Healthy Country, Healthy People: Supporting Indigenous Engagement in the Sustainable Management of Northern Territory Land and Seas

A Strategic Framework

Prepared as the Final Report for the Healthy Country, Healthy People Investment Strategy Project

by

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The project has also drawn on a wide range of research conducted on Indigenous land and sea management in the
Northern Territory, and Australia more broadly, over the last fifteen years. A bibliography acknowledging this key research
is contained at the back of the report. It is also acknowledged that traditional Aboriginal owners of country in the NT are
continuing to undertake their cultural and land and sea management responsibilities as they have for over 50,000 years
and that these activities continue to benefit all Australians.

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## KEY ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABA</td>
<td>Aboriginals Benefit Account</td>
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<td>ALEP</td>
<td>Aboriginal Landcare Education Program</td>
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<td>ALRA</td>
<td>Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976</td>
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<td>AQIS</td>
<td>Australian Quarantine Inspection Service</td>
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<td>CDEP</td>
<td>Community Development Employment Projects Program</td>
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<td>CLC</td>
<td>Central Land Council</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>Cooperative Research Centre</td>
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<td>CSIRO</td>
<td>Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation</td>
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<td>DEW</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water Resources</td>
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<td>DEWR</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
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<td>DPIFM</td>
<td>Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines</td>
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<td>FACSIA</td>
<td>Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</td>
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<td>IBA</td>
<td>Indigenous Business Australia</td>
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<td>ILC</td>
<td>Indigenous Land Corporation</td>
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<td>IPA</td>
<td>Indigenous Protected Area</td>
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<td>NAILSMA</td>
<td>North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance</td>
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<td>NHT</td>
<td>Natural Heritage Trust</td>
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<td>NLC</td>
<td>Northern Land Council</td>
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<td>NRETA</td>
<td>NT Government Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts</td>
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<td>NT</td>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
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<tr>
<td>STEP</td>
<td>Structured Training and Employment Projects</td>
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<td>STEP ERS</td>
<td>Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>WALFA</td>
<td>West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement</td>
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CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

Broker / Broker Agency

An individual or agency whose role is to link people as individuals, families and/or Indigenous land and sea management groups with purchasers of, or investors in, cultural and natural resource management service provision. Brokers understand both the aspirations and capabilities of Indigenous land and sea management groups and the requirements of purchasers and investors. Brokers are also able to combine contracting and investment opportunities to achieve a critical level of income or resources for one Indigenous land and sea management group or region. The term ‘facilitator’ is also often used to describe individuals who undertake at least some aspects of this ‘broker’ function.

Caring for Country

This term is used in its broadest sense to describe holistic Aboriginal views of land and sea management or cultural and natural resource management.

Conservation Economy

In a conservation economy, economic arrangements are designed or re-designed so that they restore, maintain or improve natural capital and produce environmental, social and financial value. In a 2006 report prepared for the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources by the Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre titled, Enabling the Market: Incentives for Biodiversity in the Rangelands1, the conservation economy is described as including all the elements of biodiversity services, eco-tourism, sustainable grazing, carbon sequestration and land condition and water resource monitoring. The analysis identified several market components necessary to support the emergence of such a conservation economy, including purchasers, brokers, landowner (organising) collectives, and individual and family landowners. A draft 2007 Australian Conservation Foundation and Land and Water Australia Report, A Cultural and Conservation Economy for Northern Australia, has found that the priority sectors for developing a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia are primarily in ecosystem services, Indigenous arts and cultural industries and visitor services.

Coordinator

A coordinator is an individual, often employed from outside the community, who works with Aboriginal land and sea managers to develop their organisations and programs. Coordinators are currently performing a dual function: firstly, they act as the interface between the Indigenous groups and government agencies and other organisations to obtain funding and commercial opportunities; and secondly, they perform a project management function, working alongside senior Indigenous land and sea managers to plan work programs and undertake cultural and natural resource management work. It is important to understand that coordinators are not intended to be the managers or directors of Indigenous land and sea management groups but rather they act to facilitate opportunities, resources and projects for the group.

Some coordinators are locally-based, living in an Indigenous community and working intensively with an Indigenous land and sea management group. Other coordinators may be regionally based, working with a number of Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Fee-for-Service

Fee-for-service arrangements are one of a number of incentives that can be used to achieve cultural and natural resource management outcomes. Fee-for-service describes a commercial arrangement under which Indigenous land and sea management groups receive payment for each service they provide to a client. This report uses the term ‘fee-for-service’ to stay consistent with the terminology in the Healthy Country,

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1 Please note that, for ease of reading, all attributions and references are contained in the bibliography at Attachment Three of the report.
Healthy People Schedule. However, it is recognised that this commercial arrangement is more appropriately referred to in other research literature as payment for environmental services. It is also recognised from recent Australian and international experience that market-based instruments, used in conjunction with other responses, are likely to outperform other approaches to establishing fee-for-service arrangements in some circumstances.

Indigenous Ecological Knowledge

This report uses the definition of Indigenous ecological knowledge provided in the North Australian Aboriginal Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) and Tropical Savannas Cooperative Research Centre draft Scoping Study on this subject. It states that for many Aboriginal people, Indigenous ecological knowledge encompasses all aspects of human and environmental relatedness. It is culturally embedded in a relationship with country and consists of detailed knowledge of species and natural resources, as well as a wide ranging set of land and sea management principles geared towards sustainable use.

Indigenous Land and Sea Management

This report uses the term ‘Indigenous land and sea management’ as defined in the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule under which this work has been commissioned. It is defined to broadly include a range of employment, economic development, training, community and cultural activities in the areas of:

- natural and cultural resource management including biodiversity conservation;
- land and sea monitoring and reporting for border protection, including assisting in the identification and reporting of domestic and foreign illegal fishing;
- active participation in the sustainable economic use of land and sea in industry sectors such as mining, pastoralism, forestry, tourism, fisheries, aquaculture, horticulture, wildlife utilisation and the commercial provision of environmental services; and
- practical maintenance of Indigenous knowledge, culture and heritage.

However, it is important to note that this project largely focused on Indigenous natural and cultural resource management, including border protection and the practical maintenance of Indigenous knowledge. It addresses Indigenous participation in the above broader industry sectors chiefly through the provision of environmental and cultural services rather than the direct involvement of Indigenous people in these industries.

Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups

This term is used to refer to land and sea management activities carried out by groups of Indigenous people, many who are traditional Aboriginal owners working on their own country. They generally operate under the auspices of Indigenous organisations who provide administrative and operational support. These groups have been established in diverse ways ranging from formal incorporation to a few people taking local action about a particular resource management problem. However, all of these groups are operating with a land and/or sea management purpose. Many of these groups refer to themselves as Ranger Groups, however other groups of Indigenous people carrying out land and sea management work, for example in Aboriginal landcare or business development organisations, also fall under this definition.

Indigenous people who are directly employed by government organisations to undertake natural resource management related activities, such as the NT and Australian Government Parks and Wildlife Services, rather than by Indigenous-owned organisations, are not considered to fall within the definition of an ‘Indigenous land and sea management group’.

It is recognised that many people prefer to use the term ‘Aboriginal’ rather than ‘Indigenous’ land and sea management groups. The right of Aboriginal people to identify their organisations as it suits them best is recognised and supported. However, this report uses the term ‘Indigenous land and sea management groups’ to stay consistent with the terminology in the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule.
Indigenous Land and Sea Manager / Ranger

Many Indigenous land and sea managers or rangers largely operate in a different cultural framework to non-Indigenous rangers. Indigenous land and sea managers combine their Indigenous ecological knowledge and skills with Western scientific knowledge and practices in what is often referred to as the ‘two tool-box approach’. Indigenous approaches to land and sea management are also integrated with individual and community social and cultural wellbeing. Indigenous perspectives on achieving successful land and sea management look holistically at the health of country, culture and people and these are frequently indivisible components of a sustainable cultural and natural resource management plan.

Participatory Planning

This term describes the practice of facilitating an inclusive engagement with a group or groups of people to negotiate and document a planned course of action. The actions can include: problem identification and solving; identification of cultural and natural resource management issues and priorities; and determining how to achieve a constructive way forward. The aim is to ensure that the plan is effectively created by the group, understood and owned by the group, and most importantly can be effectively used by them to achieve their stated objectives.

Social Enterprises

Social enterprises are defined in United Kingdom and Australian literature as organisations that use business approaches or strategies with the aim of generating revenue to support the organisation’s broader social mission. The social mission of the organisation might include community development, cultural and natural resource management, education and employment and training. It may be that the profit from the business is used to support social aims or that the business accomplishes social aims through its operation, for example through the employment of people from a disadvantaged community. Many social enterprises operate using a triple bottom line approach to achieving sustainable social, environmental and business outcomes.

Top-Up

Top-up is the broad category of grant and fee-for-service funds distributed across Indigenous land and sea management groups as wages in addition to Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) funds. It varies substantially across groups depending on the amount of income they are able to obtain from these sources.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Terms of Reference

This project was commissioned to advance the implementation of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule under the Overarching Agreement on Indigenous Affairs agreed to by the Australian and NT Governments in September 2006. The Schedule aims to deliver better coordinated and effective government investment in Indigenous land and sea management across the NT. The Terms of Reference for this project required the:

- production of a research report on Indigenous land and sea management activities in the NT, including critical elements that contribute to successful Indigenous land and sea management groups; and
- preparation of a draft government Strategic Framework to guide funding in this area over the next three to five years.

The commissioning agencies advised that the project should examine structural issues underpinning the way Indigenous land and sea management is operating in the NT and, with a long-term outlook, consider what the Indigenous land and sea management sector could become over the next five to ten years.

In response to the announcement in June 2007 of the NT Emergency Response and the phasing out of the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program, the commissioning agencies advised that the project should consider these reforms and their potential impact on the Indigenous land and sea management sector. These reforms are significantly altering the policy and funding landscape for Indigenous affairs as a whole and Indigenous land and sea management groups. This has created scope in this project for the consideration of new investment models and funding paradigms in this area. The full Terms of Reference are at Attachment One.

Overview

This report provides a five year plan for investment in Indigenous land and sea management across the NT. It provides advice to government agencies on both coordinating current investment and delivering new investment in this area, including the:

- Indigenous Land Corporation;
- Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs;
- Department of the Environment and Water Resources;
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations;
- NT Government Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts; and
- NT Government Department of the Chief Minister.

The Indigenous Land Corporation and Aboriginals Benefit Account have signalled the potential release of approximately $20 million new investment in this area over the next two years. The project used this potential investment as the foundation for building a five year investment package across key Australian and NT Government agencies. It also provides a possible framework for attracting additional business and philanthropic investment in this area.

An independent review of the Strategic Framework by a financial consultant has found that it has the potential to deliver more efficient and cost-effective land and sea management on Indigenous lands and, through a multiplier effect, deliver substantial economic, educational and cultural benefits more broadly to Indigenous communities (Appendix One).

The Strategic Framework draws its recommendations from research conducted for this project which profiled Indigenous land and sea management, current support arrangements, critical success factors and priority investment needs across the NT. This involved a review of published and unpublished research, interviews, workshops and surveys with approximately 60 organisations including Australian and NT Government agencies, land councils, businesses and Indigenous land and sea management groups. Workshops and meetings were held in Darwin, Alice Springs, Nhulunbuy, Tiwi Islands, Momeka and Djinkarr, Canberra and Adelaide over four months from June to September 2007.
Key Findings

1. Profile of Indigenous land and sea management

Indigenous people are major stakeholders in current and future cultural and natural resource management in the NT because of their ownership of vast tracts of land and coastline under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* and their customary management of their estates. Much of this land has very high environmental and cultural value, with at least one third of the NT’s nationally and internationally significant bioregions on Indigenous land.

There are currently approximately 500 Indigenous people working in Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT. Most of these groups have formed using a community development model, however many of them are evolving, or have the potential to evolve, into for-profit or social enterprise organisations able to generate income and employ Indigenous people in cultural and natural resource management. Indigenous land and sea management groups undertake a portfolio of activities and are working on all major cultural, environmental and biodiversity issues in the NT, including fire management, feral animal and weed control, biodiversity monitoring and threatened species protection. They are also working on border protection threats, including quarantine control and the illegal movement of people and goods, including foreign fishing.

The research was unequivocal in its finding that many Indigenous organisations and government agencies regard Indigenous land and sea management groups as among the most important and productive organisations in communities. They are achieving a broad range of environmental, cultural, social, education, health, employment and economic development outcomes.

They are currently funded through a combination of the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program and government grants, provided largely to achieve cultural and environmental outcomes. They are also increasingly undertaking commercial contract work for government agencies and businesses. Research conducted for this project suggested that the current value of commercial contract and fee-for-service work undertaken by Indigenous land and sea management groups is conservatively estimated at $4-6 million per annum. This level of commercial contract work is significant and signals real and growing employment and economic development opportunities for Indigenous people in cultural and natural resource management.

The NT land councils, through their caring for country or land and sea management units, have facilitated the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups, in partnership with other key stakeholders, across the NT. This has been driven at the request of traditional Aboriginal owners and by the land councils’ statutory responsibilities under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*. The vast majority of recent and emerging Indigenous land and sea management groups rely heavily on the land councils for support to develop governance models and cultural and natural resource management plans and attract funding from grant programs and fee-for-service arrangements. The land councils have faced significant resource pressures trying to maintain support for the growing number of Indigenous land and sea management groups. In particular, the sharp growth of these groups in the Northern Land Council region, coupled with a lack of stable growth funding to support the Caring for Country program, has made maintaining the current support arrangements a significant challenge. This has contributed to the instability of some positions within the Northern Land Council’s Caring for Country Unit which has worked to match the growth of this area with short-term grant funding. This issue has been consistently raised by the land councils and other stakeholders and needs to be proactively addressed by land councils and government agencies working closely together.

The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) is also a key institution performing an advocacy role for Indigenous land and sea management groups across Northern Australia.

2. An emerging industry sector

The growth of formalised Indigenous land and sea management groups over the last decade, coupled with increasing business opportunities in cultural and natural resource management, are driving the development of an emerging Indigenous land and sea management sector. This sector is a component
of the broader cultural and natural resource management and conservation industry in the NT. Indigenous land and sea management groups are creating a ‘sector’ identity because:

- there is a high degree of commonality in the cultural, environmental and biosecurity services they are providing to government and business;
- they are networked and identify as a distinct and growing sector as demonstrated by ongoing Indigenous land and sea management conferences hosted by the land councils;
- they are recognised by industry bodies such as the Agri-Foods Council of Australia as an emerging sector with specific skill competency and training requirements; and
- they are starting to generate income from a defined set of cultural and natural resource management activities.

3. Future outlook for the Indigenous land and sea management sector

With strategic investment, and the organisational development of Indigenous land and sea management groups, the Indigenous land and sea management sector has the potential to grow and deliver environmental, cultural, employment and economic development outcomes over the next five to ten years. There are three key drivers of this growth.

First, there is increasing evidence that biodiversity values on Aboriginal land in the NT are under threat and require ongoing management. A recent prominent study, *The Nature of Northern Australia*, reports that there are increasing signs that many ecosystems in the NT, particularly rangelands, are vulnerable to inappropriate land uses and fire management practices, native species decline, invasive weeds and feral animals and loss of Indigenous ecological knowledge. There is growing pressure on government agencies to invest in the maintenance of the cultural and biodiversity values of these ecosystems. Large remedial investments could be required in the long term if there are not ongoing and stable investments in the management of these issues over the next decade.

Second, government agencies are responding to these above threats with new fee-for-service arrangements on top of existing grant programs and this could create additional employment and economic development opportunities. Government agencies are currently the key driver of demand for environmental, cultural and biosecurity services in the NT. Government policy and procurement decisions in relation to levels of appropriate cultural and natural resource management and Indigenous engagement will continue to greatly impact on the levels of Indigenous employment and economic development opportunities in this area.

Third, businesses are looking for market opportunities associated with the emerging global ‘conservation economy’ and sustainable land and sea uses. This economy may create financial, environmental and social value from intact landscapes and sustainable land and sea uses such as sustainable grazing, eco-tourism, maintenance of water quality, biodiversity offsets and greenhouse gas mitigation. These industries, and their potential expansion across Northern Australia, will require cultural and natural resource management services that can be provided by Indigenous land and sea management groups.

An example commonly cited to show the potential of this area is the current commercial arrangement with Conoco-Phillips, the NT Government, the Northern Land Council and West Arnhem Land Indigenous groups under the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Project. This project is providing an annual income of approximately $1 million to West Arnhem Ranger Groups to manage fire for the mitigation of greenhouse gases and positive conservation outcomes.

The economic viability of the Indigenous land and sea management sector will depend on the ability of Indigenous groups to increase their operational capacity and stability and successfully market their services to businesses, government agencies and industries operating in, or with responsibilities for, cultural and natural resource management. The realisation of these employment and economic development opportunities will not be easy and will require a long-term investment commitment from government agencies, land councils, businesses and Indigenous groups themselves. In the main, Indigenous cultural and natural resource management groups will need a portfolio of work and income sources to sustain themselves. This will require them to grow into flexible organisations with strong operational funding bases.
However, in regional and remote NT, labour markets and commercial opportunities are limited and Indigenous land and sea management is being recognised as a potential successful avenue for employment and economic development that builds on Indigenous people’s skills, interests, location and land ownership.

Notwithstanding the potential, the success of this sector will also be determined by the ability of Indigenous land and sea management groups to balance financial sustainability and access to markets with their environmental, social, cultural, education and employment objectives. These broader objectives are at the core of Indigenous peoples’ holistic understanding of the benefits of cultural and natural resource management. Taking a strict commercial feasibility approach to developing Indigenous land and sea management groups will not work in the majority of cases and it must be balanced with support for Indigenous people’s holistic approach to the social, cultural and environmental benefits of Indigenous land and sea management and respect for their ways of operating.

4. Current government funding arrangements

Investment in Indigenous land and sea management by government agencies has grown slightly over the last three years, particularly with new funding announcements from the Department of the Environment and Water Resources and the Indigenous Land Corporation. However, despite these investments, government funding has not kept pace with the growth of natural and cultural resource management issues and rising number of Indigenous land and sea management groups. The gap in investment is difficult to estimate, however, it is clear that additional funds could be invested in the maintenance of Aboriginal land across the NT. The recent report, *The Nature of Northern Australia*, has indicated that $725 per square kilometre is spent on land management in Kakadu National Park compared with less that $1 per square kilometre in parts of Western Arnhem Land.

Government support for Indigenous land and sea management can be broken down into:

- wage support, largely through the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program;
- Indigenous infrastructure and activity funding;
- Indigenous environmental and cultural heritage programs;
- mainstream environmental and cultural heritage programs;
- resources for training and education;
- resources for business and industry development;
- joint management arrangements for parks and reserves;
- flexible employment programs;
- other grant funding; and
- core funding for land councils and other Indigenous organisations.

Overall, most of the government support for Indigenous land and sea management is delivered via small specific purpose grant funding which fragments investment in Indigenous groups. While grant funding is a common source of funds for the environment and conservation industry more generally, it has been problematic for Indigenous groups to manage for two key reasons. First, Indigenous groups overall have to manage a larger percentage of small grants as their early stage of organisational development has made it difficult for them to attract longer-term grant arrangements. Second, these short-term grants fail to provide effective investment in core items such as capital, wages and training that are required for organisational development. Some groups access up to 30 grants per annum to operate, with the accompanying costly administrative reporting burden. A number of peak organisations, such as the land councils, have collated some of these small grants to develop land and sea management programs for Indigenous groups but this been a challenge.

Over 90 percent of Indigenous land and sea management groups, government and non-government organisations interviewed for this project stated that the current dispersed and short-term funding environment is a major barrier to the successful development of sustainable Indigenous land and sea management organisations and programs. There is a pressing need to develop more stable and coordinated funding delivery and support mechanisms for Indigenous land and sea management groups for this sector to develop over the next five years.
The negotiation of the *Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule* indicates that there is a commitment across government agencies to address the issue of uncoordinated funding. This is further demonstrated by the number of agencies, principally the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Indigenous Land Corporation, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts, who have expressed interest in co-investment with other partners in this area.

Until now, relatively small amounts of funding for the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups have come from business and industry development support programs, as distinct from environment and cultural program funding. However, with the increase in the number of fee-for-service contracts in this area, there is growing recognition that some Indigenous land and sea management groups could successfully capitalise on business and industry development support.

5. A Changing Landscape – NT Emergency Response and Local Government Reform

This is a pivotal moment in the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. The institutional and funding landscape in which these groups are developing is set to change dramatically over the next twelve months as a result of the Australian Government’s NT Emergency Response and the NT Government’s local government reforms. The NT Emergency Response is directing national attention on to NT Indigenous communities. This provides an opportunity to consider raising investment in the Indigenous land and sea management sector as an emerging remote area industry with strong cultural foundations, community support and opportunities for innovative social and business development.

However, there are two high priority challenges that face the emerging Indigenous land and sea management sector stemming from these reforms. First, the Australian Government has announced the phasing out of the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program which will require Indigenous people to transition to employment or other training and employment programs, such as the Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) program and Work for the Dole. Currently 90 percent of Indigenous land and sea management groups use CDEP for partial wage payments, capital assets and human resource management.

In response to these CDEP reforms, it is recommended that the Department of the Environment and Water Resources and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations consider expanding the Working on Country program concept in the NT to provide additional employment to Indigenous land and sea management groups. This program has been well received by Indigenous land and sea management groups as it responds to their calls for government funding for paid positions to employ Indigenous people in land and sea management in the national interest. This option would deliver employment outcomes for Indigenous land and sea management groups and much needed workforce stability over the next five years. Other government agencies such as the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and Indigenous Land Corporation may also be able to provide support for a program based on expanding the Working on Country concept.

The Australian Government announcement in September 2007 of a $78.2 million jobs package to create employment positions for Indigenous people working in Australian Government service delivery, including in environmental and pastoral management, may provide the funds necessary to meet this recommendation and expand the Working on Country concept in the NT. This is discussed further in section six.

Second, it will be essential to assist some Indigenous land and sea management groups establish new governance structures and hosting arrangements in circumstances where their current host arrangements will change because of the closure of CDEP organisations and their possible transition to new Job Network and STEP ERS arrangements. This potential uncertainty in hosting arrangements may be exacerbated by the amalgamation of local government organisations into larger shires from August 2008. It is recommended that government agencies and other organisations such as land councils work urgently with Indigenous groups on this issue over the next 12 months. Stable host arrangements or incorporated Indigenous land and sea management organisations are required in order for government agencies and other organisations to contract with Indigenous land and sea management groups. It may be possible for some groups to move towards independent incorporation however the majority will need
new hosting arrangements, at least in the short-term, by local community organisations such as outstation resource centres, new shires or mid level organisations such as the land councils or other agencies. It is also recommended that the NT Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport ensure that local government reform transition plans more generally take account of how the new shires can provide ongoing support to Indigenous land and sea management groups.

In addition, research and consultations indicated that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations needs to work closely with Indigenous land and sea management groups to determine whether the STEP ERS and Work for the Dole programs will be effective in providing employment and training pathways for Indigenous land and sea managers. In particular, there are strong concerns among Indigenous land and sea management groups that Work for the Dole does not allow Top-up wages to be earned as formerly under CDEP before payments cut out. Top-up has been one of the key incentives to encourage people to work in Indigenous land and sea management groups and it has given people higher incomes, greater self-esteem, introduced many of them to western employment structures and generated increased productivity. It is recommended that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations ensure that the incentives and support Indigenous groups require to develop fee-for-service activities are maintained under any new arrangements. One option may be to increase the support the Department provides Indigenous land and sea management groups under its business development programs.

6. Critical factors for success – Indigenous land and sea management groups and government program delivery

A key finding of this project is that Indigenous land and sea management groups can achieve good outcomes when able to concentrate on steadily building their organisations through strong cultural foundations and long-term government, business and research partners. The research has shown critical success factors for the successful development of Indigenous land and sea management groups are:

- possessing secure land tenure and a strong mandate from traditional Aboriginal owners and high levels of community support;
- defining clear relationships with other Indigenous community and mid-level organisations, particularly host organisations;
- employing an effective coordinator to work alongside senior Indigenous land and sea managers where requested;
- fostering and maintaining strong Indigenous leadership of the group;
- maintaining a constant focus on capacity building, training and organisational development.
- developing long-term partnerships with government agencies, land councils, businesses and philanthropic organisations with exposure to business and organisational development models; and
- ensuring access to science and research support.

Research has shown the factors evident in cases of effective government support for Indigenous land and sea management groups are:

- investments delivered in a way that allows Indigenous groups and government agencies to work together to tailor resources to the specific circumstances of the Indigenous group. This requires flexible participatory planning and negotiation;
- investments delivered over longer timeframes (three to five years) to build effective organisations and cultural and natural resource management programs;
- investments coordinated across government agencies to achieve multiple environmental, cultural, social, training, employment and economic development outcomes; and
- administrative and reporting arrangements kept as simple as possible while providing valuable information to government agencies and Indigenous groups.

7. Priority needs

The research and consultations undertaken for this project have highlighted seven priority issues that require a response from government agencies and other investors in order to support Indigenous land and sea management groups develop into viable for-profit or social enterprise cultural and natural
resource management organisations that produce environmental, social and economic outcomes. These are consistent with the treatment of this area as an emerging sector:

- provide capital and operational funding support to Indigenous land and sea management groups so they can undertake cultural and natural resource management and biosecurity activities and plan for the long-term sustainability of their organisations;
- provide employment for Indigenous land and sea managers who deliver environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in the national interest;
- develop effective training and development support for Indigenous land and sea managers so they are able to successfully combine Indigenous ecological knowledge with western scientific approaches to cultural and natural resource management and develop careers in this area;
- develop long-term management arrangements for large-scale biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues by Indigenous land and sea management groups across regions;
- increase fee-for-service income generation and business development opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups so they are able to develop into sustainable profit or social enterprise organisations;
- establish a long-term monitoring and evaluation program to provide clear information to Indigenous groups, government agencies and other investors on the environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic development returns on investment; and
- strengthen delivery models and institutional support structures for Indigenous groups.
SNAPSHOT OF THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1. Objectives

The objectives of this Strategic Framework are to:

- develop effective and sustainable Indigenous cultural and natural resource management organisations operating as for-profit or social enterprise businesses that are able to provide environmental, cultural and biosecurity services to their communities, government, land council, business, research and philanthropic organisations and the broader public; and

- increase the number of Indigenous people employed in cultural and natural resource management positions in government, land council, business, research and philanthropic organisations.

Through meeting these objectives, Indigenous people will be able to sustainably work to their agenda of ‘Healthy Country, Healthy People,’ and achieve environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in their interests and in the national interest. Meeting these objectives will also lead to significant employment, economic development and other social outcomes for Indigenous people.

2. Proposed Investment

This Strategic Framework proposes that government agencies and peak organisations such as the land councils invest in delivering tailored three year investment packages to individual Indigenous land and sea management groups. These packages will consist of seven investment streams that need to be delivered in an integrated way to enable Indigenous land and sea management groups to transition into sustainable cultural and natural resource management organisations over the next five years.

Investments are broadly split into two categories: one, investment in projects for environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes and business development; and two, investment in sustainable Indigenous cultural and natural resource management organisations and the broader institutional network. These categories of investment are inter-related and must be delivered concurrently.

As this Strategic Framework is built on a potential release of a significant Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) and Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) investment, it is appropriate that it recommend the delivery of core operational and capital support to Indigenous land and sea management groups to develop their long-term organisational viability. This capitalises on the unique role the ILC and ABA
can play in delivering this much needed type of support to Indigenous groups. However, investments will also be required from a number of other agencies including the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts.

3. Investment Streams

The investment streams have been formulated based on the needs identified by Indigenous groups, land councils, government agencies and other organisations. These streams represent components that need to be delivered as part of integrated packages to individual land and sea management groups. More broadly, the streams also represent components of a holistic investment in the Indigenous land and sea management sector. They are:

1. Core operational and capital three year support for Indigenous land and sea management groups. This includes support for basic capital items and wages for a coordinator and senior Indigenous land and sea managers.

2. Employment for other Indigenous land and sea managers who deliver environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in the national interest.

