

Feds flag Pluto through

Monday, 15 October 2007

THE Australian Government has opened the way for Woodside Petroleum to begin developing its \$A12 billion Pluto liquefied natural gas project on the Burrup Peninsula.

It was the second LNG project to receive Commonwealth approval in three days, behind Chevron's \$20 billion Gorgon development on Western Australia's Barrow Island on Wednesday.

As with Gorgon, Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull said Pluto could proceed on strict environmental conditions.

These would see Woodside establish management plans to protect Commonwealth marine environment, including a dredging and spoil disposal management plan, an oil spill contingency plan as well as offshore drilling operations, construction, installation and operations management plans.

Pluto involves the construction of a LNG processing facility on the Burrup, with gas transported onshore via a pipeline from the gas field, about 190km northwest of Karratha.

Industry Minister Ian Macfarlane said the development would inject \$17.6 billion into the national economy, including up to 3000 direct jobs during construction and a further 200 direct jobs and 3000 indirect jobs during operation.

"The Pluto project will stimulate the local region, with an estimated 28 percent of the workforce residing locally," he said.

Minimum targets were also set for indigenous participation in the project, including in the construction and operational workforce and local supply contracts to encourage the long-term development of the local indigenous community.



Pluto well test



The Pluto development concept