

# MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 7 February 2013

## COALITION'S NORTHERN VISION WELCOMED

The Coalition's draft discussion paper on Developing Northern Australia, reported in today's media, is a welcome recognition of the potential for Northern Australia to be the driving force of the Australian economy in coming decades, according to the Institute of Public Affairs.

"The resources boom has benefited all Australians including those in southern regions. Developing the North further will create wealth and provide jobs for all Australians, both in the North and in the South," said Dominic Talimanidis, Director of the North Australia Project at the Institute of Public Affairs.

"For the Australian economy to grow we need innovative policies that leverage our strengths. The North remains underdeveloped and it is fantastic that the Coalition is looking to unleash its potential," Mr Talimanidis said.

"Developing the North will grow the pie for all Australians. We have recently seen major resource projects moving offshore and we need to respond with policies that make Australia an attractive destination for investment again."

According to a 2010 OECD report, by 2020 more than half the world's middle class will be in Asia and Asian consumers will account for over 40 per cent of global middle class consumption.

"Asian demand for our resources and agricultural goods has been pivotal in creating national prosperity in recent years. Australia must take economic advantage of its close proximity to the rising middle class populations in Asia," Mr Talimanidis said.

"This is a plan to provide Australian citizens living in the North with the same basic services many people in the South take for granted. And for providing new opportunities for people in Southern Australia."

"The discussion around the possible establishment of Special Economic Zones in the North is a welcome discussion that we need to have," Mr Talimanidis said.

In June 2011 a Galaxy poll conducted exclusively for the Institute of Public Affairs found that the majority of Australians are in favour of establishing a Special Economic Zone with low taxes to stimulate economic growth in Northern Australia.

Of the 1,063 people surveyed, 60% were in favour of a Special Economic Zone in Northern Australia while only 20% were opposed to the idea.

The Institute of Public Affairs, in conjunction with Australians for Northern Development and Economic Vision (ANDEV), has been calling for the establishment of a Northern Special Economic Zone (SEZ) with lower taxes and a reduced regulatory burden. For more information visit [www.andev-project.org](http://www.andev-project.org).

**Media Comment: Dominic Talimanidis, Director - North Australia Project, 0412 178 264,  
dtalimanidis@ipa.org.au**