



Speech by

**Hon. Kate Jones**

**MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE**

Hansard Thursday, 21 May 2009

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **World Heritage Listing**

**Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability) (11.18 am): Tomorrow, when I meet with other environment and heritage ministers, I will be working to deliver one of the Bligh government's election commitments—working to put Cape York on the international map as a place of World Heritage. I will be supporting a recommendation to put Cape York at the top of Australia's World Heritage tentative list that will be submitted to the international body UNESCO by the end of the year. This is the first step in a long process that will require substantial consultation with Indigenous and conservation groups and other relevant interests and collaboration with the Commonwealth. The Rudd government is committed to investigating a World Heritage nomination of Cape York with the consent of traditional owners, which I support. The tentative list is designed to prioritise potential World Heritage List properties that should be submitted by the Australian government. The extension of Fraser Island's World Heritage area to include Cooloola will also be on the agenda for the tentative list.

There can be little doubt that Cape York is a natural and cultural landscape of unique beauty and quality that has been shaped over millions of years and nurtured for thousands of years by the traditional owners. A World Heritage listing would give it international recognition and further showcase its cultural and ecotourism values. It would build on the work that our government has been doing for many years with conservation and Indigenous interests to manage and protect this vast and unique landscape.

However, there are a number of hurdles to get over. The Cape York and Cooloola nominations are not finalised until the properties are formally submitted for consideration. They will be subject to lengthy discussions, scientific assessments and negotiations with all parties involved to ensure that the best interests of the sites and their communities are taken into consideration. But tomorrow will be an important first step towards having both Cape York and Cooloola as World Heritage candidates. This is great news for Queensland. We already have five World Heritage places and these two would be the perfect addition to our treasures, bringing tourism dollars and jobs to Queensland.