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Beetaloo gas may be a decade away, explorer warns

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[Local News](#)



It may take a decade for shale gas from the Beetaloo to reach market, a gas explorer has warned.

Oil and gas exploration company Blue Energy says it will take 5-10 years before any gas will flow to market from the Beetaloo basin, south of Katherine.

The company welcomed yesterday's [announcement](#) by ALP leader Bill Shorten of a \$1.5 billion commitment to build gas pipelines in Queensland and the NT to transport the gas to east coast markets.

The Liberal Party has also made a [pledge](#) to fast track development of the Beetaloo. A moratorium on exploration of the NT's onshore shale gas resource was lifted last year and exploration is only just beginning again this dry season.

The NT Government hopes the development of the Beetaloo will provide a fillip to its ailing Budget.

But according to Blue Energy, that may be many years away.

Blue Energy is involved in gas exploration in the McArthur basin of the NT.

Blue Energy said it was "extremely encouraged" by the ALP pledge.

Blue Energy cautioned, however, that any expectation of "immediately available gas" was unrealistic except for the already producing Bowen Basin.

"Environmental and regulatory approvals processes for any totally new gas development, pipeline infrastructure and commissioning requirements for these prospective gas zones, put Basins such as Galilee and Beetaloo years down the track before they actually 'delivered gas' to market," the company said.

Blue Energy said it was the only company with acreage in all three regions - the North Bowen, Galilee and the Beetaloo/Greater McArthur Basins

This proposal, by the ALP, if it is fully funded, is a game-changer for the east coast domestic gas market, the company said.

More reading:

[The Battle for Beetaloo.](#)

The quickest gas to market from these Basins, in order, is:

North Bowen Basin - Producing basin with environmentally approved projects already (1-3 years).

Galilee Basin - Still at proof-of-concept stage for CSG and tight gas (5-8 years).

Beetaloo Basin - Regulatory and social licence issues ongoing in the NT (5-10 years),

The North Bowen Basin is an already discovered and producing gas basin (in production since 2006),

The gas resource in the North Bowen Basin is approximately 15,000 petajoules (PJ) - equal to 30 years of current domestic gas demand on the total Australian east coast market,

The Northern Bowen Basin gas resources are separately held by Arrow Energy (A Shell and Petrochina Joint Venture) and Australian-owned and ASX-listed Blue Energy Ltd, under permits granted by the Queensland State Government,

Arrow has State and Federal Government environmental approvals in place for a gas development project of up to 6,625 wells' plus a granted licence to build a gas pipeline from Moranbah to Gladstone to transport the gas to market,

These projects have yet to be started by Arrow,

The ACCC has publicly identified Arrow Energy as "gas warehousing" its North Bowen Basin gas resources for strategic purposes at a time when domestic gas users and manufacturers are struggling to get long-term gas supply and hence putting thousands of jobs at risk,

Blue Energy executive chairman John Ellice-Flint said: "Unlocking existing reserves and resources in the North Bowen gas province with nation building gas infrastructure has the potential to bring relief to east coast gas users within the near-term, by providing a large long-term source of new gas to the east coast."