

KANTRI LAIF

News for North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Managers

Kimberley... Northern Territory... Gulf of Carpentaria... Cape York... Torres Strait

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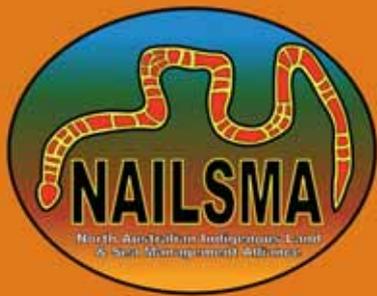
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An IPA for
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message from the Executive Officer

Welcome back to all those readers of the only Indigenous news for north Australian Indigenous land and sea managers. A lot has happened since the last edition of *Kantri Laif* – changes in the national Government, NT Government leadership and NLC leadership were major changes. However, NAILSMA is also changing. We have been working on a new refined structure, but more on that later. I'd also like to take the chance to welcome new staff members at NAILSMA – David Wise, Lyndall McLean, Janely Seah, Jessica Lewfatt and Hugh Wallace-Smith. I anticipate announcing the Operations Manager in the near future. I welcome you all to the exciting work that NAILSMA and its member agencies are involved in.

Although it is becoming accepted that northern Australia is a region that is home to long-standing Indigenous culture and heritage as well as a global centres of marine and terrestrial biodiversity. It still attracts unreasonable and emotionally driven attention on many matters including the complex issue of harvesting native animals for customary purposes. However, my view is that NAILSMA will continue to take a pragmatic approach to these important issues by working with Indigenous communities and agencies to ensure that the people best placed to manage these and many other resources in the north, continue to do so. However, these services provided by Indigenous people have to be paid for as legitimate jobs and a contribution towards maintaining the environment and the communities themselves.

The establishment of the Indigenous Water Policy Group has become a significant and important

asset to Indigenous people across the north by working towards developing a position on how Indigenous people should share in any benefits that may arise the commercialisation of water resources. Chair of the IWPG, Mr Joe Ross has been doing a lot of work for the IWPG, and as a member of the former Northern Taskforce, has continued to maintain a strong connection into relevant policy areas of the Australian Government. The commencement of the Indigenous Community Water Facilitator Network (ICWFN) will be a major contributor to ensuring that Indigenous people in key catchments in northern Australia are fully informed and part of the planning and implementation process of water reform in the north. We anticipate placing 6 facilitators across the north whilst the coordinator, Hugh Wallace-Smith will be based out of Darwin.

During April, NAILSMA co-hosted the International Expert Group Meeting On Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change, our first foray into collaborating with United Nations agencies. This meeting was co-hosted with the United Nations University – Institute of Advanced Studies and the Secretariat of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. This meeting made a number of recommendations that were presented at the Permanent Forum in New York, whereby Jean Fenton represented NAILSMA and gave a case study on carbon abatement (see report in this edition). Another related meetings being co-hosted by NAILSMA will be “An International Indigenous Expert Exchange on Issues and Opportunities arising from Emerging Trends in Mainstream Water Management” to be held in northeast Arnhem Land 7/8th August 2008.



NAILSMA Executive Officer

The abatement of greenhouse gases by better managing savanna fires on Indigenous owned lands has become a major focus of NAILSMA, in particular ensuring that the appropriate policy options are being considered in the development of the National Emissions Trading Scheme. We have been working to develop a number of projects in the north through our partner agencies that will become significant in reducing greenhouse emissions, as well as develop culturally appropriate and robust enterprises for Indigenous communities.

NAILSMA has also been at the forefront of advocating for increased resources for Caring for Country and rangers. The Working on Country Program has also been pushed hard by NAILSMA, but I believe that more thinking has to go into the longevity of these programs and the development of a new industry. It does represent a positive start.

In closing, it has been over 5 years that NAILSMA has been in operation, there are a number of significant developments that have occurred in the last 6 months. The north is getting increased resources to deal with a number of significant challenges around Indigenous welfare reform, Kimberley gas development and the development of northern water being three important ones. I look forward to continue to work for Indigenous people in the north on these and many other important issues into the future. ■

Mindil Market Stall Initiative 2008

Darwin Regional CDEP Incorporated (a local charitable organisation) and other supporting organisations have sponsored the creation of Aboriginal Bush Traders to promote the products and training opportunities of local Aboriginal businesses and entrepreneurs.

The costs have been covered for the whole Mindil season for a permanent stall space, a number of products have been approved by the Mindil association for sale, mostly Arts and Craft items and Body Products.

We can be there on the night to provide a table, lighting and chairs but it is up to yourself to be there on the night to sell your own products and provide your own money box etc.

The initiative is to give any Aboriginal businesses or individuals the opportunity to have a stall at Mindil in a good spot with out having to commit every single week.

So far the stall has been used weekly and people have been very happy with the profits that they have made and every week there has been a different Aboriginal product/ business using the stall.

It is possible to view the calendar for the market bookings on www.ironbark.org.au and click on "bushtraders" link to view the calendar.

For more information please e-mail bushtraders@ironbark.org.au or contact:

Economic Development Officer

Darwin Regional CDEP Incorporated
GPO Box 2299 Palmerston NT 0831
Telephone: (08) 8935 1200
Fax: (08) 8935 1222



New Staff Join **NAILSMA**



David Wise

David Wise started work for NAILSMA in late May 2008 as the program officer for the Intergenerational Transfer of Indigenous Ecological Knowledge. This program provides grant money to organisations that can administer or host a project which supports and achieves outcomes in the Top End of the Northern Territory for the sharing of Indigenous knowledge between generations, especially ecological knowledge. The project runs until the end of 2009. David's job involves several areas; assisting the operation of the Technical Assessment Panel (TAP) which make decisions on which grants to fund, helping potential grant applicants to make applications to the TAP, linking in to networks that can also help the transfer of Indigenous Ecological knowledge across generations and working with organisations and networks that can publicise and distribute information to potential grant applicants.

If you are in the Top End of the NT and are interested in applying for a grant for Intergenerational Transfer of Indigenous Ecological Knowledge or are interested in the program, please get in touch with David on (08) 8946 7674 or send an email to david.wise@cdu.edu.au



Hugh Wallace Smith

Hugh Wallace Smith is the Coordinator for the new Indigenous Community Water Network Facilitator (ICWFN) project. Hugh has just returned to Darwin after seven years in the Kimberley. He has recently been working for the Kimberley Land Council (KLC - Land & Sea Management Unit) coordinating the Fitzroy River Catchment Management project. Previous work experiences include coordinating the Yiriman Youth Program and managing Native Title for KLC in Fitzroy Crossing.

Under the direction of partner organisations, NAILSMA and Indigenous Water Policy Group, Hugh has been employed for three years to establish a network of six regionally based Indigenous Community Water Facilitators. These catchments include the Fitzroy and Ord regions in Western Australia, Katherine-Daly region in Northern Territory and Southern Gulf, Mitchell and Wenlock Rivers regions in Queensland. The key objectives are to advance Indigenous engagement and interests in research, water planning, management and policy processes in northern Australia.

If you would like to talk to Hugh you can contact him on (08) 8946 7678 or send an email to hugh.wallacesmith@cdu.edu.au



Janely Seah

Janely Seah joined NAILSMA in July 2008 as the Financial Officer. Janely has 30 years experience in finance and recently transferred to NAILSMA from the Tropical Savannas Co-operative Research Centre after five years work experience with them.

Janely came from Sabah in Malaysia in 1989 and has been residing in Darwin ever since. Janely is looking forward to working with the NAILSMA team.

If you would like to contact Janely, telephone: (08) 8946 6764 and email Janely.Seah@cdu.edu.au



Jessica Lew Fatt

Jessica Lew Fatt is the new Personal Assistant for Joe Morrison and Team Administration Officer for all other NAILSMA staff. Jessica is based in Darwin and has been working with Traditional Credit Union Limited for the past 4 years.

If you would like to talk to Jessica you can contact her on (08) 8946 7691 or send an email to jessica.lewfatt@cdu.edu.au



Lyndall McLean

Lyndall joined the NAILSMA team in May 2008. Lyndall is Bush Heritage Australia's (BHA) Indigenous Partnerships Officer for North Australia. BHA is a non-profit, non-government organisation which aims to protect the natural environment through the acquisition and/or management of land or water of high conservation value or environmental significance.

Lyndall's main roles are to work with NAILSMA and Indigenous people to support the purchase of ecologically and culturally significant country, to support conservation management on land already owned and managed by Indigenous people; and to support the participation of Indigenous people in the management of Bush Heritage reserves. Lyndall's initial focus is on regions and projects where Bush Heritage already works (Cape York and North West Queensland, Kimberley and West Arnhem), but her role is also to work on development of new project areas in collaboration with NAILSMA staff.

More information about Bush Heritage Australia can be found at www.bushheritage.org.au

If you are interested in hearing more about Bush Heritage indigenous partnerships, please call Lyndall on (08) 8946 7673 or send an email to lyndall.mclean@cdu.edu.au



Melissa Bentivoglio

Melissa Bentivoglio joined NAILSMA's Enterprise Development Project in October 2007. The Project is working with a number of Aboriginal groups on the development of small-scale, natural resource based enterprises. In addition, a feedback process has begun to help understand the processes Aboriginal people are undertaking to develop their enterprises and some of the issues they are confronting. It is hoped that this will lead to more effective long-term support for Aboriginal people, who are seeking avenues for socio-economic development that are compatible with their land and culture.

Melissa has a Bachelor of Science and several years experience in research with Aboriginal communities in western NSW and the Kimberley, largely associated with Aboriginal involvement in conservation management. Her dream came true when she started working with the Wagiman people on land management in the Upper Daly Region. Since then she has worked on the Ranger Program at Wadeye and a Livelihoods Project in Sumatera, Indonesia.

Ph: (08) 8946 6357, Email: melissa.bentivoglio@cdu.edu.au

TURTLE AND DUGONG

Survey Results

The Torres Strait Regional Authority's (TSRA) Land and Sea Management Unit (LSMU) is supporting the Traditional Owners of Kaiwalagal (Inner Islands), the Kaurareg people, to participate in the Torres Strait Dugong and Turtle Project.

The TSRA Dugong and Turtle Project is part of a north Australia wide project coordinated by the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), and funded by the Natural Heritage Trust.

The aim of the TSRA Project is to strengthen community involvement in dugong and turtle management. A rising population in the Kaiwalagal region and changes in environment have raised concerns about the sustainability of dugong and turtle in the region.

In an attempt to consult with the wider community residing in the area, the LSMU's Turtle and Dugong Team and Mr. Pearson Wigness, Project Officer for Kaiwalagal, worked in close consultation with the Kaurareg Elders to develop a community survey. The survey was distributed to the community through the Torres News and Tagai State College Newsletter as well as from a number of locations around Thursday Island. Mr Wigness also promoted the survey via Radio 4MW and by posting a number of posters around Thursday and Horn Islands.

The survey received a fair response, with 160 forms out of 2000 being returned. The survey results provided an indication of what the community would like to see in relation to dugong and turtle management.

Of the survey forms completed and returned:

- 45% believe dugong and turtle should only be hunted for ceremonial purposes;
- 55% believe dugong and turtle should also be caught for general consumption;
- 60% believe some methods should be made illegal;
- 80% believe there should be seasonal closures for dugong hunting to allow breeding;
- 80% believe there should be seasonal closures for turtle hunting to allow for breeding;

- 80% believe there should be limits on taking turtle eggs (possibly island closures depending on Kaurareg approval);
- 85% believe there should be designated butchering sites; and,
- 85% believe enforcement of a Management Plan should be undertaken by properly resourced Kaurareg rangers in partnership with government agencies.

A meeting with Kaurareg elders from Horn Island, Hammond Island, Thursday Island and Prince of Wales Island will be organized by Mr. Wigness to discuss how the survey information can be used to develop a Management Plan for Kaiwalagal. Mr Wigness believes that now the wider community has been consulted it is the responsibility of the Kaurareg elders to use this information to develop the specifics for the Plan.

It is hoped that a draft Management Plan will be developed by May 2008. The draft Plan will be made available for comment to the Kaiwalagal community for a period of three weeks. At the end of this period a meeting will be held for all interested community members and the draft Plan will be finalised.

Mr. Wigness, with assistance from the TSRA' LSMU, will then pass the Plan onto government agencies and research institutions for comment and support. The final Plan will be submitted to the Protected Zone Joint Authority (PZJA) for government comment, seeking support for implementation.

Indigenous people across north Australia are watching with keen interest the development of dugong and turtle management plans in the Torres Strait. Torres Strait Islanders will be supported by the TSRA and NAILSMA to share their experience through exchange visits to other north Australian Indigenous communities.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above information, please contact Mr. Pearson Wigness at Horn Island Aboriginal Corporation on (07) 4090 2111 or Mr. Frank Loban at TSRA's LSMU on (07) 4069 2947.



Piku in Trouble:

Indigenous communities in PNG work with Oil Search to conserve the pig-nosed turtle.

Kikori Delta Communities, researchers, WWF and Oil Search Ltd work together to save the unique Pig-nosed turtle in Papua New Guinea.

By Carla C. Eisemberg

The pig-nosed turtle is of considerable cultural value to indigenous communities in northern Australia, featuring in rock art and are a valued source of protein to this day. This unique turtle is restricted to the southern rivers of the island of New Guinea and the major rivers of the Northern Territory in Australia. Indigenous communities in the PNG southern lowlands also value the species and its eggs as an important source of protein to supplement their subsistence diets. Piku is the name given to the pig-nosed turtle in Rumu, one of the many local languages. Unfortunately, there is evidence that the populations in PNG have declined sharply. Increasing human populations, more villages on the river banks now tribal warfare has ceased, and the introduction of modern fishing methods and outboard motors are taking their toll. Our more recent surveys indicate that the level of harvest of nesting females and eggs remains very high. Decisions on whether to take action and what action to take is largely a matter for Kikori communities. They need to decide how important the pig-nosed turtle is to them, whether they are concerned to ensure that the turtle populations are there for future generations, whether they wish to respond to concerns from the global community, and what opportunities might be created by virtue of the spectacular and interesting species in their backyard. These decisions need to be made on an informed basis. The Institute for Applied

Ecology in association with Oil Search Ltd and WWF (PNG) are working together with the local communities on the Piku Project, studying the nesting ecology, harvest dynamics and promoting conservation and environmental education across the communities of the Kikori River delta. In the last nesting season, from September 2007 to March 2008, we delivered conservation and awareness talks to 27 villages from five tribes. Primary and secondary students from Kikori, Ogomabu and Kopi villages learned, in their schools, the importance of Piku conservation during special classes where they could observe hatchlings coming out of their eggs. They then delighted in setting the little hatchlings free. This exercise we hope will help to instil appreciation of the importance of preserving the natural resources not only for the current generation but forever, for their children and grandchildren.

For further information, or publications emanating from our work, contact:

Carla C. Eisemberg, Institute for Applied Ecology,
University of Canberra, ACT 2601 AUSTRALIA

Tel: (61 02)62012937

Mobile: (61)0448348754

Email: eisemberg@aerg.canberra.edu.au

website:

<http://aerg.canberra.edu.au/staff/georges/>

http://aerg.canberra.edu.au/staff/georges/pj_kikori.htm

NAILSMA presents at the 2nd National Indigenous Land and Sea Management Conference – Cardwell

By Lorrae McArthur

The Girringun Aboriginal Corporation successfully hosted the 2nd National Indigenous Land and Sea Management Conference in Cardwell North Queensland early October 2007. The aim of the conference was to bring together community land and sea managers to share stories and determine future direction for land and sea management across the country.

