

EMBARGOED 18 SEPTEMBER 2018

Open letter to the Western Australian Government calling for a permanent ban on fracking

Dear Premier and Ministers of the Government of Western Australia,

Unconventional oil and gas development in Western Australia should not go ahead under any circumstances.

The consequences of global warming are already extremely serious; including loss of human life, extreme weather, destruction of natural ecosystems and property damage.

Western Australia is already experiencing severe impacts of global warming, which will become far worse if emissions are not decisively reduced.

Within our children's lifetime average summer temperatures in Western Australia could rise by up to 6.5 degrees,ⁱ with even higher extremes. Bushfires and drought will increase, rainfall will continue to reduce in the populated south west, agriculture will decline, heat stress deaths will increase, among many other devastating impacts.ⁱⁱ

Our view is based on the scientifically robust carbon budget framework. On this basis, most **existing** fossil fuel reserves must remain unburned. Any **new** fossil fuel development is incompatible with the goal of the 2015 Paris climate agreement that aims to hold the rise in global temperature to well below 2.0°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue every effort to limit the rise to 1.5°C.ⁱⁱⁱ

Unconventional gas resources in Western Australia are one of the largest unexploited potential sources of carbon in the world.^{iv} Opening these to exploitation would, in our view, be grossly irresponsible given urgency of the climate situation.

As scientists and experts concerned about the wellbeing of the people of Western Australia and the rest of the world, we strongly urge that that unconventional oil and gas is permanently banned in Western Australia.

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Signatories

Professor Fiona Stanley AC, FAA, FASSA, FAAHMS	Distinguished Research Professor, University of Western Australia; Australian of the Year 2003
Professor Tim Flannery	Chief Councillor of the Climate Council
Professor Lesley Hughes	Distinguished Professor of Biology Macquarie University; Climate Council Councillor
Professor Hilary Bambrick	Head of School, Public Health and Social Work, Queensland University of Technology
Associate Prof Tilman Ruff AM, FRACP	Nossal Institute for Global Health, School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne
Associate Professor Shauna Murray	Climate Change Cluster (C3), University of Technology, Sydney
Professor Rob Moodie AM	Professor of Public Health University of Melbourne, University of Malawi
Professor John Quiggin	VC Senior Research Fellow, School of Economics, University of Queensland
Adjunct Professor Frank H Talbot AM, FRZS (NSW)	Adjunct Professor, Macquarie University
Professor Rick Cavicchioli	Biotechnology and Biomolecular Sciences, University of NSW
Professor Will Steffen	Councillor, Climate Council; Climate Scientist, ANU
Associate Professor Malte Meinshausen	Melbourne
Tim Forcey	Energy Advisor; former Gas Principal AEMO; former gas specialist Exxon, Esso BHP, Jemena.
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Ian Dunlop	Former senior executive Royal Dutch Shell; former Chairman of the Australian Coal Association; former CEO of the Australian Institute of Company Directors; chairman the original Australian Government Greenhouse Office Experts Group on Emissions Trading
Dr Sue Wareham AOM	President, Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)
Dr Luke Kemp	Senior Economist, Vivid Economics; Honorary Lecturer, Australian National University
Professor Ove Hoegh Guldberg	Professor and Director, Global Change Institute, University of Queensland
Dr Will J Grant	Senior Lecturer, Australian National Centre for the Public Awareness of Science, The Australian National University
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Professor Michael Ashley	Department of Astrophysics, University of New South Wales
Professor David Bowman	Professor of Environmental Change Biology, School of Natural Sciences, University of Tasmania
Professor Ian Lowe	Griffith University
Dr Brett Murphy	Senior Research Fellow, Research Institute for the Environment and Livelihoods, Charles Darwin University
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Dr Bill Hare	CEO and Managing Director/ Senior Scientist, Climate Analytics
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Dianne Katscherian	Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at Curtin University
Tim Buckley	Director of Energy Finance Studies, Australasia, the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis
Bruce Robertson	Investment Analyst, the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis
Dr Richard Denniss	Chief Economist and former Executive Director of The Australia Institute

References

ⁱ Government of Western Australia, Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, *About Climate Change in WA: WA's Climate Future*, Accessed 21/6/18, <https://www.der.wa.gov.au/your-environment/climate-change/252-about-climate-change-in-wa?showall=&start=3>

ⁱⁱ Government of Western Australia, Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, *About Climate Change in WA: Likely Impacts*, Accessed 21/6/18, <https://www.der.wa.gov.au/your-environment/climate-change/252-about-climate-change-in-wa?showall=&start=4>

ⁱⁱⁱ McGlade and Ekins (2015) *The geographical distribution of fossil fuels unused when limiting global warming to 2 °C*, <https://www.nature.com/articles/nature14016>

^{iv} EIA (2013) *Technically Recoverable Shale Oil and Shale Gas Resources: An Assessment of 137 Shale Formations in 41 Countries Outside the United States*, <https://www.eia.gov/analysis/studies/worldshalegas/pdf/overview.pdf>

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