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The bulletin is a collation of documents taken from the media and from other sources. It does not contain information provided by the National Native Title Tribunal, unless indicated.

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Indigenous fishing in the news

November 2007

QLD: Elders angered by fishing net ban 05/11/2007

Darumbal elder Dean Edmund said the Rockhampton Indigenous community was incensed by local member Robert Schwarten's determination to stop traditional owners using fishing nets in the Fitzroy River.

Mr Edmund said only six local fishermen used nets and only three used them in the river.

Mr Schwarten said he wanted to stop Indigenous fishermen "snubbing their noses" at the community by using nets.

"It's not about denying Aboriginal rights, it's about ensuring that barramundi is sustainably harvested."

"Until such time as there is a recognition that there is a sustainability issue at stake here, all the talking in the world is not going to resolve this issue," he said.

Sources: *Morning Bulletin*, p3 05/11/2007

QLD: Ban on illegal fishing in the Fitzroy River 07/11/2007

The Queensland Government is determined to crack down on illegal fishing and the use of unlicensed commercial nets in the Fitzroy River.

Queensland Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries Tim Mulherin said anyone who breached the Fisheries Act would be prosecuted.

“(I am) well aware of the community’s concern in relation to some traditional fishing practices particularly in the Fitzroy River,” he said.

However, he said the government had a responsibility to ensure our fisheries were equitably managed while continuing to recognise the rights of Indigenous people.

Source: *Morning Bulletin*, p5 07/11/2007

National: \$5.5 million for Indigenous water initiatives 14/11/2007

The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) has been awarded \$5.5 million by the National Water Commission to support its Indigenous Water Policy Group and the Indigenous Community Water Facilitator Network.

NAILSMA promotes strategic community-driven approaches to water management in northern Australia.

It is a partner agency of the Tropical Savannas CRC hosted by Charles Darwin University (CDU).

CDU Vice Chancellor, Professor Helen Garnett welcomed the funding.

“As a nation, Australia has few more pressing issues than the crisis in water supplies. I am particularly pleased to see the research components in these grants which will enhance understanding of Indigenous interests in water resources,” Professor Garnett said.

Source: NAILSMA, 14/11/2007

QLD: Tribal ID to help monitor illegal hunting 19/11/2007

The Kuku Yalanji people of north Queensland have introduced Australia’s first tribal identity card to help stop Indigenous people from other tribes plundering their traditional hunting grounds.

The system was introduced following an increase in discarded turtle and dugong carcasses and information that Indigenous people were travelling hundreds of kilometres to hunt in Kuku Yalanji traditional waters.

“It’s very hard to enforce our hunting rights, so we’ve introduced the cards. The goal is to have a system where only card-carriers can hunt in our waters,” Kuku Yalanji community leader Linc Walker said.

The Kuku Yalanji has exclusive hunting rights over their land and waters. They also have self-imposed hunting regulations to use only traditional hunting weapons and to restrict takes to one animal.

Sources: *Australian*, p 2 19/11/2007

QLD: Divided views on 'wild rivers' protection 19/11/2007

Divisions in the Indigenous community have emerged following claims that protection of Cape York's wild rivers will hinder plans to decrease Aboriginal dependency on welfare.

Aboriginal leaders have disputed claims made by Aboriginal spokesman Noel Pearson that Indigenous people oppose the Queensland Government's wild rivers legislation. Mr Pearson said the legislation would lock up 90 per cent of the cape from development, denying jobs to Aboriginal people.

However, North Queensland Land Council chairman Terry O'Shane said he supported the legislation.

"I don't agree with Noel, I think it's very important that we protect these eco-systems," Mr O'Shane said.

He said ecotourism on the Cape would be boosted, providing better job opportunities than mining and other developments that would damage the environment.

Source: *Australian*, p6 19/11/2007

Queensland: ALP pledges funding to strengthen marine park partnerships 18/11/2007

Ten million dollars has been pledged by the Australian Labor Party to fund a land and sea country Indigenous partnership program.

