

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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Issue 6
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Bruce Martin

37



message from the Chief Executive Officer



Joe Morrison
CEO NAILSMA

Welcome again to all those readers and supporters of Indigenous land and sea management in northern Australia. In this edition, we again present important stories of Indigenous people carrying out critically important and challenging work on country using Indigenous Knowledge and western science knowledge to better manage country. These efforts benefit everyone in Australia – by having a robust and independent Indigenous management regime in the region will allow remaining biodiversity and other natural resources to be managed in an appropriate way while Indigenous lives can be rebuilt.

This year has turned out to be extremely busy for NAILSMA and the broader land and sea network. We started our year with the launch of our Water Policy Statement, Strategic Planning for our carbon offset project, hosting a Climate Change Workshop and convening the inaugural Saltwater People Network and Strategic Planning with the NAILSMA Board. In many localities, community based land and sea management groups continue to grow rapidly in the north with a high level of demand, particularly by young men and women.

During February we had a large gathering of people come together to plan and structure the work of the NAILSMA Carbon Project. This week long exercise involved the research community, community rangers and Traditional Owners, various ranger group Facilitators, Australian Government and conservation NGO's. The large 'family' involved in this exercise shows that good, community based research and development can occur. And while there is a long way to go to reach an end point, this project presents a positive model for moving forward with the community, not in front.

In March, NAILSMA launched its water policy statement at the Northern Territory Parliament House. Like the earlier meeting held at Mary River in 2009, this occasion was marked by a reminder that Indigenous people in northern Australia take development of the north very seriously. The statement was a clear articulation of

the aspirations that Indigenous people have towards water, in particular the need to ensure that all water management plans must have an allocation for Indigenous consumptive and commercial use and that we cannot be left in the environmental allocation and not participate in the broader economy. There remains a lot of work to do in the water policy space, and while we await the states and commonwealth to respond to this statement, we will continue to work towards positioning Indigenous people in the best policy position we can through collaborative research and practical on-country work with Indigenous people.

The work of NAILSMA in water policy and management has supported the establishment of the 'First Peoples Water Engagement Council', facilitated by the National Water Commission that brings together a number of Indigenous people to assist the Commission drive policy change in water across the nation. I wish the group all the best.

In April we hosted a Climate Change workshop in partnership with the University of Melbourne and the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility. This meeting brought together a number of Indigenous groups to present their local stories and responses to climate change. This contrasted strongly with the dialogue that occurs at the national and international level. It highlighted the need for the climate change debate to be inclusive of Indigenous people and their unique issues and knowledge. Combining poor Indigenous health, with ageing and sometimes non-existent infrastructure in rural and remote Australia leaves a potential disaster to unfold.

During this conference there was a strong call from delegates to the Australian Government to release a long overdue report – Risks from Climate Change to Indigenous Communities in the Tropical North of Australia, which evidently was released shortly after the meeting. This report, the first of its kind provides some desperately required data about changes people

have been experiencing at a local level. However, just as importantly, the report highlights the climate change needs by remotely located Indigenous people for improved infrastructure, health and other services. Importantly land and sea management is a positive force to support adaptation and mitigation efforts and several case studies highlight the great work being conducted by Indigenous people.

Also in April, the Kimberley Ranger Conference was held at Home Valley Station and attended by a large and growing number of existing and aspiring rangers (Look out for this story in the next Kantri Laif). The number of people at the gathering (over 150) shows the rapid growth of Indigenous land and sea managers across the Kimberley. This was the situation in Cape York where a similar gathering supported by Balkanu got a large number of land and sea managers together to discuss management of important lands and seas in the Cape.

During May through to August a lot of fieldwork took place for the carbon and water projects. At many locations across the north a number of rangers and facilitators got together with researchers and others to start measuring, monitoring and reviewing their work to date. A meeting hosted by Kowanyama Land and Natural Resource Management provided a fantastic setting for a great meeting to review and plan the remainder of our Indigenous Community Water Facilitator Network.

The rapid growth of the Indigenous management movement across the north will however require careful planning and consideration going forward. NAILSMA will continue to focus on improving policy and investment outcomes for Indigenous land and sea managers in the present and into the future. This brings us back to my last column in Kantri Laif, that is, that consideration of the primary place Indigenous people must have in the future of the north. Regardless if it is as a land manager, or working on a cattle property or tourism enterprise, Indigenous people must drive future development of northern Australia for all Australians to benefit.

The future will present further challenges for NAILSMA, including following up from the work started by the Northern Taskforce, chaired by Bunuba leader Joe Ross from Fitzroy Crossing. The collective work of many organizations and development in northern Australia suggest that there is a time to change the way development occurs in northern Australia. While development can be seen to be inevitable, I believe that it will be important that the full range of potential options are explored and where necessary, developed by Indigenous people. Partnerships between Indigenous people, their agencies and external agencies such as The Nature Conservancy and EcoTrust Australia will be necessary.

On this note, the research community will need to take a look at itself in terms of how it goes about conducting research and the question needs to be asked constantly - for whom is that research being conducted? And who is benefiting from this research? The land and sea management growth in northern Australia is a clear example where there is a need to ensure sustainability of this growth, that there is control by local people with appropriate governance structures put in place and that research is a partnership between the practitioners, indigenous agencies and the research community to ensure that uptake of knowledge generated is maximized.

Lastly, I would like to welcome staff members Donna Bush, Shane Stevens, Jonas Lewin and Emma Ignjic to the NAILSMA family in Darwin.

I would like to dedicate this Kantri Laif to Kalem Ronberg, a much-loved colleague who we will remember forever.

Editors correction: Apologies, Kantri Laif 5 incorrectly credited the story "Miyapunu (Turtle) Satellite Tracking Begins in Yolngu Time" to Joshua Kitchens. It was in fact from Phil Wise in collaboration with the Dhimurru Rangers.

NAILSMA launches an INDIGENOUS WATER POLICY STATEMENT



By Lorrae McArthur

On the 24th March 2010, NAILSMA formally launched an Indigenous Water Policy Statement that was issued in November 2009. The statement was developed by NAILSMA through the Indigenous Water Policy Group (IWPG), which is a group that was initiated in 2006 to enhance Indigenous water policy outcomes across state and territory jurisdictions in the north of Australia.

The policy statement was launched at Parliament House in Darwin and pitched at commonwealth, state and territory Ministers and government water practitioners in response to government developing water management plans. Sponsored by Karl Hampton, Northern Territory Minister for

Natural Resources, Environment and Heritage, the launch was attended by Malarndirri McCarthy, Northern Territory Minister for Indigenous Development.

Up to 80 people from across the north attended and participated in the launch. Donna Jackson, a representative of the Larrakia Nation, welcomed guests. Joe Ross, Chair of the IWPG, facilitated the launch that included speakers from the Northern Land Council, Kim Hill; NAILSMA Deputy Chair, Richie Ah Mat; National Water Commission, Elaine Gardiner; and senior Indigenous leader, Professor Patrick Dodson. Doctor Anne Poelina, member of the IWPG, launched the Policy Statement and presented it to Minister McCarthy.

Following the speakers was a special water ceremony to show Indigenous people “Standing together for water rights”. Several members of the IWPG and from different regions across the north poured water into a coolamon as part of the ceremony.

The launch finished with a short water story DVD prepared and presented by Traditional Owners from the Miriuwung Gajerrong groups of the Kimberley region of Western Australia, and an address by senior elder Bill Harney from Wardaman people of the Northern Territory.

Images this page, left to right: The banner for the policy launch featuring Lois Nadjamerrek, Bill Harney, Community attending the launch, Community watching a video presentation, Murrandoo Yanner, (Below): Minister McCarthy and Valemina White.





INDIGENOUS WATER POLICY STATEMENT

November 2009

The policy statement provides clear terms for how Indigenous people want to be engaged in water reform processes and is partly presented below. Recognising and enhancing Indigenous cultural and commercial rights in the ownership, management and use of water is fundamental to facilitating Indigenous economic development and reducing Indigenous disadvantage.

The NAILSMA Indigenous Water Policy Group states that:

1. Indigenous peoples' traditional ownership must be fully recognised in Australian law.
2. To ensure cultural rights and the equitable use of the consumptive, commercial allocation of water, water legislation and policy must include an allocated cultural flow.
3. Any water plan in tropical Australia must include an equitable Indigenous allocation from the consumptive pool for commercial purposes (through tradeable water entitlement, revenue stream or fund)
4. The planning and ongoing management of water resources will be done jointly with Indigenous traditional owners, native title groups and state and territory government water agencies.

The complete policy statement refers to many relevant articles within the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The IWPG expects the Australian Government to be responsive to the rights of Indigenous peoples in accordance with the United Nations Declaration. It also refers other declarations, the Garma International Water Declaration (August 2008) and the Mary River Water Statement (August 2009).

In essence, Indigenous people in north Australia are ready to engage and contribute to the Australian Government's water reform processes.

To receive a copy of the Indigenous Water Policy Statement:
 Email: water@cdu.edu.au
 or visit the IWPG web page to view a copy online:
www.nailsma.org.au

Images this page from left to right: Photographing the event, Professor Patrick Dodson, Donna Jackson, Joe Ross, Dr Anne Poelina, (below) Community attending the event, Joe Morrison with Bill Harney and NAILSMA deputy Chair Richie Ah Mat, Patrick Dodson standing with Murrumbidgee Yanner

NEWS FLASH

First Peoples' Water Engagement Council

Unfortunately, it is rare for Indigenous water requirements to be explicitly included in water plans, and most jurisdictions are not yet engaging Indigenous people effectively in water planning processes.

The First Peoples' Water Engagement Council is a new group which will provide advice to the Commission on national water issues. The members are:

- Cheryl Buchanan, (South East Qld)
- George Cooley (Lake Eyre Basin)
- Phil Duncan (NSW Aboriginal Land Council)
- Bradley Moggridge (Northern NSW)
- Lillian Moseley (NSW)
- Bryan Wyatt (Goldfields WA)

The Council is expected to meet at least three times each year and held its first meeting on the 7th June 2010.

To read more about this new national water group or about their first meeting, visit the National Water Commission website or contact Melanie Durette on mdurette@synexe.com



A HEALTHY COUNTRY PROJECT IN THE KIMBERLEY

By Emma Ignjic and Bevan Stott

The Wunambal Gaambera people (Wanjina Wunggurr Unguu Traditional Owners) in the north west Kimberley are building a partnership with Bush Heritage Australia (BHA) and the Kimberley Land Council (KLC). For the past two years they have been working together on the Wunambal Gaambera Healthy Country Plan 2010-2020 to keep Wunambal Gaambera Country healthy into the future.

Wunambal Gaambera people are combining traditional knowledge, rules and responsibilities under their Wanjina Wunggurr Law with modern science and technology to look after their cultural and natural assets and values and keep their Unguu – all things in their living home - that is Wunambal Gaambera Country - healthy.

The making of this Plan has involved a number of large on-country workshops with all of the Wunambal Gaambera family groups. Old people and young people sat down together and came up with a vision for how they want to see their country in ten years time. Then they came up with the most important things (Targets) that need to be looked after, or done, to reach their healthy country vision. The next steps were to make a set of objectives (goals), strategies (ways) and actions (things to be done) to look after the Targets to keep Wunambal Gaambera Country healthy as well as monitoring of the Plan.

From a Wunambal Gaambera perspective, healthy country and conservation outcomes are a result of a healthy culture that is actively managing country. As Wunambal Gaambera ancestors kept their Unguu healthy, it has been very important this Plan today addresses cultural, ecological and

economic objectives. This way Wunambal Gaambera people can have a modern sustainable Unguu (living home) that also contributes to the Australian conservation estate.

The next stage of the project, following formal adoption of the Plan, is for Wunambal Gaambera Aboriginal Corporation (WGAC), through their corporation, and Bush Heritage Australia (BHA) to extend their partnership into a long term arrangement that will support the implementation of key healthy country actions under the Plan. Kimberley Land Council are also working with WGAC to declare Wunambal Gaambera Country as an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) under Australia's National Reserve System with this Healthy Country Plan as the IPA management plan.



Images above Left to Right: Unguu Rangers Sylvester Mangolamara and Dorothy Djanghara 2009, Justin Djanghara and Hugh Pringle on survey.

Main Image: Wuna landscape, Wunambal Gaambera coastal country, Kimberley.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

my experience
by Tonya Murray

Tonya Murray works for the Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation in Burketown Queensland, southern Gulf of Carpentaria. Tonya is a key participant in two NAILSMA projects—the Indigenous Community Water Facilitator Network and the Saltwater People Network.

Tonya travelled to Papua New Guinea in November 2009 as part of a delegation of Indigenous land and sea managers from Australia participating in a cultural and technical exchange with villagers in Madang Province—north Papua New Guinea.

The delegation from Australia was coordinated by NAILSMA's Saltwater People Network and

Ocean Revolution, with support from The Christensen Fund.

In a post-trip interview, Tonya provided insight into her Papua New Guinea experience.

