Restoring Trust: Public Comment Invited on the First Onshore Shale Gas Environment Management Plan

11 April 2019

The first Environment Management Plan (EMP) for onshore shale gas exploration drilling since the Territory Labor Government lifted the moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in the Northern Territory has been accepted for assessment.


The EMP is an activity specific plan that must show all environmental impacts and risks have been considered and appropriate environmental management practices implemented.

The Territory Labor Government is restoring trust and certainty through the implementation of a robust, clear and transparent set of rules and guidelines around how the environment must be protected in accordance with all 135 recommendations of the Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing.

The Petroleum (Environment) Regulations require the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources to publish an EMP for public comment, where the activity involves drilling of a petroleum well or hydraulic fracturing.

Interested parties may submit written comments on the EMP during the consultation period and the Minister will consider these comments in deciding whether to approve an EMP.

All EMP decisions will be published on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) website, including a statement of reasons outlining why the decision was made.

Quotes from the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources, Eva Lawler:

“This Government is making it easier to invest in the Territory as these reforms will ensure our unique environment and the jobs that rely on it are protected, while also providing further opportunities for investment and new jobs for the Territory - protecting the environment creates jobs, and good environmental policy is smart economic policy.

“I thank Santos for submitting its EMP and encourage the community to have a look at it and provide their comments so I can make a fully informed decision.

“Providing the community with a legislative right to have their say on the approval of an EMP relating to drilling or fracking will help restore trust and transparency - a process that did not exist under the previous CLP government.”

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