



Northern Land Council

MEDIA STATEMENT

NLC extends interim fishing arrangements from Blue Mud Bay until 31 December 2009

26 November 2008

The Northern Land Council's recent Full Council meeting held at Crab Claw Island endorsed the extension of the interim licensing and permit regime for commercial and recreational fishing in tidal waters over Aboriginal land until *31 December 2009*.

The interim regime was originally in force until two months after the High Court's Blue Mud Bay judgement being until 30 September 2008.

Last year the Land Councils committed to extending the interim regime for at least 12 months after the High Court's judgement which would be until 31 July 2009.

However the Northern Land Council has committed to this additional extension to *31 December 2009* to ensure that good faith negotiations can occur between all partners and stakeholders for the management and development of a sustainable fishing industry.

Aboriginal land covers approximately 5,500 kilometres of Northern Territory coastline and consultations with traditional owners will take some time to complete. Consequently, the NLC's Full Council will review this interim regime late next year with a view to further extending it if necessary.

This scheme is free and involves the automatic grant of licences to commercial operators, with recreational licences automatically granted on request.

The interim scheme was implemented in response to the Federal Court's decision in March last year in favour of traditional owners, and is administered by the NLC on behalf of the Anindilyakwa, Northern and Tiwi Land Councils.

Ends.

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