The Our North, Our Future: White Paper on Developing Northern Australia sets out the long-term policy vision for northern Australia's sustainable economic development. The White Paper provides the framework for our plan to build a strong, prosperous economy and a safe, secure Australia.

We are a quarter of the way into this 20 plus year agenda, and already there is strong progress being made. Roads are being built; concessional finance through the NAIF is supporting major new projects and employment opportunities; industry-led research is underway through the CRC for Developing Northern Australia to drive increased productivity; investment into water infrastructure will support new world class agricultural opportunities; strong and resilient communities are attracting skilled workers, families and investors; and capacity building is opening up economic opportunities on Indigenous land.

Northern Australia is now well positioned to maximise its full potential for economic growth through the next stages of the White Paper.

53% More than 53% of Australia’s land mass

35-39 yrs Diverse population with a median age of 35-39 years

80% Close to 80% of the north’s land mass is covered by Indigenous rights and interests

1.3M Home to 1.3 million people

7% The defence industry contributes almost 7% of economic activity

11% Contributes 11% of Australia’s GDP

$5.3B It is estimated the north can generate 387,000ha of crops, over 15,000 jobs and $5.3 billion annually
Developing Northern Australia

At a glance

Realising the vision of a stronger north requires a long-term commitment and united efforts across government, industry and the community. The Office of Northern Australia is actively implementing the Australian Government’s northern agenda, in close collaboration with a diverse range of partners.

Supply chains

Building better infrastructure is critical to making living and doing business in the north easier and supply chains more productive.

- Northern Australia Roads and Beef Roads Programs
- Northern component of the Roads of Strategic Importance
- Indigenous employment and business opportunities
- Remote airstrip upgrades

Water development

Water availability is a major driver of economic activity, particularly for key northern industries such as agriculture, aquaculture, mining, energy and tourism.

- Northern Water Resource Assessments in major catchments
- Business case investments to support the Adelaide River off-stream water storage; Urannah Dam; and the Lakeland Irrigation project
- Investment for water supply projects:
  - Rookwood Weir near Rockhampton
  - Hells Gates scheme (including Big Rocks Weir) near Charters Towers
  - Water security for Townsville
  - Hughenden Irrigation Scheme

Business growth

- Regions of Growth for place-based targeted investment in specific regions with sectoral strengths and opportunities
- Connecting Northern Australia Program to improve digital connectivity
- Northern Australia Development Program and the Strengthening Northern Australia Business Service to build business resilience and capability
- Defence force investments to upgrade facilities across the north
- The annual Developing Northern Australia Conference

Indigenous

Supporting Indigenous entrepreneurs and businesses is a priority. Opportunities are being opened up for Indigenous Australians to benefit economically from their land.

- Prescribed Body Corporate capacity building aims to generate economic activity to realise the benefits of native title for native title holders
- Township leasing in the NT is increasing economic activity through local decision making, streamlining land administration and decision making within commercial timeframes
- Business friendly, investor focussed online guides to land tenure and native title systems
- Indigenous leadership through the Indigenous Reference Group
- Indigenous ranger groups undertaking biosecurity surveillance and protection

Research and innovation

The northern agenda is building a more diversified economy to unlock new opportunities for traditional and contemporary industry sectors.

- CRC for Developing Northern Australia supports industry-led research collaborations to develop new technologies, products and services which address industry issues
- Tropical medicine research and commercialisation
- Increasing science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) capability
- Seasonal Worker Program
- Resources Sector Workforce Strategy

Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility

- Concessional finance for a strong pipeline of infrastructure projects that create public benefit for the north
- Projects include: airport facilities, higher education facilities, solar and energy storage, beef processing facility, major new mining projects, and a marine supply base
- An Indigenous Engagement Strategy is required for all NAIF financing

northernaustralia.gov.au

#developingnorthernaustralia
#ournorthourfuture