



Save the Nature of the Kimberley

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Landcorp Community Summit 2030 – WA Government vision for Broome ‘disturbing’.

‘The WA Government’s vision for Broome and the Kimberley to be based on heavy industry is disturbing,’ said Environs Kimberley (EK) Director Martin Pritchard.

‘In its presentation to the Landcorp community 2030 summit on July 23 in Broome, the WA Department of State Development promoted a heavy industrial future for the Kimberley. It gave emphasis to the 3,500 hectare proposed LNG industrial complex 50km north of Broome,’ Mr Pritchard said.

‘We are concerned that the State Government is pinning all its hopes on an LNG development at James Price Point as the key to the future development of Broome and the region.’

The proposal has yet to be approved; the environmental assessment of the project will not be completed until late 2010. Woodside and its joint venture partners Shell, BP, BHP Billiton and Chevron have not yet agreed on a site. The Pilbara is a cheaper option according to industry analysts.

‘A development at James Price Point would require the bulldozing of thousands of hectares of Pindan bushland, home to many species of plants and animals. It would threaten marine animals through dredging and blasting, destroying reefs and seagrass beds,’ said Mr Pritchard.

EK has a different vision from the government’s, and is calling for the Kimberley community’s support. ‘We want to see economic enterprises that build and strengthen our communities and maintain the lifestyle and feel of Broome and the Kimberley,’ Mr Pritchard said.

‘We believe the community favours businesses that have little or no environmental impact: creative industries such as the visual and performing arts, film, information technology, scientific research and education. Tourism based on the environment, culture and history, if well managed, could expand exponentially in the region with little harm to the environment. We need an economy that belongs to the people of the region and is based on conservation.

‘We need a vision that goes beyond gas plants and mining. Heavy industry provides no long term certainty. BHP’s recent withdrawal from Ravensthorpe in the southwest of WA is a glaring example of what can happen to a community that bases its hopes on mining. Bushland was cleared and people who made financial investments in the town to support a mine are suffering. Heavy industry based on oil and gas only lasts for a limited time; these industries cannot sustain communities in the long run,’ Mr Pritchard said.

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