The second conference followed the inaugural National Land and Sea Management Conference that was held east of Alice Springs in April 2005. Details on that conference can be found on the Caring for Country web site. Resolutions from the inaugural conference recognised five main issues:

- Governance
- Traditional Knowledge
- Heritage
- Youth
- Employment & Training
- Sustainable Economic Development

On the first day of the 2nd National Land and Sea Management Conference the concept of NAILSMA was introduced. Plenary speaker, Peter Yu, Independent Chair of NAILSMA presented a paper titled 'Growing the Alliance'. In brief, Peter discussed NAILSMA's foundation and its role in assisting the capacity of Indigenous people to live and work on their country, the challenges faced in achieving its goals and the future directions in achieving them. A copy of Peter's paper can be downloaded from this page, see below.

The 'Caring for Country' theme of the 2nd National Land and Sea Management Conference was ideal for NAILSMA staff to present brief overviews of their respective land and sea management projects. NAILSMA is currently working in a number of key areas including marine, fire, water, leadership, enterprise development and communications. The Programs and Projects web page provides more information on each of the NAILSMA projects.

NAILSMA had an information booth set up throughout the conference that allowed for more informal discussions about NAILSMA and its land and sea management projects. At the booth, the NAILSMA Enterprise team promoted one of its business enterprises that has been developed by the Wagiman Guwardagun Rangers of the Upper Daly in the Northern Territory. Two of its Rangers brought along a selection of its community's hand made products as an incentive for other groups looking for ideas and information on starting their own business ventures.

The 2nd National Land and Sea Management Conference was successful in bringing together land and sea managers to share their stories and aspirations. It was clear from this forum that Indigenous people are directed in their approach for caring for their country and are moving forward to achieve this. NAILSMA was grateful to be part of this process.

Acknowledgements

NAILSMA thanks the traditional owners of Girramay and the surrounding regions for welcoming us to their country. NAILSMA would also like to thank Girringun Aboriginal Corporation for hosting the conference, the Indigenous Advisory Committee for facilitating the sessions, the Cardwell Shire Council for supporting the event and the many sponsors. Special thanks are also given to Daphne and Brenda Huddleston for supporting NAILSMA at the conference.



You can download a copy of Peter Yu's presentation paper at: <http://www.nailsma.org.au/nailsma/forum/downloads/Cardwell-speech-07.pdf>

Caring for Country website:
<http://www.caringforcountry.com.au>

Indigenous Community Water Facilitator Network

By Lorrae McArthur

In November 2007, NAILSMA was successful in initiating the Indigenous Community Water Facilitator Network (ICWFN). The network has been funded \$4.787 million until 2010 by the National Water Commission through its Raising National Water Standards Programme.

Water network

Under the direction of the Indigenous Water Policy Group, NAILSMA and its partner organisations will establish in the north a network of six regionally based Indigenous Community Water Facilitators. This network of Facilitators will be supported by a coordinator based in Darwin within NAILSMA.

The six facilitators are for the Fitzroy and Ord regions in Western Australia, Katherine-Daly region in the Northern Territory and Southern Gulf, Mitchell and Wenlock Rivers regions in Queensland.

Objectives of the ICWFN

The ICWFN aims to establish a community based network that:

- advances Indigenous engagement in research and management across northern Australia at the community level, and
- act as a think tank to ensure that Indigenous interests are incorporated in water planning, management and policy processes.

Outcomes

The success of research projects currently being undertaken in northern Australia, such as those conducted through the Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge (TRaCK) consortium, are greatly dependent upon a strong understanding and capacity for local communities to effectively engage in discussions about the future of north Australian water resources.

NAILSMA hopes to have the ICWFN Coordinator on board shortly and will then develop the Facilitator network over the coming months.

Mossman Gorge, north Queensland.
Taken by Lorrae McArthur



For further information contact:
Lorrae McArthur lorrae.mcarthur@cdu.edu.au

Communicating About Water Management in Language



By Dean Mathews

I am an Indigenous trainee with the WA Department of Water based in Kununurra. I have mainly been working in the water planning area with a focus on the West Kimberley more recently.

As part of my work I have been working with people at Bidyadanga community on understanding a water management plan for the La Grange groundwater area.

At a meeting held at Bidyadanga community it became clear that terminology and concepts used by the presenter were not being understood. We wanted to be sure our Department was fully engaging with members of the community and that the Traditional Owners were prepared for public comment when the plan was released, so we developed the idea for making a DVD translation of the management plan.

I took out the main points from the WA State Water Plan and the draft La Grange Water Plan and simplified them into plain English. Then, working with the Kimberley Interpreting Service and Karajarri traditional owners Mervyn (Mulat) Mulardy and Anna Dwyer, the plan was translated into a Kriol/Karajarri language mix. We then took this translated script and went out on country in La Grange to film Mervyn

speaking about the water plan in language. I then blended this footage with some photos and maps and also added local Karajarri music.

The DVD has already been a valuable communication tool to help the Karajarri Native Title Holders understand the La Grange groundwater Management Plan which is to be released in April for community comments by the Department of Water.

The greatest challenge for me, as well as simplifying concepts and terminology of both Water Plans, was learning the technology to edit and create a DVD with such a tight time frame.

Not only has it become a positive communication tool but it is also another way for Government and non-government organisations to engage with Indigenous people on country to talk about water and respect Indigenous law and culture. It is also an example that can be used when communicating future water management plans for other communities in Western Australia especially in the Kimberley region. Another outcome of this process has been establishing a strong working relationship with the Kimberley Interpretive Service for advice on the use of interpreters for other consultative work.



Water Supplies in Remote Indigenous Communities

Water Quality Research Australia Ltd (WQRA) has been commissioned by the National Water Commission (NWC) to lead a project that aims to improve the information and communication processes for remote Indigenous community water management. The project, *Guidelines and Best Practice Documentation – Water Supplies in Remote Indigenous Communities*, is under the water planning and management theme of the NWC Raising National Water Standards program.

The project aims to address the challenges to improving water supply management in remote areas by developing tools and resources to assist service providers, including governments and utilities, to develop water management plans. The development and implementation of Community Water Plans are vital to the new national focus that reflects an emphasis on preventive risk management strategies for effective water supply management.

The Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc (CAT) is a member of WQRA and their office in Alice Springs will be the hub for the development and trialling of the resources. CAT is a national Indigenous science and technology organisation and has worked for over 20 years on water issues in Indigenous communities. CAT also brings a wealth of experience in implementing community planning across a range of service and infrastructure initiatives.

The tools, together with a project approach that includes the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders such as health professionals, water service providers and Indigenous representatives will support a consistent basis for communication and implementation of water management planning with remote Indigenous communities. The information package will be adaptable to the highly variable remote Indigenous community contexts throughout Australia and include:

- A series of materials (e.g. booklets, pictures, and maps) that summarise and simplify the policy, regulatory, and formal requirements for drinking water management
- Standard design, installation and operating instructions for basic water supply infrastructure that identify the risk parameters.

The project was initiated in April 2008 and will develop and trial the products over 12 months in collaboration with at least four remote communities located in Queensland, Northern Territory, South Australia and New South Wales. The products will be finalised by the project's conclusion in August 2009. It is intended that the products will supplement the National Drinking Water Guideline documents to ensure the uptake of improved management systems for safe water supplies in remote Indigenous communities.



Further information:

The project director is Murray Radcliffe from the National Water Commission. Queries should be directed to Lynne Griffiths on (02) 6102 6023 or by email on lynne.griffiths@nwc.gov.au

The project manager is Robyn Grey-Gardner from the Centre for Appropriate Technology. Robyn may be contacted on 08 8951 4332 or by email on robyn.grey-gardner@icat.org.au



The Indigenous Water Policy Group

By Lorrae McArthur

Created in November 2006 with funding from Land and Water Australia, the NAILSMA Indigenous Water Policy Group (IWPG) has secured further funding until 2010 of \$755,000 from the National Water Commission through its Raising National Water Standards Programme.

Membership

The IWPG has a core membership of key Indigenous representatives from major regional organisations across the wet-dry tropics of northern Australia. It is working toward developing a strategic Indigenous position on water reform that is representative across the north of Australia. In general, the IWPG aims to provide Indigenous representation on social, environmental, cultural and economic interests and values for a participatory role in directing policy around water management, allocation and planning.

Priorities

Key priorities of the IWPG have been increasing Indigenous people's awareness of the government's plans for water reform in northern Australia, and direct research to assist in the development of Indigenous policy positions.

Case Studies

In addressing its priorities, in 2007 the IWPG completed three case studies. Studies were conducted in the Katherine and Maningrida regions of the Northern Territory and the Southern Gulf region of Queensland. Reports on these case studies can be downloaded from the NAILSMA web site (www.nailsma.org.au).

Research Plan

The IWPG case studies have provided for a more fully developed research plan that will be progressed over the next two years. This research is aimed at influencing policy decisions in the interests of Indigenous people of northern Australia. Interests are specific to responsibilities and cultural links with the environment, reforming social issues, delineating water rights at the policy level and promoting economic opportunity.



Partnerships

In addition to its own research, the IWPG is closely aligned with research conducted through the Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge Consortium (TRaCK). Indigenous people will be engaged in research conducted under TRaCK to ensure that decisions for sustainable use and management of Australia's tropical rivers and coasts are based on extensive Indigenous knowledge.

The IWPG will also be engaging at the International level and is currently working with the United Nations University – Institute of Applied Science (UNU-IAS) in developing International relations.

Meetings

UNU-IAS, NAILSMA and the IWPG are working together to co-host an international experts exchange on traditional knowledge and water management in August 2008. An important theme for the forum will be linking Indigenous communities around the world to access the experience of others confronted with emerging water property regimes.

In February 2008, the IWPG met in Darwin for a strategic planning work shop. This meeting was a landmark event in not only bringing together representatives from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous water policy arenas, but also in bringing together the state and territory jurisdictions to examine a collaborative northern approach for meaningful integrated Indigenous engagement in water reform that crosses major jurisdictions.

The IWPG will next meet in June 2008 for its 6th meeting.

For further information contact:

the project Coordinator,
Lorrae McArthur
(Lorrae.McArthur@cdu.edu.au)

The Aboriginal Research Practitioners' Network fills critical research gap!

By Hmalan Hunter-Xenie

The Aboriginal Research Practitioners' Network (ARNet) enables Aboriginal people in communities to deliver Participatory Action Research (PAR), participatory evaluations and facilitate visioning and planning activities in their own local communities. Members of ARNet receive training in PAR and are paid real wages to work on short term research, evaluation and planning projects focusing on natural resource management, health and community development. Members volunteer to join the network and are drawn from communities from across the Top End.

For the most part Aboriginal people have been unhappy with the nature of their participation in research related activities. The Aboriginal land and sea management review undertaken through CSIRO in 2005-2006 underlined the critical gap in research delivery at the local level, resulting in calls by local Aboriginal people to engage in more meaningful collaboration with communities. ARNet is hosted by the School for Environmental Research at Charles Darwin University under a host agreement signed in December 2007.

The vision of ARNet is to achieve greater involvement and control by local Aboriginal people in research delivery through participating in a broad range of research projects through the application of PAR methods. These PAR methods assist the Aboriginal research practitioners to find out the opinions or ideas from communities

and provide the information to government and non-government organisations. The information supplied from communities assists the organisations and the communities to work more closely together.

Working as an Aboriginal research practitioner, people in the Top End of the Northern Territory have been employed to work on short term projects. In March 2008 ARNet completed a project for the Darwin Indigenous Coordination Centre. Since then ARNet has been approached by other organisations to be partners on projects. Due to the growing interest in ARNet more training workshops funded through the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training; are being conducted to increase the number of Aboriginal research practitioners. The feedback from these workshops has been very positive and interest to participate is growing; we are receiving requests from communities and individuals who want to participate.

A second training workshop in PAR methods will be held in the Top End of the Northern Territory in late 2008. If you would like to attend the next training workshop and become a member of ARNet, please contact ARNet coordinator, Ms Hmalan Hunter-Xenie, on 08 8946 6916.

Acknowledgements

ARNet would like to thank the School for Environmental Research at Charles Darwin University, Darwin; the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training; ARNet training workshop participants, 5-16 April 2008, Darwin; Bevyline Sithole; Desleigh Dunnett; Stephen Garnett; Otto Campion; Gill Ainsworth; Toni Briscoe; Heather Robertson and Kirsty Mines.

For further information contact:

Ms Hmalan Hunter-Xenie
ARNet Coordinator
School for Environmental Research
Charles Darwin University
Darwin NT 0909
Tel: 08 8946 7221
Fax: 08 8946 7720
Email: arnet@cdu.edu.au



ARNet Training 6-15 April 2008, Discussion on research steps, Photographed by Mrs Desleigh Dunnett



NAILSMA Hosts International Expert Group Meeting

on Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples

By Samara Erlandson

From 2 - 4 April 2008, NAILSMA in conjunction with Japan-based United Nations University - Institute of Advanced Studies and the Secretariat of United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) convened an International Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change in Darwin, Australia.

The Expert Group Meeting drew on the expertise of Indigenous Peoples; United Nations Permanent Forum members; relevant United Nations agencies; intergovernmental agencies; national and local governments; Indigenous Peoples' organizations; non-government organizations and academics that are active within the field of climate change to discuss important issues surrounding climate change impacts and opportunities for Indigenous peoples.

International Indigenous experts represented each of the seven UNPFII regions: Africa; Asia; Central and South America and the Caribbean; the Arctic; Central and Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia; North America; and the Pacific.

'Indigenous people have done the least to cause climate change and now the solutions...are causing more problems for them', said Victoria Tauli-Corpuz from the Philippines, who is the Chairperson of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

NAILSMA Staffer Ms Jean Fenton presented a positive story to the debate about carbon trading or offsets, highlighting the West Arnhem Land Fire Agreement (WALFA) as being a way in which voluntary offsets can contribute towards Indigenous aspirations to remain, return or re-connect to their country. Whilst there is more work to go in ensuring that the finer aspects, particularly those relating to the communities

themselves such as governance and benefit sharing, this methodology presents as a positive contribution towards Indigenous development and contribution to climate change.

The objectives of the Expert Group Meeting were to:

- Promote an opportunity to exchange information on the effects of climate change.
- Draw attention to the impact of climate change on indigenous peoples, their livelihoods, cultural practices and lands and natural resources.
- Identify options and further plans to accommodate the many issues (i.e. migration) that indigenous peoples face as a result of climate change and identify possible solutions that maintain indigenous peoples' identity and cultural integrity.
- Identify international institutions that may have an interest in working in partnership with indigenous peoples to address the issues in relation to adaptation, mitigation, monitoring and carbon emissions trading.
- Highlight good practice models; and
- Identify gaps and challenges and a possible way forward.

Indigenous people have shared harrowing stories. An Indigenous member of the Inuit people has told the Experts meeting how hunters have lost their lives because of the melting polar cap. "Hunters have gone out hunting and they have fallen through the ice and so forth and people have lost their lives". People are putting it down to climate change and changes to the ice sheets. Very significant issues to be aware of and it's the first time obviously in this part of the world we have heard of this type of impact of climate change".

The meeting also heard how islands are being lost in the Pacific Ocean to rising sea levels. “Many of the Pacific islands are very small and they are also very low islands, they are already experiencing a lot of king tides which are taking over and taking away a lot of islands and a lot of Indigenous estates”.

Four major themes were discussed as follows:

Theme 1: Outlining the effects of Climate Change on indigenous peoples

- Analysis of International standards and recommendations concerning the rights of indigenous peoples (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, UN Convention on Climate Change, Human Rights Committee and other treaty bodies, Human Rights Council, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, ILO and others) relevant to the effects of climate change;
- Analysis of how the goals and needs of indigenous peoples in climate change arrangements differ from the needs and goals of other interested holders, especially in the climate change processes;
- Provide case studies outlining the effects of climate change on indigenous peoples;
- Outline strategies required to deal with the effects of climate change such as migration.

