



National Environmental
Research Program

TROPICAL ECOSYSTEMS *hub*

Technical Report

Indigenous peoples and biodiversity protection in wet tropics country: from co-management to collaborative governance

Volume 1 Interim policy-relevant findings



Rosemary Hill, Petina L. Pert, Kirsten Maclean, Toni Bauman, Ellie Bock,
Allan P. Dale, M'Lis Flynn, Alf Joyce, Steve McDermott, Vince Mundraby,
Phil Rist, Bruce Rampton, Joann Schmider, Leah D. Talbot and Lavenie Tawake



Australian Government
Department of the Environment

 Reef &
Rainforest
RESEARCH CENTRE

Indigenous peoples and biodiversity protection in wet tropics country: from co-management to collaborative governance

Volume 1 Interim policy-relevant findings

Rosemary Hill^{1, 2}, Petina L. Pert^{1, 2}, Kirsten Maclean¹, Toni Bauman³, Ellie Bock⁴, Allan P. Dale⁵, M'Lis Flynn⁶, Alf Joyce⁷, Steve McDermott⁸, Vince Mundraby⁹, Phil Rist¹⁰, Bruce Rampton¹¹, Joann Schmider¹², Leah D. Talbot¹, Lavenie Tawake¹

¹Land and Water Flagship, CSIRO

²Division of Tropical Environments and Societies, James Cook University

³Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

⁴Regional Advisory and Innovation Network Pty Ltd

⁵The Cairns Institute, James Cook University

⁶Wet Tropic Management Authority

⁷Mamu Traditional Owner

⁸Terrain NRM

⁹Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation

¹⁰Girringun Aboriginal Corporation

¹¹Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

¹²Rainforest Aboriginal person



Australian Government

Department of the Environment

Supported by the Australian Government's
National Environmental Research Program

Project 12.1 Indigenous co-management and biodiversity protection in the wet tropics

© CSIRO

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry:

978-1-925088-39-7

This report should be cited as:

Hill, R., P. L. Pert, K. Maclean, E. Bock, A. P. Dale, A. Joyce, S. McDermott, V. Mundraby, P. Rist, J. Schmider, L. Talbot, and L. Tawake. 2014. Indigenous peoples and biodiversity protection in wet tropics country: from co-management to collaborative governance. Volume 1 interim policy-relevant findings. Report to the National Environmental Research Program. Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Ltd, Cairns. (45pp).

Published by the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre on behalf of the Australian Government's National Environmental Research Program (NERP) Tropical Ecosystems (TE) Hub.

The Tropical Ecosystems Hub is part of the Australian Government's Commonwealth National Environmental Research Program. The NERP TE Hub is administered in North Queensland by the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited (RRRC). The NERP Tropical Ecosystem Hub addresses issues of concern for the management, conservation and sustainable use of the World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef (GBR) and its catchments, tropical rainforests including the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (WTWHA), and the terrestrial and marine assets underpinning resilient communities in the Torres Strait, through the generation and transfer of world-class research and shared knowledge.

This publication is copyright. The Copyright Act 1968 permits fair dealing for study, research, information or educational purposes subject to inclusion of a sufficient acknowledgement of the source.

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Australian Government or the Minister for Environment. While reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the contents of this publication are factually correct, the Commonwealth does not accept responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of the contents, and shall not be liable for any loss or damage that may be occasioned directly or indirectly through the use of, or reliance on, the contents of this publication.

Cover photographs: CSIRO

This report is available for download from the NERP Tropical Ecosystems Hub website:
<http://www.nerptropical.edu.au/research>

August 2014

Contents

List of Tables.....	ii
List of Figures	ii
Acronyms Used In This Report	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Executive Summary	v
Introduction and participatory evaluation methods.....	1
Wet tropics country: people and place	1
Participatory evaluation methods.....	6
Results: from co-management to collaborative governance	11
Key findings from the participatory evaluation	11
Why governance?	13
Transformative knowledge network/s to support social learning for co-governance.....	16
Relevant research findings and gap.....	16
Policy options to address the knowledge-sharing gap.....	17
Context of transformative knowledge networks.....	17
Policy window for a collaborative governance transformative knowledge network	18
Communicating delivery of multiple benefits	18
Research findings and policy gap.....	18
Policy options to address the gap in communicating multiple benefits	21
Policy context for communicating multiple benefits.....	21
Policy window for communicating multiple benefits.....	22
Value-added Indigenous Protected Areas and Rangers.....	22
Relevant research findings and gap.....	22
Policy options to address the value-added IPA gap	23
Context of value-added IPAs and Rangers.....	23
Policy Window	24
Value-added Indigenous Land Use Agreements	25
Relevant research findings and gap.....	25
Policy options to address value-added ILUAs	26
Policy context of value-added ILUAs.....	26
Policy window for value-added ILUAs	27
Native Title Corporations and Local Governments.....	29
Relevant research findings and gap.....	29
Policy options to address the gap relevant to Native Title Corporations and Local Government ...	30
Policy context for Native Title Corporations and Local Government.....	31
Policy window for Native Title Corporations and Local Government.....	31
Conclusions and next steps	31
References.....	33

List of Tables

Table 1: Categories and themes (used as indicators) for the participatory evaluation	8
Table 2: Components used in the participatory evaluation and explanations of their meanings	9
Table 3: Health traffic light system used for rating	9
Table 4: Ratings of the health of co-management from the participatory evaluations at regional (Rainforest Aboriginal People and partners), sub-regional (Girringun) and tribal (Mandingalbay Yidinji) scales.....	11
Table 5: What is the difference between management and governance?	13
Table 6: The IUCN Protected Area Matrix—a classification system comprising both management category and governance type (Dudley 2008).	24

List of Figures

Figure 1: 'Wet tropics country' study area	3
Figure 2: Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples and wet tropics country. Source: RAPA 2013.....	5
Figure 3: Stages in the co-research and participatory evaluation.....	7
Figure 4: Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Keeping Strong: average health ratings in the four participatory evaluations	12
Figure 5: Keeping Engagement Strong: average health ratings in the four participatory evaluations.....	12
Figure 6: Schematic diagram of the characteristics of governance (Borrini-Feyerabend and Hill 2014 (in press)).....	14
Figure 7: Location of the 65 Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers, December 2013	29

Acronyms Used In This Report

AC	Aboriginal Corporation
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DOE	Department of the Environment
GBR	Great Barrier Reef
ILUA	Indigenous Land Use Agreement
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
JYAC	Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation
MY	Mandingalbay Yidinji
NRM	Natural Resource management
NRS	National Reserve System
NERP	National Environmental Research Program
OUVs	Outstanding Universal Values
PBC	Prescribed Body Corporate
PM&C	Prime Minister and Cabinet
RAPA	Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Alliance
RRRC	Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited
TO	Traditional Owner
TUMRA	Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement
WTWHA	Wet Tropics World Heritage Area

Acknowledgements

This research is supported financially by the Australian Governments' National Environmental Research Program - Tropical Ecosystems Hub and co-investment from the CSIRO Land and Water Flagship. Many other organisations are making invaluable in-kind contributions to the co-research. We would like to acknowledge and thank the Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Alliance for their important role as the regional leadership group in advancing the regional priorities of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples within the Wet Tropics region. We would also like to acknowledge the in-kind co-investment and support from our co-research partners: the Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Alliance (including Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation (AC); The Central Wet Tropics Institute for Country and Culture AC; and Girringun AC); Mandingalbay Yidinji AC and their Djunbunji Land and Sea Program; Wet Tropics Management Authority; Terrain NRM; the Australian Conservation Foundation; the Indigenous Protected Area and Working on Country programs of the Australian Government's Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and Department of Environment; the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service of their Department of National Parks Recreation Sport and Racing; James Cook University's Cairns Institute, the Regional Advisory and Innovation Network (RAIN) and Smyth and Bahrtdt Consultants. We would also like to acknowledge and thank the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies for the reciprocal partnership with their Native Title and Joint Management research project led by Toni Bauman.

Executive Summary

Rainforest Aboriginal peoples in the Australian wet tropics (Queensland) have actively and collectively asserted their right to manage their traditional estates according to their culture since the 1980s (RAPA 2013). This report presents the outcomes of a co-research project to evaluate the partnerships that Rainforest Aboriginal peoples have with their government and non-government counterparts to co-manage and protect terrestrial biodiversity on these estates. The evaluation interrogates the capability of Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) and other collaborative planning models and mechanisms, to provide the means for recognition of Indigenous knowledge and values, and joint management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area between Governments and Rainforest Aboriginal people, in partnership with communities.

The evaluation was conducted over three and a half years (mid 2011-2014). It involved social scientists, spatial analysts, Rainforest Aboriginal people and the government and non-government environmental organisations involved in co-management in the region. A participatory co-research approach was used to develop and conduct the evaluation, and facilitate social learning between participants. The co-research occurred through a five stage process: 1) the identification of mutual interests between all those who chose to be involved in the research; 2) the development of co-research agreements with relevant organizations; 3) development and refinement of a co-management evaluation framework; 4) evaluation of the co-management partnerships (using the framework) conducted via participatory workshops at three scales; 5) collaborative analysis, interpretation, report-writing and theory-building.

The participatory framework developed for the evaluation includes two major categories for co-management: “Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Keeping Strong” and “Keeping Engagement Strong”. These categories recognise that effective engagement by Aboriginal people with their partners in co-management requires that their cultures are thriving and their own knowledge systems alive and expressed in ongoing practices on country. Responsibility for the institutions for “Keeping Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Strong” lies within the Indigenous domain, whereas responsibility for the institutions for “Keeping Engagement Strong” is shared; separate evaluation metrics are therefore required. Six themes were used as indicators for “Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Keeping Strong”: culture; kin; country; Indigenous governance and leadership; capacity; and strategic vision and intent. Seven themes were used as indicators for “Keeping Engagement Strong”: protocols, principles, mechanisms, regimes, power, relationships and issue-resolution. A traffic light system was used assign the ‘health’ rating to each theme, according to three components: structures, processes and results. Qualitative data on the reasons behind the ratings, and associated policy gaps, were also collected and analysed.

All evaluations identified “Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Keeping Strong” as having better ‘health’ than that of “Keeping Engagement Strong”. This finding reflects the extraordinary commitment of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples to maintaining their customary law, culture and unique knowledge systems throughout the colonial era, and their current efforts to strengthen and renew application of their knowledge, practices and values on country. The overall ratings by the partners for both their *support* for Rainforest Aboriginal People Keeping Strong, and for Keeping Engagement Strong, were notably poorer than those conducted with all Rainforest Aboriginal groups across scales. This perception of poor health by the partners reflects two drivers: (1) frustration that the government and non-government organizational processes do not respond as well as they could; and (2) recognition that rating across the region is challenged by the heterogeneity (the evaluation by partners was only conducted at the regional scale).

The evaluations identified that a **collaborative governance** approach – rather than a focus on co-management – was the best overall strategy to further partnerships for co-management in the region. However, both Indigenous and their partners’ governance of wet tropics country is currently underdeveloped (some groups have very good governance, but overall it is patchy across

the wet tropics), and many opportunities to strengthen outcomes through **social learning** were identified.

The evaluations identified that co-governance and co-management of country generates multiple benefits including:

- employment;
- enhanced job-readiness and transition from school to work;
- moving from welfare dependency to business development;
- improved disaster readiness and response;
- mobilizing people out of passivity and empowering leadership;
- biodiversity protection and restoration;
- enhanced reconciliation between local Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities;
- intergenerational knowledge transfer; and
- cultural renewal and reconnection.

These results are particularly important because they address the complex set of factors that Indigenous peoples face, addressing multiple social, economic and educational challenges, for example: lack of economic opportunities in remote and regional Australia; the barriers that poverty, socio-economic disadvantage and native title regimes impose on asset-based development; and the erosion of knowledge transfer processes that are important to country.

IPAs together with Indigenous Ranger groups were identified as highly effective mechanisms due to their capacity to be adaptive and collaborative, to provide a context that supports wider recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights and responsibilities, and ongoing reconciliation in Australian communities. Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA) were also identified as a vitally important mechanism. Their extent is much greater than IPAs, and they are currently the only mechanism available for many groups; however, the current processes and outcomes for ILUAs are highly problematic. Static agreements and conflictual/contested positing over negotiations do not provide for adaptive, collaborative management. Nevertheless, native title is a vital mechanism for providing the platform of recognition of rights that is necessary for real power-sharing. Native title corporations bring a formal Indigenous governance mechanism at the local level to sit alongside the democratic structures provided by our Australian system of local governments. However, the evaluation identified that the roles of native title corporations and those of local governments, particularly the Aboriginal Shire Councils, needs further work.

One over-arching and five subsidiary policy-relevant findings/gaps for recognition of Indigenous knowledge and values on the management of wet tropics country were identified (not in priority order).

