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Media Release

Lucky Friday for Australia's Heritage – Australia ICOMOS warmly welcomes \$60 Million Economic Stimulus Package funding for Heritage

Australia ICOMOS warmly welcomes the announcement of \$60 million for job-creating projects for Australia's natural and built heritage, such as historic buildings and national parks.

The funding is part of the \$42 billion economic stimulus package, and is part of the amendments negotiated by the Greens, and agreed by the Government.

Australia ICOMOS President Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy said,

“This is a great outcome for Australia's heritage. Commonwealth funding for historic heritage has dwindled alarmingly over recent years. Prior to this announcement we were facing a reality which had no prospect of increased Commonwealth funding for the thousands of heritage places in Australia which the community expects to be conserved. This outcome is a tribute to the Greens who raised this issue, and marks a significant commitment of the Rudd Government to Australia's cultural heritage.”

A letter from Treasurer Swan to Greens Leader Bob Brown tabled yesterday noted,

“The government is further prepared to quarantine 60 million for projects involving the preservation of:

- National heritage-listed buildings and historic properties managed by the National Trust,
- Community heritage projects including locally significant buildings, and
- Natural heritage projects such as walking trails and upgrade of public spaces.”

This is a substantial investment but more needs to be done to secure ongoing funding. No detail is yet available as to how this funding will be allocated across the three areas listed, however Australia ICOMOS argues that Australia's natural heritage already receives a comparatively large proportion of the heritage budget. Therefore, we argue that the bulk of funds should target Australia's desperately under-funded historic or built heritage.

Australia ICOMOS is a non-government professional organisation concerned with the conservation of Australia's cultural heritage.

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