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REASONS FOR DECISION UNDER *ENVIRONMENT EFFECTS ACT 1978* (REFERRAL NUMBER 2024-R01)

Proponent

Esso Australia Resources Pty Ltd

Project

East Australia Carbon Capture and Storage Project

Description

The project includes the development of new carbon dioxide (CO₂) facilities at the existing Longford Gas Conditioning Plant, a new CO₂ pipeline between the Longford GCP and Valve Site 3 and use of the existing Bream Pipeline from Valve Site 3 to the edge of State waters (three nautical miles from low water line off Paradise Beach). The referred project is part of a larger project which extends into Commonwealth waters and seeks to compress, dehydrate, transport and store carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the depleted Bream oil and gas reservoir.

The project will predominately utilise existing facilities and infrastructure, with new proposed facilities located on land that has previously been disturbed or land within the existing Longford Plant boundary.

Decision

The Minister for Planning has decided that an environment effects statement (EES) is not required for the South East Australia Carbon Capture and Storage Project (Victorian components), as described in the referral accepted on 16 January 2024.

Reasons

- The project has the potential for adverse effects. However, they are unlikely to be complex and uncertainties can be investigated readily through existing statutory requirements and approvals. This includes the development licence and operational licence approval processes under the *Environment Protect Act 2017*, *Pipelines Act 2005* and *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2010 (Vic)* – each will readily enable the appropriate and transparent examination of these potential effects.
- Residual effects on other environmental values (such as noise, air quality and traffic) and Aboriginal cultural heritage are also unlikely to be significant and can be readily addressed via respective existing statutory requirements.
- The effects on native vegetation are not considered significant due to the siting of the project predominately within areas of previous disturbance. Minimisation and offsets for the impacts to native vegetation and biodiversity values can be addressed in accordance with policy as part of required approvals.

Date 5 September 2024