




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Cape York World Heritage Listing

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (2.19 pm): Cape York is a special place. Spanning almost 15 million hectares, Cape York Peninsula's geology spans the development of the Australian continent since the Precambrian and the resulting land surfaces support remarkable diversity of flora and fauna habitat—some found nowhere else in the world. Some parts of Cape York Peninsula, such as the Coleman Plateau, are considered to have changed little since their development in the Jurassic period. Of course it is not only home to spectacular landscapes but also important cultural places and stories that span generations. Rock art, most notably throughout the sandstone Laura Basin date to 17,000 years ago with evidence of occupation at these sites dated to 34,000 years ago.

As the former environment minister, I sat at the foot of that rock art with elders and it was a privilege to see it through their eyes and to listen to their stories. It is a privilege that I hope my children one day experience; it is a privilege that I hope all future generations might have the opportunity to experience. That is why last year I stood alongside the traditional owners and the federal government to add the cultural landscapes of Cape York Peninsula to Australia's Tentative World Heritage List. That day, standing alongside elders representing Kulla, Olkola, Wuthathi, Quinkan, Oyala Thumotang, Alwal and Ma'alpiku country, was a special day that was over 15 years in the making. A day to give effect to their voices, their will, on their lands—not mine, not ours—theirs; a day that followed an extensive period of consultation and public information sessions across the community.

Imagine my surprise to read the media commentary of the LNP environment minister only months after taking over the reins declaring he was going to review the process as, in his words, 'there was no indication adequate consultation and consideration had taken place'. Here's a tip: ask your department for the evidence. They ran the consultation process. This from a minister who when he was last in the portfolio in the feted Newman government said they did not support World Heritage listing for the cape because we had previously 'overconsulted', yet now it is because we have 'not consulted enough'—so which is it? It is not adding up and I will tell you why. The real reason the LNP do not want the cape listed is they want the cape open for business—not the kind of business that draws in tourists from around the world, creates jobs and instils a further appreciation for the biodiversity the cape is home to but open for broadscale clearing, open for mining, open for logging, open to line the pockets of the mates who line theirs, running roughshod over traditional owner wishes. Queensland's natural assets should not be up for sale and those opposite should come clean about their real agenda.