'From the time we arrived at Port Moresby airport until the time we left PNG, it was an amazing experience of a different culture.'

'The surprise traditional welcome on our arrival at Madang airport was a beautiful way to be welcomed to their country.'

'During our stay we learnt about the everyday lives of the people and their struggles with being involved in looking after their country.'



'The people were excited about their visitors and were keen to talk to us about everything from our families and home life to how our organisations are set up and function.'

'We were given the opportunity to stay in a traditional home while we were hosted at Karkum Village. Karkum is a conservation area on the coast north of Madang city with a long black sand beach and it is a known nesting place for leatherback turtles.'

'We were welcomed into Riwo and Karkum villages with a colourful traditional ceremony followed by the chewing of betel nut.'

'We ate traditional meals, enjoyed cultural performances and shared knowledge on our land and sea management programs.'

'What a great experience!! I will continue to share my stories from this exchange with family and friends for a long time to come.'

What did you learn from meeting the villagers in Papua New Guinea?

'I learnt a lot about the lives of the people we were fortunate enough to spend time with. They have many similarities to our people.'

What do you think the villagers in Papua New Guinea learnt from meeting the delegation from Australia?

'I think that the people of PNG learnt from us that working together and finding strength in numbers was important. We encouraged them to work locally as well as developing regional alliances.'

Do you think cultural and technical exchanges are important?

'I believe there is a lot to be learned from any exchange: regionally; interstate; or internationally. It allows people with common issues and common goals to help each other through sharing their experiences and knowledge.'

What was your most significant moment?

'There were so many big moments for me during the exchange but I really enjoyed sharing our stories with the people of Karkum Village. We used a white sheet between two trees on the beach to project images while we talked about our work at home. Their enthusiasm and interest in our stories was very motivating.'

PAPUA NEW GUINEA



How does Indigenous land and sea management of turtle in Australia differ from management of turtle in Papua New Guinea?

'I feel that in Australia, Traditional Owners receive a lot more support from external agencies because many groups have organisational structure and good governance. I also believe differences between Australian and Papua New Guinean government and history has a big influence on the way Indigenous people are involved in land and sea management.'

The Indigenous participants from north Australia captured their experience in Papua New Guinea through a series of photographs and audio recordings. These elements have been combined to produce a Story Report for their communities.

With the participants' permission, we are delighted to present these stories to you on the NAILSMA website: visit www.nailsma.org.au/projects/png.html.

Papua New Guinea Exchange Stories on the NAILSMA Website

During November 2009, Ocean Revolution, NAILSMA and Save PNG, with the support of The Christensen Fund, brought together Indigenous land and sea managers from across north Australia and north Papua New Guinea for a technical and cultural exchange.

The exchange, which took place in Madang Province, had a profound effect on the participants from both Papua New Guinea and Australia. Naomi Hobson, a member of the Indigenous delegation from Australia wrote of her experience:

"The trip made me a stronger person and gave me the resolve and determination to work harder with my Umpila families to get things done."

Since returning from the exchange, Naomi has been instrumental in establishing a Steering Group and Advisory Group to set land and sea management priorities for Umpila people (known as The Sandbeach People of Cape York).

In a candid moment, Karkum Village youth prepared a short video for the delegation from Australia to view on their return home. In the video, a confident young man spoke openly about his thoughts on the exchange.

"We would like this type of networking and communication to be strong and to be carried forward into the future. The future is ours. If we can build such communities, so that we can get to know each other more and force the development, we can bring great change to the whole world."

Highlights of the exchange included the sharing of music and dance, cultural tours, technical exchanges (including presenting I-Tracker to Karkum land and sea managers) and formal and informal presentations from the delegates.

The exchange also included several private and public meetings with local PNG landholders, led by members of the Kimberley Land Council, to discuss an 'Indigenous Negotiations Tool Kit' being developed by Ocean Revolution.

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Read more about Naomi Hobson's Papua New Guinea experience in the article 'Umpila Business' on page 48.

TALKING CULTURE ON COUNTRY

By Dave Wise (this page) and Dr Bentley James (page 16)



YAN-NHANGU ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING IN THE CROCODILE ISLANDS

'Latju limalama binkamunu wangalangga!'

'The best thing is visiting our country!'
Jack Roy, Yan-nhangu elder.

A major project to help conserve and maintain the knowledge of the Yan-nhangu people of the outer Crocodile Islands in coastal Arnhem Land has recently been completed with the assistance of Bentley James. Bentley related how Yan-nhangu people were delighted with the opportunity to visit country with a younger generation of people 'walking in the footsteps of the ancestors' and said that they would like to do this kind of project more often.

One of the most important outcomes of the program for Yan-nhangu people was spending fifteen days on country with younger generations, supporting the inter-generational transmission of Yan-nhangu Ecological Knowledge through visits to their ancestral lands and Islands. Senior Yan-nhangu people were able to interact with younger Yan-nhangu, handing on their knowledge about how to care for their sea country. Yan-nhangu people involved in this project have said how it has been a success and they would like to do more. Senior Yan-nhangu knowledge holders involved in the intergenerational transmission of ecological knowledge were: Laurie Baymarrwangga, Laurie Milinditj, Rayba Nyambal, Lilly Roy, Sabrina Roy, Dikarr Roy, Jonathon Roy and Jack Roy.

Nine learning areas were also addressed in the Yan-nhangu Crocodile Islands project, these were:

Murru	Types of sea food
Lolo	Types of fish traps
Ganattjirri	Tides and bodies of salt water
Gurrutu	Kinship
Rom	Requisite behaviours, law
Yakarra	Naming
Minytji	Colours and patterns
Dhangany	Stories, songs, dances
Wanggalanga	Sites, places and locatedness.

Project outcomes included documenting and mapping a wide range of Yan-nhangu knowledge. This has resulted in the production of an educational resource booklet on local shellfish - 'Wungili mana Dhangany Maypalway Djorra Limalama Wanggalangabu', a short DVD publicising the project and two posters – one of Fish and another of Shellfish. These materials will support the ongoing Yan-nhangu aim to keep this knowledge alive in their younger people and share their unique understandings about their knowledge of marine ecology.

Additional outcomes achieved by this project included

- The recording of a complete 'Malarra and Gunbirrtji' cycle of songs from the islands for the first time since 1974. This invaluable recording will be made into a CD for Yan-nhangu people and others as a record of their unique connection to country.
- Opportunities were created for planning and future project development of similar objectives on the Crocodile islands in the future, including language texts and a pictorial encyclopaedia.
- On site camping and meetings identified practical pathways for Yan-nhangu to be involved in sea management. This included increased understandings about the value of Yan-nhangu managed marine turtle sanctuaries on the Yan-nhangu marine estates
- Documentation of linguistic and cultural information related to Yan-nhangu marine sites with protocols for access by Yan-nhangu and non Yan-nhangu people were streamlined.
- Assisting Yan-nhangu to engage with a growing Indigenous sea management sector and fostered a desire to initiate a local sea ranger program.



'With the help of NAILSMA a Yan-nhangu ecological knowledge project brought senior traditional owners and children together to learn about their unique sea country in their own (Yan-nhangu) language. NAILSMA supports this intergenerational transmission of Indigenous Ecological Knowledge (IEK) in a language that has very few proficient speakers left.

This project is part of a broader Yan-nhangu Crocodile Islands Initiative (CII) which seeks to enhance links between biological and linguistic diversity in the Crocodile Islands to promote livelihoods and sustainable management of natural resources.

Senior Yan-nhangu want to capture and promote the use of their language of place. They say that it has to be done through experience of country, through practical projects like this IEK project and the planned Crocodile Islands ranger program. They are also planning to develop an IEK Data base and encyclopaedia, Language Nests and an interactive

Web Site, all helping younger people access traditional knowledge of the Crocodile Islands through modern media.

Together NAILSMA and the CII are supporting the documentation of Yan-nhangu IEK by organising trips to the outer islands for young people to learn from respected knowledge holders. Children from five of the six Yan-nhangu clans spent up to fifteen days on country during this IEK project. It has brought families together at Murrungga the largest of the outer islands to learn about sea country. Young and old visited ancient fish traps and water holes around the island learning about the seasons, the tides and timings of fish and turtle return.

The country visits provided good opportunity for discussing the Crocodile Islands Ranger program, looking at the kinds of roles it can offer men and women in the future.

Today new technologies are changing work,

school and everyday social practices and what it means to be literate. Changing modes of literacy, from old style alphabetic literacy to the digital literacy practiced by young people provide ways to enhance language, technology and IEK learning through work on sea country. Ranger programs with the use of satellite technologies are adding new capacities for appropriate and sustainable land and sea management.

The CII is working to provide the kinds of work, training and everyday practices through projects that are rich, situated, and positively value local knowledge. The IEK Data Base project linked to Language Nests and a talking on-line Web based pictorial encyclopaedia is part of this project. More than creating career paths that improve health and education, these projects will help protect waters, sacred sites and natural resources on nearly 10,000 square kilometres of sea country. This area includes 250km² of registered sacred

sites and the breeding and nesting sites of many rare and endangered species.

Projects of this kind sustain cultural, linguistic and biodiversity values but need support because of their remoteness. Much remains at stake in a policy environment where support can be patchy and evaporate rapidly. There is a need to secure long term core income for the Crocodile Islands Initiative. The imperative to sustain the initiative is expressed by senior owner L. Baymarrwangga:

'Nhangu dhangany yuwalkthana bayngu bulanggitj Yolngu mitji marnggimana dhana gayangamana mayili mana dhangany wanggalangabu mana limalama ganatjirri wulumba (maramba).'

'We continue to pass on the stories of our land and sea country for the good of the new generations.'

Getting ready to launch the Crocodile Islands Ranger boat at Gurruwa Namuyani Milingimbi Island.

Top Left to Right
Curtis Walangu, Dion Barrtja, Lazzarus Nyinamul, & Damien (Iumbo) Lumbsden.
Bottom Row Left to Right
Kelvin Marrawilitj, Desmond Brown, & Danniell Bapalindi
Image by Bentley James



Three children on Murrungga Island
Left to right: Ben Escobar, Nellie Gupunbu, Ashley Banumarra (Singing)
Image by Declan O'Gallagher





KORDBOLBOK

In 2010 we decided to go and do more surveys in some of the same and also some new places. We did the surveys during the night at Kabulwarnamyo, with Alengkel and Marlkawo and stayed overnight at Kamarrkawan outstation at Makkalarl land management camp.

On our way to Kamarrkawan Kyrin noticed some Leichardt's grasshoppers on the side of the road. We found a patch of Pityrodia which is the only plant the grasshoppers eat and six Leichardt's grasshoppers, two were mating. We recorded a GPS point so we could keep monitoring this site. When we came back from Kamarrkawan we also had a look at some water lillies and saw if there were any tadpoles in the creek. We took a few tadpoles back to our office and put them in a faunarium to watch them grow. It is good getting out on country to do research because you find all sorts of things. We were researching frogs but we also discovered lots of other important things.

Each night when we went to visit these survey areas we did the same thing – took our torch, CyberTracker, gumboots, Zoom H4 Recorder and cameras. This year we came up with a research methodology and followed the same steps each time. What we did was:

- An audio recording for 10 minutes before we started searching, and then
- 20 minute searches for frogs at each place, recording the ones we saw on our CyberTrackers and collecting specimens of frogs we were unsure of.

The next day we listened to the audio recording we made and identified the frog calls we could hear. We have a CD of frog calls so we match them to our recording. We are getting much better at this each time and can now recognise a number of the calls ourselves, for example Bilingual frog. We took photos of the frogs we captured and identified them using field guides. We then add all this information to our electronic database. Using the database to store our information helps us keep a good record of our research.

So far in our research this year we have found a total of 21 different species, which is **gamak**. We found all the same species as last year but this year we also found the Ornate Burrowing frog, Javelin frog, Peter's frog, Copland's frog, Stonemason frog,

Long footed frog, Marbled frog and most exciting was a new looking red frog. We have sent a voucher specimen of this red frog to Mike Tyler who will help us describe it if it is another new species.

Through our research we also want to learn more about frogs - what they look like when they are small and also how they look when they are big. We are still interested in looking for more frogs because there has been a lot of damage around freshwater areas in our stone country because of the feral animals like buffalos, pigs and cane toads. The buffalos are doing a lot of damage around the springs, the creeks and around the billabongs and that is where the native frogs live most. We are also a bit worried that the cane toad might take control and eat the native frogs and the tadpoles. So that is another reason why we are doing this survey; so we can monitor changes in our freshwater areas and take actions if we notice that the native frogs are disappearing.

Another aim of our research is so we can teach our people about frogs. For some people of the plateau they have frog dreaming, so frogs are important to them for cultural reasons also. We want to show people that are living in these areas the different native frogs there so they can identify native frogs themselves and to be able to tell us if they see any new ones. We have made a Field Guide for Frogs of the Arnhem Land Plateau that we will have printed and give to the people who live in the Warddeken IPA.

By doing this research we can also teach our kids so they can learn both ways about frogs -- **bininj** and **balanda ways** -- and why its important to our land to make sure there are native frogs.