Theme 2: Adaptation Measures to Climate Change

- Highlight ways that indigenous peoples could be involved in programs that support community level mitigation and adaptation measures and at the same time recognize the value of traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples that has enabled them to maintain and interact with their environment in a sustainable way;
- Provide case studies of instances where indigenous peoples are working as a community or in partnerships with Governments, private sector companies, donor agencies to adapt to Climate Change.

Theme 3: Carbon Projects and Carbon Trading

- Analysis of carbon projects and their impact on indigenous peoples' livelihoods, their lands and territories;
- Highlight and provide case studies of partnerships that currently exist between

Governments, private sector companies, donor agencies and indigenous peoples in carbon projects and carbon trading;

- Provide an analysis on the promotion of forest conservation, measures for energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Theme 4: Factors that enable or obstruct indigenous peoples' participation in the Climate Change processes.

- Provide examples where there might be effective participation in decision-making at the national level;
- Highlight examples where indigenous peoples are working in partnership with UN agencies, Governments, the private sector and/or donor agencies on monitoring and assessment of climate change;
- Analyse whether indigenous peoples have public access to information on climate change measures;
- Highlight measures of accountability and integrity in decision-making and implementation of policies at the international and national levels in regards to the Climate Change processes;
- Identify obstacles, including lack of relevant statistics, lack of information and lack of understanding of technical and scientific language of Climate Change arrangements;
- Focus on the persistent barriers that block indigenous peoples' effective participation in the Climate Change process;
- What is the role of the donor community and the private sector in enhancing or weakening indigenous peoples' participation in the Climate Change process?

Joe Morrison said recommendations made during the talks will be put to the seventh session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. “Which is a very significant forum for Indigenous peoples around the world and we hope Australia will sign up to that”, he said.

What we want to do is use the permanent forum to articulate how Indigenous people are affected on their land by climate change and what the opportunities are as well”.

For further information visit
the UNU-IAS Traditional Knowledge
Initiative Website at: www.unutki.org

Oceans Apart: Unit

Words by Djawa Yunupingu, Director Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation; Frank Loban, Dugong and Turtle Project Liaison Officer for TSRA/NAILSMA and JCU Masters student; Kenny Bedford, TSRA/NAILSMA Project Officer Erub Island; and Stephen Ambar, Head Community Ranger Hammond Island.

The sea cultures of Indigenous people from coastal northern Australia and Mexico may be oceans apart, but for the Australian Indigenous land and sea managers who attended the 2008 Symposium on Sea Turtle Biology and Conservation in Mexico, the 15,000 km journey revealed as many similarities as there were differences.

The Australian delegation included Djawa Yunupingu from north east Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, and from the Torres Strait; Frank Loban from Maluiligal nation, Kenny Bedford from Erub Island and Stephen Ambar from Hammond Island.

Rod Kennett, NAILSMA Dugong and Marine Turtle Project Coordinator and Mark Hamann, JCU Research Fellow also travelled with the delegation.

The Australians were invited to attend the symposium and take part in a cultural exchange by the Comcaac or 'Seri Indian' people.

The location of this year's symposium (academic conference) was the small seaside town of Loreto on the Mexican Baja California Peninsula, and was a temporary home to the Australian delegation—as well as 1000 scientists, conservationists and Indigenous land and sea managers from 60 nations. The theme of this year's symposium was "Native Oceans" and it was hosted by the Seri Indians.

"It's good to go to international conferences. We can meet people from around the world and share our ideas about turtle management and conservation.

"We learnt about new methods being developed by scientists to manage turtles, respond to natural

disasters and different methods for rehabilitating sick or stranded animals", said Mr Yunupingu.

Mr Bedford described the experience as an excellent learning opportunity, as well as a chance to promote the work of Indigenous Rangers in Australia.

"The symposium was a very valuable experience, not only to learn from others around the world about the various issues relating to turtle conservation and management but to also promote the good work we are doing in our respective communities in Northern Australia", said Mr Bedford.

Mr Ambar acknowledged the dedication of the Seri Indian hosts towards the management and conservation of marine turtles.

"The Seri Indians have been involved in turtle management projects for many years, but in the Torres Strait it is only in the last few years that communities have become actively involved in turtle related activities.

"Now there is a growing enthusiasm in the Torres Strait to participate in turtle, dugong and other natural resource management projects on our country.

"The symposium is a chance from us to learn from people like the Seri about the issues they are faced with and how they address them", said Mr Ambar.

For Mr Loban, the conference also represented an opportunity to take back to the Torres Strait ideas about management policy relating to turtles that had been developed by other Indigenous land and sea managers from around the world.

ed in Action

Pictures by Kenny Bedford and Frank Loban.
Compiled by NAILSMA

“The theme of the conference [Native Oceans] was an acknowledgment of Indigenous issues surrounding land and sea management. Indigenous people from around the world have been involved in conservation for millennium. For us [Indigenous people], conservation is not a new buzz-word, it’s apart of our culture—we live closely with our environment and have strong cultural ties to it.

“Attending the conference was a real eye-opener. It made me realise how lucky we are in Australia to have stable populations of turtle.

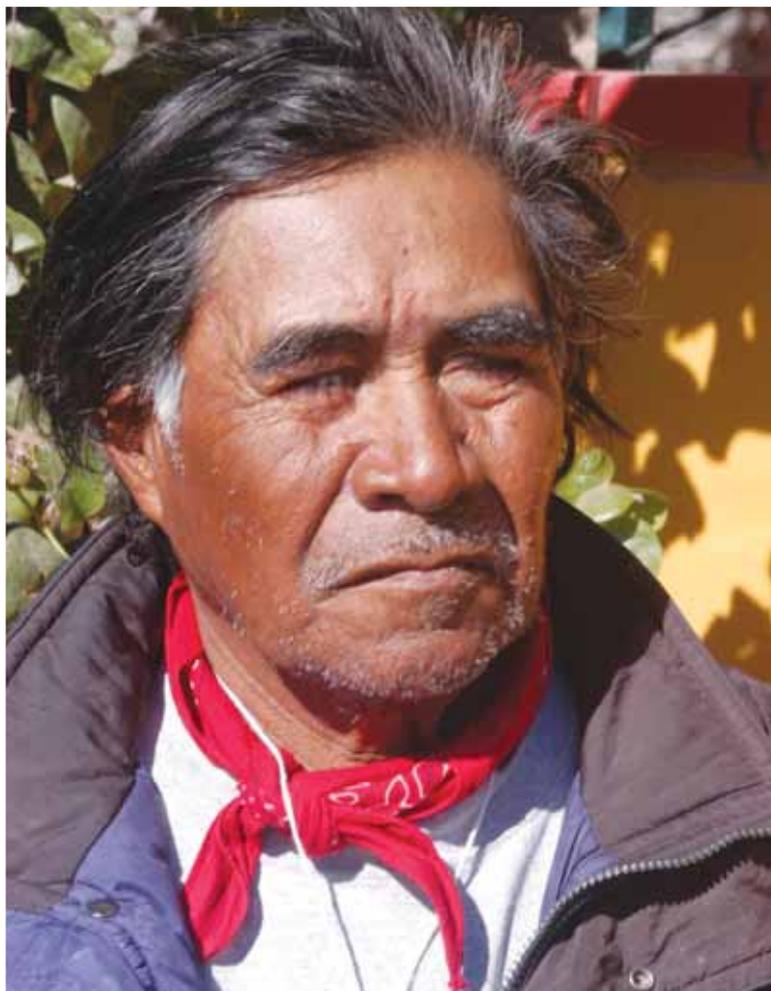
“It enabled me to see the bigger picture—to see what has happened in other parts of the world before it happens here [in the Torres Strait]. We are lucky to have this information while our turtle stocks are still healthy”, said Mr Loban.

The Australian delegates attended the Pacific Nations Meeting at the conference and were invited to make a presentation on the issues faced in northern Australia and some of the initiatives Indigenous people are involved in to address these issues.

“I spoke about some of the challenges of trying to introduce a management plan for the first time in my community, and discussed my role as Project Officer on Erub Island for the Dugong and Marine Turtle Project”, said Mr Bedford.

Mr Bedford provided insight for the attendees at the meeting on the complexities of cultural diversity in the Torres Strait.

“I explained the social and cultural diversity between islands in the Torres Strait and the





importance of developing local community-based plans that suit the needs and aspirations of respective communities.

“I stressed that although we still traditionally harvest turtles in our community; we also support research and are developing strategies and implementing projects that help to sustain turtle populations in our region”, said Mr Bedford.

Mr Yunupingu presented the Dhimurru video ‘Life of a big ghost net’ at the meeting.

“At the end of our presentation, we received a big round of applause from the people attending the meeting. They were impressed by our work and our dedication to maintaining healthy sea country; that we care about turtles, and that the government provides funding [through the Natural Heritage Trust] to our communities [involved in the NAILSMA Dugong and Marine Turtle Project] to allow us to continue our work”, he said.

A major aspect of the NAILSMA Dugong and Marine Turtle Project, which is driven by Traditional Owners, is to build networks amongst Saltwater People that are linked to governments and the scientific community.

The conference has enabled this network to be extended internationally, with the delegates making connections with scientists and Indigenous people from around the world, and gaining them access to international resources available to people concerned with marine turtle management and conservation.

Once such group is Grupo Tortuguero—a network of individuals, communities, organisations, and institutions from [predominantly Spanish-speaking]

nations around the world—who are dedicated to sea turtle conservation. The Seri Indians are members of Grupo Tortuguero.

As hosts of this year’s symposium, the Seri held a ‘welcome to country’ where they performed their Leatherback Turtle ceremony at a welcome social.

At a separate event, the Seri hosted a public forum where they formally welcomed each of the 50 Indigenous participants taking part in the symposium. 15 Indigenous nations were represented including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations from Australia, as well as Indigenous nations from Mexico, Nicaragua, Palau, Panama, and Venezuela.

Representatives from the Torres Strait presented the Seri with a framed Dhari (head dress). Mr Yunupingu presented them with a yidaki (didgeridoo) on behalf of the Yolngu people—but not before the skilled musician gave the audience a performance of music from north-east Arnhem Land.

“Everybody’s eye’s lit-up when they heard the sound of the yidaki. I think they were moved to hear an ancient instrument being played. The yidaki has been around for more than 60,000 years. For most of the people, this was the first time they heard a yidaki. It made hair stand up on end!” Mr Yunupingu explained.

Mr Bedford spoke with the Seri at the event and described the relationship between the elders and youth in the Seri community as encouraging.

“I emphasised the importance of ensuring we, as Indigenous peoples, maintain and transfer our cultural knowledge between generations, and that it is a shared responsibility by all members of our respective communities”, said Mr Bedford.

Mr Bedford extended an invitation to the Seri to visit Erub community in Torres Strait.

“I look forward to their interaction with our community, and to the opportunities they will have to experience our culture and environment and to learn about what we are doing to manage and conserve our sea turtle populations”, said Mr Bedford.

This was the beginning of a special relationship between the Seri and the Indigenous delegates from Australia as it signalled the commencement of a formal knowledge exchange program.

As part of the exchange, the Seri invited their guests from Australia on a two-day tour which included island visits and tours of rock painting galleries.

“I could see similarities and differences between Seri and Aboriginal people through the rock paintings. Their paintings were similar to ours—the colours were similar—but the stories were different”, explained Mr Yunupingu.

“Their stories praise the turtle. The turtle made the earth.”

The tone of the tour changed dramatically when the delegation visited a beach that told a very modern and disturbing story.

Mr Yunupingu explains.

“Hundreds of turtle carcasses littered the beach. It was very saddening to see such devastation.

“There was no official explanation, but some people think the carcasses may belong to turtles caught as by-catch by fisherman”, said Mr Yunupingu.

Witnessing such devastation brought home to the delegation from Australia the crisis facing turtle populations in other parts of the world. It helped to explain the drastic measures the Seri have taken to protect their turtle populations.

“Because of the outside pressures on the turtle populations, the Seri were forced to make a sacrifice I hope we [in the Torres Strait] will never have to make”, said Mr Loban.

“The Seri stopped hunting turtles many years ago. They have sacrificed a part of their culture over their concern for the dwindling numbers of turtle—brought about by the modern pressures the region now faces.





“As an Islander man, I find it hard to comprehend such a sacrifice, but I commend the Seri on their strength to make such a decision.

“Hunting turtle represents so much to Torres Strait Islanders, it fulfils sustenance, medicinal and cultural purposes. To stop hunting would represent a major loss to our culture.

“Conservation is apart of our culture. We conserve so we can consume. We are lucky that Australia’s turtle populations are still stable. We have to work together to keep it that way”, said Mr Loban.

The Seri and the Indigenous people from Australia are now collaborating on the I-Tracker project—a new method for monitoring turtle populations that combines the latest technology with the traditional skills of Indigenous people.

The knowledge exchange will continue throughout the year and a delegation of Seri is scheduled to make a visit to northern Australia towards the end of the year.

The delegation from Australia was sent to Mexico through a partnership between the North Australian Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), the Torres Strait Regional Authority, Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation, James Cook University and the United States organisation, Ocean Revolution. The delegate’s attendance was made possible through travel funding provided by James Cook University and The Christensen Fund.



For more information visit:

www.nailsma.org.au,
www.nativeoceans.org,
www.oceanrevolution.org,
www.grupotortugero.org
or www.seaturtle.org.





li-Anthawirriyarra, a-Wurrarumu and li-jawina:

Yanyuwa Past, Present and Future.

By Stephen Johnson.

On 4 February 2008, *li-Anthawirriyarra* Sea Ranger Unit took delivery of a long awaited new boat. The 6.7 metre New Zealand built Stabi-Craft is in survey D and will substantially increase the Sea Ranger's current carrying capacity, range and operational scope. On this note, Senior Ranger Graham Friday said, "It is an honour to care for country on behalf of my people and to share such knowledge with the younger generation. The *a-Wurrarumu* will assist us to carry out our jobs on the waters safely and efficiently." The handover took place on Darwin Harbour with all the Sea Rangers present, as well as staff from In and Outboard Marine and a small ABC media contingent.

A name for the boat – *a-Wurrarumu* – had been decided by senior members of the community some weeks before delivery. In general terms the name means the wind from the north that animates the waves and is also associated with the rainbow serpent. It is succinctly described as "...a proper island name" and clearly reflects the saltwater heritage of Yanyuwa people as well as the operational priorities of the Sea Ranger Unit.

The purchase of this new vessel represents a substantial investment on the part of Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Association and the Yanyuwa community and is a testament to the trust and pride they hold in *li-Anthawirriyarra*. Sea Ranger Coordinator, Stephen Johnson suggests it also signals increasing recognition of the value of Ranger activities from within the wider Australian community, "The Ranger unit is now receiving proper recognition and reward for some of the services we provide. We put our own money into purchasing this vessel with major contributions coming from Fisheries NT and Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Association".

Upon arrival back in Borroloola on 6 February 08 an official *a-Wurrarumu* launch was scheduled for 14 February 08. Most of the Yanyuwa community attended on the day, including a number of school children who were given a half day off to admire and go for a ride in the new boat. Some of these kids will be the first members of *li-Anthawirriyarra li-jawina* – little saltwater people still learning – a junior ranger programme funded by the World Wide Fund for Nature and undertaken in collaboration with the Yanyuwa Community, the Sea Ranger Unit and the Community Education Centre in Borroloola.

