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Sustainable Long Term Water Use For The Katherine Region

Natural Resources Minister Karl Hampton today announced the environment will get first priority under the Territory Government’s new Katherine Tindall Water Allocation Plan.

“The Territory Government is acting now to ensure long term sustainable water use in the Katherine region,” Mr Hampton said.

“We have consulted widely and developed this Plan through the Katherine Water Advisory Committee (KWAC) with broad community representation.

“I thank everyone involved in putting together this Plan together, which meets national standards set through the National Water Initiative, and is another step towards the Henderson Government fulfilling its election commitment of best practice water reform.

“Under this Plan, the environment gets the water it needs first, to avoid making the same mistake as other parts of the country like the Murray Darling.

“Indigenous subsistence and recreation such as camping and fishing are also recognised as high priority non-consumptive uses within the Plan, recognising the strong links between the environment and Indigenous Territorians.

“The Plan also caters for the water needs of existing Indigenous developments and future Indigenous enterprise is accommodated through the establishment of a strategic Indigenous reserve which can provide water for land that is currently subject to native title claim.

“This Plan also respects the reality that ground and surface water are connected and that current extraction levels are at the limits of sustainability.

“Lower flows in the Katherine River will affect the environment, tourism and town water supply, which is why we have set limits on water extraction.

“The Katherine River also feeds into the iconic Daly River, which was also a large consideration when preparing this Plan.

“This Plan will benefit businesses by enabling them to properly plan their investments with certainty – no one benefits if we run out of water.

“Most existing licence holders and applicants will get the water they need, but the limits on water use will be clearly drawn and will change depending on the season, so there will be more water available during the wetter months and less so during the drier months.

“This Plan sets the rules for fairly sharing water between competing users, as well as setting the rules for water trading between users, once the cap is reached.”


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