

Welcome to a summary of news in March (NN#11) on topics relevant to Kimberley to Cape's goal of keeping the world's greatest tropical savanna¹ great via sustainable development, land and water management and conservation. **These clips aim to facilitate cross-sector and cross-region knowledge sharing, and more informed conversations about the future of Northern Australia.** They're a 'round up' rather than hot off the press, and what comes across my desk rather than a systematic collection, so apologies for any major omissions - *pls do send these in, and any other relevant items!* Please let me know what you think and what you'd like more/less of. Please also let me know if you don't wish to receive this email. Cheers and thanks, Clare, Coordinator, [Kimberley to Cape](#)



Northern Australian News Roundup for March 2016

Pan Northern

- [Legislation introduced to establish NAIF](#) which will be [based in Cairns \(why more and more\)](#) and [NAIF industry roundtable](#) comment Nth Aust will have at least one rep on skills based board
- [NAIF oversubscribed with potn projects](#) w Canavan comparing to 'beauty contest' but [not a political football](#) comment from NT [Rockhampton](#)
- [Tsville bids to house Nthn Dev CRC and more](#)
- [Much talk of NQld to become separate state](#) [more](#) [more](#) and [more](#) w support from [Canavan](#) but not Frydenberg or Palaszczuk ([more](#))
- [Canavan update on dev agenda](#)
- [Northern Australia Insurance Premiums Taskforce's report](#) favours risk reductions over government mutual or reinsurance pool, so insurance premiums likely to cover av \$285M/yr cyclone bills. Gov response due midyear [AFR article](#) [Industry response](#)

- [NAB Beef report](#) North: All mkt indicators up since 2014 reflecting strong international demand. Slaughter and live ex volumes likewise surged til mid-2015, but receded since due to stock shortage. Live ex: prices up since 2013, and likely high in 2016 tho under pressure from dry conditions. Scarce domestic cattle supply means lower export volumes. Move from 3 to 4 monthly Indon quotas providing more certainty, though Indon efforts to diversify imports a medium term risk. Little upside for US export prices given growing US beef supply
- [Live ex prices have eased](#) in recent weeks as drier conditions prompted early mustering so strong supply relative to demand. Also tighter Indo trading and 4c rise in \$.
- [More re current supply](#) and [Genetics to help rebuild Nth cattle herd](#)
- [Processors don't want live ex caps](#) and [update on AACo abattoir](#) etc and [more](#)
- [Consolidated Pastoral](#) against change to foreign investment regs tho NFF for
- [Aust investment co. joins Chinese bidder for Kidman pastoral properties](#)
- [Drones for cattle stations](#)
- [Northern Australian Beef Roads Roundtable meeting](#) ([NTCA more](#) [Min media](#) [ABC incs map](#))
- [Book and blog raising profile of life on northern cattle stations](#), [blog and mag for rural women from central Qld](#), [book on a saddlery's travels across the North](#) and [book on 2011 live export ban](#)

- Pat Dodson's preselection [Wyatt/Yu](#), [Indigenous Times](#), [SBS](#), [SMH](#), [Scullion](#), [Grattan](#), [Huff post](#)
- [Indigenous rangers closing the Gap](#) [interview](#) and [Canberra forum to raise profile of outback](#)

- [Article on Nth ag futures](#)
- [Greenhouse based agriculture for Nth Aust](#) and [high prices for Nthn chickpeas](#)
- Backpacker tax [can Indigenous workers fill gaps \(audio\)](#) and [update on tax](#)
- [Santanol sandalwood co. recruits Indigenous workers](#) and [TFS plans to raise \\$65M to own its 10,600ha of Nthn plantations](#) and opens [Katherine nursery](#)
- [New boats for Northern Gulf prawn fishery](#) and [reasonable expectations for banana prawn season](#) despite poor wet. Also [prawn fishers Austral go carbon neutral in world first](#) and [Indigenous fisheries R&D group meet in Cairns](#)
- [Northwest Atlas web portal](#) being developed by oil/gas exploration co.s and AIMS to share data and better manage resource-rich North and NW marine bioregions under NESP hub
- [US defence in Nth response to China](#) [more](#) [more](#)

- Uranium co. alliance seeks energy and utility infrastructure opportunities in Nth inc low carbon and renewables involving co-investment and collaboration with Indigenous communities
- EDO NT lawyer awarded Young Environmental Lawyer of the Year and EDO NQ reopens
- Internatn visitor numbers up in WA, Qld and NT, but spending down in NT and WA (more re NT) and local gov tourism profiles updated
- Qld wins 5 of 10 top spots in TripAdvisor's 2016 Aust choice awards, industry rep citing "Great Barrier Reef, golden beaches, tropical rainforests and hinterland escapes" as what sets Qld apart
- Outback tourism group pushes for families to explore
- Drought breaking rains for parts of W Qld (inc fish) but record low rain for NT more and Apr-Jun climate outlook indicates rainfall deficits across the North

