

Northern Australia News Roundup – March 2017

Welcome to a summary of March'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

- [NT & Qld sign agreement for NAIF funds to flow, NAIF loans wont affect GST and Joint ministerial forum on nthn Development established](#) [More](#)
- [NAIF update with NT focus](#) and [Swan questions NAIF governance with 'slush fund' allegations'](#) [More](#)
- [China invites NAIF to align with 'one belt one road' economic program but gov reluctant and five projects to be NAIF funded 'close to financial close'](#)
- [Chinese premiere talks up Nth Aust & NT likened to China's west, sparse in popn & lacking infrastructure](#)
- [CRC for Developing Nth Aust seeking CEO](#) and [ex interim Chair for Nth Qld state](#)
- [Canavan on new Regional Australia Ministerial Taskforce to improve the lives of rural, regional and remote Australians with Min Nash citing health, education and infrastructure like communications and dams](#)

- [Project Seadragon prawn farm passes enviro impact assessment with 13 conditions inc scientific Advisory Group & waterbird program](#) [More](#) [more](#) [Prawn breeding facilities in Darwin's Bynoe harbour also approved with conditions](#)
- [\\$5M Aust gov feasibility study to expand Ord ramping up, GMO cotton for Nth Aust and Ord focuses on cotton rather than cane](#)
- [Review of agrics red tape incs recs relevant to canefarmers and live-ex](#)
- [Uncertainty for sandalwood co Quintis \(formerly TFS\) who own 12k ha of plantations in Nth Aust](#) [More](#) and [KNX watches](#)
- [Nrly 50 submissions made to Joint Committee on stimulating tourism in Nth Aust](#)
- [Andrew Robb urges acceptance of more foreign investment at Cattlemens conf](#) and [NTCA, AgForce Qld, WA PGA, Cattle Council, NT Gov & Canavan sign Beef Plan North to boost industry](#)
- [Cattle president calls for industry to protect its comparative advantage of pastures, rain, water sunlight and soil and product differentiation reinforced by Brazilian economist](#)
- [New agreement opens China to more beef exports tho Live-ex co raises finance to deal with difficult trading conditions](#) and [Cattle price falls 40c/kg and NT ports shipping out Qld cattle.](#)
- [Suspension on prawn imports could impact cattle exports](#)
- [Consolidated Pastoral co rolls out \\$750k internet service](#)

- [New report demonstrates importance of Indigenous rangers and Protected Areas and calls for more](#) [More](#) [more](#) [more](#) and [\\$15M for Indigenous Protected Areas negotiated by Greens](#) [More](#)
- [Report analysing impact of major agreements assoc'd with Native Title in WA on Indigenous assets & aspirations inc Ord](#)
- [Northern futures 1 of 5 foci in Aust Gov Dept of Agrics Reconciliation Action Plan](#) which incs targets to double # of Indigenous ranger groups delivering Nth Aust biosecurity services, to establish a biosecurity-focused ranger network that meets annually, & to explore traditional food & fibre prodn
- [Indigenous cultural apps bring dreaming stories to life](#) [More on Jabiru tech co](#) [more](#)

- [Optimistic start to banana prawn season due to big wet and big gulf barra catch expected](#)
- [Gulf mangroves died of thirst ie due to combo of low rainfall, high temps and low sealevel](#) [More](#) [more](#)

- [Illegal fishing of sea cumpers in Nth Aust due to Sth China Sea territorial disputes](#)
- [Cyclone Debbie damage bill in \\$billions and Re-thinking urban design and recognising natural coastal buffers post cyclone Debbie](#)
- [Insurance co. partners to analyse claim data to understand cyclone vulnerabilities in Nth Qld homes and Nth Aust premiums may rise](#)
- [Cyclone brings wettest March in 50yrs to coastal Qld tho in early Mar 84% of Qld in drought](#)
- [Nth Aust cyclone facts](#)
- [BOM apr to jun outlook predicts above av rain in far Nth & av or slightly below across much of Nth](#)
- [Citizen science to see if dragonflies signal start of dry](#)

Nth Aust Hub News

- [Report and factsheet](#) from our investigation of the effect of feral cat exclusion fences describes impact on reptiles, cat & dingo diets and cat densities
- [Report and factsheet](#) from scoping Nth Aust environmental monitoring tools highlights future use of finescale aerial photos, drones, genetic techniques and camera trapping
- [New project on fire and weeds](#) (esp gamba grass) in the Darwin & Daly areas [More](#)
- We are seeking a [Research Associate \(Fish Ecology\)](#) and a [Research Associate \(Riparian Ecology\)](#) with applications due 18 Apr

State, Territory etc news

- [NT draft Economic development framework, draft infrastructure strategy, and 10yr infrastructure plan](#) [More](#)
- [NT EPA roadmap for modern enviro regulation framework](#)
- [More on NTCA cattlemens assoc conf, panel notes and gov seeking pastoral NRM champs](#)
- [Rhinehart buys Katherine region cattle station and advises gov to invest in technology, tax reform and a national agric day](#)
- [Controversial Tiwi forestry project denies collapse risk](#)
- [Horticulture visas needed to solve Top End labour issues & targeted training for seasonal workers](#)
- [Tipperary station sows 16k ha to improved pastures with another 12k ha to be cleared](#) incs comment on gamba grass
- [Jawoyn sign conservation agreement to protect 168ha of Indigenous land nr Katherine](#) [More](#)
- [Arnhem Land stories in the stars](#)
- [Earthquake rattles Top End](#)
- [WA's new agric Min calls for new NW research institution to look at cattle industry, horticulture & carbon farming and More from Kimberley & Pilbara Cattlemens conf](#)
- [Twiggy Forest partners with Kimberley & Pilbara Cattlemens to launch Harvey Beef 'Rangelands' brand and Broome abattoir reopens after wet with plans for local pies](#)
- [Broome coast Austs Jurassic Park and Dinosaur footprints at proposed Broome marina site](#)
- [No takers for oil & gas exploration lease over Kimberley parks](#)
- [Hope for buyer for abandoned Cockatoo Is iron ore mine that threatens enviro](#)
- [Open letter re air costs to nth aust](#)
- [Qlds wild weather impacts agriculture](#) [More](#) [more](#) and [fisheries](#)
- [\\$7.1M for canegrowers to test high efficiency fertilisers & video on changes in sugarcane farming](#)
- [Landholders driving change project tackling erosion in Bowen region and video on fixing Burdekin erosion](#)
- [Survey confirms more GBR bleaching confirmed](#) [More](#) [more](#)
- [Rios Cape York Amrun bauxite mine spends \\$900M on qld contracts and \\$600k to support minerals exploration in NW Qld](#)
- [Six new management zones for Qld crocs under new plan](#)

