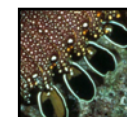


CHAPTER 5

SOCIAL INDICATORS MAPS

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SOCIAL INDICATORS

Introduction

A number of key socio-economic characteristics distinguish coastal communities adjacent to the Northern Planning Area from those adjacent to other marine regions. The coast of the Northern Planning Area is sparsely populated, with the lowest overall population of any coastal region in Australia, representing just 1 per cent of Australia's coastal population. It is also the only marine region where Indigenous people make up the majority of the population.

The region is characterised by a large number of small settlements, over half of which have less than 500 people. However, this is also a region of high population growth, with double the Australian average over the period 1996 to 2001, and an extremely young population, with forty four per cent of the population aged under 25 years of age.

Although an important economic activity in the Northern Planning Area, commercial fishing accounts for less than 1 per cent of the region's employment, with a small level of additional employment in the fish wholesaling and processing sectors. This reflects the extent of fishing activity undertaken by those with home ports outside the region. A small aquaculture industry operates in the region, however employment in this sector is the smallest of any marine region.

Background

The Northern Planning Area comprises twelve Statistical Local Areas (SLA), seven of which are in Queensland and the remainder in the Northern Territory (NT) (Table 2). Two SLAs, Mornington (S) in Queensland and Groote Eylandt in the NT, are island SLAs located in the Gulf of Carpentaria. The Torres (S) SLA, beginning on the northern tip of the mainland also includes thirteen island communities scattered throughout the Torres Strait. Thirty-five Urban Centre/Localities (UC/Ls) were also included in this social profile (Map 14).

Statistical Local Areas (SLA) are an Australian Standard Geographical Classification used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to geographically categorise certain ABS data. As marine boundaries in Australia do not correspond fully with geographic land boundaries used for statistical collection purposes by the Australian Bureau of Statistics some adjustments have been necessary to match the two. These adjustments have been based on demographic considerations and other relevant boundaries.

For example, the West Arnhem SLA (NT) straddles both the Northern Planning Area and the western part of Northern Marine Region. West Arnhem has been included in the Northern Planning Area because two thirds of the SLA and Maningrida, the largest coastal town in the SLA, lie within the Area. Likewise, two coastal localities in West Arnhem, Minjilang and Waruwu, lie adjacent to the western part of the Northern Marine Region, but are included in the Area profile because they

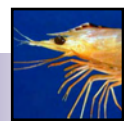
fall within the West Arnhem Region as defined by the Northern Land Council (NLC).

At the eastern side of the Area, Cook (S) (excl. Weipa) covers Far North Queensland, including two significant settlements on the eastern coast, Lockhart River and Cooktown. As it was not possible to split the SLA east-west for analytical purposes, Cook (S) (excl. Weipa) has been included in the social profile. However while Lockhart River and Cooktown contribute to the statistical data they have been largely ignored in the profile considering their distance from the Area's marine jurisdiction.

Of the thirty five UC/Ls, nearly one-third are island communities in the Torres Strait. Mainland UC/Ls in the Northern Planning Area are distributed sparsely compared to eastern coastal Australia, often separated by more than seventy kilometres. The only places where coastal UC/Ls are less than ten kilometres apart are on Groote Eylandt, the mainland part of Torres (S) and the extreme north eastern corner of the East Arnhem - Bal.

Queensland	Northern Territory
Burke (S)	West Arnhem
Mornington (S)	East Arnhem – Bal
Carpentaria (S)	Nhulunbuy
Cook (S) (excl. Weipa)	Groote Eylandt
Arukun (S)	Gulf
Cook (S) – Weipa only	
Torres (S)	

Table 2. List of SLAs by state.
The suffix (S) indicates that the SLA is a shire.



