# Wellhead Management Environment Plan: Xeres-1A Exploration Well Environment Plan Summary

**Drilling and Completions**

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Status: Final



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background and Purpose

The Wellhead Management Environment Plan: Xeres-1A Exploration Well (EP) has been prepared in accordance with the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2009* (Environment Regulations). The EP has been reviewed and accepted by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA). This EP summary has been prepared as per the requirements of Regulations 11(7) and (8) of the Environment Regulations.

# 2. LOCATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The Xeres-1A well location is in Commonwealth waters in Production License Area WA-34-L (Figure 2-1) in approximately 190 m (Lowest Astronomical Tide) water depth. This production licence is approximately 190 km north-west of Karratha. Table 2-1 summarises the well details including surface coordinates, water depth and permit area.

**Table 2-1: Xeres-1A Exploration Well Coordinates, Water Depth**

| Well | Water Depth (m LAT) | Longitude | Latitude | Permit Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Xeres-1A | 190 m | 115$^{o}$ 15’ 03.969” E | 19$^{o}$ 54’ 54.620” S | WA-34-L |

# 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

## 3.1 Physical Environment

The Xeres-1A well is located within the North West Marine Bioregion (NWMR) on the outer continental slope region in approximately 190 m water depth. The Indonesian Throughflow is the dominant current through the majority of the NWMR, while the Leeuwin Current is dominant in the south of the NWMR.

## 3.2 Biological Environment

Regional studies on the North West Shelf indicate that the seabed material is likely to be predominantly flat and featureless and comprises thick, unconsolidated fine grained sands. The sediments support soft sediment benthic communities dominated by infauna (including molluscs, crustaceans and worms) and isolated larger fauna (free swimming cnidarian, demersal fish and benthic crustaceans). With consideration of the depth of the Xeres-1A well location (190 m), general lack of hard substrate, reduced light and nutrient loading the soft sediment communities are considered of a relatively low environmental sensitivity.

No Critical Habitats or Threatened Ecological Communities as listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 2000* (Cth) (EPBC Act) occur within the area of the wellhead, as indicated by the EPBC Act Protected Matters Report for the well location area. The Xeres-1A well location is located nine kilometres from the closest Commonwealth Marine Reserve, the Montebello Commonwealth Marine Reserve, and 49 km from the closest State Marine Park, the Montebello Islands Marine Park/ Barrow Island Marine Management Area.

## 3.3 Socioeconomic Environment

There are no known areas of cultural heritage significance in the Xeres-1A well location area. No tourist activities take place specifically within the area of the well location. Due to the water depth and distance offshore, recreational fishing is unlikely to occur in the well location. There are a number of other petroleum permits around the area of the Xeres-1A well location.

The Xeres-1A well location is within a number of State managed fisheries areas; however, State-regulated fishing activity around this location is most likely to be associated with the Northern Demersal Scalefish Fishery.

