

**From:** [Thor F. Jensen](#)  
**To:** [LA Committees](#)  
**Subject:** Territory Coordinator Submission For the Parliamentary Scrutiny Committee  
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I oppose the Territory Coordinator Bill.

What we have in the Northern Territory (NT) is incredibly unique, and I perceive the Territory Coordinator as a threat to everything that makes the NT special.

I'm a filmmaker, professional adventurer, and father. I moved to the Territory for its rich and diverse nature and world-class fishing. I rely on this environment for my work with international and local film productions. I also collaborate with environmental organisations to protect this place. Like some 60,000 other Territorians, I enjoy fishing in our amazing and largely healthy, free-flowing rivers. Like all Territorians, I want my children to grow up in a clean, healthy environment.

I find the proposed Territory Coordinator role extremely undemocratic. It places too much power in the hands of the Chief Minister and one unelected bureaucrat, who, at their whim, can circumvent the mechanisms we have in place to protect people and the environment. The more I learn, the clearer it becomes that this bill is designed to help the "top end of town" undertake their business ventures with no checks and balances—at the cost of the rest of us.

The interim coordinator, Stuart Knowles, is the former NT general manager at oil and gas giant INPEX. Choosing him sends a clear signal that this coordinator will be working for extractive industries like gas, oil, and mining. These industries are known for cutting corners and damaging the environment. I find it very likely that Mr. Knowles will not prioritise the health impacts these industries have on people. For instance, the following story from ABC News comes to mind:

“In 2022, the INPEX facility in Darwin Harbour emitted more toxic chemicals than the Gorgon project off the coast of Western Australia—one of the biggest gas fields in the world.”

ABC News Article <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-06-14/inpex-ichthys-lng-plant-darwin-nt-vocs-emissions-increase/103668268>

This story underscores the need for stronger regulations, not a Territory Coordinator who can bypass existing ones.

As a father, I am gravely concerned about global warming. What kind of world are we leaving for our children? Governments around the world are already struggling to meet their climate targets, and the NT is no exception. It is my impression that Mr. Knowles and the government will champion the fossil fuel industry and its expansion. If the proposed Middle Arm Petrochemical Hub is approved, NT's carbon emissions will increase by 75%.

Here are three current projects I am concerned will destroy the Territory and accelerate climate change—with the help of the Territory Coordinator:

- Cotton expansion in the NT: This will result in massive land clearing and draining of our

rivers and aquifers.

- Fracking in the Beetaloo Basin: This risks poisoning our groundwater and significantly increasing our carbon footprint.

- Middle Arm Petrochemical Hub: This facility would emit cancerous chemicals just 3 km from Palmerston, destroy our harbor, and emit even more carbon dioxide.

One of the things that these three projects have in common is that they will jeopardise existing livelihoods:

Big cotton will drain our rivers, destroying a \$270 million recreational fishing industry and impact Aboriginal communities as well as existing farms and stations.

The gas industry pays next to nothing in taxes and employs very few people (only 0.7% of the NT workforce works in gas) the local people they do employ are usually highly skilled labor that they extract from local businesses (this happened in QLD).

In conclusion, to me it looks like the Territory Coordinator is a pawn created by the "top end of town," hoping to make a quick buck at the expense of our environment, health and livelihoods.

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Kind regards,

Thor F. Jensen.



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