

## Northern Australia News Roundup – January 2017

Welcome to a summary of December and January'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

- [Refreshed Joint Standing Committee on Nthn Aust to inquire into opportunities & methods for stimulating the tourism industry in Nth Aust \(ToR, members\). Submissions due 16 Feb More](#)
- [\\$100M Exploring for the Future program](#) underway focusing on minerals, energy & groundwater in the north
- [Canavan's opinion piece on potential NAIF loan, alternative opinion on economics of possible loan, and analysis indicates loan equates to paying \\$683k for each of ~1500 jobs. Canavan clashes with ABC More](#)
- [WA gov provides \\$16M for road to project Seadragon prawn farm](#)
- [Ord Stage 3 not a priority for NT gov](#)
- [Woodside says more LNG mega projects unlikely](#)
- [Outback yarn on sustainable tourism and the future of nth Aust](#)
- [Nth croc meat bound for US market](#)
- [Top US fighter planes to be based in Nth Aust](#)
- [Tradies help in new research on working in tropical heat & humidity](#)
- [Tackling increased poaching in Nth Aust seas](#)
- [History can inform Nth development agenda](#)
- [6.5 earthquake rattles Nth Aust](#)
  
- [Rhinehart now one of top 3 beef producers in Aust with 300k cattle, 1.5% of land & 21 stns, more](#)
- [Former NT Chief Min to work for Rhinehart as GM of 'external affairs pastoral' tho concerns over link with fracking permits. Rhinehart checks out new Kidman properties; more](#)
- [The rise of Brahman cattle - 70% of bulls in the Nth are Brahman](#)
- [Live-ex to fall 24%, Live-ex challenged by wet season access, shortage of heifers, and Indian buffalo imports, Biosec key in talks on cattle deal with Indonesia](#)
- [NT likely to restore cattle herd numbers in next 2 yrs, Qld in next 6yrs, and 'northern' herd as a whole ~6yrs depending on rainfall. Qld cattle herd smallest since 93, but prices high and graziers optimistic if enough rain. NT industry v positive](#)
- [Drones taking off in the Nth \(more re drones for land research, legacy mine monitoring and LiDAR drone\) and AACo using sat tech to track staff](#)
  
- [2016 brought highest temps on record for most of Nth Aust with Darwin posting records for max, mean & min temps . Also W Kim, Top End and west Cape York penin show highest increase in no. of days with max>35C](#)
- [BOM Feb-Mar outlook indicates above av rain for most of NT but ~av for Kimberley and Nth Qld](#)
- [Big wet brings smiles to barra fishers](#)
- [Big wet for WA \(more, Lake Argyle overflowing\), Mt Isa, Top End](#)
- [Explainer – what is the Aust monsoon](#)

### Nth Aust Hub News

- [Check out Hub projects running in 2017](#)
- We welcome Jane Thomas ([jane.thomas@cdu.edu.au](mailto:jane.thomas@cdu.edu.au)) as Science Communicator (ex IAN) and Karen Dayman ([Karen.dayman@klc.org.au](mailto:Karen.dayman@klc.org.au)) as Regional Research coordinator in the Kimberley
- [Read about Hub wetlands project in the new Wetlands Australia magazine](#)

## State, Territory etc news

- NT population grows by 534 people in 2015-16 to 245,000
- NT economy losing momentum but job market strong
- Permits needed to access tidal waters over aboriginal land
- NLC corporate plan to 2019/20 aims to have land & sea rights recognised and ensure Aboriginal people benefit socially, culturally & economically from this
- New collaborative land-use mapping project and DPIR improved pastures survey for producers
- Bootu Creek manganese mine re-opens and Aust's 5<sup>th</sup> largest diamond found at Merlin
- Frydenberg approves controversial Tiwi Island port
- NT buffalo industry aims for 20k/yr harvest and Crocs eating more than 100 cows/year
- Sandalwood co. to convert Douglas-Daly property to forestry
- Rain brings best hay season start in 5 yrs, fat cattle and season good for rambutans
- Charity giving NT cows to Cambodian families
  
- 'Chain of responsibility' laws prevent Qld taxpayers picking up environmental clean-up bills
- Townsville signs Aust's first 'City Deal'
- Hughenden looks for opportunities after job losses and drought tho other Nth Qld towns on cusp of coal jobs
- New direct flights from Cairns to Korea, Cairns tipped as top destination and outcomes of tropical Nth Qld tourism forum
- 118k ha land handback to Shelburne Bay TOs, Cape York, with 40k as co-managed nat'l park
- New \$2.9M ranger work and trainee program for Cape York community and
- NW and far Nth Indigenous communities, and Flinders shire up for share in \$5M in infrastructure
- Qld graziers DIY high speed internet
- Wet Tropics community to design \$33M project to improve reef water quality, \$11.8M in grants for sugar cane farmers to improve water quality and dung beetles also on the job
- Cairns supplies Japanese theme park with fish and corals
- Mixed results of Qld rice crops and grant for Cape York timber co.
- Contaminated water on stn nr Julia Crk now okay for cattle
  
