

NEWS RELEASE

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BHP BILLITON LAUNCHES FIVE RIVERS CONSERVATION PROJECT

BHP Billiton today launched the Five Rivers Conservation Project in partnership with the Tasmanian Land Conservancy and Conservation International, pledging A\$13.4 million for conservation and ongoing management of 11,000 hectares of land in Tasmania, Australia.

The land, near Cradle Mountain and Lake St Clair, incorporates areas that are covered by the Tasmanian World Heritage area including old growth forests, wild rivers, and alpine wetlands.

It includes habitat to a number of endangered species, including the Tasmanian devil, Tasmanian wedge-tailed eagle, spotted-tailed quoll, Clarence galaxias, Miena cider gum and grassland paper daisy.

BHP Billiton's President, HSEC, Marketing and Technology, Mike Henry officially launched the project alongside the Tasmanian Land Conservancy's CEO, Jane Hutchinson, at BHP Billiton's headquarters at 171 Collins Street, Melbourne.

"BHP Billiton is committed to operating sustainably – it is one of Our Charter values. Improving our management of land, enhancing biodiversity and contributing to enduring benefits is essential to operating in a responsible and sustainable manner," Mr Henry said.

"Over a three-year period, our investment of A\$13.4 million in the Five Rivers Conservation Project, will allow for secure, permanent conservation status for the land, and create an endowment for the long-term management of the property.

"This is our contribution to conserving this important area of national environmental heritage, in a way that complements our Australian presence and commitment to Sustainability."

Mr Henry said the project was in addition to the Company's business as usual approach to managing its environmental impacts.

"We acknowledge that the very nature of our operations means we will have impacts on the environment. So at every operation, regardless of location, it's a core business requirement to implement Land and Biodiversity Management Plans that include controls to prevent, minimise, rehabilitate and offset, as appropriate, impacts to biodiversity – this is part of our public biodiversity target," Mr Henry said.

"In addition to the biodiversity target we have also established a conservation target. This will see BHP Billiton finance the conservation and ongoing management of areas of national and international biodiversity and ecosystem value – such as the Five Rivers Conservation Project."

The conservation work will be largely supported by the five-year alliance established in the 2012 financial year between Conservation International and BHP Billiton.

Jane Hutchinson, CEO of the Tasmanian Land Conservancy thanked BHP Billiton for its support.

“We congratulate BHP Billiton for their leadership in investing in long-term conservation management of an internationally significant area and encourage other corporations to follow their lead,” Ms Hutchinson said.

“This global partnership is a big step towards achieving our vision for Tasmania to be a world leader in nature conservation and sustainability. The Five Rivers Conservation Project is globally significant because it truly manages this very important area for conservation in the long term and at a landscape scale.”

Further information on BHP Billiton can be found at: www.bhpbilliton.com.

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