



SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

GISERA | Gas Industry Social and Environmental Research Alliance

Community wellbeing and attitudes to coal seam gas development in south-west Queensland - 2014 to 2024

This project will explore trends in community wellbeing and attitudes to coal seam gas (CSG) development over the past decade across different industry phases: from construction through to full operation.

CSIRO's Gas Industry Social and Environmental Research Alliance (GISERA) is undertaking a project to continue monitoring community wellbeing and attitudes to coal seam gas development in south-west Queensland.

Drawing on data from earlier surveys and combining this with data from the proposed 2024 survey, researchers will be able to make comparisons for wellbeing and attitudes across an extended time period that spans several different phases of industry development.

Key points

- This project will focus on community wellbeing and attitudes to CSG development in the Western Downs and eastern Maranoa regions of Queensland.
- CSG development in these regions is now in a fully operational phase.
- The project builds on previous CSIRO research monitoring community wellbeing in 2014, 2016 and 2018, during earlier stages of industry development.
- The research will help create a broad understanding of the social licence for CSG development over time.
- Outcomes from this project will include a 2024 community wellbeing survey, assessing any changes over time.

A decade of CSG development in QLD

CSG development in Queensland's Surat Basin is now in a fully operational phase, with indirect employment associated with the gas industry predicted to peak in 2024.

A number of previous community surveys have taken place in the region to track wellbeing and attitudes over time.

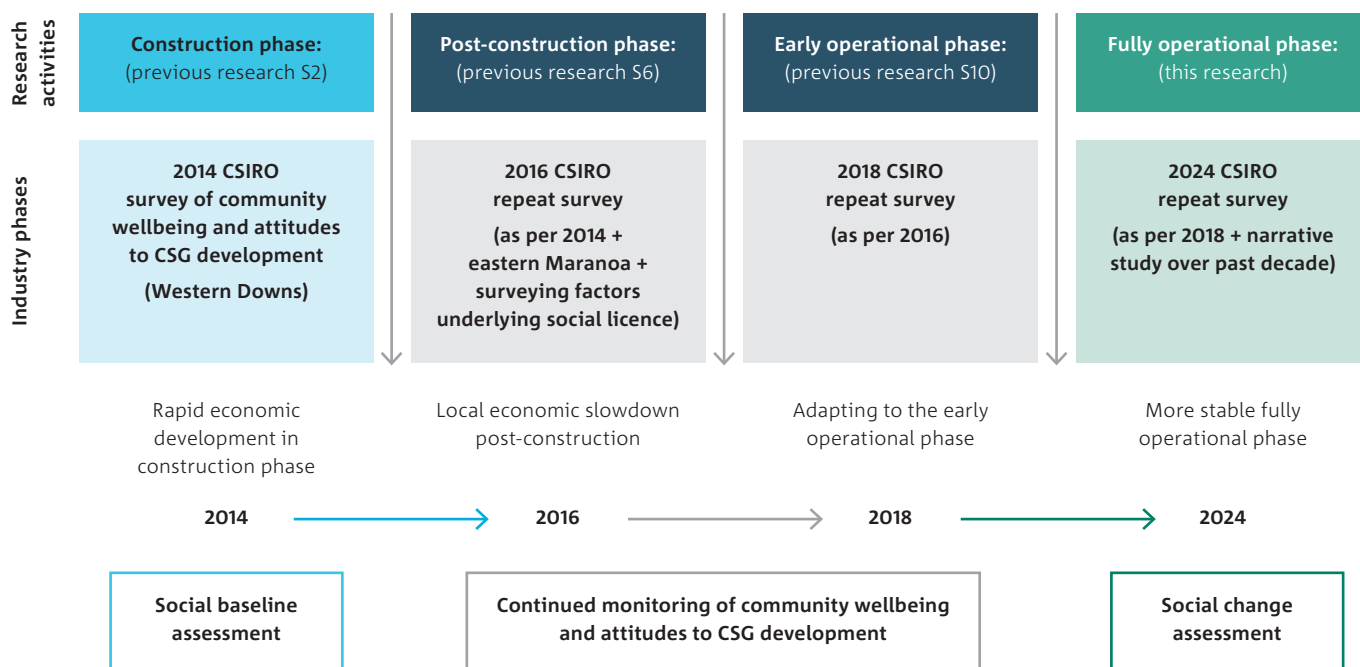
In 2014, the industry was in the construction phase, building the major infrastructure necessary for operations. This included pipelines for gathering and transporting gas, power lines, compressor stations, water treatment facilities and gas processing facilities.

In 2016, the industry was in a post-construction phase with most major infrastructure completed. As an extensive labour force was no longer needed for construction, this period saw an economic slowdown in the region.

By 2018, the industry was in a more stable early operating phase, with over 1000 production gas wells operating in the Surat Basin, and new gas fields opening up.

This project proposes to measure community wellbeing and attitudes again in 2024, with the CSG industry in a fully operational stage. It is projected there will be approximately 10,000 production wells in operation at this time.





Extending our knowledge of the impacts of CSG

CSIRO's surveys remain the only representative surveys of community wellbeing and attitudes to CSG development in the Western Downs and eastern Maranoa regions.

The previous studies provide valuable evidence that helps deepen understanding of what is important to communities, and what can help maintain and enhance their wellbeing in the midst of disruption and wide-spread change from a new industry requiring large-scale infrastructure development.

The 2018 survey report, which compared 2014, 2016 and 2018 findings, found that the Western Downs region had maintained robust levels of overall wellbeing within their communities over these years.

An innovative narrative study

A second research activity planned as part of this project is a narrative study comparing how themes around community wellbeing and perceptions of CSG have been discussed both within and outside the region over the past decade.

Focusing on issues such as services and facilities, community cohesion, and perceived impacts and benefits of CSG development, researchers will collect data from online media (e.g., websites, newspapers, discussion forums, regional newsletters and similar), and will use artificial intelligence software to identify how these and other topics have been discussed.

This work will analyse how discussions around CSG have changed over time, and help inform the 2024 community wellbeing survey.

More information

Find out more about the [project](#)

Read about other [GISERA projects in Queensland](#)

Further information | 1300 363 400 | gisera@gisera.org.au | gisera.csiro.au

GISERA is a collaboration between CSIRO, Commonwealth and state governments and industry established to undertake publicly-reported independent research. The purpose of GISERA is to provide quality assured scientific research and information to communities living in gas development regions focusing on social and environmental topics including: groundwater and surface water, greenhouse gas emissions, biodiversity, land management, the marine environment, and socio-economic impacts. The governance structure for GISERA is designed to provide for and protect research independence and transparency of research.