



Kakadu National Park, photo NESP Northern Hub.



**Northern Australia
Environmental
Resources
Hub**

National Environmental Science Programme

***Bininj/Mungguy* healthy country indicators**

Start-up factsheet

We need better cross-cultural approaches to monitor and evaluate the health of country in protected areas

As in other protected areas around Australia, staff and Traditional Owners in Kakadu National Park are committed to working together to protect the health of important values on their country. However, information is limited on how to jointly assess the health of country to guide effective co-management activities. To care for important areas, cross-cultural monitoring and evaluation frameworks need to be co-designed and trialled with Indigenous partners to develop appropriate measures of success, data sharing processes and methods for identifying priority management actions.



This research will focus on three pilot sites in Kakadu National Park, chosen by Bininj/Mungguy and Kakadu staff through the Bininj/Mungguy Research Steering Committee.



Part of the Bininj/Mungguy project team with researchers at the Jarrangbarnmi (Koolpin) case study site, photo Michael Douglas.

Overview

This project will:

- identify *Bininj/Mungguy* indicators and methods that can be used to monitor and evaluate the health of country in Kakadu National Park
- increase *Bininj/Mungguy* involvement in adaptive co-management and decisions
- inform Kakadu National Park's reporting efforts on natural resource management activities
- contribute to improving cross-cultural monitoring and performance reporting approaches in protected areas.

Bininj/Mungguy indicators will be used for adaptive co-management

Bininj/Mungguy Traditional Owners have led the co-design of this research project through their Steering Committee. The project will develop and trial an adaptive approach to co-management using *Bininj/Mungguy* indicators to monitor and evaluate the health of important values on country. These indicators will be used to empower *Bininj/Mungguy* to monitor and evaluate if and how natural resource management objectives in Kakadu are being met.

The work will focus on three pilot sites representing woodland, floodplain and stone country of Kakadu. At each pilot site, *Bininj/Mungguy* co-researchers, Rangers and the research team will engage in an action-learning process of adaptive co-management. This will involve co-developing indicators that can be used to illustrate the health of important values on country, and methods for monitoring those indicators. The team will also determine on-ground actions at each site and monitor the health of country before and after each management activity.

Bininj/Mungguy co-researchers, Rangers and the research team will then reflect on the results to improve future natural resource management activities and contribute to monitoring, evaluating and reporting efforts in Kakadu.

Project activities

- Led by a *Bininj/Mungguy* Research Steering Committee and working with *Bininj/Mungguy* co-researchers and Rangers, co-develop a set of



Healthy country indicators and monitoring methods will be developed at each pilot site, photo Michael Douglas.

indicators that will be piloted to monitor and evaluate the health of three pilot sites in:

1. Stone country (Kun-warddewardde) before and after fire management
 2. Floodplain country (An-kabohkabo dja kurrula) before and after para grass and pig control
 3. Woodland country (Kukarnhkarndan) before and after weed and fire management.
- Undertake management activities guided by Traditional Owners
 - Share learnings from the three sites with *Bininj/Mungguy* Traditional Owners, Rangers and Park managers.

Anticipated outputs

- A description of *Bininj/Mungguy* indicators and methods for monitoring the health of important landscapes in Kakadu National Park that can be incorporated into the park's evaluation and reporting activities
- A handbook on best practice cross-cultural monitoring and evaluation approaches that can be used for adaptive co-management in protected areas
- Reports and scientific publications
- *Bininj/Mungguy* co-designed presentations, summaries and factsheets.

Who is involved?

This project, stage two of the Indigenous NRM in Kakadu project, is being led by Dr Cathy Robinson from CSIRO in conjunction with the *Bininj/Mungguy* Research Steering Committee.

Dr Robinson will be supported by researchers from The University of Western Australia, Charles Darwin University, CSIRO and by *Bininj/Mungguy* Traditional Owners and Rangers.

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For further information and project updates, visit the project webpage at nespnorthern.edu.au/projects/nesp/healthy-country-indicators



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