



NORTHERN
LAND COUNCIL

MEDIA RELEASE

Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life

Project Sea Dragon set-back ‘disappointing’ but native title holders will still benefit

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The recent announcement by Seafarms Group Limited that plans for the world's largest prawn farm on Legune Station in the Northern Territory have been delayed is disappointing, but not the end of the road for native title holders, according to Northern Land Council CEO Joe Martin-Jard.

Last week Seafarms announced to the ASX that it will suspend major works pending completion of a pilot project.

The NLC has been engaged in the project since 2016 on behalf of Djarran-Djarrany and other Gadjerrong native title holders.

NLC chief executive Joe Martin-Jard said while it is disappointing that the larger-scale elements of the project have been delayed, native title holders will still benefit from smaller scale projects.

“The Northern Land Council and the Gadjerrong native title holders have been enthusiastically working with Seafarms on this project for about six years. Native title holders are as invested in this project as any major shareholder,” he said.

“While the news of the set-back is disappointing, the NLC will not be leaving native title holders in the lurch. We have already had productive discussions with Seafarms and are working hard to ensure native title holders benefit as much as they possibly can from this situation.

“The NLC and Seafarms are committed to ensuring that key initiatives – including the Gadjerrong ranger program and the various planned community projects – are implemented. Delays in project finance will mean that the NLC and Gadjerrong native title holders will need to adapt and rethink how these projects are supported, but we will not be throwing in the towel.

“We appreciate the recent transparency from Seafarms, although we wish this could have come sooner. Traditional owners and native title holders are straight talkers. They don’t want to be sold pipe-dreams.

“The upside of the pilot is that it minimises the impact on country while project feasibility is still being determined.”

Seafarms CEO Mick McMahon said the company remains committed to maintaining the positive and productive relationship it has developed with the NLC and the Gadjerrong native title holders.

“Next month we will meet in person on Country to discuss the outcome of the review. We remain committed to seeing the small scale community-based projects and the ranger group come to fruition.”