

Kulaluk crab farm

Following years of negotiations with NT Government's Department of Business, Industry and Resources Development (DBIRD), a new Indigenous owned and operated mud crab aquaculture venture is to be set up by the Gwalwa Daraniki Association (GDA) in Darwin.

DBIRD plans to use the Kulaluk crab farm to create appropriate models for the commercial farming of mud crabs on Indigenous lands in regional and remote communities. The Kulaluk mud crab farm will also serve as a demonstration site for other interested communities.

Photo of Setona Shields and Tim Angeles with crabs
Common Ground, July 2005, page 11.

GDA President Helen Secretary says, 'We want to create a viable business so we don't have to rely on government money'

Photo of Wayne Alum with crabs ready for harvesting
Eric Tlozek, NT News, April 5, 2006, page 5

New Darwin crab farm

Following years of negotiations with the NT Government's Department of Business, Industry and Resource Development (DBIRD), a new Indigenous owned and operated mud crab aquaculture venture is to be set up by the Gwalwa Daraniki Association (GDA) in Darwin.

A Shared Responsibility Agreement (SRA) has been signed with the Australian Government ensuring funding for the operation which is to be located using salt water pods on land at the Kulaluk community. After a two year period, GDA will continue to operate as a fully commercial venture.

In 2003 the Association approached the NT Government after hearing about the Fisheries Group's success in rearing crabs at the Darwin Aquaculture Centre. The new venture will grow out these hatchery crabs to initially produce around 15 tons of mud crabs a year of a minimum size of 350 grams, generating around \$235,000 in the first 3 years and expanding after this.

The GDA wants to establish a long-term sustainable business enterprise that will entail capacity building within the communities of Kulaluk and Minmarama by supporting training and promoting real employment.

DBIRD aims to use the Darwin facility to create appropriate models for the commercial farming of mud crabs on Indigenous land in regional and remote communities. The Kulaluk mud crab farm will also serve as a demonstration site for other interested communities.

A steering committee made up of representatives from the GDA, NT and Australian government agencies and the Charles Darwin University will oversee the development and a farm manager will be employed during the first two years of operation to run the farm and oversee training outcomes for the community.

"In 2004 DBIRD specifically focused on getting up some Indigenous economic development

and this has been backed with new funding of \$1 million by the NT Government," Bo Carne, DBIRD's Indigenous Fisheries Liaison Manager told **Common Ground**.

"Crab farming is one of the avenues we're chasing. We've been really



Setona Shields (front) and Tim Angeles with a couple of crabs.
Pic: David Hancock, SkyScans.

to see what will work best for bush communities, so we're looking at food sources for the crab farms that can create more employment, like getting local people to catch bait fish for the project," Mr Carne said. "It's a very positive move and credit goes to the people of Kulaluk and Minmarama for taking the initiative and getting behind this new and exciting venture."

DBIRD has also set up a partner pilot project for the Kulaluk venture at Maningrida where Bawinanga is growing mud crabs sent from the Darwin Aquaculture Centre in a cage in a mangrove creek. "We're testing different technology

Coastal communities interested in getting more info on mud crab farming can contact Bo 8999 2164 or look at the Fisheries website: www.fisheries.nt.gov.au robert.carne@nt.gov.au

Aboriginal crab farm claws at own future



DINNER: Wayne Alum with one of the four-month-old crabs ready for harvesting this month. Picture: FIONA MORRISON

By ERIC TLOZEK

AN ABORIGINAL community in Darwin hopes to become financially independent through a mud crab business.

People from the Kulaluk community have developed a mud crab farm on their land at Coconut Grove.

The farm, using ponds from a failed prawn venture, will produce its first sale-sized crabs in three weeks.

More than 40,000 crablets were introduced to the ponds this week.

Workers from the community have been developing the venture since August. The farm, worth \$1.5 million, is a joint venture between the NT Government and the Gwawa Daraniki Association.

Its eight staff are receiving training in aquaculture and business from Charles Darwin University.

'We want to create a viable business so we don't have to rely on government money'

Gwalwa Daraniki Association president Helen Secretary said the project had the potential to make the community self-sufficient.

"We want to create a viable business so we don't have to rely on government money," she said.

"The people working on this project are doing well."

Crab farm manager Bob Rose said 5000 crabs would be harvested later this month. The 40,000 crablets will be harvested in September.

Mr Rose said several buyers were interested in the crabs produced at the farm, which he expected to sell for at least \$15kg.