To the Federal Minister for the Environment Tanya Plibersek and the Resources Minister Madeleine King,

Thank you for bringing the latest five-yearly state of the environment report to our attention and expressing the well overdue empathy for the state of our environment. However, we are in need of serious action immediately.

As a concerned citizen and voter in this country, firstly I beg that you make plans to get on board with the Greens demands to prevent new fossil fuel projects. Pushing Australia to expand domestic gas supplies for a local market is not what this nation needs. We need investments into brave new industries that are not just sustainable but regenerative. This could be your legacy!

This letter relates to GAS and its unconventional extraction in the Pilliga area on Gamilaroi country as well as other degrading land use at the hands of big businesses, on a national scale.

To unlock unconventional gas sources such as shale gas, tight gas, and coal bed methane this does not require 'novel technologies' as google defines the process; It requires highly destructive processes.

To get to the gas, let me outline just one damaging technique. Coal Seam Gas Mining - Miners must drill through multiple layers up to 3km deep. This effects each layer and collapses water tables in the process. It's a highly unstable and cumbersome practice, resulting in an inefficient loss of gas on extraction. Lateral seepage is almost guaranteed and impossible to contain according to the thousands of examples around the world. Poisoning ground water on a desert island is too ludicrous to even put into words. Especially when Europeans only decades ago cooked with and heated their homes with methane. A gas sourced from their own kitchen scraps and human excrement.  Furthermore, on the outskirts of every town, in sewage plants methane is being burnt off as a waste byproduct instead of utilised.

I along with 10’s of thousands demand a full inquiry into the results of Australia's most controversial mine and it’s subsequent 'Independent' Planning Commission's decision to approve the Narrabri Gas Project. This was a clear landslide of opposition in an approximate 1:60 ratio. ‘1’ being FOR the mine and ‘60’ being strongly AGAINST the detrimental operations of this mine and all its counter parts. Furthermore, using the title of an operation that sits above Australia’s Great Artesian Basin (GAB) as the Narrabri Gas Project does, is highly misleading. It gives the general air that this is a localised mine. Located in the outback where no one will be effected by it’s operations. The NGP’s position is located just above Australia’s infamous and highly interconnected ground water source. A source that takes up one third of the land mass and is as far reaching as the water by its very nature. It hydrates our entire nation. How on earth with such an outrageous amount of opposition did this operation even get considered let alone approved? Sneaky titles for one!

Thirdly: do not allow the Hunter Gas Pipeline from the Wallumbilla Gas Hub in southern Queensland to Newcastle, via Narrabri to go ahead. If Santos claims it could provide up to half of NSW's gas supply, this is clearly a marketing ploy by an entity that has been consistently in breach of environmental laws and social integrity on multiple fronts. In fact this industry has changed laws to suit itself! Do also take seriously the submissions for the inland Rail (Narromine to Narrabri) Leg through the Pilliga forest. At 176 objections with 117 of them being detailed objections and 12 in support. If this goes ahead then your party will also be seen as corrupt.

This is YOUR golden opportunity to invest in the new renewable’s industries; Bio-gas units, harvesting, compressing and storing of methane. Eco tourism, bike tracks, mobile tiny cafe's and winery outlets and local produce sales (to celebrate the smaller and sustainable farms of this nation), accommodation and solar charging stations for electric bikes are just some of the exciting options. Inject the soul back into these gorgeous old towns currently under siege from the corporate grip. The list of alternative and the increasingly popular healthy green industries are endless.

Under the Pilliga Forest on the sacred lands of Gamilaroi country, as part of the Great Artesian Basin lies another hydro-geological miracle. A giant pure aquifer, floating like an island within the greater grainy reservoir. Inside this cavernous abyss lives the mysterious Stgygofauna. This tiny organism that once brought the Pilliga’s entire mining industry to a halt has not been mentioned since before the 2019 election. Instead of being responsible for putting their habitat into further danger, we need to celebrate these minuscule critters. Why not fund an observatory in the area and an education facility alongside a megafauna extravaganza for a heroic change?

What seems blatantly obvious on the ground especially among Australia’s farming communities, is the acute awareness of your recent position not to be seen as too radical. Labor could moderate the change that is needed verses the loss of future governance to parties further to the right. The potential leverage is a growing unease around the corporate farming conglomerates that are fast rendering the circumference of Australia’s towns as barren moonscapes with the consequential death of town life.

Forth Point: Support into small farms that are taking the hard road to rejuvinate their land and encourage chemical or dramatically reducing chemical and synthetic fertilising loads for our soil and rivers.

The overall feeling that is seeping into every aspect of country living is a lack of care.

Focus on farming community’s integrity;

* To problem solve the re-integration of traditional farming methods with a renewed push for cutting edge sustainable practices – using the catastrophic death of rivers in recent years as one of many key motivators.
* Find solutions for the displacement of farmhands from the increase in factory and machinary driven farms. A loss of employment that has been turning to supporting the mining industry etc
* increase local production and sales for local communities as one avenue. Use generic catch phrases like ‘Farm to Plate’ etc and encourage Farmers Markets
* Combat drought and the hydrological imbalance. Push the proven theory that trees make clouds (if laws were twisted for the mining industry surely they can be twisted for the increase in ‘sky rivers’)
* Pledge to deglobalise and decentralise at least in part where viable.

Use the lack of regard in our increasingly corporately drenched towns to bring back that care.

Finally: Protect what forests we have left.

Currently the Pilliga Forest as the largest remaining remnant of NSW is in decline, under the sprawling pressure of gas mining industry. It is putting at risk vulnerable, threatened rare and endangered species of flora and fauna. Water is being diverted away from vital ecosystems and farming. It is contaminated and unfit to re-enter the hydrological system. This area is only one example under immense strain by the activities of unconventional gas mining. It needs to stop immediately to save the integrity of one of Australia's most significantly valuable environments, the sacred sites and indigenous culture, the water quality and quantity and the impact it is having on farming culture and communities as well as its current and future worth to ecotourism industry.

Please respond to the 22,000 plus submissions that pleaded with the IPC for the Narrabri Gas Project not to go ahead, for the millions of people that voted Green and for Labor hoping for real and lasting change, the youth that continue to march for climate action globally, and of course to the trillions of voiceless creatures that have and will continue to perish if we relentlessly persist going down the path of invasive unconventional gas mining.

The enigmatic area of the Pilliga is full of sacred mystery and it is on a par to the Great Barrier Reef. If Australia has a heart this is where it would belong, pumping water outwards hydrating every inland river and tributary on this parched continent.

Act ASAP as our future depends on a brave leadership while we are poised precariously on the precipice of ecological collapse.

Kind Regards