

ARKAROOKA WILDERNESS SANCTUARY



From the ARK Update 17/12/09

LANDSCAPE QUALITY ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

Thank goodness medical, aviation, defence, and agricultural science does not use the same 'scientific' instruments as those used by policy makers from South Australia's lead environment agency !

The South Australian Government commissioned Scenic Solutions to undertake an independent landscape assessment of the Northern Flinders Ranges, as part of the *Seeking a Balance* framework. This involved online public surveys to establish and rank landscape values, based on a selection of landscape images. Defenders of the methodology claim it was good science, "a robust, reliable and effective process". Yet forty-two percent of respondents who commented on the survey made reference to poor quality images, with some raising concerns about the veracity of the process and results. Is it good science to explain away the concerns of 287 out of 683 respondents as 'noise'? What role did memory, familiarity or lack of it, aesthetic sensibility, patience or lack of it, perceptions about the intent of the survey, have upon the manner in which respondents completed the survey?

The following quotes have been taken from **Flinders Ranges Report 7 Appendixes pdf**, <http://scenicsolutions.com.au/Attached%20PDFs/Flinders%20R%20Report%207%20Appendixes.pdf>

Your survey will be biased because of the variable quality of the photographs.

Surely less images of high quality are needed and a repeat survey. Feel this can't be taken seriously.

There are too many slides to get a considered response, at the end you just want the survey to finish.

I highly recommend not to take the results serious(ly) and do it again, professionally.

...bad images are bad scenes.

I wouldn't be surprised if the quality of some of the photos skews their ratings. Have fun with the analysis.

Over the period of the scoring I am sure I had a complete lack of consistency.

I couldn't help but vote down the poorer quality photos.

Not sure if the survey was about images or about the Flinders Ranges itself.

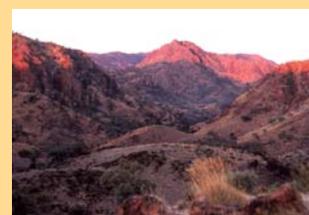
I found my parameters of judgement changing . . . is this a well taken photograph—and—would I like to be there.

Maybe the disclaimer about the inferior quality slide reproductions could have been included at the beginning along with an encouragement for us to assess the scenery, not just the picture.

I would have thought if the survey was so important an effort would have been made to get up to date digital images.

I would also be interested to see some public feedback on the findings of this survey and exactly what it is helping to map/record.

You can also download the pdf with all the survey images, their ratings and comments from 683 respondents, at www.savearkaroola.com.au
www.arkaroola.com.au/breakingnews.php



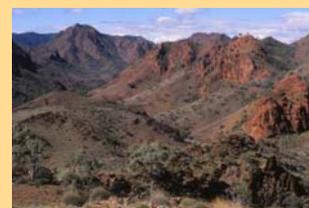
At last light



During drought



Midday - intense light



Scanned slide - after good rains

Four views of the headwaters of Yudnamutana Gorge.

Would you score them equally?

NORTHERN FLINDERS RANGES

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA