



Welcome to this month's summary of recent news on topics relevant to the [Northern Hub's](#) goal of supporting sustainable development in northern Australia. These clips aim to facilitate cross-sector & cross-region knowledge sharing, & more informed conversations about the future of northern Australia. They're an informal 'round up' of what comes across our desks rather than a systematic collection, so please send any relevant news in & let us know what you think. **We wish everybody a very merry festive season – we'll be back in early February with a round-up of news from December & January.** Cheers & best regards, Clare Taylor, Jane Thomas & Patch Clapp.

### **Pan-northern news**

- [Third Ministerial Forum on Nthn Devt maps a joint approach to grow tourism & defence industries, & Indigenous businesses, more & Defence statement for nth Aust](#)
- [Nth Aust devt faces investment, bureaucracy & policy stability challenges](#)
- [\\$150k to expand TraNSIT tool to include tourist data to identify infrastructure needs](#)
- [NAIF annual report released. Summary – 4 Investment Decisions & 2 Conditional Approvals in FY2017-18, & 2 Investment Decisions & 2 Conditional Approvals in 1<sup>st</sup> qtr 18-19. Total loan commitments at Nov18 = \\$1bn & projects capital value ~\\$2.3bn. Forecast public benefit = \\$1.9bn+ & direct jobs = 2870.](#)
- [CRC for Nth Aust commits \\$4.3m to 7 new projects in aquaculture, ag, horticulture & health leveraging a further \\$11m](#)
- [\\$470k analysis of nth Aust beef could lead to \\$3b investment in industry, more, more](#)
- [Research to develop sustainable agribusiness model for nth Aust traditional medicinal plants](#)
- [New appointments to boost Indo–Aust cattle trade, first live-ex independent observer report & farm 'fitbits' help track livestock movements](#)
- [Full Project Sea Dragon update from Seafarm's AGM](#)
- [Changes to two visa progams may help farmers, but 462 now broader than nth Aust](#)
- [Qs asked over Indigenous grant money for NT Seafood Council, consulting co. & AFANT](#)
- [Seafood industry calls for Senate inquiry into effects of seismic testing on marine life](#)
- [Nth Aust sea country mgt workshop at TNRM conference](#)
- [Qantas axing half-empty flights across nthn Aust with Top End tourism falling 7%](#)
- [Legislation to implement maritime boundary treaty with Timor-Leste introduced to parliament](#)
- [Geoscience Aust models suggests Aust tsunami risk highest in NW WA but still low](#)
- [Extreme temps over most of nth Qld & wild weather explained](#)
- [BOM seasonal outlook Dec–Feb shows hotter & below avg rainfall over much of nth](#)
- [New trop cyclone data from 160k scenarios will help build resilience](#)

### **Hub news**

- [Trials show eDNA useful for detecting threatened terrestrial species like Gouldian Finch](#)
- [Keeping prawns & barra on the menu – update from the Gulf rivers & coastal productivity team](#)
- [Productive updates & conversations at the Hub's research marketplace at TNRM conference](#)
- [Check out our Nov eNewsletter for more stories inc. \[improving gamba control\]\(#\) & \[earning carbon credits from savanna fire mgt\]\(#\)](#)
- [Mapping rare & threatened species' sensitivity to threatening processes](#)
- [Hub researches invited to run science activities alongside cultural activities on Cape York](#)
- [Mitchell Rv research team collecting fish earbones to better understand floodplain food connectivity](#)

### **State & Territory news**

- [WA govt appoints expert stakeholder convenor Bardy McFarlane to guide commitments on Fitzroy Rv Nat'l Park & mgt plan \[\\[Hub Fitzroy research\\]\]\(#\)](#)
- [Rinehart's Hancock Ag welcomes McFarlane & NAWRA Fitzroy report as the blueprint](#)
- [WA announces lift on fracking moratorium but keeps 98% of state off limits & Canavan welcomes fracking decision, more, more & pastoralists call for veto rights & differing reactions from groups in NW WA, more](#)
- [Sea Dragon prawn farm project progress helped by WA road upgrade](#)
- [Northern beef trial seeks to find best fodder](#)
- [\\$500k available for nth WA pastoralists to drive new jobs](#)

- Growers wary of view that thriving Ord cotton crop spruiked as possible game changer for nth Aus
- Derby Airport receives \$8m upgrade
- NAIF due diligence for Pilbara magnesium project
- Durack electorate inc Kimberley significant in mining industry's \$250b contribution to Aust economy
- \$200m Darwin City deal for tropical capital with university focus & CDU NAIF project in Due Diligence
- Sth Asian migrants could grow NT population & why does Darwin offer so few international flights?
- NT Farmers release plan to double Territory ag value to \$600m in next 10 yrs
- Chinese investment co. buys NT's two largest watermelon farms for \$27.5m
- Possible cotton devt on NT station after \$8.9m sale & family success with divisive durians
- Changes to NT pastoral rent introduces stability but large rent increases for some leases
- Joe Morrison stepping down as NLC's CEO
- Large sections of NT coastline could be closed to fishing
- Senate passes Land Rights Act amendments progressing resolution of 4 claims & Kakadu joint mgt
- Native Title determination recognises Mirarr rights over parts of Jabiru township & future Jabiru Lake plan's croc safety questioned
- 15 Indigenous rangers training to become NT Fisheries inspectors
- 90k blacklip oysters being grown off Sth Goulburn Is. off the Arnhem Land coast
- INPEX signs deal to pay Larrakia Devt Corp \$24m over decades
- Kakadu TOs plan to wild harvest plums & plant plum trees for rehabilitation etc
- NTG grants \$5b Mt Peake mine a mineral lease
- 2018 TNRM Award winners announced inc Dean Yibarbuk
- Qld govt work procedures guides & training to help with Native Title
- Discussion paper on Qld mining rehabilitation costs [\[related Hub mine rehab research\]](#)
- Qld launches climate change agenda focused on biodiversity & ecosystems – plan here
- Qld State of the Env Rpt outlines performance for 7 themes & incs useful infographics
- Graziers want more done for fire prevention on state-owned conservation properties
- Qld's Quinkan Country rock art area added to National Heritage List & next round of Aust Heritage Grants inc. Indigenous & natural in addition to historic heritage
- Govt commits to tackling India sugar subsidies with WTO challenge – \$360m loss currently likely
- Vessel monitoring systems on Qld fishers sparking debate between industry & mgt
- Fishing anecdotes suggest NQ sharks getting bigger & fatter
- Resources sector contributes 10.5% of Qld GDP
- Terrain NRM announces Reef Champion award winners
- Northern Gulf Croaker spring/summer issue

