Continuing Strong Protection for the Daly

With the moratorium on Landclearing on the Daly River expiring on March 5th, Minister for the Environment Karl Hampton today outlined the comprehensive land and water management regime in place to protect the Daly.

Minister Hampton said that these fulfilled the Labor Government’s election promise to protect the Daly River.

“The Daly River’s pristine environment, world-class fishing and magnificent natural beauty are irreplaceable assets for the Territory.”

“Since the ban began in 2003, our government has worked hard to ensure the environmental and recreational values of the Daly are protected, while allowing for future development in the region.”

“We now have better science, better planning and tough controls in place to ensure the once the ban is lifted, the Daly River region is developed sustainably”

Actions now in place to sustainably manage the Daly River environment include:

- Tough land clearing guidelines with strict provisions for the Daly including a buffer zone 1km wide along the length of the river.
- A complete water allocation plan for the Katherine Tindal aquifer to ensure water extraction is sustainable and doesn’t impact on river flows;
- Amendments to the Water Act ensuring the public knows who is applying to take water out of the Daly and whether they are successful.
Construction and upgrading of 24 stations to monitor water flow, making the Daly the most monitored river catchment in the Territory.

Development of a ground breaking computer model that more accurately predicts the impacts of water extraction on river flows.

7 new monitoring bores constructed to better monitor the groundwater that sustains dry season flows in the Daly.

Improved vegetation and soil mapping.

“The moratorium period has given us time to conduct the required scientific research and the community time to properly understand the issues and reach some level of agreement”

“Any large land clearing applications made once the moratorium is lifted will be referred to the Environment Minister for a decision on whether an EIS is required”

“Processes are now in place in which substandard applications are rejected and applicants are expected to establish that their proposal meets the guidelines – if they don’t, they simply won’t be approved.”

“These new arrangements for considering land clearing applications are the first step while we develop new native vegetation management legislation.”

“These laws will allow for future land clearing in ways that support regional development, ensure sustainability but also meet our Government’s commitment to protect the Daly River.” said Minister Hampton.

“Our approach will involve taking small, careful steps in the use of the Daly’s natural resources, which we will carefully monitor and use to adjust our management practices in the future.”

“At this point I would like to thank the Daly River Management Advisory Committe for their assistance - they will continue to oversee management of the Daly and look at all future land clearing applications”

“You only get one chance at doing things right, and the Daly will be a 21st century showcase of modern sustainable management.”

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