



March 2006

The Secretary

Senate Environment, Communications Information Technology and the Arts

References Committee

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

ecita.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Committee Secretary

Please find enclosed our submission to the ***'Senate Inquiry into Australia's national parks, conservation reserves and marine protected areas'***.

The Central Western Qld Remote Area Planning and Development Board is owned by, and represents eleven local governments in Queensland's Central Western area. In geographic terms these communities cover an area approximately one third of the state of Queensland; an area which includes many National and Conservation Parks; these being: Welford, Diamantina, Idalia, Lark Quarry, Bladensburg, Simpson Desert National Park, Combo and Lochern.

All parks are important assets to the local governments and communities they represent. They offer significant, globally important, environmental and biodiversity value to our region, the state and nation.

RAPAD

RAPAD suggests that future policy for all National Parks take into account the following principles.

Principles

- (a) All future planning must take into consideration of views of local governments and the communities they represent. Local government and the sparse populations that live around these areas are the custodians of these areas.
- (b) The provision of Rangers living on National Parks is ensured, as against drive-in, drive-out policies. With 'drive in, drive out' staff, the burden of environmental management, feral animal and weed control falls increasingly to local governments by default and at the very best is ineffective.
- (c) The development and enhancement of tourism in National Parks must be encouraged, and that this represents a strong opportunity for State parks services and local government to work together for mutual economic and environmental benefit. These areas can be managed sustainably while still nurturing economic development.
- (d) National Parks are funded to the extent necessary to ensure weed and feral animal control is, at all times, adequately and effectively managed. Funding must reflect the reality behind the term 'triple bottom line', not just rhetoric. A failure to fund will affect not only the neighbouring landholders and immediate communities, but the nation as a whole.

If you have any further concerns or questions I can be contacted on 07 46583944 or gm@rapad.com.au.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Arnold', written in a cursive style.

David Arnold
General Manager