

Minister upbeat about Greater Sunrise prospects

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The federal Resources Minister Ian Macfarlane is confident the Greater Sunrise gas project will go ahead, but is less certain that its LNG will be processed in Darwin.

Mr Macfarlane today visited the \$2.5 billion LNG plant at Darwin's Wickham Point.

The plant produces three-and-a-half-million tonnes of LNG a year for export to Japan.

The Minister says East Timor has agreed to a joint development agreement with Australia for the Greater Sunrise field in the Timor Sea.

But he says Darwin will not be in the running to process gas from the Greater Sunrise field until East Timor makes its own proposal for an onshore LNG plant.

Mr Macfarlane says the gas field's proponents have promised to give East Timor a fair hearing.

"Once they are satisfied with the outcome of those discussions as to where the gas will be processed, then I think you'll see that project proceed," he said.

"But for Australia it has lost its place in a queue which already features Browse, already features Pluto and already features the Chevron project at Barrow Island in Western Australia.

"The proponents of Sunrise are going to cooperate with the Timorese request.

"Once that is done, Sunrise is a very big project that will go ahead."

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