

## Garrett moves to ease fears for Kimberley

**CHRIS JOHNSON**

Future National Heritage Listing of the West Kimberley should not affect pastoral land use, according to the Federal Government.

Environment Minister Peter Garrett was reacting to concerns that protection of up to 17 million hectares of the Kimberley would threaten the livelihoods of graziers responsible for 30 per cent of the State's beef production.

Pastoralists and Graziers Association spokesman Geoff Gare said last week that Mr Garrett would be a "goose" if he believed the Kimberley region in question was not already partly developed. He feared the listing would lock up the Kimberley.

But a spokesman for Mr Garrett said yesterday that before any decision about heritage listing for the area was made, there would be an extensive consultation period with a likely outcome not expected to affect the graziers adversely.

The assessment, by an independent heritage council, was part of a strategic assessment process undertaken by the State and Federal governments.

"This process is only just beginning and it is a requirement of that process that all landowners are consulted," he said. "This will involve detailed and lengthy consultation with all stakeholders, including pastoralists, indigenous owners and the community, which is not expected to be completed before mid 2010."