BEETALOO DEVELOPMENT OUTLOOK

DELIVERING ON DARWIN MAJOR BUSINESS GROUP'S
WHAT THE TERRITORY NEEDS ACTIONS



DARWIN MAJOR BUSINESS GROUP

What development could look like, and what we'll need to be ready for it.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
November 2026

COMMISSIONED BY
Darwin Major Business Group

PREPARED BY
Vantage North Group

About Darwin Major Business Group

Darwin Major Business Group (DMBG) is an independent, member-based organisation representing a diverse cross-section of industries across the Northern Territory.

DMBG provides a platform for collaboration, analysis and advocacy, drawing on the collective experience, investment and expertise of its members to contribute to discussions about the Territory's economic future.

DMBG commissioned the Beetaloo Development Outlook to provide a whole-of-system view of what development of the Beetaloo could require over the next decade, and to help inform the decisions needed to maximise jobs, investment and economic opportunities for the Northern Territory.

DMBG commissioned Vantage North Group to prepare the report.

Our corporate members

Margetic & Sitzler Consolidated Holdings Pty Ltd

Hannon Group

Paspaley

Mindil Beach Casino Resort

Relkdar Pty Ltd. Consulting

VIGR Group

HB Group Australia

airnorth together we fly

DCOH

Airport Development Group

Darwin Convention Centre

Humpty Doo Barramundi

Kolsen

Sentinel Property Group

CGH Group

Jape Group

Beetaloo Energy Australia

VTG Waste & Recycling

tamboran Resources

McArthur River Mining A Glencore Company

Our associate member

KPMG

FOREWORD

The rise of Beetaloo in the Northern Territory and national conversation is not some overnight sensation.



Steve Margetic AM,
Project Lead and
Immediate Past Chair
Darwin Major Business Group

It follows more than two decades of work by many people and companies, not to mention considerable technological innovation and evolution along the way.

Darwin Major Business Group members have been following Beetaloo's progress for many years. And as events have unfolded, we have become increasingly excited by the potential of the region to change the Territory's economic trajectory.

Earlier this year, and with the imminent arrival of first gas into Territory power stations, DMBG decided to add Beetaloo to our research program. A program funded by our members as our contribution to the Territory's economic discussion.

We had also been flagging Beetaloo in our annual economic reports for the past few years. But we believed that it was time to add our own particular brand of analysis – essentially, what could Beetaloo look like if you owned or operated a business, or worked in one.

That is the premise of the Beetaloo Development Outlook Report (report). How might a 3 billion cubic feet (Bcf) per day scenario unfold? What markers should we be looking for that signal the next phase of development is crystallising? What might the consequent demand for business inputs and services look like?

I should mention that we focused directly on the Beetaloo province. This report does not leap into pipelines north and east, new data centres or LNG projects, nor a debate around energy politics. We leave those questions to others.

The members of DMBG are very proud to release the Beetaloo Development Outlook and are extremely grateful to the Vantage North Group (VNG) team for what they have produced. I also want to acknowledge our project team and the many others who offered guidance along the way.

Finally, the past two decades of work on Beetaloo have built the crucial foundations for a genuine step-change to our economy. Like most things in life, what comes next is entirely up to us!

WHERE THIS STARTS

THE PRIOR RECORD, AND THE SCENARIO THIS REPORT MODELS

The Beetaloo is not a new idea. For years it has been studied, tested and argued over. In 2018, the Hydraulic Fracturing Inquiry set the conditions under which onshore gas can proceed, and those conditions still define what 'ready' means.

Deloitte in 2020 and KPMG in 2019 modelled what development at scale could mean for the nation and for the Territory.

What has changed is momentum. Between 2023 and 2026, operators moved the Beetaloo from prospect to near-term planning: exploration wells, pilot production and first offtake decisions.

The path ahead is long. The scenario modelled here runs from a small pilot of around 40 terajoules (TJ) a day to a mature state near 3 billion cubic feet (Bcf) a day, reached over roughly seven years from first material production.

How the gas is used (domestic supply, the East Coast, or LNG export) is still being resolved.

This document does not revisit those studies. Its focus is the Beetaloo gas field itself: finding, drilling and producing the gas. It does not model the downstream task of building pipelines and gas facilities, including LNG plants, or the workforce for those tasks.

