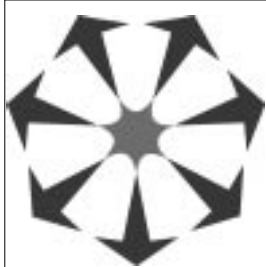


# AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Dr Howard Dengate,  
Director Agribusiness and Resource  
Economics



Office of  
Resource  
Development

*Northern Territory Government*



# Sustainable pastoral use

- ❖ effective clearing controls
- ❖ riparian areas protected
- ❖ ground and surface water control
- ❖ biodiversity conserved
- ❖ effective monitoring and enforcement

*this land is not sleeping but fully awake*

# Unique agribusiness awakening



- ❖ informed bioregional planning
- ❖ best scientific knowledge of agronomy
- ❖ best use of water
- ❖ lowest-impact pest control strategies
- ❖ best models of community involvement

# ORD Stage 2 update



# WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# NORTHERN TERRITORY

Ord River

Keep River  
Plain

Weaber Plain

WYNDHAM

Carlton Plain

Knox Creek  
Plain

Keep River

KUNUNURRA

ORD  
RIVER  
SCHEME

■ Stage 1 - Irrigation Area  
Developed

■ Stage 2 - Potential  
Irrigation Areas

— Rivers

ORD Da

Lake Arglye





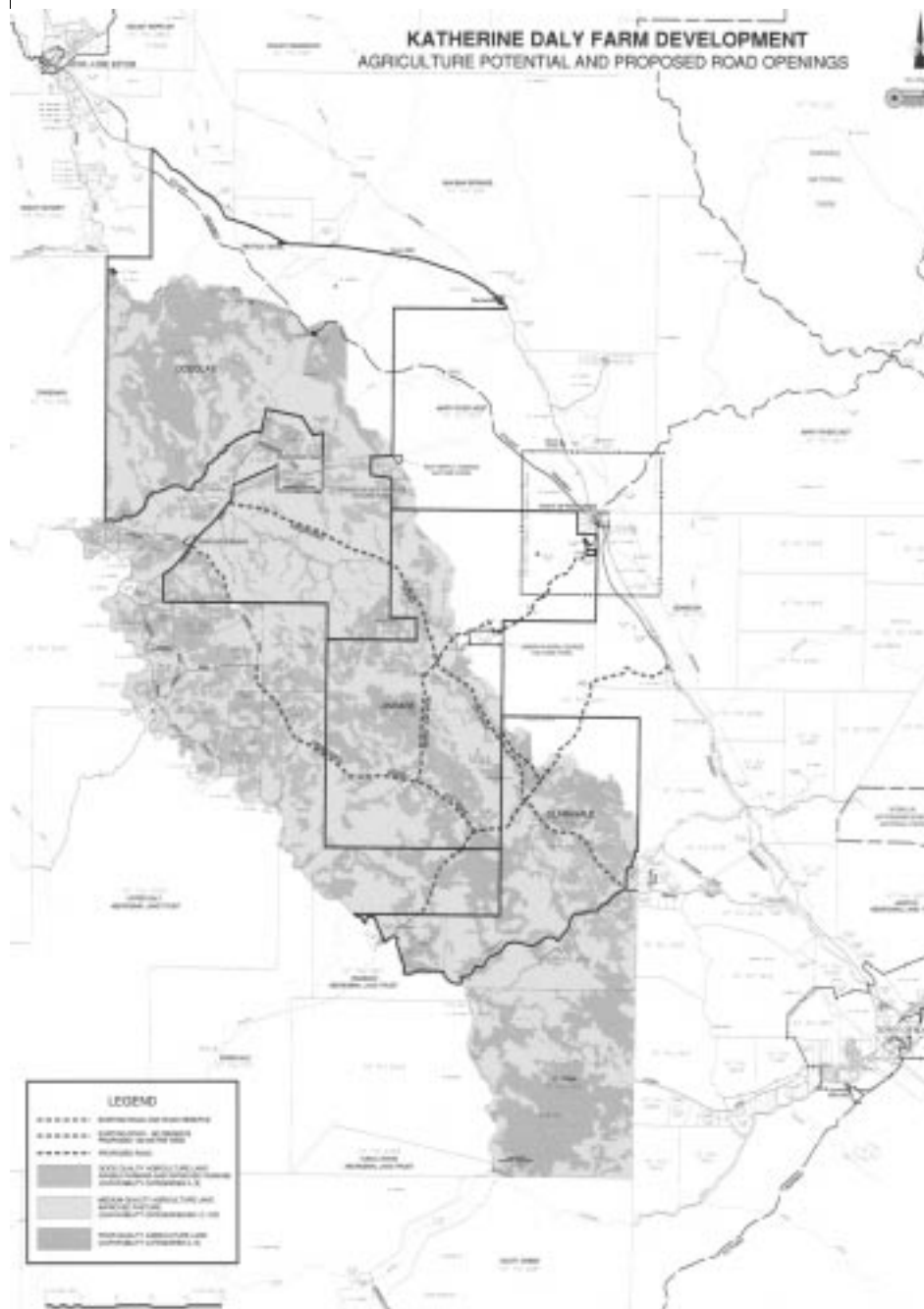
- ❖ **Environment Review and Management Plan (ERMP)**
- ❖ **Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA)**
- ❖ **Social Impact Study**
- ❖ **Government Benefits Package**
- ❖ **Wesfarmers-Marubeni consortium feasibility study**

