

DARWIN CONVENTION CENTRE - POWERHOUSE OF GLOBAL INDIGENOUS IDEAS

30 May 2013

Over 1,300 delegates representing hundreds of first nation peoples travelled from 50 countries to attend the first-ever World Indigenous Network (WIN) Conference held 26th-29th May at the Darwin Convention Centre.

Looking out to the serene harbour, an ancient site of connection where the Indigenous Larrakia people of Darwin welcomed and exchanged stories with other peoples, there couldn't have been a more befitting meeting place for the inaugural WIN conference.

Aimed at Indigenous peoples and local communities land and sea managers, the six-day event saw a vigorous exchange of knowledge about managing natural environments the traditional and modern way.

WIN 2013 drew some of the most highly respected first nation peoples advocates and experts. Professor James Anaya, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was the keynote speaker. Melissa George, a Wulgurukaba woman and WIN National Advisory Group co-chair, and actor/activist Chaske Spencer of the Lakota Sioux Tribe were the Masters of Ceremony and hosts of the conference.

There were over 70 concurrent workshops, conference sessions and keynote presentations bringing together valuable lessons learned from Canada, Nepal, the Amazon, Sweden, Ecuador, the Philippines, New Zealand, Timor, and Hawaii among others.

The opening ceremony was a spectacular cultural event showcasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander song and dance traditions. The Bangarra Dance Theatre, Australia's leading Indigenous performing arts group known for their world-class performances, led the entertainment fare which also featured the Baiwa Dance Company, Doonoch Dance Company and Gary Lang.

"The world has come to Darwin for this fantastic opportunity to recognise and showcase Indigenous knowledge in land and sea protection," said Malu Barrios, General Manager of the Darwin Convention Centre.

"We heard so many inspirational stories of achievement and look forward to a successful linking of Indigenous expertise and modern technology to improve the way we manage our environment globally," she adds.

The post conference program featured field trips to the Litchfield and Kakadu National Parks, Arnhem Land and the Tiwi Islands.

WIN 2013 kick starts the development of the network, an initiative of the Australian Government that quickly transformed from an idea in 2011 to reality when it was launched by Prime Minister Julia Gillard at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) in Brazil in June 2012.

An international gathering only a year after launch underscores the need to recognise the significance of marrying traditional knowledge that has been used for millennia, with western science to tackle today's environmental challenges.

"The network and the conference are both world-first and we're truly proud to be part of it," says Malu Barrios.



The WIN 2013 conference attracted over 1,300 delegates representing first nation peoples from 52 countries

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About AEG Ogden

AEG Ogden is a joint venture between Australian venue management interests and AEG Facilities of the United States.

AEG Ogden manages venues throughout the Asia Pacific region, including convention centres in Brisbane, Cairns, Darwin, Kuala Lumpur, Qatar, Oman (under construction), and Sydney (construction commencing 2014); arenas including Sydney's Allphones Arena, the Sydney Entertainment Centre (from December 2013), the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, the Newcastle Entertainment Centre and Perth Arena; Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane; and live theatres including Perth's His Majesty's Theatre, Perth Concert Hall, the WA State Theatre Centre, Albany Entertainment Centre, and Subiaco Arts Centre.