LOOKING FOR KORDBOLBOK (FROGS) IN THE WARDDEKEN IPA

By Manwurrk Rangers Kyrin Bulliwana and Seraine Namundja with assistance from Emilie Ens (CAEPR) and Georgia Vallance (Warddeken Land Management).

For the last 12 months Warddeken Land Management has been researching frogs in our recently declared Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area. The frogs of the Arnhem Land plateau have not been documented in any ongoing research project, so the information we are collecting is a great contribution to biodiversity data for Northern Australia.

The first frog surveys we did were in March 2009. We did the surveys at night at different sites: Kabulwarnamyo (where we live), Nakaldurrk, Kunkebnarrng, Alengkel, Makkalarl and a day trip to Ngalkombarli. We were interested in looking at all different types of frogs so we decided to visit all these places that were different habitats for frogs: swampy areas, wet season creeks, permanent waterways, springs, waterfalls and billabongs.

We had to take things with us to do the research like torches, CyberTrackers, containers and gumboots to protect us from snakes. While we were doing the surveys we also did some water quality testing to see if the water quality at the sites was linked to the frogs we were finding. To identify the frogs we made sound recordings at the sites using a Zoom H4 Handy Recorder and took photos of all the frogs we found.

In our 2009 surveys we found 14 species of frogs in all these areas. The species we found were: Bilingual frog, Rocket frog, Giant frog, Rockhole frog, Northern Dwarf Tree frog, Jabiru toadlet, Red tree frog, Roth's tree frog, Masked cave frog, Wotjulum frog, Tornier's frog, Cane toads, Remote froglet and one that we couldn't identify and might be a new species (frog expert Mike Tyler is helping us describe this new species). These are the common names for the frogs but we also looked at the Latin names and are learning those too.

Images Right from Top to Bottom (NAILSMA Climate Change Adaptation Workshop): Marcia Langton, Djapirri Mununggurritj, Lorna Hudson, David Newry & Johnny Bunayira, Todd Smith, Darryl Lacey, Otto Campion & Jonathern Yalandhy

Main Image: Djawulu Munungurr presenting at the NAILSMA Climate Change Adaptation workshop.

ClimateChange

A workshop held in Darwin on Adaptation to Climate Change in Indigenous Populations was recently held for over 50 participants, coming from across the nation. The workshop was run by NAILSMA and funded by the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility and the University of Melbourne.

The workshop was an important follow up to climate change discussions held in 2006 and consolidated an understanding of the current status in the north and the unavoidable actions and discussions needed around adaptation, opportunity and risk management, all of which have now being summarised into a NAILSMA report, now available on the web site (below right).

The report states: *'It is clear that climate change is occurring and its consequences are manifestly being observed by Traditional owners on country. The impacts are direct and indirect, understood and variously unrecognised, predictable, natural, anthropomorphic and elusive. The way to mitigate impacts and adapt to changes varies across natural and human landscapes. One of the key features in north Australia is the relatively large proportion of Indigenous people who are particularly vulnerable, not only to physical impacts but to economic deprivation and political vicissitudes of the over-governed, under-resourced environment in which they live. Climate change in north Australia cannot*

be treated in isolation. It affects Indigenous lives and is becoming the key stimulus for Indigenous adaptive response and need to develop capacity to cope with its consequences.'

Regional representatives passionately spoke about environmental and socio-economic changes that were emerging and causing climate change casualties. Participants took the opportunity over the two days to network with others in similar circumstances and discuss monitoring and community strategic plans. Others took notice of the strong voices on country calling for support for infrastructure and resources to deal with changes that were now being witnessed.

It was also the venue for a loud cry to see the release of a the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency's (DCCEE) report *'The Risks from Climate Change to Indigenous Communities in the Tropical North'* written in 2009 and edited by Donna Green, Sue Jackson and Joe Morrison. Whilst the report did not have clearance for this workshop, it was however released to the public in May 2010 and is now available to download on the NAILSMA website.

Participant's presentations, the DCCEE Report and the NAILSMA report on this workshop can be viewed at: http://www.nailsma.org.au/forum/forumclimate_change_workshop.html

COPENHAGEN (COP 15)

no global agreement but a positive step for NAILSMA

The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) sent a delegation to Copenhagen (COP 15) in December last year to present issues and opportunities for Indigenous people across northern Australia. The aim was to heighten awareness around dealing with climate change in the north, and to learn from other Indigenous people elsewhere about climate change adaptation and mitigation measures.

NAILSMA also spent some time promoting the commercial potential of Indigenous fire management through their Carbon Project, as a way to reduce green house gas emissions whilst creating employment and business opportunities for people in rural and remote settings.

Whilst there wasn't the binding agreement some expected at Copenhagen regarding climate change, for NAILSMA the conference provided an opportunity to commence what we believe will be a long term relationship with other Indigenous groups living in savannas around the world facing similar challenges regarding management of country whilst living in varying levels of poverty.

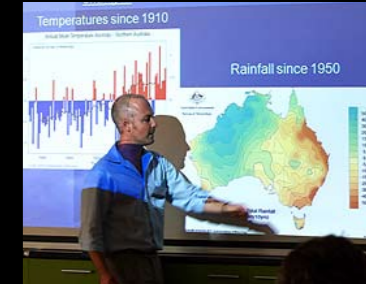
NAILSMA also had a chance to attend talks about Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in developing countries (REDD), which we are more convinced applies to northern Indigenous Australia. This program provides an incentive to the storage of carbon in forests and tries to achieve better management, biodiversity outcomes in developing countries. This pathway could allow Indigenous people in the north a way in which to approach sustainable development with low carbon outputs. Whilst it only applies to developing countries, there is a growing argument that Indigenous north Australia is akin to a developing country and therefore REDD is applicable here too.

We also provided a presentation at a side event "Indigenous Day" where we presented the work being conducted around savanna fire management. We learnt that the project to produce carbon offsets from savanna fires and in particular the WALFA project is truly ground breaking around the world with no indication that it is being done anywhere else, moreso an approach from peoples in Brazil and South Africa in this project has created an opportunity for Indigenous north Australians in the future. A number of films put together by the United Nations University – Institute of Advanced Studies, Citty Williams showcased the excellent work being done around the world by Indigenous people on climate change.

Copenhagen also led us to believe that we have a way to go to get our approaches to dealing with climate change in the north and to ensure that further pressures on Indigenous peoples to reside on their country needs a long term and comprehensive approach that will require practical, policy and research and development investments.

Joe Morrison NAILSMA CEO

Attending Copenhagen were Nolan Hunter, Samara Erlandson and Joe Morrison.





Kimberley

Interpretive Service gets the story straight

“You should always have somebody who can talk language and English when you (researchers) are collecting information on country” said Joolama David Newry, when he and Nyapajayi Annette Kogolo addressed the NAILSMA Water Facilitators in February.

Joolama is the founder of the Kimberley Interpretive Service (KIS), and Assistant Coordinator of the Mirima Dawang Woollab-gerring Language and Culture Centre. Nyapajayi is an Interpreter with KIS.

Their presentation focused on the important role of language and interpreters when working on country. Joolama presented a case study ‘Lets go talk about water back on country’ from the Keep River region in the Northern Territory. The project was funded through the NAILSMA Traditional Ecological Knowledge initiative and implemented through the East Kimberley Water Facilitator, Sonia Leonard.

The project emphasized the connection between language, culture, land and water. It operated across state boundaries and highlighted that collaborative water planning between State and Territory governments will be essential for Indigenous water policy development.

Nyapajayi stressed the importance of language, *“We talk to our country in our language - that connection is very strong.”*

As interpreters, she and Joolama work with several languages including Kriol. *“I become the person in the middle helping two way conversation”.*

Joolama said, *“information that comes from country is very important because it is connected to Dreamings, - interpreters make sure that information given ends up on the other side in the right way”.*

“Interpreters should work in a culturally appropriate way, ‘the old way’, following cultural laws to choose the right interpreter for the right land and right people.”

Waubin Richard Aken, Water Facilitator for the Wenlock Catchment on Cape York, thanked Joolama for *“a great achievement, especially keeping the skills and information in the community – you will keep your identity alive”.*

Sonia Leonard, Water Facilitator for the East Kimberley, thanked Joolama and Nyapajayi for their continued contribution to water projects she is developing.

Contact details for the Kimberley Interpreter Service:
Email: kis@wn.com.au
www.kimberleyinterpreting.org.au

Contact details for Mirima Dawang Woollab-gerring Language and Culture Centre
Email: manager@mirima.org.au



STAFF PROFILE

JONAS LEWIN

My name is Jonas Eveness Ralph Lewin. I am from Torres Straight decent, my mother is from Musig and my Dad is from Boigu, which are both located In the Torres straight. I came to Darwin when I was in year one and I attended Malak Primary School. My Mum moved us over here to get a chance in education because back at home we don't have many resources for school and sports and so I am grateful to have had the chance to go to a regular school.

Growing up in Darwin was not an easy task as I'm from Queensland. I had to adapt to the lifestyle and environment, but it has turned out all fine. A big part of it has to do with the support from all the families I have met along the way and have accepted me as one of there own due to the fact that I grew up with a lot of local family names.

When I had just hit year 6 my mum had been working at a local radio station called TEBBA doing broadcasting and it required a lot of travelling out to the community. My mum did a lot of travelling in Arnhem land and due to that she made a lot of friends and they decided to adopt her into their tribe and give my mum a skin name.

As I have become older my passion for Indigenous land management has grown. I have done all different types of work like youth work and conservation work, as well as volunteering with groups like Green Corps, helping to give me experience in this area. I have recently been employed with NAILSMA as an Indigenous apprentice through Charles Darwin University studying certificates 2 and 3 in Business Studies.

Being an Indigenous person, I am very passionate about land and sea management. Having the chance to work front and centre with other Indigenous people that share the same interest is a privilege.

Apart from my position with NAILSMA, I also work part time with Balanu, a youth and leadership foundation that aims to better the independence in youth and recognise culture and healing, it is managed by David Cole. My other interests are sports, music, art, and history (culture).



Jonas documenting the Water Policy launch at Parliament House 2010

Acacia-Larrakia Rangers

IN PURSUIT OF SWEET SUCCESS

Indigenous rangers from the Acacia-Larrakia region of the Northern Territory are hoping the harvesting and processing of native honey bee products will soon be providing economic opportunities for Aboriginal people living in the Top End.

The Acacia-Larrakia ranger program has been employing four full-time rangers since early 2009 and now undertakes a wide range of land management tasks.

The group's core activity has been management of invasive weed species, such as Mimosa pigra, but as the rangers continue to develop their skills set, other opportunities are now arising.

Acacia-Larrakia Ranger Group co-ordinator Joe Jeffrey said native honey or "sugarbag" products are an untapped resource.

"Native honey bees can be found right across the Top End," he said.

"Indigenous people have long known the nutritional benefits that are associated with native honey, but until recently haven't made it into a commercial commodity."

The Acacia-Larrakia rangers have recently been busy constructing wooden hives, which will be stocked with native bees and, potentially, offered for sale.

The Northern Land Council's Wildlife Enterprise Development Facilitator Julian Gorman said while native bees have much smaller hives than European honey bees and therefore produce less product, they can play a role in supplementing a community's income.

"Once the bees are established in the hives, within a year there's an opportunity to harvest honey and wax for wider markets," he said.

"There's opportunities for this native resource to be used in products such as lip balm, scented soap and wax which can be has a wide variety of uses."

Mr Jeffrey also pointed to potential opportunities for Indigenous communities to value add to the primary product.

"By engaging local artists to paint traditional designs and pictures on the hives we're making, we might just unearth another market," he said.



Did you know?

Joe Jeffrey explains his Ranger's badge image which shows a little frog sitting on the head of a bigger frog "big brother, little brother, big sister, little sister". He said that this signified the "creation of a foundation for future generations, by looking after each other now", and that this was important not only within the Acacia community but also looking at the bigger picture, between communities and ranger groups.



Image Bottom left: Vincent Adja - Ranger, Joe Jeffrey - Ranger Group Coordinator, Anthony Kerr - Ranger Program Manager, Julian Gorman - Wildlife Enterprise Development Facilitator, Joe Jeffrey Jnr. - Ranger and Jima Jeffrey - Ranger.

GARRITHIYA

RECEIVES AUSTRALIAN BIOSECURITY COMMENDATION

By Kay Carvan

Traditional owners of the Gove Peninsula performed a welcome to country ceremony for participants in the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service's (AQIS) recent remote area team workshop.

During the workshop, held at Nhulunbuy, north-east Arnhem Land, on 2 March, an Australian Biosecurity Award was presented to the Gumatj Corporation's Garrithiya sentinel herd project in recognition of the project's contribution to Australia's biosecurity.

The Gumatj Corporation agreed in 2008 to set up and operate the Territory's first Indigenous-run sentinel cattle herd for AQIS on Garrithiya Station.