A collaborative governance approach—rather than a focus on co-management—is the best overall strategy to further partnerships for co-management in the region, supported by:

- Transformative knowledge network/s to support social learning for co-governance;
- Better understanding of delivery of multiple benefits;
- Value-added Indigenous Protected Areas and rangers;
- Value-added Indigenous Land Use Agreements; and
- Clarification of the roles and responsibilities between Native Title Corporations and Local Governments.

The details of the proposals in each of these areas can be found in this report. We present these policy-relevant findings for consideration by both Rainforest Aboriginal peoples and their government, community and other partners in management of wet tropics country. They do not constitute recommendations that are endorsed by any of the organisations or individuals who came together on the co-research team. Rather they are ideas developed through structured

enquiry that we expect will be useful for all participants. They will also help inform Aboriginal decision making in the Wet Tropics in relation to the relisting and management of the Wet Tropics for its cultural values. In order to better consider the strengths and weaknesses of the policy-relevant findings and options, we are hosting a joint workshop in October 2014, after which policy briefs and findings from the project will be finalised.

Introduction and participatory evaluation methods

Rainforest Aboriginal peoples in the Australian wet tropics have actively and collectively asserted their right to manage their traditional estates according to their culture (Lore, protocol, customary processes) since the 1980s (RAPA 2013). Each of the Traditional Owner groups has a complex cultural system of customary laws and kinship which link them to their 'country'¹ and to one another. Customary law and knowledge is passed on in 'lore', stories encoding history and metaphors about life-ways; law and lore on country together determine important life events such as marriage, subsistence and management practices such as hunting, gathering and vegetation burning (Hill *et al.* 2004; Zurba *et al.* 2012). Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' aspirations towards protection, maintenance, interpretation and promotion of their knowledge and cultural values about their traditional country underpin the significance of research into Indigenous co-management. Government, community and other stakeholders now support the realization of these aspirations through recognition of native title rights, cultural heritage listing, negotiation of land use and management agreements, and funding for rangers and on-ground management.

Rainforest Aboriginal peoples are now involved in managing their traditional lands in wet tropics country in partnership with numerous other actors, including national, provincial and local governments, non-government environment organisations, local landholders and private businesses. Through a co-research project, Rainforest Aboriginal people and their partners in management of country were supported by a scientific team to undertake a participatory evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of their partnerships. This report presents the outcomes from this participatory evaluation together with findings related to the policy gaps that were identified in the co-research.

Wet tropics country: people and place

'Wet tropics country' in this report refers to a region in tropical north-east Queensland, Australia, extending from Cooktown (15° S, 145° E) to Townsville (19° S, 147° E), and encompassing the "Wet Tropics Bioregion", buffered by a 50km zone that to encompass relevant Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' traditional boundaries (Queensland Government Natural Resources 2004; Figure 1). The region is characterized by its tropical climate, spectacular scenery, Indigenous cultural values, economic productivity and globally significant biodiversity.

The outstanding universal significance of the natural values of wet tropics country was recognized by the listing of some 9,027 km² as the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area in 1988. This recognition of the global significance of their tradition lands *only* for its *natural values* has long been contested by Rainforest Aboriginal peoples who seek recognition of the global significance of their Indigenous cultural values (WTRA 2005). In December 2012, the [Indigenous Values of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area](#) were listed as of national significance

¹ *Country* is a word that indigenous peoples in Australia use as a short-hand for the many deep connections to their land and seas. When they talk about *country*, as Debra Bird Rose (1996, p. 7) explains, they: "speak to country, sing to country, visit country, worry about country, feel sorry for country, and long for country. People say that country knows, hears, smells, takes notice, takes care, is sorry or happy." The term 'country' is used by Rainforest Aboriginal peoples and in this report to refer to their traditional estates. Country has yesterday, today and tomorrow, with a consciousness, and is the essence of spirituality, nourishment for body, mind, and is home in its deepest sense—"land and sea country".

under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (Commonwealth 1999)* in 2012, triggering obligations on the Australian Government to protect these values, and use its best endeavours to ensure a management plan was prepared. Recognition of national-level heritage significance gave impetus for Rainforest Aboriginal people to continue to pursue their larger goal of world heritage listing, which is yet to be realised.

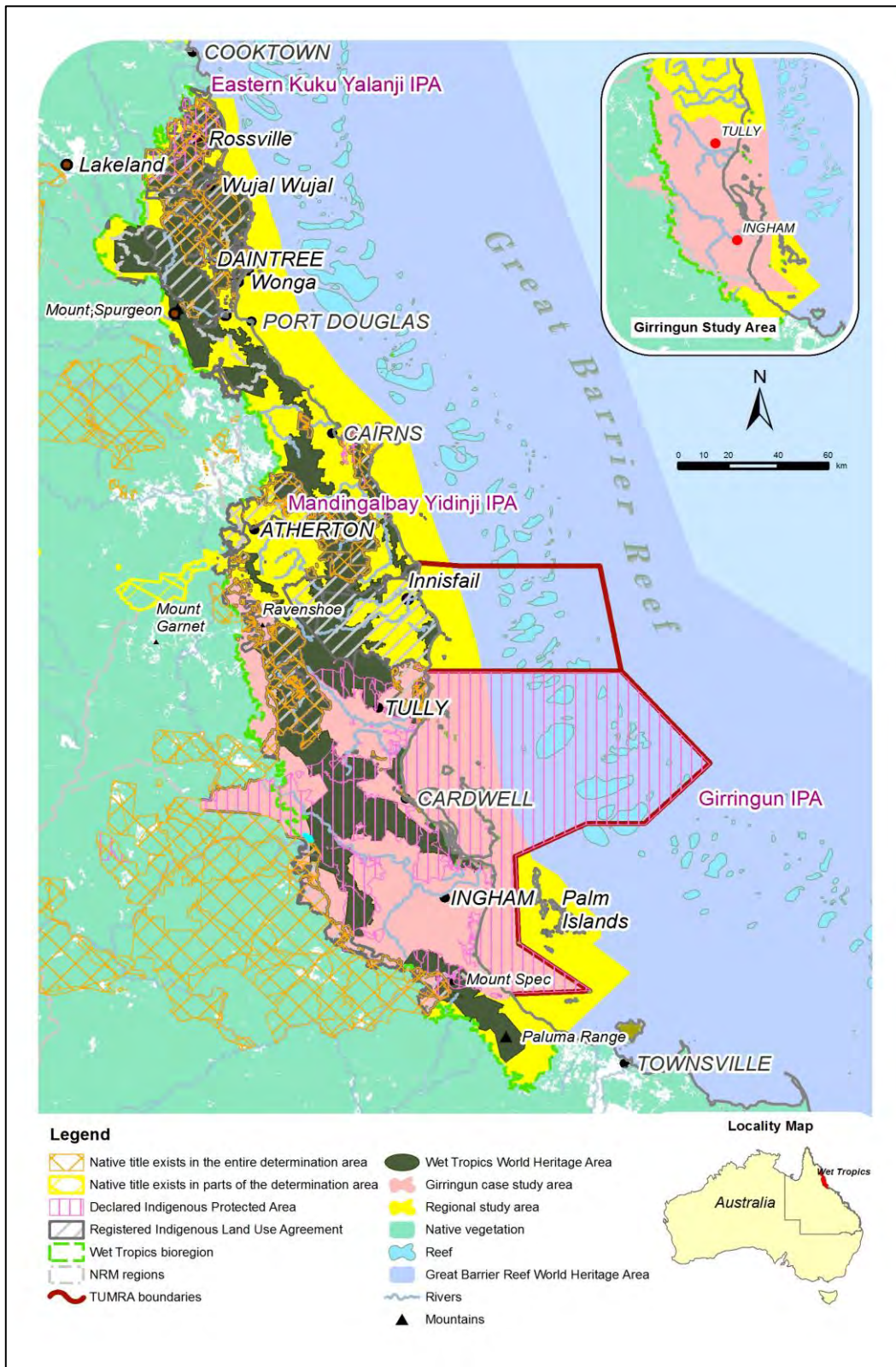


Figure 1: 'Wet tropics country' study area

The regional case study boundary intersects with the customary lands of twenty tribal groups of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples in the region. These customary lands include freehold and leased farmlands, generally owned by non-indigenous landholders, and some small towns. It has an areal extent of 28,448.3 km², which stretches from *Kalkajaka* (Black Mountain) near Cooktown in the north, west to Mt Garnet, and south to Paluma (Figure 1). This region is home to 20,000 Rainforest Aboriginal people, 120 clans within 8 language family groups, 80 legal entities including Registered Native Title Prescribed Body Corporates and registered Cultural Heritage Bodies, 2 Aboriginal Councils and 20 tribal groups. These tribal groups include: *Northern* Eastern Kuku Yalanji, Western Yalanji; *Central* Djabugay, Gunggandji, Mamu, Mbabaram, Muluridji, NgadjonJii, Yidinji and Yirrganydj, and *Southern* Bandjin, Djiru, Girramay, Gugu-Badhun, Gulnay, Jirrbal, Nwaigi, Warrgamay, Warungu and Wulugurukaba (RAPA 2013; Schmider 2014a).

Rainforest Aboriginal peoples partner in their management of country with numerous government, community and some industry organizations: Australian government agencies include the Departments of Environment and of Prime Minister and Cabinet; Queensland government agencies include the Departments of Environment and Heritage and of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing; local government authorities include the Tablelands, the Cassowary Coast and the Cairns Regional Councils and Yarrabah and Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Councils; regional natural resource bodies include Terrain and Cape York NRM; other non-government organizations included Bush Heritage, the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Cairns and Far North Environment Centre; and industry organizations include the Alliance for Sustainable Tourism. The agencies listed are a sub-set only; more detail of relevant institutions that trigger agency roles can be found in Maclean *et al.* (2012).

Recognition of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' rights by the Australian and Queensland governments have gradually increased through a variety of instruments including:

- Indigenous Land Use Agreements under the *Native Title Act 1993* (a binding agreement entered into between native title claimants and the other land managers of the land);
- Indigenous Protected Areas (a voluntary agreement between Traditional Owners and the Australian government to promote biodiversity and cultural resource conservation on Indigenous-owned land);
- the establishment of Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger programs;
- the granting of Aboriginal freehold tenure;
- the signing of a Wet Tropics Rainforest Aboriginal Agreement; and
- other arrangements as detailed further in earlier reports from this co-research project (Maclean *et al.* 2012; Maclean *et al.* 2013; Pert *et al.* 2014 in review).

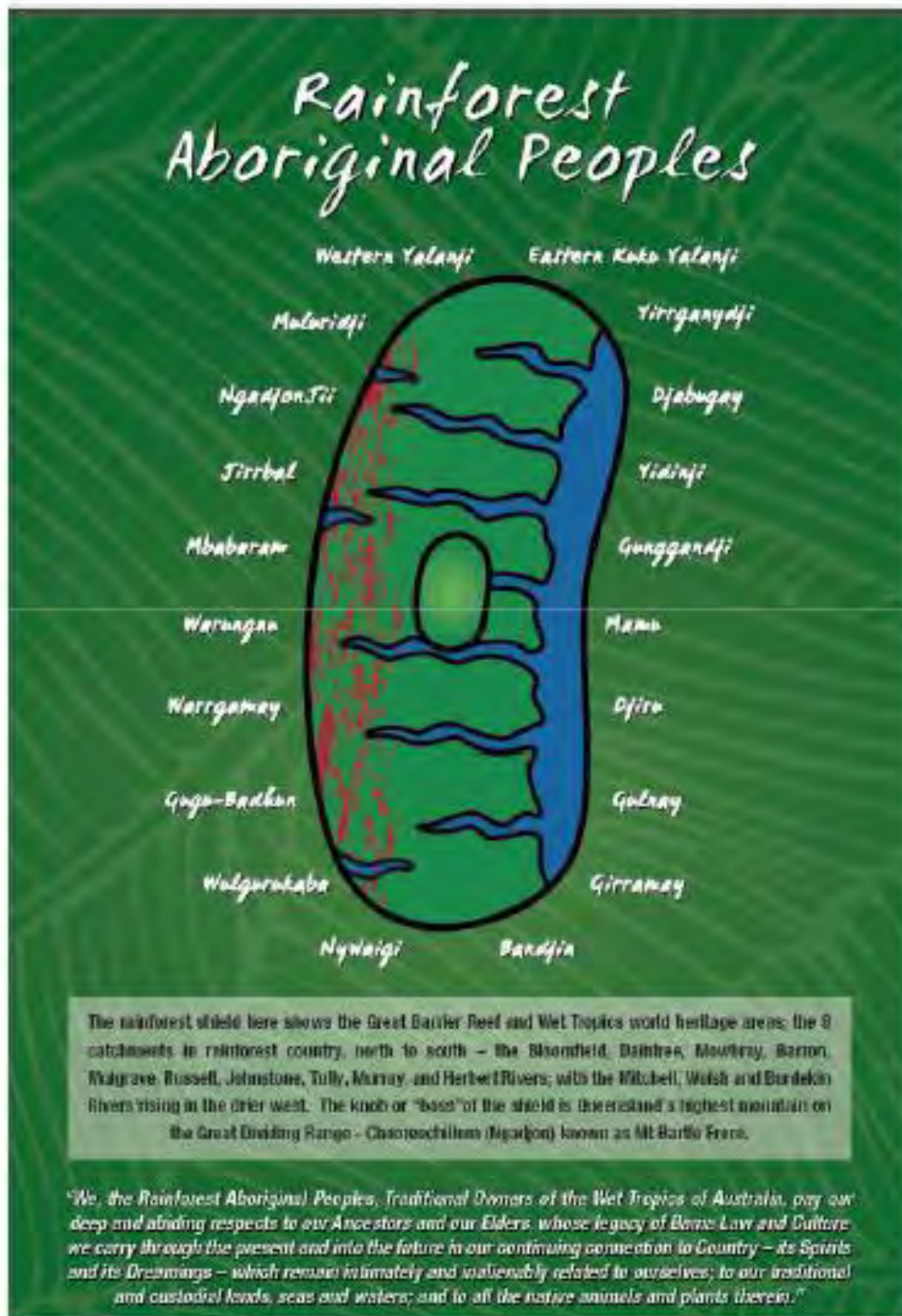


Figure 2: Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples and wet tropics country. Source: RAPA 2013

