

NAEDF ONLINE NEWSLETTER, December 2009

Welcome to the inaugural NAEDF Online newsletter. NAEDF Online will be emailed out on a quarterly basis, or when there are significant announcements or events. The aim is to strengthen networks and maintain the focus generated by NAEDF on the challenges and issues of significance for northern Australia. Please circulate the newsletter to any colleagues and acquaintances you think may be interested in being a part of the network. Contributions to the newsletter are invited and can be emailed in Microsoft Word to info@naedf.com. Feedback would also be appreciated on the type of content you would find of most value.

REGIONAL CONFERENCES 2009 AND OUTCOMES:

SEGRA, October, Kalgoorlie

Kate Charters of Management Solutions (Qld) has prepared a power point discussing the SEGRA 2009 outcomes. The themes emerging from the conference and subsequent Regional Australia Summit were:

1. Ensuring a voice for regional Australia
2. Planning for decentralisation
3. Industry, government and communities working together in whole of life planning
4. The growing indigenous role and capacity for economic development
5. Provision of strategic infrastructure that creates connectivity for regional Australia – not corridors
6. Northern Australia – remoteness, population distribution and the challenge of governance
7. Climate change responses and opportunities
8. Professional development opportunities for practitioners

The Regional Australia Summit which followed SEGRA focussed on the need to address and actively confront ways in which regional development, policy frameworks, methodology and implementation mechanisms are developed and practiced. The Summit developed a wide range of proposals under the key themes of: governance, economic, infrastructure, population and social proposals, natural resource use management and cultural and land rights.

The SEGRA 2009 Communiqué power point can be accessed at <http://naedf.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/Communique-powerpoint.pdf>.

Kate Charters is also available to make power point presentations of the Communiqué by teleconference or web-based technology to Councils, Boards, agencies and the like on request.

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SAVANNAH SYMPOSIUM, November, Darwin

More than 120 delegates from across northern Australia converged on Darwin in mid November to attend the inaugural Savannah Symposium, convened by Savannah Guides Ltd, Savannah Way Ltd and the Tropical Savannas Management CRC.

Industry, NGO and government participants and researchers illustrated successful initiatives in tourism, mining, natural resource management and indigenous ventures from across Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.



The symposium demonstrated the close organisational, social and economic relationships that exist across northern Australia, where organisations deal with similar conditions and issues and have much to gain from interaction and exchange. It illustrated the challenges that businesses, government agencies and other organisations face when operating in this remote and sparsely populated part of Australia with a unique set of ecological conditions and constraints.

Indigenous economic development and environmental integrity of savannah landscapes were seen as major pillars for the future prosperity of the North.

Delegates were unanimous in their assessment that east-west linkages were paramount to the northern economy and applauded the achievements of Savannah Way Ltd in coordinating the internationally recognised themed tourism drive across two states and the NT.

Effective governance, real community engagement, security of tenure and infrastructure to support regional development were seen as critical to the future of northern communities. Speakers noted a serious disconnect between indigenous and non-indigenous economies which must be addressed to enable advancement of north Australia.

The symposium strengthened the momentum for a new northern Australia CRC bid, which is planned for 2010, which will add value to existing initiatives including the NA Land and Water Taskforce and Water Resources Assessment. The bid will advance a holistic agenda to improve the wellbeing of residents as well as the people of Australia by (1) harnessing the physical, environmental, social and human assets of northern Australia, (2) generating opportunities for social and economic development, and (3) overcoming emerging challenges.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Regional Development Australia

The national Regional Development Australia Committees have been created. Membership lists can be accessed from <http://www.rda.gov.au/>.

Regional Development Practitioners Network – north Queensland

In Cairns a FNQ Regional Practitioners Network has been created with the inaugural meeting on 4th December. Already there are expressions of interest from north Queensland for inclusion and also from Darwin. The network is designed to facilitate professional relationships and information sharing in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the projects we are all working on by:

- Minimising duplication
- Capitalising on synergies
- Seizing opportunities for cost effectiveness

It is also designed to provide an opportunity for the support and development of the practitioner members and thereby encourage regional cohesion and sustainability. The network also has the potential to identify common issues and opportunities and contribute to strategic direction, planning and resourcing

The network will be open to all who work in the regional development sector from community based organisations through all levels of government to specific geographic or stakeholder groups and private consultants. Being a network, potential members should be joining with a view to what they can offer others more so than what financial gain they stand to make.



