

Woodside unfazed by ALP win as Pluto construction begins

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WOODSIDE Petroleum is confident that policy changes under the Rudd Government will not be disruptive to the resources sector in general and the company's Pluto project in particular.

Chief executive Don Voelte said he had consulted Labor leaders Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard about their plans for the industry and was satisfied the company would be able to deal with any changes.



Speaking at the official launch of construction on Woodside's \$11.2 billion Pluto LNG project on Western Australia's Burrup Peninsular, Voelte said he was confident Pluto's development would not be affected by the transition to a Labor government.

State Premier Alan Carpenter unveiled a plaque recognising the launch of the project on Friday, after taking part in a tour of the construction site.

Also attending the ceremony were Woodside chief executive Don Voelte and representatives from Pluto's customers and project participants, Tokyo Gas and Kansai Electric.

Voelte said Pluto was one of only two global LNG projects that had been approved in the past two years.

"Pluto is on schedule to be the fastest LNG project in the world from discovery to first gas, and the start of construction of the project is a very exciting time for Woodside," he said.

Site preparation began in January, while preparation works for the gas processing plant began last month.

Pluto's initial phase will include a single LNG production train with forecast production of 4.3 million tonnes per annum (4.8MMtpa at 100% capacity), connected by a 180km, 36-inch offshore pipeline to a platform in 85m of water.

The platform will be connected to five subsea big bore wells on the Pluto field, with first gas to be produced in late 2010.

Feasibility work has already begun on an expansion of Pluto.