

# Native title in the News

## Australia

5-Dec-2008 **Give tax break to miners, says study** Ample tax breaks would be given to mining and resource companies that do the right thing by native title claimants under possible improvements to the native title system. *Sydney Morning Herald*, (Sydney NSW, 9 December 2008), 10.

13-Dec-2008 **Rudd aims to preserve native title benefits for the future** Benefits for Aboriginal people under native title agreements could be preserved in law for the first time in a possible proposal being considered by the Rudd Government. *The Australian*, (Australia, 9 December 2008), 5

18-Dec-2008 **Improvements to native title system** The Attorney-General Robert McClelland has released a paper on possible minor amendments to the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) to encourage more negotiated settlements of native title claims. *Daily News*, (Warwick QLD, 29 December 2008), 10. *Centralian Advocate*, (Alice Springs NT, 19 December 2008), 11.

## New South Wales

12-Nov-2008 NSW **Gathering organised to start healing wounds of the past** Communities living along Hanging Rock Creek, from Barkers Vale to Cawongla, came together with traditional landowners to heal the past and acknowledge one another. The occasion was a formal acknowledgement of traditional and native title rights of the Indigenous people of the area, by Indigenous and non-Indigenous community members. *Northern Star*, (Lismore NSW, 24 November 2008), 8.

12-Dec-2008-NSW **Memorandum signed** -The Bega Valley Shire Council, local Aboriginal Land Council and native title holders have signed a revised Memorandum of Understanding intended at reinforcing the relationship between the Council and the shire's Aboriginal community. *Bega District News*, (Bega NSW, 12 December

2008), 7. *Narooma News*, (Narooma NSW, 10 December 2008), 14.

18-Dec-2008-NSW **Developers eye Byron's \$10m block** - A sought after area of land in Byron Bay is expected to fetch about \$10 million, despite the world economic crisis. The land is owned by the local Aboriginal community, the Arakwal people, who have been rightfully handed back the 4000sqm property in Brownell Drive as part of a 2007 land title hand over. *Weekend Gold Coast*, (Queensland, 27 December 2008), 21. *Sun-Herald*, (Sydney NSW, 21-Dec-2008), 31.

## Queensland

20-Nov-2008 QLD **Protest against marina** Members of the Ngaro people, who say they are the traditional landowners of the Whitsunday Islands, plan to make a native title claim to stop a \$250 million marina proposed for Shute Harbour. Save our Foreshores spokeswoman Suzette Pelt said that on November 15 the group would march with the Ngaro people at the Whitsunday Reef Festival in protest to the development. *Daily Mercury*, (Mackay QLD, 4 November 2008), 7. *Morning Bulletin*, (Rockhampton QLD, 4 November 2008), 8.

29-Nov-2008 QLD **Indigenous land bid for town area** Traditional owners of the Cooktown area met on December 2, to discuss the future of locations identified by the State Government as having important conservation values. Traditional owners were also advised to attend a meeting in Cairns on December 16 to officially sign off on an ILUA for the Shelburne Bay area, North of Lockhart River. *Cooktown Local News*, (Cooktown QLD, 26 November 2008), 3.

4-Dec-QLD **Hospital work starts three months late** Site work on the \$1.55 billion Gold Coast Hospital will begin next week, three months behind schedule, after months of discussion between Indigenous groups and the State Government. Work was meant to have commenced in September, but was held up because native title groups were unhappy with negotiations. *Weekend Gold Coast*, (Queensland, 6 December 2008), 5.

6-Dec-2008-QLD **Native Title in Gulf** Indigenous peoples in the Gulf of Carpentaria have had their native title rights recognised over most areas on 23 islands. Federal Court Justice Jeffrey Spender made the determination on 9 December on Morington Island. - *North West Star*, (Mount Isa, 10 December 2008), 3.

*Northern Daily Leader*, (Tamworth NSW, 10 December 2008), 9. *Townsville Bulletin*, (Townsville QLD, 10 December 2008), 6. *Courier Mail*, (Brisbane QLD, 10 December 2008), 11. *Advertiser*, (Adelaide, 10 December 2008), 9. *Western Cape Bulletin*, (Weipa QLD, 17 December 2008), 6.

## Victoria

7 Nov-2008 VIC **Talks seek to ease way on land rights** Victoria would become the first state in Australia where Aboriginal people could establish land rights without pursuing tedious native title cases. The Federal Court, under a possible ground-breaking deal being negotiated with the State Government, will make this possible. The State Government and Victorian Traditional Owner of Land Justice Group are expected to decide whether to sign off on the proposed deal by February next year. *The Age* (Melbourne, VIC, 12 November 2008) 11.

18-Nov-2008 VIC **Mission accomplished as owners get title over site** Traditional owners of Lake Condah mission site in southwest Victoria have been engaged in a native title fight that spanned more than a decade and was finally won last year. On the 23 November 2008 Jenny Macklin transferred the deeds of title to the site to the local Gunditjmarra people. *The Age*, (Melbourne VIC, 24 November 2008), 6.

22-Nov-2008 VIC **Forest declared national parkland** Nearly 30,000ha of forest in western Victoria has been declared National Park. The Gunditjmarra Aboriginal people are the traditional owners and native title holders of Cobboboonee forest. The traditional owners concerns as well as fire management will be high on the agenda. *Geelong Advertiser*, (Geelong VIC, 10 November 2008) 11.

24-Nov-2008 VIC **A drought-proof hotel with a landmark title** Novotel has decided to build Australia's first eco-friendly, drought-proof hotel just minutes drive northwest of Melbourne. The location of the hotel is central to Victoria's historic goldfields and spa region. The first task was to discuss a landmark native title agreement with Indigenous landowners. *The Age*, (Melbourne VIC, 27 November 2008), 8.