3. Training and skills development of current and future Aboriginal land and sea managers with support for:
   - Training and employment pathways to assist Indigenous people secure cultural and natural resource management positions in government, business, research and conservation agencies;
   - Three-year support for eight regional training coordinators, whose role is to link Indigenous groups in a region with training providers;
   - A feasibility study into developing stronger regional training delivery models including the establishment of cultural and natural resource management training campuses across the NT;
   - The development of curriculum materials specifically for NT Indigenous land and sea management groups that can sit alongside subjects offered as part of the current National Conservation and Land Management Training Package. This will involve job-ready training and courses specific to the NT environmental, cultural and social landscape;
   - Expansion of the out-posting of NT Parks and Wildlife Officers to Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups under the new NT Indigenous Ranger Group Development Program;
   - The development of a leadership and project management initiative for senior and future Indigenous land and sea managers involving Indigenous leaders and the business sector;
   - The development of an Indigenous land and sea management research institution partnership initiative to provide a voice for Indigenous groups in establishing research agendas and participating in research across the NT;
   - Three-year support for three women’s land and sea management facilitators; and
   - Indigenous land and sea management groups to participate in the ‘Adopt a School’ program and establish junior ranger courses.

4. Major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects with Indigenous land and sea management groups across a region. These will include a capacity development stage over 12 months and a requirement to show clear environmental and cultural outcomes.

5. Increasing fee-for service and commercial opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups by funding:
- Capacity building and infrastructure packages tailored to securing specific fee-for-service contracts between Indigenous groups and businesses or government agencies. These contracts must be for a minimum of three years with projected on-going business opportunities in the area; and
- A scoping study to identify potential demand for Indigenous land and sea management services within local industries, national and international bio-diversity offset, carbon offset and conservation economy markets over the next five years. This will provide information to the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Indigenous Business Australia, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources, NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development and key potential business and philanthropic investors.

6. An annual monitoring and evaluation program to track environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic outcomes to be undertaken by key Indigenous organisations and research institutions in partnership with government agencies and Indigenous land and sea management groups.

7. Adequate administrative and project management resources for government agencies and other organisations to effectively deliver the investments outlined above and to support further investment in this area by the business and philanthropic sectors.

4. Delivery options

The Framework outlines five models agencies can consider to deliver new investment in this area. The models canvass building on existing structures and brokering arrangements, such as the current land council and Natural Resource Management Board (NT) delivery models, as well as the creation of potential new arrangements. These models reflect whole-of-government approaches to the delivery of investment. Each delivery model will require the identification of a senior leader to drive the implementation of this Strategic Framework and brokers to work with individual Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Government agencies and other stakeholders will need to negotiate to determine the most appropriate delivery model and may be able to draw on a combination of the models suggested below. There may also need to be interim measures while longer term structures are developed. It is recommended that in doing so, agencies focus on the need for a delivery model that:
- maximises effective coordination among investors;
- establishes streamlined funding and administrative processes for Indigenous groups;
- creates the certainty needed to attract government, business and philanthropic investment and confidence;
- markets the Indigenous land and sea management sector as an important part of the NT economy;
- ensures input into investment decisions from Indigenous land and sea management groups;
- allows for timely delivery of investment to Indigenous land and sea management groups, particularly in light of funding uncertainty brought on by the phasing out of CDEP; and
- facilitates brokers being able to work with Indigenous land and sea management groups in a hands-on way for the next 18 months as CDEP and local government reforms create a potential gap in the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups.

1) Minimal coordination model – under this model the Aboriginals Benefit Account and Indigenous Land Corporation would coordinate the expenditure of their funds. This could be achieved by the ABA transferring their funds to the ILC under a Memorandum of Understanding. Other new and existing funds would be delivered separately by government agencies with loose coordination through mechanisms such as the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule Operational Group.

2) Enhanced coordination model – a broader range of key agencies including the ILC, ABA, Department of the Environment and Water Resources, NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations would coordinate their investment by delivering their funds to one or two lead agencies within this group or by using other tight coordination mechanisms. Other new and existing funds are delivered separately by other
government agencies with loose coordination through mechanisms such as the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule Operational Group.

3) **Devolved delivery through land councils and other peak Indigenous organisations** – new and existing funds (as identified under either the minimal or enhanced coordination model) are delivered as an aggregated sum for land councils and other peak Indigenous organisations to on-deliver to Indigenous land and sea management groups. This model builds on the current delivery of significant funding for Indigenous land and sea management through land councils and other peak Indigenous organisations.

4) **Devolved delivery through the Natural Resource Management Board of the NT** – new and existing funds (as identified under either the minimal or enhanced coordination model) are delivered as an aggregated sum to the NRM Board to on-deliver to Indigenous land and sea management groups. This could be done in conjunction with the NRM Board NT’s Natural Heritage Trust Regional Stream.

5) **Establishment of a new corporate structure** – funds are delivered as an aggregated sum to a new structure or structures for delivering investment to Indigenous cultural and natural resource management in the NT. This new structure or structures would also be responsible for brokering business and philanthropic investment in the NT.

5. Prioritising investment

Government agencies and other organisations responsible for the roll-out of new and existing funds will need to be able to prioritise investment. Investment can be prioritised by making decisions about where to invest in terms of individual Indigenous land and sea management groups and their locations. This may help to ensure that investment in groups is not spread too thinly and can achieve its objective of assisting Indigenous land and sea management groups to transition into sustainable enterprises. Investment can be prioritised by evaluating individual groups in terms of their:

- location in relation to land and sea with high biodiversity and conservation values;
- ability to access economic development opportunities, including fee-for-service contracts;
- proximity to a serviced community or ability to use a viable outstation or work camp structure;
- strength of their governance structures and organisational arrangements; and
- commitment to business planning and the ongoing training of staff.

Decisions may be moderated to ensure investment is spread across consolidating, emerging and new Indigenous land and sea management groups, recognising that new groups may need to be encouraged in areas of high biodiversity and cultural values and/or with economic development opportunities.

6. How will performance be measured?

This Framework recommends that a streamlined monitoring and evaluation mechanism be established across government agencies, Indigenous groups and other stakeholders to measure outcomes. Over time, this could replace some of the evaluation reports currently required by agencies and could be undertaken by qualified research institutions and Indigenous groups working in partnership to deliver annual evaluation reports to investors. The outcomes of the investment would be assessed against the broad objectives of the Framework. Groups will be assessed on their ability to achieve:

- environmental, cultural and biosecurity protection and management outcomes;
- clear goals, cultural and natural resource plans of management, governance structures and business models, endorsed by traditional Aboriginal owners and community leaders;
- stable core staffing arrangements with training, employment and economic development opportunities for individuals;
- a workable portfolio of government, business, research and philanthropic grants and fee-for-service contracts assessed to provide a fair degree of funding certainty across three year cycles (when compared to other not-for-profit conservation groups or natural resource management businesses in the NT); and
- a community development contribution to social outcomes, such as the promotion of education, health and wellbeing.
7. Return on Investment

It is vital that investment is driven by results and rewards Indigenous land and sea management groups who strongly contribute to the achievement of environmental, cultural, social and economic development outcomes. Investment is expected to produce the following returns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Return</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Core operational and capital three year support.</td>
<td>• Indigenous groups able to transition to sustainable for-profit or social enterprise organisations.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Delivery of effective cultural and natural resource management services.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Greater efficiency and value for public money with coordinated investment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Employment for Indigenous land and sea managers who deliver environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes.</td>
<td>• Indigenous employment and career development in regional and remote parts of the NT.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Greater workforce certainty for delivery of cultural and natural resource management services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Training and skills development of current and future Aboriginal land and sea managers.</td>
<td>• Skills development and increased capacity of current Indigenous land and sea managers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Role modelling and career development options for younger Indigenous students in science and land and sea management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects with Indigenous land and sea management groups across a region.</td>
<td>• Demonstrable environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes over Aboriginal land with high biodiversity and cultural value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased ability of Indigenous land and sea management groups to undertake major projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased productivity of Aboriginal land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Increasing fee-for service and commercial opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups.</td>
<td>• Increased business viability of Indigenous land and sea management groups as for-profit or social enterprise organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Diversification of income stream reducing reliance on government subsidy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. An annual monitoring and evaluation program to track environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic outcomes.</td>
<td>• Increased understanding of ongoing return on investment in terms of environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic development outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Administrative and project management resources to effectively deliver the investments.</td>
<td>• Effective management of investment under the Framework.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. HEALTHY COUNTRY, HEALTHY PEOPLE SCHEDULE

In September 2006 the Australian and NT Governments agreed the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule – Supporting Indigenous Engagement in the Sustainable Management of Land and Seas under the Overarching Agreement on Indigenous Affairs. This Schedule was agreed to by the Prime Minister and Chief Minister of the NT. The Schedule aims to deliver better coordinated and effective government investment in Indigenous land and sea management.

Background to the development of the Schedule

The Schedule was developed in 2006 after several Australian and NT Government agencies received representations from the NT land councils and some of the larger Indigenous land and sea management groups who called for both an expansion of investment in this area and an examination of the way government agencies could more effectively deliver their investment. At this time, NT Indigenous groups were receiving national press coverage highlighting the important environmental protection and coastal surveillance work they were doing for their communities and in the national interest.

In March 2006 senior government representatives from the Department of the Environment and Heritage (now Department of the Environment and Water Resources), Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Indigenous Land Corporation, Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, Australian Customs Service, NT Department of the Chief Minister and NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development visited the Dhimurru Aboriginal Land Management Corporation, Laynhapuy Aboriginal Homeland Resource Corporation and Yirralka and Marthakal Indigenous Rangers Groups in North East Arnhem Land.

This group of senior government representatives saw the work of North East Arnhem Indigenous land and sea managers and learnt of their future resource needs. They also received presentations from the Northern and Central Land Councils about Indigenous land and sea management across the NT.

Government agency officers agreed during this visit there was a clear demonstration of the depth of the knowledge, commitment and benefits of Indigenous land and sea management groups and their ability to act as strong role models for communities. Government representatives agreed to examine how Indigenous land and sea management could be better supported, which created the impetus for the negotiation of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule involving more than ten Australian and NT Government agencies.

Scope of the Schedule

The Schedule sets out joint working arrangements between the Australian and NT Governments to support Indigenous engagement in sustainable land and sea management. The Schedule recognises that these arrangements will need to develop over time and include the full and ongoing participation of Indigenous communities and representatives.

Key aims

The Schedule has four key aims:

1. To improve the coordination of whole-of-government investment in Indigenous land and sea management in the NT. This is to be achieved by:
   - fostering better collaboration between government agencies, land councils and Indigenous organisations;
   - simplifying and streamlining funding support to individual groups;
   - ensuring future investments complement existing investments in this area; and
   - targeting investment and partnership arrangements to plans that have been developed by Indigenous groups.
Government agencies agreed to examine new structural arrangements for the delivery of Australian and NT Government funding, including consideration of ‘virtual pooling’ of investment. They also agreed to pilot new arrangements as necessary.

2. To recognise, and elevate, the importance of natural and cultural resource management as a key remote area industry with significant employment and economic development potential, particularly when linked to established and emerging resource-based industries in the NT. This is to be achieved by:

- working with the private sector to increase stable commercial and economic opportunities for Indigenous groups engaged in land and sea management projects;
- looking at government agencies, such as the Australian and NT Government Parks and Wildlife Service, Defence, AQIS and the Australian Customs Service, as potential employers and organisations able to enter into fee-for-service arrangements with Indigenous groups;
- assisting Indigenous groups access training and expertise through the use of training providers, relevant scholarship, cadetship and traineeships and informal mechanisms such as mentoring and seconded officers placed in Indigenous groups from government, not-for-profit and business organisations;
- mapping flexible employment models applicable to this area;
- ensuring business development advice and support programs are available and effective for Indigenous groups engaged in land and sea management activities; and
- linking the expansion of the NT protected lands network, including Indigenous Protected Areas, to the identification of related employment and enterprise opportunities.

3. To improve planning and sustainable partnerships by tailoring government investment to the plans and priorities of Indigenous groups as well as fulfilling outcomes sought by the Australian and NT Governments. This is to be achieved by:

- providing additional government investment in planning processes;
- recognising that partnerships need to be reciprocal and collaborative;
- appreciating the decision-making practices and knowledge of Indigenous people, the objectives of government and aspirations of the broader NT community; and
- increasing flexibility to create opportunities for Indigenous groups to determine their plans for land and sea management operations.

4. To promote broader Indigenous engagement in land and sea management. This is to be achieved by:

- facilitating greater participation by senior community members;
- facilitating greater participation by women; and
- facilitating greater participation by young people, particularly to facilitate inter-generational transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge and assist young people identify future training and career pathways in science, land and sea management.

**Evaluation**

The Schedule requires government agencies to establish a collaborative monitoring and evaluation framework to build up more comprehensive qualitative and quantitative information about the environmental, employment, economic and social outcomes being achieved in this sector. It also indicates governments will monitor the impact of government administrative arrangements on Indigenous groups working in this area.
2. METHODOLOGY

This project was commissioned in April 2007 by the:

- NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts;
- Indigenous Land Corporation;
- Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources;
- Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; and
- NT Department of the Chief Minister, Office of Indigenous Policy.

The Terms of Reference for this project require the:

- production of a research report on Indigenous land and sea management activities in the NT, including critical elements that contribute to successful Indigenous land and sea management groups and projects; and
- preparation of a practical government Strategic Framework, based on the research report, to guide funding in this area over the next three to five years.

The full terms of reference for the project are at Attachment One.

Principles guiding the research

In April 2007 the Consultants held a workshop with representatives from the above agencies to determine the approach that would guide the development of the Strategic Framework. The following was agreed:

- While the project covers Indigenous land and sea management as broadly defined in the Schedule, it will focus on Indigenous natural and cultural resource management, including border protection and the practical maintenance of Indigenous ecological knowledge. It will address Indigenous participation in the sustainable economic use of land and sea in industry sectors such as mining, pastoralism, forestry, tourism, fisheries, aquaculture, horticulture and wildlife utilisation – chiefly through partnerships and commercial arrangements for the provision of environmental and cultural services rather than the direct involvement of Indigenous people in these industry sectors more broadly.

- The project should build on the known cultural and natural resource management needs identified over the last decade by Indigenous groups, land councils, government agencies and other organisations, as documented in research and outcomes of key conferences and workshops.

- The project should highlight critical success factors that need to be present to build sustainable Indigenous land and sea management organisations and projects. This should encompass ways that government, land councils and other organisations can effectively deliver funds and other forms of support to Indigenous groups and projects.

- The project should examine structural issues underpinning the way Indigenous land and sea management is operating and identify areas where there needs to be systemic changes to realise greater benefits.

- The project should be framed as a response to the needs identified by Indigenous groups, land councils, government agencies and other organisations.

- The project should be based on the concept of investment. This will involve: investment in the sustainability and effectiveness of Indigenous land and sea management groups; and investment in improving the environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic development outcomes achieved through Indigenous land and sea management.

- The project must have a long-term outlook, thinking about what the Indigenous land and sea management sector could look like in five to ten years time.
• There are also Indigenous people engaged in land and sea management throughout the Australian and NT Government and business organisations. While this is encouraged, the project should focus primarily on supporting Indigenous land and sea management groups as required by the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule. However, a number of the recommendations may provide support to Indigenous people working in this area more broadly.

In response to the announcement in June 2007 of the NT Emergency Response and the phasing out of the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program, the commissioning agencies advised the Consultants in early August that the project should incorporate the consideration of these reforms and their potential impact on the Indigenous land and sea management sector.

Desktop Review

This project has involved a desktop examination of relevant research reports, government program information, outcomes from Indigenous land and sea management workshops and planning documentation from the land councils, the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and the Natural Resource Management Board (NT). It utilises this significant body of information and in particular relies on the scientific data and fieldwork information collected by researchers on significant biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues requiring management across the NT. Literature on government service delivery arrangements in Indigenous affairs was also examined.

The project also drew on the draft CSIRO report *Aboriginal Land and Sea Management in the Top End: a Community Driven Evaluation* that contains extensive participatory research with Indigenous groups in the Northern Land Council region, conducted by Dr Bevlyne Sithole and Ms Hmalan Hunter-Xenie with assistance from an Aboriginal Land and Sea Management Review Team. Appendix Four contains a summary of the key reports relevant to this area and Attachment Three contains a full bibliography.

Consultation

Over the past decade there has been an ongoing and extensive dialogue between, and consultation with, Indigenous leaders and Indigenous land and sea management groups on the way that land and sea management programs can be strengthened across the NT. The project used this information rather than conducting an additional round of detailed participatory consultations with all Indigenous land and sea management groups and their host organisations and communities.

However, to verify the research and its application, interviews, workshops and surveys were conducted with approximately 60 organisations including Indigenous land and sea management groups, Australian and NT government agencies, land councils, business and other peak groups. A list of stakeholders who provided information for the project is at Attachment Two.

Letters were sent to key stakeholders informing them of the project and inviting their input. Survey questionnaires were also sent to thirteen of the larger Indigenous land and sea management groups and peak organisations that have facilitators or coordinators in place and an ability to respond to this type of approach for information. These surveys sought to gain an overall picture of the priority resources required for these Indigenous land and sea management groups to operate effectively over the next five years.

A combination of research tools including surveys, workshops, meetings and telephone interviews were held with individuals, groups and agencies who agreed to provide input. The approach was tailored to the availability of stakeholders and their location. The results of the discussions were recorded. While consultations progressed, additional stakeholders were identified and extra interviews and meetings were conducted as necessary. Workshops and meetings were held in Darwin, Alice Springs, Nhulunbuy, Tiwi Islands, Momeka and Djinkarr (West Arnhem Land), Canberra and Adelaide from June to September 2007.

Consultations drew on a flexible list of questions to guide discussions and were tailored where necessary to the roles and interests of individual stakeholders.
Funding and investment assessment

A Financial Investment Consultant, Mr Steve Armitage, provided specialist input into the project. Appendix One sets out his independent economic perspective on the findings.

Healthy Country, Healthy People Contract Coordination Committee and Operational Group

This Research Report and Strategic Framework were prepared in consultation with a Contract Coordination Committee of government agencies who commissioned this work. Milestone reports on progress and key findings were presented to the Committee throughout.

An overview of the consultants’ approach was presented to the Bilateral Steering Committee established under the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule in May 2007. Preliminary findings were presented for comment at a meeting of the Operational Group who work to the Steering Committee in mid July 2007. This Operational Group includes the previously listed government agencies, Natural Resource Management Board NT and representatives from the four NT land councils. A full first draft of the Report and Strategic Framework was subsequently presented to this Operational Group in September 2007. The comments received indicated satisfaction with the research process and findings.
3. PROFILE OF INDIGENOUS LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT

3.1 Introduction

Indigenous people have worked to effectively manage the land and sea of the NT for over 50,000 years. Since the early 1990s, land councils and other peak organisations have worked closely with Indigenous people to draw on this vast experience and body of knowledge to establish contemporary Indigenous land and sea management groups, applying an innovative blend of traditional knowledge and western science to cultural and natural resource management issues. These groups have partnered with government agencies and other organisations to address contemporary land and sea management problems.

Indigenous land and sea management groups have developed in spite of the immense challenges of poor health, overcrowded housing, low education levels, social dysfunction and stretched infrastructure and services in NT Indigenous communities. These issues create daily challenges for Indigenous land and sea management groups who are working to develop sustainable social enterprise or for-profit cultural and natural resource management organisations. Against this social and economic back-drop, the achievements of Indigenous land and sea management groups often foster a great sense of pride in communities, with members viewed as role models by younger generations. These groups provide an opportunity within communities for employment in a respected and desirable profession. The social context makes the continuing success of Indigenous land and sea management groups all the more notable for their tenacity and drive. The draft CSIRO report, *Aboriginal Land and Sea Management in the Top End: a Community Driven Evaluation*, describes Indigenous land and sea management in the NT as the fastest growing movement in natural resource management in Australia. Other states have not experienced the same pace of growth and are interested in drawing lessons from the NT experience. Much of this growth can be attributed to the strong role the land councils have played in facilitating the development of, and providing ongoing support to, Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Over the last five years, government agencies, businesses, research institutions and conservation groups have increasingly recognised the significant environmental, cultural, social and economic development outcomes being achieved by Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT. For example, in the last two years, the work of certain groups has been recognised in prestigious science awards, including Eureka Science Prizes for the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Project (producing innovative solutions to climate change) and the Maningrida School Ranger Program (achieving excellence in science teaching). The Carpentaria Ghost Nets Program has received a Banksia Environmental Foundation Award for its marine protection work in the Gulf of Carpentaria. The Muru-warinyi Ankul Rangers in Tennant Creek have received an NT Landcare award.

There are social, cultural and economic drivers behind the rise of Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT. These drivers also cement the importance of these groups to achieving effective cultural and natural resource management and the realisation of associated economic development opportunities across the NT for the foreseeable future. These drivers are:

- place valued on effective land and sea management by traditional Aboriginal owners and Indigenous communities;
- recognition of Northern Australia as a globally significant environment and one of the last great natural areas on earth, and concerns about maintaining this environment despite the threats of climate change, altered fire regimes and exotic invasive species (enhanced by recent reports such as *The Nature of Northern Australia*);
- ownership of much of this land by Indigenous people under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory)* 1976 – 44 percent of the NT land mass and at least 84 percent of the coastline. Indigenous people also play a key role as joint managers of over one third of the NT’s parks and reserves; and
- demographic trends showing the Indigenous population is rising in regional and remote areas of the NT (while the non-Indigenous population is falling). Indigenous land and sea management groups are often the only organisations in the region able to carry out ongoing cultural and natural resource management work on a cost effective basis.
Investment by government, business, research and philanthropic organisations in Indigenous land and sea management will require a long-term strategic approach to supporting this emerging sector, and to ensure it complements the broader cultural and natural resource management and conservation industry in the NT. Investment must respond to the priority needs identified by Indigenous land and sea management groups, recognising that these groups are responsible for the successes already achieved. It must also ensure groups are in the best position to build their capacity to meet future cultural and environmental challenges and grasp the opportunities presented by this resource-rich landscape.

3.2 Key Characteristics of Indigenous Land and Sea Management

This section provides an overview of the key characteristics of Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. While all of the groups are unique and have developed according to their local circumstances and environmental and cultural priorities, there is nevertheless a large degree of similarity across the groups as a whole.

What type of cultural and natural resource management activities are undertaken?

The NT has relatively intact ecosystems and nationally and internationally recognised sites of biodiversity significance, many on Indigenous land. These range from the flooded savanna wetlands, plateau country and eucalypt dominated open woodlands of the Top End region to the sheltered gorges and spinifex grasslands of the arid Centre. The NT also has important areas of coral reefs and seagrass beds which support dugong and marine turtle populations, while many sites along the coastline are recognised as important staging sites for migratory birds on the European-Asian-Australasian Flyway. A recent Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) Report, *The Environmental Significance of the Indigenous Estate: Natural Resource Management as Economic Development in Remote Australia*, has mapped the biodiversity values of the Indigenous estate, highlighting vast proportions of NT Aboriginal land as having a high or very high priority for inclusion in Australia’s National Reserve System.


As indicated in the study, *Nature of Northern Australia*, in spite of the relatively intact nature of the NT environment, many species have declined or disappeared, as a result of the spread of weeds, negative
impacts of feral animals and grazing processes and harmful unmanaged wildfires. There are other emerging threats such as climate change, saltwater intrusion, development pressure on water resources and relatively newly arrived species such as cane toads.

Indigenous groups are working on these major cultural and environmental threats across the NT according to their specific land and sea management plans, often developed through participatory planning processes. They vary from basic work outlines through to comprehensive documents outlining the broad environmental, cultural and social aims of the Indigenous group and detailed descriptions of the biodiversity values of their land and sea.

The activities of specific groups vary depending on their:
- geographic location;
- cultures and histories;
- whether they are situated on or near Aboriginal land;
- whether they are situated on near Australian or NT Government recognised parks and reserves under joint-management arrangements;
- cultural and environmental management priorities (as identified by Indigenous groups, government agencies and other organisations);
- proximity to, and interaction with, industries (e.g. mining, pastoral, tourism, forestry and fisheries);
- support from traditional Aboriginal owners and senior community members;
- local community infrastructure and capacity; and
- relative levels of organisation and administrative support arrangements.

The below table outlines the range of biophysical, ecological and cultural protection and management work Indigenous land and sea management groups are currently undertaking:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural and Natural Resource Management (CNRM)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and natural resource management planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole or joint management of traditional estates and sites, catchment areas, National and NT Parks and Indigenous Protected Areas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire management and abatement for biodiversity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feral animal control and monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weed management and monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landscaping for communities (e.g. erosion control and dust mitigation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marine management (e.g. removal of marine debris and fish kill investigations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water management (natural water and bore testing)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Endangered or threatened species biodiversity management and monitoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landscape or site restoration and protection from development impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure and road maintenance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Bio-security and Land and Sea Access for the Community and Visitors**

- Land and sea access and management systems (community and visitors)
- Biosecurity and quarantine management (including land and aquatic pest monitoring)
- Coastal monitoring and surveillance
- Protecting sacred sites and important places

**Collection and Incorporation of Knowledge – Environmental and Cultural Issues**

- Documentation and use of Indigenous ecological knowledge alongside ‘western science’ ways of working
- Environmental monitoring (flora, fauna and ecosystem change surveys)
- Cultural and natural resource mapping, including of marine estates
- Supporting and participating in ceremony and ‘on country’ visits
- Natural resource management training and development
- Transfer of traditional ecological and cultural knowledge to young people (including school visits and taking children on field visits)
- Communicating important environmental and cultural messages to government agencies, business and other organisations

**CNRM Business Development – Sustainable Use of Country**

- Sustainable CNRM enterprise
- Cultural eco-Tourism
- Research and development of wild harvest businesses including sustainable commercial harvest of natural resources
- Pastoral activities
- Horticulture (e.g. nursery)
- Carbon trading and greenhouse gas abatement
- Contracting with government, business and other organisations for CNRM work

As indicated by this table, activities undertaken by Indigenous land and sea managers incorporate more than the biophysical aspects of land and sea management. Essential work includes cultural maintenance activities such as participation in ceremony, protection of sacred sites and building Indigenous knowledge though interaction with traditional Aboriginal owners. Activities also include teaching management skills to other members of the community, participating in workshops and conferences with other Indigenous groups and negotiating access to resources with other stakeholders both within and external to the community. The social, cultural and biophysical elements of land and sea management are indivisible to Indigenous land managers and all comprise ‘Caring for Country’ work.

**Where are Indigenous land and sea management groups operating?**

Indigenous land and sea management groups are spread across the entire NT with a clustering of groups in the Top-end along the coastline. Appendix Two contains maps indicating the spread of groups across the NT. Indigenous land and sea management groups operate from major Indigenous communities and outstations. Outstations are homeland settlements of family groups, many of whom have moved back from major communities to care for their country. The structure of major communities and outstations has been important in allowing Indigenous groups to manage environmental, biosecurity and cultural issues over vast tracts of remote Aboriginal land. Many outstation residents perform caring for country work without being formally involved in Indigenous land and sea management groups.
What are sea ranger groups?

A defining feature of Indigenous land and sea management groups is whether or not they have cultural and natural resource management responsibilities for sea country. Some groups along the coastline have developed as ‘Sea Ranger Groups’. This process commenced in 2001 when the Northern Land Council’s Caring for Country Program conducted a series of consultations with traditional Aboriginal owners to develop a Sea Country Strategy. There are now fourteen of these groups across the Top End of the NT (see Appendix Two) with many undertaking both land and sea management activities.

Sea management activities currently include:

- beach and coastal protection in visitor areas;
- cleaning up marine debris (particularly ghost nets in the Gulf of Carpentaria);
- quarantine monitoring of the coastline;
- coastal surveillance and reporting of illegal movement of goods and people in Australian waters;
- marine survey work and the protection of key species, including turtle, dugong and marine bird populations; and
- search and rescue operations.

It has been difficult for Indigenous groups to develop sea management activities because there is greater uncertainty over Aboriginal ownership of coastal waters in the NT than there is for land under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*. The role Indigenous groups can play in the protection of coastal areas, particularly from over-use by commercial and recreational fishermen, has been particularly contentious.

A recent Federal Court decision, *Blue Mud Bay No.2*, has granted Indigenous groups exclusive possession of the inter-tidal zone under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*. The NT Government is currently appealing this decision to the High Court. If the decision is upheld, it may provide greater certainty to Indigenous groups working in coastal areas, and expand their rights to undertake cultural and natural resource management activities in these areas.

Nevertheless, despite this uncertainty, the operations of Sea Ranger Groups have developed quickly over the past five years with support from the land councils. This trend may continue as management of the NT’s marine resources attracts increased attention over the next few years. In particular, the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts is exploring options for mapping the cultural and biodiversity values of the NT marine estate and implementing protection plans, in partnership with Indigenous groups, where appropriate.

