The Commonwealth Government’s proposed carbon tax will have a similar impact on the economies of remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory as the Wild Rivers legislation will have in Queensland. Country Liberals Indigenous Affairs spokesman, Adam Giles, said the carbon tax will seriously set-back any prospects of economic growth in communities which already struggle with higher costs than elsewhere in the Territory. “The carbon tax will be another barrier to economic development and exclude Aborigines living in remote Territory communities from enjoying a larger slice of the nation’s wealth,” Mr Giles said. “It’s already expensive enough to establish viable businesses in the communities and to create self-sustaining economies – the carbon tax will only make things worse. “It will increase the cost to produce electricity – either off the grid or through locally operated generation plants – and it will add to the already high costs of transporting goods into and out of remote communities. “It will increase the cost of building materials and constructing new businesses and ratchet up fees associated with operating a business. ”The Wild Rivers laws have been criticised for taking away the capacity of Indigenous communities to make decisions around the management of a number of river systems in Cape York. “It is a legislation imposed on Indigenous people in Queensland by a Labor Government who needed Greens preferences to get over the line at the last election. ”Julia Gillard’s carbon tax is also a product of a debt of gratitude to the Greens and, like Wild Rivers, there was also a similar lack of consultation with Indigenous community leaders. ”Indigenous Affairs Minister, Jenny Macklin, should explain how a carbon tax will benefit Aboriginal people in remote communities. “It’s not as if they have issues with air quality or industrial emissions – in fact the opposite is the case. “The complex permit system and leasing arrangements already conspire to make it extremely difficult for businesses to operate in communities. ”Federal Labor’s carbon tax will only serve to ensure business operators are even more reluctant to look at operating in remote areas.” Further comment: Adam Giles 0421 588 118