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NIFTWG Update: Industry supports national Indigenous fishing stakeholder meeting for 2007

The commercial fishing industry's peak national body, the Australian Seafood Industry Council (ASIC) is being wound up and the fishing industry is considering alternative peak body representative structures. To maintain continuity in relation to the important role ASIC has taken in relation to national native title and Indigenous issues, the former ASIC Native Title Committee has been reformed as the National Fishing Industry Native Title Consultative Group.

The Consultative Group will deal with matters pertaining to native title and Indigenous fishing at a national level, consulting with State fishing industry representative bodies. The activities of the Consultative Group will link back into a new national peak body once one has been adopted by the commercial fishing industry. The National Fishing Industry Native Title Consultative Group will continue to be chaired by Professor George Kailis.

At a recent meeting of the Consultative Group, support was expressed for a meeting to be held in 2007 of similar type to the National Indigenous Fishing Technical Working Group (NIFTWG) stakeholder meeting held in February this year around the international fishing conference Sharing the Fish, in Fremantle, Western Australia. The meeting in February was considered to be highly beneficial, particularly in relation to how the national Indigenous fishing principles are being implemented across Australia.

Industry participants in the NIFTWG process always considered there would be some form of ongoing work for NIFTWG stakeholders, further to the development of the national Indigenous fishing principles. It is suggested that a day either before or after the 2007 AIATSIS Conference could provide an opportunity for a stakeholder meeting.

Please direct any queries and/or expressions-of-interest to Professor George Kailis on (02) 8204 4152 or gkailis@nd.edu.au

Further information on the February 2006 NIFTWG meeting and the national Indigenous fishing principles: http://www.nntt.gov.au/publications/NIFTWG06_Info.html

Indigenous fishing in the news

August 2006

NT: Marine rangers recognised in new publication, 14/08/2006

The outstanding work of Northern Territory Indigenous marine rangers in protecting the coastline against illegal fishing has been showcased in a new publication launched at Alyangula. The booklet was produced in conjunction with the Tiwi and Anindilyakwa Land Councils to acknowledge marine rangers' invaluable work supporting the Marine Police, Fisheries, Conservation, Customs, Quarantine and other Federal agencies.

Source: <http://www.nt.gov.au/dcm/ocm/media/index.cfm?fuseaction=viewRelease&id=184&d=5>

NT: Art of the sea features in award winning memorial poles, 14/08/2006

Manggalili clan leader Baluka Maymuru, who has been involved in the ongoing Blue Mud Bay native title case, has won this year's Telstra National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Art Awards' Wandjuk Marika Award for Three-Dimensional works. The senior law man from east Arnhem Land was recognised for his work *Dhakandjali* – a set of three hollow logs that represent the human journey from birth to death through water based imagery, which takes in the rivers and sea currents of Blue Mud Bay.

Source: The saga of life in three hollow logs, *The Australian*, 14/08/2006, p. 18.

See http://www.yirrkala.com/news/baluka_telstra.html for a picture of the work.

NT: Plan for Yolngu sea country launched at Garma, 16/8/2006

The launch of a plan for managing the marine environment of north-east Arnhem Land was a major highlight of this year's Garma Festival. The Dhimurru Sea Country plan brings together many years of Yolngu thinking about sea country and identifies opportunities for Yolngu people to assist in the management of endangered species such as dugong and marine turtles.

The Dhimurru Sea Country plan can be downloaded from <http://www.dhimurru.com.au/>

See also: <http://www.deh.gov.au/minister/env/2006/mr05aug06.html>

Source: Caring for and sharing the sea, *Koori Mail*, 16/8/2006, p. 30.

NT: Indigenous sea rangers call for more adequate support, 16/08/2006

Northern Territory marine rangers are requesting more adequate support resources and further funding for monitoring and surveillance work done along the NT coastline. Ranger groups in the Top End made the call for more adequate resources at a recent conference held at Djinkarr ranger station near Maningrida, which was attended by more than 100 Indigenous sea rangers.

Source: NT rangers call for real wages, *Koori Mail*, 16/08/2006, p. 6.

NSW: South coast marine park an opportunity for Indigenous groups, 23/08/2006

The Batemans Marine Park could bring employment and cultural recognition to local south coast Aboriginal people, if they play their cards right. That was the message from Indigenous managers of marine parks on the states northern coastline who visited Narooma recently to talk about the involvement of traditional owners in managing coastal marine parks.

