

NORTHERN TERRITORY

ABORIGINAL LAND AND SEA ACTION PLAN

YEARLY REPORT 1
2022 - 2024



NORTHERN
TERRITORY
GOVERNMENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The NT Government respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Nations people of this country. We pay our deepest respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to their leaders – past, present and emerging.



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BACKGROUND

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On 24 February 2022, the Northern Territory (NT) Government launched its refreshed Aboriginal Land and Sea Action Plan (the Action Plan) to ensure “land and sea ownership delivers on the economic and social aspirations of Aboriginal Territorians”.

The Action Plan is a primary initiative under the NT Government’s *Everyone Together* Aboriginal Affairs Strategy and supports the achievement of outcomes in the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the Territory Economic Reconstruction Commission (TERC) Final Report.

The Action Plan contains 10 actions that the NT Government is progressing with land councils, Traditional Owners and other key stakeholders.

It contains short, medium and long-term actions, noting that some actions will likely take many years to complete.

Progress reports will be released, providing status updates on each of the 10 actions that are either: complete, in progress or not yet started.

Further details on the progress against each TERC recommendation is captured in the TERC progress reports.

The Aboriginal Land and Sea Action Plan 2022-2024 is available on the NT Government Office of Aboriginal Affairs website: www.aboriginalaffairs.nt.gov.au

If you would like to know more, please contact: CMC.AboriginalLand@nt.gov.au

“For Aboriginal peoples, country is much more than a place. Rock, tree, river, hill, animal, human – we are all formed of the same substance by the Ancestors who continue to live in land, water, sky. Country is filled with relations speaking language and following Law, no matter whether the shape of that relation is human, rock, crow, wattle. Country is loved, needed and cared for, and country loves, needs and cares for her people in turn. Country is family, culture, identity. Country is self.”¹

SNAPSHOT – WHAT WE HAVE DONE

CONNECTION TO COUNTRY FORMALLY RECOGNISED

In April 2023, the Anangu people had their connection to country recognised over the Karinga Lakes region. The native title determination covers approximately 10,000 square kilometres of pastoral lease land, including Erldunda, Lyndavale and Curtin Springs stations.

The determination recognised various native title rights and interests including, for the first time in the Central region, a recognition of native title commercial rights.

Action 1 Resolving Aboriginal land and native title claims

Relevant Closing the Gap targets:

Target 15a - By 2030, a 15 per cent increase in Australia's landmass subject to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests.

Target 15b - By 2020, a 15 per cent increase in areas covered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's legal rights or interests in the sea.



ABORIGINAL SEA COMPANY

The NT Government provided funding for the establishment of the Aboriginal Sea Company, a milestone in the Blue Mud Bay Implementation Action Plan. The company was incorporated on 18 February 2022, and will support the participation of Aboriginal people in commercial fishing and aquaculture industries.

Robert Carne was appointed as Chief Executive Officer and Calvin Deveraux as Chairman. The Company is governed by a board with equal representation from the three coastal land councils – Northern Land Council, Tiwi Land Council and Anindilyakwa Land Council.

The Company released their 10-year Strategic Plan in 2023 that includes a focus on increasing Aboriginal-led training, performance and mentoring capacity in the regions.

LAND HANDED BACK

In 2022, the NT Government supported the finalisation of six Aboriginal land claims and, on 24 March 2022, the Traditional Owners of the Kakadu region received free-hold title to four land claims covering almost 10,000 square kilometres of the Kakadu National Park. The title deeds were delivered by the former Commonwealth Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM, during an historic handback ceremony at Cooida Lodge.

Land was also returned to the Traditional Owners of the Old Elsey Homestead and Urapunga Township, both of which are in the Roper River region. The Budal Yutpundji-Milwarapara group and Bobobingga clan of the Yangman people are now able to control and make decisions on the future use and management of their land.

EXPANDED ABORIGINAL COASTAL LICENCES

The NT Government has expanded the Aboriginal Coastal Licence (ACL) regime to improve its operation and viability, and provide greater opportunities for Aboriginal participation in sustainable commercial fishing activities in coastal Aboriginal communities. ACL holders can now apply to catch and sell species that were previously prohibited under the licence, including barramundi, threadfin salmon and mud crabs, and use additional gear to enable the effective catch of those species.

