



Balkanu



# North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance

*Looking after Our Country...Our Way.*

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## Sustainable Enterprises Research TRaCK Theme 6 Update

**A TRaCK workshop held in Brisbane in October 2010, brought together for the first time all Theme 6 project leaders and researchers to discuss findings, issues and ideas for further research.**

All Theme 6 projects are running on time. NAILSMA is currently coordinating this Theme through its Indigenous Water Resource Management Program. Michael Storrs, the previous Theme 6 coordinator, finished his contract earlier this year and now works with the National Water Commission, in Canberra. NAILSMA acknowledges the significant contribution Michael made to the TRaCK program and wishes him all the best in his new position with the NWC.

### Project updates

**Water Markets: TRaCK Project 6.1** - led by Quentin Grafton, ANU with research being undertaken by William Nikolakis, ANU.

This project is a study to assess feasibility and consequences of market-based mechanisms of water delivery. It has three main tasks:

- Task One: examine institutional arrangements for water markets;
- Task Two: review and survey stakeholder attitudes to water markets; and
- Task Three: develop a synthesis report that also scopes the potential for water markets.

William Nikolakis has delivered task one and two. Task Two has recently been published and is available through the [NAILSMA website](#) and the [TRaCK 6 publication portal](#). William

presented Task Two results at the workshop. Some key points included:

- sustainability, environmental protection; social, equity and economic development are important values;
- Indigenous engagement in water planning and water reform is vital; and
- environmental needs should be balanced with economic opportunity.

The concept of a water market is supported, but conflicts with people's attitudes that land and water should not be separated. It was also shown that government should be engaged in the regulation of water markets. Indigenous people should be engaged in all processes.

Task Three is expected to be completed at the end of November/early December with a final report delivered within the expected time frame.

**Water Rights: Project 6.2** - Legal research, led by Barrister, Michael O'Donnell, John Toohey Chambers, NT.

The project addresses several terms of reference relating to present law and associated processes in northern Australia, and the way it deals with Native Title and other interests in water that relate to Indigenous rights.

Michael presented some of the key points around the various forms of legislation in each state and territory and how these relate to the prospect of an Indigenous water allocation and cultural flow in water planning processes.

Michael has submitted a draft report that completes six of its seven terms of reference (TOR). The seventh TOR relates to the work

William Nikolakis is undertaking on water markets and Michael will complete this chapter in parallel with William. The draft report has been reviewed by Lee Godden from the University of Melbourne. It should be ready later in the year.

### **Case Study - Arnhem Land NT:**

**Project 6.3** - led by Jon Altman, ANU and research mostly being undertaken by Nanni Concu also from ANU.

This project is basically developing strategies for developing and financing an effective conservation and sustainable use economy in Arnhem Land that provides options for payment for environmental services.

Key points made at the workshop included listing all the constraints and issues for employment in the two areas of study, the Djelk Rangers IPA in Maningrida used as marker for employment and the Dhimmurru Rangers IPA in Yirrkala used as a marker for resource management. Other issues included time spent managing access through administration such as permits, maintenance of infrastructure, and managing the impact of people and feral animals on country, with no time spent on socially important interests like cultural matters and protection of traditional knowledge. Another issue concerned governance. Nanni is expected to deliver a final report in March 2011.

### **Case Study - Archer River Cape York QLD: Project 6.4**

- led by Ellie Austin, Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation and research conducted on the ground by Bruce Martin, also from Balkanu.

This project is developing a holistic sustainable Indigenous livelihoods plan for the Archer River Basin in Cape York.

So far this project has delivered most milestone reports. Key points presented focused on a recently completed workshop in one of its three focus areas that are split along the upper, middle and lower reaches of the Archer River catchment. Bruce presented on the lower reaches where the Aurukun Waterways, Wetlands and Coastal Management Plan is currently being facilitated by Wik Projects Ltd. The opportunity here is to engage in the

development of the management plan to support governance arrangements, facilitate partnerships, explore livelihood opportunities and document issues and process. Bruce noted that less people are on country, but everyone is saying 'being on country and looking after country' is the vision. Aak Puul Ngantam (APN) is a local entity engaged in the process and notes that biodiversity is getting runs but cultural maintenance is still missing. Community is keen to lead and own ideas, work and deliver outcomes.

A workshop for the Toolka Ranger Group in the upper reaches and for the middle reaches have been delivered, (for which Balkanu is contracted by the Queensland government to work with DERM in co-management of the Mungkan Kandju National Park). A final report that provides a big picture approach to catchment economic development along the Archer River is expected to be delivered in March next year.

### **Case Study - Fitzroy River Kimberley WA: Project 6.5**

-case study led by Anne Poelina from Madjulla Incorporated works directly with the Jarlmadangah Burru Aboriginal Corporation

This case study examines sustainable livelihoods on Nyikina Mangala Mardoowarra (Fitzroy River). The case study is focusing on benefits of environmental services that last into the future, as apposed to short term resource use for short term gain. At the workshop, issues were identified around governance, community awareness and cultural conservation. Similar to the other case studies, a final report is expected to be delivered in March next year.

## **Theme 6 - Emerging Interests**

After the research presentations, some key interests emerged, including;

- protection and use of Indigenous Knowledge;
- the importance of building relationships;
- the importance of raising awareness – both ways;
- scoping a definition for Strategic Indigenous Reserve;
- issues around governance; and
- cultural and environmental flows.