

Dr. David Borthwick
Montara Inquiry
P.O. Box 1564
Canberra 2601

16th December 2009

Dear Dr. Borthwick,

RE: Submission to The Commission of Inquiry – Montara Well Head Platform Uncontrolled Hydrocarbon Release

I wish to protest about the apparent lack of controls covering exploration and extraction of fossil fuels in the Timor Sea and Kimberley areas of Australia.

The recent oil spill and fire which occurred from 21st August to 3rd November during drilling by PTTEP, will have done untold damage to the natural environment and will take decades to repair - just think Exxon in Alaska where damage is still visible many years after the so-called clean-up. This recent "accident" will have killed untold numbers of organisms and endangered communities in Australia and Indonesia who rely on the area for trade and food.

It is shocking that such events can occur. Plans for increased extractions will only lead to more and worse accidents. Governments seem unable (or unwilling) to properly police the actions of what appear to be very substandard controls. It is a joke that PTTEP's practices are claimed to be "world's best practice". They took 74 days to plug the flow and another three weeks getting a rig to the site. And the oil and chemicals used to "clean" it up will take years to disperse.

Accidents will always happen but there are some places where such accidents are so devastating that the actions that lead to them, ie: drilling exploration and extraction of oil and gas (and uranium), should not be allowed to take place, whatever the economic justifications.

Areas such as the Kimberley and its surrounding seas should be left inviolate against any form of industrial activities. What we humans are doing to the world is in the end going to lead to our destruction since we are, metaphorically speaking, pissing in our own backyards. There should be no further expansion of the petroleum industry on the North-West shelf of Australia's Kimberley region unless:

- a. Marine parks with large sanctuaries are established in the Kimberley region to serve as protection against such industrial accidents,
- b. It can be shown that proposals for expansion of the North-West petroleum industry are fully compliant with binding national climate change policies and targets (Term of Reference 11);
- c. Faster response time mechanisms and improved oil spill procedures are developed and adopted – with strong independent compliance enforcement. (Term of Reference 8)

Yours sincerely,



Penelope Drake-Brockman