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Extra Information

Worldwide, groundwater systems are in significant decline & mismanaged or are depleted, e.g., France, USA, Turkey, Spain, Iran. The Great Artesian Basin is the largest groundwater body in the world. We simply must protect this. Farmers are no longer the culprits for groundwater decline in Australia. Instead, mining and resources, e.g., coal seam gas activity, carbon capture projects, are responsible for the ruin of our underground water systems, along with poor governance. This is based on our extensive experience for the last five years, fighting to protect the Condamine Alluvium from coal seam gas extraction by Arrow Energy (Shell & PetroChina) Surat Gas Project.

1) Use of surface and groundwater for mining, and petroleum and coal seam gas extraction is exempt development under the Planning Act. These activities are regulated by the [Mineral Resources Act 1989 \(Qld\)](#), the [Petroleum and Gas \(Production and Safety\) Act 2004 \(Qld\)](#) and the [Environmental Protection Act 1994 \(Qld\)](#) (Environmental Protection Act). **Coal seam gas and mining companies have unlimited rights to extract groundwater.**

2) The Regional Planning Interests Act 2024, Statutory Guideline 02/14.states:

"The Condamine Alluvium "prescribed as a regionally significant water source under the RPI Regulation" (See RPI Act Statutory Guideline 02/14 of October 2023: updated version including Appendices omitted from earlier versions). It goes on to state "through the RPI Act, the government is seeking to manage the impact of resource activities on the priority agricultural area" via an assessment process to consider each proposed resource activity on its merits".

The Surat Gas Project is still proceeding in spite of legislation such as the Regional Planning Interests Act 2014 that seeks to protect Priority Agricultural Areas (PAA'S) and water resources such as Condamine Alluvium.

The Toowoomba Regional Council has prior to Christmas 2023, called for a Moratorium on new coal seam gas activities. This should be supported by the Federal Government.

The Condamine River and its tributaries are the headwaters of the Murray Darling Basin system. Yet Arrow Energy and its joint venture partners Shell/PetroChina are continuing their activities on the Condamine Alluvium unimpeded.

Our climate is predicted to enter a drying phase and yet resource companies in Queensland are allowed unlimited take of water. This behaviour is no longer sustainable in a drying climate and should cease!

The Federal government must have the political will and demonstrate they are serious about protecting Australia's ecosystems, including the delicate balancing act of protecting and valuing our waterways/systems/aquifers. Strong deterrents must be introduced and the States strengthen their Water and Planning Acts accordingly to recognise that our precious water is a finite resource not to be squandered on, for example, coal seam gas extraction!

Carbon capture into the Great Artesian Basin must be abandoned. Our Basin needs protection first and foremost. It's a national asset. It's value is too great to be estimated. Once lost, it cannot be regained!