



Submission Re: State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) Amendment (Coal Seam Gas) 2013

Rivers SOS makes the following recommendations re these amendments:

1. Rural residential land (zone R5 in the standard LEP) and all large lot residential zonings should be added to the CSG exclusion zone.
2. The 2km buffer should be applied to the critical industry clusters exclusion areas, as well as the residential exclusions.
3. The village exclusions for CSG must apply to the entirety of the villages of Goongerry, Broke and Bulga.
4. The exclusion areas for residential land and critical industry cluster should be extended to coal mining, which should not be permitted in residential zones or critical industry clusters, with a 2km buffer around each.
5. Resource companies should not be able to nominate to exempt land they own from the critical industry clusters: it will defeat the purpose of the protections to create holes in the maps.
6. There is no protection for agricultural land under the Gateway process. The Regulation must be amended to create a strict exclusion to protect agricultural land from mining for coal and gas, and must apply to all projects not determined before the creation of the amended regulations.
7. The new Gateway provisions are contradictory, implying at one point that the Panel will not even have the power to recommend rejection of a mining application.
8. The process to verify biophysical strategic agricultural land is at the discretion of the Director-General of the Department of Planning, who only needs to "have regard to" the verification criteria. There should not be any discretion to remove land from the map if it meets the criteria.
9. There is still no protection for water catchments and aquifers from coal mining and gas extraction. The next step should be the introduction of exclusion zones to protect surface water and groundwater resources from CSG and coal mining.
At the very least, the Special Areas of Sydney's drinking water catchments should be included in these exclusion zones.

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