

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications**  
**Legislation Committee**  
Answers to questions on notice  
**Environment portfolio**

**Question No:** 26  
**Hearing:** Additional Estimates  
**Outcome:** Outcome 5  
**Programme:** Wildlife Heritage and Marine Division  
**Topic:** Royal National Park World Heritage Nomination  
**Hansard Page:** N/A  
**Question Date:** 04 March 2014  
**Question Type:** Written

**Senator Rhiannon asked:**

Last year in a Senate motion the government affirmed its commitment to supporting the nomination of the Royal National Park to the World Heritage list, and to "a thorough investigation of the park's potential for inclusion on the World Heritage List". Given that places to be nominated to the World Heritage list must be included in that country's Tentative List at least one year prior to the Nomination being submitted in order to be considered the following year:

1. Has the Royal National Park been submitted to the Tentative List yet?
2. If not why not – especially given the Tentative List "should not be considered exhaustive" and is non-binding?
3. If not, is there still a commitment to submitting the Royal National Park and its surrounds to the Tentative List?
4. Will the three associated areas - Garawarra State Conservation Area, Heathcote National Park and the Royal Reserves – be included on the Tentative List? If not, why not?
5. What are the steps in the process to advance this nomination for World Heritage listing, and what has the government done in each step so far, detailing milestones and dates?
6. May I be reassured that the community group driving this project, First National Park, is kept informed and that their queries be answered, as has not been happening?

**Answer:**

1. A Tentative List submission for Royal National Park and adjoining reserves has not been submitted to the World Heritage Centre.

On 31 January 2014, the Minister for the Environment, Mr Hunt, wrote to the World Heritage Centre to advise that the Australian Government intended to submit a potential world heritage nomination for Royal National Park and adjoining reserves. Minister Hunt also outlined in the letter that the New South Wales Government would be leading the world heritage assessment and that the Australian Government would provide support to the state in preparing the necessary documentation.

2. The 2009 *Australian World Heritage Intergovernmental Agreement* (the Agreement) sets out the roles and responsibilities of the Commonwealth and states to ensure that Australia meets its international obligations for the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of Australia's cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value.

The Agreement requires states to consult with the Commonwealth and use their best endeavours to obtain agreement on properties for inclusion on Australia's World Heritage Tentative List.

3. On 4 March 2014, Minister Hunt wrote to his counterpart in the New South Wales Government to provide guidance on the preparation of a Tentative List submission including the types of information that need to be included in the documentation.
4. The New South Wales Government is gathering the necessary documentation for a tentative list submission, including a boundary which may include the Garawarra State Conservation Area, Heathcote National Park and the Royal Reserves.
5. The next steps are for the New South Wales Government to gather the necessary information for a Tentative List Submission. There is currently no timeframe on this process. The New South Wales Government will have to consult with local government bodies and interested groups (including Indigenous, conservation and industry groups) prior to submission to the Commonwealth. The Australian Government will then need to consult with the states and territories and use its best endeavours to obtain agreement on the inclusion of Royal National Park on Australia's World Heritage Tentative List. Once there is agreement, a Tentative List Submission can be prepared and submitted to the World Heritage Centre for the World heritage Committee's consideration.
6. The New South Wales Government is responsible for consulting with all relevant local groups that may have an interest, including the First National Park group.