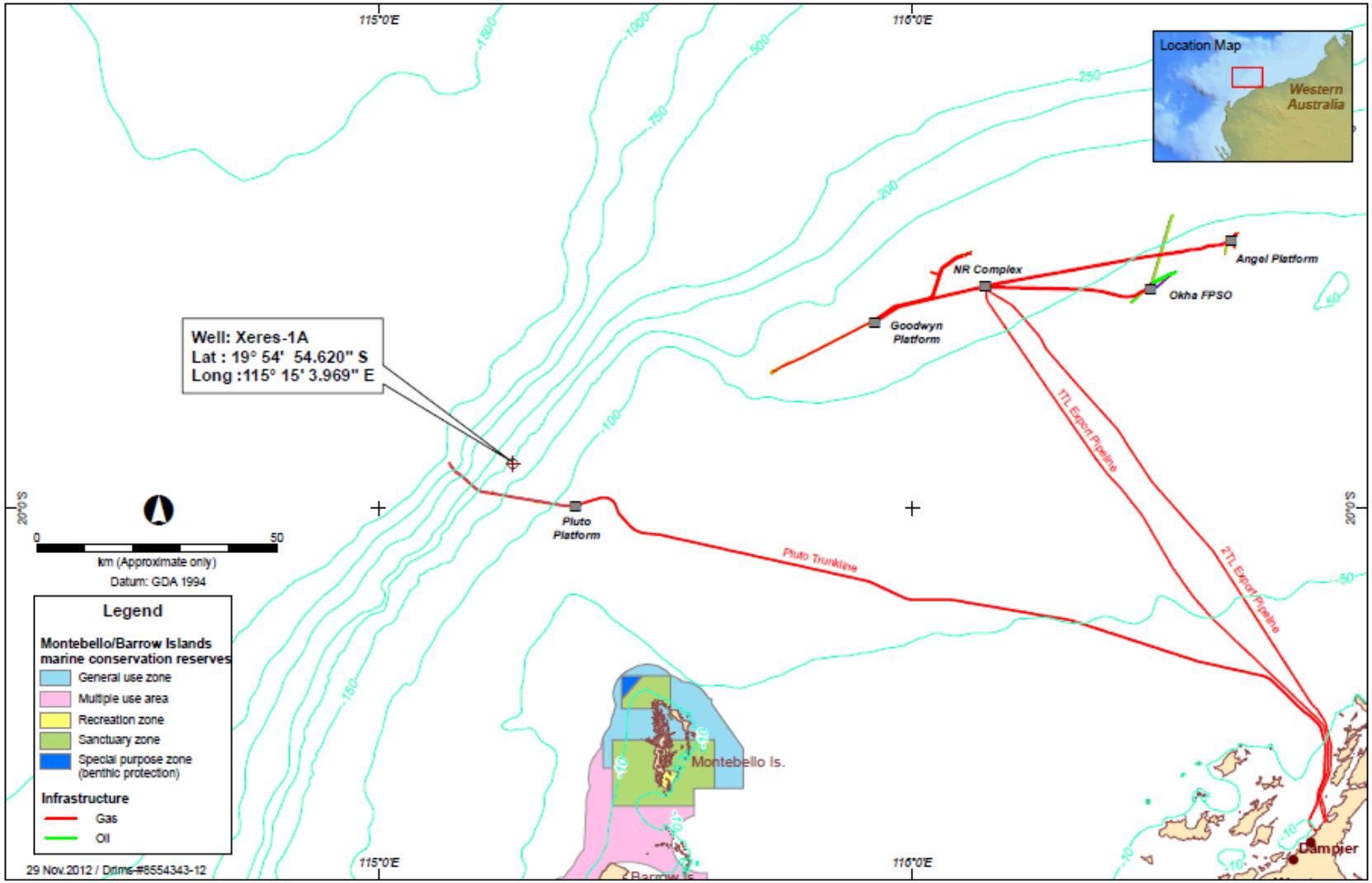


**Figure 2-1: Location Map for the Existing Xeres-1A Exploration Well**

# 4. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

The Xeres-1A exploration well was suspended and the wellhead assembly was left in situ in 2011. The EP addresses the ongoing management of the Xeres-1A wellhead assembly. No further actions (operations) are proposed for this wellhead under this EP.

# 5. MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS AND CONTROLS

Woodside undertook an environmental risk assessment to understand the potential environmental risks associated with the Xeres-1A wellhead assembly to ensure they are reduced to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP) and will be of an acceptable level using a method consistent with Woodside standards.

The key environmental hazards and control measures to be applied to the management of the Xeres-1A wellhead assembly are shown in **Appendix A**. These are consistent with Woodside corporate and project-specific objectives, standards and criteria. All control measures associated with the hazards will be implemented to reduce environmental risk to ALARP and will be of an acceptable level.

# 6. MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The Xeres-1A wellhead assembly will be managed in compliance with the EP accepted by NOPSEMA under the Environment Regulations, other relevant environmental legislation and Woodside's Management System (e.g. Woodside Environment Policy).

The objective of the EP is to ensure that potential adverse impacts on the environment associated with the Xeres-1A wellhead assembly, during planned activities, are identified, are reduced to ALARP and are of an acceptable level. The EP details specific objectives and standards for each environmental aspect that was identified and assessed in the Environmental Risk Assessment (Section 5 of the EP). For each environmental aspect the range of controls to be implemented (consistent with the standards) to achieve the performance objectives are detailed. The EP then establishes the specific measurement criteria that will be used to demonstrate that the performance objectives have been achieved.

The implementation strategy detailed in the EP identifies the roles/responsibilities and training/competency requirements for all personnel in relation to implementing controls, managing non-compliance, and meeting monitoring, auditing, and reporting requirements. The EP details the types of monitoring and auditing that will be undertaken and the reporting requirements for environmental incidents and reporting on overall compliance of the management of the Xeres-1A wellhead assembly with the EP.

# 7. CONSULTATION

Woodside conducted a stakeholder assessment for the proposed activity to identify relevant and interested stakeholders based on the well location. A consultation fact sheet was sent electronically to all identified stakeholders prior to lodgement of the EP with NOPSEMA for assessment and acceptance. This advice was supported by engagement with potentially affected stakeholders. Woodside received feedback on the proposed activity from a range of stakeholders, including government agencies, commercial fishing organisations and other petroleum operators. No issues of material concern were raised by stakeholders.

# 8. CONTACT DETAILS

Further information about the Xeres-1A well can be obtained from:

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## APPENDIX A: Summary of Key Environmental Hazards and Control Measures to be applied to the Xeres-1A Exploration Well for wellhead management

| Source of Risk (Hazard) | Potential Environmental Impact | Control/Mitigation Measures |
|---|---|---|
| Interference with fishing and shipping operations | Displacement of commercial fishing operations and potential for equipment loss or damage. | Issuing of fact sheet and/ or conduct annual stakeholder briefings with commercial fishing operations. |
| Interference with other petroleum operators activities | Potential for equipment loss or damage from activities undertaken by petroleum operators. | Participate in operator initiated consultation with regards to activities that will potentially impact on the permits around which the wellhead is located. |