

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday 23rd of April 2003

Conservation Groups call on State and Commonwealth Governments to rule out landclearing on Cape York Peninsula.

The Wilderness Society, Queensland Conservation Council and the Cairns and Far North Environment Centre today called on the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments to rule out landclearing on Cape York Peninsula following yesterday's leak of the Commonwealth Government funded 'Terrestrial Biodiversity Audit'

The groups have called on Government's to heed the warnings contained in the report which identified landclearing as a key cause in the collapse of ecosystems across Australia.

The report identified areas that have not been cleared, such as Cape York Peninsula, offer the best change of protecting biodiversity.

Conservation groups have commissioned a major scientific submission to convince the Queensland Government to declare Cape York Peninsula a 'no clearing' zone to protect the outstanding biodiversity of the region. This report will be completed in the coming months and will be presented to the Queensland Government.

Conservation groups also believe that the State and Commonwealth Governments should ensure that negotiations aimed at developing the next stage of the Cape York Natural Heritage Trust Plan should include a commitment that landclearing is not allowed to expand onto Cape York Peninsula.

"Cape York Peninsula is one of the world's last great wilderness areas. The leak of the Terrestrial Biodiversity Audit provides a timely warning that clearing should not be permitted in Cape York Peninsula."

For further comment or information contact