

6 November, 2008

Letter to the Editor Courier Mail "Terri Irwin calls on people power to fight Cape York bauxite mine" by Glenis Green 5 November, 2008-11-06

Dear Sir,

I wish to highlight seven factual errors in the captioned article, which is emotive, biased and misleading by not being based on any factual data.

### Factual Errors

- 1) "...it [Wenlock River] is fed from the perched springs on the bauxite." Not True. There are no perched springs on the bauxite. There are springs away from the bauxite and some distance from the proposed mining area. These are not "perched springs" they are "normal" springs. There are no perched springs on Bertiehaugh cattle station. The springs flow into the Wenlock River, but represent an extremely small part of the Wenlock flow and will be fully protected from any planned mining activities.
- 2) "The Bauxite acted like a sponge and absorbed water in the wet and then released it during the dry period,..." Not True. There is no evidence that the bauxite is the source of water feeding the Springs. Cape Alumina has installed a number of groundwater (hydrological) monitoring bores over the bauxite plateaus adjacent to the springs and will monitor the groundwater system over the next two years. Preliminary data, indicates the ground water aquifer feeding the springs lies well below the bauxite horizon.
- 3) "She said the Wenlock River, which ran through the Steve Irwin reserve,..." Not True. The Wenlock River does not run through the Steve Irwin Reserve, which is not a designated reserve but is a cattle station on a pastoral lease, known for the last hundred years as Bertiehaugh cattle station. The Wenlock River borders along one edge but is outside the Bertiehaugh Cattle station.
- 4) "The small mining company wants to go in and mine the bauxite and the bauxite perched springs are the only ones we can find of this kind in the country..." Not True, Cape Alumina has no plans to mine any springs. It is also Not True to say they are the only springs in the country. Dozens of similar springs have now been mapped in the region by wetland experts and they are often found around the margins of the plateaus.

- 5) "...you take the bauxite and you kill these springs." Not True. This claim is unsupported by any facts or scientific research. Cape Alumina is conducting the most comprehensive environmental impact study (EIS) ever undertaken in the area and one of the key outcomes of this EIS will be a detailed understanding of the linkages between the water table and the springs in the area. We believe there will be no impact from mining activities on the springs and our Environmental Management Plan will include full protection of the springs.
- 6) "...you need water – 20 million litres a day." Not True. The proposed mining and washing operation will use the most efficient water recycling technology available and will use significantly less than this.
- 7) "20 million litres a day is more than the entire city of Cairns uses even in the tourist season..." Not True. The minutes of the Cairns City Council Water Committee dated 19 November, 2002 reveal that at that time the average daily water consumption of Cairns was 82ML per day or more than four times the claimed amount, and this was not in the holiday season and has no doubt risen even further since 2002.

Cape Alumina has the highest standards of environmental management and is undertaking the most comprehensive environmental study ever undertaken in the area. This study will include a comprehensive environmental management plan to ensure the highest level of environmental protection and will include full rehabilitation of all mining areas in partnership with the traditional owners who have been custodians of this land for thousands of years. The EIS will be assessed by the Environmental Protection Authority prior to any decision to mine.

If developed, the Pisolite Hills project will generate 350 permanent full time jobs in an area that suffers from very high unemployment and is home to some of the most disadvantaged people in Australia. This project will contribute hundreds millions of dollars in taxes and royalties and a substantial, positive contribution to Australia's balance of trade.

Regards



CEO Cape Alumina