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**Northern Australia
Environmental
Resources
Hub**

National Environmental Science Programme

Knowledge brokering for Indigenous Land Management

Start-up factsheet

The challenge

Indigenous land management (ILM) occurs over significant proportions of northern Australia that contain many high-value environmental assets. Effective land management is vital to northern Australian development and Indigenous land managers have a strong desire to engage in the increasing level of development planning. Traditional Owners hold substantial knowledge about using, managing and safeguarding northern Australia's natural and cultural resources, and a significant body of scientific research is also available. However, these knowledge resources have not yet fully empowered Traditional Owners' land management and development capability. Several barriers impede effective knowledge uptake: **technological** barriers, such as unreliable internet access and a lack of plain English Information; **social** barriers such as poor health and other commitments that hinder senior custodians' participation in knowledge-sharing; and **organisational** barriers such as excessive demands on staff to act as cultural brokers.

How will this research help?

Effective knowledge brokering can help overcome barriers. Knowledge brokering is about the way we turn knowledge into action and it consists of five broad areas: problem identification, context analysis, knowledge

development and selection, knowledge exchange work, and knowledge use. This project will involve Indigenous peoples as co-researchers to develop tools that will assist them to identify useful knowledge resources and explore ways they can use different types of knowledge for decision-making. It will deliver:

- tailored knowledge brokering tools and guidelines for their use;
- knowledge-sharing among Indigenous land managers across northern Australia through workshops and digital networking activities;
- a diagnosis of the conditions under which knowledge brokering can improve Indigenous adaptive management of environmental assets.



Right: Burning Nicholson Block, Northern Territory, photo Northern Land Council. Above: Bardi Jawi Rangers, photo Kimberley Land Council.



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Left and right: Karajarri Rangers. Bottom: Ngurrara Rangers. Photos thanks to Kimberley Land Council.



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Research method

Indigenous stewardship of land and sea is underpinned by self-determined decision-making based on relevant knowledge. The co-research approach places Indigenous people as central to driving the design and testing of the knowledge brokering tools, and sharing their findings with other Indigenous people, through peer-to-peer knowledge exchange, and with others through digital means. Two in-depth case studies will support Indigenous land managers:

- explore stakeholder influence mapping and build a 3-D model of country to assess risks and opportunities in the Fitzroy River catchment of Western Australia.
- undertake Indigenous-driven evaluation of current land management, and use the results to drive new, more holistic planning in the Nicholson region of the Northern Territory.

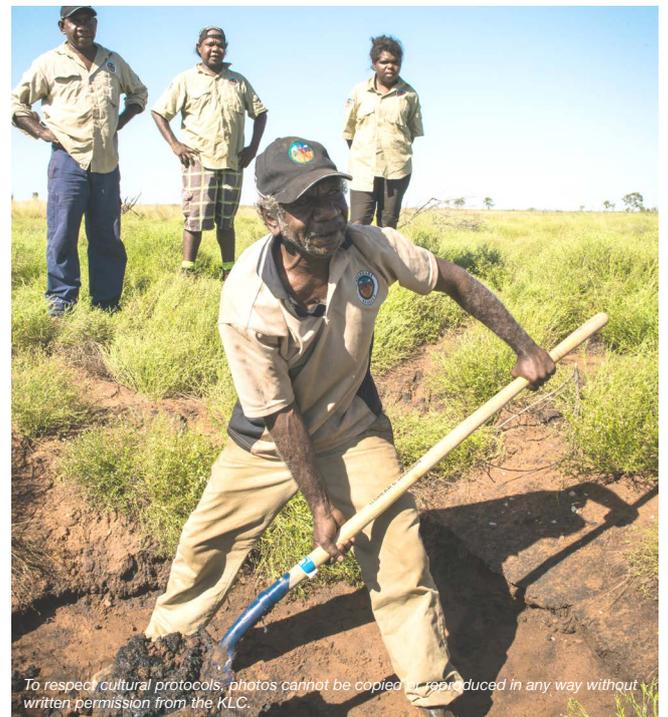
Who is involved?

Dr Ro Hill from the CSIRO and Ms Melissa George from NAILSMA will lead the project. Dr Hill and Ms George will be supported by researchers from the CSIRO and NAILSMA. Indigenous land managers from across northern Australia will be involved in knowledge sharing activities.

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