# Katherine Daly Basin



- ❖ focus on intensification
- ❖ Douglas South, Jindare and Claravale stations and the Stray Creek area, a total of 2,685 k<sup>2</sup>





- ❖ **\$2m gross value of production → \$18m per annu**
- ❖ **bioregional conservation plan**
- ❖ **land and water resource definition**
- ❖ **plan roads and other infrastructure for optimal development**
- ❖ **balanced outcomes for all community sectors**

# **An NT cotton industry?**

- ❖ Potentially as big as the pastoral industry from only 30,000 ha**
- ❖ evaluate social, economic and environmental aspects**
- ❖ no cotton grown commercially before 2003/4**
- ❖ there will be no commercial cotton industry in the Territory until the environmental integrity of such an industry can be proven**

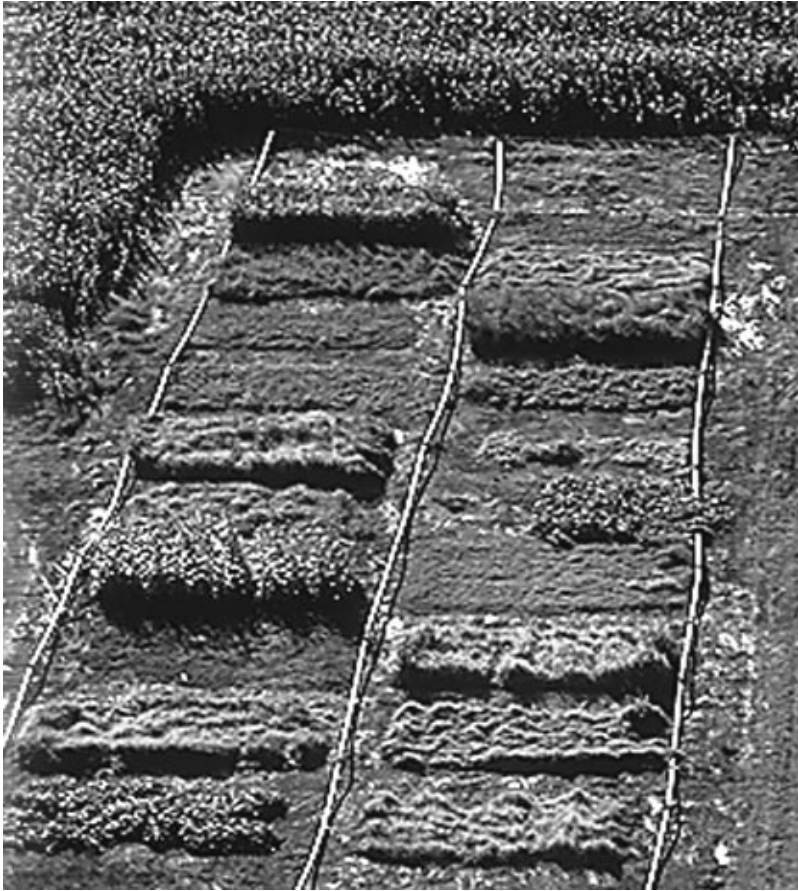
# **LAND**

- ❖ less than 0.2% of the Territory has been cleared**
- ❖ less than 0.7% of the Top End development areas from the Tiwi Islands to south of Katherine have been cleared**
- ❖ even at full agricultural development, cropping in this area will be limited by soils alone to less than 5% of the total land area**
- ❖ uses are presently constrained by irresolution on native title but partnership approaches can overcome this**

# **WATER**

- ❖ current irrigated cropping and horticulture use about 1% of known groundwater reserves**
- ❖ of 80 million megalitres that run into the Timor Sea and Gulf of Carpentaria each year, none is presently used by agribusiness, including aquaculture**
- ❖ fresh water with 18 times the volume of Sydney Harbour has been sitting in Lake Argyle for the last 29 years with little being used for agribusiness**

# AGRONOMY



- ❖ **The reliable dry season allows high quality standards for crops and horticulture**
- ❖ **most of the land area is frost-free**
- ❖ **there is a considerable body of top quality research to assist investors**

# MARKETS



- ❖ the biggest opportunity is for agribusiness from down south to develop counter-seasonal production into their existing markets
- ❖ the proximity to Asian markets must drive northern agribusiness development

*awaken the sleeping land*



*to Australia's purpose*