

Submission- Gas Substitution Roadmap by Graeme Lechte

Gas is a finite resource so transition away from gas is clearly a necessary step for Victoria and Australia. Gas also contributes to global warming and must be replaced by renewable, clean energy sources.

As outlined in the consultation paper, there must be provision for workers and their families whose jobs are lost due to the closing down of the gas industry. No worker should be left without a job or income. Those workers who cannot be redeployed into renewable energy jobs should be fully supported financially while they retrain or reach retirement age.

There are two significant omissions in the consultation paper.

1. If the government is serious about transitioning away from gas, why has it ended the moratorium on gas exploration in Victoria? It would seem this is sending mixed messages to the gas industry and the public. On one hand agreeing that, it is essential we transition away from fossil fuels, and on the other, inviting inland gas exploration in Victoria. The government can't have it both ways. We desperately need to end our reliance of fossil fuels and there should be no new gas fields.
2. There is no mention of stopping the export of gas. The government cannot claim to be phasing out the use of natural gas while continuing to export huge volumes of gas. This too, will have an economic impact and it must be factored in when the government considers compensation for displaced workers and the viability of locally owned companies.

The moratorium on gas exploration should be reinstated and the export of locally produced gas should be rapidly phased out.

The following statement is from the consultation paper;

*The Victorian Government is already taking a range of actions to reduce emissions and support an orderly transition to a clean energy economy. This includes initiatives to promote energy efficiency and support the development of **lower emission alternatives** for the use of natural gas.*

If the government is serious about 'lower emission alternatives' then suggesting that carbon capture and storage is a solution to emissions, would indicate that the fossil fuel industry will continue unabated. There is only one way to reduce CO2 emissions and that is not to create them – not use an untried and environmentally hazardous way of storing CO2.

Thank you for reading my submission.