

PICTURE: COURTESY CAPT. SERGE PRAKHOV

GAS AT FRONT AND CENTRE

Connecting Northern Territory businesses to national and global opportunities is what NT Resources Week is all about and the gas industry is no exception.

As the opportunity-laden region moves towards a cleaner energy future, developing the Territory's gas reserves means new jobs, local business opportunities, value-adding industry infrastructure and community investment.

From domestic gas fitters in Alice Springs to boilermakers in Darwin or engineers on site in the Beetaloo, a whopping 11.4 out of every 100 jobs in the Territory is supported by the natural gas industry supply chain.

In fact, the NT has the highest concentration of natural gas workers in Australia, with more than 11,000 jobs directly employed by more than 3100 businesses, and Territorians working directly for or in support of the gas industry earning $993m in the last financial year.

In the same period, the natural gas supply chain contributed $1.8bn to the NT economy, including $1.2bn in taxes, rates, fees and royalties.

In particular, the Beetaloo Basin, an area of around 28,000sq km located around 500km south of Darwin, has been tipped as the next big win for gas in the Top End.

A Deloitte report found that the Beetaloo has the potential to provide around 6300 full-time jobs and a $22.4bn boost to gross state product over the 20-year period to 2040, providing long-term economic benefits to Darwin, Katherine, and regional and First Nations communities.

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Progressing the industry's commitment to net zero by 2050 also affords the gas sector the opportunity to incorporate exciting future-focused decarbonisation technologies such as hydrogen and carbon capture and storage (CCS).

CCS is an important part of the Australian government's net zero strategy and several APPEA members are currently involved with a consortium working to develop a world-first CCS Hub in Middle Arm and other locations around the country.

The Northern Territory, like much of Australia, has a competitive advantage when it comes to CCS, with high-quality and stable storage basins, much of the infrastructure planned or already in place, established regulatory frameworks and technical expertise.

As the major players of Australia's natural gas sector come together, particularly at SEAAOC, the role of natural gas in the Territory will be placed front and centre, and we as an industry look forward to the opportunity to deliver on our potential for the NT.



– Cassandra Schmidt, Director Northern Territory, Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA)