

NO to gas-fired dispossession: We stand with Gomeori against Santos

We demand that the NSW and Commonwealth governments immediately take action to stop the climate-wrecking Santos Pilliga-Narrabri Coal Seam Gas (CSG) project proceeding on Gomeori lands.

Gomeori have never ceded sovereignty over the Pilliga and given no consent to coal seam gas. They have cared for their lands and waters since time immemorial, fought to maintain connection despite violent, racist policies of exclusion and stood on the frontline of protests against destructive fossil fuel projects for generations.

Gomeori have a registered Native Title claim over the Pilliga. However, the current Native Title Act provides very weak protection for First Nations seeking to stop unwanted developments on their lands. Santos are exploiting this weakness by taking hostile court action to impose the project.

In December 2022, Santos was granted four “Future Acts Determination Applications” by the Native Title Tribunal, allowing them to proceed with development of 850 CSG wells despite the destruction of Gomeori rights that will result. This decision is currently subject to appeal by Gomeori people and the NSW government is supporting Santos in court.

The Native Title Tribunal ruled in favour of Santos’ claim that CSG development is in “the public interest” because of claims it will bring economic prosperity, justifying the decision to over-ride Gomeori rights. In reality, this project will create profits for a tiny few while unleashing a carbon and methane bomb, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions in the order of 127 million tones (CO2 equivalent). The project will also destroy precious local ecologies and threatens to pollute the Great Artesian Basin, waters which are so crucial for sustaining life.

Instead of gas-fired dispossession, we urgently need to be strengthening First Nations rights and investing heavily in a just transition away from fossil fuels, with large-scale employment in renewable energy and sustainable development. This project cannot be allowed to proceed.

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