

MEDIA RELEASE

Traditional owners to explore carbon trading at National Native Title Conference

Traditional owners will explore their roles and rights in a future Australian carbon market at this year's National Native Title Conference, to be held in Brisbane from June 1-3.

Convened annually by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and co-convened this year by Queensland South Native Title Services (QSNTS), the conference will be hosted by the Turrbal, Jagera, Yuggera and Ugarapul Peoples, the traditional owners of the wider Brisbane area.

QSNTS CEO Mr Kevin Smith hopes discussion of native title and Aboriginal Land Rights land law and policy will help traditional owners to understand the emerging issue of carbon trading better.

"We need to understand what the new legislation will mean for traditional owners," Mr Smith said. "Conference delegates will grapple with the inherent challenge of a country that is currently in the largest resource boom of its history whilst protecting an ancient but thriving cultural legacy which has environmental custodianship at its very heart.

"Native title sits at the core of developments around the emerging carbon economy and the Conference is the best forum to have a critical dialogue about the challenges it poses."

AIATSIS Chairperson Professor Mick Dodson AM said with two parliamentary committees currently considering the matter of carbon trading and the *Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Bill 2011* recently introduced to Parliament, the conference is well placed to consider the issue.

"Traditional owners have an opportunity on the eve of the introduction of an Australian carbon market to find out what will work best for them," Professor Dodson said.

"The conference offers traditional owners the chance to engage each other, climate change specialists and policy makers about this dynamic new area of policy and I encourage them to register online now to be part of that national dialogue."

The Native Title Conference is the flagship Indigenous conference, attended by more than 500 delegates annually.

Media contact

AIATSIS Executive and Communications Director John Paul Janke m: 0408 600 867
QSNTS Media Manager Sophia Walter ph: (07) 3224 1200 m: 0412 996 158