

The Hon Tony Burke MP,
Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities,
P.O. Box 6022 House of Representatives,
Parliament House,
Canberra.
ACT 2600

Dear Minister Burke,

On 7 May 2011 more than 100 local people gathered at a public meeting at Wentworth Falls in the Blue Mountains, to voice their support for the protection of Australia's last unspoilt wilderness and the associated Aboriginal cultural heritage, at the Kimberley region in north western Australia.

We were dismayed at the inexplicable if not obscene haste with which the proposed oil and gas refinery at James Price Point north of Broome is being forced through; in a region of national and global environmental and cultural significance, in the absence of any national consensus; in the absence of any regional environmental planning, in light of the inadequacy of the strategic planning and the risk that the construction of the oil and gas plant will begin the full scale industrialisation of the whole Kimberley region.

As you are aware the broader Kimberley region contains the World Heritage listed Purnululu National Park and numerous other cultural, terrestrial and maritime areas and values of outstanding environmental and heritage significance but with very little protection. The coastline north of Broome in particular includes the unique Lurujarri Heritage Trail and the largest and most significant stretches of dinosaur footprints anywhere in the world.

The meeting considered it imperative that you and the current Australian government make the necessary decisions to protect the Kimberley for future generations. The following resolutions were all passed unanimously. Included also are extracts from a report by the palaeontologist Dr Steven Salisbury, who grew up in the Blue Mountains, that was received with great concern by the meeting.

Resolutions

1. Through a Strategic Assessment process the Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke has the final say on construction of the proposed oil and gas refinery at James Price Point north of Broome.

This meeting of concerned Blue Mountains residents calls upon Minister Burke to refuse to approve the project outright or at the very least to defer his decision because:

- 1.1 too little is known about the extent of the environmental impacts
- 1.2 other joint venture partners consider there are better alternatives

2. We are dismayed that the Kimberley locals are being bullied into giving up the James Price Point site that is so important to their culture. The resources given to the indigenous communities in the Kimberley are third world. Although the Dampier Peninsular has a medical clinic there are still 15 people living in a three bedroom house and scabies are rife. Remote communities such as Yukannura in the Fitzroy Valley have a bare minimum in equipment and only one telephone for the whole community. There should be action now to give the local Kimberley communities the resources the rest of us enjoy without forcing them to give up their culture.
3. As part of the Strategic Assessment process the Federal Environment Minister in 2008 requested the Australian Heritage Council (NHC) carry out a preliminary assessment of the West Kimberley to identify areas and values of outstanding heritage value to the nation and worthy of National Heritage Listing. Minister Burke is due to make a decision on whether to list the West Kimberley values and areas identified to date by 30 June 2011.

This meeting of concerned Blue Mountains residents supports the traditional owners and other local Kimberley stakeholders in their call for National Heritage Listing for the whole area identified in the NHC assessment and further, request Minister Burke extend the boundary of the protected areas and values to include:

- 3.1 identified values of the Dampier Peninsula, and the full range of dinosaur fossilised footprints, Mimbi Caves and the Ningbing Ranges
 - 3.2 the entire Roebuck Bay system, Fitzroy floodplain, and coral reefs and seascapes of the Kimberley coast.
 - 3.3 The Paruku wetland system, and the wetlands of the north Great Sandy Desert, 80 Mile Beach and Walankarr (Edgar Ranges)
3. This meeting of concerned Blue Mountains residents notes that less than 1% of the Kimberley's Commonwealth waters are in protected areas and that the rest is open to extractive industries including fishing and offshore oil and gas exploration and production. We support the process of Commonwealth marine planning that aims to establish a national network of marine protected areas and urge the Federal government to complete this process as a matter of urgency.

Palaeontologist Report Extract

"Future of dinosaur tracks in the west Kimberley, Western Australia

The coastline of the Dampier Peninsular north of Broome in the west Kimberley preserves one of the largest and most significant stretches of dinosaur footprints anywhere in the world. The dinosaur tracks occur in coastal exposure of the 130 million year old Broome Sandstone, over 80 km of coastline from Broome to Cape Leveque. There are literally thousands of tracks representing as many as 15 different types of dinosaurs, some of which there is no other record for in Australia. With the exception of

a few fragments of bone, these tracks constitute the entire fossil record of dinosaurs in the western half of the Australian continent. Some of the sauropod tracks are up to 1.5m long, and belong to what may have been some of the largest animals to have ever walked the planet.....

The Kimberley dinosaur tracks are an important part of Australia's geological heritage, and should be included in the proposed National Heritage listing for the west Kimberley.....

Dinosaur prints at James Price Point will be destroyed if the proposed LNG plant is allowed to go ahead (Siversson 2010). In addition, sand-dredging of channels and the construction of groynes, bulkheads and breakwater structures associated with the LNG plant will result in the redistribution of sand by longshore currents, which may further impact on dinosaur tracks on other parts of the Dampier Peninsula coastline.....

Yours sincerely,



Ms Robin Sproule,

Blue Mountains resident at 160 Falls Rd, Wentworth Falls NSW 2782.

On behalf of the meeting; including input from individual residents, BM Conservation Society, Save the Kimberley, Environs Kimberley, Wilderness Society, ACF and the Blue Mountains ALP.

Cc The Hon **Julia Gillard** MP, Prime Minister,
The Hon **Greg Combet** AM, MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency
The Hon **Mark Dreyfus** QC MP, Cabinet Secretary and Parliamentary Secretary for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency
Senator **Bob Brown**, GPO Box 404, Hobart TAS 7001
Tony Windsor MP
Rob Oakshot MP
Hon **Colin Barnett** MEd MLA, Premier of WA, Minister for State Development, 24th Floor, 197 St Georges Terrace, Perth WA 6000
Hon. **Eric Stephen Ripper** MLA BA, DipEd., Leader of the Opposition WA, Parliament House, Perth WA 6000