

# Indigenous fishing bulletin



National  
Native Title  
Tribunal



NATIONAL NATIVE TITLE TRIBUNAL INDIGENOUS FISHING BULLETIN

JUNE 2008

## Indigenous fishing in the news

**June 2008**

**QLD: Traditional fishing rights snagged by legislation**

**04/06/2008**

Indigenous Queenslanders will be forbidden to take fish from 15 sensitive areas following the alleged abuse of traditional fishing rights.

Legislation was introduced to State Parliament that would amend laws protecting the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people fishing in a traditional way.

Primary Industries Minister Tim Mulherin said that while most people are doing the right thing, a small number have been exploiting fish stocks.

"The amendments seek to reduce the risk of exploitation of fisheries resources by limiting traditional and customary fishing to personal, domestic and non-commercial communal use," Mr Mulherin said.

Sources: <http://www.news.com.au/couriermail/story/0,23739,23806029-3102,00.html>

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/06/03/2263190.htm>

**May 2008**

**NSW: Organised crime targeting fisheries 26/05/2008**

National parks in NSW are being exploited by bikie gangs, illegal divers and families operating under the guise of indigenous hunting, a study by the Australian Institute of Criminology warns.

Coral fish, eel, sea cucumbers and oysters are being increasingly targeted by bikie gangs who are also suspected of pearl theft in Western Australia and the trading of fishing licences in the Northern Territory.

Oyster theft was so well organised that thieves were using lifting equipment on vehicles to steal entire racks from farms, the report said.

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Welcome to the National Native Title Tribunal's fishing bulletin.

The Tribunal invites all subscribers to submit any relevant fishing news or useful web links to [fishing@nntt.gov.au](mailto:fishing@nntt.gov.au). We will contact you about including your submission in the next edition of the bulletin.

Please pass the bulletin on to people you think might be interested. If you have received the bulletin from a friend or colleague and would like to subscribe, please visit our [subscription centre](#) and follow the instructions.

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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The report acknowledged that while the main market for abalone and shark fin is Hong Kong, there is "an extensive illicit Australian market for these other species" including "clubs, restaurants, hotels and fish and chip shops".

Source: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/fishery-gangs-ones-that-get-away/2008/05/25/1211653847171.html>

See also: <http://news.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=569148>

<http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,23759816-29277,00.html>

## **April 2008**

### **QLD: Indigenous hunting a concern in northern Queensland 26/04/2008**

Peter Guivarra, chairman of the Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council is among a growing band of Indigenous leaders who believe hunting by their people is excessive and no longer sustainable.

Mr Guivarra mentioned the bird population was a fraction of what it was 10 or 15 years ago.

"There were hundreds of thousands, but now it's thousands and the numbers get smaller every season. I want my sons and grandsons to be able to hunt, but at this rate they won't be able to," he said.

Indigenous hunting of sea turtles and dugongs has led to a dramatic drop in the animals' populations.

Problems also exist in the wetlands of Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory, where the hunting of magpie geese with shotguns is so prolific that untargeted wildlife are suffering lead poisoning from spent lead shot ingested while foraging for food.

Source: <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23597963-28737,00.html>

## **April 2008**

### **QLD: Dugong and turtle on the menu 23/04/2008**

A survey into dugong and turtle management by the Torres Strait Regional Authority's Land and Sea Management Unit has found that 55 per cent of respondents favoured hunting the animals for general consumption while 45 per cent believed it should be done only for ceremonial purposes.

A rising population in the Kaiwalagal region and changes in the environment have raised concerns about the sustainability of dugong and turtle hunting in the region.

Kaurareg elders from Horn Island, Hammond Island, Thursday Island and Prince of Wales Island will meet to discuss how the survey information can be used to develop a Management Plan for Kaiwalagal.

Source: *Torres News*, p6 23/04/2008

## **April 2008**

### **QLD: Darumbal elder wants fishing rights protection 21/04/2008**

Darumbal elder Lester Adams has come forward in support of legislation proposed by Queensland Fisheries Minister Tim Mulherin but says any fish management plan would need to protect the rights of traditional Aboriginal people in Rockhampton.

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The legislation would close fishing within 400 metres downstream of the Fitzroy River barrage as a solution to illegal netting at the barrage in March.

Mr Adams said the fishermen were not from the local tribe and called for a fish management plan to protect Darumbal people's rights.

"The current native title law as it stands, on the federal level, talks about the rights of Aboriginal people using traditional customs... but it's in a general sense. We need to define a little bit more to make it more applicable for all the traditional owner groups around Queensland," he said.

Source: [www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/04/21/2222296.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/04/21/2222296.htm)

## **April 2008**

### **QLD: Sunfish Queensland urges recreational angler exemptions 02/04/2008**

Despite the closure of submissions for a review of the Moreton Bay Marine Park development, Sunfish Queensland will fight to keep Jumpinpin and South Stradbroke Island open to recreational anglers.

