

# 1 PER CENT

## Impact on iron ranges 'minimal'

VIVIENNE RYAN

MINING on the Mid West's iron ore ranges will impact on just one per cent of the targeted land, says the Geraldton Iron Ore Alliance.

The alliance has hit back with new research at the State Government, saying only a small percentage of the

contentious banded iron formations will be affected by mining.

"This information puts in perspective the total area presently proposed for mining projects," alliance deputy chairman Rob Jefferies said.

"Even if all current proposals gain environmental approval and mining doubles over the coming 50

or 60 years, iron ore mines within the BIFs (banded iron formations) are still unlikely to impact on more than 1.5 per cent of the ranges." The revelation comes after the Government released a strategic review on mining in the Mid West,

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# Iron ore mining impact just 1pc

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which called for 15 to 30 per cent of the Mid West BIF ranges to be protected in nature reserves.

The Mid West mining industry has come under scrutiny from the Government, triggering debate involving drought-affected shires, mining companies, environmentalists and the State Government.

In a visit to Geraldton last week Planning and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan warned the Mid West to be realistic about the iron ore industry.

She cast a shadow over the

alliance's contention that the iron ore trade would be a saviour to the Mid West, offering 4254 jobs a year over 25 years.

"Mining does not supply long-term jobs," she said. "We want greater security for the Mid West. We should try and develop complexity in the economy."

Although she acknowledged iron ore was the product to take the Mid West "further", she urged the region not to be blind to global markets.

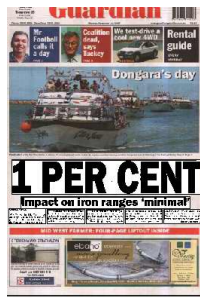
"It is clear that the Chinese market is very strong but we need

to recognise challenges in China," she said. "We have a fantastic market relationship with China but should not look at it as an extraordinary magic pudding."

China is Australia's biggest export customer and much Mid West iron ore has been earmarked for the Chinese.

Mr Jefferies said that by quantifying the size of the land to be mined, people could see environmental protection of the BIF ranges need not hold back the economic and social benefits the industry can bring.

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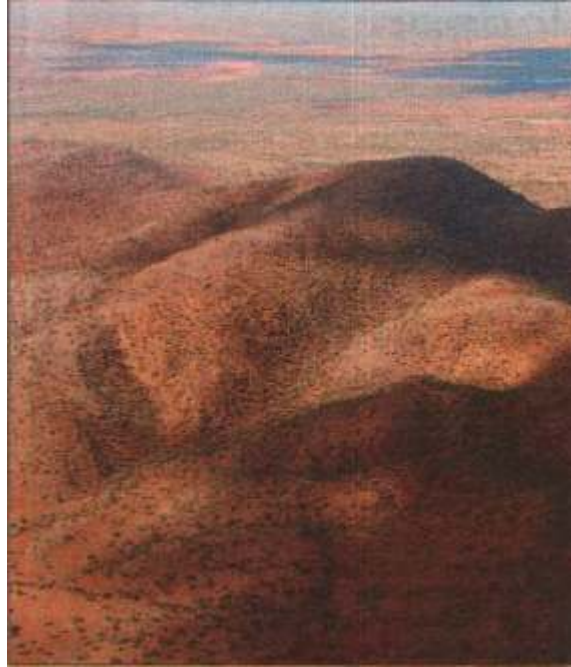
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A section of the Mid West banded iron formation ranges, near Jack Hills.