NERP Tropical Ecosystems Hub Project Factsheet

Improved approaches for the detection and prevention of wildlife diseases in the Torres Strait

Project leader: Dr Susan Laurance (JCU)

Project summary

This project focuses on improving methods to detect the introduction of exotic animal diseases into the Torres Strait. The researchers will examine the environmental factors that influence the establishment and persistence of wildlife diseases in the region. They will study insect disease vectors and the incidence of disease in birds in a range of habitats in order to identify where disease risk is greatest.

Why this research is needed

Animal-borne diseases pose serious threats to human health, agriculture and to Australia's biodiversity. There is a real possibility of disease entering Australia through people or animal movements through the Torres Strait so for this reason surveillance and reliable methods of disease detection are vital

Research-user focus

The project will deliver outcomes that are useful to a range of stakeholder organisations including state and Australian government bodies. Research users include the Torres Strait Regional Authority, Biosecurity Queensland, the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service.

Outcomes

This project will develop improved methods for detecting the establishment and persistence of disease incursions in Torres Strait. This will result in increased capacity to protect Torres Strait biodiversity and people from disease.

Capturing birds such as this silvereye for the detection of blood borne parasites (avian Malaria)

Photo: Dr Susan Laurance

Dagmar Meyer Steiger, JCU Masters Student studying disease vectors

Research Provider

JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

Find this project at www.nerptropical.edu.au
Theme 3: Managing for resilient tropical systems
Program 11: Resilient Torres Strait communities
Project: 11.2

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National Environmental Research Program

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