



BROKEN PROMISES: MINISTER KING FIFOS TO DARWIN TO ANNOUNCE TAXPAYER FUNDS FOR THE FOSSIL FUEL INDUSTRY

The Environment Centre NT is calling on the Albanese Government to front up to Territorians about the truth of what is being proposed at the Middle Arm Industrial Precinct, as Minister King commits huge amounts of public money to this toxic project.

In her speech to the Developing Northern Australia conference on Wednesday, Minister King spruiked the Middle Arm industrial hub for its “low-emissions manufacturing and export of hydrogen and ammonia clean energy”.

Today in her fly-in-fly-out visit to Darwin, she announced that the Albanese Government would commit \$1.5 billion towards the project. However, environmentalists have criticised the Minister’s spin on the project, and called for a commitment not to fund the expansion of the fossil fuel industry.

Co-Director of the Environment Centre NT Kirsty Howey says,

“Funding the Middle Arm Industrial Precinct would be nothing short of a broken promise by the Albanese Government. Labor MPs have indicated that a Labor Government won’t fund new oil and gas projects, and that’s exactly what the Middle Arm Industrial Precinct is.

“There’s absolutely nothing sustainable about the Middle Arm Project. It’s about toxic petrochemicals and plastics production in Darwin Harbour using fracked gas from the Beetaloo Basin.

“The Minister’s commitment of funding for the Middle Arm Industrial Precinct is simply shovelling huge amounts of taxpayer funds to the climate-wrecking fossil fuel industry. The Albanese Government can’t have it both ways: you can’t take action on climate and fund climate-destroying projects like Middle Arm.”

“The health impacts of petrochemicals industries are well known around the world. The Minister describes the project as ‘transformational’ for Darwin; this much is true, it will transform Darwin into another cancer alley, with toxic industries located just three kilometres away from residential areas.”

“It’s disappointing that the Minister flew in, flew out and didn’t bother meeting with any of the local community who will have to live with toxic industry polluting their neighbourhood. I wonder how the Minister would feel if they built a toxic petrochemical plant around the corner from her house.”

ENDS

For previous media releases see [here](#) and [here](#).

For media enquiries contact Naish 0439 231 122

Background to the Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct

The so-called Middle Arm Sustainable Development Precinct (MASDP), is a proposal to build a major toxic petrochemical manufacturing, using gas as a feedstock, and fossil fuel gas processing precinct, just 3km from homes and schools in the City of Palmerston, and in the middle of Darwin Harbour.

Despite its official name, the project has been criticised by environmentalists as being a smokescreen for the expansion of the gas industry, with fossil fuel companies Santos and INPEX receiving direct funding for the Precinct. The precinct is designed to lock in consumption of fossil fuel gas from the controversial Barossa gas field and from fracking in the Beetaloo basin, where Traditional Owners and pastoralists are fighting to stop gas extraction from occurring.

\$1.5 billion of federal funding has been committed to the precinct by the previous Government as part of the gas-fired recovery, with Labor giving their tentative support to the funding. But the proposal, and funding for it, has the fingerprints of Scott Morrison and Michael Gunner all over it. Questions are now being asked about what exactly the new Fyles and Albanese Governments have found themselves committed to.

The proposal is currently being assessed by the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NTEPA) under a strategic environmental assessment process— which critics say has drastically reduced the transparency of the Precinct, hiding individual projects and industries from public view.