25-Nov-2008 VIC **McInerney endorsed by native title group** Reconciliation groups have endorsed Lisa McInerney as a candidate in this month's Rural City of Wangaratta council election. Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTaR) supported Ms McInerney for her standpoint in reconciliation and native title.

*Wangaratta Chronicle*, (Wangaratta VIC, 26 November 2008), 4.

27-Nov-2008 VIC **Art work still on hold** The restoration of Aboriginal artworks at Mudgegonga is still on hold, as a local group remains entangled with Aboriginal Affairs Victoria. Restoration on the rock art sight came to a halt in April after Dhudhuroa Native Title Group appealed to key officials, citing the AAV's failure to acquire free, prior and informed approval. *Bright Observer*, (VIC, 26 November 2008), 7.

17-Dec-2008-VIC **Yorta Yorta Aboriginal Nation** The Yorta Yorta Aboriginal nation has greeted with delight the Victorian Government's announcement that it will create a Barmah National Park. The Government has involved Yorta Yorta in joint management of their traditional country. Another 56 positions have been created for Indigenous peoples due to the creation of the National Park. *Riverine Herald*, (Echuca VIC, 31 December 2008), 5.

## Western Australia

6-Nov-2008 WA **State planners silent on title claim's costing** An Augusta group is pushing for more aged care units to be constructed next to the town's hospital, though the group is still involved in a decade long negotiation over native title land. *Augusta Margaret River Times*, (Margaret River, 21 November 2008), 4.

10-Nov-2008 WA **Premier to view gas site** Broome shire president Graeme Campbell has called on premier Colin Barnett, to personally visit each of the four Kimberley sites being considered for an LNG processing hub before a decision is made on the location. Mr Campbell said his meeting with Collin Barnett centred on a push for sufficient infrastructure to be in place to help the Shire manage the arrival of an LNG hub and the need for an early resolution to native title discussions. *Broome Advertiser*, (Broome WA, 6 November 2008), 1.

14-Nov-2008 WA **Green light in Ord** Crops may be planted by the end of December next year in a significant location of Ord. This project will be moving into stage two after a deal was struck between private enterprise and native title holders last week. *Countryman*, (WA, 27 November 2008), 4.

21-Nov-2008 WA **Mt Gibson presses on with China link** Mt Gibson Iron publicised yesterday that they had reached an in-principle agreement with the

Dambimangari native title group to allow research at Koolan Island, off the state's Kimberley coast. The *Australian*, (WA, 14 November 2008), 25.

27-Nov-2008 WA **Request for early evidence granted** A request from the Ngadju Native Title groups for early evidence to be given by several witnesses living on traditional lands was granted. Federal Court Justice Shane Raymond Marshall arranged on Tuesday to travel to the Ngadju claim region to hear the evidence "on country". *Kalgoolie Miner*, (Kalgoolie WA, 22 November 2008), 8.

27-Nov-2008 WA **Road deal leads to growing Ord Valley** The Ord River Irrigation Scheme has taken a step forward with the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley and the Consolidated Pastoral Company agreeing to upgrade a road, triggering the conversion of 16,000ha of pastoral land to freehold title. The signing of the agreement sees CPC relinquish 165,000ha of land within its Carlton Hill and Ivanhoe pastoral leases for six new conservation reserves to be managed by the Miriuwung Gajerrong people as the native title owners. *Farm Weekly*, (WA, 27 November 2008), 26.

3-Dec-2008-WA **Buswell handpasses native title to Premier** Colin Barnett will assume responsibility for the office of native title after Treasurer Troy Buswell asked that it be taken from him because it clashed with his portfolios. *West Australian*, (Perth WA, 2 December 2008), 14.

3-Dec-2008-WA **Native title royalty cash payments face axe** Cash payments to native title landowners from gas and mining companies could be abandoned following fears Indigenous communities are missing out on the bounty of the resources boom. *West Australian*, (Perth WA, December 2008), 14. *Sydney Morning Herald*, (Sydney NSW, 8 December 2008), 6.

8-Dec-2008-WA **Noongar appeal no "Loss or win "** The body representing Noongar claimants in a native title case over Perth says the recent appeal decision by the Federal Court was neither a loss nor win. The appeal judges had ruled that Judge Murray Wilcox had made errors in law in his original judgement, but referred the case to the Federal Court's native title provisional docket judge. *National Indigenous Times*, (Malua Bay NSW, 11December 2008), 8.

8-Dec-2008-WA **Detail in uranium talks** A uranium and native title conference was attended by traditional land owners and mining industry representatives in Perth last week. The conference was hosted by the Yamatji Land

and Sea Council. Attendees included uranium-affected native title claim groups, uranium mining industry, government departments, environmental groups and other representative bodies. *Geraldton Guardian*, (Geraldton WA, 17 December 2008), 11.

10-Dec-2008-WA **Native title issues frustrate community works** Housing and works minister Troy Buswell, has called for a new approach to resolving native title and Aboriginal heritage issues that are holding up the provision of new housing and facilities for Indigenous communities. *Media Statements*, (Western Australia, 5 December 2008).

17-Dec-2008-WA **WA Govt looks to eliminate native title on public works land** The Western Australian Government has pushed to extinguish native title on land needed for public works. The Kimberley Land Council acknowledges the need for land use negotiations to be more efficient but believes that this proposal is not the solution. *ABC News*, (Western Australia, 5 December 2008).

## Northern Territory

December-2008 NT **80 new blocks in groundbreaker deal** Australia's first Indigenous land use agreement for an Indigenous company to develop land is to be signed off in Alice Springs tomorrow. *Centralian Advocate*, (Alice Springs NT, 16 December 2008), 2