Current thinking suggests that the network will provide contact details and introductions to facilitate collaboration on common issues. Networking functions hosted by members and a web presence including a discussion forum are also under consideration.

Those interested in being involved can email info@naedf.com or Marg Darveniza at rdo@advancecairns.com

Food tourism boost for FNQ

The Minister for Tourism, Martin Ferguson AM MP, recently announced a consortium of North Queensland tourism stakeholders have received a TQUAL Grant of \$446,010 for an innovative project to develop the region's tropical food attractions.

The project will be led by Advance Cairns and will help diversify the region's economy and deliver a regional food brand and a food consumer show, as well as extra marketing and promotion.

The project will be managed by Nola Craig (info@australianropicalfoods.com) and will commence in earnest in early 2010. The project will work towards making Cairns a tropical food tourism mecca and add another facet to the already rich tourism destination in FNQ.

Minister Ferguson said: "This funding will help the Cairns tourism industry be better positioned in a highly competitive market and give domestic and international travellers more reasons to travel in North Queensland."

\$44 million Tropical Hub for Cairns

A \$44 million world-class institute dedicated to research and innovation for tropical Australia will be built in Cairns.

The Rudd Government will provide \$19.5 million in capital costs to develop the Cairns Institute – Tropical Innovation Hub and will contribute a further \$8.75 million for research infrastructure. The institute will be located at James Cook University's Cairns Campus, which will contribute a further \$15.8 million.

Construction of the institute will generate much-needed economic activity in the region, supporting local industry and providing 200 jobs during the construction phase. The institute will support 125 research staff.

The institute will be a focal point for innovation, research and research training relevant to the tropics. It will support greater collaboration in areas of national significance such as marine and climate science, public health, social and community welfare, tourism and indigenous development.

The Hub is the culmination of several years of discussion and planning by regional development and cluster practitioners in far north Queensland. The concept was first floated back in 2006 and picked up by the Cairns Region Economic Development Corporation.

The Institute will bring leading tropical social science and humanities researchers from James Cook University into one facility, as well as housing the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre. It will enhance links between the university and research agencies such as the Australian Institute for Marine Science and CSIRO.



TropLinks

Allied with the *Cairns Institute –Tropical Innovation Hub* is the establishment in late 2009 of **TropLinks**, a not for profit incorporated association, the aim of which is to maximise the capacity to develop, commercialise and export tropical expertise in areas such as environmental services, health, agriculture and tropical living. Western Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland are collaborating in the initiative which will have international linkages. The newly appointed CEO, Graham Poon can be contacted at info@troplinks.com.

COAG

COAG December 7 Communiqué: all Australian governments recognised the importance of national resilience. COAG provided direction in a wide range of areas including health, education, training, youth, housing, regulatory reform, capital city planning, transport, water reform, closing the gap on indigenous disadvantage and national security and community safety. Click <http://naedf.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/COAGCommuniqué.pdf> to access the full report.

CONFERENCES 2010

Shaping Australia's Resilience Conference

Organised by Australia21 Limited, the conference will be held in Canberra 18 & 19 February. Click http://naedf.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/Resilience-Conference-flyer_final.pdf to access details.

Delivering Policy in Regional and Rural Communities

The conference will take place on 23 & 24 March in Newcastle. Click <http://naedf.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/Service-Delivery-Rural-regional-brochure-6pp-web.pdf> to access details.

Rural & Regional Service Delivery Training Seminar

Tonkin Corporation is now in the research stages of a Rural & Regional Service Delivery Training Seminar to be held in four locations around Australia - Alice Springs, Kalgoorlie, Dubbo & Cairns in April 2010. NAEDF has endorsed the program and will be relaying the latest information. *Watch this space.*

About NAEDF On-line website

The website pages cover the NAEDF background, North Australia linkages and networks, image library, links and contact details. The "News and Articles" menu on the right hand side provides avenues for posting articles, case studies, events news, latest news, regional reports, NAEDF papers and reports and RDA news. News items, reports and articles are most welcome. Send as pdf or word document to info@naedf.com.

NAEDF On-line wishes all a very happy, safe festive season and here's looking forward to an exciting and productive 2010.

