

## Northern Australia News Roundup – September 2016

Welcome to a summary of September's news on topics relevant to the [Northern Hub's](#) goal of supporting sustainable development in northern Australia. These clips aim to facilitate cross-sector and cross-region knowledge sharing, and more informed conversations about the future of northern Australia. They're an informal 'round up' of what comes across my desk rather than a systematic collection, so please send any relevant news in and let me know what you think. Also, please let me know if you don't wish to receive this email. Cheers and best regards, Clare, Knowledge Broker, Northern Australia Environmental Resources Hub.

### Pan northern news

- [PM tell US that Nth Aust is 'next frontier for US investment in agriculture, agribusiness and infrastructure'](#) [More](#)
- [Nth Aust White Paper Implementation Oversight Committee presents its first annual report to PM, with 70 of 102 actions in progress or complete](#)
- [NAIF reported to have one formal application but also all on track](#)
- [Canavan lateline interview covers NAIF update, Indigenous people and Nth dev, backpacker tax & Tsville \(other interviews inc backpacker tax1 2 , fracking, foreign inv in Nth & mining tax more\)](#)
- [Joint Select Committee on Nth Aust dissolved](#) authoring 3 reports
- [New NT Chief Minister Michael Gunner announces his cabinet inc Gunner = Min Nth Dev, Min Aboriginal Affairs, Min Trade, Business & Innovn; Ken Vowles = Min Primary Ind & Resources; Lauren Moss = Min Enviro & Natural Res, Min Tourism & Culture](#)
- [\\$360M Nth Aust Roads Program](#) priorities inc Capricorn Hwy, Kennedy Dev Rd, ArhemHwy, Seadragon/Ord, Marble Bar Rd & Wyndham Spur [More](#) [More](#) [Nth Aust Roads Prog delays](#)
- [\\$24M Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine for Cairns](#)
- [New book on 'Revisiting the Empty North' by JCU history prof](#)
  
- [5 Indigenous MPs inc 2 from Nth Aust to work together](#)
- [NT gov appeals federal court compensation ruling for extinguishment of Timber Creek native title](#)
- [ILCs new pastoral agribusiness manager flags fodder crops, carbon credits horticulture, aquaculture](#) to expand and diversify operations
- [DNA study trace Aboriginal Australians today to First People to enter Aust 25 -40k yrs ago and population expansion from NE Aust.](#) [More](#)
- [3 yr study on measuring what constitutes a good life for Indigenous people](#) [More](#)
- [Presentation on economic benefits of being 'on country'](#)
  
- [Indonesia reportedly abolishes quota system for cattle imports, though negotiations over 1 in 5 cattle imported must be for breeding purposes lead to ships waiting](#)
- [Elders pull out of live ex business](#) [More](#) , [upcoming live-ex squeeze](#) and [Aust share of Asian beef market to fall](#) but [Cambodia live ex growing](#)
- [Kimberley Meat Co beef abattoir opens nr Broome](#) targeting 300 head/day with 'clean and green' branded meat backloaded to Perth for export [More](#)
- [New project to build on cash cow research on improving breeding across Nth Aus and](#) [More on managing Nth Aust cattle by satellite](#)
- [CPC using genetic tech, water infrastructure and MRIs to increase grazing intensity and wins NT exporter and agribusiness awards](#)
  
- [WA Auditor General criticises Ord cost blowouts, ineffective governance and unsustainable employment.](#) Local industry defends spend saying [report looks backwards rather than forwards, and many benefits are just beginning](#)
- [Back down on backpacker tax and uncertainty about tax triggers fewer work inquiries](#)
- [Bright future for northern bananas, Better than av NT watermelon season so far , early mangos from knx, Bundaberg new macadamia capital & NT crocs travel to Qld farm in pods](#)
- [Hunt for super race of prawn for Project Seadragon](#) and [northern tiger prawns better brood stock than eastern cousins](#)

- Gulf mudcrabbers propose total ban over wet season rather than ban on female crabs to address declining crab population
- ACCC chair backs NT-Qld gas pipeline despite monopoly pricing and EIS closes 9 Oct
- Pilot processing plant nr Halls Crk approved for rare earth deposit nr WA/NT border
- Nth Aust's largest megawatt scale PV system Darwin airport's 4MW plant solar plant forecast to produce 100% of daytime and 25% of overall energy needs.
- Nth Aus Indonesian army training first since Timor crisis
- More debate over safari hunting crocs. More More and more
- Hotter than av temps, 4 to 5 landfall cyclones, more active tstorms and rain forecast for Nth Aust
- Big early rainfall for Top End
- Oct-Dec outlook shows well above av rain for NW and TopEnd, & well above av temps for CYP  
More

### **State, Territory etc news**

- Motion to separate Qld into 2 states fails More
- Highest growth in FNQ visitors, Qld ecotourism plan aims to drive innovation, showcase GBR, expand authentic Indigenous ecotourism and stimulate investment and viral video on what to do in FNQ
- Sugar co to build sugarcane byproduct clean energy plants at 4 mills in FNQ, with first \$75M project to produce 24MW of electricity, enough to power every Tablelands home
- Canegrowers recycle 82,333 fertiliser bags , Winners of canetube video competition on improved farming practices to protect the reef and remote control cane trains
- New project investigating gully remediation operations in the Burdekin
- Stronger landholder rights on mining activity and Bowen salt works reopens
- Concern that alluvial gold mine will harm CYP rock art
- \$6M cleanup bill for shipwrecked and abandoned boats
- Submissions on Greenpaper on fisheries management extended to 14 Oct
- NT moratorium on fracking but concern because gas exploration still allowed and fracking approved days before election. Backfill gas needed to keep Darwin LNG plant open past 2022
- 31% of land in NT held by foreign interests fact check
- NT quiet on Asian investment strategy
- Record breaking tourist season in Katherine but trees cleared at hot springs due to admin error (and Illegal clearing by gov at boat ramp)
- Jabiru sees economic slowdown
- 50% of Tippiary Stn sold to investor consortium
- Recycling working for Wadeye rangers and successful No Rubbish on Country art comp. Tiwi Is club also recycling for community projects
- NT joins quinoa expansion trials
- Arnhem Land Progress Aboriginal Corporation the largest Indigenous corp in Aust
- Crocodile Is rangers meet EU and win national Indigenous landcare award
- Gogo Stn on the Fitzroy has approved to apply to convert ~9000ha of leasehold land to freehold for irrigation precinct to increase cattle production
- 32,000 sandalwood trees harvested in 2.5months to produce 300t heartwood, 10 x previous yr, processed by high tech high security knx plant
- Controversial WA conservation bill passes upper house and Flannery calls for better care for the Kimberley
- Balangarra Aboriginal Corp & rangers partners in first part of 5y rock art survey and wasp nest dates Mitchell Plateau art at over 16000 yrs
- KLC comment on WA gov's Resilient Families, Strong Communities roadmap
- Mungbean trials positive in Ord and Timorese seasonal workforce a first for the Ord

- [Kimberley diamond and pearl sales up and Growing horticulture near Broome](#)
- [Bayer destroys GM cotton trial in Ord](#)

### **Water**

- Environmental law [article on Nthn water development highlights focus on engineering 'solutions' over alternative approaches and need to better recognise Indigenous water rights](#) [More](#)
- Presentations on [Nth Austs land & water resources – what, where, how much](#) (Peter Stone, CSIRO recommended), [Nathn water infrastructure fund Nth Aust focus](#), [NT gov Land & Water mapping and more](#) from Water in the Bush conf
- [NT gov considers no new bores in darwins rural area due to falling groundwater levels and Darwin Rural Groundwater Watch website](#)
- [Stalagmites show changes in Aust monsoon rainfall match sth China rainfall over 3000yrs](#)
- [Mitchell River Future Hydrological Threat Assessment](#) report

