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PEOPLE IN NEW SOUTH WALES THROUGH
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INDEPENDENCE

media release

NEW SOUTH WALES ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL

3 June 2010

Aboriginal Fishers to 'net' profits

Two of the state's peak Aboriginal organisations, the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council (NSWALC) and NTSCORP Limited, have welcomed the NSW Government's strengthened commitment to Aboriginal fishing.

NSW Primary Industries Minister, Steve Whan, today announced a range of initiatives to enhance the Aboriginal communities' participation within the commercial fishing industry.

"It's great to see employment and training opportunities being explored in an industry that involves a key part of our culture," NSWALC Chairperson Bev Manton said.

"Our people have always been, and will always be fishers. It's a part of us."

NTSCORP Chairperson Michael Bell said the initiatives acknowledged that commercial fishing is an appealing and viable source of employment for many NSW Aboriginal communities.

"There is a tremendous amount of economic opportunity which exists within the NSW fisheries industry for our people," Mr Bell said.

"Opportunities such as these allow Aboriginal people to keep working on Country and building a strong foundation for the future," he said.

The initiatives stem from the NSW Government's review of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994 (NSW)*. Both NSWALC and NTSCORP were involved in the amendment process, which formally acknowledged for the first time the importance of the fisheries resource to the Aboriginal people of NSW.

"The incoming *Aboriginal Fisheries Advisory Council*, which is a product of last year's legislation, will play a key role in working through both the cultural and commercial initiatives with the Government," Ms Manton said.

Industry and Investments NSW (I&I NSW) will be consulting stakeholders in 2010 to progress these initiatives, which include:

- Dedicated funding through an Aboriginal Fishing Trust for Aboriginal fishing ventures;
- Investment in education programs to provide training and qualifications required for commercial fishing;

- More accessible avenues for the development and participation of Aboriginal people in the commercial fisheries;
- Projects to encourage the involvement of Aboriginal people in the commercial fishing sector; and
- Mentoring and business skills development.

Mr Bell said that Aboriginal communities in NSW would be notified of the planned consultations, and that all community members with an interest in this industry were encouraged to get involved.

NSWALC and NTSCORP look forward to continuing the discussions with the NSW Government and keeping up the momentum to cement the gains for Aboriginal fishing in NSW.

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