



**FARA**  
FRIENDS OF AUSTRALIAN ROCK ART



## ‘Woodside: not just a climate criminal...’

**Woodside LNG emissions are also degrading the globally significant Aboriginal cultural heritage of Murujuga/the Burrup Peninsula**

*Huge emissions from Woodside's Burrup gas flare produce acidic compounds which are destroying the surrounding Burrup rock art*

At this time of climate emergency, environmental campaigners are highlighting Woodside's huge contribution to Australia's carbon emissions.

But the company's historic and ongoing contribution to the industrial degradation of globally significant Aboriginal cultural heritage on Murujuga/the Burrup Peninsula in Western Australia's (WA) Pilbara region should not be forgotten either:

### **World's oldest and largest outdoor rock art gallery**

The site is the world's oldest and largest outdoor rock art gallery – one of the most important archaeological sites on the planet. It contains a **continuous record of human cultural activity dating back at least 40,000 years**, as well as being of enormous cultural significance to local Aboriginal custodians.

Huge emissions from Woodside's Burrup gas flare produce acidic compounds, which are destroying the surrounding Burrup rock art.

### **Ignoring advice**

- In 2006-7, Woodside ignored objections from Aboriginal custodians, the International Federation of Rock Art Organizations, National Trust (Australia), World Monument Fund and Friends of Australian Rock Art FARA), and removed 941 rock art engravings to make way for its Pluto LNG plant in the heart of Murujuga/the Burrup Peninsula.

## Acid rain and emissions

- **Woodside is the second largest carbon emitter in WA** after its Browse Basin Joint Venture partner Chevron, and in the 2017-18 period emitted 1.93 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> from its Burrup Pluto facility alone.
- Woodside's Pluto LNG plant on the Burrup releases 2200 tonnes of nitrogen dioxide and 306 tonnes of sulphur dioxide (the two major gas components that result in acid rain) into the atmosphere every year. Even more nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide are released from the nearby Joint-Venture North West Shelf gas plant operated by Woodside.

- Recent scientific research shows acidity levels on the surface of rocks adjacent to the Woodside gas treatment works are now **1000 times higher** than before industry was established there in the 1980s. This suggests extremely high levels of acid rain from Woodside and other industrial plants located on the Burrup are eating away at the rock patina of the Burrup rock art, and are likely to destroy it over time – potentially by the end of the century.

- The Woodside gas flare pictured overleaf is located in the heart of the Burrup rock art precinct – on August 2, 2018 alone, it discharged 270 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>-e.
- Woodside has recently sought State government approval to **extend its Burrup LNG operations until 2068** and its proposed expansion of the Browse Basin facilities on the Burrup would dramatically increase existing emissions.
- In August 2019, Woodside refused to provide FARA's expert scientific team with its emissions and chemical deposition data to allow the effect of Woodside's emissions on the surrounding rock art to be independently evaluated.
- Woodside also advised FARA in August 2018 that it would not upgrade its (outdated and heavily polluting) Joint Venture LNG facilities on the Burrup for several years due to cost, even though it is aware that improved technology would reduce emissions and is currently available.

## World Heritage Listing

- The Federal Government nominated this globally significant cultural heritage site for tentative World Heritage Listing (WHL) in February 2020. This WHL plan was approved by the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation representing local Aboriginal custodians in September 2019. However, heritage experts fear that plans for further industrial expansion on the Burrup by Woodside and other companies will derail Burrup WHL at the last hurdle.

## Native title rights

- Facing the threat of compulsory acquisition without compensation by the WA Government of their native title rights on the Burrup, Aboriginal native title groups signed the BMIEA land use agreement in 2003. These groups (as well as their peak representative body, the Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation), are specifically precluded from objecting publicly to further industrial development on the Burrup by Woodside and other companies by the following 'No Objection' Clause 4.8 of this Agreement:

*...the Contracting Parties agree that the[y] ...will not, in their capacity as owners of the Burrup Non-Industrial Land, lodge or cause to be lodged any objection to development proposals intended to occur on land within the Industrial Estate.*

## More information:

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