Action 2

Progressing the Blue Mud Bay Implementation Action Plan



MARINE RANGERS

In April 2023, seven Marine Rangers from Bawinanga, Bulgul and Yirralka Rangers completed their Certificate III in Fisheries Compliance.

The rangers have been provided a pathway to learn and engage in fisheries management. The training included on-country learning as well as patrols with water police to develop practical compliance skills.

ABORIGINAL PROCUREMENT POLICY



On 1 July 2022, the NT Government launched the Aboriginal Procurement Policy.

The Policy is designed to maximise the opportunity for certified Aboriginal Business Enterprises to participate in, benefit from and build capability and capacity through NT Government procurement.

The Policy includes a target for 5% of NT Government contracts to be awarded to certified Aboriginal Business Enterprises in the 2022-2023 financial year.

The NT Government is on track to exceed its target with 51 (5%) contracts worth approximately \$62 million awarded to Aboriginal Business Enterprises in the first nine months.

Action 8

Supporting economic development and employment on Aboriginal and native title land

Relevant Closing the Gap targets:

Target 8 - By 2031, increase the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25-64 who are employed to 62 per cent.

Priority Reform 2 - Increase the amount of government funding for Aboriginal programs and services going through Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.

Priority Reform 4 - Increase the number of regional data projects to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to make decisions about Closing the Gap and their development.



PROGRESS ON ACTIONS

ACTION 1 RESOLVING ABORIGINAL LAND AND NATIVE TITLE CLAIMS

Native title claims, including future claims over Sea Country

Status: In progress

Since 2021, there have been:

- 6 native title determinations - 2 in the Central Land Council (CLC) region and 4 in the Northern Land Council (NLC) region
- One native title determination revised
- Two native title compensation applications lodged.

There are 28 active native title applications, which are being progressed through the Federal Court.

Native title compensation claims

Status: In progress

There are two active native title compensation claims in the Northern Territory, one in the Nhulunbuy region, and the other in the McArthur River region.

Both cases are currently being run as “test cases” to decide a number of novel and significant legal issues.

Aboriginal land claims, including Beds and Banks Claims

Status: In progress

There are 34 unresolved land claims.

In 2022, six land claims were handed back in the Northern Land Council region.

The NT Government continues to work closely with the Northern Land Council to resolve the remaining outstanding land claims, particularly in relation to agreeing on future access arrangements for recreational and commercial fishers, and the rights of existing users.

The Aboriginal Land Commissioner continues to progress current inquiries. These include the Daly River claims, the Peron Islands claim and the Cobourg Peninsula claim.

The NLC will be holding Traditional Owners consultations throughout 2023 to progress land claim settlements and access agreements, including in the McArthur River, Limmen River, and Daly River regions.

The Northern Territory's Surveyor General is finalising survey plans for five land claims in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Survey plans are required before the Commonwealth Government makes a grant of Aboriginal land.

ACTION 2

PROGRESSING THE BLUE MUD BAY IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

Providing funding for the establishment of an Aboriginal Sea Company

Status: Complete

The NT Government provided \$10 million for the establishment and operation of the Aboriginal Sea Company.

The Company has since purchased 10 mud crab licences and Darwin Ship Stores.

The Company launched its 10-year strategic plan in April 2023.

In addition to funding, the NT Government has entered into a grant agreement for the Company to deliver the Aboriginal Fishing Mentor Program and support the Aboriginal Coastal Licence holders in remote communities across the Northern Territory's coast on behalf of the NT Government.

Review and amend the *Fisheries Act 1988* (NT)

Status: In progress

In 2022, the NT Government amended the objects of the *Fisheries Act 1988* (NT) to acknowledge the rights, interests and cultural responsibilities Aboriginal people hold under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).

A broader review of the *Fisheries Act 1988* (NT) will be undertaken throughout 2023.

Review the Barramundi Fishery

Status: In progress

A comprehensive review of the fishery has commenced, and development of a contemporary management framework and harvest strategy that optimises benefits to all sectors.

