Northern Australian Development
The Idea of North
November 2014

Professor Sharon Bell
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Charles Darwin University
‘I’ve read about it, written about it, and even pulled on my parka once and gone there. Yet like all but a very few Canadians I’ve had no real experience of the North. I’ve remained, of necessity, an outsider. And the North has remained for me, a convenient place to dream about, spin tall tales about, and, in the end, avoid.’

Positioning for prosperity?
Catching the next wave
Areas of Comparative Advantage

Source: Deloitte Access Economics
* Average Australian advantage
Waves of Optimism

• The Lucky Country has had a good run.
• We’ve seen this pattern before: waves of Australian prosperity where global opportunity has met Australian advantage. Our gold, wool, wheat, meat, iron, coal and nickel have all boomed – some more than once.
• ...growth opportunities for Australia in agribusiness, gas, tourism, international education and wealth management, and we calculated that the size of these ‘Fantastic Five’ sectors would collectively match that of mining today.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFRASTRUCTURE</th>
<th>LAND</th>
<th>WATER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Productive new infrastructure</td>
<td>Diverse and longer pastoral leases</td>
<td>New infrastructure to support industries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better use of existing infrastructure</td>
<td>Flexible leases for Indigenous landholders</td>
<td>and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better planning and understanding of</td>
<td>Efficient native title processes</td>
<td>Comprehensive water resource assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>infrastructure opportunities and</td>
<td></td>
<td>Best practice planning and management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td>Water markets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSINESS, TRADE AND INVESTMENT</th>
<th>EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION</th>
<th>GOVERNANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deregulation agenda for the north</td>
<td>Building capabilities and skills</td>
<td>Collaboration across governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce availability and skills</td>
<td>Partnerships with world leading</td>
<td>Effective engagement with, and presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that meet business needs</td>
<td>institutions</td>
<td>in, northern Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New markets and greater trade links</td>
<td>More international students</td>
<td>Efficient service delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative business-friendly</td>
<td>Effective engagement with international</td>
<td>Capable and sustainable local institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policies</td>
<td>development in the region</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Green Paper on Developing Northern Australia

• Northern Australia should grasp its full potential for the benefit of people living there and right around our country.
• Northern Australia’s proximity to the Asian and tropical regions provides unparalleled economic opportunity for the nation.
• Northern Australia should no longer be seen as the last frontier: it is, in fact, the next frontier.
Opportunity or threat?
From Myth to Reality: New Pathways for Northern Development

Allan Dale
Andrew Campbell
Michael Douglas
Alistar Robertson
Ruth Wallace
Peter Davies
From Myth to Reality

• New approaches don’t need to repeat the litany of major policy and development conflicts and investment failures that have riddled the north’s history.

• We consider that the key to genuine progress relies on new approaches to de-risking major government and private sector decisions about policy and investment in the north by:
  – taking a strategic approach to building the evidence base needed to overcome some of the north’s most significant technical tyrannies (distance, soils, geography, failed business models, labour, climate, knowledge, heavy regulation, capacity, etc.); and
  – Building effective and long term partnerships with, and seriously engaging, the north’s regions, communities, enterprises, industries and people.

• Quality science and evidence needs to infuse the decision making processes being used, and together we need to monitor joint progress towards shared goals.
Northern Australia Knowledge Economy

- Infrastructure
- Land and Water
- Education, Research and Innovation
- Business, Trade & Investment
- Governance
Indigenous futures are inextricably linked to sustainable northern development (NAILSMA 2012)
Thank you