It asks a different question: what does the Territory have to be ready for?



THE BEETALOO AT A GLANCE

WHAT THE RESOURCE IS, WHERE IT SITS, AND WHO IS DEVELOPING IT

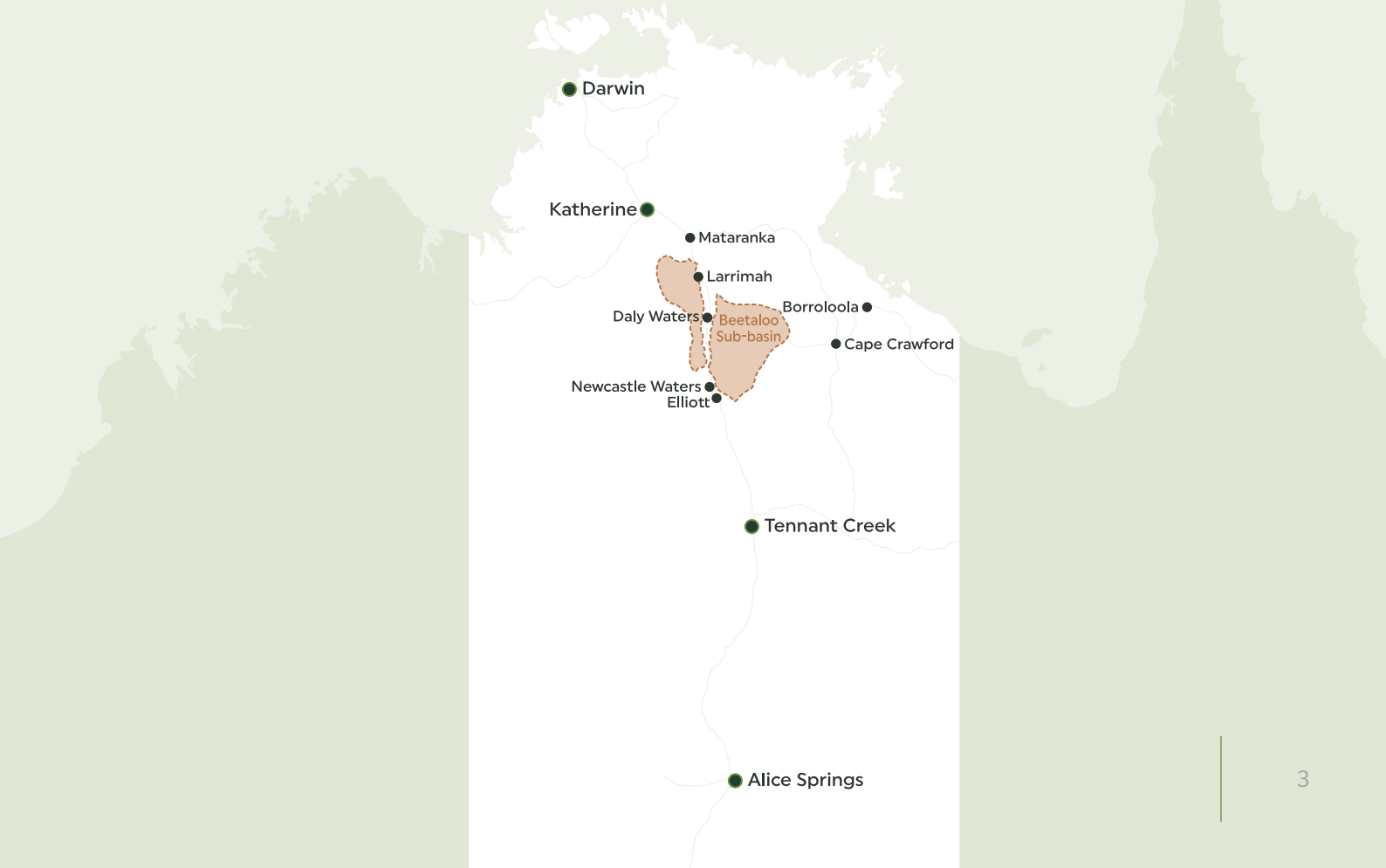
The Beetaloo Sub-basin lies about 600 kilometres south of Darwin, near Daly Waters. Its gas sits in two shale formations. The Middle Velkerri is the main dry-gas target. The shallower Kyalla is liquids-rich, holding condensate, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and ethane.