Expanding Aboriginal Coastal Licences

Status: Complete

The Licence regime has been expanded to provide for the capture and sale of species previously prohibited under the licence including barramundi and mud crab, and the use of additional fishing gear to enable the effective catch of those species.

Progressing long-term access agreements

Status: In progress

The current focus for access negotiations is over land claims in the McArthur River, Roper River, and Daly River regions.

The NT Government will also support discussions between the Northern Land Council, NT Seafood Council and commercial fishers regarding the negotiation of future Section 19 access agreements to access Aboriginal waters.

Provide fisheries-related Aboriginal capacity building programs to the value of approximately \$360 000 per annum

Status: In progress

Ongoing activities include:

- training and support to marine ranger groups across fisheries compliance, scientific monitoring and aquatic biosecurity
- commercial fishing mentor programs to develop skills and capacity and facilitate real jobs on country
- developing fisheries management training resources to support increased Aboriginal participation in fisheries management committees and working groups.

Work with the NLC and NT Seafood Council to progress opportunities for Traditional Owners to be involved in the aquaculture industry

Status: In progress

Existing programs are continuing, including the Tropical Rock Oyster Industry Development Project.

ACTION 3

SUPPORTING EXPLORATION AND MINING ON ABORIGINAL AND NATIVE TITLE LAND

Consider policy to support the acceleration of mining and development and increased exploration activity

Status: In progress

The Mineral Development Taskforce final report was released in April 2023, outlining a series of recommendations and actions to drive and increase private investment in mining and downstream value-add projects. These include:

- introducing targeted initiatives to encourage increased exploration and mining activity
- securing coordinated, transparent and efficient land access processes that respect land-owners and recognise co-existing uses

- targeted regulations focused on outcomes to deliver improved project economics
- updating the Territory's royalties regime to make it more competitive and not a deterrent to investment
- capitalising on economically sustainable downstream mineral value-add opportunities.

The Taskforce was made up of 10 representatives from government, industry and Land Councils.



ACTION 4

DEVELOPING AND UPDATING NATIVE TITLE POLICIES

Recording native title determinations in the NT Government's Integrated Land Information System (ILIS)

Status: In progress

The NT Government is working with stakeholders to develop systems that will record non-exclusive and exclusive related rights, interests, and tenure in ILIS.

Developing policies relating to future acts, future act processes, and future act compensation liability

Status: In progress

The NT Government continues to develop native title policies, as required.

Developing policies relating to native title compensation

Status: In progress

In October 2021, Native Title Ministers from all Australian jurisdictions endorsed the national guiding principles for the settlement of native title compensation claims. The principles aim to ensure fair dealings, negotiated settlement outcomes where possible, and agreements based on free, prior and informed consent. The NT Government is now working with all jurisdictions to develop options to enhance implementation of the principles.

Developing policies relating to claims over Sea Country

Status: Not started

The NT Government will develop policies in consultation with the NLC, in relation to claims over sea country. No such claims have been received to date.

Developing policies relating to native title rights over water

Status: In progress

By 2024, the NT Government will partner with Aboriginal organisations to better understand the cultural values of waters across the Northern Territory.

Developing policies to assist the resolution of claims, including policies related to road reserves, consent determination templates, and the evidence the NT Government requires to accept the native title right to "take resources for any purpose" in a determination

Status: In progress

In September 2020, the NT Government approved a new template for consent determinations over the pastoral estate in the NLC region based on the 'Borroloola formulation', which recognises the right to access and take resources for any purpose.

The NT Government is now working with the CLC on a template for consent determinations in the central region.

Building the capability and capacity of Registered Native Title Bodies Corporates to engage with government

Status: In progress

This is a Commonwealth Government initiative and is supported by the NT Government.

Implementing the Town Lands Native Title Policy

Status: Complete

In July 2020, the Towns Lands Native Title Policy was implemented. No applications have been received.



ACTION 5

PLANNING FOR THE POST-MINING FUTURE OF NHULUNBUY, ALYANGULA AND JABIRU

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Plan for the post-mining future of Nhulunbuy through the Gove Peninsula Futures Reference Group

Status: In progress

Six work streams and detailed plans have been established to progress *A New Journey Together* - the Traditional Owners' vision for the future of Nhulunbuy and the Gove Peninsula.