State/Territory/Regional General News

- Qld infrastructure plan and \$500M investment fund released tho Tsville wants more (more)
- Nth Qld Food Innovation forum in Tsville
- Genex's \$580M renewable energy Kidston project awarded prescribed project status
- \$16M biofuels pilot plant launched in Gladstone
- Debate on tree clearing continues in Qld with LNP, Katter, AgForce, TWS, Pearson, speaker
- Diversification key to growth and big plans for HMAS Cairns base
- Tsville meat works reopens after extended wet season closure due to short supplies
- New look Qld tourism website and app and NQld up 29% in year end 2015 visitor stats
- Farm groups slam possible inc in electricity costs and NW Qld power use decreasing
- Female mayors in Mt Isa Joyce McCulloch and Tville (Jenny Hill re-elected), and new Mackay mayor's action list
- Jonathon Pavetto, ag economist from sugar farming family, takes on Katter
- Second big acid spill in 3 mths near Richmond
- central Qld Fish Habitat Protection Areas consultation closed Mar 30
- Qld needs to count its croc eggs
- 5 projects to investigate and act on gully erosion in GBR catchments
- Barnett becomes tourism minister in bid to broaden WA economy
- Kimberley tourism perceptions and directions report highlights cost of flights and need for better online presence and Indigenous tourism experts in Europe
- Major fish kill north of Broome also impacts marine animals and now thought due to algal bloom, inc Streptococcus bacteria. Also Marina proposals for Broome and investigation into sewerage leaking into Roebuck Bay
- Kimberley gas project abandoned, mining downturn prompts prospecting, busy cattle season for Broome port and Wyndham, boom and bust of Kimberley economy with comments from Bergman, Prof (highlights resilience of Broome economy), Min Mischin
- Stakeholder consultation on WA rangelands reform and development via Land Admin Amendment Bill 2016 in Broome 12/4 and FX 13/4. Reform will create new rangelands leases and new Pastoral and Rangelands Advisory Board as outlined in gov position paper key proposals and FAQs (March coverage here and here)
- Locust swarm prompts pesticide use to save fodder crops
- Buru sells cattle station onto Chinese investors
- Poor wet delays Kimberley barramundi season, with warm water making fish hard to find
- Do seismic surveys and the pearling industry mix? and Kimberley doco 'the secret life of pearls' on natn Geo channel
- NT progresses new marine maintenance industry via shiplift facility and gov strategy to facilitate defence industry
- Impex gas project seeks to avoid environmental commitments, more, McArthur Rv mine pollution risks human health and Indigenous groups in the Gulf concerned about fracking (more)

- [Mining downturn NT but new zinc deposits under McArthur Rv deposits](#)
- [NT Cattlemens conference discusses fracking, foreign ownership and more. Hear pres Tom Stockwell](#)
- [NT farmers eligible for federal drought assistance and research helps buffalo industry](#)
- [Innovative NT pastoralist John Dunnicliff passes away](#)
- [NT to put backpacker tax on COAG agenda](#)
- [Daly River community to run on daytime solar via hybrid system](#)
- [NT gov seeking comment until Apr 4 on new Petroleum \(Enviro\) Regs for onshore oil and gas](#)
- [Seacumbers released to build sustainable industry nr Goulburn Is and farmed barra success](#)
- [NT tourism promos inc Backpack the Outback and medal winning Do the NT garden at show](#)
- [Nominations for NT Ranger awards open to 31 May](#)
- [Tiwi art and sale of Darwin port in NY Times](#)

Water

- [Qld gov appoints Pendergast, cotton irrigation expert to work with land holders and industry in the Flinders and Gilbert catchments](#) as part of a \$500,000 government investment in the region
- [NT opposition releases water policy](#) inc consultative approach and strategic Indigenous reserves more