Park opportunity for Aboriginal community, *Narooma News*, 23/08/2006, p. 1.

For more information on the Batemans Marine Park see: <http://www.mpa.nsw.gov.au/bmp/bmp.html>

NT: Farming mudcrabs in captivity, 27/08/2006

In the Top End, scientists have discovered the secret to farming mudcrabs in captivity and two Indigenous aquaculture ventures are reaping the benefits of a ready supply of the highly prized crustaceans.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/landline/content/2006/s1724917.htm>

NT: Fishing net clean up project a Top End success, 28/08/2006

Parliamentary secretary to the Environment Minister Greg Hunt has called for an extension of a pilot program in the Northern Territory, where Indigenous rangers clear away dangerous fishing nets, to remote communities across the country. Mr Hunt said the new environmental partnership between the Government and Indigenous rangers had cleared 100km of Cape Arnhem coast of old fishing nets.

Source: <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,20273164-2702,00.html>

Qld: Cape York land and sea management centre funding review, 28/08/2006

The Australian Government has announced a review of Natural Heritage Trust funding arrangements for land and sea management centres in Cape York Peninsula. The land and sea management centres were set up with Natural Heritage Trust funding in Cape York Peninsula in 2002 to work with the traditional owners to develop plans to best protect and manage the area's natural and cultural resources.

Source: <http://www.deh.gov.au/minister/env/2006/mr28aug06.html>

September 2006**NT: Indigenous rangers push for sea rights, 12/09/2006.**

A push for Indigenous sea rights is growing in the Northern Territory, with some Indigenous ranger groups are now asking for authority over their saltwater country. Grace Daniels is with the Ngukurr Rangers near the Gulf of Carpentaria and says they want the right to stop over-fishing and illegal fishing.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200609/s1739005.htm>

Qld: Pearling history on show in the Torres Strait, 19/09/2006

The Torres Strait's rich pearling history is being showcased at the Gab Titui Cultural Centre on Thursday Island over the next twelve months in an exciting exhibition called, The First Pearl. The exhibition highlights the significance of the region's pearl shell, from its use in Torres Strait culture to its important contribution to business and the early Australian economy.

Source: <http://www.tsra.gov.au/www/index.cfm?pageID=674>

NT: Mudcrabs for Maningrida, 21/09/2006

A batch of 3000 crablets has been shipped from Darwin to Maningrida to stock the community's mud crab farm. The farm commenced operations in October last year and became the first mud crab aquaculture venture ever established in a regional Indigenous community.

Source: http://www.nt.gov.au/dpifm/Fisheries/news_media_archive_article.cfm?newsid=139&ws=1

NT: Laynhapuy Indigenous Protected Area to deliver positive benefits, 22/09/2006

Australia's 21st Indigenous Protected Area has been declared over an area of 450,000 hectares bordering the Gulf of Carpentaria for the Yolgnu people of the Laynhapuy homeland communities. Over the next few years, the community will be focusing on sea and coast management, such as the removal of marine debris and monitoring of turtle habitats. Since 1996, Indigenous landholders have declared approximately 14 million hectares – almost 6 per cent of Australia's land mass – as Indigenous Protected Areas.

Source: <http://www.deh.gov.au/minister/ps/2006/psmr22sep06.html>

See also: http://www.anu.edu.au/caepr/ICGP_Laynhapuy.php

For more information on Indigenous Protected Areas, visit www.deh.gov.au/indigenous/ipa

October 2006

WA: Native title judgment appealed, 12/10/2006

Fishing in rivers and estuaries and on reefs for abalone could be adversely affected by the Nyoongar native title claim over Perth and the South-West, the WA Fishing Industry Council says. The council, which was a party to the original Federal Court case which upheld native title over Perth, is appealing against the landmark judgment, saying it wants the decision to be clarified to ensure effective management of the fisheries.

Source: Judgment threat to river and reef fishing, lobby group warns, *West Australian*, 12/10/2006, p. 5.