Over the course of the day the Rangers took several people on short trips upriver to five mile bend with *li-Wirdiwalangu* [senior Yanyuwa people] being first in line. A brief lull in proceedings took place while a BBQ lunch was enjoyed and the event eventually drew to a close around mid afternoon. The overwhelming endorsement and support from the Yanyuwa community evident on this and other days continues to motivate and increase confidence within *li-Anthawirriyarra* Sea Ranger Unit.

Bawuji bajirru yamulu barra – 2008 will be a good year.

Graham Friday and Stephen Johnson
li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Ranger Unit
c/- Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Association
PO Box 435, Borroloola NT 0854
Ph: 0427 970 834
Emails: graham.friday@mabunji.com.au
stephen.johnson@mabunji.com.au



Culture, Campfires and

On 10 September 2007, *li-Anthawirriyarra* Sea Ranger Unit and the Yanyuwa community held a launch at *Jawuma* (Black Rock Landing) for *Barni-Wardimantha Awara* [Don't Spoil the Country] Sea Country Plan. A Ranger Conference followed the launch with upwards of 250 traditional owners and other people from various organizations attending. Four *Maori* representatives (*Aotearoa*) also came and a great cultural exchange took place over the course of the event and the ensuing Conference.

On the first evening a Hangi was prepared in honour of the Maori visitors. The second afternoon they accompanied Yanyuwa hunters in a successful quest for dugong. A large animal was taken and eaten that night after which a big audience gathered to witness Yanyuwa and Maori performers exchange songs and dances around a large campfire.

This and other campfires became increasingly significant over the three days of the event. A senior Yanyuwa woman spoke of times as recent as the mid 1980s when the country around *Jawuma* and as far up as *Lhuka* (Batten Point) would be lit up with the cooking fires of Yanyuwa family groups, "There would be fires as far as you could see". The same woman then related a story from earlier times (still not so long ago) when the older and younger people would camp on the site awaiting the sound of *a-rabijinda* [conch shell] which would alert them to the imminent return of successful dugong hunters.

"We would hear that noise and all the young kid and old people would start getting the firewood and the ground ovens ready to cook the meat". Once again the light of campfires would illuminate the landscape from Black Rock to Batten Point.

The Maori contingent shared this emotional response. The younger men amongst them especially, stated that they had never experienced the sight of so many campfires on country before. For them it symbolized the close relationship between landscape and people and strengthened their resolve to continue working hard to look after their own home country.

When the meeting finished *Aotearoa* presented *li-Anthawirriyarra* and *li-Wirdiwalangu* with several power stones. The *li-Anthawirriyarra* stone will be held in the Sea Ranger office on behalf of the *Yanyuwa* community and will have the following dedication in *Yanyuwa*, *Maori* (awaiting translation) and English:

*Jinangu jaynyngka jibiya Aotearoa; li-mangaji li-Maori
kanalu-ngunda li-nganunga li-Yanyuwa li-Wirdiwalangu
Jina barra jaynyngka wirrimalaru kulu jilu-kanji Aotearoa
Karakarra nakari juju marnajinui, bajingu nya-nganunga awara
liyi-Yanyuwawu kulu nyalunga awara liyi-Maoriyu
jawula-alarrinji arrkula jawulamba-wulkananji karakarra baki
kariya, mayamantharra yurrngumantha*



By Steve Johnson

Country.

"This stone comes from New Zealand; the Maori people gave it to us, the Yanyuwa elders. This stone has great power and it brings New Zealand from the east, a great distance, to this place. Therefore the land of the Maori people and the land of we Yanyuwa people stand together. They stand looking at each other from the east and from the west, they are linked together for all eternity."

Contact:

Graham Friday and
Stephen Johnson
li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Ranger Unit
c/- Mabunji Aboriginal
Resource Association
PO Box 435
BORROLOOLA NT 0854

Ph: 0427 970 834

Emails:
graham.friday@mabunji.com.au
stephen.johnson@mabunji.com.au

Indigenous Interests and the National Water Initiative

This report was prepared for the NAILSMA Indigenous Water Policy Group by Sue Jackson (CSIRO). The IWPG project aims to articulate the least known aspects of water policy particularly relevant to north Australia's Indigenous population i.e. issues relating to property rights, use and management by Indigenous people.

This report, *Indigenous Interests and the National Water Initiative, water management, reform and implementation*, is an extended version of a review of current knowledge of relevance to the implementation of the National Water Initiative (NWI), *Indigenous interests in Tropical Rivers* (2006).

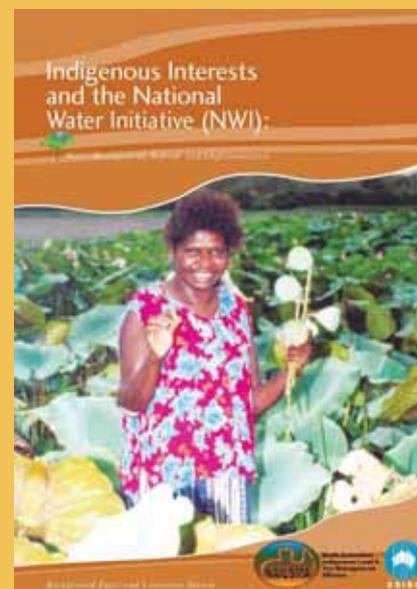
This extended version of that report is intended to provide background to understanding the Australian water sector, its institutional arrangements and recent policy reforms. This understanding should assist in the consideration of Indigenous water rights and interests in relation to the NWI, the scoping of research topics of interest to NAILSMA and the IWPG, and to the group's policy development process.

The report, in five parts, provides the following:

- An overview of the water resource sector, its key features and the resource management problems driving the raft of changes witnessed since the early 1990s
- A description of the current institutional arrangements, including the background to the NWI, particularly the reform of the 1990s, Australia's water resource law and management responses and structures
- An analysis of the NWI and its treatment of Indigenous interests, outlining the information base available to assist in implementing this key policy
- A commentary on some of the problems being experienced in the definition and incorporation of Indigenous interests and values in water planning
- A preliminary identification of knowledge gaps and areas of interest for future research

In the latter sections, the report provides a review of the literature relating to Australian Indigenous interests in water policy and management and discusses the issues that may affect the degree to which Indigenous people benefit from the NWI.

To download a copy of this report, visit the NAILSMA web site: www.nailsma.org.au



Integrated Training

Delivering Better Results for Indigenous Rangers

By Paul Younger

In June 2007 Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education positioned a lecturer in conservation and land management in Nhulunbuy to service the region's Indigenous rangers. Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation and the Yirralpa Miyalk Rangers are reaping the benefits of the resulting integrated approach to workplace training programs.

Workplace training and integrated learning, which utilises core subjects such as Maths, English & science as part of practical skills training, is widely used in the world of education. These principles are now being incorporated into the training of ranger groups in the north east Arnhem region of the Northern Territory.

This particular region had previously seen training from Batchelor in the form of fly in fly out trainers. However, Dhimurru and the Yirralpa Women's Rangers found this approach was not really providing the educational and on the job outcomes necessary to complete the important tasks needed to manage the contemporary issues facing Indigenous land managers today.

Over the years there has been constant pressure from Registered Training Organisations (RTO's), Community organisations and Government bodies that provide funding for rangers, to receive contemporary land management training. Some of this pressure can be justified given the feral pests and weeds that now invade these once intact areas and the important role rangers play in protecting Australia's borders from additional catastrophic pests. They also play a major role in protecting, nurturing, and promoting significant cultural heritage sites which sustain and hold together many indigenous communities.

My role as the Nhulunbuy based Batchelor Institute lecturer is to work directly alongside rangers who already have years of practical experience in land management and thousands of years of traditional land management skills. I work alongside these rangers on a daily basis to contextualise and ensure the relevance of their training and assess current knowledge. The goal is to see Indigenous rangers in this region achieving nationally recognised qualifications in land management.

Given the low literacy and numeracy levels of many remote Indigenous rangers, success in a mainstream vocational education format was always going to require

extraordinary measures. Adopting an integrated team approach and working alongside the Yirralpa women and the Dhimurru Rangers, Phil Wise Senior Ranger from Parks and Wildlife NT, and the facilitators employed by Dhimurru and Laynhapuy like such as Lisa Roeger - Ranger Facilitator, we aim to provide a better formula for educational success. These individuals and groups have fully embraced the concept of the workplace training model and support me in working through a major shift away from the previously unsatisfactory models to develop better programs for successfully training of Indigenous rangers.

Working alongside rangers in their daily work provides consistent reinforcement of the contemporary land management skills. It allows for the constant reinforcement of these skills creating, consolidating, and embedding new workplace practice. Lecturers have the opportunity to foster good habits in many skills and coach in areas that need improvement. The workplace supervisors also play a very important role by coaching and supporting the training when the lecturer is not present.

The integration does not stop there. Helen Clark from Batchelor Institute also provides the rangers at Dhimurru important literacy and numeracy training which is linked to the land management training and provides an immediate and practical application of relevant literacy and numeracy skills to the ranger's daily work. The rangers are engaged and willing to work hard on their literacy and numeracy skills as they can see real relevance in their learning. Dhimurru's Rangers commit an average of one day a week to classroom training but this integrated training approach really means training is part of every task undertaken. Dhimurru believes that overall this approach is helping to achieve outcomes more efficiently and effectively than would be possible otherwise.

This format of training for groups with low levels of literacy and numeracy takes longer to achieve a comparative result. However, it is one model that can provide Indigenous rangers with lasting skills to perform their important workplace tasks and develop contemporary land management skills to meet the challenges of effective environmental management into the future.

For further information contact:

Paul Younger

Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, Lecturer - Conservation and Land Management, Nhulunbuy NT.

Phone: 0889 870476 Fax: 0889 870496 Email: paul.younger@batchelor.edu.au



Our Trip to Cardwell

By Brenda Huddleston,
Wagiman-Guwardagun Ranger

My cousin Daphne and I went to the Land and Sea Management Conference at Cardwell in October 2007. We went there to sell our Wagiman Bush Soaps and meet other people who are doing land management work.

We both enjoyed the boat cruise and the rainforest walk, where the Traditional Owners showed us around the area. I also really enjoyed the Conference Dinner and the Torres Strait Island dancers.

It was good to meet lots of new friends, and we enjoyed some of the sessions at the Conference. We learnt lots of new things about Caring for Country, turtles and dugongs and bushfire management. It was our first time to go to this place and we had a great time.

UNITED NATIONS PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES 7TH SESSION

UN Headquarters New York April 21 – May 2 2008

Theme: Climate change, bio-cultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of Indigenous people and new challenges

The largest group of Indigenous Australians, approximately forty delegates attended the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNFPII) in New York during late April to early May. The Forum was held over two weeks and was attended by around 3000 Indigenous people from around the world, again the largest show of people to a forum since it was established in 2000. This years' Permanent Forum theme related to climate change focussing on the impacts as well as ways to lessen the impacts of climate change, which is referred to as 'mitigation' and ways that people have to change the way we live to prepare for the impacts of climate change, this is called 'adaptation'. Also discussed within this theme was the role of Indigenous people globally as the people best placed in this time of environmental change to care for their traditional estates which is called 'stewardship' and some of the challenges Indigenous people face in asserting their interests and issues relating to climate change both here in Australia and overseas.

My name is Jean Fenton and I attended the Permanent Forum on behalf of NAILSMA and was

invited and sponsored to attend by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) and the United Nations University – Institute of Advanced Studies. HREOC invited a NAILSMA delegate to talk about some of the work Aboriginal people and organisations in northern Australia are doing to lessen the impacts of climate change to the environment, as well as some of the opportunities arising from providing environmental services for Aboriginal people. Some of the opportunities relate to access and use of country, employment, training, re-populating country, health, transferring knowledge and others. I presented at a side event on the Western Arnhem Land Fire Agreement (WALFA) model and the work that NAILSMA and our partner organisations are doing to take the WALFA model to other regions in northern Australia. Such as, western Cape York, Queensland and Northern Territory Gulf country, Central Arnhem Land and the North West Kimberley. For more information on the current work of NAILSMA in relation to savanna burning and wildfire mitigation please go to: www.nailsma.org.au and follow the links.

So what is the UNFPII?

The UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is an advisory body to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The Permanent Forum is charged to discuss Indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. ECOSOC is an arm of the United Nations, who is charged with aiding international cooperation on setting standards and problem solving in economic and social issues. The UNFPII was established by the ECOSOC via resolution in July 2000. This resolution laid the foundation whereby the Permanent Forum is called upon to provide expert advice and recommendations on Indigenous issues to the UN system through ECOSOC.

For More information on ECOSOC go to www.un.org/ecosoc/

Who is the UNPFII?

The Permanent Forum is comprised of sixteen independent experts who serve a term of three years as Members and may be re-elected or re-appointed for one additional term. Governments nominate eight of the Members and eight are nominated directly by Indigenous organisations in their regions. The regions the UNPFII covers are Africa; Asia; Central and South America and the Caribbean; the Arctic; Central and Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia; North America; and the Pacific.

Professor Mick Dodson is currently the Indigenous Australian representative on the Permanent Forum for more information about the UNPFII please go to: www.un.org/esa/socdev/unfp/ii/



Mr Mick Dodson – Special Rapporteur UNPFII, Photo – Jean Fenton

Being at the UNPFII

This was my first time to the UNPFII and I found the whole experience of travelling to New York and going to the United Nations, amazing. It was the biggest gathering of Indigenous peoples I've ever seen and I felt truly honoured to be attending. Being at the UN involved long days, which started at 8:30am and finished at 6pm. Each morning the Australian Indigenous delegates would meet to discuss the day's program, the drafting of interventions and reports and individual roles and responsibilities. Straight after that meeting we'd meet as the Pacific Indigenous Caucus to discuss joint statements and positioning which included supporting interventions as part of the Pacific. Though the working week consists of long days, the weekend provided time to see New York, meet some of the locals, experience the culture and network with others attending the Forum.

The Permanent Forum heard many stories from Indigenous peoples already feeling the impacts of climate change such as the Inuit people in the Arctic who are finding it harder to live on their traditional country due to rises in temperatures causing their homelands to become inaccessible due to the melting of ice and snow. Equally alarming were stories from the Pacific Island nations where the rise in sea levels are causing their homelands to be flooded by saltwater which is ruining their freshwater supplies and gardens. Some Pacific Island nations are planning for a time when their Islands will be completely covered by saltwater and they will become refugees in someone else's country.

Yes the Climate is Changing!

Scientists are working hard to understand some of the impacts of climate change for the Northern Territory. Their report shows that the average temperature has gone up by 1.2 degrees Celsius in the Territory since 1910. Their scientific work shows that by 2030 yearly average temperatures across the Northern Territory could increase by another 1 degree Celsius – 1.2 degrees Celsius. Although it's hard to predict exactly, these small increases in temperature can lead to very major rises in the number of big rains, storms or cyclones, fires and heatwaves. Really hot weather may occur too; at the moment Darwin has 11 days when it gets hotter than 35 degrees Celsius. Scientists say this could go up to 44 days over 35 degrees by 2030, and up to 227 days by 2070. Changes to rainfall remain uncertain for the Top End, while decreases in rainfall are generally projected for Central Australia. Increased intensity of tropical cyclones is likely, flooding from storm surge is projected to increase, and global sea level rise is projected to continue.

For more detailed information please go to: www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au.



