



Position Title:	Senior Advisor – Sea Country Strategy and Partnerships	Position No:	DS34
Group:	Land & Sea Management	Service Area:	Sea Country
Classification Level:	Senior Officer Grade B - SOGB		
Reports to:	Manager, Sea Country Programs	Direct Reports:	(DST6) Project Officer
Special Measures:	<i>Yes - Priority Consideration Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Positions</i>		
Location:	Darwin	Date Approved:	August 2026

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Senior Advisor Sea Country Strategy and Partnerships is a senior specialist role responsible for providing strategic leadership, expert policy direction and partnership development to advance Aboriginal sea rights, Sea Country governance and long-term management outcomes across the Northern Land Council (NLC) coastal regions. Reporting to the Manager Sea Country Programs, the position leads strategic initiatives arising from the Blue Mud Bay High Court Decision (2008) and related legislation, working collaboratively with Traditional Owners, government, industry and research partners to strengthen Aboriginal participation in the management, access and sustainable use of Aboriginal waters.

The role is responsible for shaping sea country's strategic priorities, influencing policy reform, developing strategic partnerships opportunities and providing authoritative advice on marine governance, fisheries management and access arrangements. It also ensures Sea Country priorities are integrated into broader organisational planning and contributes to long-term economic, environmental and cultural outcomes for Traditional Owners.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

LEADERSHIP

- Provide strategic leadership and subject matter expertise in Sea Country policy, governance, marine access fisheries management and partnership development.
- Lead strategic initiatives that strengthen Aboriginal participation and influence in marine and fisheries management.
- Provide authoritative advice to senior management on emerging policy issues, risks and opportunities affecting Sea Country outcomes.
- Drive innovation, continuous improvement and strategic alignment across Sea Country programs and initiatives.
- Mentor and provide technical guidance to colleagues and stakeholders, supporting high-quality project delivery and organisational capability.
- Promote a collaborative, culturally safe, and accountable workplace that reflects the NLC's values and objectives.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- Lead high-level engagement, consultation and negotiations with Traditional Owners, government agencies, industry partners, research institutions and other key stakeholders.
- Develop and maintain strategic partnerships that advance Sea Country priorities and create sustainable social, cultural and economic opportunities for Traditional Owners.
- Represent the NLC and Traditional Owners on strategic forums, advisory bodies and intergovernmental committees.
- Influence policy and partnership outcomes through effective advocacy, negotiation and relationship management with the Traditional Owners



- Ensure consultation and partnership activities reflect free, prior and informed consent principles and support Traditional Owner self-determination.
- Collaborate with government and industry to identify employment, training and economic development opportunities linked to Sea Country initiatives.

PROGRAM OPERATIONS

- Lead the development, implementation and review of Sea Country strategic priorities, frameworks, and action plans.
- Provide high-level policy advice on marine governance, fisheries management, Aboriginal sea rights and resource access arrangements.
- Lead and contribute to complex negotiations with government and industry stakeholders regarding fisheries, marine access and Sea Country governance matters.
- Lead the development of NLC policy positions, submissions, briefings and strategic reports for senior management, Council and external stakeholders.
- Oversee strategic partnership projects incorporating Traditional Owners aspirations into long term fishing access arrangements and Sea Country management and monitor progress, outcomes and benefits against agreed objectives.
- Lead and evaluate strategic Sea Country initiatives including Beds and Banks land claims, policy reform projects, research partnerships and governance initiatives.
- Responsible for providing specialist advice to internal business units, including Legal, Anthropology and Compliance (PACT), to ensure consistent application of legislation, policy and organisational processes.
- Identify emerging issues, strategic risks and opportunities, developing evidence-based recommendations that support organisational planning and decision-making.
- Contribute to organisational planning, risk management and continuous improvement across the Sea Country remit
- Ensure all activities are undertaken in accordance with relevant legislation, NLC policies, workplace health and safety requirements and the NLC Code of Conduct.

AUTHORISATION & ACCOUNTABILITIES – INFORMATION SECTION

Financial Delegation - Band 5

- Approves operating expenditure within the section's budget and Financial Authorisation (Band 5).
- Approves procurement and capital expenditure within the approved budget and Financial Authorisation.
- Monitors section budget performance.
- Contributes to the development of the section budget.

Governance Accountability

- Accountable for overall section compliance with legislative and policy requirements.
- Accountable for accurate reporting and effective maintenance of internal controls within the section.
- Escalates enterprise or cross-service risks to the Manager Sea Country Programs.

Decision-Making Authority

- Makes operational decisions within established frameworks.
- Applies professional judgement in policy interpretation.
- Allocates section resources within approved budget.
- Escalates matters outside delegation or high-risk issues.



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POSITION REQUIREMENTS

ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Tertiary qualification in Aboriginal policy, marine or environmental management, fisheries or natural resource management, or a related field, or extensive equivalent experience.
- Minimum of three (3) years' experience providing technical or policy advice in marine governance, fisheries management or Aboriginal land and sea rights.
- Strong understanding of the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976, Native Title Act 1993 and related NT and Commonwealth legislation governing sea rights.
- Proven ability to liaise and collaborate effectively with Aboriginal communities, government and industry in culturally responsive ways.
- High-level analytical and communication skills, including the ability to prepare complex reports, submissions and policy advice.
- Experience supervising or mentoring staff in a small team environment.
- Sound computer literacy and proficiency in Microsoft Office and relevant software systems.
- Current NT C-class driver's licence, and ability to travel to remote areas as required.

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS

- Demonstrated understanding of, and interest in, the lived experiences of Aboriginal people in the NLC region.
- Experience representing organisations on technical committees or policy forums.
- Experience working with Aboriginal organisations or programs supporting Aboriginal self-determination.
- Understanding of Blue Mud Bay and Aboriginal Sea Country management.