What activities are groups in Central Australia undertaking?

Indigenous land management groups in Central Australia are different to those in the Top End. This is largely because of the different characteristics of the arid environment, variable rainfall and larger distances covered. In addition, Indigenous groups and populations are more widely spread and there is poor vehicle access to many locations. In the Centre, the key environmental management issues are:

- biodiversity monitoring, with vast tracks of remote land that have not been surveyed for their biodiversity values;
- feral animals, particularly camels and donkeys;
- weed management, particularly parkinsonia, athel pine, rubber bush, mesquite and buffel grass;
- management of environmental problems on pastoral lands;
- fire management;
- protection of endangered species, particularly small mammals;
- erosion and dust suppression;
- harvesting of top-soils for mine site rehabilitation;
- bush harvest, particularly around the Alice Springs region; and
- protection and maintenance of water resources such as rock holes.
The majority of the NT’s jointly managed parks and reserves are in the southern NT so many Indigenous land management groups work closely with NT Parks and Wildlife including through flexible employment and fee-for-service contracts. There is a large amount of biodiversity monitoring and survey work to be undertaken on the recently announced Southern and Northern Tanami Indigenous Protected Areas.

**How many Indigenous people are working in this area?**

It is difficult to determine the precise number of Indigenous people working in land and sea management groups across the NT because it is a diverse area and there is a significant turn-over of the people involved. Some Indigenous land and sea management groups are unstable and can be dormant for a period of time and then quickly revived. Groups usually contain between five to 25 people.

However, figures from the NT land councils show that there are approximately 500 people in Indigenous groups that are focused on natural and cultural resource management. This approximate figure is verified by other research conducted throughout the project. There are approximately:

- 400 people working in 36 groups in the Northern Land Council region
- 80 people working in eight groups in the Central Land Council region
- 12 people working in the Tiwi Land and Marine Rangers in the Tiwi Land Council region
- six people working in the Anindilyakwa Rangers in the Anindilyakwa Land Council region.

Other Indigenous people are also involved in land and sea management and a broader scope of sustainable land use activities across the NT. Some of these people are working in government organisations, businesses or as individuals and they are not counted in the above figures. There are also many Indigenous people working in cultural and natural resource management planning and decision-making processes under Parks and Reserves joint management or in other community forums. For example, there are approximately twenty traditional Aboriginal owners participating in catchment management activities as part of the Daly River Aboriginal Reference Group.

Key Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT, their location and approximate numbers of participants are set out in Appendix Two.

**Are women involved?**

Currently Indigenous land and sea management groups are largely comprised of men, but there has been a recent increase in the number of women becoming formally involved in land and sea management. Women’s Land and Sea Conferences have been held by the land councils to encourage the participation of women over the last several years. However, it remains an ongoing challenge to provide culturally appropriate support and resources for women to be formally involved in Indigenous land and sea management groups.

In some locations, women have joined an existing land and sea management group or established their own women’s groups, as is considered more appropriate by some communities due to separate women’s and men’s land and sea management business. Women have tended to focus on enterprise development and the education of young people in land and sea management, particularly native plant use and protection.

**What is the growth rate of Indigenous land and sea management groups?**

Over the last 15 years there has been significant growth in the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups and there are now over 50 of these groups across the NT. They are predominantly operating on Indigenous-owned land recognised under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory)* 1976. Many groups are functioning from remote community locations, hosted by local Indigenous service organisations, and supported by the land councils. Most work under some form of direction by the traditional Aboriginal owners of the land.

A small number of groups have been operating for over ten years, but the majority have developed over the last five to seven years. The graphs below highlight the swift growth of the sector:
How many groups have a coordinator?

Approximately 23 of the 47 groups have a full-time coordinator, often employed from outside the community, who assists in running the program. There is a heavy reliance on these coordinators to act as the interface between Indigenous groups and government agencies and other organisations. As literacy and numeracy levels are generally low in NT Indigenous communities, coordinators are important for Indigenous groups to be able to obtain funding and commercial opportunities, manage paperwork and communicate their outcomes to government and other investors. Coordinators also perform a project management function, working alongside senior Indigenous land and sea managers to facilitate the development of work programs and undertake cultural and natural resource management work. Coordinators are not intended to be managers or directors of Indigenous land and sea management groups but rather to facilitate opportunities, resources and projects for the group. Whether...
a coordinator is a man or woman can be an important determining factor in the ability of women to participate in, or develop their own, Indigenous land and sea management groups.

It can be a significant challenge for coordinators to perform both a project management role, which involves getting out of the office and working on cultural and natural resource management projects, as well as managing the lobbying, communications and paperwork required to deal with government and other organisations. As Indigenous land and sea management organisations develop and the capacity of their members expands, it may be possible for senior Indigenous managers to undertake some of this work. Capacity development, leadership and project management training needs to be provided to assist senior Indigenous managers step into coordinator roles.

Coordinators also receive support from facilitators in the land councils and some government agencies who assist in attracting and brokering funding and other support for Indigenous land and sea management groups and projects. For example the Northern and Central Land Councils host Indigenous Land and Sea Management Facilitators who work with coordinators to access funds under environmental and heritage programs such as the Natural Heritage Trust.

Indigenous land and sea management groups that do not have a coordinator rely heavily on the land councils to broker funding and support. This is the situation for approximately half of current Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT.

How many groups are operating under the auspices of a host organisation?

There are only a few Indigenous land and sea management groups operating as independent incorporated organisations throughout the NT, including the Dhimirru Aboriginal Land Management Corporation, Kakadu Native Plants, and the newly formed Warddeken Pty Ltd for the Manwurrk Rangers in West Arnhem Land. Most groups are hosted by other organisations such as the land councils, local government councils, outstation resource centres or Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) organisations. In many circumstances this arrangement has been essential to source the financial and administrative support necessary to secure government and non-government funding. Host organisations take on grant and fee-for-service contracts on behalf of Indigenous land and sea management groups. The level of support the host organisation has been willing and able to provide has been a key factor in the success of Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Over the next 12 months the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups will change because of the amalgamation of local government organisations into larger shires under NT local government reforms and the closure of CDEP organisations and their possible transition to new Job Network and Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) arrangements. This will significantly affect the Indigenous land and sea management sector and it is possible that gaps in hosting arrangements will occur making it hard for Indigenous land and sea management groups to receive grant or fee-for-service contracts. The steps that will need to be taken by government agencies and other organisations such as the land councils and the new local government shires to address this issue is discussed in section six.

How are groups developing?

The vast majority of Indigenous land and sea management groups have formed using a community development rather than an economic development model. There has generally been an initial development focus on determining community aspirations and the use of participatory planning. The land councils have provided essential support, utilising their registers of Land Trusts, to ensure traditional Aboriginal owners are identified and effective consultation processes are followed as set out in the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976.

The development of Indigenous land and sea management groups has been underpinned by a philosophy that supports a broad set of environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic development outcomes and involving as many Indigenous people in training and capacity development as is feasible. For example, many groups have used the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program to engage more Indigenous people than they would be able to do if they were relying
only on government environmental and cultural grants and fee-for-service work. They have also continued to prioritise local training and capacity development to build their skills and organisations for the longer term, rather than concentrating on shorter-term work outputs and finances.

Using this model has meant that Indigenous land and sea management groups have been generally well accepted and supported in communities, and ensured they are aligned with the priorities of traditional Aboriginal owners and community leaders. This has generally made the groups stronger and more able to withstand challenges and obtain assistance from traditional Aboriginal owners and community members. This community development perspective has also led to a preference in some Indigenous communities for people to develop their own cultural and natural resource management organisations rather than participate and seek employment in larger non-Indigenous cultural and natural resource management agencies, such as the NT Parks and Wildlife Service.

However, with the advent of increased fee-for-service opportunities, groups are now developing business capacity and are interested in economic development pathways for their organisations. This is being driven by the interest many groups have in becoming more financially independent from government grants and in building up employment and income sources for community members.

However, it is very important to groups that they do not lose sight of their cultural and community development aspirations. The challenge is to build strong organisations that are able to make effective decisions about the balance required between environmental, cultural, social and economic development outcomes, while sustaining their long-term viability.

Indigenous land and sea management groups are at different stages of development and their operational resources, capacities and needs vary markedly across the NT. Drawing on research conducted for the draft CSIRO Report, *Aboriginal Land and Sea Management in the Top End: a Community Driven Evaluation*, groups can be broadly categorised into the following areas:

**Consolidating**

Groups are considered to be at the consolidating stage if they have been in action for over four years with a core stable group of people involved. The group is operating with a diverse, yet manageable, project portfolio. They have a strong cultural and natural resource management plan but may need assistance to develop long-term organisational structures and business models to grow their organisations. Some of these groups may be incorporated and able to operate independently of any host organisation. However, they will still require support from community organisations, land councils and government agencies. The typical key resources of a consolidating group are:

- Senior Indigenous rangers with wage certainty
- Indigenous rangers (many receiving CDEP support)
- A coordinator or facilitator able to assist the group secure resources and support from government and non-government organisations
- A strong cultural and natural resource management plan
- Office space, a Ranger Station and secure storage area for equipment
- Several vehicles and basic equipment
- Administrative and financial support
- Well-developed relationships with government, business, research and philanthropic partners

**Emerging**

Groups are considered to be at the emerging stage if they have undertaken some projects and are trying to build the capacity of a core set of people to drive the group’s development. They may need assistance with longer-term planning, organisational development and training and may also be formally hosted by a land council, outstation resource centre, CDEP organisation or local government council.

- Indigenous rangers (many receiving CDEP support)
- Some groups may have a coordinator or facilitator or rely on support directly from Indigenous Land and Sea Management Facilitators in the land councils or other organisations
- A cultural and natural resource management plan
- Vehicle and basic equipment
- Basic administrative and financial support from a host organisation
- Emerging relationships with government, business, research and philanthropic partners

**New**

New groups are developing where there are a number of individuals who want to start a land and sea management group but they need assistance with identifying their goals and planning their governance structures and activities. They will require intensive participatory planning support and may also need to be hosted by a land council, outstation resource centre, CDEP organisation or local government council. The typical key resources of a new group are:

- Identified people who might be interested in land and sea management
- Support from the land councils or other organisations to undertake participatory planning

**What is the employment and wage structure for Indigenous groups?**

It is difficult to obtain a clear snapshot of the employment and wage situation of Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT because each group has different arrangements depending on their organisational development and the number of grants and fee-for-service contracts they are able to secure. In fact some Indigenous groups may be uncertain about their own wage arrangements because they are currently determined by their local CDEP organisation.

However, information from the land councils and Indigenous land and sea management groups indicates that wages are being funded through a combination of CDEP support and Top-up. Top-up is the broad category of grant and fee-for-service funds distributed across the group as wages in addition to CDEP funds. It varies substantially across groups depending on the amount of income they are able to obtain from these sources. Indigenous land and sea managers are undertaking full-time, part-time, seasonal, casual and volunteer work.

Currently approximately 90 percent of Indigenous people working in land and sea management are supported by the CDEP program. There are a small number of Indigenous land and sea management groups who are not relying on CDEP and have secured fully funded wages from other government grants and fee-for-service arrangements. These include the Tiwi Land, Dhimirru, Anindilyakwa and Jawoyn Rangers.

Approximately 85 percent of Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT are operating with Top-up wages. Some may only be receiving very small amounts of Top-up, however the majority are likely to be receiving substantial amounts. This is consistent with the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS) which reported that approximately 85 to 90 percent of CDEP participants work more than CDEP funded hours in remote and very remote Australia.

It is important to emphasise that the wage structure for individual groups may vary markedly. However, to illustrate, a consolidating or emerging Indigenous land and sea management group that has been operating for a few years may have the following wage structure:

- CDEP support – this is paid at approximately $12 per hour for 20 hours per week (totalling $240 per individual); and
- Top-up support – this is paid on average at approximately $17 per hour for 15 hours per week (totalling $255 per individual).

This creates a salary of approximately $495 per individual per week.

This wage scenario places Indigenous land and sea management groups at the bottom end of the full-time work bracket. Full-time employment is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as persons working for 35 hours per week and over, while part-time employment includes those working up to 35 hours per week. Some consolidating groups that have existed for several years may have senior Indigenous land and sea managers working for more than 35 hours a week in a full-time position with a higher salary. Some groups may decide to allocate the majority of non-CDEP income to training, capacity development and equipment and therefore may have lower Top-up components to their
salaries. In addition, there are many recently formed groups which are not yet able to obtain enough regular non-CDEP income to sustain this type of wage structure over a six or 12 month period. Therefore, their average hours worked may be much less than 35 hours a week over a 12 month period.

Nevertheless, if these wage figures are aggregated across the Indigenous land and sea management sector it is possible to make a very broad estimate that approximately 48 percent of a position is being funded by CDEP and approximately 52 percent of a position is being funded by Top-up grants and fee for service contracts.

Research and interviews conducted for this project highlighted the vital role Top-up has played in growing Indigenous land and sea management groups. The above indicative figures illustrate that Indigenous land and sea management groups as a whole are covering approximately half of their wages through grants and fee-for-service contracts with business and government agencies. It demonstrates the effort Indigenous groups are making to build their land and sea management groups.

The availability of Top-up has also provided a key incentive for work. It has created much higher incomes for Indigenous land and sea managers that would be the case with CDEP-funded positions alone. It has also allowed Indigenous land and sea managers to progressively move into a more standard employment structure, where wages are generated from grants and fee-for-service contracts with taxes and benefits, rather than solely the CDEP program. There is strong anecdotal evidence that this has lead to increased productivity levels and self-esteem in Indigenous land and sea management groups.

The phasing out of the CDEP program across the NT will significantly alter the employment and wage structure, including Top-up arrangements, for Indigenous groups over the next 12 months. The impact of this change and the need to design a new more stable employment structure for Indigenous land and sea managers is set out in section six.

There is a body of research emerging, largely driven by Desert Knowledge CRC Livelihoods inLand™ Project, which aims to understand current, and promote future opportunities, in Indigenous employment and income generation through a broader paradigm of the creation and maintenance of Indigenous livelihoods. Livelihood outcomes not only include work for income but also for health and well-being outcomes. This more holistic way of viewing broader wealth generation is in some ways more compatible with Indigenous concepts of work in cultural and natural resource management. This wider definition leads to a broader understanding of the wage and employment structure of Indigenous land and sea management groups that can encompass wealth generation though the gathering of bush tucker, hunting and visiting sacred sites. The concept of Indigenous livelihoods also recognises that many Indigenous people in the NT are operating in a hybrid economy combining the mainstream and customary sectors as discussed in the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR) paper, *Caring for Country and Sustainable Indigenous Development: Opportunities, Constraints and Innovation*.

**Are there sustainable employment opportunities in this area?**

Research shows that there are employment and income generation prospects for Indigenous people in Indigenous land and sea management across the NT. At the basic level, employment opportunities exist where there are:

- individuals who want to undertake the work;
- structures to support them in undertaking this work; and
- most importantly, demand for this work sufficient to generate payment.

Although there are significant challenges, broadly these elements are present in the emerging Indigenous land and sea management sector and employment and income generation prospects will increase as these factors are strengthened.

First, Indigenous people consider they are undertaking valued jobs when conducting their Indigenous land and sea management work and believe they should be paid appropriately. Research shows the strong preference is for employment to be provided by government or business contracts or
environmental, cultural or social programs unrelated to the Australian Government’s welfare or income support structure in recognition that much of this work is in the national interest.

The number of people involved in Indigenous land and sea management groups demonstrates that there are many individuals who want to undertake work in this area. This is significant because under-investment in education, health, infrastructure and economic development, and the subsequent reliance on the welfare system, have made it very difficult for Indigenous people to develop and attract employment opportunities. The overall lack of employment and economic development opportunities in regional remote parts of this NT where Indigenous people live has further exacerbated this problem. Despite these challenges, Indigenous people across the NT have gone to considerable effort to secure employment opportunities in Indigenous land and sea management and the importance of this effort should not be underestimated.

Indigenous people also have the knowledge and skills for them to undertake cultural and natural resource management work. Low levels of literacy and numeracy are not an insurmountable barrier to work in this area, although they continue to severely restrict the ability of Indigenous land and sea managers to undertake many tasks required by western approaches to cultural and natural resource management including data collection and communication, visitor management and project management. Literacy and numeracy training remains a priority for all Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Second, although often fragile, Indigenous land and sea management groups, including those linked to host organisations such as land councils, local governments and outstation resource centres, also provide a structure for people to undertake this work, including in remote areas of the NT. These organisations can play the vital role as an ‘employer’ of Indigenous land and sea managers. However, it is clear that these support structures need to be strengthened to ensure long-term stability and workforce certainty. The implementation of the NT Emergency Response, including the transition of CDEP program to new Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) and Job Network arrangements, and local government reforms are likely to create uncertain hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups over the next 18 months. This is a priority issue addressed in section six.

Third, it is broadly agreed by Indigenous groups, government agencies and other organisations that there is no shortage of serious environmental, cultural and bio-security issues to manage and services required in the NT. Therefore, as the CDEP program is phased out, the key issue will be whether the demand for management and service provision is sufficient to create payment from through grants and fee-for-service arrangements now and into the future. While demand is generated from a broad range of business, philanthropic and government agencies, it is the government agencies that are currently the largest driver of demand for environmental and cultural services across the NT. The quantum of these services required by government agencies, under both fee-for-service contracts and grant arrangements, is a key driver in the number of sustainable employment positions and economic development opportunities.

The Australian Government has recently announced a broad $78.2 million jobs package in the NT to convert 1600 CDEP positions into fully paid Australian Government funded positions in fields including arts, broadcasting, community care, education, sport and recreation, pastoral and environmental management. Under this package, there will opportunities for some Indigenous land and sea managers to transition from CDEP into fully paid employment. This indicates that there is demand from government agencies for Indigenous groups to provide cultural and natural resource management services and this will generate employment opportunities.

More broadly, determining the numbers of hours of currently worked by Indigenous groups also provides a weak indication of the current demand for Indigenous land and sea management services generated by government grants, commercial or fee-for-service arrangements and CDEP. The fact that in the past CDEP positions have been allocated to Indigenous land and sea management groups in the past is, in itself, evidence of their being demand for this work to be undertaken.
It is also expected that demand for services will increase in this area as the environmental and cultural management of Northern Australian landscapes becomes more urgent and ‘conservation economy’ opportunities develop. This issue is further addressed in section seven.

The key challenge will be ensuring a stable transition for Indigenous people from CDEP into sustainable employment in Indigenous land and sea management organisations or with other employers. Many Indigenous groups will require some form of employment support over the next five years to help make this transition.

**What type of training is undertaken?**

A number of organisations, including land councils, host organisations and government agencies have assisted Indigenous land and sea management groups to provide training and education opportunities for their members. Training and capacity development is seen as a key priority by Indigenous groups and this is reflected in high participation rates. For example, in 2005-06 almost 230 Indigenous land and sea managers undertook accredited training in the Northern Land Council region. This level of training is reflected across the four land council regions; although Indigenous groups in the Centre struggle to find training providers, particularly in remote areas.

Indigenous groups are currently receiving training in a number of areas including:

- accredited courses in natural resource management offered by Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and Charles Darwin University (this includes completing Certificates I -IV of the National Conservation and Land Management Training Package);
- boat handling and coxswains certificates;
- AQIS quarantine sampling procedures;
- firearms training relating to the culling of feral animals;
- driver education;
- fire management techniques; and
- workplace English language and literacy.

While many Indigenous groups are undergoing certificate training in natural resource management, there is often great difficulty connecting Indigenous groups to training providers in an ongoing and effective way. There are very significant challenges for training providers in delivering courses to Indigenous people in remote areas, largely because there are not enough qualified trainers and costs can be prohibitive. Indigenous groups often have to travel to Darwin or Alice Springs to receive training. While, training providers also attempt to deliver on-site training in regional and remote areas, many Indigenous groups report difficulties in sourcing appropriate providers. There are a few groups who have access to a regional training coordinator, including the Dhimirru, Laynhapuy, Marthakal, Tiwi and Thamarrurr Rangers. These arrangements are reported to have been effective and have demonstrated that regional training coordinators can assist Indigenous land and sea management groups access more effective and ongoing training and development opportunities. This is discussed further in section 7.3.

Formal training is complemented by Ranger exchanges and Indigenous land and sea management conferences. These more informal ways of sharing knowledge and learning from the experiences of other groups are seen as very useful by Indigenous land and sea management groups.

**What types of networks and relationships do Indigenous land and sea management groups require?**

Indigenous land and sea management groups operate within complex community, land council, government and industry networks. The following table provides an example of the diversity of relationships that an emerging Ranger Group (in this case the Adjumarrarl Ranger group) depends on to access the resources, training and the in-kind support needed to implement their land management plan. This directly reflects the current funding arrangements for Indigenous land and sea management groups which are frequently complex and short-term. Coordinators or facilitators within the land councils or other organisations assist the Indigenous groups to broker these networks. It should also be noted that these relationships, or social networks, are dynamic and constantly being negotiated. Not all relationships and networks for the group would be captured in the below diagram:
Source: Research conducted with the Adjumarllarl Ranger Group Reported in ‘Social Networking for Land Management in Remote Northern Australia’, Australasian Journal of Environmental Management (submitted for publication).
3.3 Indigenous Land and Sea Management – An Emerging Sector?

Government agencies, businesses and researchers are recognising the emergence of an early Indigenous land and sea management sector in the NT. This sector is part of the cultural and natural resource management industry which is linked to conservation, sustainable resource use, cultural protection and promotion and tourism.

A sector is defined as a distinct subset of a market, society, industry or economy whose components share similar characteristics. Indigenous land and sea management groups meet this definition for the following reasons:

- Modern Indigenous land and sea management groups have been operating in the NT for over fifteen years. During this time they have established an identity as a long-term feature of the cultural and natural resource management industry in the NT. Indigenous land and sea management groups have demonstrated resilience to changes in administration and funding arrangements and have expanded in range and scope to meet new opportunities.

- While there are differences across the NT depending on geography, environment, history and cultural priorities, there is a high degree of similarity in the structures of Indigenous land and sea management groups and their portfolio of cultural and natural resource management activities.

- There is a high degree of similarity in the way that Indigenous land and sea management groups are generating resources through government grants and fee-for-service arrangements.

- Indigenous groups in this area identify as a sector in that they recognise other organisations in their network based on common activities. This has been facilitated by the NT land councils who have taken a systematic approach to supporting these groups through Indigenous land and sea management conferences, participatory planning and joint training and development exercises.

- Indigenous land and sea management groups are establishing formal links to other cultural and natural resource management organisations in the NT such as NT Parks and Wildlife, Australian Government Parks Australia North, Greening Australia and the Australian Conservation Foundation. They also have links to the wider environmental protection, species conservation and cultural and eco-tourism organisations and industries across Australia.

- Other peak bodies have begun to recognise Indigenous land and sea management as a sector. For example, the Agri-Food Industry Skills Council recognised Indigenous land management as an industry with particular training requirements when developing and accrediting the National Conservation and Land Management Training Package.

- The NT Indigenous Economic Development Strategy recognises cultural and natural resource management as a key sector for Indigenous employment and economic development.

- Indigenous land and sea management groups are starting to generate income from a defined set of cultural and natural resource management activities.

To understand what the emerging Indigenous land and sea management sector might look like in five to ten years it is necessary to take a broad view of the way Indigenous land and sea management groups are developing in the NT. Analysis of the research and interview material collected throughout the project indicates that, on the whole, Indigenous land and sea management groups are evolving into cultural and natural resource management organisations that either operate as for-profit or as social enterprises. Some consolidating Indigenous land and sea management groups may already identify with these descriptors; however this is a longer-term development pathway for emerging and new groups.
Social Enterprises

Social enterprises are defined in UK and Australian literature as organisations that use business approaches or strategies with the aim of generating revenue to support the organisation’s broader social objectives. These objectives can be in a range of areas including community development, cultural and natural resource management, education and employment and training. Many social enterprises operate using a triple bottom line approach to achieve sustainable social, environmental and business outcomes. This is consistent with the Indigenous livelihoods approach seeking outcomes in health, well-being and income generation.

The research literature outlines three defining characteristics of social enterprises:

- **Enterprise orientation**: They are directly involved in producing goods or providing services to a market. Some commentators have suggested that ideally social enterprises obtain 50 percent or more of their organisations’ income from trading rather than from government or other subsidies and donations. Implicit in this figure is the recognition that many social enterprises will not be able to sustain themselves solely through trading although there are some that may achieve this level of self-sufficiency.

- **Social aims**: They have explicit social aims such as job creation, training, environmental protection or the provision of local services. They have ethical values including a commitment to local capacity building, and they are accountable to their members and the wider community for their social environmental and economic impact.

- **Social ownership**: They are autonomous organisations with governance and ownership structures based on participation by stakeholder groups (such as users, clients or local community groups) or by trustees.

Australia and the United Kingdom have a large number of social enterprises operating across the economy and providing valuable public goods and socially inclusive wealth creation. They are now recognised as a legitimate form of business organisation. Some examples of social enterprises in Australia include the Brotherhood of St Laurence, Social Ventures Australia, MS Fresh Australia, Green PC and Cape York Partnerships.

 Indigenous land and sea management groups may develop into social enterprise organisations because they are increasingly recognising that to maintain their cultural and natural resource management activities and achieve their objectives they must:

- **Produce goods or provide services to a market** of government agencies, businesses and the philanthropic sector to gain a level of financial independence from government and non-government subsidies, programs and donations. This is demonstrated by the increasing interest from Indigenous groups in exploring fee-for-service and other commercial arrangements for the provision of cultural and environmental services.

- **Ensure that in moving towards enterprise development they do not lose focus on their fundamental cultural, environmental, social and capacity development objectives**. It is clear that loss of control over these key objectives, in the face of funding and partnership pressures, is of major concern to traditional Aboriginal owners and Indigenous land and sea management groups. The maintenance of a strong culture of holistic Aboriginal stewardship of country and the inter-generational transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge is an essential driver of Indigenous land and sea management groups.

- **Maintain social ownership**, with strong traditional Aboriginal owner direction and community support, of their organisations. This requires strong governance structures and ongoing participatory planning recognised by Aboriginal cultures, and drawing on western models of organisational development where helpful.
Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT that are developing into social enterprises include the Dhimurru Aboriginal Land Management Corporation and the Djelk Rangers, supported by the Bawinanga Aboriginal Development Corporation. The case studies contained later in this report also provide additional examples of groups moving in this direction.

It is vital to recognise that this social enterprise model allows Indigenous land and sea management groups to develop business approaches that aim to balance striving for financial sustainability and access to markets with their broader environmental, social, cultural, education and employment objectives. These objectives are at the core of Indigenous peoples’ holistic understanding of the benefits of cultural and natural resource management. Taking a strict commercial feasibility approach to developing Indigenous land and sea management groups will not work in the majority of cases and it must be balanced with support for Indigenous people’s holistic approach to the social, cultural and environmental benefits of Indigenous land and sea management and respect for their ways of operating.

For-Profit Organisations

While many Indigenous land and sea management groups meet the definition of emerging social enterprises, not all groups are heading along this path. Some groups may wish to develop into businesses with clear profit motives. Indigenous groups exploring bush harvest and horticulture, aquaculture, and eco-tourism ventures may fall into this category.

With upfront investment by government agencies and the business sector, some groups may evolve into profitable businesses able to capitalise on sustainable development pressures and conservation economy opportunities in the NT. This possibility is further explored in section 7.5.

Other Aspirations

There will be some groups who may develop such strong conservation and biodiversity protection credentials that they are able to operate as purely not-for-profit organisations relying solely on government and philanthropic grants, programs and donations. These groups may not need to develop social enterprise arms to their organisations. In addition, some smaller and more informal groupings of traditional Aboriginal owners and community members may also wish to continue to operate as best they can, with or without government and philanthropic support, to look after their country and tackle environmental and biosecurity threats as they arise. These more informal groups of Indigenous land and sea managers are also worthy of government support for the environmental and cultural services they can provide. The high level of volunteerism Indigenous people display in performing community Caring for Country work, particularly on remote outstations, should continue to be encouraged.
3.4 Land Councils’ Caring for Country Programs and NAILSMA

The NT land councils, largely through their caring for country or land and sea management units, have facilitated the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups, in partnership with other key stakeholders, at the instruction of traditional Aboriginal owners and Indigenous community members.