- [ADF working with landholders nr Charters Towers to buy land](#)
- [New chair Wendy Morris for Tourism Tropical Nth Qld](#)
- [Indigenous women meet to discuss managing country](#)
- [Find out more re Cape York Life](#)

Water

- [Productivity Commission 's Issues Paper on national water reform](#) calling for comment on issues inc if water entitlement & planning frameworks conducive to facilitating major infrastructure investment in Nth Aust', & improving Indigenous engagement in water planning. [More](#)
- [NWI module released on Engaging Indigenous peoples in water planning and management](#)
- [Qld announces new Water Act Referral Panel Members to provide specialist advice on sustainable water management](#)
- [RDA NT ceo Kate Peak wins NTs Rural Woman of 2017 for work to improve water management](#)
- [\\$825k for irrigation to quadruple agric production in Lakeland 130km nth of Mareeba to 20k ha](#)
- [Comment on the national water infrastructure fund loan facility](#)
- [Irrigated agric for hay on the Flinders and soon Barkley Tableland](#)
- [Katherine's drinking water may be unsafe due to firefighting pollutants](#)
- [Guide to stream invertebrates in perennial coastal streams in tropical Qld](#)
- [Ntheast Qld enviro values and water quality objectives out for comment until 31 may](#) [More](#)

Energy

- [Solar boost for Nth Qld coal town and \\$42M Lakeland solar and storage project nr Cooktown tests 'grid to island' for remote towns](#)
- [Canavan speech on electricity security for jobs in the north](#)
- [Call for Nth Aust Energy Strategy \(see March Energy Update\) and NT gov roadmap to renewables](#)
- [NT fracking inquiry hears from pastoralists and enviros and seeks economic returns modelling and social impact modelling. NTCA pushes for landholders to be able to say no to fracking on their land policy](#)
- [NT-Qld gas pipeline gets federal enviro approval tho faces contract delays and land disputes](#)
- [NT-SA pipeline may not add up or unviable w/o fracking](#)

Weeds, ferals, diseases, etc

- [NW Qld fights prickly acacia](#)
- [Pig proof fence could protect 40k CYP turtle eggs](#)
- [Big pic BBC story on cane toads and Winners and losers in cane toad battle](#)
- [Country Needs People weeds video and ferals video](#)
- [Feral animal cull in Kakadu to reduce damage and Kimberley cull helps national parks with mustering economics not adding up](#)
- [Funding fire ants](#)
- [NT Athel Pine management plan released and cycad genetics](#)

Biodiversity and Protected Areas

- [40% and higher declines in small mammals in Tiwi Is](#) [More](#)
- [Calls to release rpt that finds no real evidence of illegal trade in sea turtle & dungong meat in Qld](#)
- [Nightparrot sighting in northern WA more more](#)
- [GBR governance review underway](#)
- [Sawfish swords for stealth hunting](#)
- [Finches and cattle and ants and cattle can go together](#)
- [Video explaining Indigenous Protected Areas](#)
- [Papers on bridging Indigenous & scientific knowledge systems for sustainability here and here](#)
- [Rangers gather in Fitzroy Crossing for bilby workshop](#) [More](#)
- [Thylacines on Cape York Peninsula? Follow up study](#)

- [Cairns frog hospital faces another move](#), [300g prawn caught in Gulf](#) and [Melbourne museum collecting live giant FNQ insects](#)
- [News on western cape turtle threat abatement alliance](#) and from [NT sea ranger workshop](#)
- [Big protected wildlife seizure in Darwin](#)
- [Kimberley croc numbers rise](#) but [snakes eat crocs!](#)

Fire and carbon

- [Kimberley ranger network begins annual fire management program](#) [more](#)
- [Credit for carbon stored in dead veg](#) (from dec)
- [WA pastoralists petition for carbon farming](#)
- [Mapping fire severity across the Nth](#)

Events

6 Apr, Climate in the Top End, Darwin (Katherine 7 Apr) info Eva.Zinkovsky@csiro.au

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

5-7 Jun, [National Native Title conf](#), Townsville

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

26 Jun-7 Jul, [Drone flying course](#), CDU Darwin

2-6 Jul, [Aust Marine Science Conf](#), Darwin

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

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

Please note

We would like to add you to the mailing list for our Hub's e-newsletter that comes out 3 or 4 times a year. The newsletter contains results, updates and other news from our projects across the North, so we think you'll be interested but please let me know if you don't want to be on the distribution list!

- 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!)
- if you get a phishing message, please try adding me to your address book, though sometimes this is due to one uncertified link that I don't know about
- previous news roundups are available [here](#) (and earlier editions by the [Kimberley to Cape](#) initiative are [here](#))