



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett AM MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

PG/266

7 May 2009

A WORLD OF VALUE IN HERITAGE

A report into the economic activity of Australia's World Heritage properties released today by Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, Peter Garrett, highlights the value of these universally significant places to Australia's national, regional and local economies.

"Recent studies show our 17 World Heritage properties generate \$12 billion annually and support over 120,000 jobs across the country," Mr Garrett said

"This report, which looks at 15 of our 17 World Heritage properties, confirms the significant contribution our World Heritage properties make to our nation's economy, and demonstrates their importance to local jobs and tourism.

"We already knew some of our most iconic World Heritage places like the Great Barrier Reef and Sydney Opera House were of significant value to our economy, but this report gives us a better appreciation of just how important this contribution is. It shows even our less known places like the Australian Fossil Mammals Sites and Shark Bay make a considerable economic contribution to regional and local economies.

"The great thing is that the economic benefits of this tourism are spread throughout Australia, delivering substantial economic activity in regions within and surrounding the iconic places included on the World Heritage List.

"For example, the gross economic value of tourism in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area was estimated at \$426 million in 2007 while the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area in regional and remote Tasmania generates almost \$190 million each year.

"At a state and territory level, World Heritage properties were found to add considerable economic value. For example, the five World Heritage areas in New South Wales contribute approximately \$2 billion annually to the state's economy."

"This report highlights the need to maintain these assets of outstanding universal value and the Australian Government is committed to continuing to work with states, territories and communities to ensure the ongoing protection and identification of these outstanding places that we look after on behalf of all the people of the world.

"In addition to existing Commonwealth support for World Heritage properties, the recent announcement of \$60 million for heritage projects includes at least \$8.6 million for natural heritage places, particularly Australia's World Heritage sites.

"With this continued investment in our World heritage places, we will ensure the economic activity generated by these places is maintained into the future.

For more information on Australia's World Heritage properties and access to the economics report released today, visit www.heritage.gov.au