### **Weeds, ferals, diseases etc**

- [Researchers and farmers fighting halo blight in mung beans](#)
- [Bunnings selling declared aquatic weed in NT](#)
- [Bird-scaring drone saves Ord grower \\$2000/day](#)
- [Darwin grower concerned over biosec risks from dragon fruit imports](#)
- [Aerial survey highlights top end gamba grass is spreading](#)
- [Cucumber mottle mosaic virus found in Ord farm and ?new case of Panama in nth Qld](#)
- [Tropical fire ants kill sea birds and turtles on Ashmore reef ,yellow ants vs green ants & more ant funding needed](#)
- [Spatial story and management plan for Mimosa pigra in Finnis](#)

### **Biodiversity and Protected Areas**

- Research shows [Cape York Peninsula, the Wet Tropics and the Top End, as well as southwest WA and western Tas, are areas of 'super-endemism' for the evolutionary relatedness of plants](#)
- [Nth Prawn Fishery call for support for Gulf mangrove die-back to be referred to House of Reps Standing Committee \(p13\)](#)
- [Nasa 250 colour images to provide picture of GBR health](#) [More](#) & [Boeing partners to monitor reef](#)
- [Paper analyses GBR governance risks and suggests opportunities for reform](#)
- Recommended zoning changes to 6 of 8 marine reserves in [Nth Aust](#) Network mean high level of protection for 24% . [NW Network recs](#) result in 40% in high level protection. [Recs from Science Panel](#). [Community comment](#), [Conversation](#)
- [North's iconic eucalypt savanna likely to struggle with 3 degrees of warming](#)
- [Interesting info re courting green tree frogs & Research shows damsel fish social creatures](#)
- [Loggerhead turtle travels to NT, First evidence of leatherback turtle in Gulf since 2011 sighting & project reshapes Raine Is to protect turtle nesting. Draft Recovery Plan for Marine Turtles out for comment til 13 Jan 2017.](#)
- [Dinosaur footprints found on Cable Beach](#)

### **Fire and carbon**

- [Cape York's 2016 Indigenous Fire Workshop attracts 130 people](#) [More](#)
- [Soil carbon through reforestation](#) in tropical & subtropics finds carbon levels decline from native vegetation to pasture to cultivation. Reversing decline by reforestation takes >15yrs
- Blog re [building savanna burning methodology for pindan country](#)
- New [how-to guide for the NAFI website](#)
- [Article highlighting cost of loss of savanna & other bioregions for world carbon stores](#) [More](#)
- [Tweets re Nth Aust fire from Bushfire 2016 conf in Brisbane](#)
- [Qld landholders farming carbon](#)

### **Northern Australia Hub News**

- New project to develop robust method to quantify the carbon stored in wood, leaves etc in low rainfall savanna
- Seeking a Hub Science Communicator (applications close 5 Oct)
- We're running a symposium on improving science to support decision making around multiple use of land and water in Nth Aust on 29 Nov at the Ecological Soc of Aust conference in Fremantle

### **Events**

5 Oct Joe Morrison, Nugget Coombs Lecture, Darwin  
20 Oct Qld Renewable Energy Expert Panel Public Forum, Cairns  
27-30 Oct Savannah Guides School, Cooktown  
28-29 Oct Future of Tropical Economies conference, Cairns  
23-30 Oct National Biological Farming conf, Cairns  
29 Oct Cape York NRM AGM, Laura  
7-10 Nov Qld Pest Animal Symposium, Townsville  
22-24 Nov Territory NRM Forum, Darwin

### **Please note**

- this is an informal compilation and views don't necessarily reflect those of the Northern Hub or affiliates
- being on this email list adds you to the Northern Hub Network which simply means you're interested in the sustainable development of Northern Australia (it doesn't mean lots of emails!)
- previous news roundups (produced by the Kimberley to Cape initiative) are available here or by contacting me.