Pacific Indigenous Caucus, Photo – Aden Ridgeway

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Also discussed broadly was the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on the 13th of September 2007, 143 countries voted overwhelmingly to adopt the declaration, 11 countries abstained from voting and 4 countries cast votes not to adopt it, these countries being Australia, New Zealand, United States and Canada. The Declaration has been negotiated over 20 years and it's adoption has been welcomed by the Chair of UNPFII, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz who said "Through the adoption of the Declaration . . .the United Nations marks a victory in its long history towards developing and establishing international human rights standards". She went on to add that "For the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the Declaration will become the major foundation and reference in implementing its mandate to advise members of the Economic and Social Council and the UN agencies, programmes and funds on indigenous peoples' human rights and development . . . Effective implementation of the Declaration will be the test of commitment of States and the whole international community to protect, respect and fulfil indigenous peoples collective and individual human rights"

Australia is yet to adopt the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. At the Permanent Forum, Mr Bernie Yates – Deputy Secretary of the Australian Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs stated 2 “the government is also undertaking detailed consultations with stakeholders on the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, recognising its importance to Indigenous peoples globally”.

3 In a speech made by the Attorney-General, Robert McClelland on 10th June 2008 in relation to the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples he stated that:

- We are also keen to engage in the international arena in relation to indigenous Australians.
- The Rudd Government broadly supports the principles underlying the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- My colleague, Jenny Macklin, the Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs is working with my Department to develop a statement, which sets out our position on the Declaration. And she is undertaking consultations on how best such a statement may be delivered.
- It is timely to consider this, and other international instruments, this year - the 60th anniversary of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

To download a copy of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, as well as a NAILSMA report containing the interventions and reports that went to the UNPFII please log on to www.nailsma.org.au and follow the links.

¹ Press Release. Message of Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, On the Occasion of the Adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. United Nations Permanent Forum, 13 September 2007

² Statement by Mr Bernie Yates, Deputy Secretary, Australian Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs – 24 April 2008

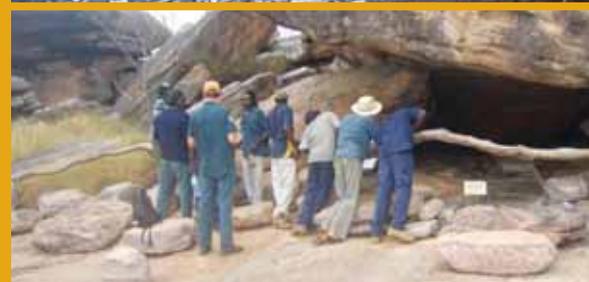
³ 2008 Non-Government Organisation Forum on Domestic Human Rights. Old Parliament House, Canberra, Tuesday, 10 June 2008, 11:00am

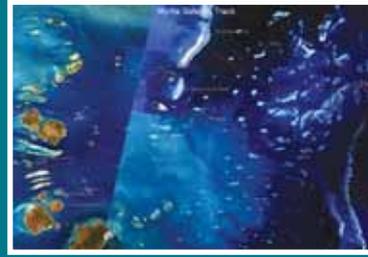
Meeting at Walgundu Yurlurrinji on 23rd of July 2007

By Simon Ponto

The Yugul Mangi Rangers and Parks and Wildlife held a meeting with the Traditional Owners to discuss how to protect the rock art site. The rock art paintings are slowly disappearing because of the rain, wind and wasp nests.

The Yugul Mangi Rangers went to Kakadu to see how the Kakadu Rangers put the silicon on the rock art to stop water leaking on the rock paintings. This is the follow up training of Walgundu Yurlurrinji meeting that held on 23rd of July 2007





Satellite Tracking Turtles from Mer Island

For the past two years, the Torres Strait Regional Authority's (TSRA) Land and Sea Management Unit (LSMU) have been working with eight Torres Strait Island communities on the Torres Strait Dugong and Turtle Project.

The TSRA Dugong and Turtle Project is part of a north Australia wide project coordinated by the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAISMA), and funded by the Natural Heritage Trust.

The LSMU employs a Dugong and Turtle Project Co-ordinator and a Dugong and Turtle Project Liason Officer who work with community Project Officers employed on the Islands of Badu, Boigu, Mabuiag, Iama, Horn, Erub, Mer and at St Pauls community on Moa Island.

The Project is designed to empower and strengthen Indigenous involvement in Dugong and Turtle Management in the Torres Strait through a community-based approach that involves each of the eight island communities determining their own management of these important species.

The Project aims to:

- Develop sustainable Dugong and Turtle Management Plans,
- Assist island communities in monitoring the catch and health of dugong and turtle habitats, and
- Deliver training in order to promote community awareness of dugong and turtle sustainability.

Training and education is a key part of the Project.

LSMU staff provide the community Project Officers with training opportunities and information

to assist the Officers in raising community awareness about turtle and dugong life cycles and sustainability.

In December 2007, as part of the Project, James Cook University delivered a week long turtle nesting training program during which a group of Project Officers attached satellite transmitters to two nesting green turtles captured at Dowar, near Mer.

The purpose of the satellite trackers was to determine where the Dowar green turtles go when they finish nesting.

Research has shown that turtles have set nesting locations in one region, but set feeding areas in another, meaning that female green turtles may travel distances up to 2,500km when moving between locations.

During the tracking project at Dowar, Year 3 students from Tagai State College on Mer Campus named the two turtles Myrtle and Otil.

Mer Dugong and Turtle Project Officer Mr. Moses Wailu played an important part during the project, educating his community about the two green turtles and ensuring the welfare of "Myrtle" and "Otil".

During the Project, Mr Wailu liaised with numerous community members including school students, informing them of the movement patterns of the two green turtles and placing notices throughout the community promoting an awareness of the work performed by himself and the Project Officers.

Sattelite Track of Ottil



The two nesting green turtles have now been tracked by satellite for three months. “Ottil” has remained close to Mer for the majority of the time, having been spotted by Mer community members at Dowaer in January 2008 and on the reef in February. Recently, for the first time in 3 months, Ottil has begun to move, heading further west from Mer. The most recent sighting occurred close to Wednesday Island.

“Myrtle”, the bigger of the two turtles, spent some time around Dowaer near Mer, before heading west. After a short stop near Warrior Reef she is now south of Hawksbury Island.

James Cook University’s involvement in the training was made possible through the Marine and Tropical Science Research Facility (MTRSF) project. University members Dr Mark Hamann and PhD candidate Mariana Fuentes assisted with the training and are also working with Mer and Erub Community members to study turtle nesting and nesting beach sand temperatures at Dowaer and Bramble Cay.

For more information in relation to the Project, please call

Dugong and Turtle Project Liaison Officer
Mr. Frank Loban at the LSMU
(07) 4069 2947,
or
Mer Dugong and Turtle Project Officer
Mr. Moses Wailu at Mer Council
(07) 4069 4231.



Body Shop Marketing Workshop

By Honorlea Massarella

On the 12th and 13th of March 2008, over 25 Indigenous participants from throughout the Top End came to Darwin to attend a Body Shop Marketing Workshop. The workshop talked about “your business ideas” and looked at ways to package and sell community created products. The presenters gave everyone lots to think about and take ideas back to their community.

The workshop provided a positive atmosphere for Aboriginal people to talk to each other about getting into business. Some of the people who attended are already running successful Aboriginal owned and operated businesses, while others are just getting started and could get lots of advice from those more experienced. The businesses are largely based on the use of natural resources and value adding in the community, including body products, bush foods and jewellery.

Some of the support service providers were also present, to talk to people about where to get help for business, including funding, training, mentoring and advice. Everyone had a good time, and left with plans and inspiration for their business.



Cultural Burning Revives Kakadu's Wetlands

By Tanya Patrick and Barbara McKaige

"You look after country, and the country will look after you," says Violet Lawson, a traditional owner from Kakadu National Park.

Indigenous Australians have been using fire to manage their environment for more than 50,000 years. Now, Violet and her family are combining traditional knowledge with Western ecological science to manage wetlands, including Boggy Plain and Yellow Water, along the South Alligator River in Kakadu.

CSIRO research officers, Peter Christophersen and Sandra McGregor (Violet's daughter) are part of a project called 'Burning for Biodiversity' which brings together the know-how of traditional custodians and science. The partnership has transformed the Boggy Plain and Yellow Water wetlands into habitats rich in biodiversity.

Kakadu's wetlands are important habitats for many animals, including Magpie Geese and Long-necked Turtles. These animals, along with a rich variety of water plants, are cherished food sources for Aboriginal people who live there. Since feral Asian water buffalo were removed in the 1980s, the native grass Mudja (*Hymenachne acutigluma*) has spread and taken over many wetlands, reducing their biodiversity and limiting access for hunting and food gathering. It is believed that the water buffalo controlled Mudja in much the same way that Aboriginal fire management did before European settlement.

Peter and Sandra explain that they have returned to a pattern of repeated burning over the early Wet Season

when wetlands have less water and there are fewer birds living there. The surrounding woodland margins are burnt early in the Dry Season to prevent the fires escaping into the woodlands. Vegetation changes are being monitored using satellite imagery, ground-based transects and fixed photograph points, and water bird abundance is being monitored in fixed plots. The results have been amazing. "We've significantly enhanced biodiversity in these wetlands and improved their cultural values for Aboriginal people by increasing the availability of food resources," says Peter.

The project has also helped transfer traditional knowledge to younger generations. "Our whole family is involved in burning the wetland. Our kids love to learn about looking after country, burning, hunting and collecting bush tucker," says Peter.

"It is important that people maintain their links with the land, animals and plants to develop an understanding of their interactions. Equally as important is having time to listen to our elders who hold much of this knowledge," says Sandra.

The results at the popular tourist resort, Yellow Water, have been particularly impressive. "The vegetation changes and the increase in the number of water birds from several hundred birds to several thousand birds at Yellow Water simply from burning have been amazing" says Peter.

'Burning for Biodiversity' is part of the Bushfire CRC, and involves collaboration between CSIRO, Parks Australia North, and the Environmental Research Institute of the Supervising Scientist.



Before Burning



After Burning

For further information about the project contact:

Peter Christophersen & Sandra McGregor
CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Darwin
Ph (08) 8944 8411

Opposite Page: Peter Christophersen and Sandra McGregor with their children Delise and Kallum at Yellow Water. Photographed by Kerryn Nossal.

Top Left: Aboriginal fire management has a dramatic and positive impact on Yellow Water's wetlands. Areas that were once densely covered in Mudja (*Hymenachne acutigluma*) now support a great variety of habitats, with more water lilies, larger areas of open water and more types of plants such as wild rice and spike rushes. As a result the number of water birds and magpie geese has increased dramatically. Photographed by CSIRO.

Top Right: Photographed by CSIRO.

Right: Violet Lawson with her granddaughter Carla Rawlinson. Violet hopes that sharing traditional knowledge will encourage young people to learn more about caring for country. Photographed by Peter Christophersen.

Bottom Right: Sandra McGregor lighting up Boggy Plain in Kakadu in the early Wet Season. Wetlands may look lush and green but underneath dense Mudja there is a layer of grass that can carry a fire. Photographed by Randy Larcombe.



Collaborative research

demonstrates that turtle harvesting in the Maningrida region is sustainable

Last year saw the completion of an Australian Research Council funded collaborative research project involving the Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation (BAC), Djelk Rangers and the Institute for Applied Ecology (University of Canberra). The project was successful in providing the fundamental knowledge and understanding to underpin sustainable harvests of *C. rugosa* eggs and adults in the Maningrida region.

Indigenous communities in northern tropical Australia have used northern snake-necked turtles (*Chelodina rugosa*) as a significant source of food for generation upon generation. They have developed a wealth of knowledge of *C. rugosa* and how they can be sustainably utilised for subsistence. BAC has been keen to see this knowledge put to use in developing a local industry which contributes to economic self-sufficiency while at the same time maintaining and reinforcing links to indigenous culture. The harvest and incubation of *C. rugosa* eggs and the sale of hatchlings into the local (NT) pet industry provides such an opportunity.

Compared to other freshwater turtles, *C. rugosa* are fast growing, reach a breeding age quickly and lay multiple clutches of eggs per year. Our research shows that these life-history traits, in conjunction with density limited hatchling recruitment and local harvest practices, are responsible for the continued persistence of *C. rugosa* over the long period of interaction with people in northern tropical Australia.

Although subsistence harvesting in the Maningrida region appears sustainable, people today are finding it harder to locate turtles. This is not because of cultural

changes to meet contemporary circumstances, but rather, because feral pigs deplete turtle populations immediately prior to harvesting. Projective models indicate that predation by pigs will almost certainly lead to the local extinction of *C. rugosa* in most savannah billabongs in the Maningrida region within 50 years time.

On a more positive note, modelling also shows that if a multi-faceted approach to pig management (including fencing of billabongs, periodic culling and restocking with juvenile turtles) is adopted, *C. rugosa* can continue to be harvested without threatening local population persistence. In fact *C. rugosa* could be harvested for commercial purposes if pigs are appropriately managed. This discovery has the potential to transform present approaches to turtle conservation and management.

On ground training has played a critical role in the project. Djelk Rangers and some community members now possess the necessary skills to detect and quantify contemporary threats to turtle abundance, and to harvest and incubate *C. rugosa* eggs and care for subsequent hatchlings. Importantly, the research has provided a management tool to support judgements on appropriate levels of exploitation in support of indigenous harvests.

Over the next couple of years the BAC Djelk Rangers will continue to collaborate with western scientists, to examine the economic, cultural and environmental benefits of several approaches for managing feral pigs and, in turn, conserving *C. rugosa*. We will keep you updated with our progress.



For further information, or publications arising from this work, contact:

Ben Corey

Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation
PMB 102 Winnellie, NT 0822

Tel: 08 8979 5460

Email: wildlife@bawinanga.com

or

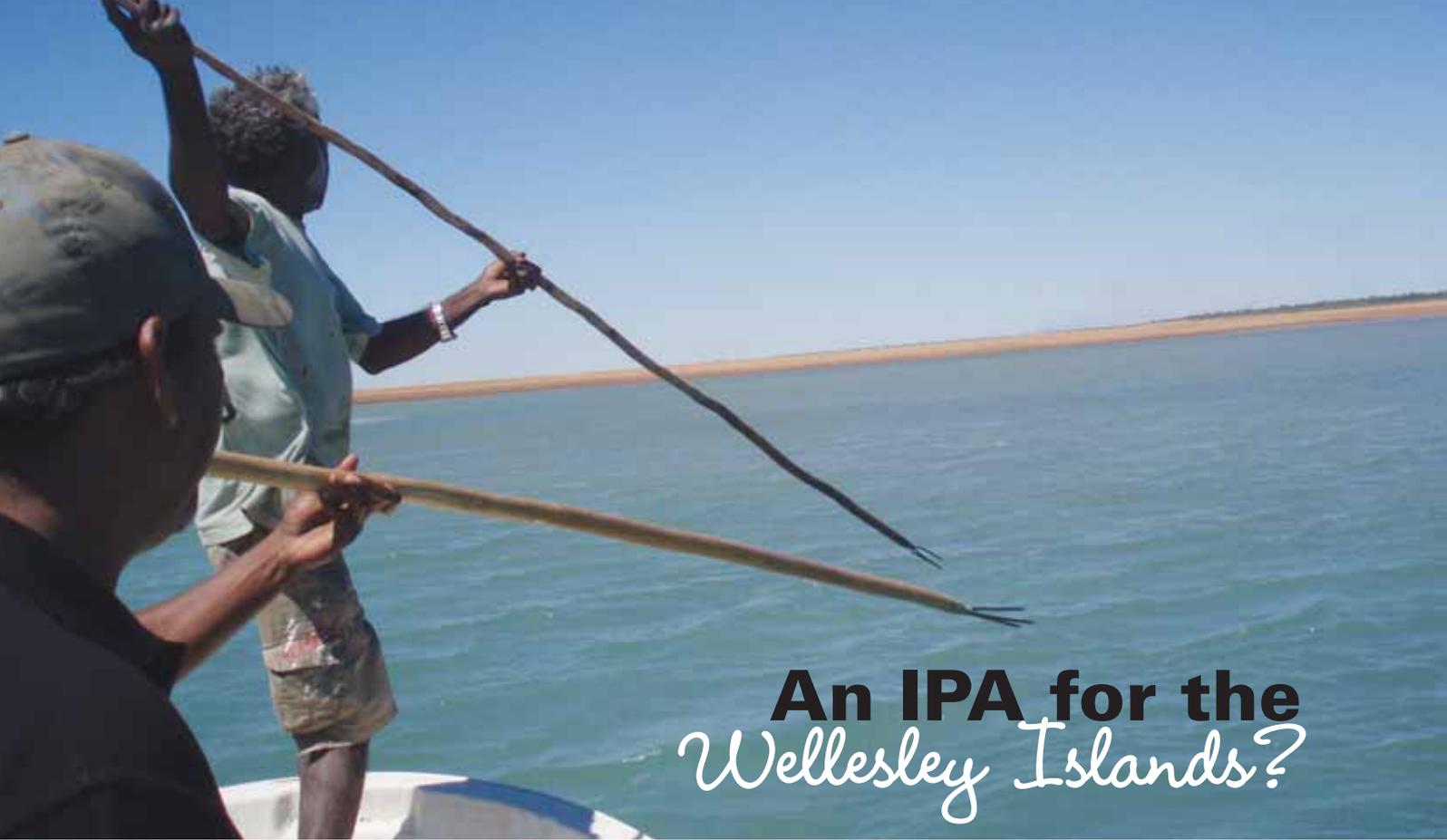
Dr Damien Fordham

Research Institute for Climate Change and Sustainability,
School of Earth and Environmental Sciences,
The University of Adelaide, SA 5005

Tel: 08 8303 6711

Email: damien.fordham@adelaide.edu.au

Djelk Ranger, Caleb Campion, with a gravid snake-necked turtle, Photo by B. Corey



An IPA for the Wellesley Islands?

