

6 December 2023

The Hon Leanne Linard MP
Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for
Multicultural Affairs
1 William Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Minister

Proposed Injection of CO₂ into the Great Artesian Basin by CTSCo

I write to you on behalf of the 11 member councils of the North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils Inc. (NWQROC). At our meeting in Burketown on 30 November 2024 the following motion was passed unanimously:

“That the NWQROC advise the Queensland and Australian governments of its complete opposition to the proposal by CTSCo to undertake an injection test of 330,000 tonnes of liquid carbon dioxide (CO₂) over three (3) years into the Great Artesian Basin (GAB) west of Moonie in Southern Queensland.”

Members expressed alarm that such a proposal could even be considered.

Councils of the North West are acutely aware of the international, Australian and State based initiatives to achieve net zero targets by 2050 and are actively engaged in Queensland’s Energy and Jobs Plan. We are also aware of trials and feasibility studies into [carbon capture and storage \(CCS\) projects](#) across the nation’s mainland states and the Northern Territory. At this time, one is operational in Western Australia, one has taken a final investment decision and 17 are at feasibility stage including CTSCo and one other in Queensland.

Glencore documents indicate the [CTSCo Project](#) is seeking approval to injection test up to 330,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide into a high-fluoride, brackish water sandstone aquifer at a depth of 2.3 kilometres and claims the water in that aquifer is non-potable and that it is geologically isolated from shallower aquifers used by the agricultural community. Glencore claims the project will have no impact on current or potential groundwater users of the GAB and that this view is shared by the Australian Government Independent Expert Scientific Committee (IESC) in a report commissioned by the Queensland Government.

Conversely, the proposed CTSCo Project has drawn strong criticism from concerned property owners in the area of the proposed test and rural sector peak bodies such as the [Queensland Farmers Federation \(QFF\)](#), Agforce, Australian Lot Feeder’s Association and Cotton Australia. They dispute the CTSCo claim that it will not adversely affect water in other aquifers in the GAB and that the aquifer they propose to inject the CO₂ into is not suitable for agricultural use with one property owner having a licence to drill into that aquifer.

The QFF have detailed the significance of the [GAB](#) contributing approximately \$13 billion to the national economy each year and being a vital resource to 180,00 people, 7,600 businesses and 120 towns. Whilst acknowledging the CCS processes are emerging globally as a potential tool to lower emissions, QFF claims research shows that its application within a usable water resource is unprecedented and that its use is usually in conjunction with poor quality, heavily saline formations and depleted oil and gas reservoirs.



The QFF also claims the injection of “industrial waste” into a usable water resource such as the GAB is extremely alarming given its significance to vast areas of rural and remote Queensland - its economy and communities.

In the circumstances of the contested science and the extreme risks and potential consequences to the GAB and those who rely on it, the NWQROC fully supports the calls of these organisations and landholders for the State Government not to grant approval to CTSCo to proceed with the three-year trial. To do so would at least be irresponsible and perhaps even fool hardy. Such an action is not worth the risk with one of Queensland and Australia’s most significant natural and economic assets no less important than the Great Barrier Reef.

For further information please contact Greg Hoffman PSM, Executive Officer of the NWQROC at E: nwqroc@carpentaria.qld.gov.au or M: 0418 756 005.

Yours sincerely



Cr Jack Bawden
Mayor, Carpentaria Shire Council, and
Chair, North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils Inc.

Cc Hon Glenn Butcher MP, Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing, and Minister for Water.
Hon Scott Stewart, Minister for Resources

