

Question on Notice
No.151
Asked on 28 February 2006

QUESTION:

MR FENLON asked the Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women (Ms Boyle)—

Will she describe the World Heritage Areas now declared in Queensland and what National Parks these areas encompass and further advise when each area gained World Heritage recognition and the number of visitors to these National Parks?

ANSWER:

There are 15 World Heritage properties in Australia set aside for their natural heritage values. Five of these properties are totally or partly located in Queensland. They are: the Great Barrier Reef, the Wet Tropics of Queensland, the Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves of Australia (known as CERRA), Fraser Island and the Australian Fossil Mammal Sites. There are more World Heritage properties in Queensland than any other State or Territory, and this is an appropriate and accurate reflection of the State's outstanding natural features.

You have sought some descriptive information on each property, including advice on national park areas that lie within the World Heritage property boundaries. I will address them in the order they were placed on the World Heritage List.

1. The Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area was listed in 1981 and is the largest property in the world, covering an area of approximately 343,800 square kilometres. It is larger than Italy and extends for 2,000 kilometres along the Queensland coast from Cape York to a line just north of Fraser Island. Approximately two million people visit the area annually.

A large component of the marine area is administered under the provisions of the Commonwealth *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, with day-to-day management being carried out primarily by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service officers. Part of the property is subject to State jurisdiction. The Great Barrier Reef Coast Marine Park is established under State legislation over Queensland tidal land and water.

Also, more than 900 islands form part of the World Heritage property. These include such well known locations as Magnetic, Hinchinbrook, Lizard, Heron, Green and Whitsunday Islands. More than 400 of the Barrier Reef islands have been set aside either totally or partly as national park. In many instances, island groups have been amalgamated into a single national park. On this basis, there are 53 national parks in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage property, some examples of which are Capricornia Cays National Park, Whitsunday Islands National Park and Family Islands National Park. A list of those parks is available for incorporation in Hansard.

2. The Central Eastern Rainforest Reserves (Australia) World Heritage property (CERRA) is located partly in Queensland and partly in New South Wales. It was first inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1986 and extended in 1994 to include the Queensland component of the property. It is not a continuous area, but consists of nearly 50 rainforest reserves, primarily national parks, with a latitudinal spread from Brisbane to Newcastle. Its total area is approximately 370,000 hectares.

The Queensland component is approximately 60,000 hectares, with the bulk of the land being in the following national parks: Springbrook, Lamington, Mt Chinghee, Mt Barney and Main Range. This part of CERRA receives in the vicinity of one million visits a year.

3. The Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage property, listed in 1988, covers an area of approximately 894,000 hectares and extends in a narrow band for 450 kilometres from Cooktown to Townsville. Its dense tropical rainforests have provided refuges for many animal species regarded as relicts of an ancient fauna dating back to when Australia was part of the supercontinent Gondwana. It has been estimated there are approximately 4.7 million visits per year to the 65 developed visitor sites within the property.

As a result of the Government's recent conversion of State forests in the Wet Tropics to national park, almost 80 percent of land in the property is national park. That percentage will increase in the near future as further national park gazettals are planned. All or part of 40 national parks presently lie within the World Heritage property. A list of those parks is available for incorporation in Hansard.

4. The Fraser Island World Heritage property has an area of 184,000 hectares and was listed in 1992. Fraser is the largest sand island in the world and its massive sand deposits are a continuous record of climatic and sea level changes over the past 700,000 years. There are 40 perched dune lakes, half the number of such lakes recorded in the world.

Approximately 340,000 people visit the island each year. Half of these are carried by commercial tour operators. The vast majority of land in the World Heritage property is part of Great Sandy National Park. Action is being taken to include the Cooloola component of that national park in an extended World Heritage property.

5. The Australian Fossil Mammal Sites World Heritage property was listed in 1994 and consists of two widely separated areas of fossilisation, one at Naracoorte in South Australia and the other at Riversleigh in the north-western corner of Queensland. Its total area is 10,300 hectares, with the Riversleigh component being 10,000 hectares.