\$2.1 million has been allocated over three years to support key transition activities across land tenure, community and government services, essential services industry transition and town governance.

Key work underway includes the development of land tenure pathways for early diversification of land use to support economic development in line with Traditional Owner aspirations.

Plan for the post-mining future of Alyangula through the Groote Eylandt Executive Steering Committee

Status: In progress

A consultant has been engaged to work with Traditional Owners to understand their post-mining vision for the Groote Archipelago.

The Groote Eylandt Executive Steering Committee is continuing to explore closure and transition governance approaches.

The NT Government, through the Groote Archipelago Local Decision Making Agreement, has committed to working with the Traditional Owners and the Anindilyakwa Land Council to support a successful transition for the township of Alyangula.

JABIRU

The Future of Jabiru and Kakadu

The Australian Government, Northern Territory Government, Energy Resources of Australia and the Mirarr Traditional Owners, represented by the Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation, are working together under a Memorandum of Understanding to secure the future of Jabiru and Kakadu and to provide certainty for residents, businesses and the tourism industry.

The Australian and Northern Territory Government's commitment to Jabiru and Kakadu National Park is reflected in the combined \$351.7 million of funding that was pledged earlier this year. This funding will be pivotal in achieving the objectives of the 2018-2028 Jabiru Masterplan to make Jabiru an Aboriginal owned, sustainable national park tourism town that celebrates its cultural heritage and provides employment opportunities for Aboriginal people as well as encouraging education and research in the region.

Northern Territory Government Commitment \$135.5m

Establishment of Jabiru Kabolmakmen Ltd	Completed
New power station	Completed
Bininj Resource Centre	In progress
Local roads, sewerage, electricity and water network maintenance	In progress
Upgrades to existing landfill capacity	In progress
Health clinic upgrades	In progress
Mobile connectivity in Kakadu	In progress



ACTION 6 ENHANCING LONG-TERM LEASES ON ABORIGINAL LAND

Work with the land councils to develop long-term leasing models that are recognised and supported by industry and financiers

Status: In progress

The NT Government secures its public housing and other remote infrastructure assets through 40-year leases. In some cases these leases are direct with the Aboriginal land trusts and in others they are subleased from township leasing entities. The Land Tenure Unit within the Department Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics continues to work with Land Councils on the long-term leasing of government assets.

Continue to participate in the Commonwealth-led Joint Review of the Remote Housing Model in the Northern Territory

Status: In progress

The National Indigenous Australians Agency is preparing the final report to the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) of the National Partnership

Agreement. It is intended for feedback of each participant, including any concerns or contrarian positions, to be submitted to the JSC along with the report. The NT Government's feedback is being coordinated through the Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities.

Work with the Commonwealth Government and land councils to streamline long-term leases on Aboriginal land, including with regard to any Sustainable Development Precincts on Aboriginal Land

Status: In progress

The streamlining of long-term leases was part of the focus on the Review of the Remote Housing Model referenced above, most notably, the recommendation that government leases on Aboriginal land be standardised into common templates. However, this reform was not supported by all participants of that Review so it is unclear whether it will progress.



Work with land councils to resolve land tenure issues associated with operating and maintaining essential public services, such as roads, barge landings and aerodromes on Aboriginal land

Status: In progress

A template for reticulated infrastructure has been agreed with the NLC. The terms of the CLC reticulated infrastructure template are nearly finalised.

In 2022, the NT Government agreed to obtain leases over 15 of the larger aerodromes on Aboriginal land.

The NT Government has also agreed to secure an interest over barge landings in the NLC region to ensure access for repairs and maintenance as well as ongoing access to third parties to allow for delivery of goods by barge.

Support land councils to facilitate and streamline land administration

Status: In progress

The NT Government continues to progress the land administration recommendations that were contained in the Commonwealth-led joint Review of the Remote Housing Model in the Northern Territory.

This includes the recommendation to survey individual allotments on Aboriginal land to create separate titles in communities.

The Land Tenure Unit also continues to progress registration of all NT Government leases on Aboriginal land.

