

# News Release

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Premier Mike Rann

Hon Paul Caica

Minister for Environment and  
Conservation

ARKAROOOLA - Sunday, 16 October 2011

## **BILL TO PROTECT ARKAROOOLA FOREVER**

Premier Mike Rann today released draft legislation that will ban all types of mining, including subsurface mining, in Arkaroola forever.

He has also begun the formal process of applying for National and World Heritage listing.

Mr Rann, who was joined by Minister for Environment and Conservation Paul Caica in Arkaroola, said he would introduce the special purpose legislation this week to protect the cultural, natural and landscape values of Arkaroola in perpetuity.

“Arkaroola is one of the most spectacular areas in the world. It features unique biodiversity and has an abundance of national and state conservation rated species, and it is also a significant place for the Adnyamathanha People whose connections with this land remain strong,” Mr Rann said.

“Arkaroola is defined by towering granite peaks, razor back ridges, and deep gorges, encompassing ancient sea beds which hold fossils that are up to 650 million years old. It is also home to more than 160 species of birds, and the rare Yellow-footed Rock-wallaby.

“After extensive consultation showing there was overwhelming support to protect Arkaroola the State Government made the decision to give the area the highest level of protection that can be afforded by the Parliament of South Australia.

“The legislation that I am introducing this week - The *Arkaroola Protection Bill 2011* - will protect the cultural, natural and landscape values of a defined area to be known as the Arkaroola Protection Area, and will exclude exploration and all forms of mining.

“The legislation will also ensure that any future development in the area is done in a way that the protection of these values is the highest consideration.

“While the State Government is unashamedly pro-mining, we have determined that the unique nature of Arkaroola justifies the decision to ban mining here and this bill will ensure that all types of mining, including subsurface mining, are banned in the Arkaroola Protection Area.”

Mr Rann said much progress has been made since he announced on July 22 that mining would be banned in Arkaroola.

“As an interim measure, the Governor of South Australia removed Arkaroola from operation under the Mining Act, preventing future exploration and mining titles being granted in the area,” he said.

“I have also written to the Prime Minister Julia Gillard signalling our intention to have Arkaroola listed on Australia’s National Heritage List and subsequently the World Heritage List.

“As a precursor to these National and World Heritage nominations, we also recently nominated Arkaroola to be assessed for its State heritage significance and I am pleased to say that on 12 October the South Australian Heritage Council provisionally listed Arkaroola on the State Heritage Register.”

Mr Caica said the Bill will ensure the Arkaroola Protection Area will meet international and national standards for what is defined as a ‘protected area’.

“The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has devised a series of protected area management categories, which are recognised by the Convention on Biological Diversity as a way of categorising the incredible variety of protected area management types in the world,” Mr Caica said.

“This Bill is unique in enabling us to establish the Arkaroola Protection Area with a high legal status, as well as being internationally recognised as a protected area.”

Mr Caica said the native title rights of the Adnyamathanha People will be fully respected by this legislation and Aboriginal heritage will be able to continue to be protected.

“The Bill has a specific provision to support the conservation of objects, places or features of cultural value to the Adnyamathanha People and the legislation will continue to support the determined native title rights of the Adnyamathanha.

“The Adnyamathanha will also be involved in developing the management plan for the area.”

Mr Rann said since coming to power in 2002, the State Government has made an unprecedented contribution to protecting South Australia’s unique environment.

“We know that a healthy and diverse natural environment is crucial to our social and economic well-being and through our *No Species Loss* strategy the State Government is working to halt, and where possible, reverse the decline in the state's land, aquatic and marine plants and animals,” Mr Rann said.

“In the past nine years the State Government has created 51 new parks, and made additions to 36 other parks and the public protected area system now covers 21 million hectares or 21 per cent of the state.

“South Australia now has 13 wilderness protection areas, taking the total amount of land afforded the highest level of protection to 950,000ha.

“When the Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area is proclaimed in the coming months this will increase to more than 1.8 million hectares, representing a 26 fold increase in the amount of wilderness protection area proclaimed since the Labor Government came to power in 2002.”