Total population, 2001 (map 14)

In 2001 the total population of the Northern Planning Area was 48 917 persons. Approximately 57% (27 976 persons) lived in the QLD portion, mostly in Torres (S) (9669 persons), Cook (S) (excl Weipa) (7457 persons) and Carpentaria (S) (4804 persons). The NT portion of the Area's population was predominantly in East Arnhem – Bal (6891 persons) and West Arnhem (4382 persons), however the SLA of Nhulunbuy (3770 persons) was the most densely populated SLA (Map 14).

In 2001, 65% of the Area's total population resided in UC/Ls. The largest centres were Nhulunbuy (3767 persons), Thursday Island (2683 persons) and Weipa (2493 persons). Half of the 35 UC/Ls, typically Indigenous settlements, contained less than 500 persons.

Total dependency ratio, 2001 (map 15)

The dependency ratio is the ratio of the number of children aged 0-14 years and persons aged greater than 65 years per 100 persons aged 15-64 years. A reduced value for the dependency ratio indicates that there is more population of working age to support the population of non-working age.

Total dependency in the Area reflected the combined influences of a large proportion of children (persons aged 0-14 years) and a small proportion of elderly (65 years or more). Overall the Area's total dependency ratio was 52.1 and dependency ratios ranged from 37.1 in Nhulunbuy to 66.7 in Torres (S).

East Arnhem – Bal, West Arnhem and Torres (S) had total dependency ratios more than 20% above

the Area's average, a reflection of the youthful Indigenous communities in these areas.

More than two thirds of all UC/Ls had a higher total dependency ratio than the Area's average. With the exception of Karumba, where there were more elderly persons (351 persons) than children (133 persons), this reflected dependent children rather than dependent elderly. On the mainland there was a clear distinction between Indigenous UC/Ls¹ which had dependency ratios greater than sixty, and UC/Ls with low proportions of Indigenous persons (Karumba, Weipa, Nhulunbuy) where total dependency ratios below forty five were common.

Amongst the UC/Ls the highest total dependency occurred in the Torres Strait, particularly on Hammond Island (107.4), New Mapoon (95.2) and Talbot Island (89.4).

Indigenous population, 2001 (map 16)

The Area is the only region where Indigenous people comprise the majority (59.5%) of the population in the adjacent coastal area. In 2001 there were 29 126 Indigenous people, 72% (20 941 persons) were located in the NT portion. The proportion of Indigenous people per SLA ranged from 14.1% in Cook (S) – Weipa to 89.4% in East Arnhem – Bal.

Indigenous people in the NT portion were mainly located in East Arnhem-Bal and West Arnhem, with 6159 persons and 3789 persons respectively. In the QLD portion most Indigenous people lived in Torres (S) (7137 persons).

Approximately 57% of all Indigenous people lived in UC/Ls. The UC/Ls with the highest number

of Indigenous people were Thursday Island (1645 Indigenous persons), Maningrida (1368 Indigenous persons), Galiwinku (1347 Indigenous persons), Milingimbi (916 Indigenous persons) and Aurukun (880 Indigenous persons).

Higher proportions of Indigenous populations were associated with discrete smaller settlements:

- for UC/Ls of less than 500 persons, Indigenous people usually accounted for more than 90% of the population
- UC/Ls with a population between 500 and 1000 persons generally had between 75% and 90% of the Indigenous population.

In the Area's largest UC/L, Nhulunbuy, less than 8% of the total population were Indigenous. The least number and proportion of Indigenous people was in Karumba (28 Indigenous persons, 2.1% of the total population).

The proportion of indigenous population in the Area has implications for the reliance on official data sources which may inadequately reflect this population due to factors such as remoteness, difficulty of access, and high levels of short-term inter-regional movement.²

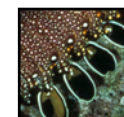
Annual average population growth, 1996-2001 (map 17)

Between 1996 and 2001 the annual rate of population growth in the Area was 2.2%, double the average growth rate of 1.1% throughout Australia in the same period.³ Annual growth ranged from -3.4% in Mornington (S) to 8.2% in Burke (S) (Map 17). Overall, the Area's total population grew from 43 899 in 1996 to 48 917 in 2001.

