

**First and last names: Eric Smith**

**Post code of where you live: 0810**

**Are you making this submission on behalf of an organisation: No**

Submission details:

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Bonaparte Basin Carbon Capture and Storage referral. I am a long-term Territory resident and parent of young children. I am concerned this referral does not satisfy the NT Environment Protection Act's requirement to protect human health as a recognised environmental value, nor does it fully assess potential impacts on air, water, soil, and community wellbeing. The project proposes offshore injection of up to 300 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>, making it the largest CCS project globally. Despite its scale, the referral does not demonstrate that the project is safe, reliable, or viable without unacceptable harm. A critical issue is that the offshore CCS is assessed separately from the onshore Ichthys infrastructure, which plans to remove acid gas incinerators that currently mitigate hazardous air toxics like benzene and hydrogen sulphide. The referral relies on continuous CCS operation; any failure, maintenance outage, or malfunction would lead to increased venting or flaring of toxic gases, directly impacting Darwin's air quality and public health. This creates a clear risk pathway through air emissions that threatens community wellbeing, especially vulnerable populations such as children.

The referral underestimates these risks and ignores Inpex's history of underreporting benzene emissions, a carcinogen with no safe exposure level as affirmed by the World Health Organization. Potential impacts to water and soil quality through pipeline installation, disturbance of acid sulphate soils, and risk of leakage are not fully assessed, threatening local ecosystems and human health. The referral also overlooks broader community wellbeing impacts related to disruption of nationally important migratory bird habitat, cultural values, and the long-term environmental legacy passed to future generations. This fragmented assessment ignores the interconnected nature of the project's risks, contrary to the NT Environment Protection Act's intent to ensure environmental values, including human health, are protected through consideration of all relevant pathways. For these reasons, this referral should be deemed unacceptable under section 57(2)(d) of the Act. Any further assessment must holistically evaluate human health impacts via air, water, soil, and community wellbeing pathways, and consider cumulative impacts of the entire CCS system.