Ferals, weeds & pests

- [Kakadu research shows 1 cat per 5sqkm, 75% of cat diet is native mammals, and 'massive increase' in numbers and diversity of reptiles \(but not yet native mammals\) in sites where cats excluded](#) (more, ABC RN)
- [Potential impacts of Asian Tiger mosquitos spreading from Torres Straight](#) (sci paper)
- [Sugar cane's yellow canopy syndrome spreads south and further and research to slow arrival of more threats to cane](#)
- [Investment in crazy ant control to maintain wet tropics worth millions more](#)
- [\\$5.2M for cluster fencing and baiting in W Qld under Natn Wild Dog Action Plan](#)
- [Nth Qld trials investigating cattle weight gain from soon-to-be-released psyllid resistant Leucaena variety Redlands and common Wondergraze variety](#) (more)
- [Screw worm fly training to help protect cattle industry](#)
- [Draft Qld Weed and Pest Animal Strategy 2016-20 out for comment until Apr 26](#), in prep for implementation under the *Biosecurity Act* on 1 July 2016
- [Low Tvsille cane toad count due to drought](#)
- [Tsville residents breeding mossies against Zika](#)
- [Are introduced Asian house geckos pushing out native geckos?](#)
- [Highest number of fruit flies on record in TS traps](#)

Biodiversity and Protected Areas

- Experts from Credit Suisse, Zurich, NAB, ANZ, GBR Fndn, Philanthropy Aust and Clean Energy Fin Corp discussed green bonds, impact investing, pay for performance models and private equity investment, inc overseas learnings, at [Reef Trust workshop](#)
- [Great Kimberley Marine Park just 're-badging'?](#)
- [West Kimberley project to collect, store, and propagate culturally significant seeds and endangered plants](#) brings together western science and traditional knowledge
- [Rare hybrid dolphin found on Broome beach](#)
- [Radio Natn summary of truffle sniffing northern bettong conservation effort](#)
- [Article on black-throated finch survival and mining inc discussion of biodiversity offsets](#)
- [New cryptic species of seamoth in found in Nth](#) (sci paper)
- [Butterfly journeys inc Nth Aust](#)
- [Easter bilbies in the Kimberley inc dreamtime story](#) (soundcloud)
- [Tracking of 113 turtles shows strong homing behaviour](#) has implics for development
- [Rainforest Reserves Aust to run cassowary hospitals](#)
- [GBR bleaching 95% in Nth parts](#)

- [Photos and multimedia bring reef and rainforest messages to public and more Nthn photos](#)
- [Russian bird makes it to Broome and good season for turtle nests](#)

Fire and carbon

- Blog post on [carbon in the develop the North agenda](#) by the Aboriginal Carbon Fund
- [NT Bushfires Act](#) review proposes new framework for managing fire in the NT - open for [comment until Apr 4](#)
- [New CSIRO research on reducing emissions from livestock](#)
- Article on [Nth Kimberley fire abatement project](#)

Events

11-12 Apr [Kim & Pil Cattlemens/MLA BeefUp and Innovation](#) forum, Broome
 11-13 Apr [Northern Australian Food Futures Conference](#), Darwin
 12 Apr [Tropical Nth Qld Tourism Industry Workshop](#), Cairns
 14 Apr [Places You Love – Nature Laws workshop](#), Broome
 22-24 Apr [Savannah Guides School](#), Broome
 3-6 May [Australian Mangrove and Saltmarsh Network conference](#), Darwin
 4 May [Backpacker & Adventure Tourism Industry Forum](#), Cairns
 24-25 May [Katherine regional mining & ex forum](#), Katherine
 1-2 Jun [Gulf Graziers/MLA BeefUp Forum](#), Mt Surprise
 1-3 Jun [National Native Title Conference](#), Darwin
 6-8 Jun [National NRM Knowledge Conference - "People, Planet and Profits"](#), Coffs Harbour
 8-9 [Strengthening Indigenous Economic Development](#), Cairns
 21-22 Jun [Develop the North Conference](#), Darwin
 15-18 Aug [Northern Beef Research Update](#) conference, Rockhampton
 30 Aug [Conservation through the Sustainable Use of Wildlife](#) Conference, Brisbane
 11-15 Sep [Australasian Weeds Conference](#), Perth
 14-15 Sep [Northern Territory Resources Week](#), Darwin

Please note

- being on this email list adds you to the Kimberley to Cape [network](#) which simply means you engage, or are willing to engage, with others to discuss how to achieve a sustainable and prosperous future for Northern Australia, and that you're generally supportive of Kimberley to Cape's guiding [principles and goals](#) (it doesn't commit you to anything more or mean loads of extra emails!). We'll assume this is okay unless you say otherwise.
- previous news roundups are available [here](#)
- the views expressed above dont necessarily represent those of the Kimberley to Cape initiative
- thank you to the [BK Dahl Trust](#), [Earth Welfare Foundn](#), [Aust Communities Foundn](#), [CDU](#) and [ECNT](#)
- any [support](#) for Kimberley to Cape is appreciated (current funding ceases Jun 16), you can donate [here](#)

¹ Northern Australia hosts the world's largest intact tropical savanna ([Woinarski et al 2007](#))