All groups require the land councils to perform their statutory functions in relation to the management and use of Aboriginal land under section 23 of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory)* 1976. The land councils are charged with ascertaining and expressing the wishes of Indigenous people living in their area as to the management, protection, use of, and commercial activities on, their land. The section also directly refers to the land council’s role in assisting in schemes for the management of wildlife on Aboriginal land. The land councils keep a register of the traditional Aboriginal owners of land trusts and a description of each area of land and must act on the wishes, and with the consent of, traditional Aboriginal owners.

The level of support the land councils provide to individual Indigenous land and sea management groups has varied according to each group’s priorities, whether or not they have other partnerships and sources of support, and their level of development and capacity. The vast majority of recent and emerging Indigenous land and sea management groups rely heavily on the land councils for support, while consolidating groups are able to operate more independently, seeking assistance from the land councils as they require it.

The land councils provide the following forms of vital support:

- Participatory planning for traditional Aboriginal owners and Indigenous communities considering the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups;
- Advocacy for the network of Indigenous land and sea management groups and fostering communication across the groups, including through the hosting of Indigenous land and sea conferences;
- Sponsoring and directly applying for funds from government agencies for specific Indigenous groups and land and sea management projects, and securing funds for coordinator positions (in many cases these projects have been regional and involve more than one group). The land councils have performed a brokering function, collating small grants from a wide range of government agencies to develop land and sea management programs for Indigenous groups;
- Funding and other resources to support Indigenous land and sea management groups, in particular, providing upfront resources to allow groups to continue their land and sea management activities in circumstances where there are gaps or delays in receiving grant funding from other agencies;
- Management of cultural and natural resource management projects, acquittal of funding and reporting on outcomes achieved to funders and other stakeholders;
- Facilitating the provision of training by linking training providers with Indigenous land and sea management groups; and
- Formal hosting of land and sea management organisations (managing their finances, wages and administration) where they are not independently incorporated or supported by another local organisation.

While there is commonality in the type of support land councils provide Indigenous land and sea management groups, there are also differences in approach.
Northern Land Council – Caring for Country Unit

The Northern Land Council created the Caring for Country Unit and Program in 1996. It was developed after a series of consultations with Indigenous communities seeking their input into the development of targeted training and job opportunities in their regions. These consultations showed that traditional Aboriginal owners wanted to pursue regionally-based environmental strategies which would provide employment for community members.

Over the last twelve years the Northern Land Council has built up a very significant base of knowledge on Indigenous land and sea management. They have developed a ‘Caring for Country’ Strategy and Program that operates on five principles for building sustainable land and sea management groups:

- Listening to, and acting on, the instructions from Indigenous landowners. This is achieved through participatory planning processes that identify local priorities and create local ownership of the directions and operations of land and sea management groups.
- Recognising that the land needs its people. This is aimed at developing the capacity of local Indigenous people to look after the land and sea rather than leaving it to be managed for local Indigenous people by external agencies.
- Respecting and applying traditional Indigenous knowledge and modern science-based knowledge.
- Promoting the intrinsic and economic value of ecologically and culturally intact landscapes for customary and sustainable commercial uses.
- Promoting and facilitating the development of partnerships and collaborations.

The Caring for Country Program facilitates the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups by first receiving a request, or ascertaining support, from traditional Aboriginal owners for the development of a group and undertaking participatory planning on its priorities and structure. The Program then identifies a suitable local host agency for the group, such as a CDEP organisation, local government council or outstation resource centre. The Caring for Country Unit works with traditional Aboriginal owners to identify the community members that will work in the group and provides planning and coordination support. The Unit also brokers training and resourcing for the group.

Key milestones in the Program’s development have been:

- 1997-98, NLC in partnership with Bushfires NT and the Jawoyn Association secure Natural Heritage Trust funding for a three year fire management strategy for the West Arnhem Land plateau.
- 1998-99, a women’s land management facilitator is employed to include more women in land management planning and activities.
- 1999-2000, the first annual Ranger Conference is held. The NLC signs a four year agreement – The Top End Aboriginal Land Management and Employment Strategy – with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, the Indigenous Land Corporation and the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training. This is focused on weed control, particularly mimosa.
- 2001-02, a Caring for Sea Country Strategy is put into place after consultation with coastal groups.
- 2003-04, the number of groups reaches 34 and the number of positions within the Unit peaks with four ABA funded core positions and 13 externally funded positions.
- 2005-06, a record of 230 Rangers receive accredited training.
The Caring for Country Program requires input from other sections of the Northern Land Council, such as the anthropological, regional and economic development and corporate services and finance areas, to support traditional Aboriginal owners undertake land and sea management work on their country.

Central Land Council

Over the last five years the Central Land Council has also expanded its support for the development of Indigenous land management groups. While they have followed the same broad approach as the Northern Land Council’s Caring for Country Program, there are differences. In particular the CLC has focused on:

- Supporting Indigenous pastoral developments in the Centre in parallel to Indigenous land management groups. This approach has been necessary because Indigenous people are regaining ownership of land which has been previously used by the pastoral industry. There is often a legacy of intense land use, and the need for rehabilitation and careful management of this land.

- Growing their program slowly to be able to provide sustained support to Indigenous land management groups, particularly given their dispersed locations. This has involved the CLC taking on the functions of a host organisation for many groups and employing land managers able to act as coordinators for Indigenous groups.

- Developing high quality information about the biodiversity values and economic development opportunities across the nine CLC sub-regions. This has been necessary because of the comparative lack of information on the state of the environment across remote parts of Central Australia.

- Recognising Indigenous land management as a component of a suite of sustainable land use activities that may be open to Indigenous people in the Centre of the NT. There are close relationships between the Land Management Unit and Employment Unit and other Units of the CLC.

The majority of land management groups in the Centre are considered to be at an earlier stage of development (compared to some of the groups who have been established in the Northern Land Council region).

Tiwi Land Council

The Tiwi Land Council directly employs the Tiwi Land and Marine Ranger Groups to undertake cultural and natural resource management work. This is different to the support and hosting arrangements developed by the NLC and CLC with Indigenous land and sea management groups in their regions. This is made possible because the Tiwi Land Council has responsibility for a much smaller geographic area.

The Tiwi Land Council and Land and Marine Rangers have a close relationship with Great Southern Limited (GSL), a forestry company operating on the island. The Rangers receive salary funding from GSL and commonly work with GSL Environmental Officers on joint projects. This highlights the Tiwi Land Council’s focus on the development of partnerships and business development arrangements with industry to grow the capacity of the Tiwi Land and Marine Rangers. There is a reluctance to rely too heavily on government program support and a desire to see land and sea management projects tied to economic development and sustainable land and sea use.

Anindilyakwa Land Council

The Anindilyakwa Land Council (ALC) hosts the Anindilyakwa Rangers operating on Groote Eylandt, and provides funding and administrative support to the Rangers. In a similar fashion to the Tiwi Land Council, the smaller geographic area of Groote Eylandt means that the ALC takes a more hands-on
approach to supporting the Anindilyakwa Rangers. In the ALC region there is also a desire to see land and sea management projects tied to economic development and sustainable land and sea use.

Managing the growth of the area

The land councils have provided strong support to Indigenous land and sea management groups over the last decade. However, research and consultations indicate additional financial, administrative and staffing resources urgently need to be directed to this area to enable the land councils to effectively respond to the growth of Indigenous land and sea management groups. It has been a particularly acute challenge for the Northern Land Council’s Caring for Country Program to secure adequate financial, administrative and staffing resources in the face of the steep growth of Land and Sea Management Groups in their area.

Managing the growth of the area

The land councils receive core operational funding from the Aboriginals Benefit Account to fulfil their broad role in ascertaining, expressing and supporting the wishes of Aboriginal people in relation to the management of their land. This funding is currently spread across land councils’ statutory functions and covers areas including the pursuit of Aboriginal land and sea rights, protection of sacred sites, consideration of mining proposals, economic development projects and land and sea management.

Some organisations have suggested that, where necessary, it may be possible for land councils to direct additional core funds into land and sea management, to meet growing demand. It is noted that the Northern Land Council considers this perception incorrect. The Northern Land Council’s Annual Reports indicate that during the period of the expansion of Indigenous land and sea management groups in its region, there has been no growth in core funding allocations to the Northern Land Council (Annual Reports 2004-05, 2005-06). The Northern Land Council has indicated that it requires additional core funding under S64 (1) of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976 to match the demand in services across a number of key areas including land and sea management. Land councils and government agencies will need to work proactively together to work through this issue, particularly as interest in investment in this area is expected to increase over the next five years, and stable support structures will be required.

In order to partly address this issue, the land councils have sought additional funds to specifically support Indigenous land and sea management from government agencies outside of S64 (1) processes, usually in the form of funds for positions. For example, the Department of the Environment and Water Resources provides funding for Indigenous Land Management Facilitators in both the Northern and Central Land Councils. Positions have also been funded through project management components of a broad range of environmental and cultural programs. However, much of this funding has been short-term which has created staff stability problems and made it difficult to strategically develop the long-term role of land councils in this area.

The Northern Land Council publication, Celebrating Ten Years of Caring for Country, recognises that there are growing indications that the Northern Land Council’s Caring for Country program has reached the limits of what it can achieve without an examination of the current structure and funding levels. It also reports frustration among existing Indigenous land and sea management groups about the level of support provided by the Caring for Country Unit and government agencies for this area.

The interim findings of the community-driven evaluation of the Northern Land Council’s Caring for Country Program (undertaken by CSIRO in collaboration with Indigenous land and sea management groups, the Northern Land Council and other partners) have highlighted numerous positive aspects in the way the Caring for Country Unit has operated over the last decade and endorsed the principles behind the Caring for Country Strategy. However, it has also highlighted several challenges for the future, including the need to develop more stable and coordinated funding delivery and support mechanisms for Indigenous land and sea management groups to see this sector develop over the next five years. The interim findings indicate that generally, traditional Aboriginal owners and other stakeholders are positive about the development of the Caring for Country Unit and commend the Northern Land Council for facilitating the Program. The evaluation recommends that the Northern Land Council strengthen its capacity to deliver a more effective service by: working with Ranger Groups to better understand their requirements for support from the Caring for Country Unit; increasing
awareness of, and priority given to, the Caring for Country Strategy within the Northern Land Council; and coming to an agreed understanding of what are reasonable expectations of the Unit.

The Northern Land Council has indicated that it has supported the development of the *Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule* as a mechanism for developing more stable and effective funding and support arrangements for the growing Indigenous land and sea management sector and it is interested in working with government agencies to progress investment in this area.

**NAILSMA**

In 2000, the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) developed through the Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Savannas Management. NAILSMA comprises a partnership between the Kimberley, Northern and Carpentaria Land Councils and the Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation.

NAILSMA aims to provide support to Indigenous land and sea management agencies across northern Australia and is involved in projects that cross state and territory jurisdictions. NAILSMA’s approach recognises that many cultural and natural resource management issues are shared across Northern Australia and thus require a coordinated response across NT, Qld and WA.

NAILSMA has received funding support from various sources including a philanthropic organisation the Christensen Fund, and the Tropical Savannas CRC. It has also received funding from a wide variety of Australian Government sources to manage Indigenous cultural and natural resource management projects across the North, including the:

- Dugong and Marine Turtle Management Project;
- North Australian Fire (carbon) Initiative;
- Indigenous Knowledge Conservation Strategy Project;
- Leadership, Scholarships and Communication Project; and
- Tropical Rivers Scoping Project.
Key Findings – Profile of Indigenous Land and Sea Management

- Indigenous people are major stakeholders in cultural and natural resource management in the NT. The Indigenous population are the future cultural and natural resource management workforce in regional and remote areas.

- The major cultural, environmental and biosecurity threats in the NT are weeds, feral animals, harmful fire regimes, climate change, increased development pressure, quarantine incursions and the illegal movement of people and goods, including foreign fishing and unmanaged visitors. Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT are working to manage these threats.

- The structure of major communities and outstations across the NT has been important in allowing Indigenous land and sea management groups to manage environmental, biosecurity and cultural issues over vast tracts of remote Aboriginal land.

- There are approximately 500 Indigenous people working in 46 Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. A small number of groups have been operating for over ten years, but the majority have developed over the last five years demonstrating significant growth in the sector.

- There is a heavy reliance on coordinators to deal with government agencies and other organisations to obtain funding and commercial opportunities on behalf of Indigenous groups. Approximately half of the current Indigenous land and sea management groups have coordinators.

- The majority of Indigenous land and sea management groups are hosted by other organisations such as CDEP organisations, outstation resource centres, local governments or land councils. Host organisations take on grant and fee-for-service contracts on behalf of Indigenous land and sea management groups. There are a small number of independently incorporated Indigenous land and sea management groups.

- Over the next 12 months the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups will change because of the amalgamation of local government organisations into larger shires under NT local government reforms and the closure of CDEP organisations and their possible transition to new Job Network and Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) arrangements.

- The vast majority of Indigenous land and sea management groups have formed using a community development rather than economic development model. With the advent of fee-for-service opportunities and Indigenous peoples’ desire to develop their organisations, some groups are developing business arms. A number of groups are evolving into for-profit or social enterprise organisations.

- It is difficult to obtain a clear snapshot of the employment and wage situation of Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT because each group has different arrangements. However, it is broadly estimated that these groups are covering approximately 52% of their wages through grants and fee-for-service contracts with business and government agencies and 48% through CDEP. This demonstrates that while 90% of groups are currently reliant on CDEP, they are working hard to build their land and sea management groups.
Research shows that there are employment and income generation prospects for Indigenous people in Indigenous land and sea management because, although these prospects are fragile in many areas, there are broadly:
- individuals who want to undertake this work;
- structures to support them in undertaking this work; and
- demand for this activity sufficient to generate payment.
Employment and income generation prospects will increase as these factors are strengthened.

While demand for Indigenous land and sea management is generated from a broad range of business, philanthropic and government agencies, it is government agencies that are currently the largest driver of demand for environmental and cultural services across the NT. The quantum of these services required by government agencies, under both fee-for-service contracts and grant arrangements, is a key driver in the number of sustainable employment positions and economic development opportunities.

Government agencies, businesses and researchers are recognising the emergence of an early Indigenous land and sea management sector linked to the broader cultural and natural resource management industry in the NT.

Indigenous land and sea management groups are providing significant training and education opportunities for Indigenous people in a broad set of natural and cultural resource management competencies.

The NT land councils, largely through their caring for country or land management units, have facilitated the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups, in partnership with other key stakeholders. The vast majority of recent and emerging Indigenous land and sea management groups rely heavily on the land councils for support.

The land councils have faced significant resource pressures trying to support Indigenous land and sea management groups. It has been a particularly acute challenge for the Northern Land Council’s Caring for Country Program to secure adequate financial, administrative and staffing resources in the face of the steep growth of Land and Sea Management Groups in their area. Land councils and government agencies will need to work proactively together to work through this issue, particularly as investment in this area is expected to increase over the next five years.

NAILSMA is now also a key institution performing an advocacy and project management role for Indigenous land and sea management groups across Northern Australia in the NT, WA and Qld.
3.5 Case Studies

This section contains eight short case studies of Indigenous land and sea management groups to illustrate the structures, achievements and future challenges for groups across the NT. They profile the work of the Tiwi Land and Marine Rangers (Tiwi Islands), Larrakia Rangers (Darwin), Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation (Nhulunbuy), Adjumarllarl Rangers (Oenpelli/Kunbarljanjna), Warddeken Land Management (West Arnhem Land), Tjuwanpa Rangers (Ntaria), Wulaign Rangers (Lajamanu) and Aboriginal Landcare Education Program (NT).

Tiwi Islands Land and Marine Rangers

Who are they?

The Tiwi Land and Marine Rangers are two separate but closely connected groups employed by the Tiwi Land Council to undertake cultural and natural resource management work on Melville Island, 5788 km², and Bathurst Island, 1693 km², north of Darwin.

The Rangers work closely with environmental officers employed by Great Southern Limited (GSL), a forestry company operating on the island. GSL are a major investor in the Ranger Groups and currently provide salaries for ten of the 12 Rangers and manage their payroll, including leave and superannuation. The Tiwi Ranger Groups are unique as the salaries for Rangers in other groups are often covered by CDEP and additional Top-up funds from particular grants or projects.

There are currently eight Tiwi Land Rangers, two Tiwi Marine Rangers and two Assistant Tiwi Marine Rangers. The Land Rangers are assisted by a full-time trainer/mentor employed through the Tiwi Islands Training and Employment Board (TITEB), while the Marine Rangers work directly to the Tiwi Land Council. The Tiwi Land Council does not employ an outside coordinator but rather the coordination role is embedded within the existing structures of the Tiwi Land Council, which directly manages both programs.

Land Rangers are undergoing training in Conservation and Land Management delivered under a Memorandum of Understanding between Batchelor Institute and TITEB. Marine Rangers undergo Coxswain training through the seafood maritime industry in Darwin.

A Tiwi Islands Natural Resource Management Committee has recently been formed, with Tiwi Land Council and Ranger representatives, to discuss priority land and sea management issues and develop work directions for the Groups. The Tiwi Marine Rangers also seek to raise awareness of, and seek collaborative action on, a wide range of marine management issues, including marine debris, aquatic pests and illegal fishing, through the Tiwi Coastal Waters Consultative Committee.

Key achievements

The Tiwi Land and Marine Rangers have a number of significant natural resource management projects underway including:

- Business development of Milikapiti nursery for a Matilda Minerals mine site rehabilitation contract;
- Pest and weed control, including Rangini pig control and feral ant control;
- Turtle monitoring and marine pests and debris work;
- Threatened species recovery plans, including for the Butler’s Dunnart and Red Goshawk;
- AQIS quarantine work; and
- Tiwi Islands fire management research with CSIRO.

What has worked well?

- The Ranger Groups are operating with the support of GSL as an industry partner and this decreases reliance on government funding sources and increases the Ranger Groups’ determination to look at longer-term investment partners and the creation of natural resource management business opportunities. The partnership with GSL needs to be
monitored as the groups develop and the longer-term plans for forestry on the Islands unfold.

- There is a strong focus on the education and training needs of Rangers and young Tiwi people who may be interested in cultural and natural resource management work in the future. This provides a long-term perspective.

- The groups are directly managed by the Tiwi Land Council who is able, in some circumstances, to use their funds to kick-start activities such as the work of the Tiwi Marine Rangers. Additional benefits include self management and monitoring through the Elders on the Tiwi Land Council, which also engenders a big-picture view of natural resource management relevant to the Tiwi community.

The Tiwi Rangers have a strong philosophy of wanting to build independence and long-term stability based around business development and private investment. They are interested in the government working harder to support industry as potential long-term investors in Indigenous natural resource management on the Tiwi Islands.

*What are the challenges for the future?*

- Attracting significant investment in the education and training of young Tiwi people in science and land and sea management. The Rangers are looking to develop a partnership with the new Tiwi College being built at Pickertaramoor and have been exploring the possibility of establishing a coastal campus for land and sea management training at Port Hurd. They are also interested in being involved with a youth forum on the islands aimed at engaging young people in developing future education, training and employment pathways;

- Broadening the type of training and mentoring provided to Tiwi Rangers so that they are able to complement the certificate courses in natural resource management with job ready, leadership, problem solving and project management skills and experience;

- Developing long-term natural resource management businesses linked to forestry and mining on the Islands. In particular, the Rangers are interested in options for nursery development on the Islands. Currently small trees are transported from the mainland to GSL for plantation and this could cause avoidable environmental problems, such as the spread of cane toads, over the next year. Rangers are also interested in establishing washdown facilities near barge landings to prevent the spread of weeds and feral animals;

- Attracting investment in the Tiwi Marine Rangers so the program can expand and develop a presence on Bathurst and Melville Islands to increase sea patrol capacity; and

- Encouraging government investment in the Tiwi Rangers that is longer-term and less rigid in terms of its monitoring and reporting requirements, particularly for core operational items.
Larrakia Rangers

Who are they?

The Rangers are based in Darwin at the Larrakia Nation offices, through which their funding and business operations are currently channelled. In 2004 the group comprised 20 male and female Rangers. However, as CDEP support has been phased out in the Darwin area, there is now a core group of eight Rangers. The group has developed a significant asset base, including four vehicles, a tip-truck, mowers and brush-cutters. This equipment is integral to the group performing fee-for-service contracts around metropolitan Darwin.

As with other groups, the Larrakia Rangers have more people interested in joining the group than they can sustain with salaries. The removal of CDEP has made it more challenging for the group to provide training and job ready pathways to Indigenous people interested in land and sea management.

The Rangers have been supported by a coordinator over the past 12 months who has played a positive role in networking and developing business opportunities on behalf of the group.

Key achievements

The Larrakia Rangers have two significant contracts with the Lions Club and NT Parks and Wildlife for cultural and natural resource management work including weed management, erosion control and ongoing maintenance of public areas. The group has undertaken several other short-term fee-for-service contracts with private landholders for burning, fencing and weed control. Other achievements have included:

- A record number of Rangers completing training in 2006, with six achieving Certificate II and eight achieving Certificate III in Conservation and Land Management. Two Rangers have also commenced university degrees in land management.
- Maintaining a small nursery of local plants for revegetation and landscape projects.

What has worked well?

- The Larrakia Rangers have been able to take advantage of their metropolitan location to secure contracts with urban-based organisations such as the Lions Club.
- Obtaining equipment and a small nursery for revegetation and landscape projects has allowed the Group to increase their fee-for-service operations.

What are the challenges for the future?

- The group is keen to obtain funding for a more sustainable three year coordinator position, with this person working to performance indicators alongside a senior Indigenous Ranger;
- Increasing the Larrakia Ranger’s involvement in sustainable land and sea management practices in the greater Darwin area rather than being restricted to general labouring under metropolitan landscaping contracts;
- Improving their networks and avenues of communication so that the group are aware of sources of government and non-government funding and business development support;
- Developing opportunities for two-way learning between NT Parks and Wildlife staff and Larrakia Rangers through out-posting arrangements and other forms of partnership;
- Investigating small-business opportunities that might utilise Larrakia knowledge and train Indigenous Rangers from remote regions. This might include teaching other Indigenous groups how to navigate in Darwin harbour in a culturally friendly environment; and
• Expanding the role they play in managing sea country, particularly turtle and dugong. The group has developed skills in this area, including five people with their coxswains certificate, but do not have an in-survey vessel.
Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation

Who are they?

Dhimurru is an independent Aboriginal Corporation managing the Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) located on the Gove Peninsula in North East Arnhem Land. The IPA covers approximately 101,000 ha of land and 8,913 ha of marine estate. In addition to the IPA, Dhimurru has authority under agreements with NT Parks and Wildlife and the Northern Land Council to issue access permits and manage the Aboriginal land of this area.

Dhimurru was incorporated in 1992 to protect Yolngu land in the face of increasing pressures from growing numbers of non-Yolngu residents in Nhulunbuy. The aim of Dhimurru is to address the natural and cultural resource management priorities of its members at the direction of traditional Aboriginal owners. The status of Dhimurru as an independent Aboriginal Corporation makes it unique to many Ranger Groups in the NT who are commonly hosted by other organisations such as the land councils, local government councils or outstation resource centres.

The Corporation currently has 12 Indigenous staff (four on CDEP) and four non-Indigenous staff, including a full-time Executive Officer who acts as a coordinator. It also receives significant hands-on assistance from a number of partner organisations on a day-to-day basis. Dhimurru currently hosts an out-posted NT Parks and Wildlife Officer who provides project management support for cultural and natural resource management projects. The officer also facilitates access for the Dhimurru Rangers to relevant NT Parks and Wildlife training, research and other forms of institutional support.

Dhimurru operates using a clear governance structure, with a Governance Committee comprising representatives of the clans of the region, and an Advisory Committee, including representatives from Dhimurru, Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources, NT Parks and Wildlife Service and Northern Land Council.

Key achievements:

Dhimurru has a number of significant cultural and natural resource management projects underway including:

- implementing the *Yolnguwu Monuk Gapu Wanga* – Dhimurru Sea Country Plan, which includes developing partnerships with researchers for coral monitoring, undertaking marine turtle recovery surveys and managing ghost nets and marine debris;
- continuing programs to monitor and assist the recovery of threatened species such as the Gove Crow Butterfly;
- continuing to manage feral animals and pests such as the Yellow Crazy Ants; and
- continuing an ethnobotanical survey of Melville Bay.

In August 2007 it was announced by the Australian Government Minister for the Environment and Water Resources that the Dhimurru Rangers have been successful in securing funds under the new Working on Country Program for six fully paid positions over three years. The people in these positions will work on the above projects as well as land rehabilitation, including seed collection and sowing native plants in degraded areas, and monitoring river quality.

What has worked well?

Dhimurru continues to grow as a successful organisation. Some of the key reasons for this success are that it is operating with:

- strong Yolngu ownership and leadership;
- a willingness to engage with partner organisations including government agencies, business, research and not-for-profit organisations;
- patience and dedication to achieving meaningful goals over the medium to long-term; and
- an ethos of a mutual respect and ‘two tool-box’ approach to managing land and sea combining Yolngu knowledge with non Indigenous scientific, intellectual and physical resources provided by partners.
What are the challenges for the future?

- Continuing to navigate and balance the competing priorities and perspectives on Dhimurru’s work from both within and outside the Yolngu community;

- Securing longer-term funding (most funding agreements operate for only one year creating a substantial workload constantly seeking new funding and acquitting and reporting grants);

- Building a new office headquarters in Nhulunbuy to meet the needs of the growing organisation (funds have been secured to commence this project);

- Developing a business plan which will assist Dhimurru manage its assets and secure fee-for-service work on a sustainable basis into the future; and

- Continuing to build education and training partnerships so that Dhimurru can provide career pathways for Yolngu students interested in science and land and sea management.
Adjumarllarl Rangers

Who are they?

The Adjumarllarl Rangers operate from the Kunbarllanjnja community, 50 km east of the East Alligator River and the border of Kakadu National Park, in the western region of the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Land Trust. The group’s activities impact on the World Heritage and Ramsar listed Kakadu National Park to the West and Ramsar listed Garig Gunak Barlu National Park to the North. In operation since 2000, the group grew from a Top End Aboriginal Land Management Employment Strategy (TEALMES) funded project working to eradicate mimosa from the extensive floodplains which surround the community. Some of the Rangers have been working on managing this potentially devastating weed since 1992.

The Rangers have had a full-time coordinator since the group’s inception in 2000. The first coordinator worked with the Group for six years. The number of Rangers working fluctuates according to morale, level of interest in the activities being undertaken, family and ceremonial obligations and health. A core group of five to six male Rangers, with one to two senior Rangers operates day-to-day.

The group operates with support from Demed Outstation Resource Centre whose role it is to provide administrative and logistical support to outstations in the region. Demed acts as the incorporated body through which grants and funds are received and managed for the Adjumarllarl Rangers, including CDEP support. They also host the coordinator and provide an office and space in the yard for equipment and housing. Recently there has been an issue with Demed processing ‘Top-up’ payments for the Rangers and the Northern Land Council has taken over this service.

The group has received training from a number of sources which have included:

- within-community numeracy and literacy training provided by Charles Darwin University;
- training courses at Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education for Certificates in Conservation and Land Management;
- in-kind training by neighbouring Ranger Groups in the operation of airboats;
- training in autopsy and blood collection by AQIS staff; and
- local business proprietors offering in-kind support by training Rangers in crocodile egg collection and carcass boning techniques.

Key achievements:

- Large areas of mimosa are being managed through coordinated aerial spraying and on-ground administration of herbicides with the aid of an airboat;

- Coordinated fire management, with neighbouring Ranger Groups, ensures protection of biodiversity including bush tucker, stock and infrastructure from wildfires. The Adjumarllarl Rangers are a partner in the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Project with the Jawoyn, Djelk, Manwurrk and Mimal Rangers, Bushfires NT, NT Government and Northern Land Council;

- The group has secured several fee-for-service contracts including weed control and revegetation at the Narbelek uranium mine site. Ongoing livestock disease monitoring in buffalo and pigs is undertaken for AQIS;

- The group has participated in small business opportunities utilising feral animals, including supplying boars to the international small goods market and culling wild horses for supply as pet meat; and

- Several Rangers have attended Batchelor Institute and acquired level two and three Certificates in Conservation and Land Management.
What has worked well?

- It has worked well for the Adjumarllarl Rangers to be involved in major environmental projects such as the Top End Aboriginal Land Management Employment Strategy (TEALMES) Project eradicating mimosa and the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement project managing fire for greenhouse gas emissions. These experiences have developed the capacity of the Adjumarllarl Rangers to work on regional projects in coordination with other Indigenous land and sea management groups.

