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24th February 2009

Senate Standing Committee on
Environment, Communications and the Arts
Via email to: eca.sen@aph.gov.au

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To the Senate Standing Committee, please find attached:

Submission for

**THE ENQUIRY INTO TIWI ISLANDS MATTERS
FORESTRY-MINING-ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY (3 pages including this**

one)

For further information please contact Jim Smith, Chief Executive Officer of Tiwi Enterprises on 08 89423995

Yours sincerely

Jim Smith
Tiwi Enterprises PL

Tiwi Enterprises: "Tiwi future in Tiwi hands"

Submission for

**THE ENQUIRY INTO TIWI ISLANDS MATTERS
FORESTRY-MINING-ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comment concerning your enquiry into forestry, mining and economic matters

About the Submitter

- This submission is made by Tiwi Enterprises PL. The company is owned by Traditional Owners of the Tiwi Islands with a charter of developing business and jobs for Tiwi People.
- Tiwi Enterprises was created by the Tiwi Traditional Land Owners in late 2007 with a specific brief to engage as a contractor to the Forest Industry on Melville Island.
- The eight land groups have an equal share in the ownership of Tiwi Enterprises. However the initial funding has been loaned to the company from 3 of these groups, from monies earned from business ventures carried out on their land, including forestry.
- In addition to supporting the forestry industry, other projects in progress now include; a Motel and Housing Office for the Mantyiupwi Clan in Nguiu; A 'Business Incubator' support in Nguiu for small business, A Marine Barramundi Farm at Snake Bay; A bus service to support both the Forestry workers & the Tiwi College and to re-establish Remote Indigenous Broadcasting Service(RIBS) with local participation to the principal communities on the Island.

While we welcome the Commonwealth interest and support through successive governments in Canberra we are aware that most enquiries end up as an expensive exercise of taxpayers monies with findings and recommendations gathering dust on a shelf somewhere, often with the government of the day ignoring what is often good advice. We are hopeful that this is not the case here.

Tiwi Enterprises welcomes both the scrutiny and recommendations from this enquiry in all aspects of economic development on the islands.

In the first instance:

Assessment of Environment, Economic and Community Impacts including Compliance

- It is noted that the wording 'impact' is used in the terms of reference for the inquiry. This is of concern to us as it can be construed as a negative. We ask that the benefits of employment of real jobs with the forest industry and the income and training to the community via forestry and mining also be considered as an impact.
- We also ask that the alternative 'impact' of not having any work opportunity or ability to invest in business that operates on our land and sea be considered due to the way government welfare is robbing us of our strength and culture.
- In regards to compliance we would ask you to be mindful of the three levels of government that are on the islands serving approx. 2500 people, each tier of government which demand "compliance".

Governance Arrangements

- We are proud to have the first Audit Committee formed late in 2008 for our Land Council. Any advice to them is welcome.

Adequacy of Contractual, Commercial & Legal Arrangements

- We challenge the committee to come up with a better and more efficient way of meeting these requirements. We trust that the recommendations are 'commercial best practice' and not a bureaucratic exercise.

Economic Opportunity Costs

- As previously stated: The alternative 'impact' of not having any work opportunity or ability to invest in business that operates on our land and sea be considered due to the way government welfare robs us of our strength and culture.
- Tiwi Enterprises offer to facilitate the Senate Enquiry both in Darwin and the Tiwi Islands, this way the Committee can demonstrate at least one economic benefit to the Tiwi people.

Prospects for Alternative Economic Development Opportunities Including Cultural Products and Carbon Trading

- The challenge of providing a new economy for the islands that is not tied to government funding is a massive task. Tiwi Enterprises is exercising its charter to use Tiwi land and water to create real economic opportunity for Tiwi people.
- We are proud of our Tiwi cultural products which include our art, music, sport and environmental knowledge. We are intrigued that the Senate Committee would know about these matters and can recommend how to enhance our existing presence in these arts and medium.
- We point out to the committee that carbon trading is just one component in sustainable development. It is also of interest that the inquiry can comment on any recommendation for carbon trading before the Australian Government has agreed on a Carbon Trading model.

We ask that each and every member of the committee in the course of the enquiry become aware of the extent of government agencies involved in the 'Aboriginal Business'. It is our belief that a better service to our people and the taxpayers of Australia would be a similar inquiry into how to streamline delivery of service and achieve outcomes across the three levels of government that are present on the islands.

Yours sincerely,

Directors of Tiwi Enterprises:

Andrew Bush

Eric Tipiloura

Wally Kerinauia

Kim Brooks Wommatakimmi

Baylon Tipungwuti

Danny Munkara

Barry Puruntatameri

Cyril Kalippa