Support the land councils and the Office of Township Leasing to inform Traditional Owners about the long term leasing options available to them

Status: In progress

The NT Government will continue to support the land councils and the Office of Township Leasing, as required.

ACTION 7

SUPPORTING THE MANAGEMENT OF ABORIGINAL AND NATIVE TITLE LAND AND WATERS

Investing in land capability assessment as part of ensuring access to good precompetitive data

Status: In progress

General fieldwork has been completed for the Roper River, Victoria River and southern Gulf water resources.

The CSIRO were engaged by the Commonwealth, with assistance from the NT Government, to prepare reports and associated broad scale mapping fact sheets.

They are on track to be released in 2023.

Working with Traditional Owners and the Commonwealth Government to develop the Territory's World Heritage Icons, including Kakadu and Uluru Kata-Tjuta National Parks

Status: In progress

Construction works at various stages include a new viewing platform at Cahill's crossing, realignment of the track at Gunlom and the commencement of road works in 2023.

The NT Government also continues to progress its multi-million dollar investment in Jabiru.

Developing and implementing a pragmatic and credible decarbonisation plan with interim targets, that delivers the Northern Territory's growth and net zero targets

Status: In progress

An NT emissions trajectory report is being finalised to inform the development of an NT emissions reduction strategy, which will include identifying interim targets on the pathway to net zero by 2050.

An emissions audit for NT Government has also been finalised. The report will inform advice to NT Government on an NT Government Operational Emissions Reduction Framework which includes a 2030 emissions reduction target.



Facilitating carbon offset industry growth

Status: Complete

The NT Government has supported projects looking at the expansion of the Savanna Burning method, engaged and advocated for amendments to existing compliance market methods, worked with Traditional Owners and key stakeholders to identify increased carbon opportunities on Aboriginal land, and has been working with researchers and industry bodies to develop a potential blue carbon method and a potential method that deals with feral animals.

The NT Greenhouse Gas Emissions Offsets Policy was finalised, providing certainty to the offset market about eligible offsets for NT environmental approvals.

Supporting the establishment and operation of an Aboriginal Sea Company (refer to the breakout story on page 6)

Status: Complete

Providing fisheries-related Aboriginal capacity building programs across enforcement, research and biosecurity with marine rangers, including appointing inspectors (refer to the breakout story on page 7)

Status: In progress

On-going activities include:

- training and support to marine ranger groups across fisheries compliance, scientific monitoring and aquatic biosecurity
- commercial fishing mentor programs to develop skills and capacity and facilitate real jobs on country
- developing fisheries management training resources to support increased Aboriginal participation in fisheries management committees and working groups.

Delivering ranger grant programs to support the management of Aboriginal and native title land and waters

Status: In progress

The sixth round of the Aboriginal Ranger Grants awarded more than \$1.6 million to various ranger groups with projects across the Northern Territory.

These include Tiwi Resources effective weed management on the Tiwi Islands, the Northern Land Council Bulgul Rangers Feral Pig Management activities, and the Crocodile Island Rangers biodiversity surveys of the Crocodile Islands.

Providing training and development opportunities for Aboriginal rangers, so they can exercise the increased powers given to them following amendments to the *Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1976* (NT) in 2019

Status: Complete

The Aboriginal Ranger Compliance Coordinator continues to work with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal ranger groups and partner agencies.

Further partnerships with the NT Fisheries Indigenous marine inspector program have developed.

A pathway for the agencies to offer recognition of training and combined authorised officer career pathways is being explored.

Bringing forward investment in Kakadu and Uluru Kata Tjuta National Parks, in a meaningful and effective partnership with Traditional Owners and the Commonwealth Government

Status: In progress

Work continues with Parks Australia and Traditional Owners.

Upgrades to campgrounds, roads and ranger housing are at various stages of progression.



ACTION 8

SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT ON ABORIGINAL AND NATIVE TITLE LAND

Collaborate to build opportunities for Aboriginal-led economic development, including access to project finance

Status: In progress

The Aboriginal Economic Participation Framework and the Aboriginal Procurement Policy were jointly launched on 31 May 2022 and implemented on 1 July 2022.