Participatory evaluation methods

The evaluation was conducted over three and a half years (mid 2011-2014), preceded by a two-year scoping phase, using a participatory co-research method (Cullen-Unsworth *et al.* 2010; Maclean and Cullen 2009). Co-research is a transdisciplinary approach that involves scientists and practitioners working together throughout the whole research cycle, from the common setting of research goals, development of methods, analysis of results through to co-delivery of policy-relevant findings and new contributions to social science theory (Tress *et al.* 2005). Our co-research was developed through a five stage process: (1) mutual interest identification; (2) co-research agreements with relevant organizations; (3) co-produced categories and indicators; (4) participatory evaluation through multi-scalar community-driven processes; and (5) collaborative analysis, interpretation, report-writing and theory-building (**Figure 3**). Details of the activities in each stage can be found in Pert *et al.* (2014 in review) and sources cited therein.

The two categories and thirteen related themes (used as indicators) were developed by the co-research team in phase 3, and refined through participatory workshops, and are presented in Table 1 (Hill *et al.* 2013; Hill *et al.* 2012). These categories and themes were initially developed and presented in the form of a diagram (Appendix 1). The two categories recognise that Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' effective engagement with their partners requires that they are thriving and able to keep their own knowledge systems alive. The institutions for "Keeping Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Strong" lie with the Indigenous domain, not the shared domain, and therefore required a different evaluation. A traffic light system was developed to assess the 'health' rating of the different themes, according to these three components: structures, processes and results (Table 2, Table3).

In stage four, the participatory processes to undertake the evaluation were conducted at three scales with four different groups, three with relevant Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' organizations, and one with their partners. At each of these workshops participants were asked to rate the health of the themes and explain the reasons behind their ratings. The participatory evaluation approaches with the Rainforest Aboriginal groups were developed in partnerships that ensured these followed cultural protocols. Girringun Aboriginal Corporation (sub-regional scale) discussed the approach at their Annual General Meeting and decided to conduct their evaluation through hosting a workshop of appropriate members at Cardwell Community Hall on 23 November 2013. The invitees were selected by Girringun as those appropriate to provide an informed perspective from their Traditional Owner groups; sixteen people attended and contributed to the evaluation. The Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Alliance (regional scale) decided to conduct their evaluation as part of the 'Warrama: for Rainforest Country, Kin and Culture' held at Genazzano Retreat 28 November-1st December 2013, which brought together invitees across the region to focus on strategic issues and priorities. Twenty-four people at this workshop contributed to the evaluation. Mandingalbay Yidinji (tribal scale) decided to conduct their evaluation primarily at a focus group discussion hosted at their Djunbunji headquarters and Ranger station on 31st March 2014. In addition, two interviews with their MY leader for this area of business, held on 11th and 20th March were provided as important input.

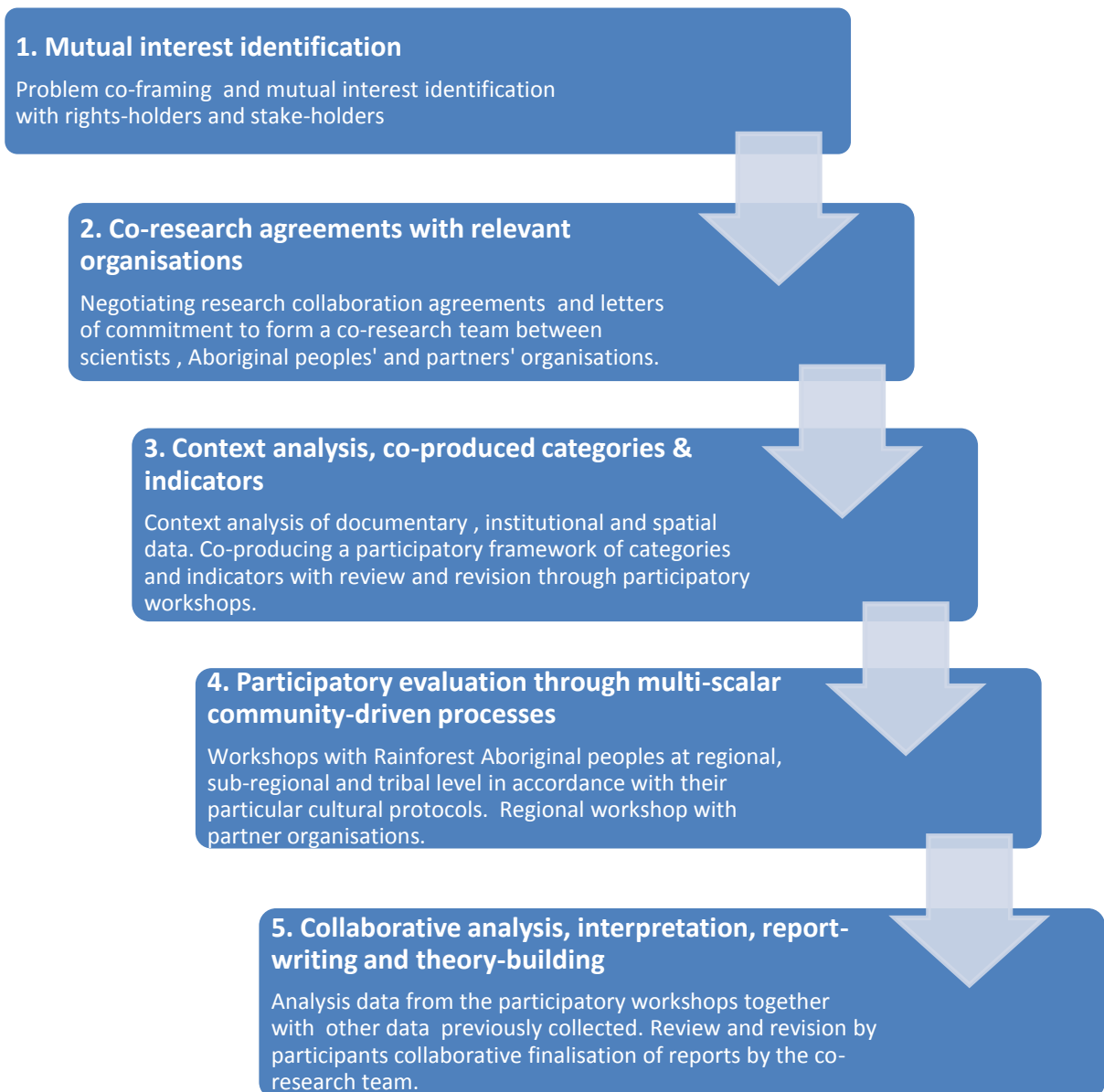


Figure 3: Stages in the co-research and participatory evaluation

Table 1: Categories and themes (used as indicators) for the participatory evaluation

Rainforest Aboriginal People Keeping Strong		Keeping Engagement Strong	
Themes (indicators)	Explanation	Themes (indicators)	Explanation
Culture	Rainforest Aboriginal peoples' worldviews, lore, law, language, dreaming and ways of knowing, doing and being	Principles	Provide fluid movement for self-determined levels of involvement in the shared space, for each Traditional Owner group's distinct trajectory, and for difference across scales (local, sub-regional, regional).
Kin	Internal Traditional Owner relationships, networks and connections.	Relationships	Good relationships enable (rather than constrain or contain) Indigenous roles, which requires a flexible approach.
Country	Traditional knowledge and practices, including story places, fire management, totems, hunting, fishing and collecting plants and animals, making a living from country.	Mechanisms	Strategic and practical plans and documents; e.g. roundtable of stakeholders who follow up with actions.
Indigenous leadership & governance	Strong organisations and institutions supporting Traditional Owner groups, language family groups, and sub-regional and regional alliances; intra- and inter-group issues resolution and interests progression.	Protocols	For a range of engagement processes.
Capacity	Individual, family, clan, tribal group, language family group and organizational skills, expertise, knowledges, and resourcing including financial	Regimes	Clearly defined government and others' co-management roles established through institutions, legislation and policy.
RAP strategic vision & intent	The tribal autonomy and sovereignty that TOs have over an area of country provides the mandate to "act on the front foot" and engage the multiple non-Indigenous mainstream organizations.	Power	Right to exercise native title, 'big stick', common law rights, prior informed consent
		Issues resolution	Mechanisms for sorting out issues that arise in engagement.

Table 2: Components used in the participatory evaluation and explanations of their meanings

Component	Explanation
Structures	Setting things up—both Rainforest Aboriginal people and government/others—like starting organisations, getting the constitutions in place for organisations, progressing Native Title recognition, making agreements (like Indigenous Land Use Agreements), making new laws or rules, agreeing on protocols.
Processes	Doing things—both Rainforest Aboriginal people and government/others—like making plans, getting people to meetings, starting projects, getting Indigenous Ranger Groups out ‘caring for country’, exercising native title rights (hunting, lighting fires), finding ways to sort out arguments, teaching language, finding partners, working together with partners, finding ways to sort out arguments and progress mutual interest.
Results	Things actually being delivered—both Rainforest Aboriginal people and government/others—like Rainforest Aboriginal people knowing their language and culture, government people showing respect for Rainforest Aboriginal People law/lore, good relationships being in place, protocols being followed, the country getting healthier.

Table 3: Health traffic light system used for rating

Health rating	Decision rule – health of indicator
5 Excellent	This indicator is excellent and continuing as is will keep it in excellent health.
4 Very good	This indicator is very healthy and does not need to be too much different to be done to keep it healthy
3 Good	This indicator is healthy and may need something more or different to be done to keep it healthy
2 Little bit sick	This indicator is a little bit sick and needs work to be done to make to healthy. If no work is done it will get worse.
1 Very sick	This indicator is very sick and if no work is done to make it better it may never be healthy again.

Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation (JYAC) worked with the co-research team to host a participatory evaluation workshop with Yalanji at Fern Trees Resort at Cape Tribulation on 6th and 7th June 2014. JYAC determined whom to invite to the workshop, in accordance with their view of appropriate cultural protocols. However, attendees did not feel that the people present were an appropriate representation and the participatory evaluation did not proceed.

The participatory evaluation by government and community partners who work with Rainforest Aboriginal peoples on co-management of wet tropics country was conducted at a workshop held at Cairns Colonial Club in Cairns on 29 April 2014. Invitees to the workshop were selected by the co-research team, based on a purposive sampling approach, to ensure participation by all significant government, community and industry partners. Attendees at the workshop were asked to rate the *support* provided (by community, government and industry) to Rainforest Aboriginal People Keeping Strong, rather than the health of the actual status of their structures, processes and results. This direction was decided by the co-research team, in recognition of: (1) the principle that Indigenous peoples strongly claim the right to represent themselves in scholarly activities, rather than be represented by others (Castellano 2014); and (2) the concept that Australian government and community organizations that have a role in managing country also have a role in supporting Aboriginal peoples’ management of that country and all that such management entails.

Qualitative data were imported into N-Vivo for coding and analysis to identify common topics. Quantitative and spatial data were analysed using Microsoft Excel and ESRI ArcGIS v10.2. Convergent triangulation between quantitative, qualitative and documentary analysis was used to test validity (Creswell and Miller 2000). Review by workshop participants was undertaken of the resultant analysis reports (See Volume 2 of this report) and interpretation of the qualitative

data by the science members of the co-research team led to revisions and updating. The key policy-relevant findings were identified by search for common themes that emerged across all four of the participatory evaluations. Finalisation of reports on the participatory evaluations, and the identification of policy-relevant findings in this report, occurred through co-authorship by the co-research team.

