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Land council clarifies mining royalties stance

The Kimberley Land Council has moved to clarify its stance on receiving royalties from resource development in the region.

The council's executive director, Wayne Bergmann, wants the public to remember that traditional owners are the rightful custodians of the land.

His comments follow a call from veteran broadcaster George Negus for the council to be cautious when negotiating royalty deals for oil and gas projects planned for the region.

Mr Bergmann is inviting Mr Negus to visit the Kimberley, in northern Western Australia, and says the council is not seeking economic gains at any cost.

He says Aborigines are capable of weighing up the opportunities development can offer.

Mr Negus has clarified his comments and says he is not opposed to development, but believes it needs to occur sustainably.

He recognises that traditional owners have every right to pursue royalties.

"They have their own integrity and their own rights where this is concerned. Obviously anybody who's involved in this campaign wants to hear what they've got to say," he said.