

**TO:** Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio Minister for Climate Action, Minister for Energy and Resources

**COPY TO:**

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12 June 2024

Dear Minister D'Ambrosio,

## **Beach Energy Enterprises Gas Extraction Licence**

I write to express our deep concern and dismay regarding the approval of the Beach Energy Enterprises Port Campbell gas extraction licence.

The decision to approve new fossil fuel developments is at odds with the Government's net zero policy directions and what our community is telling us they want. It is imperative that urgent action is taken to mitigate the worst impacts of climate change, and to do this we need a rapid transition to renewable energy and phase out of fossil fuels.

We already have an unsafe 1.5°C of global mean temperature increase above pre-industrial levels locked into our future. Our community is already experiencing the devastating effects of this firsthand with more intense bushfire weather and heatwaves, reduced rainfall and sea-level rise. We cannot have one foot on the accelerator approving new fossil fuel projects and the other on the brake seeking to reduce emissions. It simply doesn't make sense to waste any more time allowing emissions to rise through the approval of new fossil gas infrastructure.

Gas is a dirty fossil fuel made up mainly of methane - a greenhouse gas up to 80 times more potent than carbon dioxide and a dangerous contributor to climate change<sup>1</sup>. Producing and using gas for energy creates greenhouse gas pollution at every stage of the supply chain, even before it is burned. Emissions from the extraction, processing and export of gas have helped keep Australia's official emissions high, cancelling out gains we're making from increasing renewable energy in the grid.

The gas Australians use to cook and heat our homes is dangerous for our health. Gas cooktops contribute to indoor air pollution, and can leak harmful toxins like carbon monoxide (CO), formaldehyde, nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter, even when switched off. NO<sub>2</sub> is strongly associated with asthma. In fact, a child living with gas cooking in the home has a comparable risk of asthma to a child living with household cigarette smoke<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/resources/future-of-gas-is-small-and-dwindling/>

Australia has plenty of gas without the need for approvals of new projects. In fact, Australia is the world's largest exporter of liquefied gas, responsible for 24% of global exports<sup>1</sup>. Almost 80% of the gas extracted in Australia is exported overseas, driving up global greenhouse gas emissions.

Considering the climate emergency, these exports should be reduced as an urgent priority to meet any residual demand in Australia, whilst rapidly transitioning the residential, manufacturing, mining and heavy-industry gas use to alternatives within the next 5-10 years.

We recognise the State Government's climate change policy and acknowledge some pleasing developments towards the target of 75-80% emissions reduction by 2035, and net zero by 2045. However, there remains so much more to do in such a short space of time if we are to contain the harmful and costly impacts of the climate emergency from spiralling out of control and well beyond 1.5 degrees celsius; and this recent approval of the Beach Energy Enterprise gas extraction licence are taking us in the wrong direction.

**In this context, we want to clearly express our organisation's priorities for action on Climate Change, which include:**

1. No LNG import terminals in Port Phillip Bay
- 2. No new fossil fuel projects, including offshore gas and oil exploration**
3. Delivery of commitments to net Zero CO2e by 2035
4. Accelerated implementation of the Gas Substitution Road Map
5. Accelerated development of renewable energy generation, storage and transmission
6. Accelerated development of Green Hydrogen production and distribution capabilities for the decarbonisation of heavy industries and transport
7. Funding support for community, business and industry led electrification programs
8. Incentives for rapid transition to electric vehicles, public and active transport

**We urge you to overturn this decision and ensure no more fossil fuel developments are approved in Victoria.**

Kind regards,

**Dan Cowdell**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Geelong Sustainability

**David Spear**  
Chairperson  
Geelong Sustainability

## About Geelong Sustainability

Geelong Sustainability is a not-for-profit community organisation and registered charity that supports residents of Geelong and surrounds to be more sustainable in their everyday lives. We deliver events, projects, campaigns and services which help to educate and support our community's transition to a zero emission climate ready future.

We have 240 financial members, over 50 active volunteers, and a broader supporter base of 20,000 newsletter and social media subscribers. Since our inception, we have facilitated \$9.3M of renewable energy investment in the community which has helped mitigate over 127,000 Tonnes of cumulative Carbon Dioxide emission.

For more information visit [www.geelongsustainability.org.au](http://www.geelongsustainability.org.au).