

16th February 2024

LETTER OF SUPPORT: WOOROORA STATION WIND FARM, RAVENSHOE

The Hon. Tanya Plibersek
Minister for the Environment & Water
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister Plibersek,

The Reef & Rainforest Research Centre Limited (*a not-for-profit member-based organisation dedicated to build the scientific knowledge base to underpin the conservation and sustainable development agenda in Tropical Queensland and beyond*) expresses our support of the Wooroora Station Wind Farm Project in Ravenshoe.

The Reef & Rainforest Research Centre Limited (RRRC) acknowledges the comprehensive assessment and iterative design process that considers and avoids impacts to the maximum extent achievable. Consultation and engagement with stakeholders has been thorough by the proponents Ark Energy and that has built an understanding of the project and social license.

There has been a considered and measurable response to findings and feedback to develop workable compromises with meaningful benefit for all parties. And, there is clear investment and collaboration on strategies and commitments for repair and rehabilitation of the site where clearing is required.

Importantly, it is also noted that there are comprehensive and strategic offsets with management regimes (weed, fire, feral pests) to improve habitat as a direct result of the Wooroora Station Wind Farm Project.

A capital investment of \$700m, including an estimated \$200m direct and indirect expenditure in the region is significant and an investment in the community is very welcome. The creation of 250-300 jobs during the construction period and 15-20 ongoing full-time jobs for maintenance and operation is also welcomed.

Most importantly, is the financial, training and employment benefits for First Nations Peoples through the Jirrbal Peoples Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) and nature positive plan is commendable.

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Ark Energy's contribution to capacity building and opportunities for ecological rehabilitation / restoration projects is exciting as is the Community Benefit Program of \$500,000 p.a. (indexed to CPI) from the start of construction and for the life of the wind farm. Not to mention the significant positive impacts this project will assist in transitioning to a greener energy future with:

- ~ 294 MW towards Queensland's renewable energy targets and to put downward pressure on electricity prices.
- Nature positive plan to achieve conservation benefits for key species and net gains for biodiversity.

The RRRC wholeheartedly supports the Wooroora Station Wind Farm Project in the Far North Queensland community and encourages the Federal Government to approve this large scale project for our region.

Yours sincerely



Sheriden Morris

Managing Director

Reef & Rainforest Research Centre Limited

Cc: Federal Government Representatives, Queensland State Government and Tablelands Regional Council

The Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC) is a not-for-profit member-based organisation comprising research institutions, tourism industries, natural resource management agency, and conservation organisations dedicated to build the scientific knowledge base to underpin the conservation and sustainable development agenda in Tropical Queensland and beyond. The RRRC is a registered charitable trust and is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR).

The RRRC works at the intersection of conservation, Government policy development and community economic development in the tropics, providing services and promoting innovative solutions and community wellbeing. The RRRC aims to translate science-based ecological knowledge into improved environmental outcomes, increased local and regional wealth and to create regional jobs.

The results of the RRRC are already being used by more than 38 organisations including the Australian and Queensland Governments, regional natural resource management groups, local governments, tourism industry, agricultural groups, fishing industry, conservation organisations and Indigenous bodies.