The program is part of the Labor Party's Great Barrier Reef rescue plan. It follows the model of the sea rangers program being used in the Northern Territory.

In addition to the \$10 million, the ALP has pledged extra funding to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to strengthen partnerships with Indigenous communities.

Source: *3RRR FM Melbourne*, 18/11/2007

October 2007

QLD: Buyback of licences to assist Torres Strait fishing industry 23/10/2007

Both Labor and the Coalition have made commitments to re-structure the Torres Strait fishing industry by buying back commercial fishing licences.

The Labor party have pledged \$7.5 million on a voluntary buyback of the licences, which would then be re-allocated to traditional owners through the Torres Strait Regional Authority.

Queensland Seafood Industry Association President Neil Green has welcomed the move, but says the Opposition might need to put more money on the table. "I think it would be closer to \$11 million than what it would be to \$7.5 million," he said. "We think it's essential that this happens mainly because of the onshore businesses around the Cairns area that rely very heavily on the mackerel catches from that area."

Source: *ABC Western Queensland* 121.16pm 22/10/2007.

QLD: Traditional hunting to be monitored in Cape York 11/10/2007

Aboriginal elders from Cape York have joined other traditional owners in a fight to stop the slaughter of turtle and dugong under the guise of traditional hunting rights. Girrigun Aboriginal Corporation chairman John Andy has requested a system similar to that used by the Kuku Yalanji people, where elders decide who is allowed to take a turtle or dugong and punish those who abuse the right.

"There are a lot of young people who have lost our culture," Mr Andy said.

Opponents to traditional hunting say many are shooting dugongs and using outboard motors to catch turtles.

The issue has been addressed at the National Indigenous and Sea management conference being held in Cardwell, North Queensland.

Indigenous communities from Mission Beach to Ingham have also signed off on the nation's first Traditional Use Marine Resources Agreement with the State and Federal governments.

Source: *Port Douglas and Mossman Gazette*, p1 11/10/2007

Further information: *The Courier Mail*, p7 09/10/2007

NATIONAL: Indigenous community offers environmental wisdom 09/10/2007

Traditional owners want the Federal Government to use their land and sea knowledge to help deal with threats to coastal sustainability.

An alliance of northern Australian land councils said Indigenous custodians should be used by the Government to combat climate change and international fish poachers.

Northern Australia Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance chair, Peter Yu said it was time for Indigenous people to push for more responsibility.

"We have a very sad history in our lack of engagement with governments.... but Indigenous people have a very central role to play," said Mr Yu.

"Rather than think of us as an afterthought, think of us as primary mover and shakers that can assist the future of this country."

He said Indigenous people should be employed full-time in vital ranger positions to provide centuries-old expertise.

Source: *Cairns Post*, p9 09/10/2007

NT: Fishing studies in Katherine river 05/10/2007

Griffith University scientists are conducting a 'Fish and Flows study' for two years in the Northern Territory to better manage rivers.

The scientists are counting fish numbers, examining breeding habits and recording changes in fish populations.

Griffith University representative Brad Pusey said the traditional owners' views need to be incorporated into the process.

Source: *ABC radio, Stateline*, 7.40pm 05/10/2007

Issues in brief

AIATSIS conference 2007

The AIATSIS Conference was held from 5 to 8 November this year at The Australian National University's Manning Clark Centre.

Some of the issues discussed at this year's conference included sustainable management of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands.

For more information follow this link:

http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/research_program/events2/aiatsis_conf2007

Environmental assessment of the Torres Strait Prawn Fishery under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

The Torres Strait Prawn Fishery needs to undergo a new strategic assessment for ongoing export accreditation.

As part of this, the Department of the Environment and Water Resources received a fishery assessment report as a submission from the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, on behalf of the Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority in November 2007.

The report has been prepared to address the Australian Government guidelines for the ecologically sustainable management of fisheries. The submission will be used to assess the operation of the fishery for the purposes of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act.

In accordance with the provisions of the Act, people are invited to comment on this proposal.

