



Media release

The Honourable Andrew Cripps MP Minister for Natural Resources and Mines

Wik and Wik Way People's native title rights recognised

Queensland's most enduring Native Title claim has been finalised after the Federal Court today recognised the Wik and Wik Way People as native title holders of land in Far North Queensland.

Natural Resources and Mines Minister Andrew Cripps said the Queensland Government welcomed the decision – the 76th time that a native title determination had been reached in Queensland and the 70th by consent.

“This is a momentous occasion, recognising the Wik and Wik Way People's long and enduring connection with their traditional land,” Mr Cripps said.

“It means Australia's legal system formally acknowledges the rights of the native title claimants to camp, hunt, fish and gather in the area, maintain areas of significance and conduct ceremonies in accordance with their traditional laws and customs.

“Finalising this claim provides certainty for people with interests in the region by determining who the Native Title holders are and the extent of their rights and interests within the determination area.”

Mr Cripps said today's decision was the final stage of Queensland's longest running claim.

“This claim covers about 5184 square kilometres of land and waters and includes land on the western side of Cape York Peninsula between Weipa and Aurukun,” he said.

“The original claim was lodged in 1994 and partial determinations were made in October 2000, October 2004 and July 2009.

“Today's determination means the Wik & Wik Way People now have Native Title over 19,672 square kilometres of land between Embley River and Edward River and west of the Peninsula Development Road.”

Mr Cripps said achieving the consent determination required extensive consultation and negotiation between a number of parties and I congratulate all involved for their hard work and commitment to the Native Title process.

“The Queensland Government will continue to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to advance reconciliation and recognise native title holders in our state.”

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