

Federal Court Allows Jabiluka Challenge

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The Federal Court today allowed Commonwealth environmental approval for the Jabiluka uranium mine to be challenged by the Mirrar people.

The Commonwealth and Energy Resources of Australia had argued that none of the decisions leading to environmental approval for the Jabiluka Mill Alternative were reviewable by the Courts.

However in a judgement handed down today, the Federal Court's Justice Sundberg found that the Mirrar could challenge the decision by the Minister for Resources and Energy to grant ERA environmental approval for the Jabiluka Mill Alternative.

Executive Officer of the Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation, Jacqui Katona said today:

"Investors in the Jabiluka Project should start jumping ship. ERA has been refused Traditional Owner consent to process Jabiluka ore at its Ranger mine and now Commonwealth approval for the economically and environmentally dubious Jabiluka Mill Alternative will be challenged in the Federal Court."

"It is likely that ERA's headlong rush to construct the Jabiluka tunnel will be a complete waste of their shareholder's money."

However Ms Katona saved her most vehement criticism for the Commonwealth Environment Minister, Senator Robert Hill.

"Robert Hill has stood back and watched ERA's construction activities desecrate sacred sites in the absence of any cultural assessment and in breach of his own recommendations. He has allowed ERA to build a tunnel without any certainty that ERA will be able to proceed with an operational mine."

"He has been the architect of one of the world's worst acts of cultural and environmental vandalism," Ms Katona concluded.