



Media release
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WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS RISKS IN KIMBERLEY HUB PROCESS

At the close of the Northern Development Taskforce site selection workshop held in Broome this week, environment groups congratulated the Government on work completed thus far, but reiterated that not enough is known to make a decision around placement of a potential LNG processing hub site in the Kimberley.

Environs Kimberley Director Maria Mann said, “Presentations at the workshop have only served to highlight concerns that the Kimberley environment, with its potential World Heritage natural and cultural values, remains poorly understood.

“Making a premature decision on the placement of a vast industrial hub in the next few months puts at risk the irreplaceable nature of the Kimberley

“As a minimum timeline, no decision should be made until completion of the Broad Strategic Assessment of the Heritage values of the Kimberley, due in 2010.”

Conservation Council spokesperson Tim Nicol said, “Industry concerns are driving the timelines for this process, and this means that despite the resources being thrown at scientific surveys by the Northern Development Taskforce, vast information gaps exist. There simply hasn’t been enough time to understand a region as large, dynamic, complex and diverse as the Kimberley.

“Further, there is still no greenhouse emissions plan for the LNG hub. Developing this massive gas field will have large implications for WA’s greenhouse gas emissions. A greenhouse gas plan is essential before any development goes ahead in the Browse Basin.”

Josh Coates, Kimberley Campaigner for The Wilderness Society (WA) said, “We’d like to congratulate the scientists for the excellent work done within the limited timeframe available, but it has been made clear from the presentations that we are a long way off knowing enough to responsibly consider large scale industrial development in the remote and largely pristine Kimberley.

“On the other hand we are very concerned that not enough effort is being focused on sites outside the Kimberley, where large scale industrial infrastructure already exists, and on alternative technologies such as floating LNG. Without these assessments, the process loses its integrity..

“The focus of effort in relation to Browse needs to be on reducing greenhouse emissions, exploring sites and technologies that do not impact the world-renowned Kimberley coast, and ensuring that Indigenous communities are guaranteed the support they need regardless of where individual projects occur.”

Media Contacts: Maria Mann (EK) 0427 935052; Josh Coates (TWS) 0438 805 284
Tim Nicol (CCWA) 0422 235 774