

MYTH VS FACT

So why are we allowing the Northern Territory to be Fracked?

In one of its latest “research” papers, (found [here](#)) Lock the Gate claims that the nation’s oil and gas industry provides minimal employment but maximum environmental harm because of alleged methane leaks, does this square with reality? Not at all.

✘ MYTH

- “The gas industry is a highly capital-intensive industry that provides relatively small numbers of long term jobs.” (p.1)

✘ MYTH

- “Existing unconventional gas developments in Australia have relied extensively on the use of [fly-in-fly-out and drive-in-drive-out (FIFO and DIDO)] workforces made up of predominantly male non-residential workers... negative influences of FIFO/DIDO workforces on local communities include... a decline in local resident populations with flow on effects to local schools.” (p. 2)

✔ FACT

- Even “moderate” development could increase NT real output by an estimated \$446.4 million per year and create an average of over 250 jobs. Large scale development could increase real output by \$674.4 million per year – or \$17.5 billion over 25 years – and create an average of 524 full time jobs – [Final Report of the Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory](#) (p.45)
- “Headline economic impacts of CSG development in Queensland to date are found to be net positive, and are attributable to increases in employment, income, output, consumption and government revenue. These changes are broadly consistent with changes experienced as a result of a typical natural resource development.” – [Office of the Chief Economist, Australian Department of Industry, Innovation and Science](#) (p.1)
- “Based only on projects for which the final investment decision (FID) has been taken, 55,000 to 65,000 people are expected to be employed in the wider LNG industry and its direct supply chain during the operations phase. Most of these jobs are highly skilled and remunerated well above Australia’s average wage. Throughout the 2020s and beyond, the LNG industry is forecast to add around A\$30 billion per annum to Australia’s GDP, equivalent to about 2 percent of the total. depending on realised prices, LNG could contribute up to A\$55 billion exports in 2020 – rivalling iron ore, Australia’s biggest commodity export today.” – [McKinsey Australia](#) (p.3)

✔ FACT

- “Studies have shown that CSG development has led to the reversing of rural decline in CSG regions, including through increase in female employment and higher youth education levels” – [Office of the Chief Economist, Australian Department of Industry, Innovation and Science](#) (p.2)

MYTH VS FACT

So why are we allowing the Northern Territory to be Fracked?

✘ MYTH

- CSG infrastructure on farmland in Queensland costs landholders millions of dollars in revenue. (p.3)

✘ MYTH

- “There is a growing body of evidence which suggests that the scale of methane emissions from unconventional gas mining makes it potentially more polluting than coal when burnt for electricity.” (p.1)

✘ MYTH

- “Methane can escape through existing pathways like water bores and can result in farm bores becoming inoperable due to excess gas. The report raises concerns that the severe bubbling which has commenced recently in the Condamine River could possibly be the result of these types of migratory emissions.” (p.4)

✔ FACT

- “Compensation payments negotiated as part of land access arrangements, including both up-front and ongoing components, can be an important income source for farmers.” In fact, they find that not only can this compensation help buffer against agriculture’s variable income, but also “provide greater certainty in financing agricultural businesses.” – [Office of the Chief Economist, Australian Department of Industry, Innovation and Science](#) (p.31)

✔ FACT

- “Taking into account our estimates of methane emissions from both gas and coal, on average, gas generates far fewer greenhouse gas emissions than coal when generating heat or electricity, regardless of timeframe considered.” – [International Energy Agency](#) (p.1)

✔ FACT

- “Hydraulic fracturing is unlikely to be the cause of bubbling in the Condamine River because to date there has been no hydraulic fracturing by the CSG industry in these production fields.” [Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization](#) (p.1)
- “Methane occurs naturally in groundwater due to either slow migration from deeper gas-bearing strata or from microbial activity.” – [Australian Council of Learned Academies](#) (p.120)
- “The Committee finds that the risk of water contamination as a result of fugitive methane during hydraulic fracturing...is highly unlikely and can be minimised through baseline monitoring of water quality and ongoing monitoring pursuant to the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources (Environment) Regulations 2012.” – [Western Australia's Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs](#) (p.viii)
- “The LNG Enforcement Unit (LNGEU) was contacted by a landholder on 17 May 2012, regarding the observation and possible causes of bubbling in the Condamine River approximately six kilometres downstream of Chinchilla Weir. Preliminary investigations indicated that the bubbling was unlikely to be caused by coal seam gas (CSG) activities in the region... The Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate assessment of the gas seep areas indicates that there is no safety risk in the immediate area from the seeps.” – [State of Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines](#) (p.239)

MYTH VS FACT

So why are we allowing the Northern Territory to be Fracked?

✘ MYTH

- “During unconventional gas production, methane is released into the atmosphere as a result of leakage from well heads, pipelines and infrastructure...” (p.1)

✔ FACT

- “Over the past three decades, the rate of global oil and gas methane emissions from gas production have declined from 8% to 2%, as shown by the isotopic composition of methane in the atmosphere.” – [Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization](#) (p.2)
- “Analysis of remote sensing data over the Surat Basin, using data from the satellite-based sensors, has revealed no difference in the average atmospheric methane concentrations between 2001 and 2011 (Day et al., 2015) when compared to the remainder of Australia.” – [Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization](#) (p.3)
- “Numerous in-depth reviews by experts in other countries have found that, subject to the implementation of appropriate controls and standards, the use of hydraulic fracturing does not pose a significant risk to the environment.” – Office of the Chief Economist, Australian Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (p.43)