Results: From co-management to collaborative governance

Key findings from the participatory evaluation

The participatory evaluations all identified that the health of “Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Keeping Strong” is better overall than that of “Keeping Engagement Strong” (Table 1, Figure 1). This result is perhaps counter-intuitive as the disadvantage in health, education, employment and economic status faced by Indigenous peoples in Australia is well established (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision 2011). The difference here is that this evaluation focuses attention on the status of the Indigenous societies, rather than the status of Indigenous peoples within the Australia nation-state. The overall good health of culture, kin, country, governance and capacity of Rainforest Aboriginal peoples is a strong testament to the priority they place on their Indigenous societies’ law and custom. Their success in keeping Indigenous knowledge and values strong through the colonial era has been achieved in the face of what must have seemed insurmountable odds—the past policies in multiple Australian government and non-government institutions that suppressed Rainforest Aboriginal peoples’ languages, cultural practices, and removed them from access to their traditional lands are well documented (Kidd 1997; Loos 1982). The health ratings also reflected perceptions of heterogeneity across the wet tropics—the process of re-establishing management of traditional country after the disruption of the colonial era is at different stages with different groups across the region. Our participatory evaluation focused attention on groups who generally are making good progress in terms of accessing funds for management on country.

The overall ratings by the partners for both their *support* for Rainforest Aboriginal People Keeping Strong, and for Keeping Engagement Strong, were notably poorer than those conducted with Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples at regional, Girringun sub-regional, and Mandingalbay Yidinji tribal scales. This perception of poor health overall reflects two drivers: (1) frustration that the government and non-government organizational processes do not respond as well as they could; and (2) recognition that rating across the region is challenged by the heterogeneity—in some areas, structures, processes and results are in very good health, and in others they are very sick. Participants therefore gave generally low ratings reflecting that many groups need a lot more time and support to engage well in co-management in and running country themselves. This view is shared by the Rainforest Aboriginal peoples who participated in the evaluation.

Table 4: Ratings of the health of co-management from the participatory evaluations at regional (Rainforest Aboriginal People and partners), sub-regional (Girringun) and tribal (Mandingalbay Yidinji) scales.

Components	Case study area			
	RAP regional	Girringun	MY	Partners
Structures	Very good	Good	Good	Little bit sick
Processes	Good	Good	Good	Little bit sick
Results	Good	Good	Good	Little bit sick
Average overall rating for Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Keeping Strong	Good	Good	Good	Little bit sick
Structures	Good	Good	Very good	Little bit sick
Processes	Little bit sick	Good	Good	Little bit sick
Results	Good	Good	Little bit sick	Little bit sick
Average overall rating for Keeping Engagement Strong	Little bit sick	Good	Good	Little bit sick

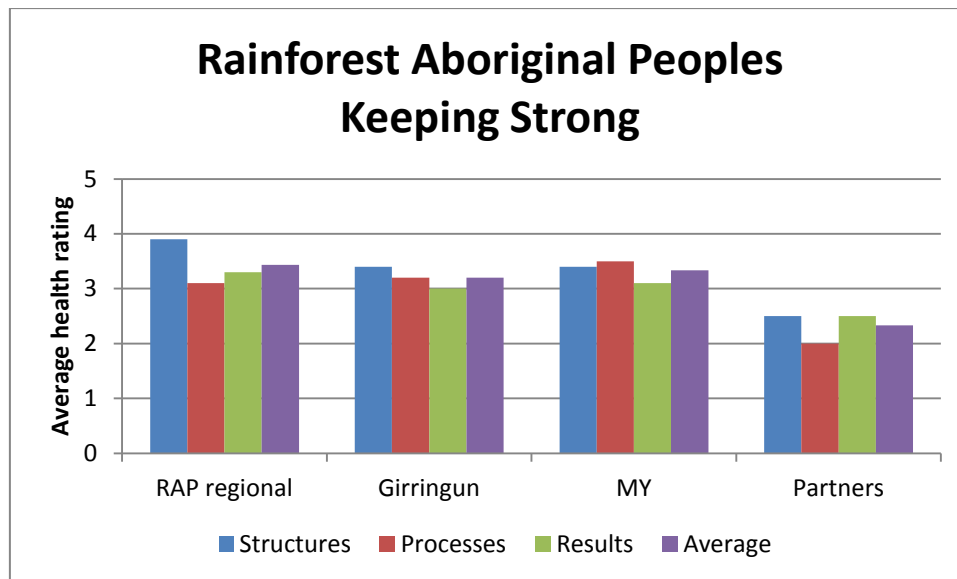


Figure 4: Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Keeping Strong: average health ratings in the four participatory evaluations

The overall most significant factor identified by the participatory evaluations was governance. Our evaluation framework focused only on Indigenous governance; however the qualitative data identified that the governance by partners, both government and non-government, is also important. Five topics were identified as gaps for potential actions to enhance collaborative governance over management of country:

- Transformative knowledge network/s
- Value-added Indigenous Protected Areas and rangers
- Value-added Indigenous Land Use Agreements
- Understanding delivery of multiple benefits
- Native Title corporations and Local Governments

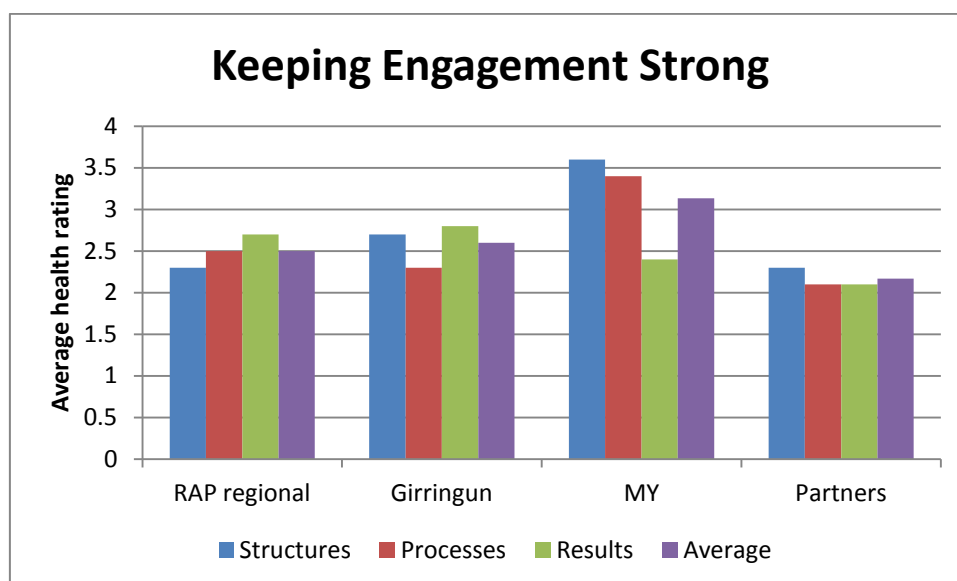


Figure 5: Keeping Engagement Strong: average health ratings in the four participatory evaluations

Why governance?

This co-research project adopted a social learning approach, and as a result our ideas and understandings of the topics under consideration changed and developed over time (Maclean *et al.* 2012). Our initial problem co-framing focused attention on the parts that make up co-management (Appendix 1). In later phases of the project, the need for a definition of what we consider co-management to be emerged. In response, we identified that we consider co-management to be *“a continual solution-building process, not a fixed state, involving extensive talking, negotiations and jointly learning, so it gets better over time”*.

We then considered the definitions of governance in relation to protected areas, biodiversity and natural resources in the international scientific and practice literature (Borrini-Feyerabend *et al.* 2013; Sikor *et al.* 2013; TGER 2013; Wyborn and Bixler 2013). Management and governance are closely related but distinct phenomena. Until the beginning of the new millennium, however, when describing decisions and action meant to conserve nature and protect biodiversity, only the term ‘management’ was used (Borrini-Feyerabend and Hill 2014 (in press)). This implied a tendency to focus on the action rather than the policy, and power-related aspects, or more precisely on the what to do after decisions are made, rather than on who and how those decisions are made.

Table 5: What is the difference between management and governance?

Management	... is about ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what is done in pursuit of given objectives • the means and actions to achieve such objectives
Governance	... is about ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who decides what the objectives are, what to do to pursue them, and with what means • how those decisions are taken • who holds power, authority and responsibility- who is (or should be) held accountable

Clearly our understanding of co-management is much more in the domain of governance when considering these differences—our participatory evaluation framework investigates the holding and sharing of power, how decisions are made, and who people maintain their authority and responsibility. Our definition then is more appropriately considered to be related to governance, rather than management. Governance has been defined in the literature addressing issues of biodiversity protection as *the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken and how citizens and other stakeholders have their say* (Graham *et al.* 2003). We consider that our definition is a more context-specific version of this general definition.

Governance, rather than management, was identified at the workshops as key to the underlying shared aspiration for Rainforest Aboriginal peoples and their partners to protect, maintain, interpret and promote Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples’ knowledge and cultural values about their traditional country. People noted how far they have come in understanding the situation differently:

Need to acknowledge the change, how far we have come together, changing definitions, chucking out co-management and just talking about management, coming together around a common language (Partner Workshop).

Is it co-management, joint management or governance of management? (Partner Workshop).

The term “collaborative governance” appears best able to accommodate the ways in which Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples and their partners are working together on wet tropics country. However, in offering this term to best describe the situation, we recognize that power-sharing is not yet equitable, and that many improvements need to be made to all the recognized characteristics of governance, including its quality, vitality and diversity of governance (**Figure 6**).

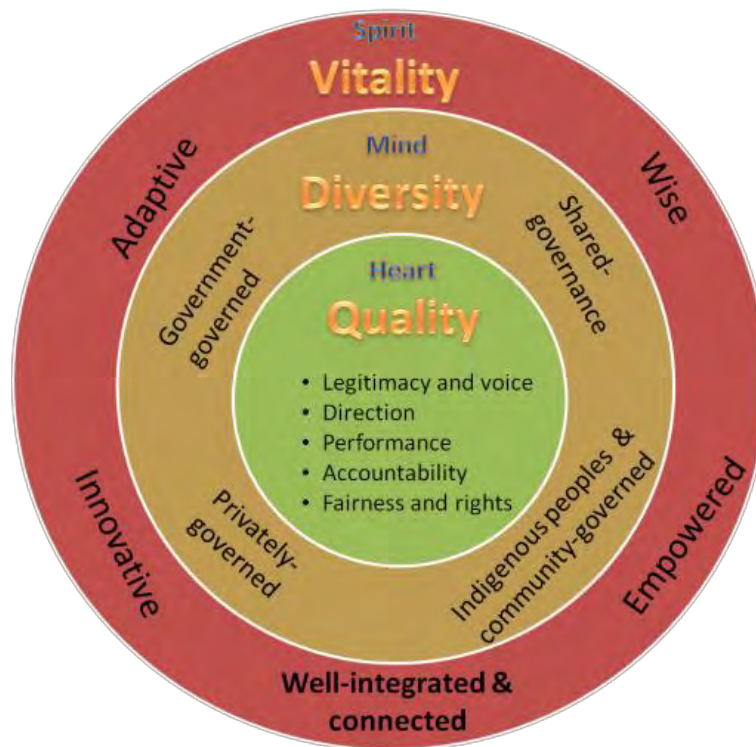


Figure 6: Schematic diagram of the characteristics of governance (Borrini-Feyerabend and Hill 2014 (in press))

Positioning collaborative governance as an overarching finding reflects both Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples’ and their partners’ identification of governance as the key issue:

Governance is the number 1 issue from parties’ perspective (Partner Workshop).

Culturally assured engagement that is clear where the responsibility lies, that directs the external agency with cultural assurance. Critically important to the vehicle (Partners Workshop).

Indigenous governance, we think we have results ... Energy needs to be put into governance upfront (Girringun Workshop)

The decision making with governance, obviously making sure that’s from the ground up (MY workshop).

Governance can be seen as the critical framework that enables all various aspects and goals of management for biodiversity protection to be pursued on country. However, both Indigenous and their partners’ governance of wet tropics country is currently underdeveloped. While some

Indigenous groups are recognised as having very good governance in place, overall it is patchy across the wet tropics. The constant churn (change) in government agencies is also a significant barrier.

Government processes are up the creek. People are moving all the time, changing jobs, departments are always changing ... Departments and staff are all over the place. How can you work with that? (Girringun Workshop).

