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Use of “water trigger” powers to assess Beetaloo fracking welcomed

Attributable to Dr Sophie Scamps, Federal member for Mackellar

This is exactly what the expanded water trigger legislation that I fought so hard for is designed to do - and that's to provide greater protection of Australia's precious water resources from being significantly impacted by gas fracking.

Tamboran's Resources gas fracking projects in the Beetaloo Basin in the NT risk destroying the immense artesian water resource that lies below and feeds the rivers of the region.

I have been advocating strongly for the Federal Government, under the strengthened national environment laws, to commission a comprehensive scientific assessment of any likely impacts Tamboran's fracking will have on these precious water resources. So I am pleased and relieved this first step has finally been taken.

Tambouran has already drilled 15 wells. Thousands of wells could be drilled if the Beetaloo projects are fully developed so we need to fully understand the impacts.

Tamboran must be ordered to stop drilling until the impact assessment is completed and a decision is made.

It's important that we have the best scientific data available before these huge gas projects proceed.

One project alone, that of Tamboran Resources will require 375 million litres of water a year to operate.

Local Traditional Owners have told me they are greatly concerned because the aquifer keeps the Roper River flowing year-round and is essential to their communities' physical and cultural survival.

We need the best possible information to assess what the impact of drilling and extraction will be on this precious resource so Minister Plibersek can decide whether to invoke the water trigger she and I worked so hard to put into law.

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