

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

16th December 2009

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

Dear Dr Borthwick,

I genuinely appreciate that this inquiry is taking place, and thanks for your part in it. I am a tertiary educated resident of Victoria, working in health-related fields. I am also one of the many Australians who believe, especially in light of the debacle that has been the Montara oil spill, that all further expansion of the petroleum industry in the sensitive region that is the North-West shelf of Australia's Kimberley region, should be curtailed.

Although I have not been to the Kimberley region, my daughter has been there, and parts of my family originate from country Western Australia. I know some people who live and work in that area, and have a felt personal interest. Aside of that however, all Australians, now and in the future, and indeed the entire world's population, both animal and human, are completely dependent on prevention of such destructive incidents. We owe it to all our children to take a strong stand against such carelessness.

Given the vast environmental damages caused by this oil spill, impacting on several marine habitats and many species, there should be established a huge marine park and reserve zone in the Kimberley region, with demarcated sanctuaries large enough to protect this sensitive marine wilderness area.

This marine reserve designation would be necessary to offer protection from any future petroleum 'events' like this 'West Atlas oil spill', particularly of such a horrifying magnitude, and in such a pristine region as the Kimberley! This need, of course, should be completely obvious to anyone involved in the inquiry. (term of reference 10)

It must be fully demonstrated that *any* future proposals, whether for petroleum exploration or extraction, in the North-West Kimberley region are *entirely* compliant with binding national and international climate change policies and targets. Given the long time that was taken to resolve this particular problem, my preference would be to see the petroleum industry avoiding such sensitive areas completely. (term of Reference 11)

Obviously then, in general, there should be a call for faster response times, and for development of strategic procedures for dealing with oil spills or any other foreseeable petroleum industry disasters. These procedures, and the management of any future disaster 'events', should be externally auditable for compliance. It is too tragic to inadvertently permit such extensive environmental impact. One such fiasco for Australia is enough! (term of Reference 8)

Yours Sincerely,

Ms Tass Holmes: natural medicine practitioner.