Fundamentally dynamic, government is always changing... if there is consistency on the TO side, provides for effective management ...but if there is churn on the TO side too, Aboriginal organizations frequently changing boards ... it doesn't go well (Partners Workshop).

Inconsistency of resources and leadership within [Aboriginal] groups... Different abilities of groups (Partner workshop).

Governance of government, the culture of that governance, was discussed at several workshops, for example:

On the government side, in the organizational set-up, cultural change is progressing, but we question the adequacy to move towards co-management (dominant organization culture may not be ready) (Partner Workshop).

Policy-relevant gap for attention in both the Indigenous and government arena. While effective Indigenous governance can overcome many of the barriers to working together on country, partners also need to mobilise:

The best results come when TOs drive the process, take government on a journey (Partner Workshop).

Power is not handed over to TOs if governments don't believe they have the authority to make decisions and are organized (Partner Workshop).

We have moved heaven and earth to get our own act together here in Girringun, but on the government side it hasn't been reciprocated. They have no mechanisms, no structures in place (Girringun Workshop).

While some activities have been implemented to address governance-related capability—Indigenous leadership training by RAPA, Indigenous cultural awareness training in partner organization—participants at the workshops identified a key gap for structured, strategic, and ongoing governance development. Participants at the partner workshop identified a need for any assistance provided to Aboriginal groups to be driven by them:

Need to ask Indigenous groups what support they need to improve their governance—e.g. is it bottom-up processes, resources to bring people together to consider governance, Indigenous driven leadership training, partners to enable or facilitate? (Partner Workshop)

In the remainder of this chapter, we discuss five topics that would establish an ongoing process of identification and delivery of support processes for Indigenous governance, beginning with the concept of a “transformative knowledge network”. For each area we present:

- Relevant research finding and gap
- Policy options to address the gap
- Context of options
- Policy window.

Transformative knowledge network/s to support social learning for co-governance

Relevant research findings and gap

We identified that knowledge is being generated by many different groups of Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples as they experience engagement with governance of country. The social learning approach adopted by this co-research approach also enhanced learning. The early groups to establish governance capacity have gained experience that they are keen to share with others:

Because all the experiences we've faced over four and a half years, you [other groups] should not have to go four and half years to get that experience (MY Workshop).

Mandingalbay Yidinji in particular has a vision of being able to assist other Traditional Owner groups through knowledge networks rather than advocacy networks:

we've actually set up Djunbunji with a vision of other traditional owners fitting in and having that assistance ... this hub could actually work and assist the people who have native title determination as opposed to an advocacy body talking up issues and aspirations of the mob But I just want to make it clear, we're not doing their business for them (MY Workshop.)

We found that groups identified that they were undertaking a transformative journey through pre-native title, post-determination, and then using their re-connection with country as a basis for economic, cultural and social development. The metaphor of a “vehicle” was used to describe what was needed to assist the journey, summarised in these two points from the participatory workshop in 2012:

- We need vehicles and a road-map to travel towards better, more effective co-management on country.
- It's an multi-lane highway with multiple destinations, and different vehicles, buses, mini-vans, and motorbikes
- We need something like a brokering hub, a one-stop shop or a T-intersection where the roads meet and we can share the learnings. (Hill et al. 2012).

The hub idea that MY are developing resonates strongly with the “brokering hub” concept:

Pre- native title, then a post determination and then economic development. Between the post determination and the economic development stage, they should do the naval gazing. Construct the constitution of their PBC, have membership of their people to a PBC, and then start developing documents which settle down the track. Those are the things that Djunbunji could assist with ... not doing their business for them, it's more about enhancing the capacity for the PBC or for any corporation or family, to do their own business ... groups who decide, want to have that cooperative, collaborative approach. We're happy to talk about our experiences and from that, negative, positive, they can shape where they want to go.

Partners also recognised that systems for supporting exchange and capacity building between Aboriginal group are a key gap:

Assistance needed for Aboriginal peoples to build their capacity—specific financial resources are needed for that.

Needs to be a system for building on learnings of other groups (Partner Workshop)

Policy options to address the knowledge-sharing gap

Many ideas were developed how Rainforest Aboriginal groups could grow their knowledge and experience for co-governance and co-management, particular through learning from each other, including through:

- An innovative Indigenous-driven multi-stakeholder network.
- Building on the social learning approach of this co-research project.
- Sharing steps in the journey between different TO groups.
- Sharing steps in the journey between different partner groups-cultural change.
- Upskilling the broader non-Indigenous community around issues of governance of country.
- Brokering/stimulating internal government training and development mechanisms.
- Providing support to build capacity in Indigenous-driven planning, strategic visioning, and methods for implementation and evaluation (IPA, country-based, land and sea planning).
- Providing training on preparing funding applications.
- Providing information on quality governance and possible different organisational structures for business.
- Building of business development skills and expertise, brokering establishment of an independent advisory service for business and marketing development (different to Indigenous Business Australia).
- Building a community of practice around planning, free prior and informed consent, conflict resolution, mediation (including within family, clan and tribal groups) and other issues.
- Sharing skills around relationship-building and management, including those for developing genealogies and other ways of understanding kinship ties.

The need for the system to provide for multi-scalar opportunities was also highlighted:

- *Family groups need to develop knowledge of story and culture for co-management.*
- *Prescribed Body Corporates need to develop the capacity to ensure delivery of the Indigenous Land Use Agreements, and to work with the Aboriginal Corporations and Land Trusts according to cultural protocols.*
- *The sub-regional “umbrella” group needs ongoing ability to follow the directions of on-ground groups, to bring partners to the table and gain and deliver resources back to the family and clan group levels (Girringun Workshop).*

Context of transformative knowledge networks

Transformative knowledge and social learning networks are gaining recognition and investment globally because of their ability to solve very challenging sustainability problems (Dentoni *et al.* 2012). Multi-stakeholder knowledge networks can shift power relationships, and allow innovations to emerge that produce business solutions to some very complex problems. The Dutch partners in the TransForum innovation network found that use of a structured approach such as the Value Mediation Method was helpful (van Latesteijn and Rabbinge 2012).

Knowledge networks have been recognised as a preferred vehicle for fostering adaptation in the context of climate change, because of their capability to move information and practices and concurrently influence both the pace and qualities of learning as the networks themselves evolve (Bidwell *et al.* 2013). Knowledge networks, sometimes referred to as “innovation platforms” are being widely used in conservation and development practice (Ison *et al.* 2012; Lahsen *et al.* 2013; Li and Yu 2013; Romero *et al.* 2012). While transformative knowledge network approaches are only starting to develop in the Indigenous knowledge and biodiversity

management domain, early examples from India (Singh and Anamika 2013) and in the Indigenous health sector (Richmond et al. 2013) are encouraging.

Policy window for a collaborative governance transformative knowledge network

The Australian Government's 2014 budget statement announced the amalgamation of the *National Environmental Research Programme* and the *Australian Climate Change Science Programme* to form a new *National Environmental Science Programme*. The Guidelines for the Program will be available in December 2014, and may present an opportunity to develop a collaborative governance transformative knowledge network at an appropriate scale (e.g. wet tropics, Great Barrier Reef and catchments to encompass both land and sea country). The Australian Government has also announced a commitment to deliver on its vision for developing Northern Australia including considering the establishment of a dedicated CRC which will be informed by the current Northern Australia White Paper process. This again may offer an opportunity. Globally, such a network would link synergistically with the Transformative Knowledge Networks being developed by the International Council for Social Science under the auspices of [Future Earth](#).

Communicating delivery of multiple benefits

Research findings and policy gap

Many benefits that are derived from co-management of country were identified in the participatory evaluations. Some examples follow.

Jobs:

The last financial year some 64 people may have been volunteers or fulltime or casuals, were employed ... At some point in time I'd like to try and beat that every single year (MY Workshop).

Job readiness and transition from school:

That's great that kids are walking around with shoes and socks and going to school, but where to after that? So, through the volunteers, we've got a lot of - the majority of our mob are on the dole, Centrelink, whatever it may be - but through your volunteer work, something comes up like a another funding submission with a bit of wages in there, we've got people on the ground or within a pool ready to go (MY Workshop).

Moving from welfare to business:

I used to think we're not going to break that [welfare] cycle in my generation but we're doing it here today. We've got eight fulltime indigenous, hundred per cent owned and operated white fellow corporation but run by black fellows. Djunbunji, ASIC - run under ASIC (MY Workshop).

Some activities are making a living from country, there's the workshops and the cattle stations and the artwork that's selling (RAP Workshop).

Biodiversity protection and restoration:

We've got a biodiversity project, a great big nursery. They've gone on country and got seeds, come back, germinate... We sent out flyers last week actually all around Cardwell and we've had people just flocking in buying trays and trays of plants (RAP Regional Workshop).

We're actually doing the acid sulfate and assisting with the acid sulfate so we're eradicating all of that. The rehabilitation of the acid sulfate - what's the technical talk - they had battery acid levels of water and now they've taken them down (MY Workshop).

Well last year our rangers were put into the re-vegetation program, they went to Hull Heads and did over 2000 plants. They've been out to Murray Upper and the Murray River and out past Tully and they've been re-vegetating 2000/3000 plants in a few weeks (RAP Regional workshop).

More people are back on-country with on-ground work to make country healthy (Partners Workshop).

Disaster readiness and response:

the response to Cyclone Yasi, the murri grapevine passed the word to other Ranger groups, people from the Cape said let's get people, Rangers on the ground to help. So Rangers would come and help people, bring chainsaws, tools. There were notices everywhere saying thanks to Girringun Rangers. We have found our place, and excelled to where we are looked on as leaders for the whole community (Girringun Workshop).

Mobilising people out of passivity, empowering leadership:

the key to it, we've kind of stumbled, across is the young ones ... the Junior Ranger Program, gets all the adults sitting around there that will not come to a meeting and talk about how we can collaboratively work together (MY Workshop).

Aboriginal people are starting to be leaders, starting to be considered powerful, influential, undertaking advocacy, mentoring (Partners Workshop).

Intergenerational knowledge transfer:

Signs that the elders are bringing people on is a positive, young people are taking over welcomes to country ... Kids, younger generation are embracing culture through language and dance (Partners Workshop).

Supporting reconciliation locally between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities:

Need to acknowledge the change, how far we have come together, changing definitions, chucking out co-management and just talking about management, coming together around a common language (Partners Workshop).

A big result [from Girringun hosting the National land and Sea Conference]... That single event completely changed the community views about blackfella business in this town ... Leading up to it we had to continually settle down the community. Chamber of Commerce wanted a guarantee. Nothing happened. Only one trouble happened it was a drug offence, though not a blackfella. We involved the police in the leadup, weekly meetings. They (organisations in town) were all frightened. The pub even hired security guards. But it was all peaceful, everyone from the community came and had a look. Even before putting in the submission, we met with the Chamber of Commerce, the Cardwell Shire Council, they made the biggest contribution ever. We had regular meetings with them the whole time, meetings where they could come along (Girringun Workshop).

It's not all about economic development. It's sustainability, you know? What - it's the key thing, is sustainability (RAP regional workshop).

Good, strategic partnerships have come through land and sea management planning. Problem is that land and sea management is not supported post-determinations (Partners Workshop).

Cultural renewal and reconnection:

Walking tracks...are all culture, it's part of our culture... really old highway just followed our Aboriginal walking tracks... south of Cardwell, used to be a goat's track but our rangers have widened it, gone through and cleaned it, we can walk our country again... walking the trails (RAP Regional Workshop).

foundation is that spiritual, emotional, cultural connection... We are one people (MY Workshop)

We have that cultural foundation. There's always room for improvement, but the cultural and spiritual foundation is better than what government says, we have to write down this in a strategic plan. Culture and spirituality is our way (Girringun Workshop).

Our mob manage through our ancestors by being linked into, by law, on the spiritual level... The principles of the law. While each area might practice it a little different, the principles are the same. It connects the storyline, connects us to the desert, connects all of us... when you look at the holistic thing, we've got these stories, there's all different connections, ceremonies and laws traveling (RAP Workshop).

These results are particularly important because they address the complex set of factors that Indigenous peoples face, addressing multiple social, economic and educational challenges.

Erosion of knowledge transfer processes that are important to country:

Country is getting worse, we're losing the old knowledge, while Aboriginal management is getting better recognized, no good enough, not quick enough, not enough to make a big difference (Girringun Workshop).

The barriers that poverty, socio-economic disadvantage and native title regimes impose on asset-based development:

People don't have a fridge, don't have a proper home, but they own a \$3 million cattle station. How do we capitalise on that asset, and bridge the gap, to get equitable social-economic benefits? We own this cattle station but our kids can't read (Girringun workshop).

