

Recommendations

1. Embrace the possibilities of development that's socially, culturally and ecologically beneficial as well as economically prosperous, and set policy accordingly.
2. Support Traditional Owners to lead the way in sustainable development and conservation.
3. Energise collaborative, place-specific planning at landscape and local scales.
4. Develop a shared policy framework and refresh the approvals process for major projects, and reinvigorate the National Water Initiative across the North.
5. Lift the governance capacity of community-based institutions and strengthen community-led enterprise development and caring for country.
6. Heed science and local knowledge, and create a development and conservation 'report card'.
7. Recognise the world's largest intact tropical savanna and celebrate it through a pan-northern stewardship partnership.

Detail

1. Embrace the possibilities of development that is socially, culturally and ecologically beneficial as well as economically prosperous, and set policy accordingly.

Government agencies, in collaboration with other relevant organisations, to:

- a. Work with communities to articulate the purpose of developing the North, who and what development should benefit, and what values need to be maintained.
- b. Based on 'a' and other recommendations here, host a biannual exercise to explore and report on alternative Northern development and conservation scenarios.
- c. Set government and industry policy to reflect results.

2. Support Traditional Owners to lead the way in development and conservation.

Indigenous support organisations, government agencies and other relevant organisations to:

- a. Support Traditional Owners to articulate their aspirations for their land and to work towards these.
- b. Promote Indigenous leadership of and participation in collaborative northern development processes.
- c. Support sustainable Indigenous enterprises that create lasting and meaningful employment choices.
- d. Ensure 'free, prior and informed consent' before progressing development or conservation proposals.
- e. Respect protocols and needs around consultations, timelines and Traditional Knowledge.

3. Energise collaborative planning at landscape and local scales.

Planning, management and other relevant bodies to:

- a. Linked with 1b, work with interested communities to scope and prioritise regional and local development and conservation options and translate results into land-use plans.
- b. Host an annual review and report on progress.

4. Develop a shared policy framework and refresh the approvals process for major projects, and reinvigorate the National Water Initiative across the North.

Government agencies, in collaboration with other relevant organisations, to:

- a. Establish a development policy framework based on agreed principles and compatibility criteria to attract good projects.
- b. Ensure development approvals are based on robust multi-criteria analyses, clear risk assignments, bonds and insurances, offsets, and effective transparency and compliance mechanisms.
- c. Reinstate a national, or establish a Northern, Water Commission to reinvigorate implementation of the National Water Initiative.

5. Lift the governance capacity of community-based institutions and strengthen community-led caring for country and enterprise development.

Indigenous support organisations, government agencies, business and others to:

- a. Strengthen governance structures that empower local people to embrace development and conservation, and to grow training and jobs.
- b. Build the capacity and coordination of community organisations, Indigenous organisations and local governments across the North.
- c. Secure, strengthen and expand Indigenous ranger initiatives and triple Indigenous ranger jobs.
- d. Support effective regional natural resource management bodies.

6. Heed science and local knowledge, and create a development and conservation 'report card'.

Management and research agencies to:

- a. Show how development decisions are based on best available science and local knowledge.
- b. Invest in research, development and extension based on two-way learning.
- c. Collaborate to create and publish an annual development and conservation report card using indicators reflecting community values.
- d. Link the report card to the North's clean, green credentials and use it to promote this advantage.

7. Recognise the world's greatest tropical savanna and celebrate it through a pan-northern stewardship partnership.

All relevant agencies and organisations to collaborate to:

- a. Agree on a name for the world's largest intact savanna, for example the 'Great Northern Savanna'.
- b. Identify how to better support and expand the land management and conservation efforts of pastoralists, Indigenous land holders, defence and other managers.
- c. Establish a connected network of multiple tenure land that is internationally recognised for its conservation and sustainable use achievements through a pan-savanna partnership - engage partners, develop a common agenda, identify shared measures of success, raise funds and undertake mutually reinforcing activities.