¹ Aurukun, Galiwinku, Maningrida, Milingimbi, Minjilang, Numbulwar, Umbakumba, Waruwu.

² Taylor and Bell (2001) Towards a composite estimate of Cape York's Indigenous population, QCPR, Queensland.

³ Haberkorn, G. et al (2004) Country Matters: Social Atlas of Rural and Regional Australia, BRS, Canberra.



Annual growth rates were highest in Burke (S) (8.2%), Aurukun (S) (5.4%) and Gulf (3.8%). However absolute population increases were highest in Torres (S) (1138 persons), East Arnhem-Bal (998 persons) and Cook (S) (excl. Weipa) (742 persons).

Population increases occurred in all but four UC/Ls; Alyangula, Umbakumba, St Pauls and Lockhart River. The largest absolute population increases occurred in Maningrida (305 persons), Weipa (290 persons), Karumba (283 persons), Cooktown (232 persons), and Aurukun (229 persons).

Change in median age, 2001 (map 18)

Between 1996 and 2001 the median age in the Area increased from 25 years to 28 years.

SLAs primarily populated by Indigenous persons recorded the least increase (one to two years) in median age: Mornington (S), West Arnhem, West Arnhem – Bal, Torres (S), Aurukun (S), Groote Eylandt, Burke (S). Median age increases of three years or more occurred in Carpentaria (S) (three years), Cook (S) (excl. Weipa) (four years), and Gulf (five years).

Information for larger UC/Ls indicates increases in median age: by two years in Nhulunbuy and Karumba, three years in Aurukun, and four years in Weipa and Cooktown.

The largest contrasts in change occurred in the Torres Strait area, where the median age in Warraber Island, New Mapoon and Saibai Island decreased by three years, but increased by three years on Yam Island, Yorke Island, Badu Island, St Pauls and Thursday Island.

Change in the labour force participation rate, 1991-2001 (map 19)

Between 1991 and 2001 the labour force participation rate declined from 53.7% to 51.8%, following the trend of declining labour force participation rates across Australia. While the overall ten-year trend showed a decline of 1.9%, geographically the Area did not reflect this, as declines in one area were offset by increases in others.

In Aurukun (S), West Arnhem, East Arnhem-Bal and Torres (S) labour force participation increased between two and ten percent over the 10 years, possibly a reflection of Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) initiatives.

Elsewhere labour force participation stagnated or declined. The decline was a reflection of the growing number of persons aged 15 years and over who were not economically active, that is, working or looking for work. This can partly be attributed to lower participation among the Area's youth⁴: in 2001 the labour force participation rate among the Area's youth in QLD was 5-20% lower than the Australian average of 63%⁵, and in the NT portion it was more than 20% below the Australian average.

In Cook (S) – Weipa (between 1991 and 2001) the number of persons in the labour force declined by over 230 persons whilst the population aged 15 years and over also declined by nearly 400 persons. However labour force participation increased from 77% to 81.5%, reflecting the controlled nature of employment in this mining town.

Employment in Aquaculture, 2001 (map 20)

The Area's aquaculture industry represented the smallest aquaculture workforce of any Marine Region. Forty-two persons were employed in aquaculture in the Area and nearly half (20) resided in West Arnhem. The remaining aquaculture employees were distributed throughout small unidentified communities in East Arnhem-Bal, Torres (S), Cook (S) (excl. Weipa) and Carpentaria (S).

There were seven persons employed in aquaculture in Karumba, the only UC/L to show a 'concentration' of aquaculture employees.

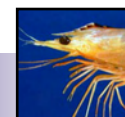
Employment in commercial fishing, 2001 (map 20)

In 2001 commercial fishing accounted for 0.9% of total employment (153 persons) in the Area, ranging from 0% to 2.4% per SLA. These persons were concentrated in several UC/Ls (Map 21). Commercial fishers from other regions also operate in the Area.

