


Approval notice and statement of reasons

Petroleum (Environment) Regulations (NT) (Regulations)

Interest holder	<i>Santos QNT Pty Ltd</i>
Petroleum interest/s	<i>EP 112 and EP 125</i>
Environment management plan (EMP) title	Environment Management Plan: Dukas-1 – Conventional Gas Well. NT Exploration Permit (EP) 112 and 125
EMP document reference	<i>MAB-PLN-006, Revision 3</i>
DPIR EMP assessment document reference	<i>E2018/0022~0027</i>
Regulated activity	Land clearing Earthworks Drilling of one petroleum well Establishing drill pads Flow testing Seismic operations
Was the regulated activity referred ¹ for consideration whether an environmental impact assessment or public environmental report was required?	No. The project was deemed not to require referral under the NOI mechanism of the Environmental Assessments Act.
Was an environmental impact assessment or public environmental report required?	<i>No EIS or PER was required or undertaken.</i>
Date EMP was first submitted under reg 6	<i>9/11/2018</i>
Date further information was submitted under reg 10, if applicable	<i>20/12/2018</i> <i>21/01/2019</i> <i>24/01/2019</i>
Date of resubmission notice under reg 11(2)(b), if applicable	<i>N/A</i>
Date EMP was resubmitted under reg 11(3), if applicable	<i>N/A</i>
Date of decision	<i>15 / 02 / 2019</i>
Decision maker	 Signature <i>Paul Kirby</i> Minister, Primary Industry Resources

1 Approval notice

The EMP is approved.

reg 11(a)

The approval is subject to the following conditions:

reg 12(2)

¹ This means a referral under the *Environmental Assessment Act (NT)* or the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1994 (Cth)*.



1 Approval notice

- a. Activities under this approval must commence within 12 months of the date of this approval.

2 Statement of reasons

1. The EMP meets the approval criterion in reg 9(1)(a), because it contains all the information required by Schedule 1 of the Regulations. reg 9(1)(a)
2. The EMP meets the approval criterion in reg 9(1)(b) for the following reasons: reg 9(1)(b)
 - a. The nature of the regulated activity is as follows:
 - I. Land clearing and earthworks to upgrade and establish access roads and drill pads.
 - II. The drilling of the Dukas-1 exploration drill hole including formation evaluation.
 - III. The potential flow testing if the well is successful, including an extended production test
 - IV. Seismic operations of either a vertical seismic profile or a check shot survey depending on the drilling success
 - b. The scale of the regulated activity is as follows:
 - i. The scale of this regulated activity is considered low for exploration drilling. This EMP is for a singular well. The access and associate facility are minimal in nature and allow for relocation given potentially sensitive environments and access arrangements.
 - II. The EMP is appropriate for the nature and scale of the regulated activity. The EMP is of a high quality and is satisfactory in the identification of the activity, environment, environmental risks and environmental impacts; assessment of risks, environmental outcomes and performance standards, implementation strategy, personnel, emergency contingency plan, stakeholder engagement, legislative requirements, recording, monitoring and reporting, and notifications.
 - III. Having regard to the above, the information in the EMP is appropriate for the nature and scale of the regulated activity to which it relates.
3. The EMP meets the approval criterion in reg 9(1)(c) for the following reasons: reg 9(2)(a)
 - a. I have considered reg 4(d) (which requires that I give fundamental consideration to the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity) as follows:
 - i. I believe the information I have regarding the existing biodiversity and ecosystems that are to be affected by the regulated activity; the effects that are likely; and the mitigative measures reasonably available, is sufficient.
 - ii. The risks the regulated activity poses to the environment in particular to the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity have been determined to be accurate, thorough in nature and the effects, mitigation measures and the residual impact after the mitigation measure is applied are acceptable and are deemed to be highly effective.
 - iii. The conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity is vital to the achievement of ecologically sustainable development. Given the fundamental nature of this consideration, I have given central importance to the conservation of biodiversity and ecological integrity in weighing whether I am satisfied the approval criterion in reg 9(1)(c) has been met.

- iv. If carried out in accordance with the EMP, the risks of the regulated activity to the conservation of biological diversity is considered to be low.
- v. If carried out in accordance with the EMP, the risks of the regulated activity to the conservation of ecological integrity is considered to be low.
- b. I have considered reg 4(a) (which concerns the integration of long-term and short-term economic, environmental, social and equitable considerations) as follows:
 - i. The expression *environment* as defined in the Regulations relevantly includes the well-being of humans, structures made or modified by humans, amenity values of an area and economic, social and cultural conditions. The requirements under the Regulations include stakeholder engagement and a broad consideration of the environmental impacts and environmental risks of the regulated activity in question. In making that broad consideration, the long-term and short-term environmental impacts and environmental risks were identified and assessed in the EMP. In this way, the concept of integration has been implemented.
 - ii. In carrying out the regulated activity there is no particular contest between economic, social and environmental considerations that requires further mention.
 - iii. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the concept of integration has been taken into account.
- c. I have considered reg 4(b) (which concerns the 'precautionary principle') as follows:
 - i. The regulated activity does not pose a threat of serious or irreversible environmental damage which warrants the application of the precautionary principle.
- d. I have considered reg 4(c) (which concerns the principle of intergenerational equity) as follows:
 - i. The environmental burdens of the regulated activity will not disproportionately affect particular [future or present] stakeholders. Accordingly I do not believe that the carrying out of the regulated activity in accordance with the EMP would have an effect contrary to the principle of intergenerational equity.
- e. I have considered reg 4(e) (which concerns the promotion of improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms) as follows:
 - i. In accordance with the 'polluter pays principle':
 - (1) The interest holder will cover the cost of remediation of the impacts of the regulated activity, as is set out in Section 3.4.5 of the Dukas-1 Environmental Management Plan.
 - (2) If the interest holder fails to remediate the impacts, a security is held by the Minister which is considered adequate to cover the resulting costs.
 - ii. Through the above, the interest holder is incentivised to complete rehabilitation work to recover their security.
- f. No environmental report or statement has been required to be prepared in relation to the regulated activity under the Environmental Assessment Act. Section 2.4 of the EMP outlines the operations against the Northern Territory

reg 9(2)(b)

Environment Protection Authority's factors and objectives for referral under the Environmental Assessment Act. It was determined that the regulated activity does not have the potential to have a significant effect on the environment. As such referral was not required.

- g. The existing environment along with its particular values and sensitivities is appropriately identified in section 4 of the EMP. reg 9(1)(c)
- h. The anticipated environmental risks are appropriately identified in section 5 of the EMP.
- i. I agree with the risk assessment set out in section 5 of the EMP, and to the extent I do not agree I have imposed a condition or conditions to address the relevant risk or risks.
- j. The anticipated environmental impacts are appropriately identified in section 5 of the EMP. I agree this is a reasonable identification of the environmental impacts of the regulated activity, and to the extent I do not agree I have imposed a condition or conditions to appropriately address the environmental impacts.
- k. There are no environmental impacts or environmental risks relating to the proposed regulated activity which I consider to be unacceptable.
- l. Overall, having regard to the above, I am satisfied that the EMP demonstrates that the regulated activity is to be carried out in manner by which the environmental impacts and environmental risks are reduced to a level that is:
 - i. as low as reasonably practicable; and
 - ii. acceptable.