## **Water**

- Katter trades govt support for FNQ water projects with weir near Charters Towers & \$180m for Hughenden Irrigation scheme, more
- Hughenden & Hells Gate water infrastructure, more
- \$500m boost to National Water Infrastructure Devt Fund incs \$2m for Burnett regions
- \$200m for Townsville water security
- NT govt to increase fines in Water Act in preparation for NT fracking
- Advice suggests Adani water plan needed full env impact assessment

## **Energy**

- Min Canavan says foreign investment in oil & gas could transform NT's economy, more & INPEX flags possible future expansion
- High cost for landlords a factor in lowest national solar uptake rate for NT but NT solar sector could take off to help meet 2030 50% renewable target
- Kimberley Clean Energy Roadmap released, map
- Conservationists oppose approval of additional thermal coal mine in Galilee Basin & Adani announces it will self-finance smaller mine
- Aust gas exports set to double by 2040 & reach 108m tonnes

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

- Standing Committee inquiry into controlling spread of cane toads open for submissions til 31 Jan
- \$1.7m boost to nth Qld biosecurity
- Rpt details challenges of gamba grass, more & infographic [\[related Hub research here & here\]](#)
- Successful ranger-led project leaves only 1 feral cat on Gulf's West Is. [\[related Hub cat research\]](#)
- Invasive parthenium weed found in the Katherine region likely to be contained to small area
- Kimberley aerial feral pig cull
- Scientists find gene that makes mosquito bites more likely
- Ngukurr ranger video shows impacts of feral animals on billabongs [\[related Hub feral animal research\]](#)

## Biodiversity & protected areas

- [Nth Aust marine worms important for ecosystem function tho often overlooked](#)
- [NT turtles facing severe pop'n struggles as all-female clutches born due to heat](#)
- [NT bilby pop'n stabilising but feral cats continue to pose a problem](#) [[related Hub bilby & cat research](#)]
- [Dolphin numbers in Darwin Harbour drop](#)
- [Large spike in Timor-Leste croc attacks may be from animals swimming across from NT](#)
- [Researchers use weather radar to track elusive magpie goose populations](#)
- [Rare sighting of Asian duck \(garganey\) in nth WA & endangered sea snakes found in nth WA](#)
- [Night Parrot photographed in Kimberley for 2nd time](#)
- [Artificial roosts for ghost bats built around Pilbara mines](#)
- [Research on how Kimberley sawfish respond to rising global temps](#)
- [World's largest humpback whale pop'n booms with annual 10% inc along Kimberley coasts](#)
- [5 new papers in Nth Qld Naturalist inc fire & rose gums, whiptail rays, water mouse & more](#)
- [Plastics in fish caught in GBR World Heritage Area](#)
- [GBR managers seek to learn from international managers of World Heritage-listed reefs](#)
- [Advisory Committee developed for significant fossil site at Riversleigh, NW Qld](#)
- [Scientists dig for vertebrate fossils in nth Tanami Desert site](#)

## Fire & carbon

- [Unusual Qld fire conditions make international headlines](#)
- [Mimal Land Mgt present their 3D fire map at TNRM conference](#)
- [Carbon offsets for NT fracking thought to be 'prohibitively expensive'](#)
- [CDU research suggests calculations of the CO2 released by rivers are currently inaccurate & this especially relevant in nth Aust where groundwater can be saturated with CO2](#)

## Events

- 6 Dec, [Future of Agriculture forum \(AgForce\)](#), Hughenden
- 12 Dec, [Regional Devt Aust FNQ&TS NAIF Funding workshop](#), Cairns
- 13-14 Feb, [Nth Aust Savanna Fire & Carbon Forum](#), Darwin
- 11-12 July, [Developing Northern Australia Conference](#), Karratha

## Please note

- This is an informal compilation & views don't necessarily reflect those of the Northern Hub or affiliates
- We welcome your input & feedback to help us improve the Round-up
- We focus on the semiarid & tropical parts of northern Australia (i.e. don't include Central Australia, Pilbara or Lake Eyre Basin, etc)
- Increasingly, online media outlets are subscriber-only (e.g. Cairns Post, The NT News, Townsville Bulletin, The Australian) so this limits the outlets we are able to link to
- Previous news round-ups are available [here](#)

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