By Kelly Gardner, Sea Country Plan Facilitator

The Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation is currently consulting with the Wellesley Islands groups in the lower Gulf of Carpentaria with a view to declaring an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) over some, or all, of the traditional sea country surrounding the islands. CLCAC will consult with the four Traditional Owner groups within the area on what levels of environmental and cultural heritage protection people desire for their country.

Consultations with individual family groups have commenced on Mornington Island and are running smoothly. Further consultations will be held with Bentinck Island and the neighbouring mainland group to incorporate their views.

As with other IPAs, a declaration of an IPA will not impact on native title rights and interests, rather if declared, it will be complementary to a Traditional Owner environmental and cultural management strategy to be developed through the course of the investigation phase.

As part of this process, the Wellesley Islands Rangers are forging ahead with their projects such as the ghost net survey and clean-up and NAILSMA's Dugong & Marine Turtle Project.

Another major objective of the ranger program is the protection of sites of cultural significance, such as traditional fish traps. The Traditional Owners are currently looking at the possibility of listing their

sacred sites, including fish traps, on the National Heritage Register to provide further protection to sites, culture and traditions.

The Traditional Owners are very concerned with the unsustainable use of marine resources and so, are also looking at the possible introduction of a zoning plan as part of their management regime. This plan will be negotiated with other stakeholders who have an interest in the Wellesley region, such as the Gulf of Carpentaria Commercial Fishermen's Association, with whom the Traditional Owners generally have a good working relationship.

There is a long way to go before a declaration will be decided upon, such as which areas to include, and what form an IPA will take, however what is becoming clear is that the Traditional Owners welcome the involvement of the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts and look forward to developing a strong working relationship with this Department.

As the process gathers momentum, it is important that people become and remain informed about this project as it affects all of the Traditional Owners of the Wellesley Islands.

We look forward to any feedback people wish to provide, especially from others who have been through this process. Please feel free to contact Kelly Gardner on 07 4745 5132, or by email at kgardner@clcac.com.au.

A Common

for Indigenous, Recreational and Commercial

By Chris Calogeras

The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) supported a historic project that saw a Northern Territory fishing and seafood industry delegation travel to New Zealand (NZ). This delegation saw leaders from peak indigenous, recreational and commercial sectors working and travelling together to meet with NZ peers to identify best-practice resource management arrangements that take into account indigenous participation in commercial operations, along with recreational and customary stocks use. The three indigenous representatives that attended were Djumbulwa Murrawuli, traditional owner Blue Mud Bay, Samuel Bush-Blanasi, Deputy Chair Northern Land Council (NLC) and Bunug Galaminda, NLC Executive.

The proposal was jointly developed by the NLC, NT Seafood Council (NTSC) and Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT (AFANT). The concept arose during a series of ground breaking meetings in Darwin, during 2007, where it was agreed it would be beneficial to develop an agreed stakeholder position on future direction for indigenous commercial participation in the NT fishing industry, which still met other stakeholder expectations.

The group considered it prudent to make contact with people who have experience in incorporating indigenous fishing into the fabric of the day to day operation and management of fishing activities. It was felt that this could be achieved through a fact finding mission to NZ to meet a broad cross section of stakeholder groups.

The delegation travelled in April 2008 with a hectic schedule, meeting with Te-Ohu-Kai-Moana (Waitangi Fisheries Commission), Ministry of

Fisheries, NZ Recreational Fishing Council, NZ Seafood Council and NZ Seafood Training, along with commercial operators and Maori groups such as Aotearoa Fisheries, Prepared Foods, Hawkes Bay Seafoods, Ngati Prou Seafoods and Ngati Kahungunu iwi.

The delegation coincided with the annual Matau-a-Maui Conference (Maori Fisheries Conference) in Napier, which brought together resource users from all sectors in NZ. When the conference organisers found that the delegation was going to be in NZ, they invited the delegates to attend and present. The importance of the NT visit saw the conference re-titled 'Domestic, Deep Water and Down-Under', with Down-Under referring to the NT delegate's attendance.

All the delegates were impressed with the hospitality and generosity of their hosts and it provided all sectors with a much greater understanding of the issues involved in improving indigenous participation in commercial fishing. On the delegation's return, the key findings from the meetings and discussions undertaken will be distilled and the information made available for discussions with the specific stakeholder groups.

For further information contact:

Chris Calogeras
C-AID Consultants
8 Dalwood Cres
Malak NT 0812
Email: calogeras@octa4.net.au
Tel: 08 8927 0817
Mob: 0401 692 601

Vision

Commercial Fishers in the Northern Territory.



NT delegates after their meeting with recreational fishing representatives in Auckland. Back row L to R. Katherine Sarneckis (NTSC), Steve Sly (DPIFM), Chris Makepeace (AFANT), Samuel Bush-Blanasi (NLC), Djumbulwa Murrawuli (Blue Mud Bay) and Doug Neville (NTSC). Front row L to R. Chris Calogeras (C-AID Consultants) and Bunug Galaminda (NLC).



Mr Samuel Bush-Blanasi, the Deputy Chair of the NLC (right) greets Mr Paora Ropiha of the Kahungunu iwi at the Maori fishery conference with the traditional Maori greeting, the hongi



Mr Djumbulwa Murrawuli, the Traditional Owner of the Blue Mud Bay area, greets the Maori fishery conference organiser, Mr Ngahiwi Tomoana of the Kahungunu iwi with the traditional Maori greeting, the hongi

Fighting to save Cape York's Sea Turtles

Life's tough for a sea turtle hatchling at the best of times - it only has a one in 1,000 chance of survival.

And for turtles on western Cape York Peninsula there's another threat, with research showing a high percentage of nests being destroyed by feral pigs and dingoes.

Egg-laying efforts stand little chance against the skill of these animals who, if they don't immediately feast on eggs, wait through the night and pick off the baby turtles one at a time as they hatch.

Dr Col Limpus, Senior Principal Conservation Officer with the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency, does not believe turtle populations are sustainable with current predation pressures on nests and hatchlings.

The Australian Government has put \$150,000 towards a Turtle Nest Predation Monitoring Program administered by Cape York Peninsula Development Association (CYPDA). Support has also been provided by the State Government.

This project complements research being conducted by Dr Limpus, with monitoring part of a wider program involving feral animal control funded by the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water.

A recent large-scale aerial shoot destroyed 7,500 pigs in specially targeted areas on the coast. Monitoring nests before and after shoots will help determine how effective this is in protecting the turtles.

Brian Benham, Natural Resource Management Coordinator for the Cape York region, said Traditional Owners are being trained and employed as part-time rangers in five key areas as an important part of the monitoring program.

CYPDA are coordinating the employment of two rangers in each of five turtle 'hot spot' areas with high levels of nesting, stretching from Napranum up to Prince of Wales Island in the Torres Strait. The turtles include the endangered Hawkesbill, Olive Ridley, and Flatback.

Every morning the rangers traverse selected beaches and identify the tracks of species coming ashore. They mark nests with GPS equipment, identify them with pegs and take photos of tracks. If the nest is attacked by predators the species involved can be identified by the tracks. In most cases the Indigenous Rangers have been very surprised at the levels of predation.

Despite the difficulties, community concern about the issue is growing and more Traditional Owners are volunteering to help the rangers.

More information

Brian Benham, CYPDA NRM Coordinator
brian.benham@cypda.com.au

Cape York Turtle Rescue
www.capeyorkturtlerescue.com



Graduation Ceremony

for Yugul Mangi Rangers

By Cherry Daniels

Last year the rangers went to Darwin for a graduation ceremony.

When a special occasion like this happens people get excited because we feel that we are receiving a very special award which makes us feel proud of what we have achieved. Receiving awards for what we have done inspires us to carry out further training or research.

After receiving our certificates we returned to Ngukurr and decided to have the same ceremony down here because we thought it wasn't right without our community knowing what the certificates meant.



Peter Tremain who is our lecturer came down from Charles Darwin University to present our certificates to us. On the day of the ceremony the rangers were rushing here and there to prepare for this special night. We asked the Ritharrngu/Wagilag dancers to perform traditional dance and songs for us. Many of our people came to see this special occasion which made us very happy. By showing our young children what we can do will lead them in doing the same or maybe go further. Then one day they may have a better chance of getting good jobs.

MEDIA RELEASE

30 April 2008

TRADITIONAL OWNERS RECORDING OWN STORIES

The “*Recording and Applying Traditional Owner Knowledge as it applies to caring for country*” project hosted by Desert Channels Queensland ensures that knowledge from Traditional Owners and Elders about caring for country is recorded and preserved for future generations.

The project involved the recording, documenting, demonstrating, and utilisation of traditional knowledge of the Elders as they address their community concerns including poor land use, the effect on rock art of ill-timed burn-offs, water salinity, inappropriate land management, water conservation and fire techniques.

Project Officer, James Newman, says this project not only helps ensure that regionally specific issues are dealt with comprehensively but that support is given to innovative approaches to managing natural resources, including environmental, social and economic aspects of sensitive ecosystem management.

“All the knowledge collected will be put on a database which will be kept by the Traditional Owners and they will have control over what is placed on this database and who can access it,” says James.

“Even though culturally sensitive stuff can only be viewed by authorised traditional owners, there will be information available about natural resource management that landholders and others may be interested in.”

James, a Wiradjuri man from the Central West of New South Wales, came to Longreach to support, assist and train Traditional Owners in the use of recording equipment. He says that the main outcome of the project will be a thorough and comprehensive collection of recorded and stored

traditional knowledge of groups and clans of the various Traditional Owners throughout areas of Queensland.

“Many Traditional Owners have passed away, resulting in pockets of knowledge lost forever. In some cases, the Traditional Owners were removed from their country for decades creating situations where direct contact with their land was limited,” says James.

As well as working across the Desert Channels Queensland region, James also worked closely with Traditional Owners in the neighbouring Southwest NRM region. “I really enjoyed seeing the country of those people I worked with and I am truly grateful for the chance they have given me to assist in gathering their traditional knowledge.

During the project, James travelled with members of the Waluwarra people (from the Dajarra/Urandangi area along the Georgina River), the Bidjara people (along the Warrego River from the Great Divide to the Charleville area) and the Budjiti people (along the Paroo River).

For more information about this project contact Vicki Webb, Project Officer, on vickie.webb@optusnet.com.au

For more information on the work we do at Desert Channels Queensland, call 4658 0600.

Author: Roelie Hartwig

Ph: (07) 4652 7825 Fax: (07) 4658 0122

Email: roelie.hartwig@dcq.org.au

Learn How to Develop a Business Based On Things from the Bush

By Julian Gorman, Michael Honer, Adam Drucker and Natasha Stacey

Ramingining community has requested a team from CDU to help them identify appropriate business development ideas. Getting some community members to answer some questions will assist the community to identify current patterns of customary harvest. It will also help to identify the importance of the natural resources (plants and animals) gained from hunting, fishing and gathering activities to the wellbeing of local people. The answers to the questions asked will provide an indication of the value of the bush in providing products (food, medicine, tools etc). They will also help to provide key information to start looking at business development ideas based on wildlife and plant harvesting.

The most promising ideas will then be discussed by the Ramingining community, assisted by the project team. Economic, environmental, cultural and social issues related to these ideas will be considered. A key result of the work will be to strengthen the community's ability to identify business ideas and, for the best ideas, to develop their own business plans that could be financed by funding agencies such as Indigenous Business Australia.

A complementary component of this work will involve identifying the difficulties faced in starting a business. Importantly, this identification will assist relevant Government agencies to address these difficulties through policy changes and legislation where necessary.

Neville Daymirringu from Yathalamarra has been employed to assist with this work. He will assist in communications between the community and the CDU team through use of Yolngu Matha and by making sure that cultural considerations are properly taken into account. He will also be an easily available local point of contact for the community members who may have questions about the work that need to be discussed or passed onto other members of the team. Neville thinks that work such as this can often be difficult for community members to understand because they are explained in too complex a manner. So he will take a leading role in talking and listening about this work in a way that he feels would best suit the community.

Members of the CDU team have started introducing themselves and discussing the work with the community. The next step will be to meet with representative groups and hold a big community meeting to incorporate community views and listen to what people are proposing as promising business ideas. These meetings are planned to be held in Ramingining this May.

The above work is to be carried out as part of a three year Business Development Project with the Ramingining community in partnership with Charles Darwin University (CDU). The work is funded by the Australian Research Council, the Ramingining Homelands Resource Centre, and the NT Research and Innovation Board.

For further information contact: Charles Darwin University, Telephone: (08) 8946 6413, Fax: (08) 8946 7720, E-mail: julian.gorman@cdu.edu.au; michael.honer@gmail.com, adam.drucker@cdu.edu.au; natasha.stacey@cdu.edu.au.



Managing Water for Australia

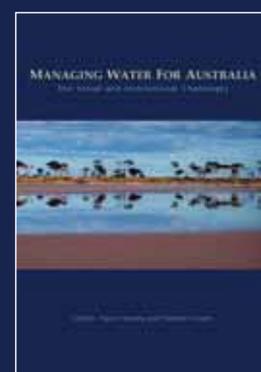
The Social and Institutional Challenges.

Published in 2007, the book titled 'Managing Water for Australia, The Social and Institutional Challenges' brings together a series of papers that were presented at the conference, Delivering the National Water Initiative: Understanding the social and industry dimensions.

The conference was hosted by Land & Water Australia, the National Water Commission, the Australian National University and the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia in December 2006.

The papers within the book summarise the existing social sciences research and knowledge and promote further consideration of the implementation needs of the National Water Initiative's agreed water reform agenda.

