



# Northern Land Council

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Black Tip gas: new opportunities for Aboriginal people**

**6 June 2003**

Northern Land Council Chief Executive Norman Fry today said that Aboriginal traditional owners in the Northern Territory's Top End stood to reap significant benefits from today's historic announcement that Alcan intended to fuel its expanded bauxite operations at Gove with natural gas from the offshore Black Tip field in the Bonaparte Gulf.

"This project has huge potential for all Territorians and particularly for Aboriginal people living in remote areas all the way from the Darwin/Daly region through to East Arnhem Land," Mr Fry said.

"Getting the gas from Black Tip to Gove will require the construction of 1,000 kilometres of pipeline across Aboriginal land and land covered by native title claim. This will offer many economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people living along the pipeline route and we will work on their behalf to ensure their interests and aspirations are met."

"One of our key requirements will be that substantial training and employment openings be made available to Aboriginal people and I am pleased to see that the NT Government has said it will work with us and Alcan to develop such openings."

"The NLC and traditional owners have been working on this project for 18 months and a lot has already been achieved in terms of surveying potential pipeline routes and consulting with Aboriginal communities."

But Mr Fry said that while the signing of the Heads of Agreement between Black Tip operator Woodside Petroleum and Alcan was an important first step, much work still needed to be done to ensure all stakeholders' interests were taken into account.

"The final decision in our negotiations will rest with traditional owners," Mr Fry said.

"We will continue to work collaboratively with all parties through the Government's newly established Task Force and I look forward to a successful conclusion to the negotiations."