



Kimberley Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

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Native title interests honoured in new Sheffield agreement

The Kimberley Land Council has welcomed last week's announcement that Mount Jowlaenga Traditional Owners and Sheffield Resources have reached a formal native title agreement in relation to the proposed Thunderbird project.

The agreement will provide the Traditional Owners with heritage and environmental protection oversight and will deliver employment and contracting opportunities. In addition, the agreement will deliver \$150 million of compensation to Traditional Owners over the lifetime of the mine, which is predicted to operate for at least 42 years with a projected total revenue of \$13 billion.

Mr Garstone said the outcome is a positive step forward for Traditional Owners who have been calling for a native title agreement in relation to the mineral sands mine project for the past four years.

"This is a long awaited but positive result for the Mount Jowlaenga Traditional Owners," Mr Garstone said.

"No project that impacts peoples' country, and their native title rights and interests for generations to come, should ever go ahead without an appropriate agreement.

"Native title should not be a barrier to development, but an opportunity to engage and work with Traditional Owners to create a meaningful partnership."

Last week's announcement comes following more than four years of negotiations and court hearings, including a Full Federal Court decision in favour of the Traditional Owners, which set a precedent in native title law in regards to the good faith negotiation obligation under the Native Title Act.

"I congratulate the Traditional Owners and Sheffield Resources for working together to reach this agreement," Mr Garstone said.

"This outcome would not have been possible without the continuing commitment of KRED Enterprises and Arma Legal who have represented the Mount Jowlaenga Traditional Owners in this matter.

"The Kimberley is known for its strong agreements and the Kimberley Land Council will continue to advocate for native title agreements that benefit and meet the interests of Traditional Owners."