

2 July 2025

Senator the Hon Murray Watt
Minister for the Environment and Water of Australia

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Dear Minister Watt

I am writing on behalf of The Australia Institute to request you make public the conditions imposed on the extension of Woodside's North West Shelf project.



The Australia Institute believes that transparency is essential to public trust in the assessment of major resource projects, particularly when the response period has been extended.

The conditions imposed on the North West Shelf extension are a vitally important matter of public interest. Secrecy undermines public trust in the assessment process. Our concerns are heightened since the notice period has blown out from ten to twenty-eight days.

The North West Shelf facility is the oldest and most polluting gas export facility in Australia. It has already operated for over 50 years, and if you allow the extension, its equipment will be up to 86 years old years when decommissioned, which is unprecedented. The equivalent of an industrial facility built during the Great Depression still operating today.

The facility was built before modern efficiency and emissions standards were developed, before the extent and urgency of climate change were widely understood, and before the importance of the Murujuga rock art was widely understood by non-Aboriginal Australians and governments.

Woodside's own documents show the extension will result in over 4 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, and the National Pollution Inventory shows it is by far the largest source of acid gas emissions on the Burrup Peninsula emitting 6,300 tonnes of Nitrous Oxide last year, around 17 tonnes per day.¹

Australia Institute analysis shows the North West Shelf gas extension will:

- Contribute almost nothing to Western Australian² or Australian public finances,³ and if it operates at or near the capacity approved under the extension would result in over \$200

¹ DCCEEW (2025) NPI: 2023/2024 report for WOODSIDE ENERGY LTD, Karratha Onshore Gas Treatment Plant - Via Karratha, WA, <https://www.npi.gov.au/npidata/action/load/emission-by-individual-facility-result/criteria/state/WA/year/2024/jurisdiction-facility/WA0196>

² Ogge and Campbell (2024) WA Gas Royalties Set to Plummet: Budget Analysis, <https://australiainstitute.org.au/post/wa-gas-royalties-set-to-plummet-budget-analysis/>

³ Commins (2025) North West Shelf gas extension will deliver 'almost nothing' to Australia's public purse, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2025/jun/01/north-west-shelf-gas-extension-australia-lng-woodside-project-little-rent-tax>

billion of royalty free gas to Woodside representing the greatest giveaway of natural resources in Australia's history.⁴

- Threaten Western Australia's domestic gas supply.⁵
- Increase Western Australian gas and electricity prices.⁶

We urge you to make the conditions placed upon Woodside's project public and full transparency in your negotiations with Woodside.

Yours Sincerely



Richard Denniss
Executive Director
The Australia Institute

⁴ Saunders and Campbell (2025) *Great gas giveaway: \$215 billion in royalty-free gas for Woodside's North West Shelf project*, <https://australiainstitute.org.au/post/great-gas-giveaway-215-billion-in-royalty-free-gas-for-woodsides-north-west-shelf-project/>

⁵ The Australia Institute (2024) *Experts warn WA Government of gas price threat from Woodside's export extension*, <https://australiainstitute.org.au/post/experts-warn-wa-government-of-gas-price-threat-from-woodsides-export-extension/>

⁶ The Australia Institute (2024) *Triple trouble: WA wholesale gas and electricity prices soar since approval of onshore gas exports*, <https://australiainstitute.org.au/post/triple-trouble-wa-wholesale-gas-and-electricity-prices-soar-since-approval-of-onshore-gas-exports/>