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Keystone carbon capture and storage project supported by Albanese Government takes major fall

Gas giant INPEX has [withdrawn](#) its plans for the world's largest offshore carbon capture and storage project in the Northern Territory after failing to properly disclose the true scale of a seismic blasting planned in a fragile marine area.

To proceed with its Bonaparte Carbon Capture and Storage project, the Japanese gas giant will now be forced to resubmit its referral of the project under Federal environment laws, if it wants to continue to pursue the project.

It is not clear why the project has been withdrawn, but campaigners from [Environment Centre NT made a submission pointing out](#) that INPEX had failed to disclose the true size of the seismic blasting area.

The withdrawal underscores persistent greenwashing questions about the viability of carbon capture and storage, which critics say is a proven failure that will not reduce emissions.

Environment Centre NT pointed out a major inconsistency: INPEX said it would conduct seismic blasting over 1800 km² over 30 years, but its [November referral report](#) only evaluated impacts for a much smaller offshore area of 480 km² and the pipeline route.

Federal environment guidelines require project proponents to disclose detailed information about seismic testing – including details of whale species likely to occur in the area and the location and timing of blasting.

ECNT observed that INPEX fail to do either, overlooking potential impacts to species including the rare Omura's whale and blue whale. Seismic blasting may cause physical damage and lead to lower breeding rates among whales and impact species viability and recovery efforts.

The project is a keystone for the Federal Government's push for carbon capture and storage, having [received Major Project Status in July 2025](#).

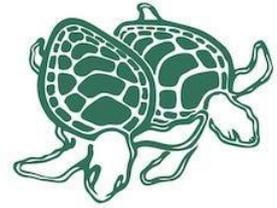
It would be Australia's first offshore carbon dumping experiment, as well as the world's largest – injecting carbon dioxide from Inpex's Ichthys plant and the proposed Middle Arm gas hub and importing emissions from our Japan and South Korea.

In its submission, Environment Centre NT noted the project is 'unprecedented' in Australia and the world and its impacts are 'poorly understood.'

The Bonaparte project may face further trouble, as documents submitted for assessment [under NT environment laws](#) also reveal INPEX plans to take its beleaguered Acid Gas Incinerators offline and intends to depend on unreliable carbon capture and storage technology to deal with toxic air pollutants from its Ichthys gas plant in Darwin Harbour.

Environment Centre NT

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INPEX has [previously struggled with the functioning of its Acid Gas Incinerators](#), leading to spiralling emissions of benzene and other volatile organic compounds into Darwin's air.

[Referral documents](#) submitted to the NTEPA reveal that if capture, transport and storage of CO2 and air toxics fail, INPEX will vent the toxic gas stream directly into the air.

Senior Climate Campaigner Bree Ahrens said:

"This is another embarrassing stumble for the gas industry, which has been plagued scandals in the Northern Territory, from [leaking tanks](#) to [oil spills](#) and massive [spikes](#) in toxic pollution.

"This is a major setback for INPEX's carbon dumping plans and it's troubling that basic details on seismic blasting are missing from the application."

"This carbon dumping project is a recipe for disaster, with deafening and deadly seismic blasting, a constant risk of spills and leaks.

Territorians who care about the whales, dolphins and turtles will have even more questions about this plan to turn our coast into the world's carbon pollution dumping ground.

Offshore carbon dumping has never occurred in Australia, and we won't accept it in the Territory."

Media:

Jem Wilson 0481 959 745 jemina.wilson@ecnt.org.au