Sunfish Queensland's executive officer David Bateman said the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had proposed green zones for 33 areas in the marine park review, 13 of which had been identified as key areas for recreational anglers by Mr Bateman's group.

Although at odds with the location of some of the EPA's proposed green zones, Mr Bateman believed they should be honoured by everyone, including Indigenous people who may hunt and fish in green zones under the Native Title Act.

"We have always found the Indigenous people to be quite reasonable in what they do, particularly in the Brisbane area," he said.

Source: *Gold Coast Sun*, p11 02/04/2008

## **March 2008**

### **QLD: Barramundi stock in jeopardy 31/03/2008**

Barramundi fishing in the Fitzroy River hinged on a decision by the Fitzroy River Fish Stocking Association (FRFSA), *The Morning Bulletin* reported.

The group had been releasing barramundi and other species of fish above the barrage near Laurel Banks for 20 years.

Association secretary Christine Ward blamed local and state governments for failing to enforce laws to protect their investment.

"Netting at the barrage is like having someone under the funnel with a sieve - they are not going to go any further," Ms Ward said.

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During the Easter weekend, a group of four men were caught on camera by The Morning Bulletin rigging a net at the barrage, which is restricted under local government by-laws.

*Source: The Morning Bulletin, p5 31/03/2008*

### **March 2008**

#### **VIC: Lake Condah handed back to traditional owners 31/03/2008**

The Gunditjmara Aboriginal people have had Lake Condah and 290 hectares of Crown land in Victoria's southwest officially returned to them following a Federal Court judgment last year.

The Gundjiti Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation will manage Lake Condah, which will be rebuilt and refilled with water for the first time in 50 years.

The Corporation's Chairman Damien Bell said the Gunditjmara people had aspired to have Lake Condah returned to them for a long time.

"These achievements are not only testament to our community's ability and identity, but to the understanding and partnership of the broader community," he said.

*Sources: Geelong Advertiser, p9 31/03/2008*

*Warrnambool Standard, p5 31/03/2008*

*See also: Warrnambool Standard, p8 07/05/2008*

### **March 2008**

#### **QLD: Fitzroy River netting row deepens 27/03/2008**

The Queensland Department of Fisheries gagged its Central Queensland officers from talking to the media after a net full of dead fish, including large barramundi, was pulled from waters near the Fitzroy River Barrage.

District officer Mike Broadsmith of the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol retrieved the net along with almost \$1000 worth of dead fish.

A source from the local fishing industry told The Morning Bulletin that Indigenous men were selling the barramundi they netted on the black market.

"If people stop buying the fish off them on the street and black market then it would help," he said.

This development came less than a week after fishing groups and Darumbal spokespeople expressed outrage at photographs showing four Indigenous men netting across one of the barrage spillways.

*Source: The Morning Bulletin, p1 27/03/2008*

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## Issues in brief

### NAIDOC Week 2008

NAIDOC celebrates the survival of Indigenous culture and Indigenous people's contribution to modern Australia.

This week is celebrated not only in the Indigenous community but also increasingly in government agencies, schools, local councils and workplaces.

NAIDOC Week celebrations for 2008 will be held from 6 - 13 July and the focus city is Canberra.

For more information visit: <http://www.naidoc.org.au/default.aspx>

### Japan's Indigenous Ainu recognised

Japan has officially recognised the Ainu as an Indigenous people with a distinct language, religion and culture.

Parliament unanimously approved a resolution recognising the Ainu who have endured sharply lower incomes and education levels.

"Our government solemnly accepts the historical fact that the Ainu people were discriminated against and suffered poverty in the process of our country's modernisation," Chief Cabinet Secretary Nobutaka Machimura said.

The Ainu formed their society on parts of Japan's main island of Hokkaido where they practised an animist faith and lived by hunting and fishing.

Source: [http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5g\\_RhwBf7VyTHHRIP866Pgb28IJEw](http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5g_RhwBf7VyTHHRIP866Pgb28IJEw)

## Other useful links

### Australian Government

Australian Fisheries Management Authority: <http://www.afma.gov.au/>

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.daff.gov.au/>

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts: <http://www.environment.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/>

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/home>

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Department of Primary Industries and Water Tasmania:

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

Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries:

[http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/home\\_ENA\\_HTML.htm](http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/home_ENA_HTML.htm)

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/en-nz/Publications/Hi+Ika+newsletter/default.htm>

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

[http://savanna.ntu.edu.au/publications/kantri\\_laif.html](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>

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

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

Reef Ed: <http://www.reefed.edu.au/>

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

### **International**

Fisheries and Oceans Canada: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/index-eng.htm>

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

