

MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND THE ARTS

(Senate Question No. 399)

Senator Siewert asked the Minister representing the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, upon notice, on 7 April 2008: In relation to the Burrup Peninsula in Western Australia:

- (1) Did the Minister receive correspondence and proposals from Mr Alex Leach, a resident of Western Australia, on or about July 2007 and, subsequently, in January 2008.
- (2) What issues were raised in each piece of correspondence and each proposal.
- (3) Does the Minister consider that these proposals have merit.
- (4) Is the Minister going to respond to the correspondence and proposals; if not, why not; if so, when can Mr Leach expect a response.

Senator Wong – The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts has provided the following answer to the honourable senator's question:

- (1) I am unable to comment on correspondence which may have been sent by Mr Leach in July 2007 to the former Government. I did receive correspondence from Mr Leach in January 2008.
- (2) Mr Leach submitted a proposal suggesting a program of activities relating to inventory, management and presentation of the rock art of the Dampier Archipelago and encouraged the Australian Government to consider World Heritage listing of the area.
- (3) Mr Leach's proposal is not inconsistent with the Australian Government's objectives for managing National Heritage places. Under Conservation Agreements between the Government and industry relating to the National Heritage values of the Dampier Archipelago, activities will be supported over the next ten years to identify sites with National Heritage values; present and transmit information about National Heritage values; manage National Heritage values to ensure they are conserved for future generations; and research and monitor National Heritage values.
- (4) My Department replied to Mr Leach on 21 April 2008, informing him that the department is working closely with Western Australian government agencies to develop an Indigenous Heritage Management Plan for the Dampier Archipelago and surrounds that will address the issues he raised.

Mr Leach was also advised that nominations by Australia to the World Heritage list are developed collaboratively by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments. At its meeting in June 2007 the Environment Protection and Heritage Council agreed to support the preparation by the Australian Government of a new Australian World Heritage Tentative List. The Australian Government invited state and territory governments to submit places for consideration for the Tentative List by June 2008. It was suggested to Mr Leach that he may wish to raise with the Western Australian Government the merits of including the Dampier Archipelago on the Tentative List.