



Above: Excavations for the Kulaluk prawn farm aquaculture project on the old salt pan in 1997.



Above: The abandoned Kulaluk prawn ponds in about 2005 before conversion to the crab farm.

## Who is to pay for 'aquaculture' failure?

**I**N MAY 1997, bulldozers began excavating huge ponds for an "aquaculture" development in the Ludmilla Creek system on the Kulaluk Aboriginal lease.

Until 1964, the land from Ludmilla Creek to Totem Rd was a part of Bagot Aboriginal Reserve.

In 1979, 301ha of this coastal land was returned for "Aboriginal community use". The area has a potentially

unique value as a recreational and education space.

The mangroves are widely used by Aboriginal people from Bagot Community and elsewhere in Darwin to gather bush tucker.

In response to my complaints when the prawn ponds began, the Kulaluk management claimed it was to provide income and jobs for the Kulaluk community.

Roads, powerlines and pro-

cessing sheds were constructed in the tidal regions under the flight path of the international airport although it was obvious to many the project was an environmental, economic and engineering disaster.

Within three years the huge and expensive scheme has failed, as I predicted. The devastated site is now abandoned and the infrastructure removed, apart from power-

lines leading nowhere. According to the planning approval, which should never have been given, if the lease is no longer used for aquaculture the land must be restored. Who is going to pay for the restoration, and whose money has been flushed down the creek on this foolish scheme?

Bill Day  
Fannie Bay

Above: Letter to NT News from Bill Day published on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2001