



Media Release

Adam Giles
Chief Minister of the Northern Territory

\$1.45 billion prawn farm awarded major project status

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A \$1.45 billion prawn farm that will create 1600 direct jobs and produce more than 100,000 tonnes of prawns a year has been awarded Major Project Status by the Australian and Northern Territory Governments.

The announcement today comes on the back of the recent launch of the Australian Government's Northern Australia White Paper.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development Warren Truss said the granting of Major Project Status recognises the project's potential to provide significant economic opportunities to the NT and kick-start private investment across the north.

"This is the type of project we want to encourage across northern Australia. It is visionary and comes at the right time to meet surging global demand and takes advantage of northern Australia's inherent benefits of space, location and opportunity," Mr Truss said.

"With Major Project Status, Project Sea Dragon will now have access to services to coordinate Australian Government and Northern Territory Government processes, such as environmental and biosecurity approvals.

"This project, once developed, will be one of the world's largest prawn aquaculture farms and employ more than 1,600 people at full operation.

"Production of farmed prawns is expected to be more than 100,000 tonnes each year from this facility alone, a significant increase on Australia's total current farmed prawn production of around 5,000 tonnes a year."

Federal Member for Solomon Natasha Griggs said the Sea Dragon project would create jobs and new opportunities for the Northern Territory.

"I'm very excited to see the project gain Major Project Status," Mrs Griggs said.

"This is just the sort of innovative project that will spearhead North Australian development and deliver ongoing economic growth for the Territory."

Northern Territory Chief Minister Adam Giles said Project Sea Dragon involved the development of a 10,000 hectare prawn farm at Legune Station that would position the Northern Territory as a global aquaculture precinct.

“My Government is determined to unlock the Territory’s full potential and create more jobs and opportunities for Territorians by supporting major projects to develop northern Australia,” he said.

“We have paved the way for this project through the changes we made to the *Pastoral Land Act* in 2013 that meant pastoralists could diversify their business by extending pastoral leases from five years to 30 years.

“Project Sea Dragon demonstrates the way forward for northern Australia development with three Governments (NT, WA and the Commonwealth) working together with the private sector on a project that will boost economic activity and create jobs in remote and regional Australia.

“This project will deliver massive economic benefits for the Territory and provide significant employment opportunities for Indigenous Australians.

“At full operation, there will be 700 jobs at Legune Station, 300 jobs at a Darwin-based hatchery and breeding facility and 600 jobs in Kununurra.”

Mr Truss said a Final Investment Decision was on track to be made at the end of 2016 with the project proponents, Seafarms Group Limited, well-positioned to take advantage of the growing international demand for seafood.

“If the Final Investment Decision is positive, Stage 1 of the project will involve construction of the first 1,080 hectare ponds (3 farms) during the dry season of mid-2017,” Mr Truss said.

“It is expected that the first prawn exports would be made in late 2018 with the majority of the product aimed at Asian markets.”

Project Sea Dragon will be developed in five stages over seven years.

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