



Project 5.3: Multiple benefits and knowledge systems of ILMPs: Economic perspectives

Project leader: Natalie Stoeckl, James Cook University
Project update, June 2017

What's new?

Our project started in February 2016. For the first 10 months, we spent most of our time analysing data that was publicly available. This analysis was divided into two:

- Creation of economic models that allowed us to estimate the regional economic impact of expenditure on Indigenous land management programs (ILMPs) in the Kimberley, in the NT, and in north Qld. In addition to considering total regional impact, our models also allowed us to look at the share of financial benefit flowing to Indigenous and non-Indigenous households.
- Collation of information from the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) about the income, assets and number of employees of different corporations. We looked at the characteristics of those corporations (e.g. age, length of time since incorporation and remoteness) focusing in particular on corporations engaged in land management but also comparing corporations in northern Australia with those in the south.

In addition to a short whole-of-project summary, we compiled two separate documents that summarised key findings from those preliminary investigations, distributing them within and between our Indigenous partner organisations and within the Departments of Environment & Energy and Prime Minister & Cabinet (PM&C).

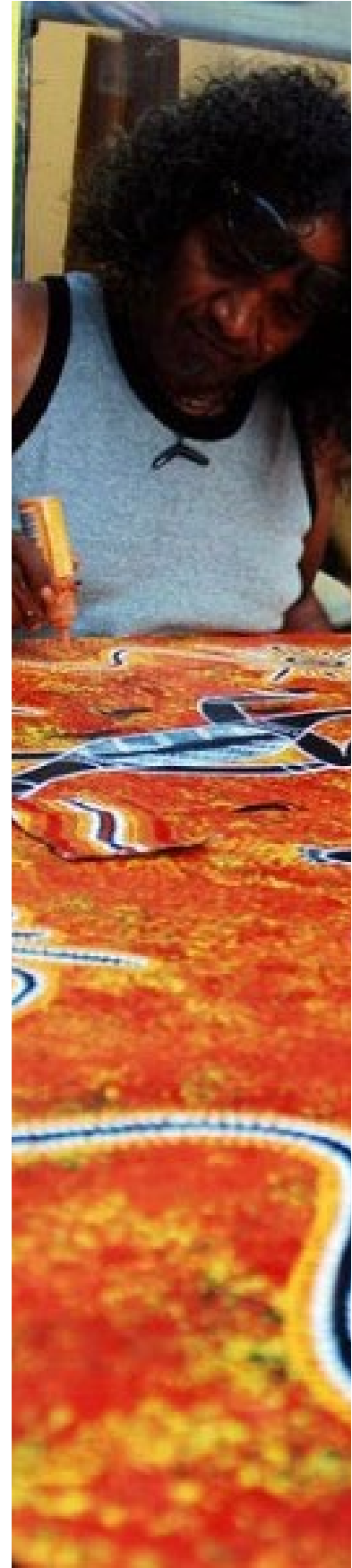
During 2016 we also started preparing for our case study work. We obtained ethics clearance from James Cook University (JCU), we developed a research agreement and an initial work plan for our case study work with the Ewamian Aboriginal Corporation (EAC) in Qld, and we made two separate trips to the Kimberley to start scoping work and building relationships with our partner organisations in that region. These organisations include:

- Bununba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation
- Walalakoo Aboriginal Corporation (registered body corporate for the Nyikina Mangala peoples)
- Yi-Martuwarra Claimants or Claim Group
- Gooniyandi Aboriginal Corporation

Our activities and achievements so far in 2017 include:

Dr Jane Addison and Dr Diane Jarvis have now joined the team (each spending about two days per week on this project) to help fill the gap left by Dr Michelle Esparon, who will be on maternity leave until May 2018.

We have continued to work with PM&C to collate data relating to government spending on ILMPs across the north for use in our economic models, so that we can be sure that the scenarios we analyse reflect realities. Since the start of 2017, most of our effort has focused on our case studies in both Qld and WA – see map on next page, which highlights the river catchments which overlap the traditional country of our case study communities (n.b. we are only working with a few communities in these catchments).



