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HOME LATEST VIDEO CRICKET NEWS SPORT BUSINESS POLITICS OPINIO

BUSINESS > AGRICULTURE

Hancock calls for more Kimberley support

Jenne Brammer The West Australian

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 Gina Rinehart has invested heavily in northern Australian pastoral interests.



Gina Rinehart's Hancock Agriculture has hailed a recent CSIRO report as the blueprint for a sustainable future in northern Australia, pledged to invest capital and urged the McGowan Government to get on with supporting the Kimberley's development.

Hancock Agriculture chief executive David Larkin said the group was keen to invest in developing northern Australia, while adopting environmental and culturally

sustainable principles.

Hancock Agriculture finally broke its silence on the high-profile CSIRO report, released in September, after the State Government announced this week that it had appointed Bardy McFarlane as an expert stakeholder convener to help guide delivery of its election commitments to create the Fitzroy River National Park and develop a management plan for the Fitzroy River.

Hancock Agriculture welcomed Mr McFarlane's appointment, adding the CSIRO report dealt with the issues and allowed all parties to move forward.

The report outlined how, by using water resources, the Kimberley could be the State's next agricultural hub, supporting thousands of jobs and a \$1 billion-plus crop industry.

"The time for talking and studying is over," Mr Larkin said.

"The best science minds in the country have provided the blueprint so let's do it."

Mr Larkin said without sustainable development that encompassed environmental sustainability, cultural rights and economic development, there was a risk that creating a government-subsided park that created only three jobs and cost taxpayers millions of dollars would not help anyone, particularly local Aboriginal people.

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