The scale is large. The Northern Territory Government estimates gas in place at around 430 trillion cubic feet (Tcf), a resource often compared with the United States' Marcellus shale. What has been booked so far is smaller but rising: contingent resources across the basin now total more than 7 Tcf, led by discoveries in the Velkerri.

Development is no longer hypothetical.

Tamboran Resources is the largest acreage holder, alongside Beetaloo Energy Australia, Santos and Daly Waters Energy, which is partnered with Japan's INPEX. First gas commenced in September 2026.

This places the Beetaloo among Australia's most significant undeveloped gas resources. It is moving from prospect to production now, and what the Territory captures from it depends on being ready.



BEETALOO GAS DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

FOR THE TERRITORY, FOR AUSTRALIA AND FOR OUR REGION

For the Territory

It is far more than a gas project. Handled well, it means a pipeline of investment, thousands of jobs, and the chance to process and add value here at home. That growth helps pay for the roads, hospitals, schools and services Territorians rely on. This is the Territory's opportunity for generational equity.

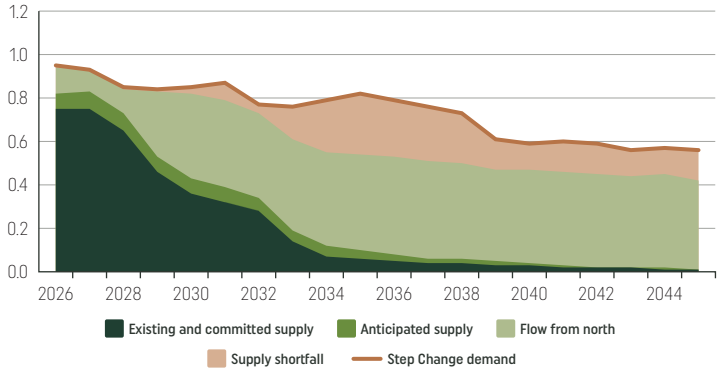
For Australia

Beetaloo gas reduces Australia's reliance on declining offshore fields and strengthens long-term energy security. It builds national resilience. With a structural gap from 2030 in the eastern gas market, new northern production from the Beetaloo can help fill it.

For our Region

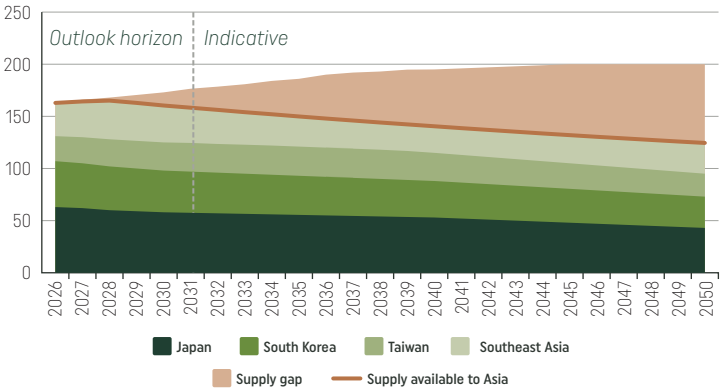
Australia's closest trading partners depend on imported gas: Japan, South Korea and Taiwan have few energy options of their own. Their security depends on reliable gas. The Territory is one of the few places that can supply it at scale and is close to market.

FORECAST STRUCTURAL SUPPLY GAP EMERGES FROM 2030, WIDENING THROUGH THE MID-2030S BEFORE EASING WITH ELECTRIFICATION



Source: Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) 2026 Gas Statement of Opportunities (March 2026), Figure 39, p.72. Step Change scenario, reference year 2024. Excludes LNG ullage at Gladstone. Analysis: Vantage North Group.

DEMAND GROWTH IN SOUTHEAST ASIA OPENS A STRUCTURAL SUPPLY GAP THAT NEW PRODUCERS MUST FILL



Sources: VNG Analysis. GIIGNL Annual Report 2026; Resources and Energy Quarterly, September 2026; IEA Southeast Asia Energy Outlook 2024 and 2026; METI 7th Strategic Energy Plan; MOTIE 11th Basic Plan; IEEFA; Kpler. Supply = Pacific Basin producers at 2025 delivery share plus Atlantic Basin and Middle East volumes held at 2025 levels; excludes unsanctioned projects. Post-2031 indicative.