What are the challenges for the future?

- Obtaining training with practical application to be provided locally to the group with incentives to participate and learn;

- Identifying possible funding sources to extend the program and support the involvement of more community members including senior traditional Aboriginal owners, women and young people. This includes attracting support for transferring Indigenous ecological knowledge to younger Rangers;

- Seeking resources to develop more appropriate infrastructure and equipment to support the Rangers’ cultural and natural resource management activities;

- Working to more clearly define the relationship and obligations between the Ranger Group and local institutions including the resource centre; and

- Identifying avenues for strengthening and supporting local leadership by Bininj leaders.
Warddeken Land Management Pty Ltd (Manwurrk Rangers)

Who are they?

Warddeken Land Management Pty Ltd was established in August 2007. It represents the evolution of the Manwurrk Rangers into a cultural and natural resource management organisation developed to conserve and manage the west Arnhem plateau. It is operating from the Kabulwarnamyo community, re-established in 2002, and seeking to manage 12,400km of sandstone country immediately east of Kakadu National Park. This land is recognised under the NT Parks and Conservation Masterplan as an internationally recognised site of biodiversity significance and one of the highest priorities for conservation across the NT. It is a stronghold for numerous nationally and Territory-listed threatened species. It is also of great cultural significance locally and globally with experts stating that the extraordinarily rich and diverse body of rock art across the plateau is of World Heritage standard.

While the organisation is still developing its structure, it is building on the staff and resources developed by the Manwurrk Rangers over the last ten years, including a full-time coordinator and approximately 12 Rangers (with numbers fluctuating depending on the season and amount of work). A number of senior Indigenous leaders are also involved in providing cultural advice to the Rangers.

Key achievements:

- The Manwurrk Rangers, now operating under Warddeken Land Management Pty Ltd, are pivotal to the success of the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (WALFA) Project. Regular early dry season burn-offs now occur and the Rangers have achieved the emission abatement targets set for 2005-06 and 2006-07, securing a further 15 years of contract funding for this work. The Rangers have good partnerships with Bushfires NT and scientists working to measure the greenhouse gas offsets. The WALFA Agreement with Conoco-Phillips has created a long-term fee-for-service funding stream able to employ Rangers in full-time positions. A core group of Rangers are now qualified to deliver aerial prescribed burning from helicopters. The WALFA Project received the ‘Innovative Solutions to Climate Change’ Award at the 2007 Australian Museum Eureka Prizes;

- Warddeken Land Management is working to declare their land as an Indigenous Protected Area. A significant amount of community consultation, research and biodiversity survey work has gone into the development of a draft plan which is expected to be supported by the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources and the NT Government Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts, due to the valuable cultural and natural resources of the area. This will set a framework for the management of the area over the next decade; and

- The Manwurrk Rangers have also been working to record the ecological knowledge of a small number of elderly Indigenous experts on the landscapes and species of the West Arnhem plateau. Young people and elders have been working together on this project, ensuring oral histories are digitally recorded on video and computers. This is a rich resource with extensive descriptions of the ecology of key species. The Rangers have also held annual ‘Walking Back to Country’ expeditions involving hundreds of young Indigenous people over the past five years. This has motivated students to consider their future obligations to their country and the need for a good school education leading to potential careers in cultural and natural resource management.

What has worked well?

- It has worked well for the Manwurrk Rangers to enter into partnerships with research institutions and senior scientists on their fire management work. This has allowed Indigenous ecological knowledge and western science techniques to be combined to create the rigour necessary to attract investment from businesses interested in greenhouse gas abatement.
• It is important to recognise that this greenhouse gas work only developed after traditional Indigenous owners moved back on their country (to Kabulwarnamyo) and resumed traditional early season burning. Previously the country was unpopulated and this significantly increased the possibility of large destructive fires in the late dry season.

• While it is early days, it is working well for Warddeken Land Management to focus on developing long-term cultural and natural resource management and business plans for their organisation. There is a strong vision behind the organisation of achieving clear environmental, cultural and economic development outcomes for the Kabulwarnamyo community. Warddeken Land Management also has business goals which involve seeking other potential fee-for-service opportunities and philanthropic investment from web-based donors.

**What are the challenges for the future?**

• The biggest challenge for Warddeken Land Management is sourcing high quality financial and administrative support for the organisation. The West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement work requires rigorous accounting of finances linked to greenhouse gas offsets. This financial and administrative support needs to be provided by an organisation that understands the cross-cultural and development context Indigenous land and sea management groups are operating within but can also provide best practice financial advice and budget support.

• A key challenge for Warddeken Land Management is securing base operational funding while it builds up its fee-for-service work and a web donor income stream linked to its biodiversity conservation work. Waardeken Land Management has a vision of being able to largely operate as an enterprise organisation by 2011; however it requires tailored development support from government agencies over the short-term.

• Another key challenge for Warddeken Land Management is obtaining resources for an adequate Ranger base with essential services at Kabulwarnamyo. Currently workers are living year around in tents and require more sustainable electric power, Ranger huts and a workshop shed.

• Developing a strong communications plan, including a website for interacting with, and rewarding, donors is crucial to Warddeken Land Management’s business plan. This will be a key component to establishing themselves as a recognised and supported cultural and natural resource management organisation nationally and internationally.
Tjuwanpa Rangers

Who are they?

The Tjuwanpa Ranger Group first formed in early 2005 at Hermannsburg (Ntaria) approximately 130 km west of Alice Springs. The Hermannsburg group of Aboriginal Land Trusts comprises over 3,800 km² of land that lies between two high-profile national parks (Finke Gorge and West MacDonnell). Prior to the formation of the Tjuwanpa Rangers, the Indigenous lands in question were essentially unmanaged. The Central Land Council and the NT Parks and Wildlife Service worked together under joint management arrangements to conduct a pilot project and test the potential to develop an Indigenous cultural and natural resource management group based at Hermannsburg.

The Tjuwanpa Rangers initially performed occasional work on nearby national parks under the NT Parks and Wildlife Service’s Flexible Employment Program. After initial success, the program stalled due to a shortfall in funding and effort went into seeking ongoing funding from a variety of sources. The Tjuwanpa Rangers were revived in January 2006 with gap-fill funding through the local resource centre (Tjuwanpa). In August 2006 the group expanded its operations to work predominantly on the Hermannsburg group of Aboriginal Land Trusts whilst remaining active in park-related projects.

Funding for the Rangers began to flow in from numerous sources including: the NT Government, Indigenous Land Corporation, Aboriginals Benefit Account, Natural Heritage Trust and Magellan Petroleum Australia Limited. The Ranger program now provides regular work for participants. The program is coordinated by the Land Management Section of the Central Land Council in close cooperation with Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource Centre.

Key achievements:

- The Tjuwanpa Rangers have successfully obtained and completed their first commercial contract, installing almost 400 bollards and numerous large boulders to define camping areas at Palm Valley campground for the NT Department of Planning and Infrastructure. Further contract work is vital to help the Ranger Group attain a degree of financial independence. The Rangers have secured upcoming contract work with Tourism NT to upgrade and develop tourist campgrounds at selected outstations.

- The largest known NT population of the threatened Slaters Skink was located on Rodna Aboriginal Land Trust north-west of Hermannsburg. This project will continue in the warmer months of 2007 when lizard activity peaks.

- The Athel Pine control program has been successful and follow-up inspections revealed a 100 percent kill-rate of seedlings and trees treated in August and September 2006. Ongoing surveillance of major drainage lines remains imperative to effectively control this weed of national significance to protect downstream areas of the Finke River.

- Flexible Employment Program Projects have continued with the NT Parks and Wildlife Service and include: a fauna survey and Circle Gully in Finke Gorge National Park; electrifying southern boundary fence in Finke Gorge National Park; and conducting a rock rat survey in West MacDonnell National Park.

- The Rangers are developing a sound working relationship with NT Parks and Wildlife Service Rangers on nearby national parks. This will enable more effective cross-tenure management of important issues such as weeds, feral animals and fire.

- There has been scope for projects of a ‘traditional’ nature (e.g. country visits, waterhole maintenance, traditional cooking practices).

- There have been high participation rates, and strong support of traditional Aboriginal owners, with the Ranger Program engaging 26 men and five women in paid activities in 2006/07. It has provided over 2,700 hours of combined work experience for participants.
What has worked well?

- Successfully combining the priorities of the Ranger Group with the opportunity to meet the priorities of NT Government agencies such as NT Parks and Wildlife through paid contract work. For example, the Ranger Group has undertaken projects of a ‘traditional nature’ such as country visits, waterhole maintenance and traditional cooking practices alongside fee-for-service natural resource management contracts;

- Developing positive partnerships with non-government organisations, Federal and Territory agencies, and private enterprises that could lead to more stable investment arrangements and the growing of fee-for-service opportunities;

- Having access to training and development opportunities by attending the Central Australian Ranger Camp near Tennant Creek, a threatened species workshop near Uluru and the Alice Springs Desert Park; and

- Having the flexibility for the Ranger Group to undertake community activities of interest such as the digital recording of music. 100 copies of a CD of 18 original songs were produced and sold at Ntaria Store, raising $1,500 to purchase musical equipment for the group.

What are the challenges for the future?

- As the group is relatively new, a key challenge for the future will be maintaining the program with the phasing out of CDEP and managing an effective transition to other support programs.;

- Maintaining support for the Rangers will also be important as priorities are shifted under the broader Australian Government NT Emergency Response. While this will affect the whole of the NT, the Centre is currently the focus of attention under this Response.

- Sourcing appropriate natural resource management training will be difficult for the Group. This is a challenge for all Indigenous land and sea management groups but is particularly difficult in Central Australia.
Wulaign Rangers

Who are they?

The Wulaign or Lajamanu Rangers are undertaking land management work on the Northern Tanami Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). This IPA was declared in April 2007 and includes the northern half of the Central Desert Aboriginal Land Trust and the southern third of the Hooker Creek Aboriginal Land Trust.

The IPA built on previous land management planning undertaken by traditional Aboriginal owners in this area from 1999 to 2001. This planning highlighted the desire of traditional Aboriginal owners to relieve unemployment in the community by establishing a community-based Ranger program able to facilitate Indigenous people working on cultural and natural resource management issues such as weed and feral animal control, fire management, land degradation, mine site rehabilitation and cultural heritage protection.

There are currently 12 male Rangers and another eight to ten senior female traditional Aboriginal owners more loosely involved with the Ranger Group. The Rangers are all CDEP recipients and also receive Top-up funds from a wide range of government grant and fee-for-service contracts. As a result of the IPA declaration, the Ranger Group now has a dedicated coordinator. The group is hosted by the Wulaign Outstation Resource Centre and also receives strong support from the Central Land Council, particularly in relation to the management of the IPA. An IPA Management Committee consisting of 30 traditional Aboriginal owners meets quarterly to provide general direction to the Wulaign Rangers on cultural and natural resource management priorities for the IPA. Permission is also obtained on a week-by-week basis from appropriate traditional Aboriginal owners for work planned by the Rangers.

The Wulaign Rangers have formed several key government and business partnerships including with the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources, through the IPA planning process and Newmont Mining, through fee-for-service work associated with their gold mine in the Tanami.

Most of the Rangers are undergoing training including Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management (delivered by Charles Darwin University) and Certificate I in Fire Suppression (delivered by Bushfires NT). A number of the Rangers also hold heavy machinery licences obtained through prevocational employment programs at the Newmont Mine.

Key achievements:

The Wulaign Rangers have a number of significant natural resource management projects underway including:

- declaration and ongoing management of the IPA according to its plan of management. The Tanami region has high biodiversity significance and is an asset to the National Reserve System. The Rangers are undertaking prescribed burning around arid wetlands, weed control and mapping, cultural site monitoring and protection, biodiversity monitoring and controlling cats and foxes at key sites for threatened species;
- securing fee-for-service contracts with Newmont Mines associated with the operations of the Tanami mine. These include the Tanami Biodiversity Monitoring Project, waste rock dump recovery surveys, weed control and fire management;
- securing weed control contracts for the Hooker Creek Aboriginal Land Trust through the Victoria River District Conservation Association;
- collaborations with NT Parks and Wildlife on flora and fauna surveys; and
- commercial seed harvesting by the women for sale to an Alice Springs based bush foods company.

What has worked well?

- The Ranger Group has developed out of strong participatory planning processes with traditional Aboriginal owners who are still involved in the management of the IPA. This
provides the group with strong cultural foundations and a mandate to undertake their land management work.

- The Ranger Group have been focused on securing fee-for-service opportunities with the Newmont Mine and other businesses in their region. This has helped them build-up the ongoing financial viability of the Group. The Group is looking to expand these activities and secure additional mine-related contract work through the Tanami Regional Partnership Agreement between the Central Land Council, Newmont Mining, the Minerals Council of Australia, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and other agencies. A dedicated Tanami Regional Partnership Agreement Coordinator is hosted by the Central Land Council to facilitate the uptake of contracts identified at the Tanami site for both the Lajamanu and Yuendumu-based Ranger Groups.

- The group has attempted to collaborate on other community initiatives. For example, the Ranger Group has collaborated with the Lajamanu Community Education Centre who host a junior Ranger program and run ‘on country’ visits each year with the Ranger Group.

The Wulaign Rangers have a strong philosophy of wanting to create sustainable employment opportunities from Indigenous land management work in the Tanami region.

What are the challenges for the future?

- Maintaining wages for the Wulaign Rangers with the removal of CDEP support. The group are interested in exploring other support arrangements with government agencies such as the Working on Country program. They are also interested in possible additional contracts with Newmont Mines, continuing seed collection enterprises and exploring cultural tourism opportunities linked to the Warrego to Lajamanu four-wheel drive route across the Tanami;

- Securing delivery of the remaining units in Certificate II of Conservation and Land Management. The remoteness of the community creates significant logistical challenges for course delivery. The Group are also interested in securing training in the recording of traditional ecological knowledge and fire-arms handling to the standard required for larger-scale feral animal control;

- Refurbishing an abandoned house near the Wulaign Outstation Resource Centre donated by the Centre to be developed into a Ranger Station within the next year; and

- Providing more support to the women Rangers to be able to expand their seed-collecting enterprise for sale to ‘bush tucker’ markets and also to Newmont Mines who require specific native species for mine rehabilitation.
Aboriginal Landcare Education Program (Greening Australia)

Who are they?

The Aboriginal Landcare Education Program (ALEP) supported by Greening Australia, is now in its 13th year of operation. The Program works in partnership with remote Aboriginal communities across the NT on community environmental health and enterprise development projects. ALEP currently has four staff members, all of whom are Indigenous.

ALEP’s activities are different to those carried out by Indigenous Ranger Groups across the NT. While many Ranger Groups focus on the management of vast tracts of Aboriginal land with relatively large-scale activities such as fire, feral animal and weed management and coastal surveillance, ALEP focuses on the environmental health within Indigenous communities and their immediate surrounds. ALEP works with individual families and traditional Aboriginal owners on projects such as dust suppression, trees for shade, weed management and erosion control around community housing and recreation areas, including school grounds. This work produces significant environmental, health and social benefits.

ALEP also provides support to Indigenous families interested in enterprise development based on their cultural and natural resources, such as selling native trees, bush tucker, soaps and medicines. It also has a focus on education and the transfer of skills. One of its current projects is the development of training resources for vegetation management in communities.

Key achievements:

- One of ALEP’s key achievements is the development of long standing relationships between its Indigenous staff members and the communities and families they work with. ALEP is now in its 13th year of operation and the consistency of the program has allowed these relationships to develop. ALEP regularly receives requests from Indigenous communities for assistance with community environmental health projects. Where resources are available, Indigenous local government councils and other organisations are increasingly interested in contracting with ALEP for the provision of environmental health expertise.

- ALEP has successfully worked to fill a gap in cultural and natural resource management on Aboriginal lands. There have been many Indigenous land and sea management groups, research institutions and other organisations focused on the management of broader Aboriginal land and sea country, but less of a focus on the environmental management of Indigenous townships and communities. ALEP has helped to address this gap and currently has funding from the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs for a Healthy Community, Healthy Yards project operating in the Nyirrangulung and Jawoyn regions. The Indigenous families involved widely regard the project to have been successful in creating a better environment for communities, allowing transfer of skills and the development of self-esteem.

- ALEP has been successful working with individual families, and particularly groups of women, who have historically not been as involved with Indigenous Ranger Groups. This is particularly the case with the enterprise development projects they are supporting in the Darwin, Adelaide River, Daly River, Pine Creek and Katherine areas. ALEP’s enterprise development work is currently supported by the Natural Heritage Trust program.

What has worked well?

- It has worked well to have ALEP staffed by Indigenous people. This has facilitated ALEP being able to work closely with Indigenous families on environmental health and economic development projects.

- It has also worked well for ALEP to have continuity as a program over 13 years, with the Program being hosted by the Northern Land Council in earlier years. This has allowed ALEP to grow and develop better approaches to environmental health and enterprise
development, whilst strengthening relationships with communities. For example, ALEP has learnt from earlier experiences with developing community nurseries that they can operate more sustainably if they have an economic development aim as well as a community health focus.

- It has worked well for ALEP to move toward reporting on projects to government stakeholders and other agencies using innovative communication techniques such as the production of DVDs showing community work and the before and after effect of environmental projects.

What are the challenges for the future?

- A key challenge for ALEP is constantly seeking grant funding to be able to continue the program. Much of the funding ALEP receives is on an annual basis and this creates problems for the continuity of community programs. In some circumstances, ALEP has had to end community projects, to the distress of members of the community, because funding has run out. ALEP staff and Greening Australia would like to sit down with government agencies and negotiate three year projects so that the funding meets the needs of the program and is delivered in a way that will maximise results.

- Another significant challenge for ALEP is trying to meet the demand from Indigenous communities for environmental health projects. There are currently more requests for assistance than ALEP is able to meet. ALEP staff would like to look at options for expanding their program by locating staff in regional areas, including potentially in the Alice Springs Greening Australia office.

- A key challenge for ALEP over the next 12 months is likely to be encouraging the Australian Government to consider the ALEP model and their expertise in delivering environmental health programs to Indigenous communities. The Australian Government has indicated that the current NT Emergency Response might encourage community clean-ups, potentially using Work for the Dole participants. It will be important that the government learn and capitalise on ALEP’s experience of work in the environmental health area and look at potential partnerships that can be built between ALEP and government agencies.

- ALEP staff will continue to advocate that resources allocated to the cultural management of land be increased to better balance with the resources allocated to natural resource management. Indigenous cultural and natural resource management is frequently inseparable and there needs to be more of a focus on younger Indigenous people working with senior community members to learn their stories of the land and how it needs to be managed.

- ALEP and Greening Australia will continue to work hard to manage partnerships with other Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations such as the land councils and government agencies. This is a challenge given high staff turnover and continual changes in government arrangements.
Key Findings – Case Studies

- The groups profiled in these case studies demonstrate how successful Indigenous land and sea management can be in delivering valuable environmental, social, training, employment and economic development outcomes in urban settings and remote Indigenous communities.

- All of the groups profiled are focused on strengthening their organisations by increasing training opportunities for Indigenous land and sea managers and exploring new projects and better ways of operating. They are also looking to develop commercial contracts and take advantage of emerging ‘conservation economy’ opportunities in areas such as carbon abatement, environmental monitoring and mine and forestry site rehabilitation.

- Each of the groups is undertaking an impressive portfolio of work, which in all cases includes significant business or fee-for-service arrangements. These arrangements are providing employment and economic development opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups.

- The case studies show that Indigenous land and sea management groups are operating with different structures ranging from an independent incorporated association to hosting by the land councils, outstation resource centre or other organisation. Where the group is hosted by another organisation, it is vital that the roles and responsibilities of this host organisation are clear.

- The case studies also highlight the importance of effective participatory planning processes, involving traditional Aboriginal owners, to establishing culturally appropriate and recognised governance structures and cultural and natural resource management plans for Indigenous land and sea management groups.

- A number of the groups cited the management of short-term government grants as a key challenge for their organisations.

- The phasing out of CDEP will be a challenge for all groups. The groups that will find it most difficult to meet this challenge are those that are newly developed such as the Adjumarllarl, Tjuwanpa and Wuilgign Rangers.
4. PROFILE OF GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

This section contains four parts profiling current government and non-government support for Indigenous land and sea management:

- overall characteristics of government support;
- government grant and program support;
- fee-for-service arrangements; and
- additional support – business, philanthropic and research institutions.

4.1 Overall Characteristics of Government Support

Growth in funding

Investments in Indigenous land and sea management by government agencies have grown slightly over the last three years, influenced mainly by new funding announcements from the Department of the Environment and Water Resources and Indigenous Land Corporation.

- DEW has committed an additional $47 million over four years under a national and ongoing Working on Country Program aimed at providing wages for Indigenous land and sea managers working on cultural and natural resource projects in the national interest. A significant component of this funding is predicted to be delivered in the NT; and
- ILC has committed an additional $7 million over three years to the Indigenous Protected Areas Program (with in-kind funding to be matched by DEW). IPA is a national program with considerable investment in the NT.

The NT Government has also released new funding into this area through the development of its joint management arrangements for NT Parks, contracting with Indigenous land and sea management groups and increased support for Marine Rangers. The NT Natural Resource Management Board has also directed additional Natural Heritage Trust regional funding to Indigenous land and sea management groups over the past three years. The new Australian Government announcement of a $78.2 million jobs package to create employment positions for Indigenous people working in Australian Government service delivery, including in environmental and pastoral management, may also deliver new funding to this area.

However, despite these investments, government funding has not kept pace with the growth of natural and cultural resource management issues and Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. This has prevented growth of the sector and its ability to achieve important environmental, social, training and employment outcomes. The gap in investment is difficult to estimate, however, it is clear that additional funds could be invested in the maintenance of Aboriginal land across the NT. The study, The Nature of Northern Australia, has indicated that $725 per square kilometre is spent on land management in Kakadu National Park compared with less that $1 per square kilometre in Western Arnhem Land.

Fragmented and short-term funding arrangements

The desktop research and interviews conducted for this project highlighted that while funding has not kept pace with the growth of the sector, a more serious issue is that a large proportion of government support consists of fragmented grant funding. This has meant that, even though a considerable level of Australian and NT Government funding has been directed at Indigenous land and sea management, this investment has not been delivered efficiently and to date has been very difficult for Indigenous groups, and peak organisations, such as the land councils, to manage.

There is no one dedicated program or stream of support. The sector is currently characterised by a plethora of programs, some not specifically designed to fund Indigenous land and sea management, which are being channelled into this area by government agencies, land councils and Indigenous groups. This style of funding has shaped the way Indigenous land and sea management groups are operating as relatively financially uncertain organisations. Groups often need to secure funding from over ten sources to implement their land and sea management plans. This funding cycle is an ongoing process as
many funding sources are only available for one year. This has created a cycle of ‘grant hunting and gathering’.

While grant funding is a common source of funds for the environment and conservation industry more generally, this has been particularly problematic for Indigenous groups to manage for two key reasons. First, Indigenous groups overall have to manage a larger percentage of small grants as their early stage of organisational development has made it difficult for them to attract longer-term grant arrangements. Second, these short-term grants fail to provide effective investment in core items such as capital, wages and training that are required for organisational development.

A number of peak organisations, such as the land councils, have collated some of these small grants to develop dedicated land and sea management programs for Indigenous groups, however this has been a day-to-day challenge. With the intention of responding to the growth in this area, funding for some land council positions has also been obtained through short-term grant arrangements. This has resulted in staff uncertainty and, in some circumstances, limited the support the land councils can provide to Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Over 90 percent of the Indigenous land and sea management groups, government and non-government organisations interviewed for this project stated that the current dispersed and short-term funding environment is a major barrier to the successful development of sustainable Indigenous land and sea management organisations and programs.

An illustration of the complexity of funding arrangements for one Indigenous land and sea management group is illustrated below. Many larger groups or programs may have even more complex arrangements.

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<tr>
<th>Wagiman Guwardagun Ranger Funding 2003/05</th>
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<td><strong>Source:</strong> Northern Land Council: Celebrating Ten Years of Caring for Country, 2006.</td>
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Government support arrangements for this sector have not always been as fragmented as they are today. When the sector was smaller it was arguably easier to support through targeted funding. The Contract Employment Program for Aboriginals in Natural and Cultural Resource Management (CEPANCRM), was a model which operated for ten years until 1997 and promoted a whole-of-government approach to environment, employment, education and social outcomes. It delivered contract employment for Indigenous people within a framework of training, leadership and mentoring.
When this program ended there was a lapse in the development of specific Indigenous employment opportunities in land and sea management until the recently announced Australian Government Working on Country program. This program has the potential to employ a small percentage of the Indigenous people currently undertaking natural and cultural resource management work in areas of high biodiversity significance.

Due to the diverse program arrangements in this area, it is difficult to map all funding sources. For this reason, this report cannot provide a breakdown of government funding across the Indigenous land and sea management sector. However, Appendix Five sets out an indicative table of the government support programs in this area.

Confusion over support for outcomes, activities, wages or infrastructure

Another key characteristic of government funding support for this area is that there is confusion about what government agencies will and will not fund to support Indigenous land and sea management. While most agencies indicate that they are providing support to achieve a broad range of environmental, cultural, social, training and employment outcomes in this area, in both reality and perception, they have rules about whether or not they will fund some or all of the key elements required to achieve these outcomes.

Interviews conducted have highlighted that there is a lot of confusion about whether particular government programs will or will not fund the following items: planning and capacity development; recurrent administrative and financial operations; wages; infrastructure; vehicles; and cultural and natural resource management activities on sea country.

In some cases, this confusion has been created by agencies whose staff are unclear about whether there are rules, for example in legislation or program funding requirements, on what they can and cannot fund or whether there are standard practices that have developed through policy guidelines or corporate culture that could be changed. This is exacerbated by instances where, under pressure to get valuable projects up and running, the rules seem to have been broken by agencies.

These ‘rules’ can act as a major limitation on delivering timely and effective government support for Indigenous land and sea management activities. Often groups have to seek support from a variety of sources to cover all the project elements that various agencies will or will not fund. These groups struggle, without proper information and assistance, to pull together support. It would be beneficial if government agencies were to address this issue by either:

- showing increased flexibility and funding all, or at least a larger portion, of the required elements for workable projects that will achieve desired outcomes; or
- being clearer about what they will and will not fund and entering into stable and timely co-investment arrangements to ensure projects are appropriately resourced with packaged support across agencies. This would shift the burden of packaging support to government agencies and away from Indigenous groups.

The negotiation of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule indicates that there is a commitment across government agencies to address the issue of uncoordinated funding. This is further evidenced by the number of agencies, principally the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Indigenous Land Corporation, NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, increasingly interested in co-investing with other partners to support this area.
4.2 Government Grant and Program Support

There are currently ten broad types of government grant and program funding being provided to Indigenous groups and land and sea management programs:

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<th>1) Employment and wage support</th>
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<td>• Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program</td>
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<td>• Working on Country</td>
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<td>• Top-up</td>
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<th>2) Indigenous infrastructure and activity funding</th>
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<td>• Indigenous Land Corporation</td>
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<td>• Aboriginals Benefit Account</td>
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<th>3) Indigenous environmental and cultural heritage programs</th>
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<td>• Indigenous Heritage Program</td>
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<td>• NT Marine Rangers</td>
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<td>• NT Indigenous Ranger Group Development Program</td>
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<th>4) Mainstream environmental and cultural programs</th>
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<td>• Natural Heritage Trust – National</td>
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<td>• Natural Heritage Trust – Regional</td>
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<td>• Envirofund – Local</td>
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<td>• NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts</td>
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<th>5) Resources for training and education</th>
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<td>• Recurrent Funds for Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>• Structured Training in Employment Projects (STEP) Program</td>
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<td>• Department of Education, Science and Training</td>
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<th>6) Resources for business and industry development</th>
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<td>• Indigenous Business Australia</td>
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<td>• Indigenous Small Business Fund</td>
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<td>• NT Indigenous Business and Industry Services</td>
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| 10) Core funding for land councils and other Indigenous organisations |  |
1) Employment and wage support

*Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP)*

CDEP has played a very significant role supporting Indigenous land and sea management groups over the last fifteen years by providing partial wages and other resources, such as wage allocation, administration and human resource services, equipment and vehicles. These funds have been delivered through local CDEP organisations and have provided a relatively flexible source of support. The CDEP program has been a hybrid community development and income support program and this blend of its purpose has meant that different stakeholders have viewed its core functions and potential outcomes differently.