See also the WA Government media statement 'Native title appeal lodged' (10/10/2006):

http://www.nativetitle.wa.gov.au/MediaPublications_Releases.aspx and the Australian Government's appeal announcement:

http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/WWW/MinisterRuddockHome.nsf/Page/Media_Releases_2006_Third_Quarter_1872006_-_5_October_2006_-_Challenge_to_Native_Title_Ruling_over_Perth

Qld: Reinstate fuel subsidy to save fishing industry, say Torres Strait Islanders, 29/10/2006

A petition signed by more than 1500 Torres Strait Island residents highlighting high costs of living in the Torres Strait has been tabled in Federal Parliament. The petition calls on the Federal Government to reinstate a fuel freight subsidy it abolished in July after rising fuel prices have placed the local fishing industry at risk.

Source: http://www.torresnews.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=272

November 2006

NT: Fish farm closure will cost jobs, 13/11/2006

Employment opportunities for Tiwi Islanders have been significantly diminished following an announcement by Norwegian company Marine Harvest that it is closing its fish farm at Port Hurd on Bathurst Island and will be abandoning applications for three additional farms in Darwin and Bynoe Harbours, as well as at Snake Bay on Melville Island. Tiwi Land Council manager Cyril Kapil says the decision will cost jobs.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200611/s1787428.htm>

Qld: Ministers agree on new steps to combat illegal fishing, 16/11/2006

Commonwealth, State and Territory fisheries ministers have met in Brisbane to discuss cooperative approaches to implementing the Federal Government's budget package to fight illegal foreign fishing in Australia's northern waters. They agreed to investigate tougher measures including a review of sentences for illegal fishers and committed to working on pilot programs to enlist the support of the indigenous community to find and apprehend illegal fishing boats.

Source: <http://www.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/story/0,22049,20769581-5001028,00.html>

A communiqué from the meeting is available here: <http://www.mffc.gov.au/releases/2006/06136aj.html>

NT: Calls for greater role for marine ranger in illegal fishing fight, 16/11/2006

Acting NT Fisheries Minister Kon Vatskalis has welcomed the idea of involving Aboriginal communities in the illegal fishing fight. "We would still like to see Indigenous Marine Ranger groups play a greater role in the apprehension of illegal fishers and hopefully we'll see this with the expansion of pilot programs to engage Indigenous communities."

Source: <http://www.theage.com.au/news/National/Australia-Indonesia-sign-fishing-deal/2006/11/16/1163266705706.html>

Qld: Elder calls for end to dugong 'slaughter', 17/11/2006

Every year around Christmas, it is estimated that 50 or more dugongs are slaughtered on beaches near Cooktown in far north Queensland. Eddie Deemal, 80, an elder of the Deedarr tribe, says it is time "the annual slaughter" should come to an end. He said his people traditionally observed the ritual of killing and eating a dugong in a take of only one animal per family a year, but non-local Indigenous people were preying on the vulnerable sea cows in wholesale slaughter according to Mr Deemal.

Source: Hunting rights poser, *Courier Mail*, 17/11/2006, p. 22.

Qld: Ranger recognised in far north, 20/11/2006

Wildlife ranger Lawrie Booth from the Mapoon Indigenous community in far north Queensland has won a top quarantine award. Mr Booth has worked side-by-side with Customs and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service for 12 years monitoring illegal fishing activities and potentially dangerous pests.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200611/s1785330.htm>

WA: Rights to fish a part of landmark Kimberley determination, 24/11/2006

The Federal Court has recognised native title over almost 7000 square kilometres of the Kimberley region of Western Australia. The finalisation of the Miriuwung Gajerrong #4 claim means that native title is now recognised in more than 35 per cent of the Kimberley region. The Miriuwung, Gajerrong and Kija people have won exclusive native title rights over four community lease areas and shared rights and interests with pastoralists on pastoral lease land. On pastoral lease land, the native titleholders have the right to live and camp on the land, they have hunting and fishing rights and the right to engage in cultural practices on the land.

Source: <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,20813938-1702,00.html>

NT: Marine rangers form major part of an island success story, 25/11/2006

Nicolas Rothwell reports on a Northern Territory story of hope from the remote community of Grootte Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria, which is shifting away from the traditional welfare model that forms the basis of economic life across much of remote Australia. Among the recent successes is the eight-member marine ranger team which regularly identifies illegal Indonesian fishing vessels off Grootte's shores and guides Customs boats from Weipa or Gove to intercept them.