FROM RESOURCE TO ECONOMIC VALUE: WHERE BEETALOO GAS CAN GO

DIFFERENT END-USES PRODUCE VERY DIFFERENT VALUE, JOBS AND INVESTMENT PATTERNS FOR THE TERRITORY

Beetaloo gas could flow to several end uses, and the volumes are very different:

- LNG export to South-East Asia
- East Coast domestic supply
- Power generation in the Territory
- Industrial feedstock for local manufacturing

Export operates at a different order of magnitude to domestic supply or local manufacturing.

Each pathway creates different economic value, and a different share of it stays in the Territory.



THE DEVELOPMENT STAIRCASE:

FROM TODAY'S 40 TJ/D PILOT TO 3 BCF/D BY THE MID-2030s

Stage	Scale	Indicative Timing	Cumulative Production	Key Enablers & Logic
Stage 1A	40 TJ/d Pilot	2026 (commissioning)	40 TJ/d	Tamboran's Shenandoah South pilot, using spare capacity in the existing Amadeus Gas Pipeline. Its job is proof with the first real data on how much gas each well delivers and how quickly its output falls. That sets how many wells, and how much of everything else, later stages will need.
Stage 1B	~5-10 TJ/d Pilot	2026–2027 (final stages)	45-50 TJ/d	Beetaloo Energy Australia's Carpentaria pilot, supplying gas through the existing pipeline to McArthur River Mine. It gives a second operator's well data alongside Tamboran's, so results don't rest on a single project.
Stage 2	Second 40-55 TJ/d Pilot	2027–2028	85-105 TJ/d	A second pilot of similar size, possibly from another operator, using the last of the existing pipeline capacity. It shows the early results can be repeated, and that is the evidence investors need before committing to development at scale. After this, existing pipelines are full.
Stage 3	In-field opportunities 200 TJ/d	2028–2029	305 TJ/d	The first large use of gas inside the basin itself. Generating power on site for energy-intensive users such as data centres. Because it needs little new pipeline, production can grow before major pipelines are built, and it proves buyers will sign long-term supply contracts.
Stage 4	1 Bcf/d (first pipeline tranche)	2028–2032	1,050 TJ/d	The biggest single step with the first major new pipeline out of the basin, able to carry around 1.5 Bcf/d. Pipeline, gas field and buyer decisions have to line up at the same time, and this is when a new LNG train would likely be committed.
Stage 5	Second 1 Bcf/d	2031–2034	2,106 TJ/d	The first pipeline runs full and a second comes into use. Each extra unit of gas now costs less, because roads, in-field pipes and workforce are already in place. A second LNG train or a major East Coast supply contract provides the buyer that justifies it.
Stage 6	Third 1 Bcf/d → 3 Bcf/d plateau	2033–2035+	3,165 TJ/d	Two major pipelines running full, with gas supplying several markets at once. LNG export, the East Coast, local manufacturing and Territory power. This is the Beetaloo at scale. Holding at this scale means drilling continues every year for decades.



SIX STEPS FROM PILOT TO 3 BCF/D, EACH ONE UNLOCKING THE NEXT

This staircase sets out a credible path for development, based on what operators are doing now, the capacity of today's pipelines, and where buyers are emerging. Each stage is an investment gate and success at each step enables and justifies the next. (For scale, 1 Bcf/d is roughly 1,000 TJ/d.)

The pilots can run on spare capacity in today's pipelines, but that capacity runs out at Stage 2. From there, growth needs one of two things. Either gas used inside the basin itself, or new pipelines to carry it out. The jump from pilots of a few wells a year to 1 Bcf/d, needing ~75 wells at peak, is the largest single step on the staircase.

Gas used in the basin is most likely to come from energy-intensive users such as data centres, which can be powered on site. New pipelines north to Darwin and east to the eastern states need large, long-term buyers to justify them, such as LNG export or major East Coast supply contracts.