Even with the land that was supposed to be given back to us, soon as we get the land, it's put in a place where we can't touch it. We've got our native title but we can't use it for what we want... No leverage, does that make sense, we got nothing... We got some blocks that were non-exclusive, that meant everybody used them, and we got some that are exclusive possession to us, but they have turned them back into national parks before we got the exclusive possession of them. They get you both sides. They went through and done all the tenures on them, turned them back into national parks, and then they give them over as exclusive possession, so that takes our rights away from us anyway, once you sign an ILUA(RAP regional workshop).

Lack of economic opportunities in remote and regional Australia:

to get a job in Yarrabah, he'd have to line up with the rest of the 400 people around his age...; you need to drive some type of economy within the community there and that's great, they've got arts and crafts and museum .. but it's just they haven't got the right

package - future generations and kids are still going to be bored and the welfare cycle, they're still going to hop on that merry-go-round (MY Workshop).

The key policy-relevant gap related to multiple benefits was identified during the research through consultation with policy officers in the Australian government. This gap relates to a lack of understanding in governments about the linkages between co-management of country or more properly collaborative governance of management of country, and these multiple benefits.

Policy options to address the gap in communicating multiple benefits

Two overall directions were identified to address the gap in communicating multiple benefits. These are:

- Development of an “Infographic” to communicate the multiple benefits from co-management;
- Support this with a further “infographic” linking the IPA/Ranger/Country-based planning approach with the World Vision Model.

Policy context for communicating multiple benefits

The concept of multiple benefits is not at the forefront of Australian Government Indigenous policy settings, but could be linked to their new Indigenous Advancement Strategy which began on 1 July 2014 and replaces more than 150 individual programmes and activities with five programmes all focused on achieving results in the priority areas:

- Jobs, Land and Economy.
- Children and Schooling.
- Safety and Wellbeing.
- Culture and Capability.
- Remote Australia Strategies.

The multiple benefits identified above could be re-organised into these categories. As noted, the gap was identified through our co-research collaboration. Many of the Indigenous peoples and their partners working on country feel that these benefits are obvious, and that they have gone to great lengths to communicate them:

Yes, yes yes, because I think we've been talking and talking and talking. Still today we're still talking ... and no action (RAP Regional Workshop).

Nevertheless, there may not be a full appreciation of how crowded the communication space is. Existing material on multiple benefits appears to be largely very report-based, without simple communication tools (Auditor-General 2011; Weir et al. 2011). Policy officers consulted in PM&C and Environment suggested that we:

- Focus on simple/effective communication of the multiple benefits from co-management through graphics and other means.
- Get the co-benefits of all parties captured—what's the outcomes for government, for Treasury e.g. the Social and Economic Impacts reports of the Working on Country Program.
- Shine a light on the broad benefits to Traditional Owners from working on country, from co-management.
- Potential simple graphic (a little picture) to represent the concept of “multiple benefits”, straight-forward and simple.

- Slogans, statements and killer facts.
- Statement for example powerful messages - when TOs themselves talk about what the benefits are, it is powerful.
- Slogans E.g. "governance is the most important factor for biodiversity conservation". This is probably also true Indigenous people, needs to be captured as (e.g.) "governance allows us to speak for country, go on country, work on country".
- Our standard is the Integrated Development Model of World Vision, adopted through an MoU – this could/should be used as a standard in the last part of the method.

Policy window for communicating multiple benefits

As noted above, the new Australian Government arrangements focus on "Advancement" and have separated land from culture, and Rangers from IPAs, perhaps splintering the concept of multiple benefits. Nevertheless, the [Memorandum of Understanding on Indigenous Development Effectiveness](#) between the Australian Government and World Vision covers the period from 2012-17 and has been adopted by the current government, with a Practice Note recently being scheduled to the MoU (ACFID Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program Working Group 2014).

The key to World Vision approach is a beginning in collaborative design of community-driven development—which clearly resonates strongly with the IPA and country-based planning approaches. Many of the Principles in the Practice Note also resonate.

A policy window exists to communicate the multiple benefits of co-management, and perhaps also to link to ACFID as an excellent example of the outcomes from appropriate Development Practice.

Value-added Indigenous Protected Areas and Rangers

Relevant research findings and gap

Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) and Rangers were identified as providing a means for developing and implementing a strategic vision, offering an effective pathway towards adaptive governance:

IPA is what gives us the structure for strategic vision, IPA is 'the what', comes -together in putting our vision, Rangers is 'the how' ... In an IPA we have something that can be adapted, it evolves (Girringun Workshop)

[IPA] that's deadly, it's a good thing, it's a really good thing in that - it's not a legal right as such but what it does translate into is ... UN instrument attaches with other self-rights and self determination ... applying the DRIP (UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) (MY Workshop).

Intent comes through IPA and country-based planning. Not driven by agencies, but are what TOs want them to be. Get the strategic vision (Partner Workshop).

Nevertheless, IPA encounter limitations in their ability support collaborative governance and aspirations for Rainforest Aboriginal knowledge and values to be expressed on country:

No formal level through which IPAs change the government processes. At a basic level – senior rangers may take a role on country. But the IPA declaration does not result in any delegation of roles, responsibilities etc. from the state (Partner Workshop).

In addition, only parts of wet tropics country have been able to access IPA funding, leaving other groups with very few resources (PBCs often have no access to resources) and often substantial responsibility for country:

If PBCs aren't operating or have the resources to manage their affairs they effectively can get taken over by the government (Regional Workshop)

What wasn't taken into account was post-determination so there was no resources or structure associated with implementation of agreements (MY Workshop).

The expansion of IPAs to enable more wet tropics groups and country to participate is viewed as a way to stabilize the context and therefore delivery of multiple benefits, which is currently challenged by short-term, inadequate funding for management:

We get called on a lot for input to decisions and we work with the land and sea - but it's always that battle with funding because we have to fight for that. We've got our programs which only last for a year or maybe four years and then we have to fight again to get the funding to keep it going. A little bit here, a little bit there, and some of our funding is only 12 months. So at the end of each 12 months we're sort of panicking whether we've still got our jobs (RAP regional workshop).

Policy options to address the value-added IPA gap

Three directions were identified to address the implementation and extent gaps identified in relation to IPAs. These are:

- Higher value outcomes and inputs: supporting a world and national heritage IPA that ensures protection of globally/nationally significant natural and cultural values (e.g Outstanding Universal Values, OUVs) and receives commensurately more resources;
- Expanding the area of IPAs to include all (but not only) the WTWHA, based on relevant TO country boundaries;
- Expanding Ranger programs and ensuring these are effectively linked to value-added IPAs.

Context of value-added IPAs and Rangers

The Minister for Environment (Pers. Comm. Greg Hunt, Minister, 25 February 2014) and the Indigenous Advisory Committee (Pers Comm. Kate Thomann, Indigenous Policy Officer, 24 February 2014) have both expressed interest in the concept of value-added IPAs. Minister Hunt envisaged a concept similar to a "national park" under the IUCN Matrix of categories of management and governance (

Table 6).

Management categories and governance types capture important characteristics of any protected area and– as they are independent– they can be juxtaposed in a matrix, creating a "space of options" helpful to visualise their possible combinations. The resulting IUCN Matrix is particularly helpful to visualise the combinations of management category and governance type that can exist. Interestingly, this IUCN Matrix can apply not only to protected areas but also to governance of country more generally (Borrini-Feyerabend and Hill 2014 (in press)). Many IPAs are currently Category IV and V; in effect a value-added IPA would maintain the same governance, while lifting the level of management.

Management for Outstanding Universal Values (OUVs) has been brought into focus by attention paid in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area through the recent strategic assessments and other processes (Department of Environment 2014).

Policy Window

The 2014-15 Australian Government Budget maintained funding for existing IPAs which now form part of the “jobs, land and economy” component of the [Indigenous Advancement Strategy](#), under the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C). The key performance measures for this strategy are:

- increase in the Indigenous employment and participation rates.
- number of employment places filled with assistance by the Indigenous Advancement - Jobs, Land and the Economy programme and proportion retained to 26 weeks.
- proportion of job seekers in employment, education or training three months following participating in the Indigenous Advancement – Jobs, Land and the Economy programme.
- number of Indigenous ranger jobs contracted.
- number of Native Title claims finalized.
- number of land claims being progressed or finalised under Commonwealth land rights legislation and number of township leases being negotiated, agreed or in place (Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet 2014).

Table 6: The IUCN Protected Area Matrix—a classification system comprising both management category and governance type (Dudley 2008).

Governance Type Management Category	A. Governance by government			B. Shared governance		C. Private governance			D. Governance by indigenous peoples and local communities		
	Federal or national ministry or agency in charge	Sub-national ministry or agency in charge	Government-delegated management (e.g. to an NGO)	Transboundary governance	Collaborative governance (various forms of pluralist influence)	Joint governance (pluralist governing body)	Conserved areas established and run by individual landowners	...by non-profit organisations (e.g. NGOs, universities)	...by for-profit organisations (e.g., corporate landowners)	Indigenous peoples' conserved areas and territories – established and run by indigenous peoples	Community conserved areas and territories – established and run by local communities
I a. Strict Nature Reserve											
Ib. Wilderness Area											
II. National Park											
III. Natural Monument											
IV. Habitat/ Species Management											
V. Protected Landscape/ Seascape											
VI. Protected Area with Sustainable Use of Natural Resources											

While the management and implementation of the IPA Program falls under the responsibility of PM&C, ongoing funding will be through the Caring for our Country Sustainable Environment stream (PM&C 2014). The objectives of this stream are:

- maintenance of ecosystem services.
- protection of our conservation estate.
- enhanced capacity of Indigenous communities to conserve and protect natural resources.

Funding of up to \$78.3 million is available over five years (commencing 1 July 2013) for existing Indigenous Protected Areas projects under these Guidelines. These Guidelines recognize protection of cultural heritage and list key focus areas to include:

- Indigenous heritage values and places of importance to Indigenous communities that have been identified as management priorities
- places on the World and/or National Heritage List.

The Guidelines state support for the transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge, and activities that engage young people, traditional owners and the community in land and sea country management. These activities can be supported as a component of funded projects.

The policy context provides an opportunity for higher-level IPAs, but further work is needed to create a policy window that provides for expanding the extent of IPAs. This work could concentrate a focus on the Wet Tropics as both a World Heritage Area and national listed for its Indigenous Cultural Values, and the opportunity to focus on OUVs.

Value-added Indigenous Land Use Agreements

Relevant research findings and gap

The role and function of native title recognition and Indigenous Land Use Agreements were highlighted by all participants in the participatory evaluation. Native title recognition is certainly seen as an important step in the journey towards equitable power-sharing and application of Indigenous knowledge and values on country:

the native title determinations are about what your rights and interest are over the whole ... Native title rights and interests will survive ... native title holders are the land-owners (MY Workshop).

However, the current processes to negotiate and recognize native title are considered unsatisfactory:

Native title works on an adversarial process...native title...appalled, never been able to say it, gets dumped on people and used to pull each other apart (Partners Workshop).

Native title is disempowering. When the court came here to give our determination, the court says, no photos, no singing out with happiness. The Judge walks in, sits up there, going through papers, reading out all the conditions on our native title. Who the hell is this bloke. It upset me. That's not his to give. That's ours, it's always been ours (Girringun Workshop).

We've got our native title but we can't use it for what we want... No leverage, does that make sense, we got nothing... (RAP Regional Workshop).

Native title is limited, it's sick, it's very sick. Government say a lot of things. Say they'll do this and that. But come down the track where they get in writing, it doesn't go to the implementation, doesn't go there. It's a hard thing (RAP Regional Workshop).

Once you get native title (even then it's just a right to negotiate), under the threat of compulsory acquisition: if industry wants the land for something, if you can't come out with some sort of agreement, ILUA, whatever, their legal people threaten "if you don't agree we'll ask the State for a compulsory acquisition". So it puts us on the back foot, right is given and taken away at the same time. Any industry can actually do that, it goes back to the institutionalised racism in the system (RAP Regional Workshop).

People contrasted the adversarial processes around negotiation Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) with the more collaborative approaches in IPA and land and sea planning:

IPA is what gives us the structure for strategic vision, IPA is 'the what', comes together in putting our vision, Rangers is 'the how' ... ILUAs put us in a competition with the State, negotiating to reach an agreement. ... In an IPA we have something that can be adapted, it evolves. With an ILUA, it depends on the strength of the negotiation (Girringun Workshop).

Good, strategic partnerships have come through land and sea management planning. Problem is that land and sea management is not supported post-determinations (Partner Workshop).

People also noted that ILUAs expire, which can be both an advantage and a disadvantage.

Improvements in the processes and outcomes from ILUAs negotiated through native title processes would be welcomed by all. Agreement-making is viewed as potentially a good way forward:

At the end of the day the agreement will come when both parties sit down and say, righty-o, the goal is set there. If we move to meet halfway, agree on that one, we've achieved something (RAP Regional Workshop).

