



# COMMUNIQUE

## Northern Australia Land and Water Taskforce

---

16 December 2009

### NORTHERN AUSTRALIA TASKFORCE DELIVERS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT

The Northern Australia Land and Water Taskforce (the Taskforce) presented its final report, *Sustainable Development of Northern Australia*, to the Hon Gary Gray AO MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Western and Northern Australia in Perth today.

The Taskforce was convened in 2007 to establish a better understanding of sustainable development opportunities in northern Australia, based on water resource availability. Key priorities for the Taskforce were to find new opportunities for economic development in the north, based on water availability and sustainability, and to report on the potential impact of new developments on water balance and quality, the environment, existing water users and the broader community.

The Taskforce has offered fifteen recommendations to Government addressing key information gaps, opportunities for growth and constraints to development in northern Australia.

The Taskforce concluded that developing Northern Australia as an integrated, sustainable region is a complex policy challenge. It requires strategic focus, national leadership and an appreciation of the north's current and potential contribution to national prosperity. 'Closing the Gap' for Indigenous Australians is also imperative.

In addressing the terms of reference, the Taskforce consulted extensively with stakeholders and communities from across northern Australia. Over 80 public meetings and consultations were conducted and more than 100 public submissions received.

To underpin its work, the Taskforce also commissioned a comprehensive review of northern Australian land and water science. Coordinated by CSIRO and involving over eighty of Australia's leading scientists the *Northern Australia Land and Water Science Review 2009* represents the most comprehensive and thorough review undertaken of conventional science and knowledge of northern Australian land and water.

| Media inquiries: Joe Ross 0438 000 651 \_\_\_\_\_ Website: [www.nalwt.gov.au](http://www.nalwt.gov.au)