

Question on Notice

No. 64

Asked on Wednesday, 14 February 2024

MR S O'CONNOR ASKED THE MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE GREAT BARRIER REEF AND MINISTER FOR SCIENCE AND INNOVATION (HON L LINARD)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the Minister's recent media comments in the Cape York Weekly regarding the proposed World Heritage Listing of the Cape York Peninsula, that 'the Traditional Owners I engaged with personally on country last year were appreciative of the Government's support'—

Will the Minister detail which Traditional Owners these comments were in reference to and outline what other consultation has been undertaken by the department on this proposal, including a summary of the results of that consultation?

ANSWER:

The Miles and Albanese Governments support tentative listing due to the extremely high environmental and cultural values found on Cape York Peninsula. These cultural values include ancient rock art, proving Traditional Owners have lived in the area for tens-of-thousands of years.

We will only include areas that have the free, prior and informed consent of the relevant Traditional Owners. No areas will be included in a World Heritage nomination without the consent of all parties with rights and interests in the proposed area.

The Queensland Government engaged in initial discussions with representatives of the Cape York Land Council and Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation between November 2022 and July 2023.

In September 2023, the Honourable Tanya Plibersek MP, Australian Minister for the Environment and Water and I travelled to Cairns and parts of Cape York Peninsula to discuss both Governments' commitment to progress a World Heritage Tentative listing. Since that time engagement has continued, the Traditional Owners and community representatives involved to date have been representatives of:

- Olkola
- Oyala Thumotang Land Trust (which includes Southern Kaantju, Ayapathu and Wik Munkan)
- Ang Gnarra
- Thaypan
- KULLA Land Trust (which includes Kaantju, Umpila, Lama Lama and Ayapathu)
- Wuthathi
- Mayor of Lockhart River
- Kuuku Ya'u
- Wik

- Teppethiggi
- Old Mapoon
- Central West Wik
- Possum
- Kuku Warra
- Balnggarrawarra
- Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation

As discussions are ongoing, it is not appropriate to include specific details at this time. However, consultation has broadly identified the key drivers for Traditional Owner groups include: increased conservation and protections for Country, elevating cultural values, opportunities for improved tourism, employment, land management resources and economic returns.