

WHAT IS FRACKING?

Fracking is a process that is used to extract unconventional gas, including shale and tight gas. It involves pumping large amounts of water and chemicals into the ground under high pressure to crack the rocks and make gas flow.

Unconventional gasfields also involve the industrialisation of entire landscapes. They generally require thousands of wells, vast networks of roads and pipelines, compressor stations, processing plants, wastewater holding dams and treatment plants.

FRACKING IN WESTERN AUST

WA is estimated to contain 280 trillion cubic feet of potential shale and tight gas resources¹ and gas companies are actively exploring for gas. If the industry moves to full production, gasfields will industrialise large, ever-increasing areas across the state as new wells are constantly drilled to maintain production levels.

Fracking for unconventional gas has already taken place in WA, with around 12 exploration wells fracked in the past 15 years.²

For detailed mapping of tenement data from official government sources see:
www.lockthegate.org.au/australian_mining_map

WHAT'S AT RISK?

Unconventional gas development across WA threatens some of our most productive food growing regions. Vital underground water resources, internationally significant wetlands and important natural bushland areas are also at risk.

Farmers and Traditional Owners DO NOT have the right to veto gas development on their land. Residential areas are NOT protected from gas operations.³

1 <http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/Petroleum/Shale-and-tight-gas-exploration-19990.aspx>

2 <https://frackinginquiry.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/Scientific%20Inquiry%20into%20Hydraulic%20Fracture%20Stimulation%20in%20WA%20-%20Background%20Paper%20-%202017%20November%202017.pdf> Page 10

3 For more information see "DMP Petroleum information sheet. Land use and access" www.dmp.wa.gov.au/shaleandtightgas

DO WE NEED TO FRACK?

Western Australia has ample offshore gas resources to supply all our domestic gas needs.⁴ We do not need to place our land, water, health and climate at risk by developing this industry. We have a golden opportunity in our state to go down a renewables pathway to generate energy, employment, ease climate impacts, and protect our precious food growing land and scarce water resources.

WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS?

The available peer reviewed research shows that out of 685 published scientific papers on the impacts of unconventional gas development, ‘84% of public health studies show risks to public health, 69% of water studies show actual or potential water contamination and 87% of air quality studies show elevated air pollution’.⁵

WATER: Unconventional gas mining uses vast amounts of water and places ground and surface water at risk from contamination.⁶

HEALTH: Unconventional gas operations can have serious impacts for human health, including cardiological complaints, cancer, skin conditions, respiratory ailments and infant health problems.⁷

CLIMATE: The carbon footprint from developing WA’s known shale and tight gas reserves would be huge. If all the gasfields are developed they would create about three times the annual pollution we can emit under Australia’s already modest Paris Climate Agreement targets. Development of these resources would undermine WA’s and Australia’s attempts to limit global warming.⁸

JOBS: The gas industry is a capital-intensive industry that only provides small numbers of long term jobs, with most required for the short initial construction phase only. A peer reviewed study of Queensland found for every 10 gas jobs, 18 agricultural jobs were lost.⁹

4 [http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/publications/tables/papers.nsf/displaypaper/3911622a5dd072199f87835d48257cd9002ca8ca/\\$file/1622.pdf](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/publications/tables/papers.nsf/displaypaper/3911622a5dd072199f87835d48257cd9002ca8ca/$file/1622.pdf)

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5 Hays, J., & Shonkoff, S. B. C. (2016). Toward an understanding of the environmental and public health impacts of shale gas development: An analysis of the peer-reviewed scientific literature, 2009-2015. PLOS One, 11(4), e0154164. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0154164

6 Gallegos et al, 2015, Hydraulic fracturing water use variability in the United States and potential environmental implications, Water Resources Research Journal.

7 Concerned Health Professionals of New York & Physicians for Social Responsibility. (2018, March). Compendium of scientific, medical, and media findings demonstrating risks and harms of fracking (unconventional gas and oil extraction) (5th ed.). <http://concernedhealthny.org/compendium/>

8 <http://climateanalytics.org/briefings/western-australias-gas-gamble.html>

9 Fleming M and Measham T (2015) Local economic impacts of an unconventional energy boom: the coal seam gas industry in Australia, The Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics, 59(1), pp. 78–94