The Garrithiya stockmen run a midge trap and regularly take and process blood samples from the herd for testing for quarantine-target organisms, including exotic bluetongue viruses and surra, that could infect animals and harm Australia's export cattle industry.

Sentinel herds help AQIS to monitor whether exotic pests, such as screw worm fly, or diseases have entered the Top End.

Guests at the presentation included Gumatj Corporation chairman Galarrwuy Yunupingu AM, Gumatj Association CEO Djawa Yunupingu, Balupalu Yunupingu, Robert Yunupingu, Latiti Yunupingu, Tyron Mills and Kenny Page.

In the West, the Mayala Rangers also received a 2009 Australian Biosecurity Award, presented to them in a ceremony on 19 November.

The award recognised the timely and efficient manner in which the rangers reported finding Indonesian fishing vessel debris and the remains of a camp while on a routine debris patrol around the Buccaneer Archipelago.



Image above: Even a tropical downpour couldn't dampen the enthusiasm of AQIS officers Vern Patullo and Joe Schmidt with Garrithiya Station stockmen Ian - Djuto Gurruwiwi, Kenny - Dhalatj Page, Gerald Latiti Yunupingu and Tyron Mills, pictured with the first samples obtained from the sentinel herd.



Nhulunbuy - An Australian Biosecurity Award was presented by AQIS regional manager, Robert Langlands to Galarrwuy Yunupingu on behalf of the Gumatj Corporation's Garrithiya sentinel herd project. Standing rear - Loren Schipke, Bruce Lansdown, Chris Dale, Robert Yunupingu, Balpalu Yunupingu, Kenny Paige, Latiti Yunupingu, Tyron Mills, Joe Schmidt, Piers Peters-Snow, Mandie Burgess. Seated - Djawa Yunupingu, Vern Patullo, Galarrwuy Yunupingu, Robert Langlands, Jonathan Corpus.

Water trading in northern Australia – will it work?

All state and territory governments have agreed – water is a scarce resource that we need to manage better. The principles and mechanisms for better water management are in the National Water Initiative (NWI). One of the mechanisms is the creation of a national market to trade water rights. Markets are expected to result in an appropriate price on water and more efficient water use.

Research by the Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge (TRaCK) program, coordinated by NAILSMA, is examining how water markets can work in tropical Australia, and the potential socio-economic impacts arising from an open trading market.

'Markets can be a practical tool to help meet the objectives set out in a water plan', says TRaCK researcher Dr William Nikolakis from ANU's Crawford School of Economics and Government. However, while the NWI reforms have contributed to a significant expansion in water trade in south-eastern Australia, it has been less wide-spread in the north.

Do people in the north want water trading?

People's values in relation to water and their attitudes to water trading will have a bearing on whether markets will work in the north' says Dr Nikolakis who is currently analysing the results of his survey of 120 stakeholders from industry, government, recreational groups and Indigenous groups across the region.

Early results suggest mixed views about water trading in the north. Around half of people surveyed thought that a water market would be useful in their region. And while just over half of them viewed water as something that could be traded, people did not want to see environmental or cultural flows traded, and a number of these people stipulated that any trading framework must involve Indigenous people.

'The northern Australia leadership should think innovatively about developing instruments, such as Aboriginal equity in water trading, that transition Aboriginal people off passive welfare into employment and economic development', says Joe Ross, Chairman of the Indigenous Water Policy Group, which is facilitated by NAILSMA. 'It

is totally unacceptable that Aboriginal people in northern Australia continue to rely on the largesse of the states'.

The legal case for water trade

Legally, the north is ready for water trading in all three jurisdictions. 'Generally, the potential to trade exists where a water sharing plan is in place', says Dr Nikolakis. But how is this potential realised on the ground for Aboriginal people? TRaCK researcher and barrister Michael O'Donnell from John Toohey Chambers in Darwin has been examining the current laws, recent court decisions, and their implications.

'It has been made clear', says Mr O'Donnell, 'that there can be a native title right to trade the natural resources of the land and water. It is also clear from some court cases that water is regarded as a natural resource. The cases so far have recognised a right to exchange resources in a traditional or subsistence sense. Some cases have also recognised a right to trade.' But, he emphasises, each case depends on its own facts and evidence, and not all cases have been found to have the right to exchange resources.

'It remains to be seen whether a right to trade in a commercial sense will actually be recognised and, if so, whether it is recognised as a native title right in relation to water. Regardless, governments would still have the right to regulate trade through the issuing of licences.'

The influence of the north's environment on trading

The design and scale of markets in the north will also be influenced by the local environment.

'Across the north there can be no trading outside of water plan areas', says Dr Nikolakis. Also, groundwater generally can't be traded between aquifers which may reduce the potential for trading across jurisdictions where groundwater is the main water source.

'In surface water systems where irrigation schemes exist there is generally only trading within schemes. Many areas of the north are physically unsuited to irrigation meaning water trading, if it is to occur, will potentially only be available in discrete plan areas.'

Creating livelihoods from traditions and culture

Indigenous land and sea owners in northern Australia wear many hats. Rangers in the Dhimurru and Djelk Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) in Arnhem Land, for example, are people managers – controlling visitor numbers and activities; environmental conservationists – assisting with biosecurity and managing fire; and cultural teachers – performing traditional ceremonies and giving talks to schools and international conferences.

The vision for the north, according to Joe Morrison, CEO of NAILSMA, is for a cultural economy that is built on this customary management of land and sea.

'NAILSMA is developing a strategic approach across the north regarding future development', says Mr Morrison. 'We want to develop an economy driven by our cultural knowledge and practices; an economy that will provide more opportunities for employment, income and business development in local communities. This vision is being driven by people on the ground, land councils and other Indigenous groups interested in the future of northern Australia.'

'The idea is to establish markets for this customary management, which will then provide sustainable livelihoods on country for Indigenous people. So it's not just about creating jobs, it's about supporting people who aspire to live on country, so they can look after country and maintain their social and cultural practices, and thereby improve the health and well-being of local communities, while managing the environment responsibly.'

Researchers from the Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge (TRaCK) program are embarking on three case studies, facilitated by NAILSMA, to find out how and why Indigenous people aspire to live and work on country, and to see if they can be supported financially to do so by being paid for the services they provide in managing the environment.

Dr Nanni Concu from the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research at the Australian National University in Canberra is working with the Bawinanga and Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporations (Djelk and Dhimurru Land and Sea Rangers respectively) in Arnhem Land to determine how much it would cost to contract traditional owners

to provide environmental services.

'We are collecting data on what the rangers do on their everyday land and sea patrols to estimate the efforts and resources currently spent on each activity. We will then estimate how much more time and resources are needed to improve environmental management. For example, how much more money is needed to eradicate weeds in a given area?'

Dr Concu and the rangers will also determine the demand for these environmental services by collecting information on what visitors to the area value, their daily expenditure, where they've been and if they'd like to see any improvements made to the IPA. Dr Concu will also interview Indigenous rangers and other stakeholders who would benefit from the protection of environmental values.

An Archer River case study in Cape York has just begun. TRaCK researchers will work with the Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation to develop a sustainable livelihoods plan by defining the opportunities for Indigenous livelihoods in the Archer River Basin, and the priorities and aspirations of traditional owners in the region.

In the third case study, TRaCK has partnered with the Nyikina Mangala people – the traditional owners of the lower Fitzroy River in the west Kimberley. Building on sustainable livelihoods projects previously run in the region, Dr Virginia Falks will document these projects and help implement the existing Cultural and Natural Resource Management Plan.

Dr Anne Poelina, Managing Director of Madjulla Inc., is the community representative for the Kimberley project.

'We're very excited about building a body of evidence around good science and traditional ecological knowledge to plan and build sustainable livelihoods on country', says Dr Poelina. 'By collaborating with other traditional owners across the north we want to shift Aboriginal people to entrepreneurial development and wealth creation.'

Dr Poelina says that the key to developing sustainable livelihoods in northern Australia is creating the right mindset. 'Indigenous people need to be seen as equal partners—as an asset rather than a deficit to Australia's economy'.



Indigenous Environmental Philosophers make a Statement to the World

By Dr Anne Poelina

On the 1st of May 2010, twenty two Indigenous environmental philosophers from around the world signed the Redstone Statement at the Southern Methodist University in Dallas Texas. The Redstone Statement is a watershed in regards to raising an International awareness of the rights of Indigenous people and the environment to not be poisoned, destroyed or diminished.

The first International Summit on Indigenous Environmental Philosophy commenced the 26th April in a remote Kiowa Indian community retreat at Redstone Oklahoma. For three days the delegates shared stories of how their environment has changed in recent years and about the new threats that are looming on the horizon.

The Summit was the brainchild of Jonathan Hook a Cherokee Indian and Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion at the University of North Texas. "I've been working on this for four years" Prof. Hook said "I had no idea of what might come out it ... I just wanted to get all these different Indigenous environmental philosophers from Africa, Asia, North, Central and South America, Russia, Australia and New Zealand into the same space and see what magic might come out." The Summit was sponsored by Memnosyne Foundation and other supporters identified on their website.

Dr Anne Poelina, a Nyikina woman from the Mardoowarra (Fitzroy River) spoke about the disparate interests competing for water and land in the Kimberley. The Mardoowarra is living water; it is rich with biodiversity in the water, the land, the sky and the spirit. Nyikina people are Yimardoowarra (lower Fitzroy river people). History has not been kind to Nyikina or Mangala people yet we continue to live our culture today and have engaged processes to maintain our language and culture into the future."

The Mardoowarra faces many challenges in a rapidly approaching future. There are proposals for large open thermal coal mines and uranium extraction that threatens the network of aquifers and sub-terrarium waterways that feed the river, soaks and springs which give life to the country. Agriculturalists that have drained the south-eastern rivers dry have their sights set on draining the

northern aquifers. "There is no way anybody can justify making a profit at the cost of another's life, lifestyle and future existence."

Dr Poelina is the Managing Director of Madjulla Inc., an Indigenous not-for-profit non-government community development organisation; Deputy Chair of the Nyikina Mangala Aboriginal Corporation, member of the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance - Indigenous Water Policy Group and is an inaugural member of the recently formed National First Peoples Water Council.

"I am active at a range of levels from my remote home community through to the national and now international involvement however when I signed the Redstone agreement I did it for all of those people who have not been born yet, we have a responsibility to leave something for them." Throughout the discussions the delegates made it clear that the Redstone Statement is a document that people from all corners of the globe can understand, identify with and commit to at a personal level. It is up to each and every individual to choose their own ethical path, delegates are just asking for people to broaden their understanding of the need for balance and the need to maintaining a human presence in the natural landscape.

There are many unresolved matters in regards to governments of all persuasions and all levels to act ethically towards Indigenous people and the environment. "It is time to stop the politicking and engage good science with traditional ecological knowledge to ground evidenced based ethical sustainable development. We now need other people who share the ethical principles espoused in the Redstone Statement to help make a better future happen. Action oriented community capacity building programs to introduce base learning activities for managing ecologically and economically sustainable enterprises." Dr Poelina said. "We need to build baseline data for ecosystems services by valuing the landscape, cultural assets, and water resources. Baseline data will provide benchmarks for valuing environmental, social, cultural and economic relationships to land and water quality and sustainability."

Leave us a future!

Redstone Statement 1 May 2010

By Dr Anne Poelina



'We are Indigenous environmental philosophers who have come from the four corners of the earth to Redstone, Oklahoma, to discuss the future of the planet.

Indigenous environmental philosophy respects a mutually supportive network of interconnected physical and spiritual entities that is sustainably maintained, and which connects the ancestral past with the distant future. The vision of our Indigenous peoples is to reach spiritual and material well-being through conscious action. Mother Earth is a living, dynamic being with inherent value, and her principles must be actively embodied in order to remain in harmony and balance.

Today, we are at a tipping point at which humanity is in danger of being removed from the cycles of Mother Earth. We bring this urgent message in response to Indigenous women, youth and children from around the world who have consistently asked us to leave them a more balanced planet.

We come as individuals from cultures whose authority originates from our unique relationships with nature and the environment. Our ways of living, and very existence, are threatened by the resistance of nation-states to include our institutions as part of the solutions that can save our planet. Consequently, we issue this call to the world.

Environmental, social, economic, and political conflicts over natural resources and access rights, climate change concerns, and other significant issues threatening international and local communities did not suddenly erupt on the global landscape. Rather, they are an outcome of the historical process that today affects every area of creation. Spiritual, cultural, social, economic, and political structures and values lost their connections to the communities and now focus exclusively on the individual. The world shifted from the circle of community to the ascendancy of the individual, resulting in a dangerous environmental imbalance with significant spiritual and health consequences. Balance must be restored in order to heal the earth, and it must include the participation of all ages, races, genders and cultures.

Effective mechanisms necessary for restoring balance include implementing the following:

1. Recognition of the interdependence of all things;
2. Indigenous self-determination;
3. Indigenous land, air, water, territory, and natural resource management;
4. Protection and preservation of Indigenous traditional knowledge, lifeways and languages, cultures, sacred sites, and folklores/oral traditions;
5. Indigenous authority over all actions impacting Indigenous communities;
6. Respect for, and protection of, traditional agricultures and genetic resources;
7. Seed sovereignty and food security;
8. Rights of movement, rights of access, rights of participation and communication in the exchange of environmental knowledge and culture.

