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. Cheers & best regards, Clare Taylor, Jane Thomas & Patch Clapp.

Pan-northern news

• Public hearing by Joint Parliamentary Cmte into engaging TOs in the economic devt of nth Aust hears from Nat’l Native Title Tribunal, Office of Nth Aust & AIATSIS, more
• $74m NAIF loan for WA fertiliser project as part of $250m project, more
• $505k CRC for Developing Nth Aus research collaboration for specialty rice
• Remote Community Devt Program achieves only 1% improvement in employment, more
• Comment on Indigenous estate, new labour markets, transition planning & more rel to nth Aust
• $12m in grants to facilitate new Indigenous Protected Areas [related Hub research]
• Seafarms Grp lost $13m in last 6 mths but work well underway for Project Seadragon prawn farm
• NT cotton growers learn from Qld growers w 100ha being grown in Top End this yr
• Broome pearling co. expands to NT waters
• Beef exports to China on rapid rise
• Campaign to reduce cattle on & nr roads in nth Aus goes nat’l
• Office of Northern Australia newsletter
• More species threatened as nth Aust suffers more heat events [related Hub research]
• Aust Institute suggests nth Aust could be too disaster-prone for insurance
• Aerial accessibility across the nth remains an important topic for residents regularly isolated
• How the Madden-Julian Oscillation influences the wet in the nth

Hub news

• Follow up on the latest Hub research & products presented in Canberra 18-21 Feb
• Getting Back to Jilundarina short film thoughtfully conveys Waanyi Garawa desires for a future connected to country
• Qld Hub researchers discuss innovations in tracing energy through food webs

State & Territory news

• NT govt pledge to underwrite loans for major projects
• Treaty negotiations b/w NT govt & Aboriginal people to be led by Mick Dodson, more, more
• NLC full council will meet before Scullion’s mtg to discuss audit rpt which has been rejected by interim CEO, more, more
• New Federal laws to enable further Aboriginal land claims in the NT
• Second biggest mango crop on record & bumper dragon fruit crop seeks market
• NT govt denies fault over $10m grant to water bottling company
• Manganese clean up required near Katherine after derailment & manganese mine dam safety risk
• PFAS env’l precautions disregarded at Darwin Airport
• Persistent high temps lead to spontaneous combustion & smouldering cattle yard
• Limited wet season for nth leaves sthn NT baking & March not likely to offer any substantial rainfall

• FNQ Reg’l Org. of Councils 2019 election priorities, more
• NW Qld flood devastates livestock farmers, TSV-Mt Isa railway reopen not expected until May, NW Qld farmers ask BoM for updated radar services, BoM classifies Qld event as ‘exceptional’, Biosecurity Qld brought in to manage carcass disposal & multibillion $ recovery package for graziers
• Qld summer of disasters costs $1.5b
• Giant flood plumes hit GBR & Gulf, NW Qld flooding topic on Qld Globe [related Hub research]
• Adani issued a ‘show cause’ notice over coal-laden floodwater release
• Qld communities in transition project for clean growth choices
• New laws on waste mgt & draft FNQ Waste Infrastructure Plan (4th article) [related Hub research]
• $16m for 8 FNQ Landcare projects
• Wet Tropics Waterways podcasts
• More from Terrain & Southern Gulf NRM

• New film on devt perspectives ‘Undermined – Tales from the Kimberley’
• Global nickel boom gives Kimberley mine second wind & nickel loaded at Wyndham
• Kimberley mineral sands project delayed but not mothballed
• Popular west Kimberley parks to take on Bunuba language names
• Kimberley ag leaders meet to discuss cattle welfare & prevention of livestock losses, more
• Kimberley algae biofuel trial to start on Indigenous-run stations
• Round 2 of WA Aboriginal Ranger Program open for EOIs

