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2 February 2024

Press Statement

The Tiwi Land Council Chairman and CEO today expressed disappointment in the allocation of funds by Santos for Northern Territory coastal communities following the recent Federal Court's ruling permitting the Barossa gas project to proceed. While acknowledging Santos' gesture, the Tiwi Land Council firmly believes that the allocated amount of ten million dollars falls short of meeting the needs of the region, particularly the Tiwi Islands.

The Tiwi Land Council recognises the importance of economic development for the region but emphasises that it must be balanced with other social, cultural and environmental issues and heritage. The Barossa gas project has significant implications for the communities on the Tiwi Islands and to date has done little other than divide the Community.

"While we appreciate Santos' efforts to provide financial support, we cannot overlook the inadequacy of the allocated funds," said Gibson Farmer Illortaminni, Chair of the Tiwi Land Council. "The Tiwi Islands, with our unique cultural heritage and environmental significance, require special attention and investment to ensure sustainable development and the well-being of our people."

The Tiwi Land Council stresses that any funds allocated for coastal communities should prioritise the specific needs of the Tiwi Islands and while focused on such things as education, healthcare, infrastructure, environmental conservation and biosecurity must not replace the normal sources of island funding. The specific circumstances of the islands' population would seem to call for funding tailored to economic empowerment.

"We urge Santos to reconsider the distribution of funds and to allocate a more substantial annual investment and a greater focus on the Tiwi Islands. Our communities deserve equitable support to thrive in the face of industrial developments in our region" said Gibson Farmer Illortaminni.

The Tiwi Land Council remains committed to advocating for the best interests of the Tiwi people and will continue to engage with stakeholders to ensure that the voices of the community are heard and respected.

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