KULALUK MUD CRAB FARM OPENS

More than 40,000 crablets have been placed at a new mud crab farm on Indigenous land at Kulaluk, near Darwin Harbour between Fannie Bay and Coconut Grove.

The farm is a joint venture between the Gwalwa Daraniki Association (GDA) and the Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines (DPIFM).

Minister for Primary Industry and Fisheries Kon Vatskalis said the project provides Indigenous employment opportunities and promotes economic development.

“The farm will be run by a full-time, live-in manager and GDA representatives will be trained in vocational aquaculture and small business management through Charles Darwin University.

“This batch of crablets is the first of thousands to be produced at the farm every year. This is an opportunity to trial commercial scale mud crab aquaculture while creating meaningful employment and training.

Mr Vatskalis said the crablets were reared at the Darwin Aquaculture Centre (DAC) and are expected to be ready for harvest later this year.

“It is hoped the farm will produce mud crabs that weigh 350g or more and although they’ll be smaller than those caught legally in the wild, they represent a market advantage. We anticipate that more than 15 tonnes of mud crabs will be grown here in 2.5 hectares of saltwater ponds - worth about $235,000 a year.”

The Kulaluk mud crab farm has been developed under a shared responsibility agreement by the GDA, DPIFM, the Federal Government and a private partner Tropical Aquaculture Australia.

“If the farm proves to be profitable, the Gwalwa Daraniki Association will investigate expanding the farm to increase social and economic outcomes.

There is also the possibility of showcasing the project to other Indigenous communities across the Territory and Australia who may like to start their own aquaculture project,” said Mr Vatskalis.

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