We must assure the well-being of both humanity and nature. This requires a unification of diverse people who are open to ideas; people who are wise, clear, and profoundly human; and people who can transcend the self-imposed limits of their minds, reaching deep into their conscience and spirit for solutions.

All governments, communities, leaders, individuals, industries, and corporations must immediately act together to restore the balance that is essential for continued existence.

We call for a review of existing commercial practices and an end to any further non-sustainable exploitation and degradation of natural resources- for all generations to come. We also call for a portion of profits to be invested in the development of renewable energy resources.

We as Indigenous environmental philosophers breathe life into this statement and commit to implementing the provisions contained in it.'



Main picture: Forum Participants, Top Right: Shaun Ansell, Samual Gulwa and Victor Rostron from Djelk Rangers present on I-Tracker, Bottom from left: Bradley Wilson and Tonya Murray - Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Workshop, Lisa Roeger and Djawulu Munungurr - Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation, Mount Bundy Station provided a great backdrop for the workshop.

a Recent Book Launch



Above: Joe Morrison NAILSMA CEO, Ms Marion Scrymgour MLA, editor Peter Whitehead, editor Jeremy Russell-Smith and NLC's Robbie Dalton.

NAILSMA recently launched a new book edited by Jeremy Russell-Smith, Peter Whitehead and Peter Cooke, titled **'Culture, Ecology and Economy of Fire Management in North Australian Savannas: Rekindling the Wurrk Tradition'**, it was launched by Ms Marion Scrymgour MLA on April 20th on Darwin's Esplanade as a part of the National NRM Knowledge Conference.

Over 100 guests were there to see the launch and hopefully have a read of a what has been hailed as a very valuable resource. You can purchase the book on the CSIRO publications web site:

<http://www.csiro.au/resources/Fire-Management.html> or view the event flyer at http://www.nailsma.org.au/nailsma/projects/downloads/book_launch.pdf



SALTWATER

People Network Kicks Off

Many readers will be familiar with NAILSMA's highly successful Dugong and Marine Turtle Project, which was funded by the Australian Government from 2005-2009.

Through this project, Traditional Owners from the Kimberley, Top End of the Northern Territory, southern Gulf of Carpentaria, Cape York and the Torres Strait developed community-driven approaches to the sustainable management of dugong and marine turtle in northern Australia.

NAILSMA partner organisations oversaw the project through Regional Activity Plans (RAPs). The RAPs were developed through community consultation and identified Traditional Owners' needs and aspirations, the issues and threats facing dugong and marine turtle management, and the management and research activities that communities wished to undertake.

The project was widely acclaimed for its success, winning a Banksia Foundation Environmental Award in 2008 and an Australian Government Northern Territory Coastcare Award in 2007. It was deemed a "standout success" that "outstripped the original expectation" in the Australian Government's 2009 Performance Story Report.

Following the success of the Dugong and Marine Turtle Project, NAILSMA applied for funds under the 2009 Australian Government's Caring for Our Country strategy. A new project called 'The Saltwater People Network' was awarded four years of funding starting in 2009.

A key feature of the Saltwater People Network is the I-Tracker project, which matches state-of-the-art, "field-tough" hand-held computers with internationally acclaimed CyberTracker software. Together these tools provide a user-friendly, culturally appropriate and scientifically tested way of collecting information while out on country or on the sea.

NAILSMA will also be supporting the development of "I-Map", an extension of the I-Tracker project that will allow Indigenous community participants to access a range of data from across north Australia on their desktop to assist with local management and decision making.

The Saltwater People Network will build on partnerships developed through the Dugong and Marine Turtle Project and Indigenous community and government investment in local management capacity (through such programs as Working on Country, Indigenous Protected Areas, Wild River Rangers, and North Australian Quarantine Strategy). The network will further develop the tools, relationships and

By Micha Jackson, Joshua Kitchens and Rod Kennett

environment where Indigenous and non-Indigenous aspirations and expertise can come together for better saltwater country management across north Australia.

To launch the Saltwater People Network, an inaugural forum was held from Feb 23-25 with about 30 representatives from project partners across north Australia meeting at Mount Bundy station to learn more about the Saltwater People Network and discuss their ideas and aspirations for the network.

A highlight at the forum for many participants was the Djelk Rangers' presentation on how they have used data from the I-Tracker sea country patrol program and their own CyberTracker patrol programs to manage their country.

The forum also created a great platform for strengthening existing networks between the delegates and creating new ones. The attendance and participation of the Carpentaria Ghost Nets Programme (CGNP) at the forum, as well as their adoption of I-Tracker for the collection of ghost nets data, further cemented the sister relationship between the CGNP and the Saltwater People Network.

Visit the NAILSMA website (www.nailsma.org.au/forum/spn_forum.html) to listen to what the participants had to say about the new Saltwater People Network.

Biodiversity Conservation Values of NT Islands

By Terry Mahney



New wildlife records, range extensions of reptiles and healthy populations of small mammals have been some of the highlights of wildlife surveys of previously unsurveyed and poorly surveyed NT Islands during 2009. This has been part of a 12 month Caring for our Country funded project started in May by the Biodiversity Unit of NRETAS titled "Biodiversity conservation values and management for Northern Territory islands". The project was developed in recognition that many wildlife species are under threat and declining on mainland Australia and islands offer a possible refuge from these threatening processes.

These critical surveys were made possible with the generous support of over 50 indigenous rangers, traditional owners and their supporting organisations. Important amongst these have been the Thamarrurr Rangers (Wadeye), li-Anthiwirriyarra Rangers (Borrooloola), Anindilyakwa Rangers and Land Council (Groote Island), Garngi Rangers (Croker Island), Mardbalk Rangers (Goulburn Islands), Gumurr Marthakal Rangers (Elcho Island), Milingimbi Resource Centre, Yanhangu Traditional Owners, Parks and Wildlife Rangers from Garig Garnu Barlu National Park and the Northern Land Council Caring for Country Unit.

Ranger groups helped support what was often an intensive and logistically challenging 6 months, with a dedicated team of scientists, indigenous rangers, traditional owners, and NLC Caring for Country employees visiting 6 major island groups and surveying over 25 islands. These have ranged from the Sir Edward Pellew Islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria to islands at the mouth of the Victoria River near the W.A. border.

The surveys have turned up some interesting results - some good, some sad. Amongst the good results:

- over 10 species of small mammals and more than 200 individual animals on islands at the mouth of the Victoria and Fitzmaurice Rivers, including bandicoots, planigales, red cheeked dunnarts, possums and large numbers of native rats;
- high densities of northern quoll and northern brown bandicoot on Groote Eylandt and Winchelsea Island;
- a significant population of the threatened northern hopping mouse on previously unsurveyed south eastern Groote Eyl and;
- substantial range extension of the striped skink, *Ctenotus striaticeps*, on to Groote Eylandt; the blind snake,

Rhamphotyphlops toveli, to Croker Island and islands in Arnhem Bay respectively;

- first surveys of fish and other aquatic biota in large lakes on south east Groote Eylandt;
- healthy populations of *Varanus panoptes* (yellow-spotted monitor) and *V. gouldii* (sand goanna) on Groote Island and yellow-spotted monitor on Croker Island (these goannas have declined markedly on the mainland due to effects of cane toads);
- the continued persistence of arboreal mammals on Croker Island, including brushtail possum and sugar glider;
- new records of *Antechinus bellus* (fawn antechinus) on Valencia Island and bandicoots on Probable Island;
- many islands have relatively benign fire regimes and retain large areas that are long unburnt, or infrequently burnt;
- two new populations of each of two rare mangrove species - *Bruguiera sexangular* and *Cynometra iripa* on islands in Arnhem Bay
- new records of other rare or disjunct tree species on various islands, including the eucalypts *Corymbia papillosa*, *Eucalyptus oligantha* and *Corymbia paucisetia*; and
- continued healthy translocated populations of northern quolls in the English Company Islands.
- the most southerly record of orange-footed scrubfowls for the NT in the Sir Edward Pellew Islands, which appear to be an important ecological link between Queensland and the NT for birds that prefer rainforest habitat
- tens of thousands of migratory wading birds on the tidal flats of the Crocodile Islands highlighting the international significance of these islands

On a sadder note the arrival of cane toads on the Sir Edward Pellew Islands appear to have resulted in the loss of northern quolls from these islands with none being captured during these surveys and the last ones being seen more than a year ago. Some other islands are also suffering from the threatening impacts of cane toads, feral cats, horses, pigs, frequent fires and cyclones.

In the upcoming 6 months the project will look at and analyse these and other threatening processes facing the islands and look at possible implications and how they may be addressed.

Images from Top left:

1. Terry Mahney records indigenous knowledge with traditional owner Roderick Mamarika, his mother Susie Wurrawilya, daughter Kelisha and wife Judy Bara. Image Gavin Dally.
2. The skink *Ctenotus striaticeps* was recorded on Groote Island and was previously only known from around Borrooloola in the Gulf of Carpentaria. Image Terry Mahney.
3. Captain Brown (Garngi Rangers and Lazarus Lami Lami (Mardbalk Rangers) with Terry Mahney and Jenni Low Choy (NT Biodiversity Unit scientists) share a happy moment at the end of a days trapping. Image John Westaway.
4. In the NT the saltmarsh plant, *Hemichroa diandra*, had previously only been recorded at inland salt lakes. During these surveys they were found on islands near the mouth of the Victoria River. Image Kym Brennan.
5. A significant population of the threatened northern hopping mouse was found on previously unsurveyed south eastern Groote Eylandt. Image John Westaway.
6. Main image: Remote and logistically challenging to survey, the low lying Quoin Island is threatened by climate change. This island supported red cheeked dunnarts, large populations of native pale field rats and a diversity of snake species. Image Kym Brennan.
7. (Below) Thamarrurr Rangers and NRETAS Biodiversity Unit scientists worked together to survey islands near the mouth of the Fitzmaurice River. Image Franz Ranacher.





Women on bus: Starting the 800 km home journey after the Water Policy Launch (in rows from left to right) Row 1 Agnes Armstrong, Phillis Ningarmara, Row 2 Alice Boombi, Mignonett Jamini, Row 3 Peggy Griffiths, Jessie Gumboi, Row 4 Dora Griffiths, Row 5 Ronnie Carlton

Miriuwung Gajerrong

Traditional Owners bring their Water Story to Parliament

By Sonia Leonard
East Kimberley Water Facilitator

On 23rd March 2010, sixteen Miriuwung Gajerrong Traditional Owners for the Keep River Region travelled over 800 km from Kununurra to Darwin to tell their water story at the NAILSMA launch of the Indigenous Water Policy Statement at Parliament House (pg 4).

They brought with them a 20 minute DVD on the cultural significance of water and the traditional knowledge that managed and protected water resources over thousands of years.

The DVD records Traditional Owners giving emotional accounts of water stories and their significance, and why it's important that water and land can not be separated in Native Title determinations. In addition Traditional Owners express their concerns about how governments use and manage water, and state their aspirations for future water reform.

Footage in the DVD was collected during a three day back to country trip held at Police Hole.

The Miriuwung Gajerrong Traditional Owners wanted to show their DVD at the launch of the Indigenous Water Policy Statement to bring to the attention water planners and ministers, how important water is to them.

The DVD was funded through the NAILSMA Indigenous Ecological Knowledge project, and developed in conjunction with the Kimberley Interpretive Service, the Mirima Dawang Woollaberrang Language and culture Centre and the in kind support from WA Dept of Environment and Conservation, Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation and the NT Parks Service.

Staff Profile:

EMMA IGNJIC

Personal: For the first 10 years of her life Emma grew up in the coastal country around southern NSW; then the next 10 years in the high country of Victoria. At the age of 20, she moved to far North Queensland and the tropics got into her blood. For the first time she spent time with Aboriginal elders on country – she would never experience the landscape the same way again. Since then her life has been a series of learning experiences in a variety of settings, including studying anthropology and human geography at university – but the most valuable lessons continue to be learnt when spending time with people on country.

Professional: Emma has experience working to support Indigenous governance and participation in conservation management both with non-government conservation organisations such as The Wilderness Society, where in the mid 1990s she was involved in the Starcke campaign on Cape York; and with peak Indigenous organisations such as Balkanu, where in the late 1990s she worked as part of a team to develop and support sub-regional land and sea management programs within Cape York Peninsula. Her learning continued with fifteen months of community based fieldwork in Aurukun where she participated in on-ground resource management activities with the Wik and Kugu Land and Sea Management Program. Then for a number of years she worked as a lecturer with the School of Indigenous Australian Studies at James Cook University in Cairns teaching in various areas including Indigenous resource management, and supporting Indigenous participation in tertiary studies.

