

Four Frequently Asked Questions regarding Kimberley fracking

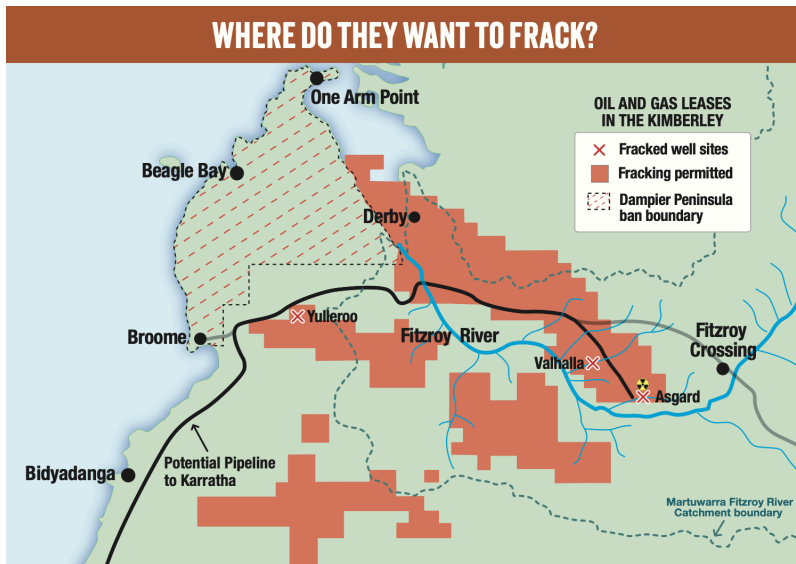
1. I heard fracking isn't happening or won't happen, so what's the problem?

The WA Government has never ruled out fracking in the Kimberley. While fracking companies aren't currently fracking for oil or gas (as at June 2025), this is due to the 12+ years of community campaigning.

Right now, Texan company Black Mountain Energy's proposal to frack 20 wells near Fitzroy Crossing (the 'Valhalla' project) is going through [state and federal assessment processes](#). The WA EPA's recommendation decision is expected around August 2025.

In 2023 the [WA Government lifted the ban](#) on exporting gas from the vast onshore Canning Basin in the Kimberley, [encouraging the development](#) of a large-scale gas fracking industry for export by the first mover.

Below are the petroleum lease areas in the Kimberley where fracking is permitted under Cook government policy, showing an industry proposed gas export pipeline route to the Pilbara, past test fracking sites, key towns and the Fitzroy Martuwarra River.



The company that previously fracked in the Kimberley, Buru Energy (in 2011 and 2015), has 'conventional' gas and oil projects in the region, which are often a precursor to fracking. In May 2024 the WA Government [awarded Buru Energy \\$375,000](#) of taxpayer funds to help expand its oil and gas exploration in the Kimberley's Canning Basin.

Buru Energy has not ruled out fracking in the future, and has not given up its 'Yulleroo' gas lease where fracking would be required. Theia Energy has previously proposed a large scale oil & gas fracking operation in the Great Sandy Desert, and has not ruled out these plans or relinquished their lease.

The WA Government should give the community and industry certainty by banning fracking in the Kimberley as they've already done in the Southwest, Perth, Peel and Dampier Peninsula regions.

2. The WA Government says it would be ‘liable for financial compensation to lease holders if we banned fracking’ or there could be ‘legal consequences for the state’. Is this true?

There would be no legal obligation for the Western Australian Government to compensate any company that possesses a petroleum tenement, should the ban on fracking be extended to the Kimberley. So stated the independent legal advice (available [here](#)) from a barrister whose career includes many years at the State Solicitor’s Office.

The WA Government banned fracking in other WA regions (see first question) while there were still active exploration leases in place, and paid no compensation and faced no legal consequences.

3. The WA Government says Traditional Owners have the right to veto fracking. Is this true?

No. Traditional Owners **do not** have the right to veto (or block) fracking on their lands, or any other oil & gas exploration. Neither do private landholders or pastoralists.

In 2018 [WA Labor committed to a Traditional Owner veto](#) on exploration fracking – but as far as the public is aware, consultation on the proposed veto law hasn’t even begun, let alone legislation being drafted and passed.

Additionally, the WA Labor veto commitment as it stands means that Traditional Owners would only be able to block fracking at the production stage; it does NOT include a veto for exploration fracking - which is what Black Mountain is seeking approval for in the Kimberley with its ‘Valhalla’ project. It gives fracking companies a foot in the door and risks pollution and other harmful impacts (which can occur even with one well).

4. Isn’t fracking banned across 98% of WA?

No. The [government’s own mapping](#) shows that fracking is banned across a much smaller portion of the state (South West, Peel, Perth metro and the Dampier Peninsula), **not 98%**. The majority of WA has a moratorium (temporary ban) on fracking which could be overturned at the stroke of a pen. In any case, 2% of Western Australia is close to 5 million hectares, nearly the size of Tasmania!

This false statement is a distraction from the real issue - the areas where fracking IS permitted include large and iconic parts of WA, including the West Kimberley and the Martuwarra Fitzroy River catchment area.

Fracking should not be permitted anywhere in Western Australia. There is a substantial and ever-growing scientific case against fracking that has led many countries and jurisdictions across the world to ban fracking. Not even the most robust regulations can stop the extreme impacts of fracking, e.g., the huge amounts of water the industry uses; industrialising entire landscapes, and emitting vast quantities of greenhouse gases.