



North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance

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Looking after Our Country...Our Way.

Media Release

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An Indigenous Water Policy Statement for North Australia launched at Parliament House, Darwin, 24 March 2010

Indigenous experts from across north Australia launched an Indigenous Water Policy Statement at a landmark event that took place at Parliament House in Darwin on 24 March 2010.

Up to 80 people from Fitzroy Crossing to Cape York attended this event which was hosted by the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA).

Speaking at the launch, Professor Patrick Dodson stressed that this policy statement provides a chance to get things right in the north - to include Indigenous people in nation building, and make sure they are part of the economic development of their land.

Joe Morrison, NAILSMA CEO said "This Policy Statement is a clear declaration of the terms upon which Indigenous people want to be engaged in water planning and reforms in the north".

Traditional Owners attending the launch bought water from their regional catchments to be part of a symbolic unification ceremony to demonstrate that Indigenous communities across the north are standing together for water rights.

"The Water Policy Statement is a pragmatic approach by Indigenous people that is addressed to governments to partner with us to tackle Indigenous economic disadvantage" he said.

The Policy Statement builds on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as well as other statements relating to water reform, The Garma International Indigenous Water Declaration and The Mary River Statement.

The Indigenous Water Policy Group is the only construct in the north informing policies in the interests of its members and advocating for the recognition of Indigenous rights to water for customary and commercial purposes.

NAILSMA is an alliance of Kimberley Land Council, Northern Land Council, Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Cooperation and Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation.

More Information:

For full details about the launch, and to download the Indigenous Water Policy Statement, media releases, and other relevant information, go to http://www.nailsma.org.au/forum/water_policy_launch.html

For more information about the Indigenous Water Policy Group, visit the NAILSMA website:
www.nailsma.org.au/projects/water_policy.html

Media Contacts:

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