The pros and cons of drilling 1.5 mln hectares

A report released by SLR Consulting, the independent assessment practitioner for the project, shows the following preliminary issues and potential impacts have been identified and will be investigated as part of the environmental assessment:

• Farm safety - access by unknown persons to farms operating heavy vehicles and equipment may pose safety risks. Runaway fires may present a potential hazard. Farm infrastructure - farm roads, gates and fences may be damaged during exploration activity.
• Soil and land capability - activities at the seismic and drill sites may affect soils and land capability if poorly regulated and not rehabilitated.
• Biodiversity - activities at the seismic and drill sites have the potential to disturb or destroy regulated ecosystems.
• Groundwater - the proposed drilling has the potential to contaminate groundwater, which could impact availability to other users and the ecosystem.
• Air - the proposed project has the potential to contribute to air pollution, particularly through dust emissions from vehicles on gravel roads and the release of gas from boreholes.
• Noise and vibrations - the proposed project has the potential to cause noise pollution during the day and at night. The impact to structures and livestock and wildlife is unknown.
• Socio-economic - the project has very limited potential to contribute to socio-economic impacts. The potential for increased crime, spread of disease and pressure on support services is low.

While positive impacts include job creation and stimulation of the local and regional economy, the potential negative socio-economic impacts include potential for increased crime, spread of disease and pressure on support services.