

Development and Northern Australia's natural environments

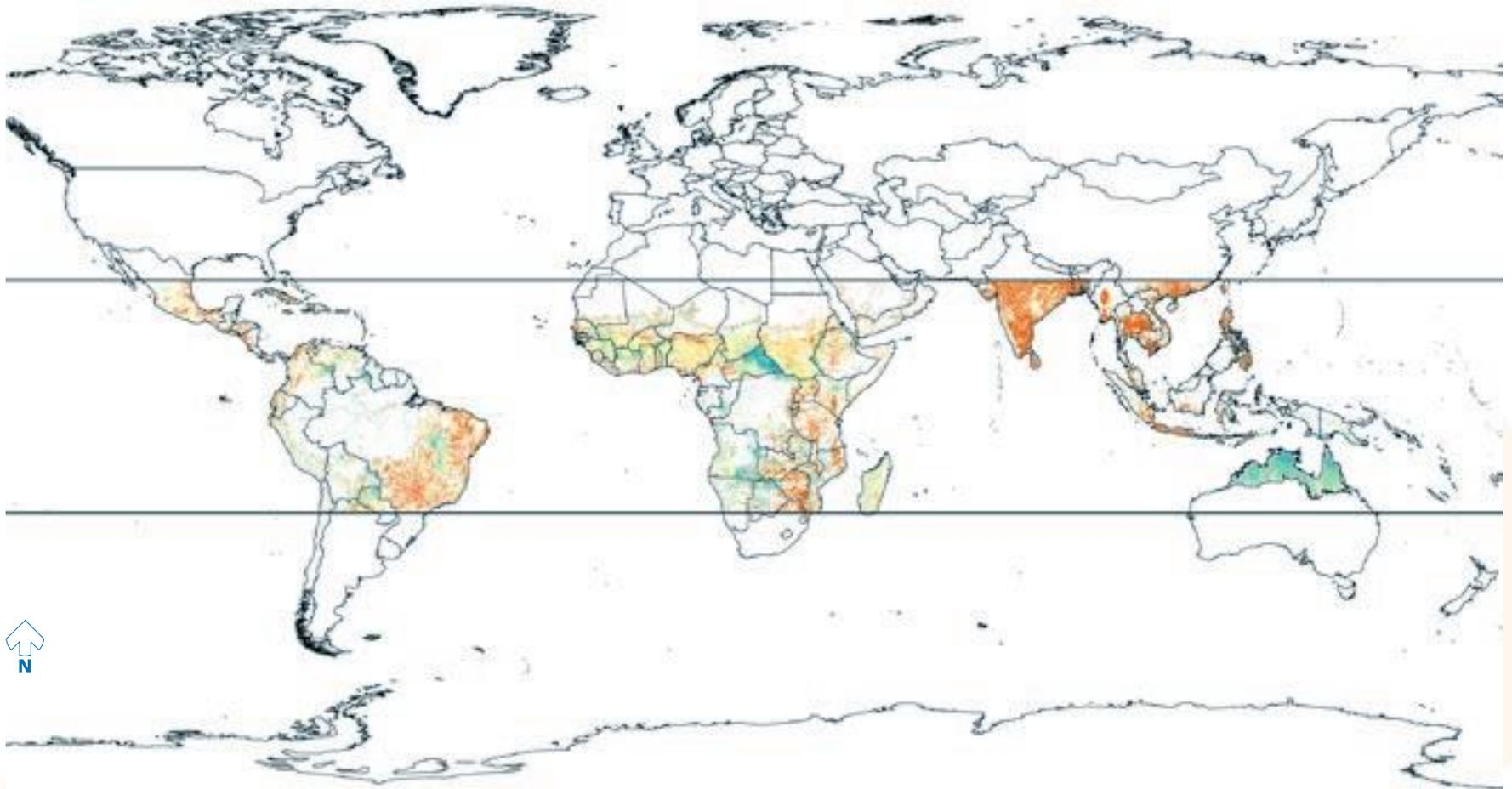
Michael Douglas

Charles Darwin University, Darwin, Australia

1. The natural environments are nationally and globally significant



World's largest area of high quality tropical savanna

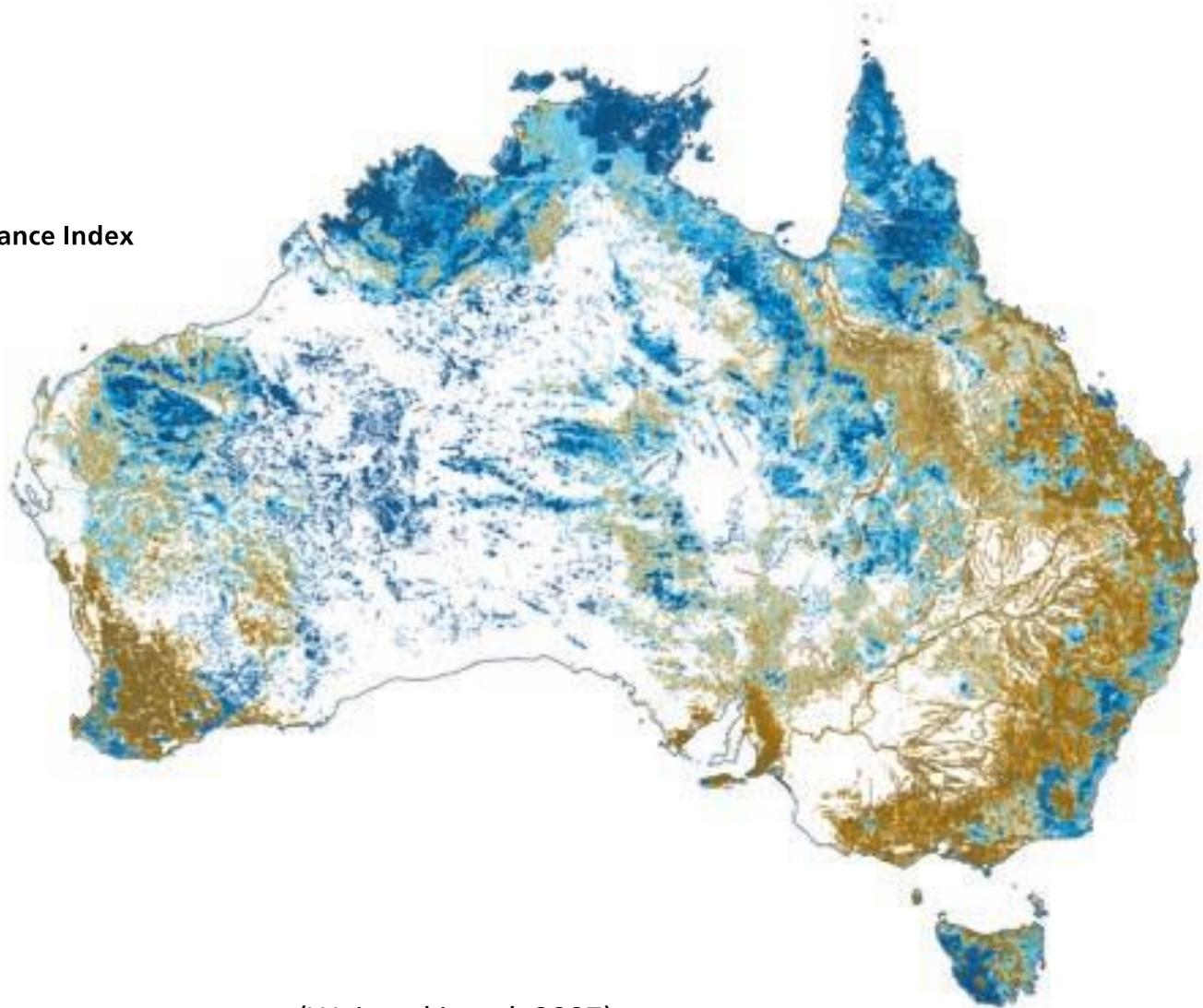