Some stakeholders have suggested that the CDEP program has, in the main, tended to allow people to remain on CDEP with only low expectations that they would transition into other forms of employment and that this has been a barrier to achieving job outcomes in Indigenous communities. Other stakeholders have viewed CDEP support for the Indigenous land and sea management sector as a stepping stone to employment and income generation, rather than a long-term support structure. This is evidenced by the amount of resources some Indigenous groups have put into obtaining other fee-for-service contracts and government grants, initially to Top-up CDEP with the aim of moving to non-CDEP funded wages over the longer-term.

The Australian Government has announced that in June 2008 CDEP funding will be phased out of NT Indigenous communities and replaced with jobs, and other employment and training programs, such as the Structured Training in Employment Projects and Related Employment Services (STEP ERS) and Work for the Dole. The impacts of this reform and options for the future employment of Indigenous land and sea managers, and hosting of Indigenous land and sea management groups, are discussed in section six.

*Working on Country*

In the 2007-08 Budget, the Australian Government allocated funds to the Department of the Environment and Water Resources to create a new Working on Country program for Indigenous land and sea managers. This initiative was part of a broader package of government funding aimed at converting some CDEP positions that were contributing to the delivery of government services into full paid jobs.

The program has two main objectives:

- to provide the means for Indigenous people to undertake environmental work on country that meets both their aspirations for caring for country and the Australian Government’s environmental and cultural protection responsibilities; and
- to provide a mechanism through which Indigenous people, including those previously involved with the CDEP program, can move into jobs.

It is a national and ongoing program, with $47.6 million to be invested across the country over the next four years. The first round of funding under this program was announced in August 2007 by the Minister for the Environment and Water Resources. Funds have been provided for salaries and operational cost to support fully paid Indigenous people working on priority cultural and environmental projects. The Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT who have received funds in the first round are Laynhapuy Indigenous Protected Area, Anindilyakwa Rangers, Li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Ranger Unit, Djelk Land Management Extension and North-West, Tennant Creek and Western and Central Regions (Central Land Council).

The funds will initially allow 33 Indigenous land and sea managers in the NT to enter paid positions under this first round, rising to 51 positions by the end of the third year. It is predicted, on the basis of successful applications for round one of the program, that Indigenous groups in the NT are likely to secure a significant proportion of national Working on Country funds over the next four years as future funding rounds are released.
This program has been very well received by Indigenous land and sea management groups as it responds to their calls for the government to fund paid positions to employ Indigenous people in land and sea management work in the national interest.

The program is targeted at Indigenous land and sea management groups that are able to show they are providing high value environmental and cultural services in a cost-effective way that produces long-term environmental and employment outcomes. Successful groups will need to demonstrate that they have strong governance structures and stable organisational arrangements able support robust employment arrangements for Indigenous land and sea managers.

The Working on Country program in the NT will be delivered by one Department of the Environment and Water Resources staff member located in Darwin and one in Alice Springs. These staff members can work closely with Indigenous groups, government agencies and other organisations to develop tailored employment support for groups. The Working on Country program is interested in being a co-investor under this Strategic Framework and partnering with other agencies, particularly those able to provide infrastructure support in this area.

Top-up

As indicated previously, Indigenous land and sea management groups have also been able to secure partial wage support from a broad range of fee-for-service contracts and government grants. A number of the programs that have provided this wage support are discussed below.

2) Indigenous Infrastructure and Activity Funding

The Indigenous Land Corporation and Aboriginals Benefit Account under section 64(4) of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* have provided significant funds for the infrastructure, equipment, vehicles and activities for many Indigenous land and sea management groups. While historically the ILC and ABA have focused on delivering infrastructure support to Indigenous land and sea management groups, they have also in some circumstances provided operational funding, including wage support, for some cultural and natural resource management projects, where it has been necessary for the project’s viability and strong outcomes have been predicted.

**Indigenous Land Corporation**

The ILC has operated since 1995 by drawing down from a Land Fund invested in by the Australian Government for the acquisition and management of Indigenous land. The Corporation has two functions: acquisition of land for Indigenous people; and the management of Indigenous-owned lands. In the NT, SA and the Top End of WA, the ILC’s focus is on land management given the amount of land already acquired under land rights legislation and native title.

The focus of the ILC’s investments in land management are increasing the productivity of land through sustainable environmental management and establishing viable commercial businesses in related industries such as pastoralism and tourism. In addition, the ILC has recently focused on employment, training and education opportunities for Indigenous people. The new National Indigenous Land Strategy 2007-2011 states that the ILC aims to fund land management projects which can generate and support these opportunities for Indigenous people.

The ILC aims to be an investment partner with other agencies, focusing funds in areas where groups are demonstrating a capacity to successfully carry out land management projects and where there will be a clear environmental, education, training, employment and economic development return on investment. Its recent investments in the Indigenous Pastoral Program, FarmBis and the Indigenous Protected Areas program are examples of this partnership approach. This collaborative approach is underpinned by three factors: sharing the financial load; managing risk and; encouraging agencies to fulfil their legislative and program responsibilities by partnering on investments with the ILC.

Over the last five years, the ILC has funded significant land management projects such as the Top End Aboriginal Land Management and Employment Strategy (TEALMES), supporting Indigenous people develop on-the-job training to deal with weeds, fire and feral animals. The focus has been on achieving
a widespread reduction of mimosa on Aboriginal lands. The ILC has also provided significant capital and operational funding to support the implementation of the cultural and natural resource management plans of Indigenous land management groups across the NT.

The ILC currently does not operate through funding rounds, but it is moving to introduce this grant structure over the next few months. If applications are under $250,000 they may be approved by the General Manager, if over this amount, applications are submitted to the ILC Board for consideration. It is able to offer contracts for three years. The ILC is also increasing its capacity to generate its own strategic projects where economic development, employment, training and education are key outcomes.

In terms of delivery, the ILC has adopted a more hands-on approach to the delivery of support to Indigenous groups, agreeing to work alongside groups to develop their applications and negotiate a delivery structure that aligns with their work plans.

One key issue to note is that the ILC is restricted to funding land management projects by its legislation and is not able to fund infrastructure or projects that are predominantly based on the management of sea country.

“We recognise that environmental problems such as weeds and feral animals are more expensive and difficult to deal with the longer they are left unmanaged. We have a responsibility to assist in keeping Indigenous-owned lands productive.”

(Indigenous Land Corporation, Interview 2007)

Aboriginals Benefit Account

The Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) comprises mining royalty equivalents appropriated by the Australian Parliament to compensate Indigenous Territorians for the impact of mining on Aboriginal land as set out in s64(4) of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976. It can be used for the benefit of Aboriginal people living in the NT, including for land and sea management projects.

The ABA has supported Indigenous land and sea management throughout the NT by being a stable source of funds for much needed infrastructure, vehicles and equipment. In the past, the ABA has tended not to fund recurrent or multi-year funding projects but has made exceptions in the case of co-investments with other government agencies. In a similar fashion to the ILC, the ABA has the flexibility to develop its ability to operate as a co-investor on strategic projects.

Funding is provided at the discretion of the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs on advice from the ABA Advisory Committee, comprising representatives from the NT land councils. Applications can be made at any stage and are submitted to the next ABA Advisory Committee meeting (held twice yearly). Once advice is received from the ABA, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs staff will also review the projects and provide the advice of both the Board and Department to the Minister for final decision.

In terms of delivery mechanisms, the ABA has a small Secretariat in Darwin and a number of staff in Canberra. It does not have a network of field staff and largely relies on the land councils to assist groups develop ABA applications.

3) Indigenous environmental and cultural heritage programs

Indigenous Protected Areas

The Indigenous Protected Areas program has been operating as part of the National Investment Stream of the Natural Heritage Trust since 1997. The program provides a planning and land management framework for Indigenous owned lands to be managed as part of the National Reserve System. The program has four stages:
funding community consultation with traditional Aboriginal owners and community leaders interested in forming an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) over a designated area of Aboriginal-owned land;

- funding the development of a comprehensive Plan of Management for the designated IPA area, including information on the aims for the IPA, roles and responsibilities;

- voluntary declaration of the IPA by traditional Aboriginal owners writing to the Federal Minister for the Environment and Water Resources; and

- possible seed funding for Indigenous groups to undertake specific work set out in the IPA Plan of Management.

There are currently 22 declared IPAs and a further nine in development across Australia. There are four declared IPAs in the NT: the Dhimurru, Laynhapuy, Northern Tanami and Anindilyakwa IPAs; and there are three IPAs under development: Bawinanga, Angas Downs and Southern Tanami.

The IPA program was reviewed in 2006 and was found to be Australia’s most successful innovation in protected area management and Indigenous engagement in environmental management. However, it was also found that there is a need for increased funding for the ongoing management of the IPAs. It was suggested that the program improve collaborations with other agencies to reduce administrative complexity and streamline funding provided to groups managing IPAs. In particular, the evaluation suggested collaborations between the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Indigenous Land Corporation and Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to deliver support for this area. These partnerships are developing and recently the Indigenous Land Corporation committed $7 million over three years (requiring matching Department of the Environment and Water Resources funding) to support the expansion and consolidation of the IPA program. This Strategic Framework also provides a significant opportunity to pursue collaborations between these departments for the coordination of investment in this area.

Source: Department of the Environment and Water Resources Website 2007: www.environment.gov.au

Indigenous Heritage Program

The Department of the Environment and Water Resources’ Indigenous Heritage Program is a national grant program aimed at supporting the identification, conservation and promotion of Indigenous heritage values important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It is a small program with funding of $3.5 million per year ongoing. The Department holds an annual funding round and also...
retains a flexible pool to fund projects outside this process, including through Shared Responsibility Agreements.

While historically this program has not provided a large amount of support to Indigenous land and sea management groups, it is able to fund small projects. The program is flexible in its definition of Indigenous heritage values and can support a wide variety of cultural and natural resource management projects. For example, it can provide funding for staff working on heritage projects, cultural mapping, rock art protection, ceremony and access to country. It has provided funding in the last few years to the Wagiman and Dhimurru Rangers in the NT.

There is interest in the program adopting a co-investment approach with other agencies, in particular supporting larger cultural resource management projects in partnership with the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts. This Department delivers an Indigenous Cultural Support program of $6.5 million per year to support projects in a wide variety of areas including the inter-generational transfer of knowledge, maintenance of language, recording of oral histories and promotion of Indigenous song and dance.

**NT Indigenous Community Marine Ranger Program**

The NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines (DPIFM) support eight of the fourteen Indigenous Ranger Groups operating along the NT coastline through their Indigenous Community Marine Ranger Program. The Ranger Groups currently receiving support are: Mardbalk Marine Rangers (Goulburn Island), Gumurr Marthakal Rangers (Elcho Island), Djelk Rangers (Maningrida), Tiwi Marine Rangers (Tiwi Islands), Thamarrurr Rangers (Wadeye), Lianthawirryarra Sea Rangers (Borrooloola), Numbulwar Numurindi Amalahgayag Inyung Rangers (Numbulwar) and the Anindilyakwa Sea Rangers (Groote Eylandt).

DPIFM provides flexible ongoing funds of $480,000 annually to the groups ($60,000 per group) for coastal surveillance, monitoring and resource management activities. Workplans and reporting arrangements are negotiated in individual agreements with the Indigenous Ranger Groups. This arrangement, more flexible than most grant funding in this area, is seen by both government officials and Indigenous groups as more useful for meeting the goals of both parties than more rigid grant structures. The Agreements require each Ranger Group to provide a monthly patrol report to DPIFM. DPIFM has indicated that there may be scope to move to three year agreements for groups (reviewed annually) to provide Indigenous Ranger Groups with greater certainty of funds.

DPIFM also provides, as appropriate, infrastructure support including vessels and vehicles. It also provides training and capacity building support for the groups in fisheries compliance, fish kill investigations, fish identification, fisheries legislation and aquatic pests. Other training includes boat handling, safety at sea, marine debris reporting, biosecurity in relation to Foreign Fishing Vessels and blood sampling for exotic diseases. This training is delivered by the NT Marine Safety Branch, NT Police Marine and Fisheries Enforcement Section, Australian Quarantine Inspection Service and the Australian Customs Service. DPIFM's long-term strategy is to have all Marine Rangers complete Certificate II in Fisheries Compliance (Seafood Industry) and be able to become full Fisheries Officers with enforcement powers in line with the *NT Fisheries Act 1988*.

In consultations DPIFM indicated that it is interested in discussing potential involvement in additional projects which fall within the *Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule* particularly where projects relate to their core areas of responsibility, including Indigenous engagement in the fisheries, pastoral, horticulture and mining sectors.

**NT Indigenous Ranger Group Development Program**

The NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts currently out-post an NT Parks and Wildlife officer to the Dhimurru Rangers. This officer is based with the Rangers and provides project management support for cultural and natural resource management projects. The officer also facilitates access for the Dhimurru Rangers to relevant NT Parks and Wildlife training, research and other forms of institutional support.
This arrangement has worked well and is regarded as a model that could be applied to provide support to other Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT. Accordingly, the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts has decided to expand this initiative into a broader Indigenous Ranger Group Development Program and consider the out-posting of additional officers to Indigenous groups. The out-posting of officers would be on the request of Indigenous groups and the recipient groups would need to be at a stage of development where they would benefit from the skills and experience a Parks and Wildlife officer could provide. The recipient Indigenous groups would need to have appropriate governance and administration structures and cultural and natural resource management plans in place.

The success of this initiative relies on the ability of out-posted Rangers to work effectively in a cross-cultural context, display appropriate personal and professional attributes such as high level interpersonal relationship and negotiation skills and respect local governance structures that maintain community ownership of the Indigenous land and sea management group. It is recognised that this arrangement may work well for some Indigenous land and sea management groups and not be considered appropriate by others. It is recommended that the Department work with Indigenous groups who consider they would benefit from this arrangement and consider seconding officers to approximately eight Indigenous groups over the next five years.

4) Mainstream environmental and cultural programs

The individual cultural and natural resource management activities and projects undertaken by Indigenous land and sea management groups are being funded to a large degree by small grants from environmental and cultural programs. While these programs provide much needed support for Indigenous land and sea management groups, the short term nature of the funding and the high administrative workload associated with these grants (in terms of acquittals and reporting requirements) make them problematic for groups.

The most significant environmental program is the Natural Heritage Trust (NHT). The Trust has three overarching objectives: biodiversity conservation; sustainable use of natural resources; and community capacity building and institutional change. It is a significant source of funds with NHT 3, to be released from 2008-2009, expected to deliver $2 billion of investment in natural resource management across Australia. Funding for NHT 2 is currently winding up and the next six months will see plans for transition into NHT 3. The Trust is delivered together with funds available under the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality.

NHT provides three broad streams of funds: national investment delivered by the Australian Government; regional investment; and local investment. The Australian Government has indicated that engaging Indigenous people in the delivery of these three investment streams in the NT will be a priority for NHT 3.

Natural Heritage Trust – National Investments

Investments at this level cover national priorities, addressing activities that have a national or broad-scale, rather than a regional or local, outcome. This includes statewide activities and those that cross State, Territory and regional boundaries. For example, the Indigenous Protected Areas program is funded out of the national NHT stream. This stream also funds the National Landcare Program and Australian Government NRM facilitators, including the two specific Indigenous Land Management Facilitators in the NT working to assist community groups access NHT funding for land and sea management.

Natural Heritage Trust – Regional Investments

The Australian and NT Governments also deliver a regional investment stream of NHT funding. Regions have been identified across Australia to form geographic areas for the development of regional natural resource management plans and the delivery of funds. The entire NT is identified as one region which poses challenges for integrated planning that deals with varied landscapes and environmental and cultural issues across such a large landmass and coastline.
Regional investments from the Australian Government are matched with funding and in-kind support from the NT Government under a bilateral agreement between the Governments. They are delivered through the Natural Resource Management Board NT (NRM Board NT), which comprises community members with natural resource management experience and expertise.

The NRM Board NT has developed a Regional Investment Strategy for NHT funds from 2007-2010. Only one year of the plan has been approved by the Australian Government due to transition arrangements to NHT 3. However, funds for 2007-08 total $7.16 million, with indicative total funds for 2007-2010 of approximately $21 million.

The Regional Investment Strategy provides funds to government agencies, research institutions and community groups across the NT, including Indigenous land and sea management groups, for cultural and natural resource management work. The 2007-2010 Strategy focuses on: investments in weed and feral animal management; capacity building, including through the provision of natural resource management group coordinator support; and fire management, particularly as it relates to carbon offset schemes. While all areas are open to applications from Indigenous land and sea management groups, there are also some Indigenous-specific investment areas including increasing the capacity of Indigenous land and sea management groups, Indigenous ecological knowledge and Indigenous sea country.

On current trends, approximately 35-40 percent of the regional investment funds are being delivered to Indigenous land and sea management groups each year. This means that the NRM Board is a major player in Indigenous cultural and natural resource management in the NT. A key investment has been funds for approximately eight coordinators (out of an approximate total of 20 local level coordinators funded) that work directly with Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. This is a significant investment in the core stability and operations of these groups.

The Regional Investment Strategy for 2007-2010 predicts an increase in funding (when compared to the 2004-07 Strategy) for the arid centre of the NT and for the management of terrestrial biodiversity. This is justified on the basis that the trend toward significant investment in water planning, management and utilisation will continue to accelerate independently of NHT regional funding. On current trends, the Regional Investment Strategy expected to deliver $6 to $9 million to Indigenous land and sea management groups over this period.

Natural Heritage Trust – Local Investments

Some Indigenous groups are also accessing Australian Government Envirofund support. This program was formed to assist individuals and community groups undertake small projects aimed at sustainable resource use and conserving biodiversity. Envirofund can offer grants of up to $50,000. On occasion, Envirofund offers special rounds of funding for particular cultural and natural environmental issues or landscapes. For example a special purpose ‘Coastal and Marine’ Round of the Envirofund was recently held.

NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts

The NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts (NRETA) also provide small grants and a significant amount of in-kind support to Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. These grants are often associated with research or conservation projects worked on jointly by Indigenous land and sea management groups and NRETA Biodiversity Conservation Division staff. In-kind support often involves training and project management for biodiversity and land management projects. For example the Weeds Branch of the Biodiversity Division provides significant in-kind support for the Top End Aboriginal Land Management Employment Strategy (TEALMES) mimosa work.
5) Resources for Training and Education

Recurrent Funds for Vocational Education and Training

The NT Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) provides lump sum recurrent funding to Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education for the delivery of vocational education and training in the NT. The Department outlines the qualifications these institutions are expected to deliver, however leaves discretion to these institutions to determine how they might allocate funds and deliver services. Both institutions provide cultural and natural resource management training to Indigenous groups in the NT, including Certificate qualifications in Conservation and Land Management.

DEET also operates a flexible pool of $2.1 million per year for training across the NT which can be used by Indigenous land and sea management groups. For example, in the past year DEET has offered fire-arms training and first aid courses to Indigenous groups.

DEET also works to facilitate Remote Learning Partnership Agreements between Indigenous communities, their local schools and other education and training providers. These Partnership Agreements are currently being negotiated in a number of major Indigenous communities across the NT and may be able to support stronger relationships between Indigenous land and sea management groups and the local school to create training and employment pathways for younger people into science, land and sea management.

Structured Training in Employment Projects (STEP) Program

The Structured Training and Employment Projects (STEP) program is delivered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. It is aimed at assisting private sector employers provide job placements for Indigenous people. It provides flexible funds to cover training (including apprenticeships, traineeships and on-the-job training), mentoring and other employment costs. To attract STEP funds, the organisation needs to guarantee that an ongoing job will be available after the funding period (usually 12 months). STEP funds are currently allocated to an individual rather than to a position within an organisation. This means that if the individual pulls out of the program, the STEP funds are lost to the organisation and they are unable to take on a replacement person with these funds.

STEP has provided valuable training and employment pathway support to some Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. However, the structure of the program has made it a challenge for Indigenous groups to manage. It has been suggested with the phasing out of CDEP that the STEP program may provide wage and training support to Indigenous land and sea managers. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations is expanding the STEP program to provide other Employment Related Services. This broader STEP ERS program may have a broader application and flexibility although it is unclear at this stage to what extent the program may support Indigenous land and sea management groups in the future. This issue is discussed further in section six.

Department of Education Science and Training

The Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) delivers a suite of training and education support programs that may be helpful to Indigenous land and sea management groups including the Workplace English Language Literacy program, Vocational Education and Training support and ‘Adopt a School’ which is a component of the Local Community Partnership program. ‘Adopt a School’ programs aim to facilitate engagement between industries and schools through activities that will increase the knowledge and opportunity for careers and further education. Additional DEST programs are listed in Appendix Five.

6) Resources for Business and Industry Development

Up until now, small amounts of funding for the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups has been provided by business and industry development support programs. This is largely because of the origins, and continuing characterisation, of Indigenous land and sea management groups as community development, rather than business organisations. With the increase in the number of fee-
for-service contracts in this area and the emergence of conservation economy opportunities, there is increasing recognition that some Indigenous land and sea management groups could be considered social enterprises or for-profit organisations worthy of business and industry development support.

**Indigenous Business Australia**

Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) provides support to Indigenous people seeking to develop commercially viable enterprises. IBA assess applications for support to establish business feasibility, using a panel of experts who examine market opportunities and the infrastructure and management skills of the potential business. If successful, IBA can provide business planning and development, management training and marketing support. It is also able to offer a loan if the business venture is demonstrated to be commercially viable with capacity to pay back the loan.

IBA has historically only provided support at the margins to Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT. Its clientele are predominantly individuals or family businesses rather than larger organisations. However, in consultations conducted for this project, IBA recognised that Indigenous land and sea management groups are developing business arms to their operations and attracting cultural and environmental fee-for-service work. This may lead to increased IBA support for Indigenous land and sea management business enterprises in the future. More broadly, IBA is also increasingly taking a partnership approach with other agencies in investing to achieve Indigenous economic development outcomes.

**Indigenous Small Business Fund**

The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations delivers an Indigenous small business program that could also provide greater support to Indigenous land and sea management groups. The Indigenous Small Business Fund provides funds to develop business owned and operated by incorporated Indigenous organisations. Funding can be used to:

- obtain a mentor, business manager or consultant to provide advice on how to start, manage and run a business;
- provide training to develop business and governance skills;
- develop a business or feasibility plan;
- identify and develop business opportunities;
- obtain assistance for marketing and promotion; and
- develop a product or service.

Incorporated Indigenous community-based organisations that return profit to the community are eligible to apply. This makes this program potentially well suited to supporting Indigenous land and sea management groups who want to make the transition to a sustainable enterprise model.

**NT Indigenous Business and Industry Services**

The NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development can provide support to Indigenous groups who want to pursue opportunities for enterprise development. The Department provides an information and support service rather than a dedicated business grant or loans program. It is able to work closely with Indigenous groups to identify community-based business interests, provide start-up information, advise on business proposals and link groups up with further assistance and funding sources.

**Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources**

The Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources only indirectly provides support to Indigenous land and sea management through their promotion of the development of the Indigenous cultural and eco-tourism sector throughout Australia. However, as Indigenous land and sea management emerges as a recognised sector, it may be possible for this Department to provide increased industry development assistance.

Overall, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Indigenous Business Australia, NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development and Department of Industry, Tourism...
and Resources could partner with each other, Indigenous land and sea management groups and key business players to map out an industry strategy for building sustainable Indigenous land and sea management businesses. This could assist these agencies to develop a greater understanding of the commercial viability of this sector and the type of support required. IBA has developed similar strategies in the Indigenous housing and construction, arts and timber industries and these may provide a useful template. This issue is further addressed in section 7.5.

7) Joint management arrangements for Parks and Reserves

Indigenous people play a key role in the joint management of many of the NT’s Parks and Reserves. The NT was the site for the first jointly-managed Park in the world. Kakadu National Park was created under joint management arrangements between traditional Aboriginal owners and the Australian Government in 1979. Since then, joint management arrangements have developed between the Uluru Kata-Tjuta National Park’s traditional Aboriginal owners and the Australian Government and between the Gurig, Nitmiluk, Baranyi, Djukbinj and Tnorola National Parks’ and Conservation Reserves’ traditional Aboriginal owners and the NT Government.

In 2005 the NT Government extended its joint management structure to an additional 27 parks and reserves across the NT under the Parks and Reserves (Framework for the Future) Act 2005. Joint management under the Act involves a partnership in which the NT Government, represented by the Parks and Wildlife Service, works together with traditional Aboriginal owners to manage these parks. When legal arrangements are completed later in 2007, the total number of jointly managed parks in the NT will be 32.

Where Aboriginal land and sea lies within a recognised park or reserve, Indigenous groups may receive cultural and natural resource management support through Australian and NT Government joint management structures. This support may be provided in a variety of ways including flexible employment arrangements, training, planning, rental payments and survey work. Indigenous members of joint-management boards also receive sitting fees for the time they spend working on parks and reserves business.

The draft NT Parks and Conservation Masterplan (2005) establishes a framework for increasing NT Government support for Indigenous people to work in cultural and natural resource management across the NT, both off and on parks and reserves. For example, the plan supports the Aboriginal Trainee Ranger Program, largely operating in the Southern NT where there are a larger number of jointly managed parks. This program supports traditional Aboriginal owners and others to undertake training to gain a Certificate in Conservation and Land Management. They are then assisted by the NT Parks and Wildlife Service into positions as Park Rangers.

8) Flexible Employment Arrangements

Both NT and Australian Government Parks and Wildlife Services provide flexible wages for Indigenous people working on cultural and natural resource management activities on parks and reserves. Some Indigenous people may undertake this work part-time with the balance of their time working for their Indigenous land and sea management group or in other capacities.

The Australian Government’s Northern Defence arm, NORFORCE, also offers flexible work to Indigenous people across the NT, some of whom are also in Indigenous land and sea management groups. NORFORCE conducts reconnaissance and border protection work across Northern Australia and recognises the value of partnering with Indigenous people who have a strong knowledge of country, surveillance and tracking skills. NORFORCE can employ Indigenous people flexibly for a minimum of 21 days and maximum of 200 days and is one of the largest employers of Indigenous people in the NT.

When Indigenous people from land and sea management groups work in NORFORCE they are a part of the organisation and command structure, with a clear delineation between their time as NORFORCE members and their time in their own Indigenous land and sea management group. NORFORCE members are provided with training and development opportunities in first aid, navigation, drills and life skills, which is highly relevant to work in Indigenous land and sea management groups.
NORFORCE also offers an Indigenous cadet program for people aged between 12-17. This program operates with senior Indigenous leaders and young people learn life skills, traditional law and cultural values and foundation military skills.

When interviewed for this project, NORFORCE expressed an interest in developing stronger relationships with Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. It may be possible for NORFORCE to employ up to thirty additional Indigenous land and sea managers to work on a part-time basis. These managers would gain access to training and skills development they can take back to their Indigenous land and sea management group.

9) Grant funding through other programs

Given the wide scope of activities performed by Indigenous land and sea management organisations and the broad range of environmental, cultural, social, education and employment outcomes achieved, there are a large number of other government programs and initiatives providing funds in this area. Three additional sources of funds are the Regional Partnerships Program, Shared Responsibility Agreements and the NT Community Benefit Fund. Under these initiatives, support for Indigenous natural resource management is being integrated with broader social development objectives for whole-of-government outcomes.

Regional Partnerships Program

The Department of Transport and Regional Services’ Regional Partnerships Program has historically not been a major funder of the Indigenous land and sea management sector. However, there have been instances where this program has been able to provide support for infrastructure development. For example, the program is currently supporting the development of a Ranger Station for the Thamarrurr Rangers at Wadeye and discussions have commenced on supporting facilities for the Dhimurru Rangers at Nhulunbuy, in conjunction with other funding partners. The program is also able to support job creation and better access to services and planning in regional and remote areas. It can also assist communities make structural adjustments in regions affected by major economic, social or environmental change. Each year the Australian Government identifies areas that are priorities for funding under the program and for 2006-07 one of the priority targets was Indigenous communities.

There are 56 Area Consultative Committees around Australia to assist applicants develop and submit their proposals. Proposals require co-investments from other funding partners (covering at least 50 percent of the project’s cost). They are assessed on the following criteria:

- the outcomes that will be achieved;
- the level of partnership funding;
- local support for a project;
- the project’s and applicant’s viability;
- the extent of any competitive advantage; and
- the extent of any cost shifting by other levels of government.

The Department of Transport and Regional Services has indicated that it may be able to play a larger role in supporting capital projects for Indigenous land and sea management groups and would consider co-investing in projects with other agencies.

