

Kimberley gas development essential: Barnett

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Western Australian Premier Colin Barnett says the global economic crisis reaffirms the need for industrial development in the Kimberley, in the state's north.

Environmentalists have urged the Government to build a processing plant for Browse Basin gas in an area where industrial infrastructure is already established, such as Port Hedland.

Mr Barnett says the development is the last opportunity for Indigenous people in the Kimberley to gain substantial economic benefits from the region's gas fields.

"If the gas is piped 600 kilometres south to the Pilbara there will be no gas in the Kimberley, there will be no gas-related economic development in the Kimberley and there will be no economic benefit for the Aboriginal people of the Kimberley. I don't want to see any of those things happen," he said.