Chapter three, '*Indigenous perspectives in water management, reforms and implementation*', was written by Sue Jackson (CSIRO) and Joe Morrison (NAILSMA). This paper focuses on Indigenous interests in water and how these interests are construed with respect to the National Water Initiative. The paper clearly identifies processes that need to be considered when adequately addressing issues of Indigenous access, customary and cultural values, and engagement in the water planning and trading processes. The paper also highlights key issues that may effect how Indigenous people benefit from the National Water Initiative water reform agenda.



To view more information about this book and chapter three, go to the NAILSMA web site: www.nailsma.org.au, or go to the CSIRO publishing website: <http://www.publish.csiro.au/pid/5619.htm>

Fresh Water

in the Maningrida Region's Hybrid Economy

This report was prepared for NAILSMA's Indigenous Water Policy Group (IWPG) by Jon Altman assisted by Virginie Branchut.

The NAILSMA IWPG project aims to articulate the least known aspects of water policy particularly relevant to north Australia's Indigenous population, i.e. issues relating to property rights, use and management by Indigenous people.

This report, *Fresh Water in the Maningrida Region's Hybrid Economy: Intercultural Contestation over Values and Property Rights*, describes the results of one of the four case studies undertaken during 2007, each with different research emphases as proposed in the original funding application to Land and Water Australia (LWA) in 2005. Other case study locations are Katherine (NT), Gulf of Carpentaria (QLD) and the Ord River (WA).

This report describes the current governance of water in the Maningrida region in central Arnhem Land from three perspectives:

- a historical analysis of the political economy of water
- a sectoral analysis of the regional hybrid economy, and
- a spatial analysis that has differentiated Maningrida township from the hinterland.

A cultural analysis is provided of regional values associated with water before a set of emerging contestations were outlined in relation to water property rights and water governance. The analysis highlighted that much of the complexity of water issues in this region can be attributed to a range of inter-linkages (a range of economic and institutional).

To download a copy of this report, visit the NAILSMA web site: www.nailsma.org.au

Guidelines and Protocols for the Conduct of Research

NAILSMA has produced a publication that provides advice and guidance to researchers wishing to undertake research in Indigenous communities, particularly in natural resource management.

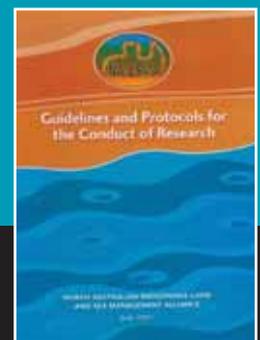
Research is an important means of promoting and assisting management and development on Indigenous land and sea estates in ways that are environmentally, culturally, socially and economically sustainable. NAILSMA is committed to ethical research practices of the highest standard. NAILSMA's role in relation to research is fourfold:

1. Commission and manage research projects;
2. Act as a representative body for research projects undertaken by Indigenous partner organisations and Land Owners;
3. Provide advice and support for research projects undertaken by Indigenous partner organisations and Land Owners;
4. Participate in or provide input to bodies responsible for setting research agendas or assessing research proposals.

The booklet provides advice through it's:

1. Brief summary of the research context in relation to management and research approaches;
2. NAILSMA's requirements for research approval;
3. Appendix of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) Guidelines for Ethical Research in Indigenous Studies.

To download a copy of the publication go to the NAILSMA website at www.nailsma.org.au



Fencing and Planting at Numuwuy

By Dhuru Yunupingu

In March, Waykarr, Phil, Arian, Paul, Patrick, Daryl and I went to Little Bondi, Barinjura, for fencing and tree planting. We went there to fence around the car park to stop the visitors walking in the bush. We packed four vehicles with fencing gear like shovels, hammers, pliers, cutters, three corner posts and the wire. We picked up lots of different plants from Y.B.E. Paul said we had to plant the trees and he and Phil would watch us do the work because we were learning how to plant trees. It was half an hour drive south-east of Nhulunbuy.

It was raining that day but we planted the trees first then we started fencing. We were using the safety equipment like hand gloves, long pants, boots and safety glasses. It was hard work.

After that at 4 o'clock we knocked off but we started again the next day. We went back to Barinjura to do a bit more fencing. The boys took photos, to prove they had done the fencing and planting. It looked good at the end and Paul said "Yo manymak" (That's good).



AQIS

Working Together With Communities



By Kay Carvan, Public Awareness Officer, AQIS NT

Working together, community ranger groups across northern Australia and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service — AQIS — are combining traditional skills and knowledge of country with western science to enhance quarantine monitoring for exotic pests and diseases.

In 2006 AQIS set up a team to work with coastal Indigenous communities for providing quarantine monitoring and surveillance and to train and support participants.

Less than two years later, AQIS is working with more than 40 Indigenous groups across northern Australia.

AQIS remote area team co-ordinator Lyndall McLean says, "Fee for service contracting means Indigenous land and sea managers can generate income for their 'on-the-ground' efforts. The contracts set out the work to be done and the training to be given.

"Together, AQIS and the rangers work out what quarantine work can be done in their area and draw up a work plan. AQIS then trains the rangers for work such as mozzie trapping and ant collecting, weed patrols or beach patrols where rangers collect insects from timber that may have washed ashore from illegal foreign fishing vessels, then dispose of the timber," Lyndall says.

Getting involved can have longer-term benefits, too. AQIS currently employs thirty-five, full-time Indigenous staff across northern Australia. They are located in Broome, Darwin, Gove, Bamaga, Cairns and across the islands of the Torres Strait.

Gove-based liaison officer Mangatjay Yunupingu says: "The contract scheme helps extend community recognition of the role of AQIS, provides skilled 'eyes and ears' on the ground when we can't be there and offers much-needed training and financial benefits to the community."

For further information contact,
Kevin Langham, Assistant Regional Manager AQIS NT, (08) 8920 7020

Working Together for *women's business*



By Melissa Bentivoglio

A small group of Women Rangers have been busy working with their Community at Wadeye, to utilize wildlife resources and traditional ecological knowledge in the development of a small enterprise project. The project has been a real collaborative effort, with the women being employed and supported through the Thammarrurr Ranger Program, but also greatly assisted through the Palngun Wurnangat Association (Women's Centre) to make and sell their products.

Currently, the Thammarrurr Women Rangers are making shampoo, conditioner, soap, body spray and jewellery, to sell at their Women's Centre. The products have been well received by the people of Wadeye, and the constant stream of visitors to the Community. This demand has kept the Women busy for the past year, but this year they will also look at selling outside their Community.

An important part of this collaborative project is the foundation of traditional ecological knowledge, and thus working with the old people of Wadeye to get advice and make decisions about the use of wildlife resources. The Aged Care, or 'Brain's Trust' as they are locally known, have done many trips out bush with the Ranger Women, to discuss plants which have medicinal and other properties suitable for the Women's products. The Women have then used these plants for oil extraction and making their products.

The Ranger Women are also enrolled in Certificates in Conservation and Land Management, and Spoken and Written English through the locally based Batchelor College. This training is invaluable to their small enterprise project, through the scientific study of plants, addressing issues of environmentally sustainable harvest, and numeracy and literacy skills required for business development.

This collaborative effort has been fundamental for the Women to be effectively supported, and develop the range of knowledge and skills required for their small enterprise project. Starting from the foundation of traditional ecological knowledge, wildlife resources are sustainably harvested for product development, an appropriate image is being developed and marketed, and the Women are learning how to talk about their products and be proud of their achievements. They are also learning about working as a team, business structure, managing money, decision-making and planning. From a small seed, a Women's Business is growing.



THE SEA COUNTRY RANGERS

at Dhimurru

By Balupalu Yunupingu

My name is Balupalu Yunupingu. I am a senior sea ranger at Dhimurru. My job is to look after the sea country in Dhimurru I.P.A. (Indigenous Protected Area) around Nhulunbuy and as far as Mount Alexandria near Buymarr. I am employed by Dhimurru along with Patrick White and our new facilitator Vanessa Walsh who came on aboard on February 11th 2008 and she's already doing a fantastic job.

We got the boat on May 20th last year. We did a lot of training on the boat. All Dhimurru rangers had to train to past their Restricted Coxswains ticket before taking the boat on patrol. The Laynha rangers had to drive our boat and the Dhimurru rangers had go on their boat. The boat measures 7.3 metres and has 2 Johnson 140 H.P. motors and the design is Ocean Master.

On September 10th 2007 we took the boat to Borroloola for the sea country conference. Patrick White, Bas, Steve Roeger and me launched the boat at the Yirrkala boat ramp about 6am in the morning. The weather was good and the water was very smooth all the way to Alyangula. The boat trip took us about seven hours. We had to drive the boat in turns and we arrived in Alyangula at 12pm. We then tied our boat and unloaded our swags and other stuff. There to meet us was Steve's sister and his brother in law at the ramp. They then drove us to their house. We had a shower and a bit of cuppa and cookies. After that we then drove ourselves to the ranger quarters because the Anindilyakwa rangers had left a car for us to drive around, which was good.

We stayed overnight and the next morning we left at 6am for Port McArthur and then again the water was in good condition. It took us seven or eight hours and then again we had to drive the boat in turns and we arrived at Black Rock, 40 km inland from the mouth of McArthur River, about 2.30pm. As we were entering the channel we could see all the rangers standing on the top of the cliff with different uniforms waving and cheering to us.

We stayed on for the conference and on the September 13th 2007 we left Black Rock for North East Island. We took a different route this time. It was a winding creek and only three of us were on the boat this time. When we got to the open sea we heard a coast watch call, "409 stranded vessel" it said. The stranded vessel was located where we were heading. We soon found out that Numbulwar rangers had a problem on their motor on their 5m Quintrex and then we called back to the coast watch saying the boat was alright and no longer required assistance. So we then left the area and headed for the Island with Numbulwar rangers following behind us. We camped on the island and the next day we didn't see any sign of the Numbulwar rangers. They must have left earlier that morning.

Well anyway we packed up and left for Alyangula. It took us eight hours and we arrived at 1.30pm. In the afternoon we fuelled up the boat to get it ready for the next day. We had dinner at the Alyangula club. The next day, we left Alyangula and headed for Yirrkala at 6am. The water was bit choppy and we had to slow down a bit. We arrived at Yirrkala about 2pm. We had a good trip going there and back. It was a good experience for all us and we really enjoyed the trip.



Indigenous Water Values and Interests in the Katherine Region of the Northern Territory

The report, *Preliminary Study on Indigenous Water Values and Interests in the Katherine Region of the Northern Territory*, was prepared for the NAILSMA Indigenous Water Policy Group.

This preliminary case study was conducted by David Cooper and Sue Jackson, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems.

The NAILSMA IWPG project aims to articulate the least known aspects of water policy particularly relevant to north Australia's Indigenous population i.e. issues relating to property rights, use and management by Indigenous people.

This report on Katherine Indigenous water values and interests describes the results of one of the four case studies undertaken during 2007, each with different emphases. Other case study locations are Maningrida (NT), Gulf of Carpentaria (QLD) and the Ord River (WA).

The timing of this report coincides with the Northern Territory Government's plan to release a draft water plan for the Katherine region in late April. The draft plan will be open to public comment for a five week period. It is hoped that the report may assist relevant organisations in responding to the draft plan.

For further information contact:

Sue Jackson (08) 8944 8420 or
Lorrae McArthur (08) 8946 6973

To download a copy, visit the NAILSMA website:

<http://www.nailsma.org.au>

Draft Dugong and Turtle Management Plans Released for Stakeholder Consultation

Through the Torres Strait Dugong and Turtle Project, the Torres Strait Regional Authority's (TSRA) Land and Sea Management Unit (LSMU) have been supporting Traditional Owners on the Islands of Badu, Boigu, Erub, Iama, Mabuiag, Mer, Horn and St Pauls, to strengthen their capacity to sustainably manage their dugong and turtle fisheries.

The TSRA Dugong and Turtle Project is part of a north Australia wide project coordinated by the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), and funded by the Natural Heritage Trust.

TSRA Chairperson Mr. Toshie Kris, said that the Project, which is now entering its third year, uses a community-based planning process so that management decisions are made by the island's Traditional Owner group together with other traditional inhabitants.

"A Project Officer has been employed in each of these communities to liaise with their community and to develop a Plan that documents how they want to manage their dugong and turtle resources", said Mr Kris.

"These Officers are supported by the LSMU's Dugong and Turtle Project team who provide technical and financial assistance whilst facilitating partnerships with government and non-government organisations to roll out the project.

"To date, six communities have developed draft Dugong and Turtle Management Plans. The draft plans discuss:

- How management arrangements will be implemented for dugong and turtle on these islands,
- Traditional Owner research priorities,
- What type of assistance the community needs to make the Plans work, and
- Who needs to be involved to help implement the Plans.

"Each community is enthusiastic about the draft plans being supported and endorsed by government. One proposed key outcome is the creation of suitably qualified Traditional Owner rangers to manage dugong and turtle according to their Plans.

"The TSRA, with the support of Traditional Owners, has commenced a stakeholder consultation process inviting comment and commitments for the Plans and their proposed implementation. The Plans have been sent to ten Australian Government agencies, six State agencies and two research organisations for comment.

"The TSRA's Land and Sea Management Unit is working to coordinate a meeting between agencies and Traditional Owner representatives from each of the participating islands to discuss the agencies' comments", said Mr. Kris.

If you would like to find out more about this project, please call LSMU's Dugong and Turtle Project Liaison Officers Mr. Lachlan Sutherland or Mr. Frank Loban at the TSRA Land and Sea Management Unit on (07) 4069 2947.

li-Anthawirriyarra

West Island Turtle Camp

Every year *li-Anthawirriyarra* Sea Rangers conduct a turtle camp at *Maabayny* on West Island. In 2007 we camped there from 14 to 21 October together with Traditional Owners, Greg and Di Quayle and Dr. Scott Whiting all of whom have been a great help in keeping this annual event going.

Maabayny is a big Yanyuwa place where *Wundunyuka* [sea turtles], in this case mostly *Wirndwirndi* [flatbacks] come to nest at this time of year. The rangers do track counts on this beach all year round and at this one time of the year, measure and tag the turtles, monitor their numbers, collect DNA samples and measure the success of hatchlings.

This year, most of the turtles were mature and already tagged. All of them were flatbacks. The Ranger Unit uses this data in combination with the wide range of knowledge Traditional Owners hold, to build a more complete picture of the health of turtle populations on Yanyuwa country. This annual event also gives the Rangers and Yanyuwa kids the opportunity to learn from the older people.

In 2007, one of the topics of discussion revolved around the sustainable harvest of turtle eggs. Traditional Owners explained to the Rangers how this might be managed long into the future with minimal impact on turtle populations in the region. Drawing on Indigenous and scientific knowledge, a single nest, where the chances of hatchling success were virtually nil due to a covering of bedrock over the nest site, was identified and the eggs were taken. Working together in this way everyone was able to enjoy a hearty meal in the full knowledge that *Wirndwirndi* would be back year after year and that their children and their children's children would be able to look after them for a long time to come.

In 2008, *li-Anthawirriyarra* hopes to make the annual turtle camp an even bigger event. We are working with the school to have students and our junior rangers present for at least a couple of days over the two weeks and will be working together with many senior Traditional Owners. We would also like to invite other ranger groups to attend so if you are interested please contact us.

NAILSMA Delegation Goes to 2020 Summit

Delegates of NAILSMA took Indigenous positions to the Australian Governments 2020 Summit that was held in Canberra on the 19 and 20 April 2008.

NAILSMA delegates attending the Summit included the Chairperson, Mr. Peter Yu, Executive Officer Mr. Joe Morrison, Director of the KLC Mr. Wayne Bergman and Mr. Joe Ross, the Chairperson of the Indigenous Water Policy Group (IWPG). Delegates highlighted a number of Indigenous positions under several themes within the 2020 Summit.

