

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

### WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Guyula to the Chief Minister:

#### **Emissions offset discussions for fracking**

Please provide detail of any discussions with State and Federal counterparts or petroleum permit-holders in the NT on plans for offsetting projected emissions from new fracking gasfields or activities.

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#### **Answer:**

On 17 April 2018 I wrote to the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, then Prime Minister of Australia, regarding steps towards a cleaner energy future.

The correspondence reiterated the Inquiry's findings which highlight the potential for the onshore shale gas industry to deliver significant economic benefits for the Territory and nation more broadly, while making a contribution to securing Australia's energy future.

I raised key areas where we will need to work collaboratively with the Commonwealth to realise this shared opportunity, including:

- a commitment by both governments to work in partnership to ensure there is no net increase in life cycle greenhouse gas emissions in Australia from any onshore shale gas produced in the Northern Territory, consistent with Australia's commitments under the Paris Climate Accord;
- the Commonwealth Geological and Bioregional Assessment Program to undertake a strategic regional environmental and baseline assessment of the Beetaloo Sub-Basin as a first step, given the potential national significance of this resource, and ahead of granting any production approvals in the Northern Territory; and
- consideration by the Commonwealth of the Inquiry's recommended amendments to the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, to apply the 'water trigger' to all onshore shale gas development to ensure comprehensive assessment of environmental impacts, particularly in relation to surface and groundwater systems.

The former Prime Minister responded to this correspondence on 10 May 2018, advising that the Commonwealth Government will work in partnership with the Northern Territory Government to help manage greenhouse gas emissions from onshore shale gas development.

Discussions are yet to commence with petroleum permit holders in the Northern Territory.

In addition, a discussion paper on climate change and an environmental offsets policy are in development.