

Coexistence Criteria for Agriculture and CSG Mining

Coexistence criteria should never be a “one-size-fits” all approach. Every land use and farming enterprise is unique and every situation will require specific consideration e.g. Intensive livestock or organic farming cannot be treated just like extensive grazing and conventional farming.



BSA's overarching principles of Coexistence

"10 Commandments of Coexistence"

1. Resource activity must not occur unless landholder agrees.

Comment: We recognise that the community owns the underground resource and it should be developed to benefit all Queenslanders. However, the current and proposed CSG activity in the Surat Basin will have an enormous impact on our land and water resources and landholders have been greatly disempowered in the negotiation process for land access and compensation. Giving the right to landholders to negotiate on an even footing (by being able to "walk away" from negotiations) will ensure the CSG companies offer a fair and reasonable business proposition for land access and compensation. True landholder agreement can only be achieved if there is full disclosure of all planned activities by the resource authority holder.

If the landholder does agree, then the following applies:

2. CSG activity must not endanger the long term productivity of the land. The CSG industry must restore land to full agricultural productivity consistent with original 'land capability' classification once CSG operations are completed. (Therefore the original land may require classification).

Comment: This requirement to fully restore agricultural productivity should be a requirement of all mining activity on productive agricultural land.

3. CSG development must address relevant neighbour impacts e.g. overland flow issues so that activities or infrastructure on one property do not unreasonably impact neighbouring properties.

Comment: In agriculture, neighbours work together to ensure they don't adversely impact on one another. CSG companies should act in the same way.

4. There must be no net detrimental impact on underground water supplies for agricultural or domestic use. i.e. No net negative result – CSG industry must ensure sustainability of underground water.

Comment: Water is our most precious resource. By purifying CSG water and substituting this water for current uses, and by also ensuring no water is wasted, the adverse impact of the water depletion from aquifers can be minimised.

5. Critically, water quality must at all times be assured.

Comment: Current "Make Good" requirements relate to supply of water quantity. They should also apply when the water extracted for CSG operations causes a detrimental effect on water quality.

6. CSG Development should avoid high quality soils that are suitable for cultivation.

Comment: CSG wells and other CSG infrastructure such as roads and pipes should not be located on cultivated lands or lands that are suitable for cultivation. That is any lands classed A & B in the good quality agricultural land classification system (or the land classified 1 and 2 in the capability classification international standard). Such infrastructure could be located adjacent to but away from such areas. We understand that directional drilling etc. make this possible. CSG infrastructure on farmed land unreasonably interferes with farming activities.

7. Coexistence guidelines should apply to all rural land – such protections should not only be afforded to PAAs and PALU.

Comment: Regardless of whether land is classified as Strategic Cropping Land or Priority Agricultural Areas, the coexistence criteria we propose should apply to all mining operations on all agricultural land. Land classification alone does not define the value of an agricultural enterprise.

8. Agricultural activities/operations must have priority over resource activities. (i.e. Where there is any conflict, agriculture has right of way, except for genuine safety emergencies).

Comment: Many agricultural operations are highly time sensitive. Farm efficiency and productivity depends on being able to carry out critical operations on time. Operations such as mustering, crop planting, harvest and spraying must take precedence over mining activities, except where the mining operation is for emergency safety reasons.

9. CSG development must not compromise human health and safety.

Comment: Human health and safety must be paramount. This applies to physical and mental health.

10. Compensation must recognise and address all impacts including social, financial, amenity and lifestyle.

Comment: Landholders want to be treated fairly and with respect. Compensation must at all times must be related to the level of impact - including from off-property activities (ie. affected persons should be compensated for the 'authorised nuisance', not just the signatory to the CCA). We expect reasonable recompense in Land Access and Compensation agreements. CGG Companies (and the Government) who have operated in a fair and reasonable manner have found landholders generally to be fair and reasonable in return. Agreements must be able to be reviewed.

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