



Australian Government  
Director of National Parks

# MEDIA RELEASE

8 July 2009

## **ULURU DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN – CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Director of National Parks today invited public submissions on a draft plan to guide management over the next decade of one of Australia's most recognised international symbols, the iconic Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park.

On behalf of the park Board of Management, Director Peter Cochrane today released a draft management plan for a two month public comment period, before revision and presentation to the Australian Government Environment Minister and the Australian Parliament late this year.

"The traditional owners of Uluru, who have majority representation on the Board, agree that we are at a major crossroad in managing this jointly managed national park, so loved by so many Australians," Mr Cochrane said.

"We are confronting the impacts of climate change and invasive species. We also need to think beyond the global economic crisis to longer term visitor travel patterns – who are our next generation of visitors? What experiences are they are seeking and what can we offer?"

"Uluru was a touchstone for Aboriginal land rights as a result of the historic decision by the Hawke Government in 1985 to give the traditional owners title to their lands in return for agreeing to lease it back to be managed as a national park.

"It has since been globally acclaimed as a World Heritage Area for its natural and cultural values."

Uluru-Kata Tjuta is managed as a cultural landscape because of the thousands of years that it has shaped, and been shaped by, Aboriginal people. Their customs and beliefs underpin park management from traditional burning and protecting sacred sites, to keeping alive the stories that interpret its remarkable desert landscape.

Mr Cochrane said the draft plan presented the Board's views on how the park should be managed, but they wanted feedback on all its aspects.

"Too often we ask for public comment on the way we do our business and get a handful of responses," Mr Cochrane said.

"We want comment on how we propose to look after the environment. We want visitors and industry to tell us what activities and experiences we should offer, and what their priorities are.

"The Uluru climb continues to be a contentious issue with traditional owners and many park visitors. Should we close the climb for safety, environmental and cultural reasons - and if so, what alternative experiences should we offer?"

"Do they need more walks, more things to do at night or in the heat of the day? Do they want more contact with traditional owners and greater understanding of the natural and cultural dimensions of the park?"

**Comments are requested by Friday 4 September 2009: [Uluru.Plan@environment.gov.au](mailto:Uluru.Plan@environment.gov.au).**

The draft management plan is available at: [www.environment.gov.au/parks/publications/uluru/draft-plan.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/publications/uluru/draft-plan.html)  
For more information [www.environment.gov.au/parks/uluru](http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/uluru)