Table 3 shows the majority of commercial fishers were located in Karumba, Cooktown, and the community of Thursday Island. In Carpentaria (S) and Torres (S), commercial fishers mainly resided in UC/Ls but this was reversed in Cook (S) (excl. Weipa) and other SLAs where the majority of commercial fishers resided in non-urban areas. In the NT portion of the Area commercial fishers were mostly in West Arnhem. Although exact locations are not available, the geographic extent of some commercial fishing activities in the NT portion includes;

⁴ Youth are persons aged 15-24 years.

⁵ Haberkorn, G. et al (2004) Country Matters: Social Atlas of Rural and Regional Australia, BRS, Canberra.



- pearling on the Coburg Peninsula (West Arnhem), Cape Wilberforce (East Arnhem-Bal)
- trepang harvesting at Crocker Island (West Arnhem), Melville Bay (East Arnhem-Bal)
- mud crabs at Blue Mud Bay (East Arnhem-Bal)
- prawn aquaculture near Nhulunbuy⁶

Employment in the consolidated fish industry, 2001 (map 22)

Employment in the consolidated fish industry (CFI) (comprising employment in commercial fishing, fish wholesaling and seafood processing) accounted for 175 employees, or 1% of total employment in the Area.

Total employment in the CFI reflects the very small work force employed in fish wholesaling (18 persons) and seafood processing (4 persons) in addition to the 153 persons employed in commercial fishing. This indicates that for every person employed in commercial fishing, there were 0.1 persons in wholesaling and processing.

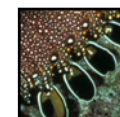
Table 3 shows those employed in fish wholesaling were located on Thursday Island (L), Karumba, Nhulunbuy and unidentified parts of Cook (S) (excl. Weipa). Persons employed in seafood processing were confined to Horn Island (L) in Torres (S).

Figure 3 shows that the key employment areas in the Area for commercial fishing and related activities are Carpentaria (S), Torres (S), West Arnhem and Cook (S) (excl. Weipa).

UC/L name SLA Name; State	Persons employed in commercial fishing	Persons employed in fish wholesaling	Persons employed in seafood processing
Karumba	35	3	0
Pormpuraaw (L)	6	0	0
Other towns/rural balance	4	0	0
Carpentaria (S); QLD	44	3	0
Cooktown	11	0	0
Lockhart River (L)	3	0	0
Cook (S) (excl. Weipa); QLD	33	5	0
Horn Island (L)	3	0	3
Thursday Island	18	6	0
Other towns/rural balance	11	1	1
Torres (S); QLD	32	7	4
Other towns/rural balance	20	0	0
West Arnhem; NT	20	0	0
Other towns/rural balance	6	0	0
Gulf; NT	6	0	0
Other towns/rural balance	5	0	0
East Arnhem-Bal; NT	5	0	0
Weipa	4	0	0
Cook (S) – Weipa only; QLD	4	0	0
Aurukun (L)	3	0	0
Aurukun (S); QLD	3	0	0
Other towns/rural balance	3	0	0
Burke (S); QLD	3	0	0
Nhulunbuy	3	3	0
Nhulunbuy; NT	3	3	0
Northern Planning Area	153	18	4
Coastal Australia	9836	3129	1530

Table 3. SLAs with the most persons employed in commercial fishing, 2001. UC/L denotes Urban Centre/Localities SLA denotes Statistical Local Area. The suffix (S) denotes a shire and the suffix (L) denotes a locality.