Project: Emma joined NAILSMA's team December 2009. Emma 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. BHA also builds partnerships with other organisations and individuals to support conservation management of land that is managed by others. BHA's Conservation on Country Program focuses on building these partnerships for conservation management with traditional owners of country.

Emma's main role is to work with NAILSMA and Indigenous people to support conservation management on land already owned and managed by Indigenous people; to support the purchase of ecologically and culturally significant country; and to support the participation of Indigenous people in the management of Bush Heritage reserves. Emma's initial focus is on regions and projects where Bush Heritage already has partnerships (Cape York, the Gulf of Carpentaria, Kimberley and West Arnhem), but her role will also involve developing 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 email Emma on eignjic@bushheritage.org.au



IN THE NORTH A KANTRI LAIF SPOTLIGHT ON:

Who: Bruce Martin (Front Cover Image)

Born: Cairns, Queensland, From Aurukun, western side of Cape York

Language Group: Wikngathan, Wikmungkan

Job title: Consultant

What does your work involve in north Australia: Helping people up home set up a community controlled company that will do biocultural management of our homelands, so that's looking after the biodiversity, the environmental aspects of country, as well as maintaining and strengthening our cultural ties to country. This means establishing an organisation with directors from the community, employing rangers, attracting partners, training and funding to be able to do the work we want to do on country.

What started your interest in this work: My family in Aurukun, especially my mum and uncles. Also my dad worked on out-stations when he first moved into Aurukun as an engineer when he was 25, so I'm doing similar work to what he was doing, just in a modern context.

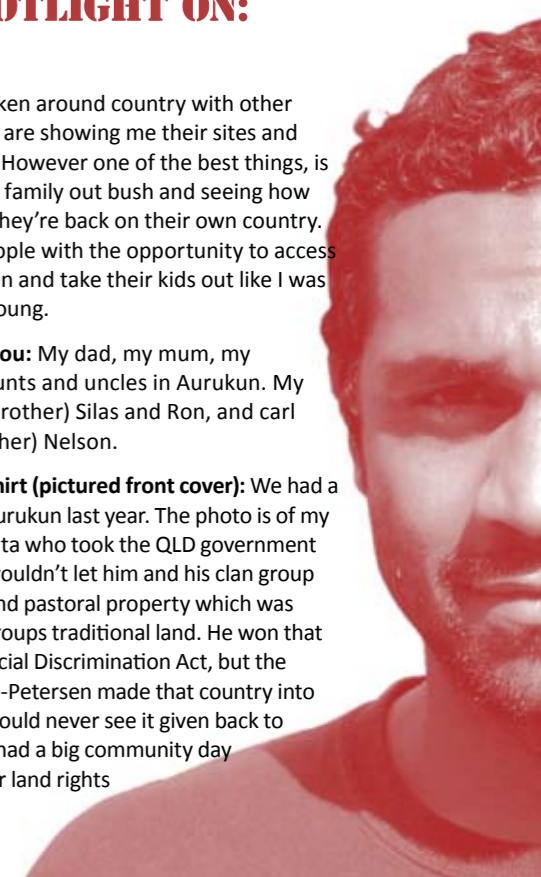
The hardest part about the job: The hardest part is also one of the most important, and that is making sure that community people are actively engaged throughout the whole process. So that means working with different clan groups and different families, and trying to bring them together to be able to make decisions about country that will effect the whole region and how we manage it.

The best part about the job: Spending so much time out bush where I grew up from a small boy, visiting some places I haven't seen

since I was 4, getting taken around country with other traditional owners who are showing me their sites and telling me their stories. However one of the best things, is just spending time with family out bush and seeing how free people feel when they're back on their own country. As well as providing people with the opportunity to access their country more often and take their kids out like I was taken out when I was young.

What / Who inspires you: My dad, my mum, my brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles in Aurukun. My mook (mothers older brother) Silas and Ron, and carl (mothers younger brother) Nelson.

Explanation of your t-shirt (pictured front cover): We had a big community day in Aurukun last year. The photo is of my late mook, John Koowarta who took the QLD government to court because they wouldn't let him and his clan group purchase the Archer Bend pastoral property which was the Winychanam clan groups traditional land. He won that court case under the Racial Discrimination Act, but the then premier, Joh Bjelke-Petersen made that country into a National Park, so he would never see it given back to traditional owners. We had a big community day to honour him and other land rights activists from Aurukun.



mud crab fishery

A collaborative recruitment forecasting programme for the Northern Territory

A collaborative research project involving the Northern Territory Seafood Council, the Fisheries Group of the Department of Resources, the NT Mud Crab Licence Committee (formerly the NT Crab Fishermen's Association), the Djelk, Yugul Mangi and Li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Ranger Groups is now into its second year.

The aim of the study (funded by a Landcare Sustainable Practices grant under the Australian Government's Caring for our Country) is to collect information on when and where juvenile mud crabs are found and describe potential links between juvenile abundance and the subsequent commercial harvest of mud crabs. The areas being monitored include the Liverpool River in Arnhemland and the Limmen Bight, McArthur, Roper, and Wearyan Rivers in the Gulf of Carpentaria.

Since the project began in August 2008 NT Fisheries staff in conjunction with Chris Calogeras (C-AID Consultants) have conducted a number of training/review workshops with each of the project partners. Where necessary, these workshops covered how best to set and retrieve crab pots, mud crab handling techniques as well as data recording and reporting protocols.

Each participant (or group) has been issued with a number of purpose-built research pots and a scientific permit to use non-standard pots. The

research pots are based on commercial crab pots but are wrapped in a smaller, finer mesh. The use of shade cloth to line the funnels and a narrow funnel entrance provides purchase for the small legs of juvenile crabs (allowing them to enter the pot) and blocks the entry of large crabs, respectively.

Three to five pots have been grouped in several locations within each monitoring area (e.g. near salt pans, mangroves and mud flats) and are checked at least two to three times per week. Crabs captured are emptied into a plastic tray which has a checkerboard pattern applied to the inner surface for calibration purposes.

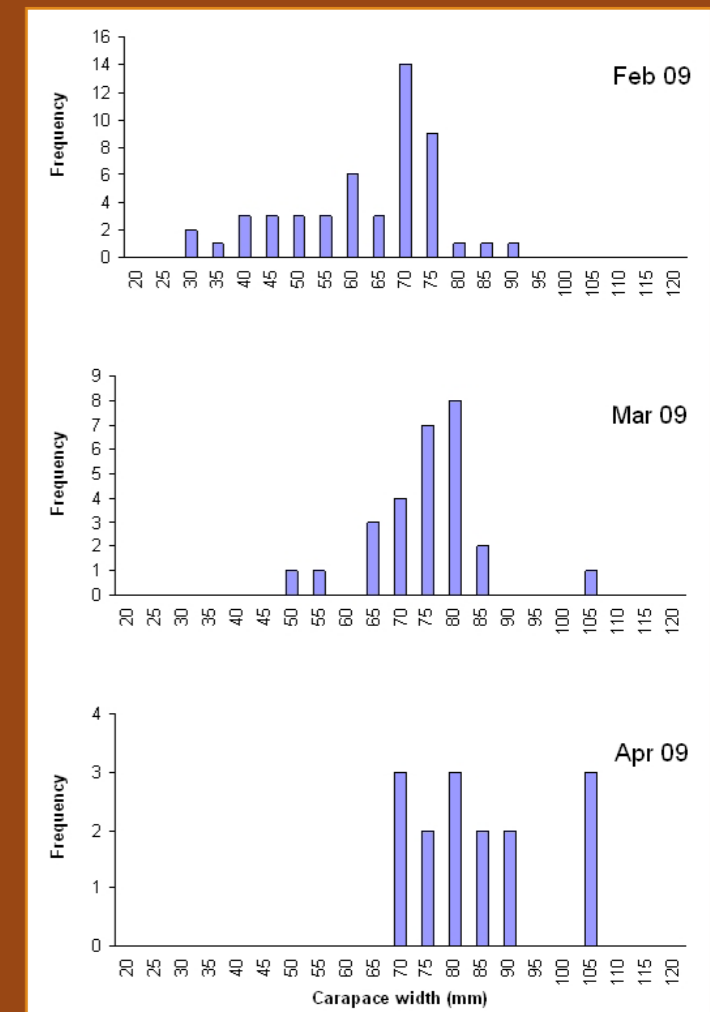
Once photographs of the catch have been taken (using water-proof digital cameras), the crabs are released. Images are returned to Darwin each month for crab size estimation using image analysis software.

Figure 4 provides an example of the change in size frequency of juvenile crabs (which can be interpreted as growth - from left to right down the page) caught (and released) in the Wearyan River from February to April 2009. Similar trends were observed in the data from other study areas. Whilst it appears that fewer crabs were caught in April compared to February, this data has not been standardised for effort (i.e. the pots may have been set and/or checked more frequently in February than in April).

In an attempt to solve this problem (i.e. quantify effort) we are individually labelling every pot and asking participants to take a photo of each pot as it is checked, irrespective of whether or not it contains a crab/s. In many cases, participants are also recording the exact position of the pots by taking photos of their GPS units (either hand-held or hard-wired) at the point of retrieval (as shown below).

Our immediate success in capturing good numbers of small mud crabs has generated interest in the project among crab biologists in both Queensland and Western Australia. The project methodology and results have also been presented through meetings, workshops and conferences held locally (Darwin, NT), nationally (Bribie Island, QLD and Fremantle, WA) and internationally (Anchorage, Alaska, USA and Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada).

At the completion of the project, the data collected will be used to identify patterns in juvenile crab abundance in each area. This information will then be compared with the commercial harvest. If trends in juvenile and adult (i.e. commercial) catches are similar, then the survey method may enable fishers to predict the relative size of their catch 6 to 9 months in advance. Such a forecasting tool may also allow crabbers to scale their operations to the predicted catch.



Images from bottom left to right: Juvenile mud crabs being measured using image analysis software, Yugul Mangi ranger Benjamin Wilfred checking research pot, Crabs captured are emptied into a plastic tray which has a checkerboard pattern applied to the inner surface for calibration purposes, Digital image showing individual pot number and GPS readout.

Above (figure 4): Change in monthly size frequency of juvenile mud crabs caught in the Wearyan River from February to April 2009

MARY RIVER STATEMENT

By Kalem Ronberg (deceased)

As published in the previous Kantri Laif, Issue 5, December 2009, the outcome of the North Australian Indigenous Experts Water Futures Forum was, the Mary River Statement that is a testament to the seriousness of Indigenous peoples contribution and participating in water policy decision making. It also sends a message that Indigenous people can not remain on the margins of discussions about development in the north.

The Northern Australia Land and Water Taskforce final report included recommendations from the Mary River Statement in their final report, 'Sustainable Development of Northern Australia', released in February this year, to the Hon. Gary Gray, Parliamentary Secretary for Western and Northern Australia who accepted on behalf of the Australian Government. The Taskforce made the following recommendations in relation to Indigenous issues:

Recommendation 3: Australian governments should significantly increase investment in social, cultural, and economic analysis to support the assessment of competing values and uses for land and water

use planning, catchment level water planning and local decision making.

Recommendation 12: The allocation of water rights under statutory water plans should explicitly recognise Indigenous Peoples' rights and interests in water.

Recommendation 13: Australian governments should invest in communication, social marketing, education and knowledge brokering to improve public understanding of Indigenous rights and interests and sustainable water resource management, and deepen commitment to the principles of ecologically sustainable development, as they apply in northern Australia.

The report received an immense amount of publicity including, The Australian, ABC News, ABC Stateline and several Radio Interviews such as 4k1g Murray Voices Townsville, Wire Radio Adelaide, National Current Affairs, ABC Radio National and National Indigenous Television.

We are expecting a response from government about the Sustainable Development of Northern Australia report mid year of 2010.



Image: David Hancock 2009

WATER FIELD GUIDE

ready for action!

By Robyn Grey-Gardner

The Community Water Planner Field Guide is a ready-to-use package for Indigenous community residents and service providers to create a drinking water management plan. The package contains easy-to-use activity sheets, stickers and posters that are combined to create a water management plan for a specific community. The Field Guide is packaged in a mailing tube that is durable for remote conditions and is easy to transport.

The materials inside are mainly large posters with brightly coloured pictures that show:

- Correct installation of a water supply
- Regular maintenance activities
- Asset management planning tables
- Where to go for service and assistance

The *Field Guide* package is designed to be displayed in prominent locations around a community so that the information is readily accessible for those who need it. The posters fit together to form a management plan. The process should be facilitated by someone who has a background in water management. Environmental Health Workers or Essential Service Officers could be facilitators - their skills and technical knowledge would be a valuable resource for the participants/residents creating their own water management plan.

