



**Karl Hampton**

MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES

29 September 2009

## **New Report Highlights Health of Darwin Harbour**

A new Territory Government report on Darwin Harbour region shows most local waterways are in excellent health.

Minister for Natural Resources, Karl Hampton, and Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee Chair, Bill Stuchbery, today launched the first edition of the Darwin Harbour Report Cards.

“The Territory Government is delivering an open and accountable report to help us ensure water quality can be protected into the future,” Mr Hampton said.

“Overall the report cards are positive and show that Darwin Harbour and local waterways are in excellent health.

“The harbour is the hub of commercial activity and economic growth, as well as one of our most loved recreational areas for fishing and boating.

“Since 2001, the Territory Government has banned commercial fishing in the harbour, protected over 90 per cent of mangroves, created the Darwin Harbour Advisory Committee, and instituted a plan of management for the Darwin Harbour area which is currently being reviewed.

“This report shows that with a strong commitment to protecting the environment and the right policy framework, increased commercial activity can be compatible with a healthy harbour.

“We will continue to track water quality and aquatic health and take actions necessary to protect our waterways for the future – everyone has a role to play in ensuring our waterways remain healthy.

“The report shows there are some places where the water quality can be improved, such as Buffalo Creek, and we’ll work with all parties to make sure this happens,” Mr Hampton said.

The report cards were produced for Darwin Harbour, Darwin-Palmerston, Elizabeth River, Blackmore River, Shoal Bay, Rapid Creek and Lagoons in the region.

The first series of report cards produced in 2009 summarise data collected by the Territory Government’s Aquatic Health Unit for biological health from 2001-2007 and, where available, water quality from 2001-2008.

“Our harbour is in a very good health and these report cards will help ensure we keep it this way through regular review and action,” Mr Stuchbery said.

“We all have an interest in understanding and improving the health of our waterways, and the release of these report cards is a milestone in our united effort to be good stewards of our harbour.”

The report cards can be viewed online at [www.nt.gov.au/nreta/water/reportcards](http://www.nt.gov.au/nreta/water/reportcards)  
Media contact: *Nicole Manison 0448 693 279*

