

## Gas giant threatens to take \$20b project to Territory

THE Japanese company behind a proposed \$20 billion gas development in the Kimberley yesterday threatened to take the project to Darwin because of its increased frustrations over what it says are regulatory hold-ups in WA.

Having spent the past four years working towards a WA-based project, Inpex and its French joint venture partner Total said they had signed a "project facilitation agreement" with Northern Territory Chief Minister Paul Henderson.

Inpex said although it would prefer to

develop its Ichthys liquefied natural gas project on Maret Island, off the Kimberley coast, it had to explore "all realistic options".

"The NT Government has demonstrated that Darwin offers an alternative site that could be developed within a reliable time frame," Inpex executive Jiro Okada said.

Mr Okada said he expected a decision on the final location for Ichthys later this year and that Inpex maintained a "good working relationship" with the WA Government.