



## PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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### KAKADU

The Federal Government has decided to declare Stage 2 of Kakadu National Park in accordance with the provisions of the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1975. In addition a notice of intent to prepare a report recommending declaration of Gimbat and Goodparla pastoral leases as part of Kakadu National Park will be published by the Director of National Parks and Wildlife.

In taking these steps, the Government is implementing recommendations made by the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry in respect of Kakadu National Park. Of particular importance is the inclusion in the Park of virtually the whole South Alligator River Catchment, with its internationally significant wetlands.

In moving to include Gimbat and Goodparla in the Park the Government is conscious that the lessees have been aware for a long time of this possibility. The Government will seek to acquire the two leases.

Serious consideration has been given to the position of the Northern Territory Government which has stressed the importance to its economy of mining, particularly in the Alligator Rivers Region. It is the view of the Commonwealth that appropriate tourist development in Kakadu National Park will generate a major long term increase in job opportunities and increase significantly revenue to the Northern Territory. The area is already a major tourist attraction, and the proposed developments will need to be undertaken in such a way as to ensure the protection of the natural and cultural values of the Park and be sensitive to Aboriginal interests.

A basic program of development for Stage 2 will include work on basic park infrastructure, such as power and water supplies and service roads, as well as provision of some essential visitor facilities. The Minister for Home Affairs and Environment, the Hon. Barry Cohen, will be discussing with the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, the Northern Territory Government and Aboriginal groups an augmented program of development of visitor facilities and park infrastructure

in the Kakadu National Park over the next six years, bringing forward the introduction of recreation facilities providing for bushwalking, nature observation and water-based activities. These visitor facilities will be developed to ensure that visitors are able to enjoy the Park better while not endangering its natural and cultural treasures.

This program will put millions of dollars annually into the Northern Territory economy and open up major employment and economic opportunities, especially for Aboriginal people.

Details of the program will be announced after Mr Cohen has completed his discussions and the Government has had an opportunity to consider specific proposals.

Subject to negotiations with the Northern Territory Government and Aboriginal groups, an additional expenditure of the order of \$36 million over six years is envisaged under the accelerated development program.

This, together with the associated private sector expenditures on tourism, would generate very substantial numbers of new permanent jobs over the next decade and beyond.

Canberra/Darwin