

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Vowles to the Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries:

Fisheries

1. Please list the recipients of all grants to commercial fishers in 13/14 and the purpose of the grants.

Northern Territory Seafood Council

\$250 000 (includes \$70 000 for a specific marketing project) including \$25 000 GST
For delivery of agreed projects specified in funding agreement.

Northern Territory Guided Fishing Industry Association

\$44 000 including \$4 000 GST
For delivery of agreed projects specified in funding agreement

2. Please list the recipients of all grants to recreational fishers in 13/14 and the purpose of the grants.

Amateur Fishermen's Association of the Northern Territory

\$220 000 including \$20 000 GST
For delivery of agreed projects specified in funding agreement.

3. Please itemise the allocation of \$2.25 million to support Indigenous development opportunities and provide permit-free fishing access to intertidal water overlaying Aboriginal land.

\$1.675m funding has been allocated to meet commitments for the seven Blue Mud Bay agreements reached to date and allow for further agreements to be negotiated for key fishing areas across Arnhem Land. It is expected the \$1.115m will be committed to marine ranger program funding and \$0.56m in fishing access payments.

In addition \$0.575m is allocated to indigenous programs undertaken by my Department that include enhanced training and support for marine rangers mentoring support for indigenous fishing businesses and enhanced consultation processes with traditional owners over management of sea country.

These amounts are additional to the programs and funding already committed by my Department for indigenous fisheries development.

4. Please itemise the funding allocation for each recipient through the Marine Ranger Program in Indigenous communities for each of the past three years.

\$60,000 in grant funding has been allocated to the following ranger groups for each of the past three years:

- Tiwi Rangers
- Thamarrurr (Wadeye)
- Mardbalk/ Garngi (Goulburn and Croker Islands)

- Djelk (Maningrida)
- Gumurr Marthakal (Elcho Island)
- Anindilyakwa (Groote Eylandt)
- Yugul Mangi/ Numbulwar
- Li-Anthawirriyarra (Borrooloola)

The Department also provides significant support to all marine ranger groups through training and capacity building.

5. Please list the gross value produced and tonnage harvest for each of the following fisheries for the past three years and any available forecast for future years:
- a) Barramundi Fishery
 - b) Coastal Line Fishery
 - c) Coastal Net Fishery
 - d) Demersal Fishery
 - e) Mud Crab Fishery
 - f) Offshore Net and Line
 - g) Spanish Mackerel Fishery
 - h) Timor Reef Fishery

The below values reflect commercial fishery activity*

a. Barramundi Fishery

2011 – gvp \$5.62m , 1084t; 2012 – gvp \$5.82m, 1152t; 2013 – gvp \$3.50m, 696t.

Reduced performance likely due to combination of ~20% effort reduction and poor wet season = reduced recruitment.

Forecast – performance expected to mirror seasonal conditions.

b. Coastal Line Fishery

2011 – gvp \$0.35m , 146t; 2012 – gvp \$0.50m, 167t; 2013 – gvp \$0.42m, 139t.

Forecast – similar returns to 2013 expected.

c. Coastal Net Fishery

2011 – gvp \$0.02m , 4.4t; 2012 – gvp \$0.03m, 6t; 2013 – gvp \$0.02m, 4t.

Forecast – similar returns to 2013 expected.

d. Demersal Fishery *

2011 – gvp \$2.6m , 438t; 2012 – gvp \$12.02m, 2228t; 2013 – gvp \$14.9m, 2771t.

Strong performance due to management restructure in 2012.

Forecast – 5-10% increase on 2013 returns expected.

e. Mud Crab Fishery

2011 – gvp \$7.93m , 397t; 2012 – gvp \$7.8m, 389t; 2013 – gvp \$4.6m, 228t.

Reduced performance likely due to poor wet season = reduced recruitment.

Forecast – performance expected to mirror seasonal conditions.

f. Offshore Net and Line

2011 – gvp \$3.6m , 1195t; 2012 – gvp \$4.07m, 1113t; 2013 – gvp \$2.92m, 600t.

Reduced performance likely due to lower export demand

Forecast – similar returns to 2013 expected.

g. Spanish Mackerel Fishery

2011 – gvp \$2.11m , 274t; 2012 – gvp \$2.26m, 276t; 2013 – gvp \$1.79m, 219t.

Forecast – similar returns to 2013 expected.

h. Timor Reef Fishery

2011 – gvp \$4.51m , 716t; 2012 – gvp \$4.72m, 716t; 2013 – gvp \$4.15m, 743t.

Forecast – 5-20% increase on 2013 returns expected.

A summary of this above data is provided in the below table:

Fishery	Catch (tonnes)			GVP (\$ million)		
	2011	2012	2013	2011	2012	2013
Barramundi	1082	1152	696	5.62	5.82	3.5
Coastal Line	146	167	139	0.35	0.50	0.42
Coastal Net	4.4	6.0	4.0	0.02	0.03	0.02
Demersal	438	2228	2771	2.60	12.02	14.90
Mud Crab	397	389	228	7.93	7.80	4.60
Offshore Net and Line	1195	1113	600	3.60	4.07	2.92
Spanish Mackerel	274	276	219	2.11	2.26	1.79
Timor Reef	716	716	743	4.51	4.72	4.15

*Note: Catch increases in the Demersal fishery from 2011 to 2012 were due to amalgamation of Finfish Trawl Fishery into Demersal Fishery and subsequent introduction of additional trawl effort to better utilise stocks.

6. What targets have been established for the growth of aquaculture across the Territory?

Due to the lingering impact of the global financial crisis on the pearling industry together with a rationalisation of the barramundi farming industry, realistic and meaningful targets for industry growth cannot be set at this time. However, DPIF is providing an enabling environment for industry growth by removing red tape and working cooperatively across government to attract and facilitate investment. Significant investment opportunities are currently being pursued in pond-based prawn aquaculture and sea-cage farming of barramundi.

7. What support for aquaculture is allocated?

The funding allocation for aquaculture in the 2014/15 financial year was \$718,000.

8. What advice has been provided by the department to other agencies concerning the impacts of the Elizabeth River Dam proposed in the Planning Commission's "Towards a Darwin Regional Land Use Plan 2014"?

No formal advice has been provided by the Department. The Department provides advice through the environmental impact assessment process on specific proposals.

9. Please provide the detail of each agreement struck to date, basis for calculations in lieu of permit fees in relation to permit-free fishing access.

Agreements for permit-free fishing access have been established as follows:

- Daly River (Malak Malak Aboriginal Land Trust)
- McArthur River and the Sir Edward Pellew Group of Islands
- Daly River mouth to an area of land south of Cape Ford
- Minimini / Murgarella region (Kakadu National Park to boundary of Cobourg National Park)
- Nhulunbuy region agreement (Cape Arnhem north along coastline to Yudu)
- Wadeye region agreement (Dooley Point south to land adjacent and including Docherty Island – includes the Moyle rivers)
- Tiwi Islands agreement

Calculations to determine the value for each agreement are based on the level of commercial, fishing tour operator and recreational fishing activity in the inter-tidal waters overlying Aboriginal land in the region covered by each agreement. The fishing activity is monitored by commercial logbooks and recreational fishing surveys.
