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NEW



Decision on Tarkine national heritage listing close, says Giddings

A premier's perspective

EXCLUSIVE

By SEAN FORD

A FEDERAL call on national heritage listing the Tarkine is close, Premier Lara Giddings believes.

Federal Environment Minister Tony Burke's decision is being eagerly awaited by miners, State Labor and the State Liberals — who do not want mining's future disrupted — and conservationists and the Greens who want the big North-West area listed.

"We've made it very clear mining is our top priority," Ms Giddings said in an exclusive interview with *The Advocate* yesterday.

She said the government was on tenterhooks waiting for Mr Burke's decision.

She was not exactly sure when it would be, but said she did not believe it was far away.

Ms Giddings was encouraged Mr Burke had taken the time to understand the issues around the Tarkine.

She said she hoped his decision would be one miners and conservationists could live with.

The Wilderness Society is also expecting a decision soon, according to Tasmanian campaign director Vic Bayley.

SUPER TRAWLER

Ms Giddings supports new plans for the controversial super trawler to act as a floating freezer for other vessels.

Seafish Tasmania is seeking approval for the new plan after being banned by the Gillard Government from fishing Australian waters for two years following a campaign against the trawler.

"I have sympathy with Seafish Tasmania and what they are trying to do," Ms Giddings said.

She said the company had always operated within the laws of the day and the laws had changed since it entered a legally binding contract relating to the trawler.

"They were left with a stranded asset.

"They can't fish, but they can support the wider industry ... and help get fresh product straight into the market.

"They have every right to realise some value."

Asked if Seafish should sue the Commonwealth, Ms Giddings said it was a matter for the company, but she would never encourage people to "go around suing".

DEVONPORT DOINGS

Ms Giddings has given no thought to appointing an administrator to the troubled Devonport City Council.

A bitter schism between Mayor Steve Martin and various other aldermen has been bubbling away for months, including recent majority



CANDID: Premier Lara Giddings talks exclusively with *The Advocate* about many of the big issues facing Tasmania. Pictures: Tony Cross.

"They can't fish, but they can support the wider industry ... and help get fresh product straight into the market."

Lara Giddings on the super trawler

support for a no-confidence motion in the mayor.

"If there are issues at a political level they need to be resolved at a political level," Ms Giddings said.

She was referring to local government political level and said there were processes available.

Ms Giddings said she believed council general manager Iarr McCallum was an excellent GM.

State governments sending administrators in to run councils is rare, but not unheard of.

Former premier Jim Bacon appointed an administrator to Kentish some years back when it was going through extremely troubled times.

SAME SEX MARRIAGE

The pending retirement of Legislative Council president Sue Smith would not change the government's timing on plans for revisiting the same sex

marriage issue, Ms Giddings said.

The Upper House voted down legislation last year.

Mrs Smith made it known she would not be supportive of the plan if she needed to vote on it.

Ms Giddings said there was now an opportunity for progressive candidates to put their hands up for Mrs Smith's seat (Montgomery).

DYING WITH DIGNITY

Ms Giddings expected the government would release a discussion paper on euthanasia in the next fortnight.

She was hoping a dying with dignity bill would reach parliament by the end of the parliamentary year, saying most surveys showed about 80 per cent of people supported some form of legislation on the issue.

The second part of the interview will appear in tomorrow's issue.

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