Source: <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,20816236-28737,00.html>

For more information see: <http://www.deh.gov.au/minister/ps/2006/psmr06jun06.html>

Qld: Climate change threatens traditional ways, says report, 26/11/2006

A recent report published by the CSIRO suggests there is risk posed by climate change to traditional life in the Torres Strait, including the fact that dugongs and turtles may be among the first species to decline in numbers as climate change affects their habitat and breeding grounds. The report by Dr Donna Green also says seafood species such as prawns and crayfish may also be affected by changing habitats.

Source: http://www.torresnews.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=309

Dr Green's article is available in full: <http://www.dar.csiro.au/sharingknowledge/index.html>

QLD: TSRA dugong and turtle workshop, 29/11/2006

The Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) held a Regional Dugong and Turtle Workshop on Badu Island from 11 to 13 December. The purpose of the meeting was to talk about community-based management of dugong and turtle and discuss how people would like to see these natural resources managed into the future.

Source: Dugong, turtle workshop to discuss management options, *Torres News*, 29/11/2006, p. 14.

Issues in brief

WA Fish Resources Management Act (FRMA) amendments

A ministerial review committee will hold meetings across Western Australia to seek feedback on a draft report of proposed amendments to the state's *Fish Resources Management Act 1994* (FRMA), which governs WA's fisheries and aquaculture sectors. Issues relating to customary fishing are discussed in the review committee's draft report, as well as the Aboriginal Fishing Strategy and proposed Indigenous Fishing Fund. The committee held meetings in Esperance, Broome, Kununurra, Kojonup and Albany in December. Further meetings will be held in Karratha, Carnarvon, Geraldton, Bunbury, and Perth in January.

Copies of the 'Proposed amendments to the Fish Resources Management Act 1994 – draft report of the Ministerial Review Committee' can be downloaded from the Department of Fisheries' website: <http://www.fish.wa.gov.au/docs/op/op038/index.php?0006> . Submissions on this draft report are welcome until 16 February 2007. For further information, please contact the Executive Officer Rae Burrows on (08) 9482 7238 or by email to: rburrows@fish.wa.gov.au

Source:

<http://www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au/media/media.nsf/news/EB98ED463711201B4825723B0029425F?opendocument>

Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreements

In recent Senate Estimates hearings, representatives of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority spoke about consulting and engaging with traditional owners and Indigenous groups on the Queensland coast. The GBRMPA has been working with a number of Indigenous communities to progress the second and third traditional use of marine resource agreements – TUMRAs.

The extract linked to below contains questions asked of GBRMPA representatives regarding the types of sea life fished by Indigenous people with special focus on the Giringun people, who recently finalised a TUMRA with the GBRMPA.

Standing Committee on Environment Communications Information Technology and Arts Budget Estimates Hansard extract (31 October 2006):

http://parlinfoweb.aph.gov.au/piweb/TranslateWIPILink.aspx?Folder=ESTIMATE&Criteria=DOC_DATE:2006-10-31%3BJOB:9769%3BSEQ_NUM:18%3B

Senator the Hon. Ian Macdonald's speech at the signing event for the Giringun people's TUMRA in August 2006: <http://www.senatormacdonald.org/speeches12.html>

Indigenous Heritage Programme

Applications for the 2007–08 round of Indigenous Heritage Programme (IHP) funding will close on 21 February 2007. The Australian Government Programme supports projects that identify, conserve and promote the Indigenous heritage values of places important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The programme provides Indigenous organisations or not-for-profit bodies with grants for projects up to \$100,000 (GST inclusive).

Examples of projects funded under the 2006-07 round of the IHP include the development of the Ngarrindjeri environment and heritage management strategy to facilitate implementation of case study research, planning and education of the Ngarrindjeri cultural heritage on Ngarrindjeri Ruwe (lands and islands) in South Australia and a \$100,000 grant to interpret and explain the significance of the Fitzroy River as a cultural resource to promote understanding and knowledge of Indigenous heritage in Western Australia.

For details on applying see: <http://www.deh.gov.au/heritage/programs/ihp/index.html>

For further general information on nationally-available funding and assistance for initiatives associated indigenous economic and social development, land management, conservation and cultural heritage protection see the *Guide to Australian Government Funding Sources*:

<http://www.nntt.gov.au/research/reports.html#Specificissuereports>

NAILSMA website

Please see the interim NAILSMA website that is up and running now. The site is available at <http://www.nailsma.org.au/>

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/>