Least disturbed rivers in Australia

LEGEND

River Disturbance Index

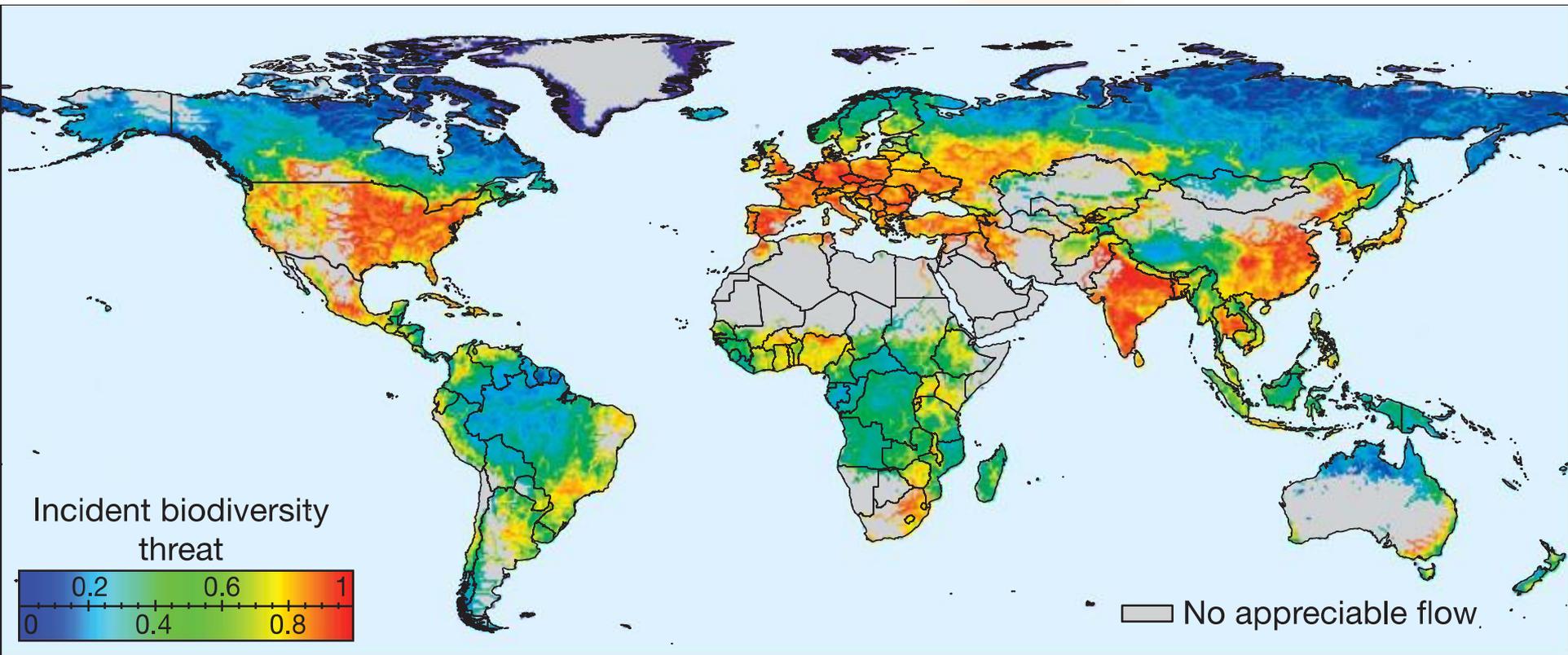
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10



0 250 500 1000km

(Woinarski et al. 2007)

Limited threats to freshwater biodiversity



2. Australians value these environments for many reasons



People value tropical rivers for many reasons

Most important management issue	Responses (%)
Preserving for biodiversity & natural habitat	40
Preserving rivers for the people who live there and visitors	20
Producing food for Australia	30
Developing northern Australia	6
Providing food for the world	4