Note: The staircase assumes drilling is not held back by delays in building pipelines, processing plants, LNG facilities or supporting infrastructure, such as water supply for Middle Arm.

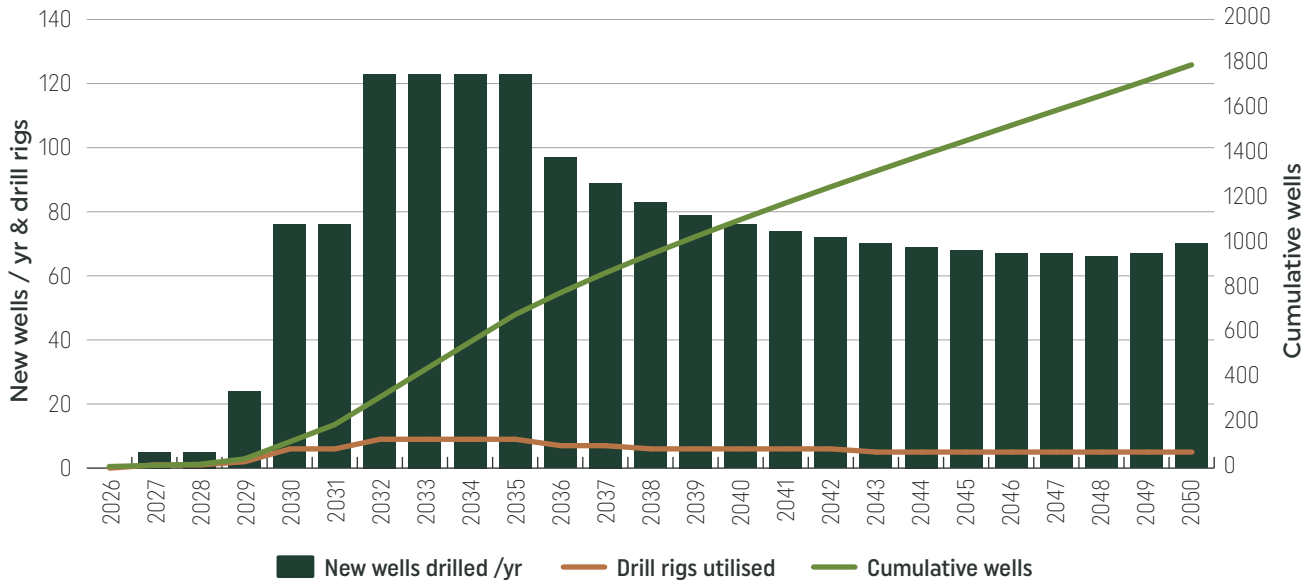
WHAT THE PROGRAM LOOKS LIKE IN NUMBERS, FROM FIRST GAS TO PEAK TO PLATEAU

OPPORTUNITIES AND IMPACTS ACROSS SIX CATEGORIES, FROM PRODUCTION TO LOGISTICS TO WORKFORCE

Category	Modelled element and unit	Peak 2032–2035	Plateau 2036–2050
Production and development	Gas production (Bcf/d)	3	3
	New wells (per year)	122.7	66-97
	Drilling rigs	9	5-7
	Frac spreads	3	1.7-2.4
	New pads (per year)	20	11-16
Well materials and water	Proppant (Mt/yr)	1.58	0.86-1.25
	Freshwater (ML/yr)	8,391	4,540-6,618
	Cement (k m^3/yr)	27	14.6-21.3
	Casing steel (kt/yr)	42.8	23.1-33.7
Civil works and gathering	Total gravel (kt/yr)	594	321-469
	Access roads (km/yr)	51	28-40
	Gathering pipe (km/yr)	63	34-50
	Gathering capex ($m)	58	32-46

Peak is the highest annual value in 2032–2035; plateau is the annual minimum–maximum in 2036–2050. Based on a 3 Bcf/d scenario with an assumed decline curve and total estimated ultimate recovery of 14.6 Bcf per well.

New wells drilled, cumulative wells, and drill rigs utilised



Category	Modelled element and unit	Peak 2032–2035	Plateau 2036–2050
Workforce and employment	Direct workforce	4,195	3,114–3,492
	Indirect jobs (Type I)	1,888	1,401–1,571
	Indirect jobs (Type II)	4,404	3,270–3,666
	Total employment	10,487	7,785–8,729
	Workers on site	2,018	1,454–1,666
Transport and logistics	Road freight (kt/yr)	496	273-391
	Total road loads /yr	6,034	3,374-4,774
	Loads ex gravel/sand	3,559	2,035-2,822
	Freight task (Mt-km)	223	124-176
Fuel and emissions	Gross fuel (ML/yr)	111.8	61.7–88
	Diesel displaced by gas (ML-eq)*	27.9	15.4-22
	Net diesel (ML/yr)	83.9	46.3-66
	Combustion CO_2 (kt/yr)	300	165-236

* 25% diesel replacement by gas, expressed in diesel-equivalent litres.

INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

THE BASIN CAN'T BE DEVELOPED ON THE TERRITORY'S EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

A significant enabling infrastructure investment program is required: some of it within operator scope, but much of it requiring government leadership to plan, fund and deliver. The categories follow KPMG (2019); the scale is updated to the current development path.



Roads

All-weather sealed access from the Stuart Highway into the basin and between pads, with heavy-vehicle capacity for proppant, casing, water and rig moves. Needed before peak drilling; the haul route carries around 3,500 truck movements a year at peak.



Rail

Use of the existing railway for inbound bulk materials is the opportunity; today all freight arrives by road.



Logistics areas

Staging and laydown areas in Katherine and Darwin, plus an in-basin logistics hub for proppant, fuel and consumables at scale.



Aerodromes and air routes

Upgraded regional aerodromes for FIFO workforce movement and emergency response, with all-weather capability. Just as important as the strips themselves is the connection they serve. Direct air links to Darwin or Alice Springs are what allow a Territory-based FIFO model, rather than defaulting to East Coast hubs that route the workforce and its spending interstate.



Communications

Reliable mobile, fixed-line and data coverage across the basin and along access routes, sized for operations, safety and emergency response.

FLOW-ON IMPACTS: LNG AND PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION

THE DOWNSTREAM CONSTRUCTION EVENTS THAT THE TERRITORY BUSINESS COMMUNITY MUST BE POSITIONED FOR

Development of the Beetaloo to export scale triggers downstream construction events on a larger capital scale than the basin itself. These are the construction events the Territory business community must be positioned for. Delivery of 3 Bcf/d to Darwin could support two additional pipelines, resulting in the expansion of Ichthys LNG Train 3, Darwin LNG Train 2, and the four proposed LNG trains for NTLNG.

Pipeline construction

Moving 3 Bcf/d to Darwin needs two additional export pipelines, and an East Coast link is a third possibility. Each is a multi-billion dollar project on its own, and Territory civil and fabrication capability is directly relevant to all of them.

LNG train construction

Each 4.5 Mtpa LNG train represents billions in capital investment, with Ichthys-scale project management, logistics and labour demand.

Middle Arm Precinct

The intended industrial anchor for downstream gas processing and future LNG expansion. Beetaloo gas supply is the feedstock the precinct depends on.



WHAT WOULD CHANGE THIS OUTLOOK

Well performance

The model assumes Beetaloo wells perform like wells in the US Marcellus shale, the closest comparable field. The first few years of real production data will confirm or change that. If wells produce less, or their output falls faster, more wells are needed, and nearly every number in this outlook (materials, freight, workforce) rises with them. If they perform better, gas is cheaper to produce, which opens more markets.

Agreements

The staircase assumes land access and other agreements with Traditional Owners, pastoralists and government keep pace with development. Of all the factors here, this is the one the parties can most directly influence. If agreements take longer, every later date moves with them: port facilities, quarries, camps and each new stage of production. That is a reason to resource the process properly, for all parties, from the start.

Demand windows

The Asian supply gap this outlook relies on is drawn from International Energy Agency (IEA) forecasts, and beyond the early 2030s those figures are indicative. If the gap is smaller or arrives sooner, the stages compress and key decisions must be made earlier. If demand is weaker, development takes longer and relies more on domestic and East Coast buyers.

If the evidence moves, this Outlook moves with it. That is what a live document is for.

