



# Senator the Hon. Joe Ludwig

## MEDIA RELEASE

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
Senator for Queensland

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### **The Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster Fishery: Buy-out of licences**

A voluntary buy-out of fishing licences is being offered to non-Traditional Inhabitants to increase the ownership and participation of Traditional Inhabitants in the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster fishery.

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator Joe Ludwig, made the announcement as chair of the Protected Zone Joint Authority, the organisation that will manage the buy-out.

“The PZJA acknowledge the aspirations of the Traditional Inhabitants to increase their ownership in the Tropical Rock Lobster fishery,” Minister Ludwig said.

“This decision has been made in consideration of both sectors of the fishery.

“The share of the fishery to be transferred to the Traditional Inhabitant sector will be confirmed once the buy-out is complete.”

The buy-out will commence prior to the 2012 hookah season (February 2012).

Minister Ludwig said the future development and sustainability of the Tropical Rock Lobster fishery will depend on the co-operation of both sectors as these changes take place.

“Leasing arrangements and two additional processor-carrier licences will be put in place to help maintain supply to processing businesses during this transition,” he said.

The Torres Strait Regional Authority is running a capacity building program for Traditional Inhabitant fishers to enable a smooth transition and profitable future for the fishery.

“The PZJA recognise the need for long term sustainable management arrangements to provide a secure future for all stakeholders in the Torres Strait Tropical Rock Lobster fishery,” Minister Ludwig said.

“After the buy-out, a management plan will be developed and there will be a move towards output controls, such as a catch quota system.”