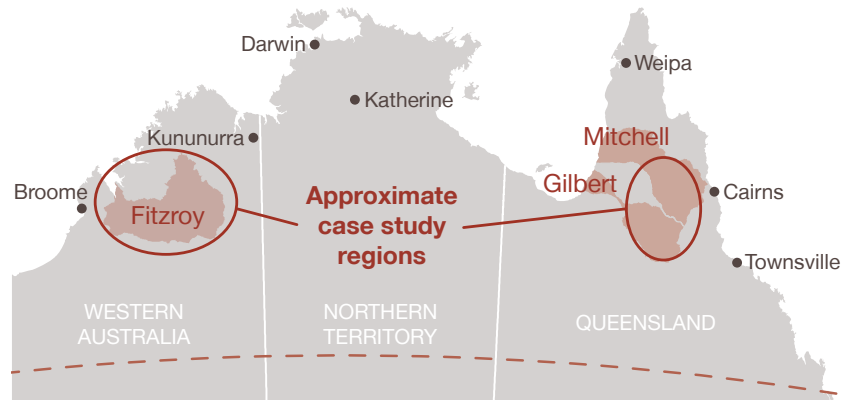


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1. We developed a questionnaire for use when collecting data from individuals about some of the personal benefits of ILMPs.
2. We have also developed a parallel questionnaire for use when collecting data from groups about some of the broader benefits of ILMPs.
3. We have finalised the background administrative details relating to our Qld case study with EAC – including the development of a more formal research agreement, and delineation of tasks – and have begun collecting data.
 - Both Jane and Diane visited Mareeba on 10 February, to introduce themselves, to discuss plans for data collection, and to gain feedback on the draft survey.
 - Diane attended the EAC board meeting on 11 April, collecting some background information relating to government expenditure on ILMPs and on their Indigenous enterprises and aspirations for future enterprises. While there, she also obtained additional feedback and was able to answer questions about our proposed questionnaire (for use when interviewing individuals). These insights, combined with insights from the Fitzroy River catchment in WA, allowed us to finalise the questionnaire for use in the field.
 - Between 26 April–5 May, Jane and Diane travelled around the Mareeba, Atherton and Kuranda area with two Ewamian research assistants, interviewing Ewamian people in their homes.
 - Since May, Diane has conducted several more surveys with Ewamian people who live in and around Cairns (facilitated by the help of members of the EAC).
 - So far, we have conducted 36 interviews with Ewamian residents of north Qld.
4. Hub Regional Research Coordinator Karen Dayman has been working with our team and with other Hub researchers who will be working in the Fitzroy River catchment (WA) to develop a research agreement and work plan for our case study work in the Kimberley. Our agreement will comprise one part of a larger agreement that will cover all Hub projects in the catchment.
 - Jane travelled to the Kimberley in the week beginning 18 April, to attend a meeting for all Hub projects working in the Kimberley, where she gave a presentation explaining our project to attendees.
 - Jane spent an additional day with Indigenous representatives, and distributed key visual aids intended for use in our



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interviews, obtaining valuable feedback. This feedback has been incorporated into key parts of the questionnaire, and parts of it have been translated into Fitzroy Kriol for use when interviewing respondents who would prefer to not use English.

- Jane was also able to start conversations about data collection logistics within each community, to assist with the development of a more detailed workplan and research agreement.

That research agreement and work plan are now well developed. We anticipate finalising all within the next month or two, and visiting our partner communities in the Fitzroy before the end of the year to start collecting data.