⁶ www.nlc.org.au/html/busi_fishing.html



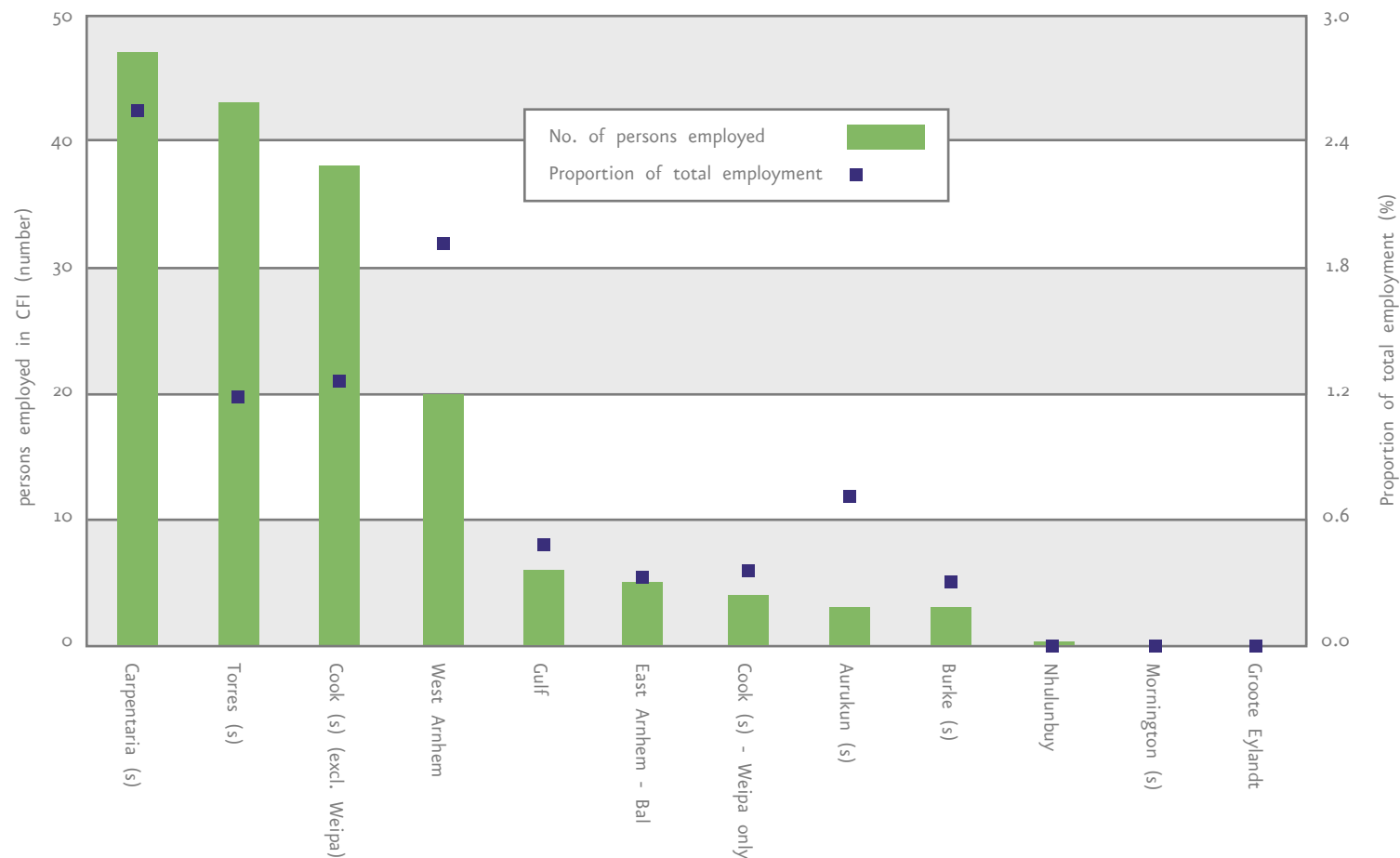
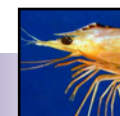


Figure 3. Number and proportion of persons employed in the consolidated fish industry, 2001.