Kakadu: A Shared Vision and Mutual Obligation

The Federal Government’s Morse report and its tourism strategies for Kakadu serve to highlight the shortcomings of the Territory Government’s own Masterplan for our parks estate, CLP Shadow Tourism Minister Terry Mills said today.

“Tourism has been given scant regard in the Martin Government’s Masterplan for the future use of the Territory’s Park’s and the Martin Government would do well to look to the Morse report for guidance in the future,” Mr Mills said.

“Kakadu National Park could become the role model for tourism in other parks.

“The CLP Opposition welcomes the release of the Morse Report, ‘A Shared Vision for Tourism’. The report provides an insightful and realistic analysis of the challenges facing Kakadu and describes appropriate strategies and poses a number of innovative recommendations.

“Unlike the Territory Government’s Parks Masterplan Document the Morse Report focuses on tourism as the industry central to achieving core economic and social objectives.

“With the will of government this report could move us beyond describing problems to achieving real progress. We all have a mutual obligation to ensuring this is the case. “

Mr Mills said the report sets out a new and welcome approach to capitalising on an asset that could produce a far better return for all Territorians.

“Ultimately of course the shared vision should also include the transfer of Kakadu from Commonwealth to Territory control,” he said.

“Tourists are over ‘Crocodile Dundee’ and want more than waterfalls and scenery.

“New attractions that appeal to the wealthy but time poor tourist must be created. The modern tourist seeks authentic and individual experiences so recommendations such as walking trails and cabins, night wildlife tours and low impact eco-camping are welcome.

“Tour operators must have more secure tenure by extending and strengthening the permit system. By encouraging joint venture partnerships with Traditional Owners solutions could be found to use the vast sections of the park that are currently under-utilised. “

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