Carbon and emissions settings

The Hydraulic Fracturing Inquiry recommended no net increase in Australia's lifecycle emissions from Territory onshore gas. Under the Commonwealth Safeguard Mechanism, Beetaloo projects must have net zero direct (Scope 1) emissions from the start, and the NT Government requires greenhouse gas abatement plans. If those settings tighten, or the cost of offsets rises, the cost of each well rises too. Replacing diesel with gas or electric equipment in the field reduces that exposure.

Water

At current water use per well and today's low recycling rates, peak drilling would draw slightly more water than the 8,000 ML a year currently allocated to petroleum activity. If more water is needed per well, or less can be recycled, that limit is reached sooner and drilling would slow. Investment in recycling, and the 2028 review of the Georgina Wiso Water Allocation Plan, are where this is managed.

Capital and gas markets

The staircase is built on investment decisions that have not yet been taken. Global gas prices, drilling costs and competing basins decide where capital goes.

If decisions slip, stages stall regardless of Territory readiness. If costs inflate, the input bill grows and the case for local supply strengthens.

THREE CONVERSATIONS THIS OUTLOOK SURFACES

THE BIGGER CONSTRAINT IS NOW EXECUTION RATHER THAN GEOLOGY. NONE CAN BE RESOLVED BY ONE PARTY ALONE.

CONVERSATION ONE: Route to Market

Where does the gas go, and what sets the pace?

- How far can the existing network and already-approved expansions take production before a new pipeline is needed?
- What commitments, whether new LNG trains for Darwin or foundation customers for the East Coast, does a new pipeline need to be investable?
- How does the Territory keep the pathway open so the basin's pace doesn't depend on any one operator's investment timetable?

When: Before the first major pipeline decisions, expected across 2027 and 2028.

Who: Operators, pipeline investors, LNG proponents and East Coast buyers, with the NT and Commonwealth governments.

CONVERSATION TWO: Readiness

Will the Territory be ready before the demand arrives?

- Who funds housing, roads, water and services ahead of demand, and on what trigger?
- How does the Territory build a residential workforce fast enough to reduce a fly-in, fly-out pattern setting in by default?
- Can approvals for water, quarries, land access and Traditional Owner agreements keep pace with a drilling program, without lowering standards?

When: Now to 2028. That means quarry tenure within a year, the Water Allocation Plan review in 2028, and housing and training in place before the build-out to 1 Bcf/d.

Who: The NT and Commonwealth governments, regulators, Traditional Owners and land councils, pastoralists, Charles Darwin University and training providers, and operators.

CONVERSATION THREE: Value Retention

How much of the value stays in the Territory?

- Which inputs can be supplied locally at scale (cement, sand, gravel, fuel storage, logistics), and what decision unlocks each one?
- How competitive is the Territory for gas-based processing and manufacturing?
- How do investment and policy decisions made in 2026-2028 change how much of the benefit stays here?

When: 2026 to 2028, while operators are still designing their supply chains and before contracts lock in for the life of the field.

Who: Operators' procurement teams, Territory businesses, investors in local supply, and the NT Government on tenure, port planning and investment attraction.

The window is 2026 to 2028. What the Territory decides now, it lives with for decades.

The Darwin Major Business Group acknowledges and thanks the following event sponsors for supporting the Beetaloo Development Outlook report launch.

DMBG members independently commissioned the Beetaloo Development Outlook, separate from the sponsorship of the launch event.

Joint Platinum Sponsors

Beetaloo Energy Australia

tamboran RESOURCES

Gold Sponsors

Santos

INPEX

Margetic & Sitzler Consolidated Holdings Pty Ltd

Silver Sponsors

VTG | WASTE & RECYCLING

Airport Development Group

Vantage North Group

AUSTRALIAN PORTABLE CAMPS

Bronze Sponsors

DREAMEDIA creative event production

CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

Proudly sponsored by NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT

Preparing the Territory to capture the opportunity.

The Beetaloo Development Outlook is an output of the Darwin Major Business Group's What the Territory Needs Action List - a series of recommendations focused on accelerating economic growth in the Northern Territory.

The Outlook puts that agenda into action by providing a shared starting point for conversations about infrastructure, workforce, local business capability and how more of the economic value of development can remain in the Territory.

DARWIN MAJOR BUSINESS GROUP

dmbg.com.au
admin@dmbg.com.au