Policy options to address value-added ILUAs

Three directions were identified to address the gap in processes and outcomes for negotiating and implementing ILUAs. These are:

- Collaborative development of a state-wide model protected area ILUA that provided for an adaptive collaborative process;
- Country based planning as the first step in ILUA negotiation to enable TOs resources to address governance and strategic vision;
- Ensuring that ILUAs include financial resources for implementation for both parties.
- Policy and legislative research looking at co-existence between Native Title and Local Government democracy, and the role of ILUAs.

Policy context of value-added ILUAs

Schmider (Schmider 2014b) undertook a context analysis around the intersection between native title, protected areas and ILUAs in wet tropics country:

All but 5 of our 20 groups have NT determinations, and 3 of those 5 have at least 1 ILUA with local government ...I haven't done a full analysis, but 11 of the 18 NT Determinations involve Protected Area ILUAs with the State. And amongst the 18 NT

Determinations and tribal groups who've got ILUAs outside Determinations, there's 37 local government ILUAs.

ILUAs are therefore centrally important to governing and managing country in the wet tropics. Again Schmider (2014) found:

the common experience in the Wet Tropics is that Protected Area ILUAs ended up being about hunting, firearms, taking of species, camping, fire and rubbish. We felt real good when we got agreement for traditional burials in national parks. We tried and tried and tried to get the lawyers in Land Council to push joint management approaches in place but the State was using a template ILUA that was about controlling the exercise of TO rights. We even tried to reduce the 10 year ILUA window.

Bauman et al. (2013) have done a lot of work looking at protected area comanagement across the nation ... The content and quality of these Protected Area agreements and provisions varies significantly from Information sharing and consultation arrangements between Aboriginal people and land management agencies through to joint decision making power. More is needed, and I encourage AIATSIS and Government areas responsible for World Heritage Areas and national parks to pick up this work.

Bauman et al. (2013) detail how ILUAs can be used differently to the experiences that Schmider (2014b) has identified. For example, in Cape York, Indigenous Management Agreements (IMAs) form a schedule to ILUAs over protected areas, providing for a more ongoing adaptive approach, and also for tenure transfers. In the Northern Territory (and increasingly in NSW), ILUAs establish joint management arrangements over parks, using a template to underpin the discussions. Kuuku Ya'u people on Cape York Peninsula have been given certain powers of enforcement over sea country under an ILUA, having been trained in compliance and authorised as state marine park inspectors. ILUAs also form a key feature of co-management arrangements in the other states (Bauman et al. 2013). Some, but not many, of these include financial resources for implementation, which is a key issue and aspiration for Traditional Owner parties and increasingly for governments.

Schmider (2014b) also identified a large number of ILUAs with Local Government as an important component of co-management in wet tropics country:

37 LGA ILUAs - 11 x access, 8 x Development, 16 x Government, 1 x Terms of Access, 12 x Infrastructure, 3 x community, 11 x Consultation Protocol, 3 x communication, 2 x co-management, 1 x exploration, 4 x Tenure Resolution, 1 x community living areas.

The co-management ILUAs with local government appear to be the only co-management ones in wet tropics country.

Policy window for value-added ILUAs

Queensland Government Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing [Policies and procedures](#) web-page includes the Department of Environment and Resource Management (2011) as their policy on [Indigenous partnerships in management of protected areas](#). This policy notes on page 2 that "in each case of a determination of native title over a national park, an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) has been negotiated to regulate how native title rights and interests will be exercised on the park." Interestingly, this document also states that Indigenous Protected Areas in Australia do not meet the formal definition of the [National Reserve System](#), which is clearly not the view of the Australian Government who recognizes IPAs as now making up more than one third of the National Reserve System. Further discussion between Australian and Queensland officers on this point would be valuable.

The parameters of the policy (Department of Environment and Resource Management 2011, p. 5) clearly determine the outcomes identified by Schmider (2014b)

“Partnerships with Traditional Owners on Protected Areas

While each protected area will differ, the following components cover the range of initiatives that QPWS may discuss with traditional owners in structured negotiation of partnerships. Note that these are presented as a range of partnership options and are not absolute requirements for every situation.

- 1. Working groups may be established to address specific management outcomes over a defined timeframe. These working groups may negotiate protocols for issues such as fire management, pest plant and animal management, visitor and commercial activities, and cultural heritage management.*
- 2. A management plan working group may be established to specifically address the development of a national park management plan.*
- 3. Employment opportunities may be explored using Indigenous identified and specified positions, casual positions and permanent appointments. Additionally, there may be a commitment to explore commercial opportunities for traditional owners through their involvement in management and presentation of the protected area’s natural and cultural resources.*
- 4. Living areas and hunting on protected areas may be considered, but will require considerable discussion and negotiation on scope and procedures, depending on the area’s size and location and the extent of visitor use of the area.*
- 5. Park names and names of sites within protected areas may be drawn from Indigenous languages to recognise traditional owner’s connection to land.*
- 6. These components can be used singly or in combinations. They can be used to initiate new arrangements or to build on existing ones, depending upon the particular circumstances existing on the protected area, the collective capacity to resource them, and the aspirations and capacity of traditional owners to engage in them.”*

Queensland’s Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) conducts a Queensland Land and Sea Rangers Program (Department of Environment and Heritage Protection 2013) which employed 65 Rangers at 14 sites across Queensland in December 2014 (

Figure 7). DEHP also offers grants of up to \$50k to communities for projects under their [Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Grants program](#).

Linking of the financial resources and capability associated with these DEPH programs to ILUAs could provide a policy window to address the options proposed above.

The fact that responsibility for land management lies largely with State governments under Australia’s constitutional arrangements mean that ILUA negotiations for native title holders include a large component of dealing with State agencies (although see next section for a discussion of Local Government roles). However, Australian Government responsibilities are also triggered in the wet tropics through the world heritage status, the national listing of the Indigenous Cultural Values, the IPAs and various measures under the Environment Conservation and Biodiversity Protection Act 1999. In this regard, it is worth noting the key performance outcome in the discussion above about IPAs:

- number of Indigenous ranger jobs contracted.
- number of Native Title claims finalized.
- enhanced capacity of Indigenous communities to conserve and protect natural resources.

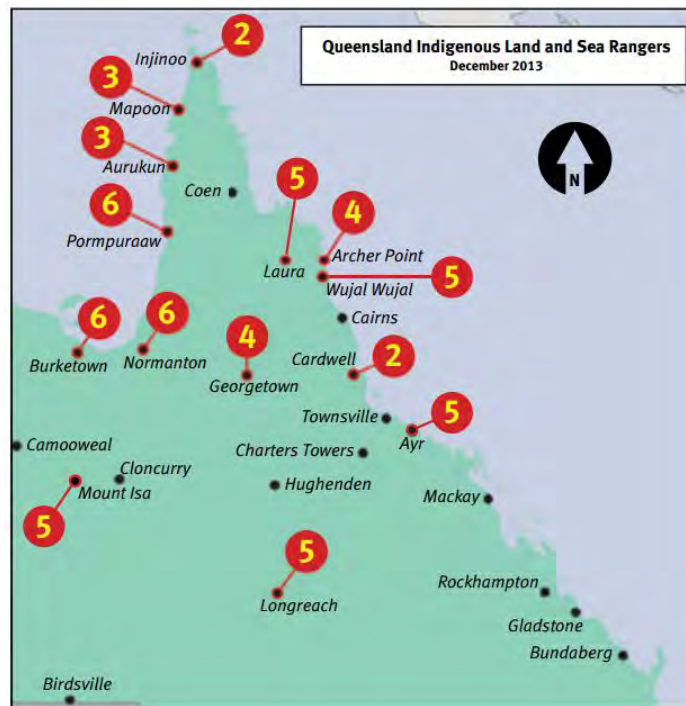


Figure 7: Location of the 65 Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers, December 2013

Native Title Corporations and Local Governments

Relevant research findings and gap

The relationship between Native Title Corporations and Local Governments was identified as a critical issue by Mandingalbay Yidinji Corporation, primarily in the context of the relationship with the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council.

Through the native title process, there has been a substantive shift of power about land use decision making from Councils to traditional owners. Traditional Owners' frustrations centre on the lack of understanding, and some lack of clarity, about how the different roles and responsibilities between the native-title holders and Local Government work in practice:

We thought that would have been a given, when we got the determination, federal people in Cairns that have said well it's got to do with this, let's talk to these people ... one would expect that as soon as you have got a consent determination, through the courts, all state and federal agencies would be on notice to consult or contract if the government does. Instead they all call the Yarrabah Council at times, so that's the confusion. It's on the other side of the barbed wire fence instead of our side.

Within the transition from the Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) to the Local Government Act, there was no up-skilling of the critical mass of people in Yarrabah in terms of the changing of responsibilities. Go over there now and people are still thinking that they're under the DOGIT and that's how they actually operate ... even the councillors are operating on that basis yeah, he got housing, you've got the police force, they're even calling up for the RSL. So there's a bit of confusion ... and it's not [particularly] their [Yarrabah Council's] fault in terms of where they see the community and how they do

things. Yarrabah's running as ... the mission, when it was born and the selection of these people that were taken there, were relocated there

Looking from eyes outside and looking into the community, some agencies still see the council as the DOGIT there as the one stop shop. They're not aware of the evolution of the local governments.

It's the first ever [Yarrabah Shire town plan] on that type of tenure, where do our rights and interests sit as determined people and the right people (MY Workshop).

On native title lands, key responsibility for managing country primarily sits with traditional owners, even though these lands may be sited within the boundaries of an Aboriginal Shire Council area. Hence, traditional owner country-based planning needs to now influence Council-based land use planning. In the wider context, positive relationships between Traditional Owners and Local Governments were also identified as useful promoters of management of country:

Constraints are lifting. Local government is engaging with TOs to have a presence on land. A lot of people were removed from country, so small actions like this lift the constraints (Partners Workshop).

From Local Government (LG) we support Ranger training, Ranger employment and facilitate discussions...some LG support a facilitator ... some coastal councils seem to be doing it better (CCC, CRC and Douglas)(Partner Workshop).

As a corollary, where relationships are not well developed, and roles not properly understood or respected, this causes difficulties:

we had a statement in the Cairns Post recently with the mayor looking at the four main reasons why Cairns is not going forward and he listed "native title"... they need to get away from looking at us as part of the problem - to being part of the solution... we've actually had the Cairns City Council as part of our partners for over seven years, we've had very close engagements with the planning department in terms of our development applications, yet they still see us as a problem ... we need them putting on the right spectacles to see that we're there as a neighbouring factor to achieving - helping them achieve (MY Workshop).

Policy options to address the gap relevant to Native Title Corporations and Local Government

A number of potential directions were identified to address the gap. These are:

- Strong traditional owner led country-based planning influencing local government Town Plans;
- Collaborative development of a Town Plan between MYAC, Gunggandji-Mandingalbay Yidinji Peoples PBC Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC and Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council.
- Similar collaborative town planning could be relevant between Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation and the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council, but was not discussed during this research.
- Policy and legislative research looking at co-existence between Aboriginal Shire Council, local government-based democracy and native title corporations, and clarifying roles and responsibilities.

Policy context for Native Title Corporations and Local Government

The [Australian Local Government Association](#) provides a lot of resources to assist with roles and relationships with native title. However, these resources are not targeted to the particular Queensland context or to former Deed of Grant in Trusts Councils.

Policy window for Native Title Corporations and Local Government

The creation of many new PBCs in the wet tropics region and Cape York provides the driver for better understanding and practices in this domain. The [Northern Australia Whitepaper](#) process also envisages more policy work with respect to land use planning and tenure reform.

Conclusions and next steps

The overall goal of our participatory evaluation of Indigenous co-management and biodiversity protection in wet tropics country was to:

interrogate the capability of Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs), and other collaborative planning models and mechanisms, to provide the means for recognition of Indigenous knowledge and values, and joint management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area between Governments and Rainforest Aboriginal people, in partnership with communities.

We identified that IPAs together with Rangers are highly effective mechanisms, because of their capability to be adaptive and collaborative, and to provide a context that supports wider recognition of the rights and responsibilities of Indigenous peoples, and the ongoing project of reconciliation in Australia. IPAs through Indigenous-driven planning provide the “what” for management of country; Rangers through their roles on-ground provide the “how”.

We also found that Indigenous Land Use Agreements are a vitally important mechanism as their extent is much greater than IPAs, and they are currently the only mechanism available for many groups. However, the current processes and outcomes for ILUAs are highly problematic, with conflictual negotiations and static agreements that do not provide for adaptive, collaborative management.

Our wider consideration of the meaning and application of co-management lead us to conclude that collaborative governance of management of wet tropics country is best able to “provide the means for recognition of Indigenous knowledge and values, and joint management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area between Governments and Rainforest Aboriginal people, in partnership with communities”.

