

Barnett emissions trade a pipe dream - Conservation Council

- **Chris Thomson**
- October 21, 2008 - 1:23PM

Premier Colin Barnett's belief that a gas pipeline from the Kimberley to eastern Australia could replace a national emissions trading scheme is simplistic, says the Conservation Council of WA.

Council director Piers Verstegen said Mr Barnett's assertion at a petroleum engineers' conference yesterday that such engineering measures would be more effective than "a complex carbon emissions trading scheme" ignored the big picture.

"The use of gas will be an important part of our shift away from coal as the nation's primary energy source," Mr Verstegen said.

"However, the Premier doesn't seem to grasp the importance of addressing all major sources of greenhouse gas emissions including transport, agriculture, deforestation and waste.

"The sensible way to reduce emissions from all sectors, including the replacement of coal with gas, is to introduce a carbon price in the form of an emissions trading scheme as soon as possible."

Mr Verstegen called on the Premier to honour a pre-election commitment to support the introduction of a national emissions trading scheme.

He feared Mr Barnett's "preoccupation with infrastructure development in the Kimberley" would determine the government's climate change policies.

"As a signatory of the Kyoto Protocol, Australia would be laughed out of the room during negotiations if we seriously proposed that building an LNG pipeline could meet our emissions reduction obligations," Mr Verstegen said.

"Western Australia has access to world-class renewable energy resources including solar, geothermal, wave and wind power.

"We need to be embracing emissions trading and rapidly restructuring our economy around these clean energy sources."

Mr Verstegen also called on the Barnett government to increase energy efficiency standards for buildings and invest in public transport.

