



THE HON JOSH FRYDENBERG MP
Minister for the Environment and Energy

SENATOR THE HON MATT CANAVAN
Minister for Resources and Northern Australia

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

27 April 2018

GEOLOGICAL AND BIOREGIONAL ASSESSMENT OF BEETALOO SUB-BASIN

In the wake of the Northern Territory Government's decision to lift its moratorium on hydraulic fracturing, the NT's Beetaloo Sub-basin has been selected as the third and final region to be assessed by the Geological and Bioregional Assessment Program.

"The program will assess the environmental safety of extracting gas from the region as the Coalition Government seeks to ensure that Australia can access our plentiful resources in a responsible way," Minister Frydenberg said.

The 28,000 square kilometre Beetaloo Sub-basin lies southeast of Katherine in the Northern Territory and was selected for its high prospectivity, demonstrated shale gas flows and its proximity to new pipeline infrastructure – all of which make it an excellent candidate to deliver new gas supplies to the east coast gas market.

Minister for Resources and Northern Australia Matt Canavan said initial estimates suggest the NT could be sitting on a massive gas resource of more than 200 years' supply.

"That huge quantity of gas means jobs and investment in the North," Minister Canavan said.

"It's not only the jobs involved in extracting the gas. Access to this gas could also attract new industries such as manufacturing and refining and create more new jobs in Northern Australia."

The \$30.4 million Geological and Bioregional Assessments Program is part of the 'Towards a New Energy Future' package in the 2017-18 Budget.

The studies will be conducted by Geoscience Australia and the CSIRO, supported by the Bureau of Meteorology and managed by the Department of the Environment and Energy.

The independent scientific studies will assess the geology, water quantity and quality of surface and groundwater as well as protected environmental assets to determine the potential impacts and environmental safety of shale and tight gas developments.

This work will directly contribute to the Strategic Regional Environmental Baseline Assessment (SREBA) which was a key recommendation of the Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory.

Work on the Beetaloo Sub-basin assessment will begin in mid-2018. It is the third and final region to be assessed as a potential source of gas by the Coalition Government. Assessments have already commenced in the Cooper Basin in Queensland and South Australia and the Isa Superbasin in Queensland.

Ends

Media contacts:

Kane Silom – Office of the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP – 02 6277 7920
Martin Bowerman – Office of Senator the Hon Matt Canavan – 0428 303 189

The Hon Josh Frydenberg MP | Minister for the Environment and Energy | MELBOURNE
Senator the Hon Matt Canavan | Minister for Resources and Northern Australia | ROCKHAMPTON