

## Timor Leste demands pipeline link to Sunrise gas project

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Paul Garvey, Resources reporter, Perth

Timor Leste has reinforced its insistence that gas from the Greater Sunrise LNG project be piped to Timorese soil, dashing hopes of a compromise over the long-stalled project.

Timor Leste, representatives of the Australian government and the Sunrise joint venture partners — Woodside Petroleum, ConocoPhillips and Royal Dutch Shell — have been meeting in Brisbane this week for the first negotiations between the parties for several years.

Sunrise has been stalled for years amid a dispute over the maritime boundary between Australia and Timor Leste, as well as a determination from Timor Leste that any future development involves a pipeline between it and the fields.

The partners have long favoured a development that would involve either piping the gas back to the existing Darwin LNG plant or a dedicated floating LNG vessel. A Timor Leste development has previously been regarded as uncompetitive due to a deep ocean trench between the country and the gas fields.

The boundary dispute is all but resolved following a decision by the Permanent Court of Arbitration of Copenhagen in August that left the parties needing to agree to a development pathway for the fields.

When asked by *The Australian* at the weekend whether the country would consider an option that did not involve a Timor Leste LNG plant, Timor Leste Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri said “everything is on the table”.

But in a letter to *The Australian*, Mr Alkatiri’s chief of staff Nelson Santos “strongly refuted” any suggestion that Timor Leste was open to any other development option for Sunrise.

“Any development in the Greater Sunrise field must include the option of a pipeline to Timor Leste,” Mr Santos said. ’

“The ongoing infrastructure development in our southern coast of the country to host petroleum processing facilities should be a strong testament to this commitment.”

Mr Santos said the Prime Minister had his full confidence in the country’s chief negotiator, former president Xanana Gusmao.