Mr. Joe Morrison acknowledged, "given the recent change in government, the current epoch is an opportune time for Indigenous people to inform innovative policy that is suited to the requirements of the north".

From NAILSMA's perspective, the approach for a national dialogue could be based on principles previously articulated by renowned Indigenous leader, Mr. Patrick Dodson.

Fundamental principles for that approach are founded on mutual respect for different views and political positions; upholding the

highest standards of international human rights; maintaining cultural and social values as integral components for building Australia's nation; and, bringing about change that will contribute to a better sense of Australian nationhood.

The NAILSMA IWPG also took an Indigenous position on water. While calls were made at the Summit to examine the opportunities around water in the north, Mr Joe Ross stated that, "the magnitude of the issues affecting Indigenous people and their environments and the pressures to develop the north will require new research and partnerships with Indigenous people to answer complex questions".

It is particularly important to ensure that the complexity of issues affecting Indigenous communities attract world-class research, "but any new research must be driven by Indigenous people, which is why a new engagement framework is justified", said Mr Ross.

Overall, NAILSMA backed the outcomes of the water and climate change discussions. This stream called for Indigenous people to be part of the dialogue in developing climate change strategies



Graham Friday and Stephen Johnson
li-Antbawirriyarra Sea Ranger Unit
c/- Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Association
PO Box 435, Borroloola NT 0854
Ph: 0427970834
Emails: graham.friday@mabunji.com.au
stephen.johnson@mabunji.com.au

oes to ummit

for the nation that consider Indigenous Australians. The Summit also called for a national Indigenous Knowledge or Indigenous Research Centre to be established to carry out multi-disciplinary research to answer complex questions for Indigenous people.

Joe Morrison said “this is a step in the right direction, given the increased attention being paid to the water resources on Indigenous lands in the north, and the vulnerability of Indigenous communities to any changes in climate, this is timely”.

Furthermore, “the need for Indigenous people to engage and then formulate strategies to develop the north must be seen as the primary objective, rather than an after thought”.

A discussion paper that was presented at the 2020 Summit can be downloaded from the NAILSMA web site: www.nailsma.org.au

‘Healthy Pastures’ on Wagiman Country

By Sam Crowder and Melissa Bentivoglio

Northern Australia is blessed with vast healthy grasslands. Many of these grasslands occur on Aboriginal land, and the Wagiman - Guwardagun Rangers from the Upper Daly Region are getting support from Greening Australia (GA) for the sustainable use of their grasses.

GANTs ‘Healthy Pastures’ Program, is based in Katherine, and promotes the sustainable use of native grasses across Northern Australia. Building a strong native grass seed industry is a keystone of the Program, to ensure a reliable supply of diverse seeds and to create employment opportunities in remote areas. Many ranger groups are well placed to fill this role.

The Wagiman Rangers have shown a keen interest in harvesting grass seeds on their country, and have started some training with Sam and Matt from GANT on using a seed harvester. Sam says that, “the Wagiman crew have a natural ability for grass species identification, spotting good harvestable patches and getting the timing right for harvest”. There’s plenty of good grass on Wagiman Country, and the rangers have already harvested Kangaroo Grass and Native Sorghum to sell to Greening Australia.

The grasses are then used for rehabilitation of mines and other disturbed sites in the region.

Wagiman Rangers, John and Verona, have plans to continue harvesting the grasses each wet season and eventually establish their own business. They are grateful for the support of both the ranger program and Greening Australia, to help them understand and undertake the process of harvesting and storage. The project provides a valuable link between the identification of healthy pastures and the development of a small enterprise, with the potential for healthy country to lead to economic development.



Catching Western King Brown

By Mandaka Marika

Parks and Wildlife Ranger Phil Wise had a phone call from Yirrkala that there was a snake to be removed from one of the rangers' houses. The King Brown of Gwarar Nuchalis or Mulga snake or Darrpa in Yolngu Matha is a most venomous snake. It grows up to 1.8 m or an average of 1.4 m long. The Yolngu people of Arnhem Land, the Djamparrpuygu and Rirratjingu have a song and dance for it.

So I volunteered to go with Phil to Yirrkala. As we got to the house there were some people very excited and scared yelling, "under the house!". So they showed us where the snake was hiding. Then we grabbed the tools from the back of the ute to catch the snake.

First we looked for the snake but we couldn't find it. We heard the people yelling, "underneath the house!" So Phil and I went over to that house to try to scare the snake out of its hiding place. It worked.

Then Phil got the snake hook and I got the snake bag and placed it on the ground and he lifted the snake very carefully in the bag.

It wasn't easy to catch the reptile. Finally we caught the snake then came back to Dhimurru. Half way between Yirrkala and Nhulunbuy, we freed the snake and let it go into the wild.



What is Indigenous Governance?

A Yanyuwa Good News Story from the southwest Gulf.

By Stephen Johnson and Graham Friday.

The word governance is a tricky one - some might even call it a weasel word. In Natural Resource Management when people talk of Indigenous governance more often than not they use blackfella names to refer to whitefella ways. Not so in the southwest Gulf of Carpentaria where Yanyuwa people and *li-Anthawirriyarra* Sea Rangers live and work.

On 18 March 2008, *li-Wirdiwalangu* [senior Yanyuwa people] met with Rangers to formalize a longstanding, but to date, informal working relationship. Representatives from all four Yanyuwa clan groups - *Rrumburriya*, *Mambaliya-Wawukarriya*, *Wuyaliya* and *Wurdaliya* - were present. The meeting was called because of increasing concerns that Yanyuwa ways of doing business - of caring for kin and country - were being left behind in a mad scramble to do things "whitefella way".

Over the course of the meeting, *li-Wirdiwalangu* elected two representatives from each of the clan groups. The two people elected will represent *ngimirringki* [owner for father's country] and *jungkayi* [custodian for mother's country] for each family estate. These eight representatives now form a Management Committee to oversee and direct all *li-Anthawirriyarra* Sea Ranger operations and activities.

These developments were timely with *li-Anthawirriyarra* poised to take on another five new Rangers - three fulltime and two part time - through the Working on Country NT programme.

On 14 April, an interview panel consisting of four Yanyuwa Management Committee members, held a number of interviews for these positions: *li-Anthawirriyarra* now has five new Rangers who will start work on 21 April 2008. In addition, the Unit will be taking on another two fulltime positions for women Rangers - at the end of financial years 2007/2008, 2008/2009 - this time through the Working on Country Australia Wide programme. Within two years *li-Anthawirriyarra* will have eight fulltime and two part time Rangers working together with the community to look after business Yanyuwa way.

Once again, it will be senior Yanyuwa Traditional Owners who will make these employment decisions and guide the Rangers into the future. They will do so according to a Yanyuwa system of governance - a system that has served people well for at least the last 8,000 years - where family relationships with each other, the land and all it holds, are paramount.

Graham Friday and Stephen Johnson
li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Ranger Unit
c/- Mabunji Aboriginal Resource Association
PO Box 435, Borrooloola NT 0854
Ph: 0427970834
Emails: graham.friday@mabunji.com.au
stephen.johnson@mabunji.com.au



Daly River

Aboriginal Reference Group

Mona Liddy and William Hewitt of the Daly River Aboriginal Reference Group perform an important and vital role in representing Traditional Owners interests in any proposed or planned development in the Daly River region of the Northern Territory.

The Aboriginal Reference Group (ARG) is attached to the Daly River Management Advisory Committee (DRMAC).

Formed in 2005, the ARG is responsible for overseeing the environmental and cultural impact on communities in the region. Of particular significance to the ARG is the:

- Development of economic and employment opportunities;

- Aboriginal water rights, particularly the use and allocation of those rights;
- Land use for farming purposes;
- Protection of sacred sites and the retention of cultural values and practices; as well as;
- The continued monitoring of water quality and other important ecological issues.

Representing eight language groups in the Daly River region, the ARG has been active in recent months providing input into any development plans for the region, as well as attending conferences and seminars informing of the future for the Daly River area.

To find out more about the way ahead for the Daly River region contact the Northern Land Council on (08) 8920 5100



ARILLA PAPER

Bringing Women Together

As a way to aid the local community and to help reduce paper waste within their office, Southern Gulf Catchments is now taking their used paper products to Arilla Paper so it may be turned into paper or handmade works of art by local Indigenous women. "Arilla Paper is about bringing women together and is a centre for learning and support," explains Arilla Paper Manager Elaine Sarmardin. "We use the plants and spirit of the land to make unique Indigenous paper."

"Anyone can take their fibrous waste such as cardboard, printer paper, magazines, newspaper, letterbox ads, old denim and t-shirts, buffel / spinifex grass lawn clippings and leaves from palms, mangoes and plum trees to Arilla. They welcome and encourage all of it," states Southern Gulf Catchments' CEO Donald Coventry. The women of Arilla turn the pulp into artworks and paper that can be ordered for use in printers or made into certificates, invitations and even photographs. They can fill any size of order with enough advance notification.

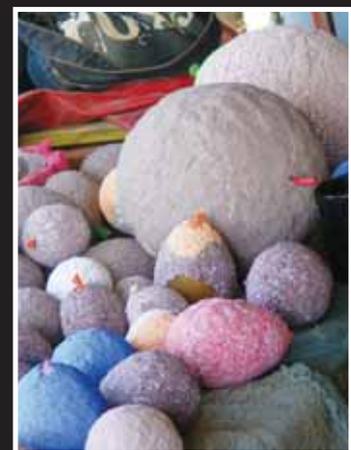
Arilla paper is located between Outback@Isa and the city centre just off Marian Street and is open Monday – Thursday 8:30am – 3:30pm and Friday 8:30am – 12:30pm. They offer tours of the mill, volunteering and will also be displaying their work at an exhibition in Noosa in July – August 2008.

Media Contact:

Kate Masters
kate.masters@southerngulf.com.au
 Ph: 4743 1888

Lisa Gammon
lisa.gammon@southerngulf.com.au
 Ph: 4743 1888

MEDIA RELEASE
 Friday, 7 March 2008





NAILSMA Dugong and Marine Turtle Project Wins Banksia Award

It's official! The Dugong and Marine Turtle Project is the proud owner of a Banksia Award (Indigenous category).

The award was presented to NAILSMA Executive Officer Joe Morrison on Friday 19 July at a ceremony in Melbourne by Environment Minister Peter Garrett.

Minister Garrett said in a media release "These Indigenous people are the 'front-line' managers of the north Australian coast where dugong and turtle remain abundant."

In accepting the award, Joe said "It was very much a surprise to win as our project was up against some very tough competition from other Indigenous projects. It was an honour for NAILSMA to receive an award that acknowledged the stewardship of Indigenous land and sea managers across northern Australia in managing nationally and internationally significant ecosystems.

"It demonstrates that having Indigenous people on country managing their lands, delivering environmental benefits for all Australian's, is an important asset for the national good.

"The project supports communities to combine Indigenous knowledge with modern research and training to undertake management activities such as mapping and monitoring populations and habitats, tracking turtle migrations by satellite, and developing turtle and dugong management plans," said Mr Morrison.

Accompanying Joe at the ceremony was the NAILSMA delegation of Project Coordinator Rod Kennett, Senior Bardi-Jawi Ranger Kevin George from the Kimberley, Dhimurru Ranger Patrick White from north east Arnhem Land, li-Anthawirriyarra Ranger Damien Pracy from Borroloola, and Torres Strait Council Deputy Lord Mayor Kenny Bedford.

TS-CRC Executive Officer David Garnett, Charles Darwin University Vice Chancellor Professor Helen Garnett, and Australian government representatives Les Russell and Ilse Kiessling also joined the NAILSMA table at the awards to represent our many collaborators and supporters.

Congratulations to all the partners, rangers and participating communities of the project!

- Kimberley Land Council
- Northern Land Council
- Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
- Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation
- Torres Strait Regional Authority Bardi-Jawi Rangers
- Dhimurru Rangers
- li-Anthawirriyarra Rangers
- Wellesley Islands Rangers
- Injinoos Community
- Lockhart Community
- Pormpuraaw Community
- Hopevale Community
- Mer (Murray) Islanders and Erub (Darnley) Islanders from Kemer Meriam Nation
- Badu Islanders, Mabuig Islanders and St. Pauls community from Maluiligal Nation
- Malu Kiai (Boigu) Islanders from Guda Maluiligal Nation
- Iama (Yam) Islanders from Kulkaigal Nation
- Kaurareg from Kaiwalagal Nation

The NAILSMA Dugong and Marine Turtle Project is funded by the Australian Government.



Grant Funding for Indigenous Ecological Knowledge Now Available!

The North Australian Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) has grant funding available for Inter-Generational Transfer (younger people learning from older people) of Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (IEK). If you are in the area covered by the Northern Land Council, Tiwi Land Council or Anindilyakwa Land Council you can apply for these grants.

All Aboriginal knowledge which helps people look after country properly is part of IEK. Grants are available until late 2009 for projects that support younger people learning about how to look after country properly from Elders and other knowledge holders.

Two types of grants are available:

Grants of \$1000 - \$20,000

Grants under \$20,000 are decided on by the NAILSMA IEK Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) which will meet frequently and issue grants funding. These smaller projects have a simpler grant application and reporting procedure.

Grants of \$20,000 – \$100,000

If the grant is larger than \$20,000, the TAP makes a recommendation to another board, the Natural Resource Management Board of the NT {NRMB(NT)}, which can then give approval for the project to go ahead. These larger grants have a more formal grant application and reporting procedure.

For more information contact

David Wise at NAILSMA
ph 89467674 fax 89467677,
email david.wise@edu.edu.au
or go to the NAILSMA IEK website at
http://www.nailsma.org.au/projects/indigenous_knowledge.html





Il-wirdiwalangu Dance at Jawuma

6th IWPG meeting in Kununurra. Photo taken by Samara Erlandson of meeting participants at Lake Argyle



Miriam Meipi collecting bush medicine to make soap



Collecting lilies



Brenda selling Bush Medicine Soap at Mindl Markets



Crabbers Camp, Wurrwinkarra, Davies Channel



Honorlea and Daphne at Cardwell



Thamarrur Ranger Women at the Bodyshop Workshop



Floodplain – collecting bush tucker



Gertrude with her favourite bush tucker

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Kantri Laif Team

Production: Samara Erlandson **Editor:** Joe Morrison **Logo and Graphics:** Ian Lee

Thanks to issue 4 contributors:

Chris Calogeras, Kelly Gardner, Kay Carvan, Lisa Gammon, Honorlea Massarella, Mandaka Marika, Dean Mathews, Tanya Patrick and Barbara McKaige, Steve Johnson, Graham Friday, Mona Liddy, Lachlan Sutherland, Frank Loban, Dhuru Yunupingu, Cherry Daniels, Djawa Yunupingu, Kenny Bedford, Stephen Ambar, Sam Crowder, Melissa Bentivoglio, Paul Younger, Julian Gorman, Michael Honer, Adam Drucker, Natasha Stacey, Simon Ponto, Lorrae McArthur, Brenda Huddleston, Carla C. Eisemberg, Moses Wailu, Hmalan Hunter-Xenie, Balupalu Yunupingu, Roelie Hartwig, Pearson Wigness, Pearson Wigness, Murray Radcliffe, Ben Corey and Damien Fordham.

Contact Us

Address:
Building 12,
Level 3,
Room 27,
Charles Darwin University

Postal:
NAILSMA,
Charles Darwin University,
NT, 0909

Fax: (08) 8946 6388

Email: Kantrilaif@cdu.edu.au

Website:
www.nailsma.org.au

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