Zander and Straton (2010) Ecological Economics

Zander et al. (2010) Journal of Environmental Management

Zander et al. (2013) PLOS ONE

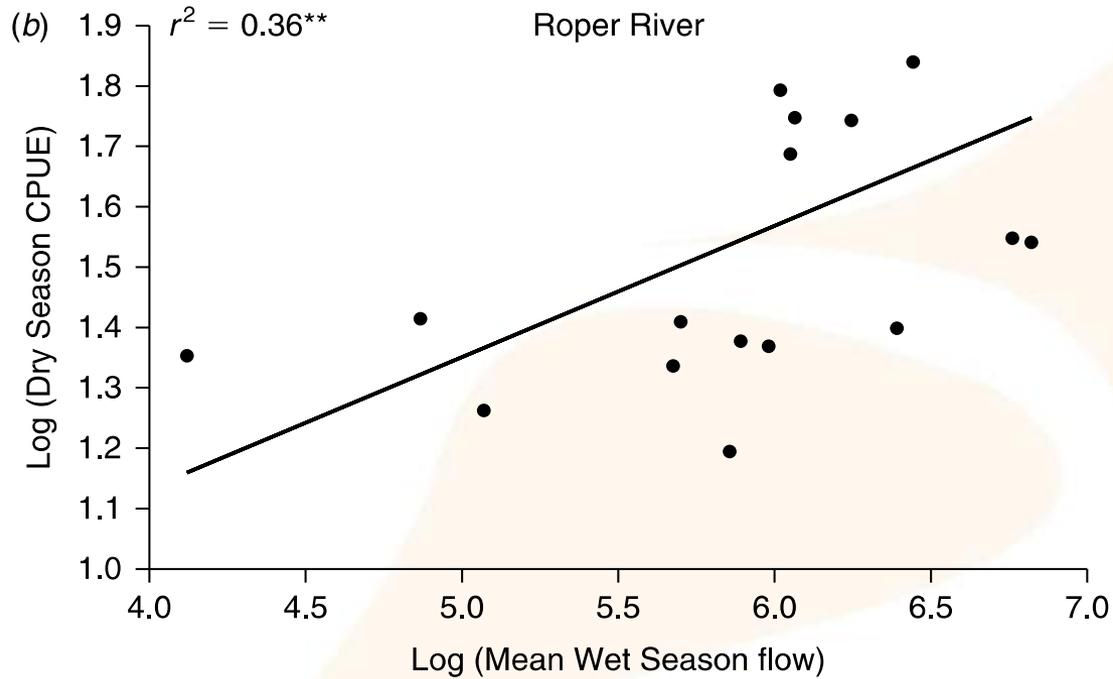
3. Visions for the other sectors are inextricably linked with the environment.



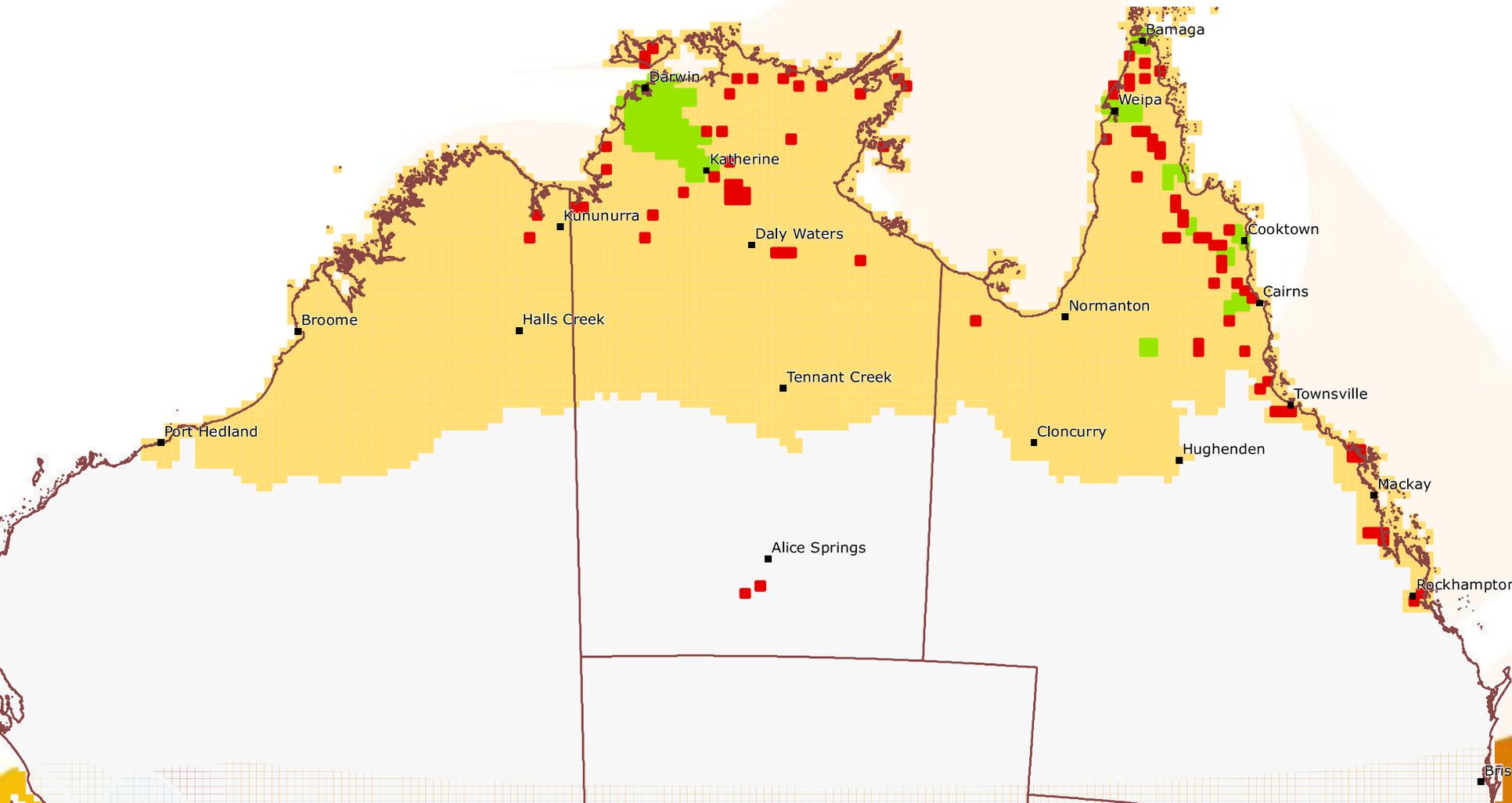
4. Our understanding of the impacts of development continues to improve