Shared Responsibility Agreements

In some cases, Indigenous land and sea management groups have also been supported by Shared Responsibility Agreements (SRAs) negotiated with Indigenous Coordination Centres. These Centres are operated by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and staffed with Australian Government employees from various agencies.

SRAs are voluntary agreements between the Australian Government and Indigenous communities and can be developed where Indigenous people and communities decide they want to address specific priorities. The Northern Territory Government may also be a partner in an SRA. In return for discretionary benefits from government, communities make specific commitments in order to achieve their identified goals. Some Indigenous land and sea management groups have opted to negotiate SRAs
as potentially a more flexible form of support. They have not always proved easy to negotiate and can involve lengthy discussions among government agencies on possible funding sources. However, they have provided support in some areas, for example the development of the Dhimurru Sea Country Plan.

**NT Community Benefit Small Grants Program**

This program provides funds, raised from levies imposed on the operation of electronic gaming machines, for community benefit. Grant decisions are made by a Committee comprising government officials and independent community members. Grants are typically small, up to $5000, and are provided to non-profit Territory-based organisations to assist in the provision of services that benefit the community.

**Other Programs**

There are a range of other Australian and NT Government agencies that could also support Indigenous land and sea management groups because of the broad range of social, health and education outcomes they are achieving. In particular, it would be possible for the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, NT Department of Health and Community Services, Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training and NT Department of Employment, Education and Training to support these groups through community health and education programs.

Increasingly, the anecdotal evidence of the health and education outcomes being achieved by Indigenous land and sea management is being backed-up with research data. For example, projects conducted by the Menzies School of Health Research in Arnhem Land and Desert Knowledge CRC in Central Australia are demonstrating that participation in Indigenous land and sea management can lead to improved health and wellbeing, largely through diet and exercise.

**10) Core funding for land councils and other Indigenous organisations**

As indicated in section 3.4, the Australian Government also provides core funding to the land councils to perform their statutory functions under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*, including assisting traditional Aboriginal owners with the management of their land. The core funding is provided through section 64 (1) of the Aboriginals Benefit Account. Some land councils have raised concerns that the level of core funding is not sufficient to meet the growing demand for their services across a wide range of areas including Indigenous land and sea management.

Government agencies are also indirectly supporting Indigenous land and sea management groups by providing varying levels of core funding to other Indigenous community organisations such as outstation resource centres and local government councils. However, these core allocations are often required for a wide variety of other community services such as health, education, community safety and essential services and are unable to provide significant support directly to Indigenous land and sea management groups. CDEP and local government reforms may significantly impact on the core funding of a broad range of Indigenous community organisations.
Key Findings – Characteristics of Government Support

- Investments in Indigenous land and sea management by government agencies have grown over the last three years, particularly with new funding from the Department of the Environment and Water Resources and the Indigenous Land Corporation.

- Despite these investments, government funding has not kept pace with the growth of natural and cultural resource management issues and the increasing number of Indigenous land and sea management groups. This has acted as a limit on the growth of the sector and its ability to achieve important environmental, social, cultural, training and employment outcomes.

- Most of the government support in this area is delivered via fragmented grant funding. Over 90 per cent of Indigenous land and sea management groups, government and non-government organisations interviewed for this project stated that the current dispersed and short-term funding environment is a major barrier to the successful development of sustainable Indigenous land and sea management organisations and programs.

- The difficulties of fragmented grant funding are exacerbated by confusion about what various agencies will or will not fund through these grants. It is very difficult for Indigenous land and sea management groups and other government agencies to understand and work successfully with these rules.

- The negotiation of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule indicates that there is a commitment across government agencies to address the issue of uncoordinated funding. This is further evidenced by the number of agencies interested in co-investment with other partners to support this area.

- Government support for Indigenous land and sea management consists of:
  - wage support;
  - Indigenous infrastructure and activity funding;
  - Indigenous environmental and cultural programs;
  - mainstream environmental and cultural programs;
  - resources for training and education;
  - resources for business and industry development;
  - joint management arrangements for parks and reserves;
  - flexible employment programs and other grant funding; and
  - core funding for land councils and other Indigenous organisations.

- CDEP has played a very significant role supporting Indigenous land and sea management groups over the last fifteen years by providing partial wages and other resources, such as wage allocation, administration and human resource services and equipment and vehicles. The Australian Government has announced that in June 2008 CDEP funding will be phased out of NT Indigenous communities and replaced with jobs, and other employment and training programs, such as the Structured Training in Employment Projects and Related Employment Services (STEP ERS) and Work for the Dole. The impacts of this reform and options for the future employment of Indigenous land and sea managers, and hosting of Indigenous land and sea management groups, are discussed in section six.

- The current Working on Country program can provide salaries and operational costs to support to a small percentage of Indigenous people working on priority cultural and environmental projects. This program has been well received by Indigenous land and sea management groups as it responds to their calls for the government to fund paid positions to employ Indigenous people in land and sea management in the national interest. However, the program is not large enough to support all Indigenous land and sea managers when the CDEP program is phased out.
• The Indigenous Land Corporation and Aboriginals Benefit Account are major supporters of infrastructure and activity funding for Indigenous land and sea management. They can both be effective co-investment partners with other agencies. The Indigenous Land Corporation has recently prioritised funding for land management initiatives that create long-term employment, training and education opportunities for Indigenous people.

• The Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) program is widely regarded as a success in promoting Indigenous engagement in environmental management. A recent evaluation has suggested collaborations between the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Indigenous Land Corporation and Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs to deliver whole-of-government outcomes in IPA areas. This Strategic Framework provides an opportunity to progress these collaborations.

• While a small program, the NT Indigenous Community Marine Ranger Program operated by the NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines is valued because it provides flexible ongoing funds.

• The national and regional streams of the Natural Heritage Trust provide grants to Indigenous groups to undertake cultural and natural resource management activities and projects. The Natural Resource Management Board of the NT has recently announced its Regional Investment Strategy for 2007-2010 amounting to $21 million over three years. On current trends, this is expected to deliver $6-$9 million to Indigenous land and sea management groups over this period.

• NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts provides small grants and a significant amount of in-kind support to Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. An initiative that has worked well has been the out-posting of NT Parks and Wildlife Officers to Indigenous land and sea management groups.

• The NT Department of Employment, Education and Training provides recurrent funding to Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education for the delivery of vocational education and training. Both institutions provide cultural and natural resource management training to Indigenous groups.

• The Structured Training in Employment Projects program provides training and employment pathway support to Indigenous land and sea managers. However, the structure of the program has made it a challenge for Indigenous groups to manage and reforms may be required to ensure it is an effective means of support for this area. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations is expanding the STEP program to provide other Employment Related Services. This broader STEP ERS program may have a broader application and flexibility although it is unclear at this stage to what extent the program may support Indigenous land and sea management groups in the future. This will be further addressed in section six.

• In the past, relatively small amounts of funding for the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups has been provided by business and industry development support programs. However, with the increase in the number of fee-for-service contracts in this area, there is increasing recognition that some groups may be worthy of business and industry development support. The key programs that can currently provide this support are the Indigenous Small Business Fund, Indigenous Business Australia and NT Indigenous Business and Industry Services.

• Australian and NT Parks and Wildlife Services and NORFORCE offer flexible work to Indigenous land and sea managers. There is room to further develop these arrangements.
There are other initiatives providing support for Indigenous land and sea management groups such as the Regional Partnership Program, Shared Responsibility Agreements and the NT Community Benefit Small Grants Program. The Department of Transport and Regional Services has indicated that it may be able to play a larger role in supporting capital projects for Indigenous land and sea management groups and would consider co-investing in projects with other agencies.

The Australian Government also provides core funding to the land councils to perform their statutory functions under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*, including assisting traditional Aboriginal owners with the management of their land. Some land councils have raised concerns that the level of core funding is not sufficient to meet the growing demand for their services across a wide range of areas including Indigenous land and sea management.
4.3 Fee-for-Service Arrangements

Over the last several years Indigenous land and sea management groups have begun to develop fee-for-service arrangements with government agencies and businesses as a way to diversify their funding bases and secure economic development opportunities. Researchers often refer to this area of commercial activity as ‘payment for environmental services’ however, the terminology ‘fee-for-service’ will be used here to include payment for a broader range of services including biosecurity work and the transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge. This term is also used to remain consistent with the terminology in the *Healthy Country, Healthy People* Schedule.

The desktop research and interviews conducted for this project indicated that the level of fee-for-service activity in the Indigenous land and sea management sector is not well recognised, with some agencies under-estimating the current state-of-play and potential of this area. One of the reasons for this may be that it is difficult to develop an overall picture of the type of fee-for-service opportunities that currently, and could in the future, exist for land and sea management groups. While there are some broad markets developing in the NT in fire management and carbon mitigation, many of the opportunities are location-based and dependent on the government agencies and businesses operating in a particular region requiring environmental, cultural and biosecurity services and recognising the potential of Indigenous land and sea management groups as possible providers.

There are three broad categories of fee-for-service work currently being undertaken by groups:

- contracting for land management services (e.g. feral animal control, weed reduction, fencing and mine-site rehabilitation);
- contracting for environmental protection and monitoring (e.g. survey and research work and access permits); and
- contracting for border protection services (e.g. quarantine sampling and coastal surveillance).

The key purchasers of environmental, cultural and biosecurity services are currently mining and energy companies and pastoral stations, local government and NT and Australian Government agencies, including NT Parks and Wildlife, the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service and the Australian Customs Service. Overall, government agencies are currently the key driver of demand for environmental, cultural and biosecurity services in the NT. Government policy and procurement decisions in relation to levels of appropriate cultural and natural resource management across the NT and Indigenous engagement will continue to greatly impact on the level of Indigenous employment and economic development opportunities in this area. This is consistent with the fact that government procurement and service delivery is a key driver of the overall NT economy.

Analysis of research conducted for this project suggests that the fee-for-service component of the Indigenous land and sea management sector is currently valued at between $4-6 million annually, with this value expected to grow as Indigenous groups develop their capacity to undertake this work, government agencies seek to enter into fee-for-service rather than grant arrangements for environmental protection work and ‘conservation economy’ opportunities increase. The land councils and other peak Indigenous groups have assisted Indigenous land and sea management groups to negotiate many of these fee-for-service contracts and have provided business and legal services.

The following table provides a snapshot of the variety of fee-for-service work being undertaken by Indigenous land and sea management groups.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Client</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 Indigenous land and sea management groups along the NT coastline</td>
<td>Quarantine monitoring – obtaining samples for the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service.</td>
<td>Australian Quarantine Inspection Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Landcare Education Program (Greening Australia)</td>
<td>Environmental health work – landscaping and dust reduction</td>
<td>Local Community Government Councils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acacia Larrakeyah Land Management</td>
<td>Mimosa management on crown land near Acacia Gap</td>
<td>NT Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjumararl Rangers</td>
<td>Maintenance of revegetation plots for the Nabarlek mine site rehabilitation</td>
<td>Queensland Mines Pty Ltd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhimurru Rangers</td>
<td>Permits for entry into some recreation areas on Yolngu land</td>
<td>Tourists and Nhulunbuy residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djelk Rangers</td>
<td>Coastal surveillance and reporting; standby vessel capacity</td>
<td>Australian Customs Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamarrwa Nuwal Landcare</td>
<td>Community landscaping and revegetation work</td>
<td>Nhulunbuy Council and Alcan Gove</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kakadu Native Plants (Peter and Sandra Christophersen)</td>
<td>Seedlings for mine rehabilitation</td>
<td>Energy Resources Australia, Ranger Mine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larrakia Rangers</td>
<td>Community landscaping and weed control work around Darwin</td>
<td>NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts; Lions Club Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lianthawirriyarra Rangers</td>
<td>Search and rescue activities</td>
<td>King Ash Bay Fishing Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minyerri Rangers</td>
<td>Fire management and other land management work associated with pastoral properties</td>
<td>Roper River and Hodgson Downs pastoral properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muru-warinyi Ankul Rangers</td>
<td>Weed control contracts on pastoral leases in the Barkly region</td>
<td>NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tjuwanpa Rangers</td>
<td>Camping ground infrastructure at Palm Valley</td>
<td>NT Department of Planning and Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi Land Rangers</td>
<td>Business development of Milikapiti nursery for Matilda Minerals mine site rehabilitation contract</td>
<td>Matilda Minerals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wulaign Rangers</td>
<td>Biodiversity Monitoring Survey in the Tanami</td>
<td>Newmont Mines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jawoyn, Djelk, Demed, Manwurrk and Mimal Rangers</td>
<td>Fire abatement in West Arnhem Land – greenhouse abatement program</td>
<td>NT Government and Darwin Liquefied Natural Gas (Conoco-Phillips)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The details of three fee-for-service current contracts are provided below to flesh out the diversity of some of these arrangements.

**AQIS Quarantine Contracts**

In the 2006-07 Budget, the Australian Government provided $6.9 million over four years to AQIS to enter into fee-for-service arrangements with Indigenous groups across the WA, NT and Qld coastline. These groups provide quarantine samples aimed at the early detection of pest and disease incursions. AQIS, who has been working with Indigenous groups for over ten years, has entered into these
arrangements in recognition that the North Australian coastline is subject to quarantine threats due to its close proximity to South East Asia. This threat is also enhanced with illegal foreign fishing vessels entering Australian waters. Indigenous land and sea management groups are able to undertake this ongoing sampling and monitoring work on a cost effective basis across the NT coastline.

AQIS has employed additional Aboriginal Liaison Officers and other dedicated staff to develop these fee-for-service arrangements. There are currently 19 community contracts that have been negotiated, collectively worth approximately $400,000 in the first year across the NT. This figure is expected to reach approximately $1 million over this next financial year as training and sampling arrangements are now in place. The number of NT Indigenous groups involved is expected to reach 21. AQIS has also worked closely with land councils to develop these arrangements.

These contracts provide an hourly rate for work (including time to undertake training) and are based on an average day rate for a senior quarantine officer. Contracts with Indigenous land and sea management groups are negotiated on a twelve month basis. Funds are paid to the Indigenous land and sea management group or their host organisations, including overheads for vehicle use and other organisational costs. It is up to the Indigenous land and sea management group to determine how the task will be performed and both parties agree on the labour and operational costs required to do the work and AQIS pays the hourly rate accordingly. For example, if it is agreed that the task should take two people six hours, AQIS will pay that amount (with overheads) even if the Indigenous group decide that five people will perform the task under an alternative timeframe. Funds are released to the groups when they send in their quarantine samples and an invoice.

While establishing these fee-for-service arrangements has taken time to negotiate, they are now working well and AQIS is receiving an effective quarantine sampling and monitoring service, which exceeds what they could achieve relying only on their own officers travelling to remote areas. The training Indigenous groups have received to be able to perform this service is tailored specifically to AQIS requirements and has been delivered by AQIS staff in remote communities. Training includes the basic administrative skills required to send samples into AQIS with appropriate information and invoicing.

One of the key factors behind the success of this fee-for-service arrangement is that Indigenous land and sea management groups are clear on the service they are being asked to deliver and can do so after receiving AQIS training. Unlike in some other areas of border protection work, regulatory enforcement by Indigenous land and sea managers is not required and therefore those participating do not need to be covered by legislation. AQIS staff noted that establishing fee-for-service arrangements is much easier where there is a full-time local level coordinator and effective financial and administrative systems in place, either within the Indigenous land and sea management group itself or its host organisation. Any gaps in host organisation arrangements as a result of CDEP and local government reforms could make it more difficult for AQIS to maintain fee-for-service contracts with Indigenous land and sea management groups.

The funds for this fee-for-service initiative are lapsing at the end of the four year period and AQIS will need to make a case to government for this arrangement to continue.

“We can bring our experience contracting with Indigenous groups to the Healthy Country, Healthy People Strategy and assist other government agencies, such as Customs, Defence and NT and Australian Government Parks and Wildlife, who may want to increase their fee-for-service arrangements with Indigenous groups over the next few years.”

(AQIS, Interview 2007)

Customs Surveillance Contracts

In the 2006-07 Budget, the Australian Government provided funding to the Australian Customs Service to conduct three one year pilot programs to engage Indigenous groups in fee-for-service arrangements for coastal monitoring and surveillance. The pilots do not include Indigenous groups being contracted for enforcement work and this remains clearly defined as the role of Customs staff covered by relevant enforcement legislation due to stringent law, safety and security considerations. The pilots will be
evaluated in early 2008 with a decision then taken about ongoing investment in fee-for-service arrangements.

The pilots are being conducted with the Djelk Rangers at Maningrida in the NT, One Arm Point community in WA and the Arukun community in Qld. All three pilots are operating at different levels with the Djelk Ranger pilot providing the highest level of service to Customs. All three programs are to conclude on July 1st 2008 and, prior to this date, a review will have been completed to determine the futures of all three programs.

The Djelk Rangers provide two services: one is a regular patrol in areas identified by Customs as potential risk sites for the illegal movement of people or goods, including illegal foreign fishing in Australian waters; and the second is a standby service for Djelk vessels to be available for Customs use at short notice.

It has been possible for the Djelk Rangers to provide this high level of service to Customs as the Rangers have invested in their own infrastructure and capacity, including an in-survey vessel, light plane and Rangers with coxswains qualifications. This was done to demonstrate to the Australian Government that they are an organisation able to provide these services and contribute to the border protection effort. Customs utilises six rangers and all three marine vessels that the community have available. However, Coastwatch is the aerial surveillance provider.

The Djelk Rangers have been successful in demonstrating their capabilities and have met Australian Maritime Safety Authority standards for boat handling and maintenance. Customs has now supplied computer software to allow the Rangers to electronically send surveillance information straight to Customs databases. Fees for work carried out are set at the level of an ‘acting officer of customs’, which is taken from the Customs Certified Agreement, and are paid to the organisation for dissemination to the Group under standard Customs commercial arrangements.

In the WA trial with the One Arm Point community, the WA State Fisheries Department have provided a vessel and both Customs and WA State Fisheries provide officers to work with the Indigenous group. This highlights the potential for Customs to be flexible in its arrangements and provide infrastructure support in partnership with other government agencies. However, the ability for groups to build up their own infrastructure and capacity for coastal monitoring and surveillance with other government investors will be, to a large extent, a precursor to fee-for-service arrangements with Customs.

“Formal comment cannot be provided on the Djelk Ranger Pilot until the program evaluation is completed. However, the Djelk Rangers are providing a patrol capacity and reporting sightings as agreed to in the Service Level Agreement.

(Australian Customs Service, 2007)

West Arnhem Land Fire Management Agreement

The West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Agreement (WALFA) is a partnership between Darwin Liquefied Natural Gas (owned by Conoco-Phillips), NT Government, Northern Land Council and West Arnhem Land traditional Aboriginal owners. It establishes a strategic fire management regime across 28,000 km² of Western Arnhem Land for the purposes of offsetting some of the greenhouse gas emissions from the Liquefied Natural Gas plant at Wickham Point in Darwin Harbour.

The project aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from this area by adopting effective fire management practices. These practices also help conserve environmental and cultural values in the region. Following assessment of other greenhouse offset opportunities elsewhere in the country (e.g. blue-gum and pine plantations), Conoco-Phillips decided upon the WALFA project due to its cost-effectiveness and ability to produce significant greenhouse offset outcomes.

The WALFA project is being undertaken by the Jawoyn, Djelk, Adjumarllarl, Manwurrk and Mimal Rangers Groups operating with a coordination function performed by the Northern Land Council and
significant assistance from Bushfires NT. They implement strategic fire management from early in the dry season to reduce the size and extent of unmanaged wildfires.

A key issue for the project is the quantity of greenhouse gas emissions it reduces and whether these reductions meet international guidelines. A number of researchers from the Tropical Savannas CRC, CSIRO and Bushfires NT have worked together with Indigenous groups to undertake scientific studies necessary for greenhouse gas offsets to be quantified in line with best-practice methodologies and international guidelines. This scientific foundation has been necessary to establish robust fee-for-service arrangements.

This project is not generating income from carbon trading at this stage. Rather, it is a fee-for-service arrangement in which Indigenous land managers are being paid for fire management to produce greenhouse gas offsets. However, the process and accounting practices used to abate greenhouse emissions in this project would qualify for carbon trading if the market arose in the future as is predicted by many experts in this field. This approach has significant potential for application in other fire-prone regions of north Australia. There are other companies currently looking at fire abatement and carbon offset and trading opportunities with Indigenous groups across the NT particularly in the Arnhem and Gulf Regions, including Sustainable Forestry Management, Alcan and Xstrata, and this is likely to be a growing commercial opportunity.

**Form of current contracts**

As the above examples illustrate, while each fee-for-service contract is unique, the majority of contracts in this area are with incorporated associations, either the Indigenous land and sea management group themselves or their host organisations, rather than with individuals. However, there are some examples of fee-for-service arrangements being brokered with individual Indigenous land and sea managers, particularly for bush harvest products.

Increasingly fee-for-service arrangements are being negotiated at commercial or market rates representing the value of the labour and on-costs for the organisation in providing the service. However, there is still a considerable amount of tightening up to be done in this area as Indigenous groups become more adept at negotiating these types of contracts and client confidence increases.

It is also apparent that that fee-for-service arrangements in this area are often more successful where the service or goods being provided are clear and quantifiable and payment is directly related to the measurement of these goods or services.
4.4 Additional Support – Business, Philanthropic and Research Institutions

While government grants and fee-for-service arrangements are currently the major sources of support for Indigenous land and sea management, it is important to recognise that there are an additional six important areas of support:

- social and cultural impact compensation;
- philanthropic investment;
- partnerships with research organisations;
- support from individuals with natural resource management, government and business expertise;
- Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements; and
- revenue raised by Indigenous groups.

Social and cultural impact compensation

A number of businesses make corporate social responsibility investments in Indigenous land and sea management groups. These are often tied to major development projects on, or adjacent to, Aboriginal land and include mining, forestry and tourism developments. Increasingly these investments are coupled with separate, but related, fee-for-service contracts with Indigenous groups.

Key examples across the NT currently include:

- Alcan Gove support for the Dhimurru Aboriginal Land Management Corporation;
- Great Southern Limited support for the Tiwi Land Rangers;
- Newmont Mines support for the Wulaig Rangers; and
- Xstrata support may be negotiated for Indigenous land and sea management groups in the Borroloola region.

Social and cultural impact compensation could be a growth area with increasing pressure on development, particularly focused on water resource-rich areas, in Northern Australia.

Philanthropic Investment

There are also philanthropic organisations making social and environmental investments in Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT. These investments are provided as grants or donations to achieve environmental and community development outcomes and can be of significant financial value. The major players are national and international conservation agencies such as the Christensen Fund, Greening Australia, Nature Conservancy, Pew Environment Group, World Wide Fund for Nature, Australian Conservation Foundation, Sidney Myer Fund and Oxfam.

This support is available for a wide range of community development activities directly and indirectly related to environmental protection and conservation. For example, the Christensen Fund has provided NAILSMA with core operational funds and project funds to support its Australian Indigenous Leadership, Scholarship and Communication project. This aims to create the next generation of leaders in natural and cultural resource management by providing young people with education, networking and leadership development opportunities.

Research Organisations

There are research organisations throughout Australia that partner with Indigenous land and sea management groups to conduct research in a broad range of environmental and social sciences. Key research organisations include Charles Darwin University, CSIRO, Tropical Savannas CRC, Bushfires CRC, Desert Knowledge CRC, Centre for Appropriate Technology, Menzies School of Health Research and the Australian National University.

These partnerships vary in value depending on their longevity, opportunities they provide for genuine knowledge and skills transfer and level of financial remuneration paid to the Indigenous land and sea management group for their knowledge and participation in research. As organisations have gained experience and developed protocols for research with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, they...
have increasingly been able to develop more effective partnerships with Indigenous land and sea management groups. These partnerships are important because they assist groups develop a scientific foundation and rigour to their land and sea management practices. Researchers are able to assist Indigenous groups identify, document and communicate significant environmental and social issues on their country and the outcomes being achieved by Indigenous land and sea management. Researchers benefit from the traditional and modern ecological knowledge of Indigenous land and sea managers. A key example of the possible benefits of this type of partnerships can be found in work being undertaken by scientists and Indigenous land and sea managers to ensure there is a strong scientific foundation to the greenhouse gas abatement work under the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement project.

Support from individuals with natural resource management, government and business expertise

It is also important not to underestimate the support that some individuals, either in a private or business capacity, are providing Indigenous land and sea management groups. Some groups receive advice on a formal or informal basis from experts in natural resource management, government and business backgrounds.

One option for enhancing this type support would be to consider whether the Indigenous Community Volunteers program may be able to source more individuals able to bring natural resource management and business expertise to Indigenous land and sea management groups. This program is operated by Indigenous Community Volunteers (ICV), and independent not-for-profit organisation receiving funds from the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. ICV aims to create partnerships between Indigenous people and business and industry representatives to transfer skills and knowledge useful to all parties.

Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements

Native Title Agreements and Indigenous Land Use Agreements negotiated under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1976 can also establish mechanisms for the delivery of funding support to traditional Aboriginal owners and Indigenous groups for cultural and natural resource management work on their land and sea. These Agreements can contain clauses requiring biodiversity monitoring or land and sea rehabilitation associated with industry use and can indicate a preference for contracting out this work to Indigenous land and sea management groups. The land councils are in a key position to assist traditional Aboriginal owners to negotiate potential fee-for-service and other commercial arrangements for Indigenous land and sea management groups within Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements.

Raising own revenue

It is also possible for traditional Aboriginal owners and Indigenous groups to consider investing funds they have received through royalties or leases for land-use into Indigenous land and sea management. This is a way for groups to potentially raise their own revenue for the conservation of significant parts of their land and sea. For example, traditional Aboriginal owners in the Barkly region of the NT have fully leased their land to an Indigenous-owned pastoral company so that it can be managed for both pastoral production and conservation. This has been a mechanism for funding the environmental protection of land as well as its productive use. An additional example can be seen across the Toogimbie Station Indigenous Protected Area near Hay in NSW. The Nari Nari Tribal Council has sold land irrigation leases to be able to fund the conservation of important wetlands in their IPA.
Key Findings – Fee-for-Service Arrangements

- Many Indigenous land and sea management groups now have fee-for-service arrangements as part of their portfolio of funding sources. This is now a key feature of the Indigenous land and sea management sector.

- The key purchasers of environmental, cultural and biosecurity services from Indigenous groups are currently NT and Australian Government agencies including NT Parks and Wildlife, the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, Australian Customs Service, local government, mining companies and pastoral stations.

- Overall, government agencies are currently the key driver of demand for environmental, cultural and biosecurity services in the NT. Government policy and procurement decisions in relation to levels of appropriate cultural and natural resource management across the NT and Indigenous engagement will continue to greatly impact on the level of Indigenous employment and economic development opportunities in this area. This is consistent with the fact that government procurement and service delivery is a major driver of the overall NT economy.

- It is predicted that the fee-for-service component of the Indigenous land and sea management sector is currently valued at between $4-6 million annually, with this value expected to grow.

- Increasingly fee-for-service arrangements are being negotiated at commercial or market rates however, there is still a considerable amount of tightening up to be done in this area as Indigenous groups become more adept at negotiating these types of contracts and client confidence increases.

- Fee-for-service arrangements in this area can be more successful where the service or goods being provided are clear and quantifiable and payment is directly related to the measurement of these goods or services.

Key Findings – Additional Support – Business, Philanthropic and Research Institutions

- Businesses are making corporate social responsibility investments in Indigenous land and sea management groups, often tied to major development projects on or adjacent to Aboriginal land, such as mining, forestry and tourism developments. This source of support could grow with increased development pressure on Northern Australia.

- National and international philanthropic agencies are key investors in the conservation and development outcomes achieved through Indigenous land and sea management.

- There are research institutions throughout Australia that seek to partner with Indigenous land and sea management groups to conduct research in a broad range of environmental and social sciences. Indigenous groups should be supported to enter into research partnerships on their own terms. These partnerships have the potential to impart significant scientific knowledge and rigour into land and sea management projects.

- Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements can contain clauses requiring biodiversity monitoring or land and sea rehabilitation associated with industry use and can indicate a preference for contracting out this work to Indigenous land and sea management groups.

- Indigenous groups may also be able to consider investing funds they receive through royalties or leases for land-use into Indigenous land and sea management. This is a way for groups to potentially raise their own revenue to meet their conservation objectives.
5. CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

5.1 Success Factors – Structures and Capabilities of Indigenous Groups

NT Indigenous land and sea management groups have developed with different objectives and measures of success. However, the interviews have highlighted seven critical success factors present in groups that are operating effectively and looking to further develop their organisations. These success factors correspond with those identified in other research reports such as *Sustaining Eden: Indigenous Community Wildlife Management in Australia* and the recent Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Report evaluating joint parks and reserve management models across Australia.

