

4 SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES OPPOSING FRACKING IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY - Councillor Penny Pedersen

File Number: CLM/20/1/1/6 - BP20/240

BACKGROUND:

On 2 October 2018, Origin announced a contract to supply solar power from their 56MW Moree Solar Farm to 20 Sydney local Councils, including Randwick City Council. This is via a group Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) led by the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC).

Origin Energy pride themselves on their “good energy” brand and claim to take climate change seriously, however, Origin has plans to start shale gas fracking in the Northern Territory. Fracking in the Northern Territory would not only be one of the largest potential sources of carbon pollution in the world, but it poses huge threats to the lands, waters and rights of Aboriginal people to make decisions about what happens on their country.

<https://www.goodenergy.net.au>

In February this year, The Australian Institute and thirty of Australia’s leading scientists – including many of Australia’s leading climate scientists – called for a permanent ban on unconventional gas development in the Northern Territory due to its potential impact on global warming.

[https://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/P637%20NT%20offset%20paper%20\[WEB\].pdf](https://www.tai.org.au/sites/default/files/P637%20NT%20offset%20paper%20[WEB].pdf)

The Northern Territory is one of the areas that will suffer most from global warming if global emissions are not decisively reduced. CSIRO projections show that, if emissions continue to rise, Darwin could experience up to 275 days per year above 35 degrees by 2070. Combined with Darwin’s high humidity, this could make the region virtually uninhabitable. Increasing extreme heat is just one of the many potentially devastating impacts of climate change.

Despite this, a moratorium on unconventional gas extraction in the Northern Territory was listed by Chief Minister Michael Gunner in April 2018.

A more suitable and positive alternative to shale gas fracking which could be proposed to Origin is to consider suggestions made for Australia to become the world’s renewable energy powerhouse, and explore renewable energy grid development.

As an Origin customer and consistent with its Climate Emergency Declaration, Randwick City Council has an opportunity to support Traditional Owners and communities in the Northern Territory, and to write to Origin Energy about the matter.

Council, submitted on 24 March 2020.

NOTICE OF MOTION 4 (continued)

MOTION:

That Council:

(a) Write to Origin Energy:-

- (i) Noting City of Ryde has a Power Purchase Agreement with Origin Energy through SSROC, 20% of which is currently sourced from the Moree Power plant.
- (ii) Noting City of Ryde has endorsed a Climate Emergency Declaration, a resolution to divest from Fossil fuels and has resolved to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan.
- (iii) Expressing our support for the traditional owners and communities in the Northern Territory, who have expressed their strong opposition to fracking due to the threat it poses to the climate, to their lands, waters, and rights.
- (iv) Requesting that Origin Energy cease all plans to conduct fracking in the Northern Territory and elsewhere due to its impact on climate, communities, water, and environment and that they commit to further investment in environmentally sustainable renewable energy projects.

(b) Forward a copy of the correspondence referred to above to all NSW Regional Organisations of Councils (ROCs).

(c) That should this become a resolution of Council, that Council endorses the following Motion to be submitted to the 2020 National General Assembly of Local Government:

That ALGA:-

(a) Write to all Energy companies currently proposing fracking in the NT:-

- (i) Noting that many Councils in Australia have Power Purchase Agreements with them.
- (ii) Noting that many Councils have endorsed and must uphold - among other things: Climate Emergency Declarations, Net zero emissions targets, resolutions to divest from Fossil fuels and developed Reconciliation Action Plans.

NOTICE OF MOTION 4 (continued)

- (iii) Expressing our support for the traditional owners and communities in the Northern Territory, who have expressed their strong opposition to fracking due to the threat it poses to the climate, to their lands, waters, and rights.
 - (iv) Requesting that Energy companies cease all plans to conduct fracking in the Northern Territory and due to its impact on climate, communities, water, and environment and that they commit to further investment in environmentally sustainable renewable energy projects.
- (b) Forward a copy of the correspondence referred to above to all Australian Ministers for Local Government, Energy and Environment.