



17 May 2018

Buru Energy wins APPEA Environment Award for bilby research

Buru Energy was presented with the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association Environment Project Excellence Award at Wednesday night's APPEA 2018 Conference Dinner in Adelaide.

In announcing the award, APPEA Board member and General Manager Australia, BHP Billiton Petroleum, Graham Salmond, said the judges found that Buru's Kimberley Bilby Initiative is a notable example of the company's culture of environmental protection.

"Buru is committed to safe and environmentally responsible development of the Canning Basin's oil and gas resources," Mr Salmond said.

"The company is not only working to ensure its operations do not harm the region's bilbies; it is also making an important contribution to zoology and environmental science by addressing gaps in knowledge about this threatened marsupial."

The Canning is one of the few regions in Australia that still has a healthy population of the Greater Bilby.

Buru wanted to expand its bilby surveys and research and decided that partnering with a university was the best way to maximise value for all stakeholders.

From 2014-17, Buru co-funded a Murdoch University PhD research project.

The company placed no restrictions on the distribution of research outcomes. The results have been shared with interested stakeholders and will be made publicly available through peer-reviewed journal articles and the research thesis.

Much of the fieldwork for this bilby project is undertaken with Yawuru Native Title Holders and local ranger groups. This takes advantage of traditional knowledge and insights into the environment, while also providing collected data to these groups.

This research adds significantly to knowledge of Canning bilbies' diet, habitat use and movement patterns, as well as their role in the local ecosystem.

This fieldwork will also help Buru improve its risk management, site selection and operational planning to reduce any impacts upon the bilby population. It has already implemented avoidance zones and vehicle speed restrictions, and has prohibited night-time driving except in emergencies.

To date, Buru has not identified any impacts on bilbies as a result of its operations.

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