



## Media Release

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### PRODUCERS NEED CERTAINTY, NOT REGULATION

Changes announced by the Minister for the Environment on clearing in the Daly River region offer no benefit to producers struggling to manage in a climate of uncertainty, the NT Cattlemen's Association said today.

"Producers have been working with the Government to demonstrate that environmental sustainability is integral to their operations," said Stuart Kenny, Executive Director of the NT Cattlemen's Association. "However they are operating with a cloud over their heads, with no end in sight."

"It is now more than three years since the Government imposed its moratorium on land clearing, which has caused real hardship to farmers who had purchased land on the understanding that it could be developed," he said.

"They have cooperated fully with the Government's reference groups, scientific studies and restrictions on their business, but people's patience is wearing thin," he said.

"We call on the Government to show a more balanced approach to developing the Daly region, as outlined in an adaptive management plan for the Douglas Daly developed in conjunction with industry, scientists, the Department of Primary Industry Fisheries and Mines, and the Department of Natural Resources Environment and the Arts.

"This plan calls for staged development of the area, in conjunction with studies that provide a better understanding of issues such as weeds management, sustainable use of water from the aquifers and clearing."

"We recognise that development must not be unbridled and that the government's comprehensive land clearing guideline must be adhered to," Mr Kenny said.

"But this has to be balanced with a sensible approach that lets producers manage their existing businesses," he said.

"Farmers are conservationists too. Most have a long-term goal of handing on their land to their children in better condition than they found it. Many are members of their local Landcare groups, and environmental sustainability is a key issue across the pastoral industry," he said.

"The latest announcement by the Minister fails to clarify the Government's plans for the Daly region and the implications of what she has announced are unclear," he said.

"Most of the activities outlined in the Minister's release, such as clearing for fences, roads, tracks, yards and watering points are already exempt from planning controls that apply to pastoral leases.

"All that appears to have changed is that pastoral properties can now clear for airstrips if they wish," Mr Kenny said.

For more information on the adaptive management plan, see the Douglas Daly web site at [www.ntca.org.au](http://www.ntca.org.au)

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