



NATIONAL FISHERIES AUTHORITY

“Effectively Managing our Fisheries and Marine Resources
For Sustainable and Equitable Benefits”



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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATIONAL FISHERIES AUTHORITY COMMITS USD\$65,000 PER YEAR FOR 2025 AND 2026 TO ARAFURA AND TIMOR SEAS ECOSYSTEM ACTION (ATSEA) REGIONAL SECRETARIAT

SYDNEY, Australia: Honorable Jelta Wong, Minister for Fisheries and Marine Resources, Highlights the Importance of the Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action (ATSEA) Sydney Declaration in Strengthening Regional Cooperation. The ATSEA Sydney Ministerial Declaration represents a bold and unified commitment to the long-term health of the Arafura and Timor Seas, and the USD\$65,000 investment is a crucial step in ensuring the success of this important regional initiative during the bridging phase.

In a significant step toward enhancing regional collaboration and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Arafura and Timor Seas ecosystem, Honorable Wong, delivered an inspiring speech today at the signing ceremony of the Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action (ATSEA) Sydney Declaration in Sydney, Australia. The declaration marks the commitment of Papua New Guinea, Australia, Indonesia, and Timor Leste to work together towards the management of shared marine resources.

Speaking at the event, Minister Wong emphasized the critical importance of this partnership in safeguarding the health of the Arafura and Timor Seas, which is vital not only for the environment but also for the livelihoods of millions of people across the region.

“The Arafura and Timor Seas ecosystem is central to the economic well-being and cultural heritage of our nations,” Minister Wong said. “It provides sustenance, employment, and opportunities for millions of people, and it is our collective responsibility to ensure that these resources are managed sustainably for generations to come.”

The signing ceremony, which took place this morning, saw the official commitment of a USD\$65,000 funding package to support the implementation of joint initiatives under the ATSEA program. This funding will be used during the bridging phase for programs that focus on marine conservation, fisheries management, biodiversity protection, and climate resilience in the Arafura and Timor Seas region.

Minister Wong further acknowledged the significant partnership between Papua New Guinea, Australia, Indonesia, and Timor Leste, calling it a demonstration of the shared commitment to protecting the natural resources of the region. “This partnership is a testament to the strength of our collective will to tackle the challenges that threaten our marine ecosystems, from overfishing to pollution and climate change. It shows what can be achieved when nations come together to achieve common goals.”

He also recognized Australia’s continued support in providing resources and technical assistance to the ATSEA program. “Australia’s longstanding commitment to the sustainable management of our shared marine environment has been instrumental in fostering regional cooperation, and we look forward to deepening our collaboration in the years to come.”

The ATSEA program aims to enhance the collective management of the marine and coastal resources of the Arafura and Timor Seas, focusing on improving the health of the ecosystems, addressing environmental threats, and supporting the livelihoods of the people who depend on these resources.

In closing, Minister Wong called for continued cooperation and engagement to ensure that the Arafura and Timor Seas remain vibrant, resilient, and productive for future generations. "The signing of this declaration is only the beginning of our journey. We must remain committed to action, not just words, and together, we can create a more sustainable and prosperous future for our nations and for our shared marine environment."

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