More flow = more seafood



5. We still have time to get it right in northern Australia



6. Shared vision emerging for northern Australia

Kimberley to Cape

What do we need to do?

1. Ensure environmental sustainability in areas where we will have more intensive development
2. Better manage natural resources across the broader landscape
3. Support environmental stewardship for people managing the land
4. Improved understanding of the trade-offs: Benefits & Costs, Winners & Losers
5. Make informed decisions based on the evidence

Reasons to be optimistic



“If I hear one more person from Canberra talking about all this water going out to sea to waste in the north, I think I’ll go mad”

“We have to understand water flows and water reserves in both the wet and the dry, do the research, get the data, understand the impact of taking more wet season (river) flow on barramundi and prawns, and then allocate water for irrigation on that basis.”

David Crombie past president of National Farmers Federation, The Australian September 06, 2014

2007 Heffernan touts the "Ord as the food bowl for the region"



[Print](#) [Email](#) [Share](#) [Add to My Stories](#)

2008 Rudd touts Ord River expansion as 'new food basket'

Posted Tue Dec 16, 2008 2:10pm AEDT

Updated Tue Dec 16, 2008 3:05pm AEDT

2011 Tony Abbott's plan for northern foodbowl

- by: Sid Maher
- From: The Australian
- September 17, 2011 12:00AM

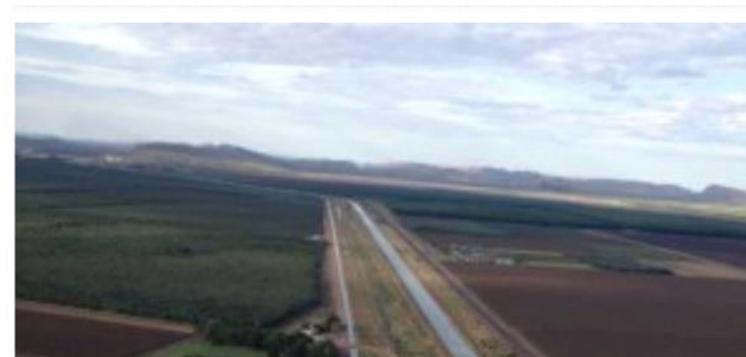


2014 PM again dangles tax carrot for push to develop northern Australia as a 'food bowl'

Updated Fri 28 Feb 2014, 2:31pm AEDT

Prime Minister Tony Abbott says tax concessions will be considered as part of the Federal Government White Paper on northern Australia.

Mr Abbott is in Darwin and will attend meetings to discuss terms of reference for the report.



2007 Heffernan touts the “Ord as the food bowl for the region”



[Print](#) [Email](#) [Share](#) [Add to My Stories](#)

2008 Rudd touts Ord River expansion as 'new food basket'

Posted Tue Dec 16, 2008 2:10pm AEDT

Updated Tue Dec 16, 2008 3:05pm AEDT

2011 Tony Abbott's plan for northern foodbowl

- by: Sid Maher
- From: The Australian
- September 17, 2011 12:00AM



2014 PM again dangles tax carrot for push to develop northern Australia as a 'food bowl'

2014 Barnaby Joyce says “Asia food bowl claims are ridiculous”

THE AUSTRALIAN AUGUST 03, 2014 1:05PM



