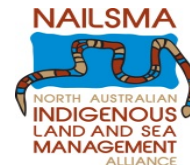


Reporting Back – Kimberley Workshops Fire Discussions

November 16th (Fitzroy Crossing) and 20th (Kununurra) 2015



Facilitated by Ro Hill
(CSIRO)



National Environmental Science Programme

Kimberley Workshops

Fitzroy Crossing (16th November 2015)

Anne Poelina	Nyikina Mangala
Lynette Shaw	Gooniyandi
Natalie Davey	Bunuba
Brendan Fox	Ngurrara Healthy Country Coordinator
Hugh James	Gooninyandi Rangers
Steven Heggie	Bush Heritage/Bunuba
Ian Perdrisat	
	Ngurrara Knowledge Project (Jaru/Balanajarra)
Cissy Gore-Birch	
Chantelle Murray	Walmajarri/ Gooniyandi
Melinda Sheppard	Bunuba Staff
Peter Murray	Ngurrara
Michael Douglas	Uni of WA/NESP Hub Leader
Ro Hill	CSIRO

Kununurra (20th November 2015)

Imran Paddy	Kija
Thomas Grounds	Kija Healthy Country coordinator
	Wilinggin Healthy Country Coordinator
Katherine Mitchell	
Ro Hill	CSIRO

Workshops discussions

- What are some good stories about fire projects and partnerships?
- What are some of the challenges and issues you faced?
- What are the most important institutional factors for supporting good fire projects?



Successful projects, activities

- Qantas project with Balangarra, price has enabled aerial burns plus cultural work
- Ngurrara fee-for-service work with pastoralists nearby. Not much fire work in the desert.
- Bunuba getting resources from parks to be engaged in burning
- Kija – Gouldian finch project. Pastoralists asking them to come and help on Violet Valley mapping areas to burn for the finches.
- Willinggin – fire planning workshops. Start with the Elders each year and then work with the neighbours.
- Northern Kimberley TO cooperation. Chopper rotates between 4 groups. Balangara have 2 different base camps, chopper out doing comping, Rangers back at camp learning about country, fire management, cultural knowledge, fishing etc.
- Protective burn around rock art sites etc. leveraged off carbon \$
- Fire maps, scars, plans, paper, projected onto white boards
- Monitoring with remote camera, photo points, biodiversity surveys
- Fire important cross-IPA and cross-targets e.g weeds, ferals

Fire Walks (and camps)

- Fire walks really important, rangers and elders together, feels good, see different side of people, atmosphere great
- Combine with training e.g. remote navigations, Ranger Courses
- Not just fire, look at rock art, cultural sites, feral animals, weeds, native plants, animals e.g. extent of cane toad invasion only realised during fire walk.
- Finding new rock art on Fire Walks, documenting these
- Base camps for choppers for aerial burns can support fire walks
- Need big chopper to fit senior custodians, and fire managers.
- Management of cultural sites with fire involves lots of stuff:
 - Transmission of cultural knowledge – way they used to burn in the past, stories for country, important sites to protect, language
 - Why they doing it, for bush tucker and stuff, reasons behind it.
 - Pride that prevents suicide and social problems
 - Environmental benefits
 - Helps control feral animals like cats, weed management
 - Protection of habitat for animals

Challenges and issues

- Current price for carbon farming below break-even
- Bigger chopper needed to combine cultural, on-ground and aerial burning is expensive
- Being able to put a \$ figure on multiple benefit outcomes from fire
- Measuring carbon – carbon offset-reporting
- Fires have to be fought when there is a potential when threats to carbon credits, grass for cattle, buildings, tourists
- Working with Remote Jobs Community Program to establish an emergency fire fighting crew
- Rangers have helped pastoralists with late emergency fire control
- Pastoralists get reimbursed by FESA for fire control activities, but then they don't pay the rangers
- Currently works through “hybrid economy” e.g. money from carbon market, government funding of rangers, IPA – carbon not enough

Challenges and issues

- Roads - pastoral lessees trying to stop people driving through their station to exclusive possession native title land
- Air – new mail plane contract doesn't allow people on the plane, used to be fairly cheap way to get around
- Licences – State asking TOs to get an additional licences, claiming
- Tenures – fragmentation of landscape, hard to conduct a burning program
- Boundaries – cooperation with pastoralists around fires crossing boundaries, but not Department of Parks and Wildlife (DPaW)
- New WA legislation - restricting burning on conservation lands to DPaW, can't burn according to customary practices, even when rangers are involved, even under joint management
- Some non-indigenous groups trying to lock TOs out of rock art sites
- Some burning slip-ups by TOs – fire crossing into tourist area, minor infrastructure burnt
- Southern fires increased risk-avoidance - unintended consequences e.g. no permits for fires on high winds in wet when easiest managed

Institutions for success

- Tenure that supports TO fire practices e.g. exclusive possession over ALT lands
- Measurements of carbon outcomes *plus* co-benefits, cultural, individual well-being
- Price that pays for co-benefits e.g. big enough chopper to support Fire Walks
- Cultural institutions, language, practices, sites, traditional indicators like emus, abundance of bush tucker, cultural resources e.g. books, recording knowledge
- Research partnerships to support new methodologies and measurements
- Kimberley-specific guidelines for fire permits, matched to local conditions
- Fire emergency control crews being available

“Knowing where cultural sites are, maintaining connection by being there, knowing stories, cleaning vegetation around them, burning around them”

Knx Workshop

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