



## Kimberley Land Council

**MEDIA RELEASE**

**26 April 2007**

### *Kimberley Land Council moves to protect Maret Island from disturbance*

The Kimberley Land Council on Friday (20 April) lodged an appeal with the Minister for the Environment in relation to a permit issued to gas development proponent Inpex to clear native vegetation on Maret Island.

“It is not appropriate that the EPA issue a native vegetation clearance permit for a pristine area with such high environmental, cultural, and heritage values,” said Wayne Bergmann, Executive Director of the Kimberley Land Council.

“The Kimberley Land Council calls on the State Government to halt further investigations into gas developments on Maret Island until there is agreement on how the long term effects can be assessed.”

“If current processes are allowed to proceed unchecked, they will create future liabilities for the State, and destroy one of Western Australia’s and Australia’s significant environmental assets,” said Mr Bergmann.

“It is disappointing that Inpex has engaged in ground disturbing activities on the island without an agreement with Traditional Owners.”

“On behalf of Traditional Owners KLC is seeking to establish an engagement process with the State. The aim of this is to minimise the amount of industrial development on the Kimberley coastline, and to ensure any development respects and protects cultural, heritage, and environmental issues,” said Mr Bergmann.

The Kimberley Land Council understands that two other appeals were also lodged. The permit to clear is deemed not to have been granted until any appeals are resolved, so Inpex does not currently have lawful authority to clear native vegetation on the Maret Island.

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#### BACKGROUND

The process in relation to determining the appeal is as follows.

- DEC will within 21 days provide a report to the Minister in relation to the issues raised in the appeals. The issues raised in the appeal may also be referred to other government agencies.
- Inpex will have 21 days to respond to the issues raised in the appeals. Inpex will be fully informed of the grounds on which appeals have been lodged.
- The Appeals Convenor (responsible for administration of appeals) will try to meet with the appellants and proponents – the time frame is between 2 and 6 weeks.
- The Appeals Convenor may also try to mediate the issues between the appellants and the permit holder.