

MEDIA RELEASE

22 February 2011



TO: EDITORS/CHIEF OF STAFF

Basin Sustainability Alliance applauds four corners report

Basin Sustainability Alliance has applauded the ABC's Four Corners program for highlighting the serious concerns that surround the coal seam gas industry in Queensland and across Australia.

BSA Chair Ian Hayllor said the program highlighted the lack of monitoring and regulation in the industry.

"We are really concerned that the government is so determined to push ahead for big bucks in royalties and jobs that it is willing to risk the environmental well-being of our state and the health and safety of the people of Queensland."

Mr Hayllor said the BSA was concerned about the impact of CSG development on the quantity and quality of groundwater, the impact on the land including salinity and infrastructure on farmland, the impact on people's ability to make a living from their property and the loss of privacy and lifestyle.

"We fear that CSG is having a negative impact on food security, food quality and food quantity especially when there is ever increasing demand from a growing population," he said.

The ABC report highlighted examples of where fraccing has gone wrong and wells have been left leaking.

"If these are the ones we know about how many mistakes have happened that have not been uncovered," Mr Hayllor said.

"With tens of thousands of wells to come, we need to get the regulation right – not keep playing catch up."

He said BSA had been working hard over the past 12 months to represent the concerns of its members, landholders and businesses with the Surat Basin region.

"BSA representatives have enjoyed robust discussions with a range of Government Ministers and officers – including Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke, Queensland Premier Anna Bligh and many heads of departments.

"While the BSA has not been into loud demonstrations, we do understand why people's emotions have reached boiling point.

"We've put in detailed submissions on a range of environmental impact statements and draft legislation – backed by research from credible sources – and yet we still fear that our genuine concerns are not being fully addressed by the gas companies or the Government.

Mr Hayllor supported Solicitor Peter Shannon's comment to the ABC Four Corners program "we are asking agriculture to bear the cost of this industry".

"This is not just about the moral rights of individual landholders, it affects communities, it affects our environment, and our country's ability to produce food and fibre in the future."

ENDS

Media contact, BSA Chairman Ian Hayllor 0428 795548



www.basinsustainabilityalliance.org
PO Box 180, Dalby, Qld, 4405