



Paul Henderson
CHIEF MINISTER

27 February 2008

SIGNING OF PROJECT FACILITATION AGREEMENT WITH INPEX

A two-train, more than 8 million ton per annum LNG development opportunity was advanced today with Chief Minister Paul Henderson signing a formal Project Facilitation Agreement with INPEX, demonstrating the option to bring gas from the Ichthys gas field to Darwin is being given serious and growing consideration.

INPEX operates the Ichthys field in the Browse Basin on behalf of Joint Venture partner TOTAL.

"The opportunity for Browse Basin gas to be processed in Darwin is a viable option for INPEX, and has the full support of the Northern Territory Government," Mr Henderson said.

The Project Facilitation Agreement ensures that a whole-of-government approach is taken to the development of the Project including facilitating the necessary environmental and planning approvals, provision of land at Middle Arm, and port access.

The company is currently undertaking a range of technical and engineering studies to fully assess the Darwin option and to see how it compares to their current preferred option of processing the gas on the Maret Islands off the Kimberley coast in Western Australia.

"I plan to visit INPEX headquarters in Tokyo in March to promote the benefits of the Darwin option," said Mr Henderson.

"Darwin offers a high degree of certainty and security for the project - with land on Middle Arm Peninsula available for the development of current and future LNG facilities.

"Access to a modern deepwater port, an international airport, direct links to the National highway and rail networks, as well as the attributes of a modern capital city, make Darwin an attractive option for INPEX."

The company is working closely with the NT Government to evaluate the concept of plant design and layout on the Middle Arm Peninsula, determine possible pipeline route into Darwin, identify shipping and port requirements, and assess the availability of local labour and other services.

In addition to the benefits Darwin facilities provide, including expandability of the project, a high degree of schedule certainty and risk minimisation are key advantages of the Darwin option, which can be critical for major projects such as this.

Among the various options INPEX is considering in the Kimberley and Northern Territory, there is no doubt that Darwin has advantages of great interest to INPEX.



"My Government will continue to work collaboratively with INPEX for their assessment of Darwin," Mr Henderson said.

A high-level Steering Group consisting of representatives of the Northern Territory Government and Inpex has been established to progress the Project Facilitation Agreement.

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