Water
• NT Water Amendment Bill referred to Economic Scrutiny Cmte with submissions due 11 Mar
• Territorians use more water than others in Aust, triple the amount of some places
• FNQ Regional Org of Councils establish Drinking Water Quality Alliance with Qld Health (3rd article)
• New Inventory page on standard methods for collecting & managing wetland-related data
• New Lower Burdekin Walking the Catchment story map
• NT businesses may pose backflow risk to water supply
• Rpt on improving modelling of gully erosion & river sediment transport

Energy
• Min. Canavan declares NT’s Beetaloo Basin as best immediate prospect for oil & gas & confusion over whether companies are looking for (fracking rules apply to) gas or oil or both
• Nat’l resources statement incs ref to Beetaloo MOU & commitment to local community benefits
• NLC submission on amendment to NT petroleum legislation
• New Tanami gas pipeline testing goes ahead
• Santos aligns equity & operations in offshore nth Aust
• Glencore sets limits to coal production incl. from Qld mines
• Proposed Katherine solar farm sold to Italian company, Eni Australia Ltd
• Rio Tinto gets $2m from ERF to switch Arnhem Land mine to diesel power

Weeds, ferals, diseases, etc
• Tropical diseases more common with more extreme weather events & melioidosis (post-flood disease) info
• Murray Valley encephalitis warning in nth WA, but no human cases this season
• Conversation article on feral cat cull target
• Toxic parthenium weed costing farmers $22m/yr still found in Katherine
• Cane toad inquiry lacks WA reps & holding hearings in only Canberra
• Genetically altering cane toads to reduce toxicity
• Call to extend funding to eradicate yellow crazy ant in FNQ

Biodiversity & protected areas
• Atlas of butterflies & diurnal moths of nth Aust
• Rangers risk all in croc-inhabited Top End waters for dugong conservation
• Do nth Aust crocs swim to Timor? & croc trap theft puzzles rangers near Darwin
• Worm goby fish caught nr Kakadu
• Qld’s new laws for harvesting croc eggs sparks emotive response from Australia Zoo
• Endangered nthn quolls could be surviving in Darwin suburbs
• Top End hopping mouse subject of surveys to better understand their dist’n
• $330k Landcare project to maintain mahogany glider pop’n in FNQ
• White lemuroid possum could be climate change victim
• Trials to cool turtle nests to ensure a better ratio of male to female hatchlings
• GBR position statement on coastal ecosytems
• Celebrated sighting of Asian fairy pitta in WA darkened by likely cat predation
• Threatened Species cmte appointments inc Jaru/Kija woman Cissy Gore-Birch

Fire & carbon industry
• Completed 2019 fires scars & 2018 fire histories available via NAFI
• Farmers & land managers in nth Aust included in expanded scope of ERF rebadging
• 200 people at Nth Aust Savanna Fire Forum to look at carbon farming, more [related Hub research]

Events
• 14 Mar, North Queensland Agribusiness Future Forum, Townsville
• 15 Mar, Impact Assessment… social & cultural sustainability in developing the North, Darwin
• 28–29 Mar, NT Cattlemen’s Conference, Darwin
• 3 Apr, Northern Australia Fire Managers (NAFM) forum, Darwin
• 9 Apr, NT Agriculture: Pathways to Potential Field Day, Katherine, NT
• 11–15 Jun, Australian Meteorological & Oceanographic Society meeting, Darwin
• 3–5 Jul, Australasian Ornithological Conference, Darwin
• 11–12 Jul, Developing Northern Australia Conference, Karratha
• July, Northern Australia Arts Fest, Townsville
• 10–18 Aug, National Science Week, national
• 14–15 Aug, Australian Water Association NQ regional conference, Townsville
• 21–23 Aug, Qld Coastal Conference, Gold Coast
• 2–5 Sep, Australian Rangeland Society Conference, Canberra
• 4–8 Sep, NT Resources Week, Darwin
• 12–13 Sep, Australasia Pacific Extension Network Conference, Darwin
• 20–24 Oct, Riversymposium, Brisbane
• 12–14 Nov, TNRM conference, Darwin

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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