The Riversleigh section is part of Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park. Visitor levels are not high, probably in the vicinity of 20,000 per year, as the fossils are more readily appreciated in museum displays following extraction and preparation. The extensive Riversleigh deposits are encased in rough limestone and provide a record of mammal evolution over at least 20 million years.

NATIONAL PARKS THAT ARE PART OF WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTIES

NATIONAL PARK NAME	WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY
Barnard Island Group National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Bolger Bay Conservation Park	Great Barrier Reef
Brampton Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Broad Sound Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Brook Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Cape Hillsborough National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Capricorn Coast National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Capricornia Cays National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Capricornia Cays National Park (Scientific)	Great Barrier Reef
Claremont Isles National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Cliff Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Curtis Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Denham Group National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Endeavour River National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Family Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Fitzroy Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Flinders Group National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Forbes Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Frankland Group National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Gloucester Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Goold Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Green Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Hinchinbrook Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Holbourne Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Hope Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Howick Group National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Jardine River National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Keppel Bay Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Keppel Bay Islands National Park (Scientific)	Great Barrier Reef
Lindeman Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Lizard Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Magnetic Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Michaelmas and Upolu Cays National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Molle Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Newry Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Northumberland Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Orpheus Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Percy Isles National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Piper Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Quoin Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Repulse Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Restoration Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Round Top Island National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Sandbanks National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Saunders Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Sir Charles Hardy Group National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Smith Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
South Cumberland Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Swain Reefs National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Three Islands Group National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Turtle Group National Park	Great Barrier Reef

West Hill National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Whitsunday Islands National Park	Great Barrier Reef
Great Sandy National Park	Fraser Island
Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park	Riversleigh
Barron Gorge National Park	Wet Tropics
Black Mountain National Park	Wet Tropics
Cedar Bay National Park	Wet Tropics
Clump Mountain National Park	Wet Tropics
Crater Lakes National Park	Wet Tropics
Curtain Fig National Park	Wet Tropics
Daintree National Park	Wet Tropics
Danbulla National Park	Wet Tropics
Danbulla National Park (Recovery)	Wet Tropics
Dinden National Park	Wet Tropics
Dinden National Park (Recovery)	Wet Tropics
Edmund Kennedy National Park	Wet Tropics
Ella Bay National Park	Wet Tropics
Girringun National Park	Wet Tropics
Grey Peaks National Park	Wet Tropics
Hull River National Park	Wet Tropics
Japoon National Park	Wet Tropics
Kirrama National Park	Wet Tropics
Kirrama National Park (Recovery)	Wet Tropics
Kuranda National Park	Wet Tropics
Kuranda National Park (Recovery)	Wet Tropics
Kurrimine Beach National Park	Wet Tropics
Malaan National Park	Wet Tropics
Moresby Range National Park	Wet Tropics
Mount Hypipamee National Park	Wet Tropics
Mount Mackay National Park	Wet Tropics
Mount Windsor National Park	Wet Tropics
Mount Windsor National Park (Recovery)	Wet Tropics
Mowbray National Park	Wet Tropics
Mowbray National Park (Recovery)	Wet Tropics
Murray Upper National Park	Wet Tropics
Paluma Range National Park	Wet Tropics
Russell River National Park	Wet Tropics
Tam O'Shanter National Park	Wet Tropics
Tully Falls National Park	Wet Tropics
Tully Falls National Park (Recovery)	Wet Tropics
Tully Gorge National Park	Wet Tropics
Tully Gorge National Park (Recovery)	Wet Tropics
Wooroonooran National Park	Wet Tropics
Wooroonooran National Park (Recovery)	Wet Tropics
Lamington National Park	CERRA
Main Range National Park	CERRA
Mount Barney National Park	CERRA
Mount Chinghee National Park	CERRA
Springbrook National Park	CERRA