

Pluto Gets Nod From EPA

Woodside's controversial Pluto development, located offshore Western Australia, has been granted conditional approval by the WA Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The EPA found that the Pluto project has satisfied the EPA's environmental components, which include fauna, vegetation both terrestrial and

we would not expect this to have a major increase on cost", a Woodside spokesperson said.

The Pluto development involves extensive dredging in Mermaid Sound and along a proposed pipeline route, as well as the construction of an LNG plant and export facilities on the Burrup Peninsula.

was not adequate to address the potential loss of coral.

"However, provided a substantive offset package is agreed to and the stringent conditions recommended are fully implement, the Pluto LNG development could be allowed to proceed", said Hinwood.

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migratory/marine species, Indigenous Heritage, air quality and greenhouse gas. But in relation to coral loss has failed to meet the marine component of its seven-part environmental check list.

"Woodside is generally satisfied with the bulletin and the project remains on schedule to deliver the first LNG to customers from the end of 2010. At this stage we're still considering the details of the EPA bulletin, however

According to the EPA report, the predicted amount of coral lost or damaged caused by the development of the project exceeded threshold levels.

The EPA Deputy Chairman, Andrea Hinwood, said the EPA had concluded that the proposal, as presented, did not fully meet the EPA's objectives for the marine environment, and that the current offset package being offered

Andrea Hinwood recommended that port-related infrastructure be shared in order to reduce impact on the marine environment. The EPA has the opinion that it is unlikely that Woodside's commitment to the area and condition set out by the EPA would be compromised. An EPA report is now the subject to a two-week appeal period that has been submitted to the WA Minister for the Environment, David Templeman, who will make the final decision. ■