Support Land Councils, Township Lease Community Entities, and the Office of Township Leasing to facilitate and streamline land administration

Status: In progress

Progress includes:

- reforms to the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976* (Cth) and establishment of the NT Aboriginal Investment Corporation
- the release of a Discussion Paper on reforms to tenure in community and town living areas
- development and implementation of a new town leasing entity arrangement in Jabiru.

In October 2021, The Administrator, at the request of the Northern Land Council, declared Jabiru and Open Area under the *Aboriginal Land Act 1978*. Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation Jabiru Town (GACJT) is the holder of the new township lease under Section 19A of the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976* (Cth).

Implement the Aboriginal Contracting Framework for NT Government procurement

Status: Complete

The Framework was implemented 1 July 2022. The Framework has been rebranded to the Aboriginal Economic Participation Framework as the intent is broader than contracting and procurement. It has a focus on Aboriginal workforce development and Aboriginal business development.

The Aboriginal Procurement Policy commenced on 1 July 2022 with the aim of increasing opportunities for Aboriginal businesses, community-controlled organisations and Aboriginal Territorians to participate in government tendering and contracts.

Strengthen the regional economic growth function of government to better drive economic development across regions

Status: Complete

Regional Development Framework released. The Framework guides the way regional development will be communicated, coordinated and delivered.

Develop or update regional economic growth plans as a pre-cursor to negotiating regional deals

Status: In progress

Regional Economic Growth Plans have been developed and finalised in the Big Rivers, East Arnhem and Top End regions and are in development in Barkly, Central Australia and Palmerston/Litchfield.

Support development of Aboriginal-led industry opportunities

Status: In progress

The NT Government has provided funding and in-kind support to the NT Indigenous Business Network for Aboriginal business development and Aboriginal employment outcomes.

Facilitate sustainable development of the pastoral land estate and Aboriginal land

Status: In progress

Sustainable development precinct model and future agribusiness development opportunities are well underway through 3-year collaboration with CRCNA (De Risking Phase II - NT Through Sustainable Development Precincts).

Prepare business cases for key Aboriginal cultural tourism icons and take projects to market

Status: In progress

There has been strong progress across a range of key Aboriginal cultural tourism projects including the National Aboriginal Art Gallery, the Larrakia Cultural Centre, the Watarrka National Park walking trail and the Hermannsburg Historic Precinct Stage 2 restoration works.

In April 2023, a one million dollar funding pool opened for round five of the Aboriginal Tourism Grant Program. The grant program supports the NT Aboriginal Tourism Strategy' focus to develop quality experiences, products and services.

Work with Traditional Owners and the Commonwealth Government to develop the Territory's World Heritage Icons

Status: In progress

Work continues with Parks Australia and Traditional Owners to progress development in Kakadu National Park in Jabiru, through the Future of Jabiru and Kakadu project.

Develop commercial opportunities in the Territory's National Parks

Status: In progress

Release of the 30-year NT Parks Masterplan along with the NT Parks 10-year Activation Plan which maps out infrastructure development for the first decade of the Masterplan.

Capitalise on the Top End's competitive advantages for equatorial launch services

Status: In progress

In June-July 2022 NASA launched three rockets from the Arnhem Space Centre on Aboriginal land and were NASA's first rockets to launch from a fully commercial spaceport.

The NT Government supported the promotion of the NT's space industry

by attending and exhibiting at the 14th Australian Space Forum in Adelaide and the Paris International Astronautical Congress

Capitalise on Central Australia's competitive advantages for stratospheric ballooning/high altitude pseudo-satellite (HAPS) launch and recovery

Status: In progress

Continuing to target key high altitude pseudo-satellite (HAPS) companies to promote the Territory's favourable conditions for both launch and recovery.

Support development of ground station precincts

Status: In progress

The NT Government continues to provide proactive support and promote the Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT) space precinct with prospective ground station companies.

OneWeb and Telstra's NT gateway site in Darwin, Tivendale is near completion with testing underway and go-live planned for 2023. The facility will provide turnkey ground station support for OneWeb's growing fleet of low-earth orbit (LEO) satellites.

Accelerate work to deliver infrastructure solutions for future water demand

Status: In progress

Commonwealth funding of \$300 million confirmed for the Darwin Region Water Supply Infrastructure Program Stage 1.

