



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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GREAT BARRIER REEF AND THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

The Prime Minister, Mr. Malcolm Fraser and the Premier of Queensland, Mr. Joh Bjelke-Petersen today announced the nomination of the Great Barrier Reef for inclusion on the World Heritage List.

The World Heritage List, a list of cultural and natural wonders of the contemporary world, is being compiled under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, pursuant to the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. The aim of this Convention is to ensure, as far as possible, the proper identification, protection, conservation, presentation and rehabilitation of the world's unique and irreplaceable heritage.

Mr. Fraser and Mr. Bjelke-Petersen noted that the Great Barrier Reef clearly met the criteria for the inclusion of natural properties on the World Heritage List. These criteria require the Great Barrier Reef to satisfy one or more of the following conditions:

- . be an outstanding example representing the major stages on the earth's evolutionary history;
- . be an outstanding example representing significant on-going geological processes, biological evolution and man's interaction with the natural environment;
- . contains unique, rare or superlative natural phenomena, formations and features or areas of exceptional natural beauty; or
- . be the habitat where populations of rare or endangered species of plants and animals still survive.

The Great Barrier Reef also satisfies the "integrity" requirement - that is, it is large enough to contain and show the necessary inter-related and inter-dependent elements to enable viability and self-perpetuation of the process or species involved.

The Prime Minister and the Premier stated that the joint authority exercised through the Commonwealth Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act is perfectly adequate to satisfy the obligations of the Convention. This legislation, in conjunction with the Commonwealth/Queensland Great Barrier Reef Ministerial Council which is responsible for the co-ordination and development of policies in relation to the Barrier Reef at the Ministerial level, is such that no further mechanism for planning or control is contemplated.

Mr. Fraser and Mr. Bjelke-Petersen agreed that the nomination of the Great Barrier Reef was a further and significant step in the international recognition of the Reef as a unique and irreplaceable part of the world's heritage. They are confident that the nomination will be accepted and that Great Barrier Reef will join the unique inventory which now includes such wonders as the Yellowstone and Everglades National Parks and the Grand Canyon.

In conclusion, both the Premier and the Prime Minister stated that their joint announcement of the nomination served to emphasise the co-operative arrangements and responsibilities which the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments have established for the protection and conservation of the Great Barrier Reef.

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