSW become a world and national leader in food production, water resources and the development of renewable energy.

Caz Stott
Yamba, NSW