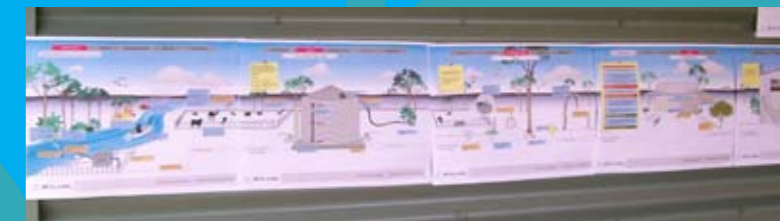
The *Field Guide* was commissioned by the National Water Commission. The Commission recognised that one of the greatest contributions that can be made to improving water supplies in Indigenous communities in Australia is through planning and management based on risk management principles. Water Quality Research Australia (WQRA) and the Centre for Appropriate Technology designed the Field Guide and trialled it in four Indigenous communities during 2008 and 2009. Launched in October 2009, the *Field Guide* is now available free of charge. Copies are available from the Health Departments in the Northern Territory, Queensland, New South Wales and in South Australia. In West Australia the Field Guide can be

obtained from the Department of Water. Additional copies are available at the Centre for Appropriate Technology. From April 2010, the *Field Guide* will also be available for download from the WQRA website (www.wqra.com.au)

If you would like to learn how to use the Field Guide, you can organise to have a one-day workshop held in your area. The workshop is available to teach anyone who is interested in using the package. The workshop gets participants out into the field, using their own observations and tackling their own water supply problems by thinking through the risks and what actions would stop problems. The course has a fee to cover the materials and lecturers' time. If you would like further information, contact Robyn Grey-Gardner.

Contact details:
Robyn Grey-Gardner - Special Water Projects
Centre for Appropriate Technology Inc
Tel: (08) 8959 6158
Email: Robyn.Grey-Gardner@icat.org.au

Main Image: community planning at Buru in Qld
Image by Brian Singleton. Image Top: Community mapping sheet from the field Guide by Kat Taylor





Stepping Forward for Country - Introducing the

GIRRINGUN

Aboriginal Rangers By Ellie Bock, IPA Facilitator for Girringun Aboriginal Corporation

Staff Profile: SHANE STEVENS - A/G SALTWATER PEOPLE NETWORK COORDINATOR



Personal

Shane Stevens was born and grew up in Brisbane, Australia. Shane enjoys scuba diving, surfing, martial arts and travelling. He has travelled around Australia and throughout South-East Asia. Shane has lived in northern Australia for many years, especially enjoying diving in the gulf sea country and Timor-Leste.

Professional

Shane has completed a Bachelor of Applied Science and is finalising a Master of Community Development and Emergency Management, through Southern Cross University, New South Wales, Australia. Shane has extensive experience as a scientific researcher as well as an environmental resource manager, covering the following multidisciplinary marine and terrestrial applications: ecology, heavy metal chemistry, botany, water quality, scientific scuba diving, and a range of natural resource management plans. Shanes focus is the delivery of combined and sustainable management solutions and partnerships with Indigenous Land and Sea custodians.

Shane has valuable practical experience working with Aboriginal communities across the Northern Territory. His most recent research project involved a combination of scientific methods and culturally appropriate approaches to assess heavy metal accumulations in Aboriginal subsistence foods and the aquatic environment, in the Sir Edward Pellew Group of Islands and McArthur River, Northern Territory.

Project

Shane is the A/g Coordinator of the Saltwater People Network (SPN). The SPN project brings Indigenous communities and ranger organisations together with non-indigenous experts to better manage saltwater country across northern Australia. It will build enduring knowledge and skills sharing partnerships that link together a growing workforce of Indigenous coastal managers and enable coordinated responses to natural resource management issues of local and national significance in a changing climate.

The SPN will build on significant Indigenous community and government investment in local management capacity (e.g. Working on Country (WoC), Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA), Wild River Rangers, North Australian Quarantine Strategy) at a time of historic progress in reconciliation and the recognition of Indigenous rights to sea country. Building on the experience and outcomes of NAILSMA's highly acclaimed Dugong and Marine Turtle Project, the SPN will further develop the tools, relationships and environment where Indigenous and non-indigenous aspirations and expertise can come together for better coastal and aquatic management outcomes.

Girringun is a long established, well respected Traditional Owner land and sea body based in Cardwell, North Queensland, which acts on behalf of 9 Traditional Owner member groups: Bandjin, Djiru, Girramay, Gugu Badhun, Gulnay, Jirrbal, Nywaigi, Warrgamay and Warungnu peoples.

Since its establishment in 1994 by Elders and senior Traditional Owners from its member groups, Girringun has lead Aboriginal involvement and participation in regional processes to strengthen protection and enhancement of land, sea, water and biodiversity within an area extending from Mission Beach to Rollingstone, and inland to Ravenshoe and Greenvale, north Queensland. This area of interest reflects the custodial land and sea estates of Girringun's Traditional Owner member groups.

In January 2010, Girringun Aboriginal Corporation employed 11 Aboriginal Rangers and a Ranger Coordinator under an extended jointly-funded, highly collaborative management approach supported by the Australian and Queensland Governments.

Girringun Aboriginal Rangers will be working closely with a range of management agencies including Queensland Parks and Wildlife, local government councils and statutory management agencies including the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, to look after land and sea country in the Girringun region. These relationships are reflected in collaborative workplans for protected areas.

The Girringun Aboriginal Rangers are a group of committed Aboriginal men and women who want to make a difference in their communities and learn a range of new life and work skills. Whilst the Rangers are employed by Girringun to help build a solid foundation for regional collaborative management,

many hold family connections to the traditional lands and seas of Girringun's member groups.

This puts them in good stead to gain strong skills in applying both traditional and scientific knowledge in their day to day work activities. Elders from Girringun's member groups will induct and mentor the Rangers into cultural protocols and any cultural restrictions which might apply to working in significant locations on country. Traditional Owner mentors will also pass on important knowledge around plants, animals, resource uses and cultural site management. Scientific techniques will be passed on through joint research and surveying work with key scientific partner agencies.

All Girringun Aboriginal Rangers will be participating in accredited training and skills development activities, including enrolment and participation in Conservation and Land Management certificate courses.

Girringun's long term aim is to establish a regional co-management Indigenous Protected Area over those areas within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area located in its area of interest. In 2009, negotiations started with key agencies to develop a framework for a Girringun Region IPA Plan of Management.

Image by F. Croft for Girringun Aboriginal Corporation

Image Far top left:
GAR Coordinator: Matt Gillis

Image top left:
Girringun Aboriginal Rangers (L-R): Bruce Reece, Albert Reece, Dyznie Smallwood, Cindy Togo, Larry Leedie, John Surha, Haydn Togo, Evelyn Ivey, Hedley Fischer, Christopher Muriata and Penelope Ivey.

Indigenous Water Policy Group

Meets in Darwin

By Lorrae McArthur

The Indigenous Water Policy Group (IWPG) has met in Darwin for its last two meetings. A couple of significant outcomes have come from those meetings.

At its 10th Meeting in November 2009, the IWPG expanded its membership to include members selected at the Mary River Forum (North Australian Indigenous Experts Water Futures Forum – August 2009).

The newly expanded IWPG adopted the principles of the Mary River Statement, which are:

1. Land, water and people are intrinsically connected, which means unity of land, water and Indigenous people.
2. Water management and use includes all of cultural uses, environmental flows, consumptive and commercial uses; and that all freshwater systems are included whether on the mainland or on sea county.
3. Adherence to maintaining a balanced revised 'Triple Bottom Line' (social and cultural, ecological and economic) including a fourth element of political sustainability.

4. Water dealings are based on free, prior, and informed decisions and engagement with Indigenous communities at all levels.
5. Principles of International Law be the guiding principles for development of Indigenous engagement on water.
6. Water allocation needs to be linked with best practice, sustainable, efficient use and accurate up to date information about environmental flows.
7. Indigenous people across north Australia are united in dealing with water issues and accordingly recognise a set of common interests (these interests are given on the Mary River Statement).

At its 11th Meeting in March 2010, the IWPG discussed how to then best put these principles into practice. The group is now considering an Indigenous integrated land and water model that operates across the north of Australia to support these principles.

Image below: Some of the attendees of the 11th Indigenous Water Policy Group meeting convened in Darwin at Parliament House on 23-24 March 2010.



Larrakia Rangers bring their skills to the laboratory

By Kay Carvan

Larrakia Rangers Adrian Ludwig, Stephen Cusack and Michael Bauwer added another dimension to their ranger activities late last year when the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) contracted them to help monitor for vectors of quarantine disease.

AQIS monitors the types of midge present in the region by setting traps that use a light to attract insects, which are then sent to the AQIS laboratory for identification. The traps not only attract midges but also other insects such as moths, beetles and flies.

The rangers visit the AQIS laboratory in Darwin twice a week to help entomologists identify midges collected through the AQIS trapping network.

The rangers perform an important role in helping to process the trap contents. Their work assists AQIS identify insects faster and allows the scientists to concentrate on the more complex diagnostic and reporting processes associated with the monitoring.

Because midges can spread animal diseases, AQIS monitors them across northern Australia as part of its biosecurity surveillance and contribution to the National Arbovirus Monitoring Program.

Images: Larrakia Rangers, Adrian Ludwig, Stephen Cusack and Michael Bauwer working in the laboratory with AQIS community liaison officer Mandie Burgess

"In the North we're looking particularly for exotic species that may have blown in on monsoon winds from Indonesia," said AQIS entomologist and Australian midge expert Glenn Bellis. "This helps protect our cattle industry,"

Larrakia Ranger, Adrian Ludwig sorting midges in the AQIS laboratory

Images by Kay Carvan



DONNA BUSH

CARBON PROJECT OFFICER

Personal:

Donna was born and grew up in Diamond Creek, Victoria. After high school she travelled around Australia for a few years, working mainly in the Whitsundays and the Kimberley. Donna then moved to Darwin to study before travelling overseas and finally returning back to the Kimberley.

Professional:

Prior to working with NAILSMA, Donna worked at the Kimberley Land Council and for a private legal practice in Broome. Donna has a Bachelor of Law and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies as well as a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice.

Position:

Donna is supporting NAILSMA's Carbon Project, which is pursuing opportunities for Indigenous people to participate in the emerging carbon economy through strategic fire management activities which reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is anticipated that the Carbon Project will have significant biodiversity conservation outcomes as well as social, cultural and economic outcomes for Indigenous people in remote communities.



Image Top: Anthony Johnston li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Ranger Unit. Image Bottom: Thamarrurr rangers Wendy Simon, Possum Marshall and NAILSMA's Micha Jackson.

SALTWATER

People Embracing Technology

A wave of technology is sweeping Australia's northern coastline. I-Tracker, an initiative of the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance's (NAILSMA) Saltwater People Network, is supporting Indigenous land and sea managers to use the information they collect to improve land and sea management on local, regional, national and even international scales.

I-Tracker matches state-of-the-art 'field-tough' hand-held computers complete with built-in GPS, camera and voice recorder, the internationally acclaimed software 'CyberTracker' and a sea country survey tailored to the data collection needs of Indigenous sea rangers.

The Djelk Rangers from Maningrida NT pioneered the use of CyberTracker for saltwater country management by Indigenous rangers in north Australia and assisted NAILSMA and collaborating partners to develop the sea country survey.

Using touch-screen hand-held computers when completing patrols on sea country, rangers answer a series of questions in the survey for each event they might want to record.

The survey can utilise local language words or icons to record biophysical information such as marine animal population information; information on threats to the marine environment, such as marine debris like ghost nets; as well as information for agencies like the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS),

who have a fee-for-service arrangement with some ranger groups to collect bio-security information.

After a patrol is completed, the hand-held computer is synced with the office computer to transfer across all the data collected in the field. There's no need for paper data sheets or manual data entry.

The rangers can then generate powerful maps, charts and spreadsheets that can be used for sea country management or reporting to Traditional Owners, funders and other stakeholders.

But I-Tracker is proving to be much more than an environmental management tool; it is helping to unlock opportunities for Indigenous land and sea managers. NAILSMA CEO Joe Morrison explains.

"The reports generated by I-Tracker articulate and show governments and others—including in the private sector—that the work Indigenous land and sea managers do is of national and international importance".

The li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Rangers based at Borroloola on the south-west Gulf of Carpentaria coast have experienced first-hand the potential for I-Tracker to unlock opportunities.

"We're using I-Tracker for every facet of what we do. From heritage work—which includes documenting and recording rock art sites—to log coffin sites and Macassan camp sites," explains Stephen Johnson, li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Ranger Coordinator.

The li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Rangers are currently using reports from I-tracker to prepare a proposal for the Marine Safety Branch (NT) for the management of navigation aids on the waterways they patrol.

"I-Tracker has given us the capacity to present to the Marine Safety Branch a really professional summary of where things are at. They can see that we have the capacity and tools to take on a contract of this nature," said Mr Johnson.

I-Tracker is a user-friendly, culturally appropriate and scientifically approved tool that complements Indigenous rangers' knowledge of sea country—supporting livelihoods for Indigenous people living on country, and supporting the management of internationally significant ecosystems for all Australians.

This project is supported by NAILSMA, through funding from the Australian Government's Caring for our Country.



