

# LNG hub would not harm environment: Barnett

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A major LNG gas hub on the Kimberley coast would have no adverse environmental impact, Premier Colin Barnett said today.

He said a gas hub would bring jobs and financial gain to the region without causing any environmental damage.

"What is important for the Kimberley is that we do find a site, whether it is North Head or one of the others," Mr Barnett said.

Mr Barnett has already indicated his preferred site for the LNG project is North Head on the Dampier Peninsula; a site conservationists say threatens the Kimberley whale sanctuary, pristine coral reefs and mangrove forests.

Other sites earmarked for the possible development include Gourdon Bay south of Broome, James Price Point (also on the Dampier Peninsula) and Anjo Peninsula.

Mr Barnett said he had visited Broome at the weekend and was aware of protests by local environmental groups over proposals to site an LNG hub in the region

"The state will act to secure that site so that we can have some development of LNG - a clean high-tech industry - because without that, the benefits of gas and the benefits of employment, and social packages for local people, including the indigenous people, just will not happen.

"I can assure the people of the Kimberley and the people of Western Australia that the development of an LNG site on the Kimberley will not impact adversely on the environment of the Kimberley."

Mr Barnett said a LNG hub would bring much-needed employment opportunities to indigenous people in the region.

A decision on the site for the hub is expected before Christmas with construction underway within the term of the government.

The public comment period closes tomorrow.

PERTH  
JANE HAMMOND