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MAJOR PROJECT INVESTMENTS BOOSTED BY NEW DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM

The voice of Australia's oil and gas sector has backed the announcement of a new Federal Government program aimed at cutting green tape and improving transparency in major project approvals while protecting the environment.

The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA) today said the \$47 million Digital Environmental Assessment Program (DEAP) would reduce unnecessary delays and duplication across projects involving multiple jurisdictions.

"The oil and gas industry is committed to best environmental practices, supported by our commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050," APPEA Chief Executive Andrew McConville said.

"However, our members have consistently said for some time that they consider reducing red and green tape as the critical steps to improving the investment environment, streamlining approval processes and restoring business confidence.

"We talk a lot about the massive economic opportunity available to Australia if the policy settings are made more competitive.

"This is a step in the right direction.

"This announcement is an example of how the regulatory burden on business can be sensibly reduced while also improving environmental outcomes."

DEAP is currently run as a pilot program in Western Australia but will now be expanded nationally to expedite decisions, make the process cheaper and ensure judgements are made on correct data.

It will allow proponents to submit applications through an integrated portal with state and federal capability rather than multiple applications required across multiple jurisdictions.

Mr McConville said: "We congratulate the Minister for the Environment, Sussan Ley, and the Minister Assisting the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Ben Morton, on this welcome initiative."

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