Umpila Business Cape York

Umpila country is situated on the East Coast of Cape York Peninsula. The Umpila estate stretches approximately 120 kilometres between Cape Sidmouth (Puuya-kamu) in the north to Breakfast Creek (Yalmaraka) in the south. We are known as The Sandbeach People of Cape York.

Our country is bordered on the east by the Coral Sea, our sea country has broad sandy beaches, fringing reef, outside reef and barrier reef and islands. The western border is the magnificent and pristine MacIlwraith Range with thick tropical rainforests, mountain streams, waterfalls and gorges. Between the ranges and the coast are our wetlands, grasslands, freshwater and saltwater swamps, sand dunes, open woodlands with four major rivers that snake to the coast. Inside all of our land and sea country is our rich culture, our stories, story places and camp sites.

For the past 15 years, we have made little progress or advancement with the ideas and aspirations that we drafted up in the 1990's after a thorough family process to document our plans. I was a little girl then, and I watched our elders plan things for the future.

In 2008, I started talking to the remaining elders that were around in the 1980's and 1990's about the lack of progress for Umpila. I started working with other young strong Umpila people to establish a solid foundation for Umpila to move forward where the elders left off.

We developed agreements with institutions and government wanting to undertake research in our country. This led to building closer relationships with a range of stakeholders to discuss broader opportunities.

In 2009 a small group of us put a proposal to our families regarding the development of an Umpila representative

group. We undertook a campaign that involved every Umpila family group with traditional ties to country. The families all agreed.

In November 2009, I was invited by NAILSMA to travel to the north coast of PNG with my grandfather Abraham Omeenyo to attend a series of land management conferences and to visit some tribal groups near Madang. We travelled with indigenous groups representing regions from right across the north of Australia and the Torres Straits. The objective of my trip was to gather information and share ideas with the travelling groups about their land and sea achievements and to build relationships so the groups can support each other.

The trip made me a stronger person and gave me the resolve and determination to work harder with my Umpila families to get things done. Visiting the tribal groups and seeing how they were able to maintain strong social arrangements and rich culture in a region of extant poverty and no government support was an eye opener. The groups were fighting hard working tirelessly to gather philanthropic support to achieve their land and sea management aspirations. In Australia we have enormous resource support from government and non-government agencies and too often we squander our social and cultural development opportunities.

Since returning, we have established a Steering Group and Advisory Group and set priorities for the things that we aim to achieve on our lands and sea. Through our projects, we will create opportunities for Umpila people both on country and in the outside world.

The establishment of a representative group was essential and most elders felt that not having a group that gives

By Naomi Hobson -
Chairman Umpila Nesbit Rocky Massey Chester (NRM) Steering Group

everyone a voice was the missing piece. This was the first time in many, many years that we have come together like this and agreed on a structure for Umpila.

The role of the Steering Group is to implement an Umpila program. Each member is to ensure they pass information back to their family groups regarding discussions, plans and ideas. The role of the Advisory Group is to ensure the opinion and advice of Umpila elders guides all the discussions and negotiations that the Umpila Steering Group undertakes.

Because we have maintained an inclusive process there is always a strong representation of Advisory Group members at our community based planning meetings at Lockhart River and Coen, around 30-40 people. There are 2 Advisory Group members that also form part of the 12 person strong Steering Group.

We agreed on a very high standard of rules for maintaining a seat on the Steering Group. I was elected as the inaugural Chair of the Umpila Steering Group in January of this year.

Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation is a Cape York Indigenous Regional Organisation. The specialist staff in Balkanu's Land Management Unit provided invaluable support to us in getting up and running, and have guided us towards participating in an extraordinary group of networks and capability development opportunities with NAILSMA and government agencies.

We are also thankful for the assistance and support of Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM), Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), and the Cape York Land Council (CYLC who have all assisted in making the Umpila group a reality.





Carbon

By Glenn James

CPRS down but not out

The failure of the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS) bill to get through parliament has not diminished the work NAILSMA has done or is doing to assist Indigenous land managers across the northern savannas to enter a regulated market place for Green House Gas offsets when one finally appears. Even though the Rudd government has delayed any further attempts at legislating for an Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) until 2013 there is a strong sense within NAILSMA and potential corporate investors that an ETS is inevitable.

The economic potential of fire and emissions abatement through Indigenous land management is also being developed with a view to voluntary market trading, fee for service arrangements and with far-sighted research into carbon sequestration offsets for managed savannas. Project development using best practice industry Standards like the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Standards (CCBS) will position Indigenous land managers equally well with a future ETS as it will with current voluntary markets.

Fire and land management planning week

In February NAILSMA brought together about 40 Indigenous rangers and land managers, participating scientists, institutional partners, collaborators and service providers at the Darwin Airport Inn for a week of workshops and fieldwork scheduling. The strong contingent worked through a broad range of science and livelihood topics to map out what will be a very busy 2010. The science of fire management continues in each of the project regions across the savannas with experimental plots being burnt and measured and assessed with rangers. Improvements are also being made in the use of Cyber-tracker technologies alongside burning with helicopter mounted Raindance machines delivering incendiaries. In the Kimberleys a partnership between the KLC the WA Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) is seeing Indigenous

rangers being certified in the operation of these Raindance machines, building important skills for the developing Indigenous fire management project.

Rangers from all areas stressed the significance of cultural maintenance in the fire project, reaffirming the importance of social and cultural assessment processes as the projects develop. Local mechanisms to uphold socio-cultural values were a key consideration as rangers and traditional owners talked about options for engaging in green house gas offset markets that would provide core incomes for land management work over the long term. An introduction to Voluntary Carbon Standards (demanded for engagement in voluntary carbon markets) offered useful direction to some questions about the development of fire abatement business and governance strategies.

Concerns about resourcing the work that needs to be done to become effective fire managers covering significant areas of wild fire prone country were immediate and critical. Operational and infrastructure costs were high on the list, as well as good on site training and knowledge sharing through ranger exchanges across regions. It was clear that ranger groups were developing their capacities and scope quite quickly, though not adequately matched by operational or other fund income. This conundrum is being worked on by NAILSMA and partners at both government support for land management and business investment levels.

With limited resources ranger groups and associated traditional owners have excelled in their fire management programs over 2009 and are growing important regional relationships and new capacities for land and fire management work. Much remains at stake though, in an Indigenous land management environment where policy and other support can change fairly rapidly. The need to secure long term core income was an important theme for land managers at the meetings. Enterprise development steps will be high on the working agenda for many traditional land owners, rangers and their Land Councils this year.

National forum calls for an alternative policy approach to Homelands/outstations

By Katherine May

In October 2009 a national forum brought together Indigenous representatives from outstations/homeland communities, peak Aboriginal organisations and resource agencies, social and physical scientists, educationalists, medical practitioners and bureaucrats to discuss the future of homelands/outstations, the impact of recent government policy, and the lack of adequate funding for services for the 1,000 small remote dispersed Indigenous communities across Australia.

The 2-day Forum was held at the Australian National University (ANU), and was organised by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), as part of their *People on Country, Healthy Landscapes and Indigenous Economic Futures* project and the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (ASSA). The aim of the workshop was to give voice to homeland/outstation residents in relation to their growing concern about being excluded from policy development about their futures. Discussions centred on different aspects of homeland/outstation life in a number of areas including, cultural and natural resource management, education, health and wellbeing, and housing, infrastructure and employment.

The participants highlighted the need for an alternative policy approach to homelands/outstations and the outcomes of the forum culminated in a communiqué sent to the Prime Minister.

The communiqué called for the Government to;

- Recognise the cultural, environmental and strategic importance of nearly 1000 homelands/outstations located on the Aboriginal estate, including along the northern coastline;
- Recognise the unique significance of homelands/outstations for Aboriginal livelihoods, health, education and well-being and in the provision of environmental services;

- Recognise the importance of homelands/outstations for linguistic diversity and Indigenous Knowledge;
- Call a moratorium on COAG and other government processes, especially the reform of CDEP, that are undermining positive contributions of homelands/outstations to Closing the Gap;
- Assess the compatibility of current policy on homelands/outstations with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which the government publicly endorsed in 2009.

The government responded to the communiqué in February 2010 with a letter from Minister Macklin which failed to address the Forum's recommendations claiming that the Government's current approach was appropriate.

Commentary on the discussions at the forum has been documented in a discussion paper available at <http://www.anu.edu.au/caepr/country/> and the Communiqué can be downloaded from the People on Country project website at: <http://www.anu.edu.au/caepr/projects/country.php>

For more information about the People on Country project contact:

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Talking Culture On Country at Tjindi

by Dave Wise

Tjindi is an area to the north of Wadeye on the western coastline of the NT. The traditional owners of this area, who mostly live around Wadeye, have found it hard to keep in touch with this country as it is quite difficult to travel to. Most of the younger generations who are linked to this country have not been able to visit this country at all. The Thamarrurr rangers helped the people of the Tjindi area apply for the NAILSMA 'Talking Culture on Country' funding for a back to country trip to help connect the younger people with the culture and country around Tjindi.

The knowledge holders, traditional owners and senior elders involved in this project were Mathias Namarluk, Boniface Namarluk, Gertrude Namarluk, Martin Mullumbuk, Stephanie Berida and Jules Dumoo. Over 30 people and knowledge holders participated. Showing younger generations sacred sites and sites of significance and how to care for them was one of important things the project achieved. Places with rock carvings and art were shown to children as well as important dreaming sites including Sawfish dreaming, Yam dreaming and Mak

Mak (Sea Eagle) dreaming. The sites were explored and remembered and the stories shared by family. These places are of great significance to the local people who want to continue protecting and monitoring sites like these. As some Thamarrurr rangers were with the back to country trip it was very useful as the rangers are able to help with keeping these places looked after. Details about the mapping of these places using GPS and video recording of site condition was done by the rangers with the permission of the traditional owners to help with looking after these places into the future.

Old people and young people shared knowledge about how to harvest a variety of bush foods including Ku Balli (Mud Crab) Ku Kunen (Mud Mussels) and Wallaby and how to make fibre and weaving from Thitimampe (Sand Palm). Young ones were also shown traditional games from the childhood of their elders showing how to keep amused and entertained from their own culture without the need for electronic distractions. Everyone had lots of fun, especially the adults who seemed to enjoy it even more than the children did.



Image top from left to right:
At Sawfish Dreaming: Martin Mullumbuk, Tony Aliung, Ann Marie Kungiung (seated), Mary Mullumbuk, Robert Dumoo (seated), Arthur Mardinga, Ian Kungiung, Theresa Nilkur, Zita Mullumbuk, Stephanie Berida and young ones.

A DVD CALLED THE YOLNGU SEASONS

The Yolngu Seasons

Bush Foods

By Valerie Boll

After being awarded 2 research grants in 2007 and 2008 from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, in Canberra and the Christensen Fund, in California, Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation in conjunction with Dr Valerie Boll, Honorary Research Associate in Anthropology at the South Australian Museum - , have undertaken research on Indigenous ecological knowledge.

Valerie spent 16 months (March 2008 to June 2009) in North East Arnhem Land, working in collaboration with Dhimurru rangers and Yolngu Elders on a project called Caring for Country. Managing Indigenous and Scientific Environmental Knowledge in North East Arnhem Land, Australia. The Yolngu ecological knowledge collected will be used by Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation but Valerie wanted this knowledge to be passed on and used by Yolngu children. With Jane Harvey's help, a former teacher at the Laynhapuy Homeland Schools at Yirrkala - an educational bi-lingual DVD and a booklet called The Yolngu Seasons have been produced. Both are valuable resources, which will be used in the first place by the CEC (Community Education Centre) at Yirrkala but could also be distributed later to Yolngu schools across North East Arnhem Land.

For further information contact Valerie Boll:
Valerie.Boll@samuseum.sa.gov.au

Image above: Opening page of the DVD: The Yolngu Seasons and opening page of the Bushfood section (painting by Gayili Yunupingu-Marika)



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Knowledge for Country



The Natural Resource Management Board invites you to participate in an important discussion on issues relating to the retention, recording, storage and use of Australian Indigenous Knowledge and to explore its historic and current relationship to natural resource management.

Please visit: <http://knowcountry.cecc.com.au/>
 This is a part of an 'Indigenous Ecological Knowledge' program currently being delivered by the:



Engineering a solution to a huge environmental problem was the seed for Garma 2006's competition of best use of ghostnets. The winner, Chantal Cordey (from Sydney) won with her unique woven guitar strap. Little did anyone know that it would kick off a series of weaving workshops using contemporary materials in traditional ways four years on.

GhostNets Australia's 'GhostNet Gear' now runs limited workshops where and when possible in communities with non Indigenous renowned fibre artists, building networks and techniques across

Australia. Creativity and motivation are a plenty - if only there was funding to match to see this unique collaborative, creative and unique solution to environmental waste flourish.

Riki Gunn - Coordinator, GhostNets Australia

Image bottom: Aurukun's Mavis Ngallametta's basket with thong handle - made from ghostnet and raffia.

Image top left and right: Artists Showing coiling techniques to make baskets and other objects without traditional grass or palm.



Balkanu



North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance

Looking after our Country...our way.

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