



# Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef Minister for Science and Innovation

Our Ref: CTS 08210/24  
Your Ref: A1275225, A1283768

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30 May 2024

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letters of 2 and 22 May 2024 enclosing a copy of Parliamentary Petition Nos. 4059-24, 4074-24 and 4086-24 concerning the potential impacts of the proposed Surat Basin Carbon Capture and Storage Project on the Great Artesian Basin.

The Department of Environment, Science and Innovation has determined the Carbon Transport and Storage Corporation (CTSCo) Pty Limited Surat Basin Carbon Capture and Storage Project is not suitable to proceed due to potential impacts on groundwater resources in the Great Artesian Basin.

As Queensland's environmental regulator, the department carefully considered the project's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which involved a rigorous three-year assessment against strict regulatory requirements in the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* and the Environmental Protection Regulation 2019.

As part of the process, the EIS for the proposed project was publicly notified and submissions invited between 5 December 2022 until 23 February 2023.

On 24 May 2024, the department decided that the project is not suitable to proceed.

The assessment found that the Precipice Sandstone aquifer in the Great Artesian Basin, where the project had proposed to inject captured CO<sub>2</sub> for storage, is not a confined aquifer, which is a strict requirement of the Regulation.

The assessment also found that CO<sub>2</sub> injected into the aquifer could migrate, likely causing irreversible or long-term change to groundwater quality and environmental values if the project was to proceed.

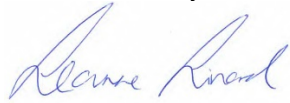
Several submissions on the EIS confirmed that groundwater in the Precipice Sandstone holds environmental values, as it is used for agriculture, irrigation, and stock watering.

The department's final decision on the EIS acknowledges the importance of the Great Artesian Basin to multiple stakeholders and makes it clear that other carbon capture and storage projects will not be viable in the Great Artesian Basin.

A copy of the assessment report can be found on the Queensland Government website at:  
<https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/management/environmental/eis-process/projects/completed/surat-basin-carbon-capture-and-storage-project>.

I trust that this information has been of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leanne Linard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'L'.

Leanne Linard MP

**Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and  
Minister for Science and Innovation**