Some emerging findings

1. Expenditure on Indigenous land management programs does not only benefit Indigenous people. It contributes more broadly to regional economies with 'knock-on' expenditures. In some cases, the 'knock-on' benefits that accrue to non-Indigenous households can even be larger than all of the financial benefits going to Indigenous households.
2. Regional economic benefit is not just about how much is spent on ILMPs. What really matters is how much (and with whom) money is 're-spent'. If the people who receive money from ILMPs (e.g. some of the employees of land management businesses) spend their money with other Indigenous businesses (e.g. grocery stores, mechanical shops) or in businesses that employ Indigenous people, then it is as if their fortune is shared with other Indigenous people. Encouraging local spending with Indigenous businesses, or businesses that employ Indigenous people, and supporting the development of other Indigenous businesses is one way of enhancing the benefits of ILMPs for Indigenous people.
3. The sample size from our case study questionnaires is still small ($n=36$), and results will change as we add more observations. However we have found that the five things mentioned most frequently as being
 - 'very important' to overall wellbeing are:
 - i. Feeling strong in culture
 - ii. Having the legal right to use/access country
 - iii. Being out on country
 - iv. Having a paid job
 - v. Knowing that family are healthy and strong in body and mind
 - both 'very important' and of 'concern' (i.e. with respondents expressing dissatisfaction with them) include:
 - i. Having a paid job
 - ii. Having jobs available in the community
 - iii. Knowing that family are healthy and strong in body and mind
 - iv. Having legal right to use/access country
 - v. Sharing knowledge





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If ILMPs are able to help improve the things that are both ‘important’, and ‘of concern’ to Indigenous people, then they have the potential to improve the wellbeing of individuals within communities.

Upcoming activities

Planned project activities over the next six months include:

- Continuing to collect data from Ewamian people in and around the Cairns/Mareeba/Kuranda area. We will also spend several days in the Brisbane/Cherbourg area during early June, conducting interviews with some of the Ewamian people living in these regions (accompanied by a research assistant from Ewamian).
- Visiting the Kimberley region to conduct interviews there. This visit will either entail a relatively small team of researchers, staying for up to six weeks, or a larger group, staying for 7–10 days. While there, the JCU research team will work closely with and be accompanied by cultural brokers from each of our partner organisations.
- Ro Hill and Melissa George are leading a related project ([Project 5.4: Knowledge partnerships for Indigenous land management](#)). Amongst other activities, they are holding a workshop in the NT in late June. We will be there to share some of the insights gained from our analysis of the characteristics of Indigenous corporations involved in land management. We will also be running a pre-workshop forum, inviting attendees of the main workshop to participate in discussions about community wellbeing by identifying factors crucially important to wellbeing and thinking about the extent to which land management programs do (or could) have a positive influence on those key factors.

Further information

Contact project leader, Natalie Stoeckl at natalie.stoeckl@jcu.edu.au

The project page can be found [on the Hub website](#), along with the [project start-up factsheet](#).

Multiple benefits and knowledge systems of ILMPs
Economic Perspectives

Project context
Indigenous people are integral to the conservation of Australia's biodiversity and maintenance of cultural resources. Their ecological knowledge, passed on from one generation to another, has been shown recently to have been lost for tens of thousands of years. The importance of this knowledge is recognised throughout the world and is financially supported by investments in a variety of Indigenous Land Management Programs (ILMPs) (mostly, but not exclusively, funded by government). Aside from generating ecological benefits, these programs generate many co-benefits to local, national and economic, medicinal, and social well-being.

How will this research help?
Funding agencies such as governments, businesses and NGOs would like to know if their investments represent 'value for money'. This project will provide quantified, comparable data about the co-benefits of different types of ILMPs. In doing so, it will generate information that is likely to:

1. Support continued and increased funding to support Indigenous people working on country; and
2. Better guide investments towards ILMPs that effectively deliver most benefit in different contexts.

Authors: Natalie Stoeckl (JCU), Roger Archer (Land Australia), and Leah (JCU). Preparation for Aboriginal body: Leah (JCU).
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Project summary

Investments in ILMPs are growing, both internationally and in Australia. Whilst these programs aim to generate environmental benefits, they also generate many social, cultural and economic co-benefits. While we have some understanding of the monetary value of some of these co-benefits, we lack information about other less tangible co-benefits such as those relating to culture. Funding agencies such as governments, businesses and NGOs would like to know if their investments represent ‘value for money’. This project will provide quantified, comparable data about the co-benefits of different types of ILMPs. It is using some broad-scale ‘desktop’ data relating to government expenditure on ILMPs to assess the regional economic impact of this expenditure in northern Australia. It is also looking at some of the characteristics of Indigenous corporations that are involved in land management activities across northern Australia. This project partners with communities in the upper Gilbert/Mitchell River catchments (Qld) and the Fitzroy Valley in the Kimberley (WA) to develop case studies in those areas.