

Kimberley gas hub discussions

STATE Development Minister Eric Ripper met environmentalists and other interested groups in Broome last week to discuss possible locations for a gas hub to service the Browse Basin.

The basin is situated off the Kimberley coast and contains massive reserves of natural gas.

Members of the groups had previously met in a workshop with the Northern Development Taskforce to detail their concerns.

Mr Ripper said the consultation over the location of a gas processing hub had started very well and that discussions had provided an invaluable backdrop to the upcoming site selection process.

"I am encouraged by the level of willingness and commitment shown by people to engage with

the Northern Development Taskforce in this important process," he said.

"The State Government has an opportunity to create a model for community benefits, sustainable development and improved conservation outcomes through the work of the taskforce, and their views and those of the broader community are central to this process.

"We will be talking to industry, environmentalists, the indigenous community, marine tourism operators and the general public in the coming months.

"We're also talking to the Commonwealth departments about jointly conducting a strategic regional environmental assessment aimed at identifying and improv-

ing the protection of the environmental and heritage values of the region."

Meanwhile, Greens leader Bob Brown's objection to the plant's location in the Kimberley drew a hasty response from the Kimberley Land Council, which hopes to gain significant rewards from developers Inpex proceeding with the project. Conservationists believe the State Government may have softened its stance on the number of gas hubs it might approve in the Kimberley. Save the Kimberley representative Kevin Blatchford said the meeting with Mr Ripper was positive and he believed the Government might have started to realise the environmental merit behind a single hub.



Manager of the Kimberley Tax Help Program Bronwyn Mudge with 10-year volunteer Pamela Barrett in recognition of her contributions.