



Save the Nature of the Kimberley

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KIMBERLEY
INC



AUSTRALIAN
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION

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ATTENTION: News Editors, Political, Resource and Environment Reporters

Water Forum provides opportunity to discuss future of Fitzroy River

Environs Kimberley (EK) and the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) are delighted to be participating in the Kimberley Water Forum being held in Broome over the next two days and welcome the opportunity to talk about the future of the Fitzroy River.

Kimberley Freshwater Campaigner, Dr Gary Scott, will tell the forum about the campaign being run by EK and ACF to secure legal protection for the Fitzroy River's superb natural and cultural values by 2010.

At the Kimberley Appropriate Economies Roundtable, held in Fitzroy Crossing in 2005, traditional landowners, Indigenous groups, pastoralists, environmentalists, academics and others identified long term legal protection of the Fitzroy River as a key feature that should guide future economic development in the region.

Dr Scott said: "Much more needs to be done to ensure environmentally and culturally destructive proposals, such as a dam or a pipeline to transport Fitzroy River water to Perth, never go ahead.

"We encourage the WA Government to build on the strong foundation for regional water planning that will be set by this Water Forum, which brings together so many people from around the Kimberley.

"The WA Government needs to explore ways in which the state water reform process and proposed new water legislation can provide long-term legal protection for the Fitzroy River. At the same time Traditional Owners' rights and interests in water must be fully recognised and accommodated.

"Friday is also the International Day of Action for Rivers. It's a reminder that we cannot afford to let largely unmodified rivers like the Fitzroy go the way of the Murray-Darling and the Mississippi," said Dr Scott.

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