We consider that collaborative governance involves:

a continual solution-building process, not a fixed state, involving extensive talking, negotiations and jointly learning, so it gets better over time.

In effect, our definition sets out the types of interactions that occur in the wet tropics, within a framing where governance is considered to be:

interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken and how citizens and other stakeholders have their say (Graham et al. 2003).

Our focus on governance rather than management reflects the identification that

- Management is about what is done in pursuit of given objectives and constitutes the means and actions to achieve such objectives
- Governance is about who decides what the objectives are, what to do to pursue them, and with what means; how those decisions are taken; and who holds power, authority and responsibility.

Governance can be seen as the critical framework that enables all various aspects and goals of management for biodiversity protection to be pursued on country. However, both Indigenous and their partners' governance of wet tropics country is currently underdeveloped. While some Indigenous groups are recognised as having very good governance in place, overall it is patchy across the wet tropics.

The evaluations identified that co-governance and co-management of country generates multiple benefits including:

- employment;
- enhanced job-readiness and transition from school to work;
- moving from welfare dependency to business development;
- improved disaster readiness and response;
- mobilizing people out of passivity and empowering leadership;
- biodiversity protection and restoration;
- enhanced reconciliation between local Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities;
- intergenerational knowledge transfer; and
- cultural renewal and reconnection.

These results are particularly important because they address the complex set of factors that Indigenous peoples face, addressing multiple social, economic and educational challenges, for example: lack of economic opportunities in remote and regional Australia; the barriers that poverty, socio-economic disadvantage and native title regimes impose on asset-based development; and the erosion of knowledge transfer processes that are important to country.

Our co-research identified five policy-relevant findings that constitute gaps in the current arrangements where options exist to improve recognition of Indigenous knowledge and values on the management of wet tropics country:

- Transformative knowledge network/s to support social learning for co-governance;
- Understanding delivery of multiple benefits;
- Value-added Indigenous Protected Areas and rangers;
- Value-added Indigenous Land Use Agreements;
- Native Title Corporations and Local Governments.

We present these policy-relevant findings for consideration by both Rainforest Aboriginal peoples and their government, community and other partners in management of wet tropics country. They do not constitute recommendations that are endorsed by any of the organisations who came together on the co-research team. Rather they are ideas developed through structured enquiry that we hope will be useful for all participants. They could also help inform Aboriginal decision making in the Wet Tropics in relation to the relisting and management of the Wet Tropics for its cultural values.

In order to better consider the strengths and weaknesses of the policy-relevant findings and options, we are hosting a joint workshop in October. Final outputs from the participatory evaluation will be policy briefs about the policy-relevant findings, and journal articles.

References

- ACFID Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program Working Group. (2014) Effective Development Practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities. Australian Council for International Development (ACFID). Online: <http://www.acfid.asn.au/resources-publications/publications/practice-notes/effective-development-practice-in-aboriginal-torres-strait-islander-communities>, Canberra.
- Auditor-General. (2011) Indigenous Protected Areas. Audit Report NO. 14 2011-12 Performance Audit Australian National Audit Office, Canberra.
- Bauman T., Haynes C. & Lauder G. (2013) Pathways to co-management in Australia. Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Research Discussion Paper No 32. Online; http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/_files/ntru/BaumanHaynesDP_web.pdf, Canberra.
- Bidwell D., Dietz T. & Scavia D. (2013) Fostering knowledge networks for climate adaptation. *Nature Climate Change* **3**, 610-1.
- Borrini-Feyerabend G., Dudley N., Jaeger T., Lassen B., Broome N. P., Phillips A. & Sandwith T. (2013) Governance of Protected Areas: From understanding to action. IUCN Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 20, Gland, Switzerland.
- Borrini-Feyerabend G. & Hill R. (2014 (in press)) Governance of the conservation of nature. In: *Protected Area Governance and Management* (eds G. L. Worboys, M. Lockwood and A. Kothari). ANU Press, Canberra.
- Castellano M. B. (2014) Ethics of Aboriginal Research. In: *Global Bioethics and Human Rights: Contemporary Issues* (eds W. Teays, J.-S. Gordon and A. D. Renteln) pp. 273-85. Rowman & Littleford, Lanham, Maryland, USA.
- Creswell J. W. & Miller D. L. (2000) Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory Pract.* **39**, 124-30.
- Cullen-Unsworth L. C., Butler J. R. A., Hill R. & Wallace M. (2010) Cooperative Research: An Example from the Wet Tropics of Queensland. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Science* **5**.
- Dentoni D., Hospes O. & Ross R. B. (2012) Managing Wicked Problems in Agribusiness: The Role of Multi-Stakeholder Engagements in Value Creation EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION. *Int. Food Agribus. Manag. Rev.* **15**, 1-12.
- Department of Environment. (2014) EPBC Act referral guidelines for the Outstanding Universal Value of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. Australian Government Department of Environment. Online: http://www.environment.gov.au/system/files/resources/e8e47508-5ea4-457b-adeb-b9c1364e9bec/files/referral-guidelines-great-barrier-reef_0.pdf, Canberra.
- Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. (2013) Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers. Queensland Government Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. Online: <http://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/ecosystems/community-role/ranger/pdf/brochure.pdf>, Brisbane.
- Department of Environment and Resource Management. (2011) Operational Policy Indigenous Indigenous partnerships in the management of protected areas. Queensland Government.

Department of Environment and Resource Management. Online: <http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/register/p02291aa.pdf>, Brisbane.

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. (2014) Portfolio Budget Statements 2014-15 Budget Related Paper No. 1.14 Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio. Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Online: http://www.dpmc.gov.au/accountability/budget/2014-15/docs/pbs_2014-15_portfolio.pdf, Canberra.

Dudley N. (2008) *Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories*. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland.

Graham J., Amos B. & Plumptre T. (2003) Governance principles for protected areas in the 21st Century, a discussion paper. Institute on Governance in collaboration with Parks Canada and Canadian International Development Agency, Ottawa, Canada.

Hill R., Baird A., Buchanan D., Denman C., Fischer P., Gibson K., Johnson J., Kerry A., Kulka G., Madsen E., Olbar A., Olbar L., Pierce J., Schuan J., Shipton E., Shipton H., Smith J., Sykes R., Walker E., Walker W., Wallace P., Yerry B., Yougie D., Ball D., Barney E., Buchanan R., Buchanan R., Denman H., Fischer R., Gibson R., Talbot L., Tayley E., Tayley N., Walker D., Walker K., Wallace M. & Yougie L. (2004) *Yalanji-Warranga Kaban. Yalanji People of the Rainforest Fire Management Book*. Little Ramsay Press, Cairns.

Hill R., Maclean K., Pert P. L., Joyce A., Schmider J. & Tawake L. (2013) Participatory evaluation of co-management in wet tropics country. Interim Report. Report to the National Environmental Research Program. Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Pty. Ltd., Cairns.

Hill R., Pert P. L., Tsatsaros J., Bauman T. & Schmider J. (2012) Workshop on Indigenous Co-management and Biodiversity Protection. Towards a framework for evaluation in Australia's wet tropics. Report to the National Environmental Research Program. Reef and Rainforest Research Centre Limited, Cairns.

Ison R. L., Bruce C., Carberry P. S., Maru Y., McMillan L., Pengelly B. C., Sparrow A., Stirzaker R. & Wallis P. J. (2012) *A 'learning system design' for more effective agricultural research for development*. International Farming Systems Association, Vienna, Austria.

Kidd R. (1997) *The Way We Civilise*, Brisbane.

Lahsen M., Bustamante M. M. C., Swap R., McNie E., Ometto J. P. H. B., Schor T., Tiessen H., Andelman S. & Annegarn H. (2013) The Contributions of Regional Knowledge Networks Researching Environmental Changes in Latin America and Africa: a Synthesis of what they can do and why they can be policy relevant. *Ecology and Society* **18**.

Li L. W. & Yu Y. W. (2013) From Self-Interest to Community-Interest: Low Carbon Community-Based Process and Practice. *Int. J. Green Energy* **10**, 984-98.

Loos N. (1982) *Invasion and Resistance*. Australian National University, Canberra.

Maclean K. & Cullen L. (2009) Research methodologies for the co-production of knowledge for environmental management in Australia. *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand* **39**.

Maclean K., Hill R., Pert P. L., Bock E., Barrett P., Bellafquih R., Friday M., Mundraby V., Sarago L., Schmider J. & Talbot L. (2012) Framework and institutional analysis: Indigenous co-management and biodiversity protection in the wet tropics. Reef and Rainforest Research Centre on behalf of the Australian Government's National Environmental Research Program (NERP) Tropical Ecosystems (TE) Hub. <http://www.nerptropical.edu.au/sites/default/files/publications/>

files/Project%2012.1%20Technical%20Report%20Maclean%20et%20al%202012%20Final.pdf, Cairns.

Maclean K., Ross H., Cuthill M. & Rist P. (2013) Healthy country, healthy people: an Australian Aboriginal organisation's adaptive governance to enhance its social-ecological system. *GeoForum* **45**, 94-105.

Pert P. L., Hill R., Maclean K., Dale A., Rist P., Talbot L. D., Tawake L. & Schmider J. (2014 in review) Mapping cultural ecosystem services with Rainforest Aboriginal peoples: integrating biocultural diversity, governance and social variation. *Ecosystem Services*.

PM&C. (2014) 2013–18 Sustainable Environment stream. Grants for Indigenous Protected Areas. Grant guidelines. Australian Government, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Online: http://www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous_affairs/grants/docs/IPA_Guidelines.pdf, Canberra.

Queensland Government Natural Resources M. a. E. (2004) Regional Vegetation Management Code for Broad-scale Clearing: Wet Tropics Bioregion. Queensland Government Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, Queensland, Australia.

RAPA. (2013) Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples. Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples' Alliance, Cairns.

Richmond C., Martin D., Dean L., Castleden H. & Marsden N. (2013) Transformative Networks: How ACADRE/NEAHR Support for Graduate Students Has Impacted Aboriginal Health Research in Canada. Aboriginal Health Research Networks Secretariat, Victoria, BC, Canada.

Romero C., Athayde S., Collomb J. G. E., DiGiano M., Schmink M., Schramski S. & Seales L. (2012) Conservation and Development in Latin America and Southern Africa: Setting the Stage. *Ecology and Society* **17**, 13.

Schmider J. (2014a) Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Project 2020. Looking after Australia's world heritage - our wet tropics rainforest country, culture and kin Presentation to the Co-management Workshop at Cairns Colonial Club, 29 April Cairns.

Schmider J. (2014b) Too VIP to be Overlooked, ILUAs as Protected Area Joint Management, compared to everything else. In: *National Native Title Conference Living with Native Title, from the Bush to the Sea 2-4 June*. Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and NTSCORP Ltd, Coffs Harbour, NSW.

Sikor T., Auld G., Bebbington A. J., Benjaminsen T. A., Gentry B. S., Hunsberger C., Izac A. M., Margulis M. E., Plieninger T., Schroeder H. & Upton C. (2013) Global land governance: from territory to flow? *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* **5**, 522-7.

Singh R. K. & Anamika S. (2013) Biodiversity and recipe contests: innovative socioecological approaches to capture ecological knowledge and conserve biodiversity in Arunachal Pradesh. *Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge* **12**, 240-51.

Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision. (2011) Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2011. Productivity Commission, Canberra.

TGER. (2013) Governance of Natural Resources Background. IUCN Commission on Environment, Economic and Social Policy, Theme on Governance, Equity and Rights, Online https://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/tger_background.pdf.

Tress G., Tress B. & Fry G. (2005) Clarifying integrative research concepts in landscape ecology. *Landsc. Ecol.* **20**, 479-93.

van Latesteijn H. C. & Rabbinge R. (2012) Wicked Problems in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security, the TransForum Experience. *Int. Food Agribus. Manag. Rev.* **15**, 89-93.

Weir J. K., Stacey C. & Youngetob K. (2011) The Benefits of Caring for Country. Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water Population and Communities and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra.

WTRA. (2005) *Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area Regional Agreement Between Rainforest Aboriginal People and the Wet Tropics Management Authority, Queensland Environmental Protection Agency, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines and The Commonwealth of Australia - the Department of Environment and Heritage - For Management Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.* Cairns, Australia, Wet Tropics Management Authority, Wet Tropics Regional Agreement.

Wyborn C. & Bixler R. P. (2013) Collaboration and nested environmental governance: Scale dependency, scale framing, and cross-scale interactions in collaborative conservation. *Journal of Environmental Management* **123**, 58-67.

Zurba M., Ross H., Izurieta A., Rist P., Bock E. & Berkes F. (2012) Building Co-Management as a Process: Problem Solving Through Partnerships in Aboriginal Country, Australia. *Environmental Management* **49**, 1130-42.