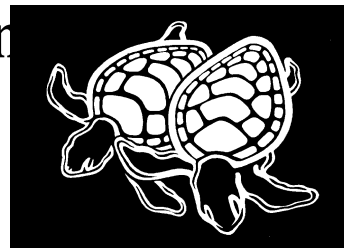


The Environment Centre N.T. Inc

GPO Box 2120 Darwin NT 0801 Unit 3/98 Wood St Darwin NT 0800
Telephone: (08) 8981 1984 Facsimile(08)8941 0387
ecnt@octa4.net.au <http://www.ecnt.org>



14 July 2005

The Environment Centre NT (ECNT) is very pleased to be able to launch the report '*Legal and Policy Frameworks for Water Management in the Northern Territory*' and an accompanying 14 page summary document.

In January 2005, ECNT commissioned Ilona Millar, Principal Solicitor at the Environmental Defender's Office New South Wales (EDO NSW), to undertake an independent review of water law and planning in the Northern Territory. This review was completed at the end of May 2005 not long before the Territory election was called for 18 June. The enclosed report and summary document does not therefore include discussion of ALP environment policies announced during the course of the election campaign. These policies include:

- an overhaul of the Water Act 'to meet world's best practice'.
- a new 'Living Rivers' program to be developed and accompanied by new legislation to 'give special status and protection to our icon river systems (both arid and tropical) for the benefit of all users'.
- the Daly River to be the first river system to be managed under this new 'Living Rivers' program. An additional \$3.5 million of funding will be allocated to enable improved water monitoring, licensing and compliance arrangements to be established.

ECNT welcomes these new policies and looks forward to working with the re-elected Martin Government to ensure that these election commitments are followed through with.

ECNT believes that EDO NSW's independent review will provide invaluable guidance for Government Ministers, policy makers, resource managers and the general public during the upcoming reform process. We would particularly like to highlight the emphasis that the review places on clarifying environmental objectives, improving transparency, and increasing public participation in water law and planning in the Territory.

Any feedback you may have on the recommendations contained in this report would be very much appreciated.

Regards,

Dr Gary Scott
Freshwater Campaigner
Ph. 8941 7439 or 0439373386 (mob)
Email. ecntdaly@iinet.net.au

ECNT is a member of the IUCN World Conservation Union

The Environment Centre N.T. prints on reused or recycled paper in order to reduce waste