

Ancient rock art removed for Pluto LNG

Filed from Singapore 2/5/2008 5:59:19 AM GMT



AUSTRALIA: Woodside Petroleum on Jan. 16 completed the relocation of ancient rock art to make way for the the Pluto LNG onshore facilities on the Burrup Peninsula, according to a report by newspaper *The Australian*.

The Burrup Peninsula and the 42 islands of the Dampier Archipelago are said to host an estimated 1 million pieces of Aboriginal rock art, also known as petroglyphs, of up to 30,000 years old. Last July, Woodside was granted the permission by the Australian Environment Ministry to move one per cent of the Aboriginal rock art, also known as petroglyphs, prior to carrying on with the Pluto LNG project. The move was widely condemned by local and international conservation groups.

A Woodside spokesperson said during an interview with *The Australian* the relocated rock art represent less than 0.02 per cent of the petroglyphs located in the area. "We were able to leave undisturbed about 95 per cent of the estimated 3000 engraved boulders on the Pluto leases," he said adding that none of the engravings had been damaged in the move.

Woodside reportedly relocated 170 pieces of petroglyphs in the presence of Aboriginal monitors, in addition to 42 other pieces of rock art removed from the site last year. The Burrup site could host up to four LNG processing plants drawing on gas supplies from the North West Shelf and possibly as far away as the Browse Basin.