Experts have been engaged to deliver the NT Water Availability stocktake.

Undertake continued water exploration and targeted water resource investigation

Status: In progress

The draft Territory Water Plan was released in October 2022 for public consultation and proposes delivery of a Territory wide water efficiency strategy in 2023.

ACTION 9 MAKING IMPROVEMENTS TO NT LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS

Strengthening the regional economic growth function of government to better drive economic development across regions, including implementing the Regional Development Framework

Status: In progress

Additional place-specific funding was announced for key regional projects in the October 2022 Federal Budget including \$120 million for the Central Australia Plan.

The Commonwealth Government has announced funding and program reform to previous 'Deals' in the October 2022 budget. A new Precincts and Partnerships Program will be developed as an alternative model for the Northern Territory to leverage.

Clarifying and providing the guidance on land access negotiation pathways, focusing on Sustainable Development Precincts

Status: Complete

Mapping was completed for three priority Agricultural precincts including Wildman, Larrimah and Keep Plains. They were delivered to market via an EOI process managed by the NT Land Corporation.

Collaborating with stakeholders to introduce statutory timeframes for negotiating on land access, where possible

Status: Complete

The *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) was significantly amended in December 2021. Co-designed with Land Councils, the suite of changes include the establishment of a new Aboriginal-controlled body called the NT Aboriginal Investment Corporation to invest money from the

Aboriginal Benefits Account; streamlining of exploration and mining processes on Aboriginal land and institute a range of practical land administrative reforms; and Traditional Owners retaining their right to grant, or refuse consent to the grant of, an exploration tenement.

Working with the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority to develop a new data management system to enable further digitisation and the streamlining of processes

Status: In progress

AAPA is working to implement this action.

Working with the Land Councils to enhance the recording of Aboriginal Territorians' rights and interests in land and waters within the NT Government's Integrated Land Information System (ILIS)

Status: In progress

The NT Government is working with stakeholders, who administer and engage with land councils, to develop systems that will record related rights, interests and tenure in ILIS.

Reviewing the *Fisheries Act 1988* (NT) in line with the Blue Mud Bay Implementation Action Plan and other election commitments (also see Action 2)

Status: In progress

In 2022, the NT Government amended the objects of the *Fisheries Act 1988* (NT) to acknowledge the rights, interests and cultural responsibilities Aboriginal people hold under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).

A broader review of the *Fisheries Act 1988* (NT) will be undertaken throughout 2023.

Reviewing the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989* (NT) taking into consideration the recommendations of the 2016 Sacred Sites Processes and Outcomes Review, and ongoing discussions with the Commonwealth Government and the land councils

Status: In progress



ACTION 10

SUPPORTING IMPROVEMENTS TO COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES

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Explore options with the Northern and Central Land Councils and Commonwealth to improve the operation of the Native Title Act

Status: In progress

The NT Government contributes to the native title senior officers working group convened by the Office of the Commonwealth Attorney-General. The NT Government is also engaging directly with Native Title Representative Bodies.

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Contribute to all other options the Commonwealth puts forward to amend the Land Rights Act

Status: In progress

The NT Government provided input into the reviews of Part IV and V of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act.

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Explore ways to ensure the Land Rights Act works seamlessly with the Control of Roads Act 1953 (NT) and other Northern Territory roads legislation

Status: Not started

This is a longer-term action that has yet to commence.

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Explore options with the land councils and the Commonwealth to ensure the costs that land trusts incur as a Territory landholder are able to be met

Status: Not started

This is a longer-term action that has yet to commence.

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Explore options to enable land trusts to provide the NT Government an appropriate interest in land to deliver essential services if agreement cannot be reached amongst Traditional Owners

Status: Not started

This is a longer-term action that has yet to commence.

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Encourage the Commonwealth to provide more support to the land councils to undertake their administrative, consultative and decision making statutory obligations, particularly given the amount of work coming out of the TERC Final Report and recommendations.

Status: In progress

The NT Government has made representations to the Commonwealth generally regarding resourcing, and also specific comments regarding consultations for access to Aboriginal land.

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