



Barkans



North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance

Looking after Our Country...Our Way.

I-Tracker



CyberTracker

North Australian Indigenous I-Tracker Network: Part of the CyberTracker Worldwide Network





What is I-Tracker?

I-Tracker is an initiative of the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA).

I-Tracker is a network of Indigenous Land and Sea rangers and managers across north Australia who work together to collect and share information for better land and sea management.

I-Tracker is supported and developed

through NAILSMA's Saltwater People Network.

I-Tracker is about developing standardised tools to help Indigenous land and sea managers to collect, manage and share information about natural and cultural resources across remote north Australia.

I-Tracker is supporting Indigenous land and sea managers to use the information they collect to improve land and sea management at local, regional, national and even international scales.

How does I-Tracker work?

I-Tracker matches state-of-the-art, “field-tough” hand-held computers with internationally acclaimed software known as ‘CyberTracker’.

Together these tools provide a user-friendly, culturally appropriate and scientifically approved way of collecting information while out on land and sea country. NAILSMA provides support to I-Tracker participants through:

- ▶ access to accredited customised Cybertracker data collection applications;
- ▶ access to maps and similar resources;
- ▶ training and technical support; and
- ▶ newsletters and other communication and networking opportunities.

NAILSMA promotes the wider use of CyberTracker and the development of networks to support Indigenous land and sea management across Australia.

NAILSMA also works with international collaborators to promote the principles of I-Tracker and the use of CyberTracker.





Guiding Principles of I-Tracker

As agreed by NAILSMA's partners, the guiding principles of I-Tracker are as follows:

- ▶ Participants are working under approved local plans and have the authority of local Traditional Owners to complete their work.
- ▶ Participants have identified a clear understanding of why data is being collected and that I-tracker is an appropriate tool to collect, manage and share the information.
- ▶ Data is being collected for the purpose of informing local/ community priorities such as: community-based management plans, day to day Ranger operations, fee for service agreements with external stakeholders, and reporting requirements to funding organisations.
- ▶ Agreements and protocols are in place to ensure that Traditional Owners of the target area have given their informed consent for the data collection to occur.
- ▶ Traditional Owners have discussed how the data is to be used, stored, analysed and shared with others.
- ▶ Ownership of the data has been clearly defined and agreed.

Organisations or individuals wishing to participate in I-Tracker must agree to these principles.

What's needed to participate in I-Tracker?

There are a number of operational requirements necessary for the successful implementation of I-Tracker. These include:

1. General Requirements

- ▶ On ground leader who will support and direct I-Tracker and associated work routines (this role is usually filled by a ranger coordinator; it is vastly preferable that this leader is on site).
- ▶ Office or other meeting space that is secure, has a regular supply of electricity, and houses a computer that can be used for I-Tracker.
- ▶ Adequate training in CyberTracker software and access to follow-up support.
- ▶ Established work routines including regular on country monitoring.
- ▶ A clear understanding of the intended use for data collected using CyberTracker.

2. Computer Requirements

- ▶ Regular and continued access to a working PC or laptop that uses Microsoft Windows 2000/XP/2003/Vista.
- ▶ Several people within the organisation who have basic computer literacy; the ability to operate in a Windows

environment; and the ability to use the simplest features of Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel.

- ▶ Internet access is not strictly required in order to use CyberTracker but is strongly suggested; internet connection is needed to access important mapping and data management functions.

3. Technical Requirements

- ▶ Hardware – I-Tracker requires a ruggedized 'touch screen' Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) running Microsoft Windows which can be used under harsh field conditions.
- ▶ Software – The software that I-Tracker uses is called CyberTracker and can be downloaded freely from www.cybertracker.org. Software needs to be installed onto the I-Tracker office computer AND onto the field unit.
- ▶ Cybertracker database application – This is a customised application that guides users to record data through a 'touch screen' response to a series of questions and prompts. NAILSMA is collaborating with Indigenous rangers, researchers and funding agencies to develop standardised applications that support ranger patrols and community management requirements across north Australia.

What sort of information is I-Tracker collecting?

I-Tracker can be used to collect information about a wide range of natural and cultural resources. Currently, NAILSMA is supporting a 'Saltwater Country Patrol Application', which allows rangers to collect a wide variety of information relevant to sea country management, including:

- ▶ live marine animals;
- ▶ turtle nests and tracks;
- ▶ dead or sick animals;
- ▶ boats including illegal foreign fishing vessels;
- ▶ marine debris including ghost nets;
- ▶ quarantine activities;
- ▶ commercial fishing nets & crab pots;
- ▶ pest samples; and
- ▶ fish kills.

The Saltwater Country Patrol Application also supports recording and reporting of data to meet the reporting requirements of Australian Customs, the Australian Quarantine & Inspective Service, Northern Territory Fisheries and the Carpentaria Ghost Nets Programme.

Initially developed by the Djelk Rangers, (Maningrida, NT), advancement of the Saltwater

Country Patrol Application also included collaborations with:

- ▶ Australian Quarantine & Inspection Service;
- ▶ Australian Customs;
- ▶ Australian Marine Mammal Centre (*Project title: Developing a decision process based on expert knowledge to inform the management of dugongs and coastal dolphins in Northern Australia: the Yanyuwa sea country in the Northern Territory as a case study*);
- ▶ Carpentaria Ghost Nets Programme; and
- ▶ Northern Territory Fisheries.

Its development was also informed by many Indigenous rangers and ranger program coordinators who provided valuable feedback on earlier versions. It will continue to be updated based on feedback from participating groups. Applications to support other monitoring requirements will be developed in the future.



