

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 28 January 2016 3:02 PM  
**To:** Water Trigger Review  
**Subject:** Review of EPBC Act Water trigger  
**Categories:** Red Category

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this review as we are very concerned that the current regulation of water management in CSG and mining activities in Queensland is inadequate. In particular we are very concerned that the provisions in parts 4 and 5 of the Newman governments Water Reform and Other Legislation Act 2014 (WROLA) that allow CSG and mining operations unregulated access to and use of associated water were not revoked, when other parts of the WROLA were revoked, in the recent Water Legislation Amendment Act 2015. Hence we see the need for an assessment process by an agency outside the Queensland government as being essential to protect the sustainability of the aquifers that most Queensland agriculture is totally dependent on Accordingly we offer the following comments:.

\* We support the water trigger being provided in the EPBC Act to ensure proposed impacts of CSG and large mines on our precious water resources are subjected to a higher level of assessment, and therefore to provide more community confidence in government regulation of these projects. Most if not all states and territories in Australia do not provide regulation of water use which would adequately reflect the specific requirements of the EPBC Act. The water trigger is a necessary check and balance on these large scale projects which impact above and below-ground water resources;

\* We recommend that the water trigger should be amended to provide for the following:

- extension of the application of the trigger to apply to all large mines that excavate beneath the water table, as well as to large unconventional gas projects, including shale gas. Shale gas is set to greatly expand in Queensland; an industry which is known to consume a significant amount of non-associated water. The Queensland Government regulation of water is not sufficiently strong to ensure protection of our water resources. It is necessary that the water trigger provides a safety net at a Commonwealth level to protect our water;
- an express prohibition of hydraulic fracturing, as has been provided in several other jurisdictions (including France, New York and Quebec).
- a provision that the Minister may not approve a project until the proponent has adequately addressed any concerns raised by the IESC in their report;
- a requirement that the Minister refuse a development likely to have a significant impact on water resources; and
- a requirement that the Minister act consistently with the advice of the Independent Expert Scientific Committee (IESC), including a requirement that conditions of consent reflect the IESC's advice.

[REDACTED]



**EDO NQ**

ABN 32 017 484 326  
Level 1, Suite 1, 96-98 Lake Street  
Cairns QLD 4870 AUSTRALIA  
E: [edonq@edonq.org.au](mailto:edonq@edonq.org.au)  
W: [www.edonq.org.au](http://www.edonq.org.au)  
T: +61 7 4031 4766