



MEDIA RELEASE

Worldwide knowledge and understanding of Australian Indigenous cultures, past and present

Wednesday, 6 June 2007

Conference commemorates 15 year Anniversary of Mabo decision

The eighth annual Native Title Conference opened today in Cairns, exploring the ebb and flow of native title law, policy and practice since the High Court decision in *Mabo* 15 years ago.

Organised by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the North Queensland Land Council, the conference is being held on the lands of the Gimuy Walubara Yidinji people, traditional owners of the Cairns region.

“As an Indigenous-led conference, this is an opportunity for Indigenous people to influence policy on Native Title,” AIATSIS Chairman, Professor Mick Dodson said.

“Today was a chance for 440 people from Native Title groups and representatives bodies and the Indigenous sector to get together and share ideas, strategies, innovations and ideas about improving practice and creating professional networks.”

Over the next two days, the conference will focus on the relationship between native title, Indigenous communities and country.

All Native Title stakeholders will be involved in the coming days’ events, including Commonwealth and State government departments and the National Native Title Tribunal.

“I encourage all of the participants at this conference to use this opportunity to design strategies, forge new linkages, and make plans to create space for the abundant exercise of our right to self determination,” Professor Dodson said.

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Media: DVD copies of approximately one minute of footage from the documentary *Mabo: Life of an Island Man* are available for electronic media covering the Native Title Conference in Cairns this week.

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