Closing date for comments is Friday, 21 December 2007.

For further information:

http://www.pzja.gov.au/notices/notices/2007/tspf_call4comment2007.pdf

NAILSMA National Indigenous Land and Sea Conference

In early October 2007, the Giringun Aboriginal Corporation hosted the second National Indigenous Land and Sea Management Conference in Cardwell, North Queensland. The conference aims to bring together community land and sea managers to share stories and determine future direction for land and sea management across the country. It followed the inaugural National Land and Sea Management Conference that was held east of Alice Springs in April 2005. Resolutions from the inaugural conference recognised issues such as governance, traditional knowledge, heritage, youth, employment and training and sustainable economic development.

For further information:

http://www.nailsma.org.au/forum/cardwell_conference_2007.html

Other useful links

Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority: <http://www.afma/default.php>

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies:

<http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/>

Australian Institute of Marine Science: <http://www.aims.gov.au/>

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry: <http://www.dpie.gov.au/>

Department of Environment and Heritage: <http://www.deh.gov.au/index.html>

Fisheries Research and Development Corporation: <http://www.frdc.com.au/index.htm>

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority: <http://www.gbmpa.gov.au/>

Indigenous Business Australia: <http://www.iba.gov.au/>

National Native Title Tribunal: <http://www.nntt.gov.au/>

Torres Strait Protected Zone Joint Authority: <http://www.pzja.gov.au/>

Torres Strait Regional Authority: <http://www.tsra.gov.au/www/index.cfm>

Wet Tropics World Heritage Area: <http://wettropics.gov.au/>

State and Territory Government

Department of Primary Industries and Resources South Australia:

<http://www.pir.sa.gov.au/index.shtml>

Department of Primary Industries Tasmania:

<http://www.dpiwe.tas.gov.au/inter.nsf/Home/1?Open>

Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries:

<http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/home/default.html>

Northern Territory Fisheries: <http://www.fisheries.nt.gov.au/>

NSW Department of Primary Industries – Fisheries: <http://www.fisheries.nsw.gov.au/>

Victoria Department of Primary Industries: <http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/dpi/index.htm>

WA Department of Fisheries: <http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/>

Native Title Representative Bodies

Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement: <http://www.alrm.org.au/>

Cape York Land Council: <http://www.cylc.org.au/>

Central Land Council: <http://www.clc.org.au/>

Goldfields Land and Sea Council: <http://www.glc.com.au/>

Queensland South Native Title Services: <http://www.qsnts.com.au/>

Kimberley Land Council: <http://www.klc.org.au/>

Native Title Representative Bodies: <http://www.ntrb.net/>

Native Title Services Victoria: <http://www.nts.vic.gov.au/>

Northern Land Council: <http://www.nlc.org.au/>

South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council: <http://www.noongar.org.au/>

Online publications

Hi ika – Indigenous fisheries magazine issued in New Zealand:

http://www.fish.govt.nz/customary/hi_ika/

Kantri Laif (coun-try li-fe) – twice-yearly newsletter produced by NAILSMA:

http://savanna.ntu.edu.au/publications/kantri_laif.html

CRC Reef Newsletter: <http://www.reef.crc.org.au/publications/news/>

Education

Australian Maritime College: <http://www.amc.edu.au/>

Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (ANU):

<http://www.anu.edu.au/caepr/index.php>

Centre for Indigenous Natural and Cultural Resource Management:

<http://www.ntu.edu.au/cincrm/>

Desert Knowledge: <http://www.desertknowledge.com.au/>

James Cook University Native Title Studies Centre:

<http://www.jcu.edu.au/app/law/ntsc/index.cfm>

Marine Education Society of Australia: <http://www.mesa.edu.au/>

Reef Ed: http://www.reefed.edu.au/explorer/traditional_owners/index.html

Torres News: <http://www.torresnews.com.au/>

International

Fisheries and Oceans Canada: http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/home-accueil_e.htm

New Zealand Ministry of Fisheries: <http://www.fish.govt.nz/>