Why is biodiversity important to recreational anglers

Craig Ingram AFANT
Over 30,000 NT residents (non-indigenous) fished between April 2009 and March 2010

NT anglers spent $51 million direct expenditure

Visitors to the NT contributed 77,000 fisher days (about half total effort)

Recreational fishing tourism showing significant growth

$22 million spent on guided fishing in the NT

Estimated direct expenditure of $100 million per year
The NT Recreational fishing experience

- For most anglers it's about more than just fish
- Landscape, scenery and environment
- Diverse and spectacular natural Systems
- The isolation or wilderness experience
- Most importantly NT has Great fishing

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Fishy systems

- Healthy environment = healthy fishery's
- Understanding the drivers of fish populations
- Environment the big limiter of the productivity of NT fishery's
Significant impact from salinity inundation
Extensive loss of fresh water melaleuca wetlands and floodplain
Changes to the productivity and diversity of the system
New areas under threat and continued salinity spread
Real risk in loosing areas like Corrobaree Billabong to salinity
Government and land owner Intervention largely unsuccessful and has other significant impacts
Impact is not limited to the Mary River system
The Mary River floodplain
Melaleuca stands on Marrakai station
What is the effect of salinity

- Vastly changing ecosystem from Fresh water Melaleuca wetlands to Hyper saline mud flats
- Erosion and spreading salinity
- Loss of habitat
- Loss of productivity
The salinity spread continues
Just 2 Km of distance between the now salt affected Red Lily Lagoon and the bottom of the Corroboree Billabong system.
Conclusion

- Sea level rise and the impact of climate change is occurring across Northern Australia right now.
- Important freshwater wetland systems are suffering serious and irreversible environmental damage across the top end.
- There is a real threat to iconic Northern Territory wetlands like Corroboree billabong.
Thank you