



Kenbi Land Use agreement to protect flatback turtle

11 April 2018

Sea Darwin has entered into a licence agreement with Kenbi Aboriginal Land Trust to maintain access to Ngulbitjik (Bare Sand Island) for running exclusive turtle tours. The licence means the eco-tourism company will continue to access Bare Sand Island during the dry season months to continue its tours.

The NLC Executive Council approved the licence in July 2017, following consultations with Traditional Owners, the Kenbi reference group and Aboriginal members of the Belyuen community. This Saturday will mark the first visit to Ngulbitjik for 2018 when Sea Darwin will lead a clean up of marine debris in preparation for turtle nesting season.

Ngulbitjik was handed back as Aboriginal Land to the Kenbi Aboriginal Land Trust by the Commonwealth in 2016. Under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act, proponents must enter into a lease or licence agreement to undertake commercial interests on Aboriginal Land.

NLC CEO Joe Morrison praised Sea Darwin for showing leadership and working in partnership with Traditional Owners to enter into this agreement, which will ensure tourists can continue to access this pristine area in an environmentally sustainable way.

“It’s a great example of tourism and economic development taking place on Aboriginal Land when the correct procedures are followed and when third parties show generosity and respect in working with Traditional Aboriginal Owners,” he said.

Sea Darwin Company Owner Jim Smith said the company was proud to formalise its association with the Kenbi Rangers. “We thank the Northern Land Council and the Kenbi Traditional Owners for granting us permission to visit your island this year with our guests.”

“This agreement recognises the importance of the island to Traditional Owners and confirms the supportive partnership between tourism and the Kenbi Sea Rangers in monitoring and protecting the island environment.”

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