



Hon Tanya Plibersek MP
Member for Sydney

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SAMPLE

Dear Hon Tanya Plibersek MP

I live in your electorate and I believe that **extending the water trigger to shale and tight gas** was one of the most significant environmental election commitments of Federal Labor.

This is very overdue. It was recommended in 2018 by the NT [final Fracking Inquiry report](#) (the Pepper inquiry), and this year was backed by a [Senate Inquiry](#), which also recommended the trigger be brought forward.

Furthermore, the independent advisor to the NT Government said in his [Final Implementation Report](#) in March that the *risks of fracking to First Nations people and culture remain at an unacceptable level*.

The NT government has acted in bad faith. It promised when it lifted the ban on fracking to implement all recommendations of the Pepper inquiry by the end of 2022. One of these was the water trigger – a [detailed analysis](#) commissioned by Lock the Gate from Earth Justics shows that it has properly implemented only 45 per cent of the inquiry's 138 recommendations.

If the Federal government does not act soon on this, fracking will start in the Beetaloo Basin in the NT and make it another broken promise, this time from Federal Labor. [Here](#) Tamboran describes its plans to produce gas via mini-LNG in 2024. In this [video interview](#), the CEO of Empire says they are targeting a Final Investment Decision on pilot production by the end of this year. In other words: **This is urgent**.

Minister Plibersek cannot protect precious water without this water trigger because the NT laws allow fracking companies to sell gas from “appraisal” fracking with no upper limit, and there is no basis for a referral to the Minister under the current EPBC Act. Even if referral to the NT government for environmental approvals were to be required, it could be fast-tracked, and the NT laws and processes provide no assurance that water would be protected.

In November 2022, a group of 18 Australian water experts [wrote to the Chief Officer of the Northern Territory](#) warning that the Northern Territory's record of water planning does not meet national standards.

The fracking companies do not need to wait for a pipeline to Darwin. Tamboran can run a short pipeline to connect to the McArthur River Mine Gas Pipeline without environmental approvals, and the nearby [Empire Energy tenements](#) overlap the Amadeus Gas Pipeline as well.

So this cannot wait until there is a new EPBC Act.

A small amendment to the current Act would do it. It would not affect other legislation. The cross bench will support it in both Houses.

Please ask the Minister to fulfil this promise before it is too late and it is broken, along with the trust of First Nations people of the NT and all Australians who care about them and our precious water and environment.

Many thanks if you have met with concerned constituents and discussed this critical matter. If that has not yet happened, I beg you to facilitate it at your earliest convenience, and would be grateful if you would kindly advise me of when and how it could be done.

Yours sincerely,