- Bountiful Kakadu plum/gubinge season and plum plantations coming to Broome
- Rains bring hope for NW WA prawning industry
- Halls Crk nickel mine may reopen and Min moves to reopen Ellendale diamond mine
- Yanunijarra Aboriginal Corporation takes on rangers in partnership with KLC
- Green Army loss for Indigenous employment in Broome; more
- 10 remote WA Aboriginal communities for infrastructure upgrades
- Mandora Stn near Broome changes hands
- 2min video of Kim & Pilbara cattlemen's & MLA stakeholder day and leadership bootcamp info
- Thunderbird mineral sands environmental review out for comment until 13 Feb
- Untold story of Kimberley bone ornament and Wandjina art story reclaimed by TOs
- Kununurra becoming fishers' paradise

## Water

- Qld revises water legislation and water planning processes with water plans replacing water resource plans, new water management protocols (to implement a water plan) and new water entitlement notices (to replace ROP schedules).
- Update on CSIRO's Nth Aust Water Res Assessment project
- Unallocated Qld Fitzroy Basin water available and Gilbert river later in the year post IFED
- Qld Govt seeking comment on draft water plan, mgt protocol & entitlement notice for Great Artesian Basin & other regional aquifers until 17 Apr
- Qld irrigators one step closer to local management of assets
- Wetlands in the GBR catchments mgt strategy released; more
- Darwin commercial growers urged to apply for water extraction licences due to major watertable drops

- [Mt Todd mine legally discharges contaminated water into river to clean up](#)
- [One Nation wants to turn Qld rivers inland to create Garden of Eden](#) and [Opinion on the power of dams for Nth Aust](#)
- [Yawuru receives \\$250k for irrigation project near Broome](#)
- [WA gov provides \\$11.5M for groundwater investigations and \\$20M for irrigation innovation grants](#)

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

- [Discovery of Nth Aust parasite sparks calls for more monitoring; more](#)
- [Qld Govt funds feral cat research](#)
- [Major research on stinking passionflower in NW WA](#)
- [Magpie geese impact Qld mango growers maybe due to poor 2015/6 wet in NT; more](#)
- [Indigenous community eradicate mosquito fish](#)
- [Sagittaria response continues in NT](#)
- [Biosecurity stalls new mango for Qld grower and dieback killing Derby mango trees](#)

### **Biodiversity and Protected Areas**

- [New 740k ha Wiltinggin National Park for Nth Kimberley](#)
- [Horizontal Falls marine park hurts some fishers tho 76% of park open to rec & charter fishing](#)
- [150 new species of snail discovered on Kimberley islands](#)
- [Guides to wetland plants of the Wet Tropics and Townsville-Burdekin floodplain, and WSUD plant selection guide for Mackay; more](#)
- [Core samples show ancient GBR almost drowned then recovered and Omura whale first for GBR](#)
- [GBR farmer a local legend and Video re cassowary losses](#)
- [Aust researchers leading push for eastern curlew protection and Gulf property added to flyway](#)
- [Smoking banned in Qld national park picnic areas, etc](#)
- [Golden pearls and coral crocheters](#)
- [Rare lizardfish fossil found in NW Qld](#)
- [Draft recovery plan for marine turtles reviewing comments](#)
- [Nth Aust whipray one of 3 new Aust ray species found in 2016 more](#)
- [Lower croc numbers in NT in 2016](#)

### **Fire and carbon**

- [Qld gov announces \\$8.4M Aboriginal carbon farming fund](#)
- [Evaluation of policy options to support carbon farming in WA rangelands](#)
- [Report on Kimberley fire management and carbon abatement from Morocco COP22](#)
- [WA rangelands fire managers meet](#)

### **Events**

Feb & March, [NT economic summits](#), various NT locations

23-24 Feb 2017, [NT Governance Summit](#), Darwin NT

7-8 Mar 2017, [ABARES Outlook conference](#), Canberra ACT

23-24 Mar 2017, [Kimberley & Pilbara Cattlemen's conference & field day](#), Minderoo Stn

1-4 May 2017, [Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference](#), Canberra ACT

19-20 Jun 2017, [Developing Northern Australia](#) conference, Cairns

4-7 Sept 2017, [Qld Coastal Conference](#), Airlie Beach Qld

24-28 Sept 2017, [Aust Rangeland Society Biennial Conference](#), Port Augusta SA

29 Nov-3 Dec, [Ecological Society of Australia conference](#), Adelaide SA

### **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 are available [here](#) (and earlier editions by the [Kimberley to Cape](#) initiative are [here](#))

