



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

26 April 1990

STATEMENT BY THE ACTING PRIME MINISTER THE HON PAUL KEATING MP

The Government has finalised the terms of reference for the Resource Assessment Commission's inquiry into the use of the resources of the Kakadu Conservation Zone. The Prime Minister has written to the Hon Justice D G Stewart, Chairman of the Resource Assessment Commission, formally asking him to commence the inquiry. A copy of his notice to the Commission setting out the terms of reference for the inquiry is attached.

This follows consultation with State and Territory Governments and a range of other industry, conservation and Aboriginal organisations on the terms of reference for the inquiry. The terms of reference now finalised will enable the Commission to undertake a proper examination of all major issues relevant to the Conservation Zone.

The Resource Assessment Commission was established by the Commonwealth Government last year to conduct independent inquiries into major complex resource issues. The issue of the future use of the resources of the Kakadu Conservation Zone involves consideration of a range of particularly complex and contentious resource, environmental and Aboriginal issues. The reference will form the Commission's second inquiry following the referral of the issue of forest resources to it late last year.

The Governor-General has appointed Professor Roger Kitching and Dr Gregory McColl as special Commissioners to the Resource Assessment Commission for the purpose of this inquiry. Both are well qualified to assist Justice Stewart with the inquiry.

Professor Kitching is Professor of Ecosystem Management at the University of New England and has an extensive background in scientific research and analysing environmental issues.

Dr McColl is a consulting economist with considerable analytical experience in economic and resource matters.

The Prime Minister has asked for the report to be completed by 26 April 1991.

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