1) Security of tenure, strong mandate from traditional Aboriginal owners and community support

These three related features need to be present in order for Indigenous land and sea management groups to have the authority to undertake cultural and natural resource management work. Due to the large amount of Aboriginal land in the NT, many Indigenous land and sea management groups have security of tenure to conduct management activities on their country. However, there are areas where groups do not have this security of tenure, including for sea country (subject to the final decision in the Blue Mud Bay Case) and land excised for pastoral properties. In these circumstances, the activities of Indigenous land and sea management groups can be limited if agreements cannot be successfully reached with other landholders and interest groups.

Given that Indigenous communities are small and infrastructure and resources are scarce, it is also vital that Indigenous land and sea management groups initially obtain and then maintain community support. This requires groups to devote resources to managing the expectations of traditional Aboriginal owners and community members; a task that is sometimes under-recognised by funding organisations. A strong mandate from traditional Aboriginal owners and high levels of community-ownership can be created when there are resources to allow effective up-front discussions and community consultations and the subsequent development of strong governance models and cultural and natural resource management plans. These plans need to recognise Aboriginal concepts of land and sea management alongside western scientific approaches and strongly articulate a vision for the sustainable development of the Indigenous land and sea management group. The land councils play a fundamental role in identifying traditional Aboriginal owners utilising land trust registers and supporting Indigenous groups to undertake participatory planning to develop Indigenous cultural and natural resource management plans.

The governance models and operational structures for Indigenous land and sea management groups have to be developed by traditional Aboriginal owners and community members rather than imposed by external organisations. However, there could be far greater support provided to Indigenous groups considering possible governance models. There is now fifteen years of experience in developing Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT and this could be drawn on more effectively to offer new and consolidating Indigenous groups possible models and structures they can learn from and adapt to their situations. This could include providing groups with information on business arrangements and how they might attract long-term partnerships with government and non-government investors.

“*There is a need to get the governance arrangements right for Indigenous groups operating on the ground. One of the priorities should be working up good governance models that can guide new and emerging Indigenous Ranger Groups. Given some Groups have been operating now for over a decade, there is enough knowledge to pull together some governance models to help newer groups develop to be strong organisations. There may be different models for those groups who want to head towards independence and those who want to be hosted by other organisations.*”

*(Dhimurru, Laynhapuy and Marthakal Workshop, 2007)*
2) Clear relationships with other Indigenous community organisations, particularly host organisations

There are only a few Indigenous land and sea management groups operating as independent incorporated organisations throughout the NT. Most are hosted by other organisations such as the NT land councils, local government, outstation resource centres or Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) organisations.

Indigenous land and sea management groups have had mixed experiences of being hosted by other organisations, although in many circumstances this arrangement has been essential in order to source financial and administrative support necessary to secure government and non-government funding. Operating as an independent incorporated body also has its challenges and Indigenous land and sea management groups who have gone down this path have still required close partnerships with other organisations and key individuals.

Where the host arrangements have worked well, five factors have been present:

- Effective support from the host organisation for Indigenous land and sea management and the recognition of it as a priority not only for the Indigenous land and sea management group but also for the overall business of the host organisation;
- Adequate financial, administrative and reporting systems in the host organisation so they are able to allocate resources effectively and with certainty to the Indigenous land and sea management group and provide acquittal and reporting information back to the funding agencies;
- Adequate staff and board arrangements within the host organisation to be able to follow through consistently on delivering support to the Indigenous land and sea management group;
- Adequate infrastructure and facilities so they are able, if necessary, to provide office and equipment storage space to the Indigenous group; and
- Mechanisms to ensure that the host organisation is accountable to the Indigenous land and sea management group for fulfilling its roles and responsibilities.

Given problems with the governance and business arrangements of many organisations in Indigenous communities, there are cases where Indigenous land and sea management groups have not been adequately supported. On occasion this has lead to resources provided for land and sea management projects being redirected to other projects and wage payments not being made properly to Indigenous groups.

In these circumstances, some Indigenous groups have requested that an NT land council take on responsibility for hosting their financial and administrative arrangements. For example, the Northern Land Council has taken on responsibility for paying some Indigenous land and sea management groups when a local CDEP host organisation has refused to pay ‘Top-up’ wages. This assistance from the land councils has allowed Indigenous land and sea management groups to stay afloat when they might have otherwise collapsed.

In order to improve the clarity of the relationships Indigenous land and sea management groups have with other community organisations it is important that groups either decide to move towards independent incorporation or establish defined working arrangements, set out in Service Level Agreements, with the organisations hosting or supporting them. The timing of this process has become more urgent with the upcoming transition from CDEP and reforms to local government council arrangements. Groups will need strong support from government agencies and other organisations such as the land councils to manage this process as canvassed further in section six.

3) Stable involvement of a coordinator with senior Indigenous land and sea managers

Indigenous groups, government agencies and organisations interviewed emphasised the vital importance of having a stable coordinator in place to work alongside senior Indigenous land and sea managers. This coordinator is often required before an Indigenous land and sea management group is able to obtain grants and fee-for-service contracts and operate as a viable organisation.
This coordinator needs to be able to work effectively in a cross-cultural context and assist the group with the planning and management of their organisations. This person is central for networking and helping the group manage the interface with government departments, business and other organisations.

While the long-term goal must be to have local Indigenous coordinators who are able to interface directly with funding agencies and manage the associated paperwork, communication and advocacy for the group, most local Indigenous people do not currently have the literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge of government and business imperatives to be able to fill this role. However, there are a small number of groups across the NT that have local Indigenous coordinators which shows that training and capacity building is producing results. Overall, there is a reliance on non-Indigenous coordinators, often previously external to the community. This can create several challenges:

- Groups are reliant on the coordinators for the resources and networks they develop with government and non-government organisations. If the coordinator leaves their position without a succession arrangement, it can jeopardise the operations of the group. This can occur frequently as coordinators with heavy workloads suffer burn-out and there are not usually assistant coordinators who are able to take on the coordinator function;
- Coordinators often have heavy workloads and it can be a challenge to ensure that transferring knowledge and building the capacity of other Indigenous managers to interact with funding organisations is treated as a key priority. There is a significant, and at times unrealistic, burden on coordinators to perform these two functions;
- It can be hard to find people with the right cross-cultural skills and personalities to be able to perform the coordinator function effectively. How well people perform in this role will also rely on their ability to work closely with the senior Indigenous managers and traditional Aboriginal owners; and
- It can be challenging for coordinators to work at empowering senior Indigenous Rangers and genuinely facilitating the realisation of their priorities. There are often concerns (real and perceived) about coordinators imposing their priorities and ways of working on Indigenous groups.

Approximately 23 Indigenous land and sea management groups have been able to secure a local level coordinator to work directly with the group, many living in the Indigenous community. Although this is resource intensive for funding agencies, with housing often required on top of salary arrangements, research indicates the investment is paid back many times over in terms of the resources the group can attract and the outcomes that can be delivered. It is important that this is clearly recognised and that government agencies allocate resources to attract and retain coordinators, including by providing adequate leave and support arrangements. In addition, capacity development, leadership and project management training needs to be provided to assist more senior Indigenous managers step into coordinator roles over the next five years.

While the support is not as intensive, there is also the potential in some regions for one coordinator to support several Indigenous land and sea management groups, particularly if these groups are only starting to explore their interest in land and sea management. This coordinator might sit in a mid-level organisation, such as a land council. In this circumstance, it is important to be realistic about how many groups this coordinator can cover and what form of support they will be able to provide. Research in this area suggests that the highest workable ratio is one coordinator to three groups (depending on the size of the region and the support the coordinator receives from other organisations).

Coordinators also need a support network and access to information on resources available to assist Indigenous land and sea management groups, including program funding, training and development opportunities. Facilitators in the land councils and some government agencies are currently responsible for providing this support. For example the Northern and Central Land Councils host Indigenous Land and Sea Management Facilitators who work with coordinators to access funds under environment and heritage programs such as the Natural Heritage Trust. However, there is a need to consider how coordinators and senior Indigenous land and sea managers might be better supported to effectively carry out their roles over longer periods to reduce turnover and burn-out problems. Strong support may also help to increase the consistency and effectiveness of the support coordinators provide to Indigenous land and sea management groups.
4) Strong Indigenous leadership

Groups require leadership from motivated senior Indigenous land and sea managers able to work closely with traditional Aboriginal owners and other community members. It is clear from the case studies that Indigenous land and sea management groups in most cases already involve senior community leaders. This is one of the fundamental drivers behind the successful development of Indigenous land and sea management groups in the NT. However, many Indigenous groups struggle to remunerate senior leaders and cultural advisors for the time they spend working with the group on land and sea management priorities. It would be more appropriate for this remuneration to be factored into funding for the groups.

It is also clear that growing upcoming Indigenous leaders from younger generations is seen as a priority for Indigenous land and sea management groups. This requires resources to be dedicated to the transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge, western science education, training and mentoring for younger people interested in careers in this area.

5) Focus on capacity building, training and organisational development

Groups who are focused on continually growing and strengthening their organisations, particularly through building the capacity and skill levels of their staff, are more likely to develop as sustainable organisations over the long-term. Most Indigenous land and sea management groups are trying to operate this way and are constantly seeking out development and training opportunities. Many of the agencies and Indigenous groups interviewed highlighted the large amount of training Indigenous people in this area are engaged in, particularly in comparison to other industry sectors.

The diversity of an Indigenous land and sea management group can also contribute to its organisational development. In particular, involving older and younger people and men and women can assist in expanding the groups’ knowledge and activities.

6) Networks and longer-term partnerships with government agencies and/or businesses in the region

Groups, who by virtue of their location, skills and networks are able to attract longer-term partnerships with government agencies and businesses are more likely to develop as sustainable organisations over the long-term. The challenge is recognising the factors that are going to enable the development of these partnerships in a changing landscape and economy and how they match with Indigenous aspirations for land and sea management. It is important to ensure traditional Aboriginal owners and Indigenous land and sea management groups play the lead role in identifying these opportunities and deciding how they may be taken up.

Research shows that Indigenous groups located near biodiversity hotspots or land recognised as under environmental threat have been more successful at attracting partnerships with government agencies. This is evidenced by the fact that groups who have managed to promote their country as having a high biodiversity values, for example through the declaration of an Indigenous Protected Area, are able to subsequently secure additional resources. This trend is set to increase with the recent report, The Nature of Northern Australia, providing stronger evidence of the internationally recognised value of some NT landscapes.

In addition, groups located in close proximity to businesses, such as mining, forestry, tourism or pastoral companies, are likely to be more successful at developing business opportunities associated
with cultural and natural resource management. Where these partnerships expose Indigenous land and sea management groups to various organisational and business development models, the benefits of these partnerships are greatly enhanced. Indigenous groups are then in a position to learn from these models and consider adopting different work practices within their own organisations.

However, there can be prolonged debate about appropriate use of Aboriginal land which can create challenges in developing relationships. It can be a valid decision for Indigenous groups to decide not to pursue or cooperate with economic development opportunities they consider will damage their country.

The operational capacity and infrastructure of the Indigenous group and their communication and networking skills is often the key determinant in whether these partnerships can develop and how lucrative they might be. Government agencies have a role to play in assisting groups develop their capacity to enter into business and government partnerships and encouraging long-term investors into the Indigenous land and sea management sector.

7) Access to science and research support

It has been demonstrated that the ability to access science and research support is also a critical factor in the successful development of Indigenous land and sea management groups. The strongest projects have developed when there are researchers with ‘western science’ approaches operating alongside Indigenous land and sea managers with their local ecological knowledge and skills using a ‘two tool-box’ approach. In these circumstances it is important that there is mutual respect and cross-cultural exchange among the parties. This way of working can transfer knowledge and build the capacity of all involved, particularly if the research partnership is over several years.

Some benefits of these partnerships are as follows:

- the hosting support that the Tropical Savannas CRC has provided the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) over the last several years. This has enabled NAILSMA to grow into a stronger organisation able to support a wide range of projects such as the Carpentaria Ghost Nets and Turtle and Dugong programs;
- CSIRO has been working in partnership with Dhimurru on a crazy ant eradication project in the East Arnhem Region for several years. A CSIRO staff member has worked alongside Dhimurru staff members building up world renowned science and methodologies in this area. More broadly, CSIRO has recently worked to develop a Sustainable Indigenous Livelihoods Research Stream that will lead to further partnerships with Indigenous communities across the NT to develop employment and economic development opportunities;
- The NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts Parks and Conservation area has worked with Indigenous land and sea management groups on a number of projects. One project that has been well regarded was the Island Arks program monitoring translocated Quoll populations with researchers and Gumurr Marthakal Rangers working together with clear responsibilities and objectives; and
- Desert Knowledge CRC working with Indigenous communities in the Centre on a series of Indigenous Livelihoods InLandTM Projects including: desert fire management; bush foods and wildlife harvest research; youth training and mentoring around the management of water resources; and market approaches to biodiversity conservation in spinifex deserts.

Government agencies could consider possible incentives to encourage long-term partnerships with research institutions and Indigenous communities. A key issue is empowering Indigenous groups to be able to attract and commission their own research on priority cultural and natural resource management projects. This would place Indigenous communities in the driving seat able to direct more of the research that is conducted on their land and sea.
Success Factors – Structures and Capabilities of Indigenous Groups

1) **Security of tenure, mandate from traditional owners and community support**

A strong mandate from traditional Aboriginal owners and high levels of community support can be developed and maintained with effective participatory planning, governance models and operational structures for Indigenous land and sea management groups.

2) **Clear relationships with community organisations, particularly host organisations**

It is important that groups either move towards independent incorporation or establish defined working arrangements, set out in Service Level Agreements, with the organisations hosting or supporting them.

3) **Stable involvement of a coordinator with senior Indigenous land and sea managers**

Most groups need access to a coordinator who is encouraged, with appropriate support structures and leave arrangements, to make a long-term commitment to work in this area. Groups with the desire to develop into sustainable organisations with strong government and business relationships are likely to require a dedicated coordinator. It might be possible for several groups that are emerging or new to share one coordinator but they must share a geographic region. Facilitators in the land councils and some government agencies are currently providing a support network for coordinators. However, there is a need to consider how coordinators and senior Indigenous land and sea managers might be better supported to effectively carry out their roles.

4) **Strong Indigenous leadership**

Indigenous land and sea management groups in many cases already involve senior community leaders. This is one of the fundamental drivers behind their success. These senior leaders and cultural advisors need to be appropriately remunerated for their work with Indigenous land and sea management groups.

5) **Focus on capacity building, training and organisational development**

Groups who are focused on continually growing and strengthening their organisations, particularly though building the capacity and skill levels of their staff, are more likely to develop as sustainable organisations.

6) **Longer-term partnerships with government agencies and/or businesses in the region**

Groups who by virtue of their location, skills and networks are able to attract longer-term partnerships with government agencies and businesses are more likely to successfully develop as sustainable organisations. Current trends show that Indigenous groups located near biodiversity hotspots or land recognised as under environmental threat have been successful at attracting partnerships with government agencies. Groups located within proximity of businesses, such as mining, forestry, tourism or pastoral companies, can also be more successful at developing business opportunities associated with cultural and natural resource management.

7) **Access to science and research support**

The strongest projects have developed when there are researchers with ‘western science’ approaches operating alongside Indigenous land and sea managers with their local ecological knowledge and skills using a ‘two tool-box’ approach. Government agencies should consider possible incentives to encourage long-term partnerships with research institutions and Indigenous communities in this area.
5.2 Success Factors – Government Support Arrangements

It was clear from the interviews and research conducted that there is a significant degree of consensus among Indigenous groups and government agencies on the issues that need to be addressed for government support arrangements to work more effectively to develop the Indigenous land and sea management sector. However, there was also significant scepticism about the ability of government agencies to act on these issues and change the way they do business. In order to address this scepticism, a number of people interviewed were interested in this report highlighting examples of where government agencies have changed their approach and as a result had their support arrangements recognised by both Indigenous groups and government agencies to be more effective.

The issues raised and examples of them being addressed successfully by government agencies are as follows:

1) Resources and time allocated to participatory planning and negotiations with Indigenous groups so that support is more tailored to their needs and priorities.

Some government agencies have seen the value in developing programs that, to an extent, flexibly utilise participatory planning and negotiations with Indigenous groups as a means of directing government support.

For example, the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources’ Indigenous Protected Areas program is widely regarded by Indigenous groups and other stakeholders as successful in developing the sustainable long-term management of Indigenous owned lands because it is flexible enough to facilitate strong upfront planning. This allows Indigenous people to focus government support on helping them achieve their land and sea management priorities.

Indigenous Community Marine Ranger Groups also comment favourably on the way that the NT Fisheries’ Indigenous Community Marine Ranger Program provides on-going flexible funding. NT Fisheries negotiate what the funding will be used for with Marine Ranger Groups rather than specifying upfront funding categories and then inviting grant applications.

“The flexibility of the IPA program is seen as one of its greatest strengths, enabling Aboriginal people to develop and implement governance arrangements which work for them. People are keen to see the provisions relating to capacity building, governance and institutional development enhanced wherever possible.”

(The Indigenous Protected Areas Evaluation, 2006)

2) Dedicated staff, including Aboriginal Liaison Officers, able to work directly with Indigenous groups and land councils, to develop projects and funding proposals that can then be lodged with government agencies.

This success factor is linked to the first one. Government agencies that have dedicated staff either in the field, or who are able to visit Indigenous groups for reasonable periods of time, can ‘put a face’ to a program and work with Indigenous groups and land councils on developing their projects. This is seen as more successful than the traditional grant application model. Where there is consistency of effective government staff working on a program, the benefits of this approach increase dramatically.

The success of this approach has been highlighted by the Indigenous Pastoral Program (IPP) which uses dedicated field officers, working with the land councils, to pull together a plan for the resources required to build Indigenous engagement on selected pastoral properties throughout the NT. A package of resources is then negotiated across government agencies and other stakeholders and delivered with the assistance of these dedicated officers. The program has achieved success with the negotiation of land use agreements for pastoral activities and substantial numbers of Indigenous people trained and employed in this industry since the IPP commenced.

The importance of employing additional Aboriginal Liaison Officers has been highlighted by the AQIS’ experience of establishing fee-for-service arrangements with Indigenous groups for quarantine monitoring and sampling work. The Aboriginal Liaison Officers have opened doors and helped develop
good relationships between AQIS and Indigenous groups. AQIS has also continued to work closely with the land councils throughout this process.

The NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines operate with a Fisheries Indigenous Liaison Unit staffed with three permanent Indigenous staff and one apprentice. This Unit is responsible for liaising with Indigenous land and sea management groups and Indigenous communities and organisations more broadly on a wide range of marine management issues. This arrangement has allowed NT Fisheries to develop close working relationships with coastal Indigenous communities.

“Employing local Aboriginal Liaison Officers has really helped us develop good working relationships with Indigenous groups. It shows we are serious about having a presence in a region and developing long-term relationships.”

(AQIS Interview, 2007)

3) Longer-term funding is vital for building effective land and sea management organisations

As the profile of current government support shows, the majority of the funding sources in this area are delivered on an annual basis. However, where government agencies have been able to deliver funding for periods of three years or more, the quality of the land and sea management programs have increased significantly. This is because greater resources can go into developing these programs, with security of funding for staff, equipment and planning. While initially harder to negotiate, the longer-term funding approach is usually seen as more effective by both Indigenous groups and government agencies.

Increasingly some government agencies are working to deliver longer-term funding agreements. For example, the Indigenous Land Corporation has moved to fund key projects on a three year basis. This approach has been used to deliver capital and operational support to the Tiwi Land Rangers to implement their natural resource management plan. It has also been taken with Indigenous Pastoral Project (IPP) investments because of the recognition that it takes steady ongoing investment in organisational development and training to achieve sustainable Indigenous engagement in the pastoral industry. The same logic applies to the Indigenous land and sea management sector.

“Longer-term funding for projects allows us to plan our activities and employ Indigenous people. You can’t build an organisation for the future able to fulfil all the environmental and employment objectives the government wants us to meet if you only have funds for one year.”

(Ranger Groups at Momeka Workshop, 2007)

4) Coordinated delivery of support

Government agencies are currently finding coordinated delivery of Indigenous land and sea management support a significant challenge. This is for five key reasons:

- Government programs, on the whole, are designed to be delivered in certain way, for example, through application and grant structures linked in with specific timeframes, delegations and reporting processes. It can be hard for agencies to be flexible and change the delivery of funds to suit a collaborative approach across agencies;
- While government programs are designed to achieve broad environmental, social and economic outcomes, their success is measured by the delivery of particular outputs. It can be difficult for government agencies to rely on broader collaborative approaches and reporting process to monitor the achievement of these outputs;
- Collaboration across agencies for outcomes is a relatively new area and can be seen as risky and time consuming to develop;
- Government agencies, and their Ministers, want their support for projects to be properly acknowledged by the community and there can be fears that their contributions will not be recognised appropriately if they are one of many partners in a collaborative process; and
- Often not enough upfront work often occurs to communicate to agencies exactly how the collaborative process will work, including individual agency’s roles and responsibilities, and what the benefits will be. This makes agencies nervous about becoming involved.
Nevertheless, it is possible for government agencies to address each of these concerns and there are currently cases where a coordinated approach is being taken and it has acted to create more stable funding arrangements for Indigenous groups. For example, the Central Land Council has recently been able to work with the Indigenous Land Corporation, Aboriginals Benefit Account and Department of Environment and Water Resources to negotiate a more coordinated approach to funding the cultural and natural resource management work plan of the Tjuwanpa Rangers. Subsequently, this group has been able to develop with stability and more quickly than many Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. This group is now in the process of nominating for an NT Landcare award for its environmental and social achievements. Once this type of coordinated approach is negotiated, it becomes much easier to extend these arrangements to other areas.

The Operational Group established under the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule is also trialling a coordinated approach across a number of agencies, including the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Indigenous Land Corporation and Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, to the delivery of investment in Indigenous land and sea management groups. These agencies are developing a common streamlined contract for the delivery of funds as Early Investment Projects to a number of Indigenous land and sea management groups. This common contract will be managed by the Department of the Environment and Water Resources. The Indigenous land and sea management groups will only need to provide one Report back to this Department who will disseminate information back to the other agencies. While it has proved time consuming to negotiate this coordinated approach across agencies, agreement on one streamlined contracting process is a significant step forward. It is now possible to build on this work to deliver streamlined contracts under this Strategic Framework.

Government agencies interviewed have also indicated that it is often more strategic and less time consuming to negotiate a broad collaborative funding arrangement for an area rather than negotiate collaborative arrangements for individual projects on a case-by-case basis. This has been evidenced by the high-level collaborative funding approach the Indigenous Land Corporation has taken to the Indigenous Protected Areas program with the Department of the Environment and Water Resources.

“It works well for government agencies to coordinate their investment around our regional condition reports and the workplans of Indigenous land and sea management groups in that region. These outline all of the priority cultural and natural resource management issues and are consistent with NT wide environmental planning documents such as the NT Parks Masterplan and NHT Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan. We have trialled this approach with the ILC, ABA and Department of the Environment and Water Resources and it shows real promise.”

(Central Land Council Interview, 2007)
Key Findings – Critical Success Factors – Government Support Arrangements

- There is a significant degree of consensus among Indigenous groups and government agencies on the issues that need to be addressed for government support arrangements to work more effectively to develop the Indigenous land and sea management sector in the NT:
  - Resources and time allocated to participatory planning and negotiations with Indigenous groups so that support is more tailored to their needs and priorities;
  - Dedicated staff, including Aboriginal Liaison Officers, able to work directly with Indigenous groups and land councils, to develop projects and funding proposals that can then be lodged with government agencies;
  - Longer term funding for building effective land and sea management organisations; and
  - Coordinated delivery of support.

- However, there is also significant scepticism about whether government agencies can act address the above issues and change the way they do business.

- In order to address this scepticism, it is vital to highlight examples of where government agencies have changed their approach in the above areas and as a result had their support arrangements perceived by Indigenous groups and government agencies to work more effectively. These include:
  - Resources and time allocated to participatory planning under the Indigenous Protected Areas program;
  - Dedicated staff, including Aboriginal Liaison Officers, under Australian Quarantine Inspection Service fee-for-service arrangements;
  - Longer term funding available under the Indigenous Pastoral Program; and
  - Coordinated delivery of funding by the Indigenous Land Corporation and the Aboriginals Benefit Account for the Tjuwanpa Rangers.

- In addition, the work of the Operational Group under the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule in driving forward one streamlined contract across agencies for the delivery of investment in Indigenous land and sea management groups is a significant step forward. It is now possible to build on this work to deliver streamlined contracts under this Strategic Framework.

- Government agencies have also indicated that it is often more strategic and less time consuming to negotiate a broad collaborative funding arrangement for an area rather than negotiate collaborative arrangements for individual projects on a case-by-case basis. This has been evidenced by the high-level collaborative funding approach the Indigenous Land Corporation has taken to the Indigenous Protected Areas program with the Department of the Environment and Water Resources.

- These examples provide models for how government agencies might amend their delivery arrangements on a larger scale to better suit the investment needs of Indigenous land and sea management groups.
6. A CHANGING LANDSCAPE – NT EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM

This is a pivotal moment in the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. The institutional and funding landscape in which these groups are developing is set to dramatically alter over the next twelve months as a result of the NT Emergency Response and local government reform.

It was clear in research and interviews conducted that Indigenous groups and government agencies have come to regard land and sea management groups as among the most successful and valued organisations in communities. Both peak Indigenous organisations and government agencies consulted have highlighted the important role this Strategic Framework could play in positioning Indigenous groups to take advantage of opportunities the NT Emergency Response and local government reforms may present and developing options for managing any potential negative effects.

6.1 NT Emergency Response

The Australian Government announced the NT Emergency Response in June 2007. It is aimed at ensuring the safety of Aboriginal children and tackling problems of substance abuse, violence, social dysfunction and welfare dependency faced in many Indigenous communities throughout the NT. Wide-reaching legislation to implement the Emergency Response was passed in the Australian Parliament in August 2007 with an initial implementation budget of $560 million in 2007-08.

The Response is set to change the social, cultural and economic structure of NT Indigenous communities and organisations and therefore, subsequently, the Indigenous land and sea management sector. It was not the role of this project to predict the wide effects of the Response, however, research has indicated that there are key elements that will have a direct impact on the Indigenous land and sea management sector:

- Phasing out of CDEP with efforts made to transition Indigenous people into employment or other training, job ready and income support schemes such as the Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) Program and Work for the Dole;
- The potential closure of CDEP organisations and their possible transition to new Job Network and STEP ERS arrangements affecting hosting arrangements for Indigenous land and sea management groups. This is closely related to NT Local Government reform arrangements also impacting on hosting arrangements;
- Quarantining of 50 percent of Work for the Dole payments and CDEP transition payments for many Indigenous people;
- Removal of Remote Area Exemptions requiring Indigenous people of working age to participate in training and employment programs;
- Declarations of five-year leases over Indigenous townships and community living areas and the removal of the permit system in these areas and on access roads;
- Closer scrutiny of the funding provided to Indigenous communities and a concentration of resources on priority areas. Government Business Managers will be appointed in Indigenous communities to manage Australian Government funding and will have wide reaching powers to direct the use of government-funded services and assets; and
- Spotlight on NT Indigenous communities and a more focused examination of the future of these communities in terms of the provision of infrastructure, housing, education and health services and on social and business development and job creation.
1) Phasing out of CDEP – Jobs, training, employment and income support schemes

As indicated previously, the Australian Government has announced that it will phase out the CDEP program in the NT from June 2008. It has stated it will support Indigenous people that are not currently in full paid employment with transition to employment or training and employment programs, such as the Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) program and employment related services and Work for the Dole.

As previously highlighted, CDEP has played a very significant role supporting Indigenous land and sea management groups over the last fifteen years by providing partial wages and other resources, such as wage allocation, administration and human resource services and equipment and vehicles. Therefore, the phasing out of CDEP represents a challenge to Indigenous groups and government agencies wanting to support the continued development of a successful Indigenous land and sea management sector in the NT.

Research and interviews conducted suggest that Indigenous land and sea management groups will need to be directly assisted by government agencies to transition into employment or training and employment programs, such as the STEP ERS program and Work for the Dole. It is recommended that in formulating these transition arrangements, government agencies consider the programs that will be most useful in assisting Indigenous land and sea management groups develop over the next five years into long-term and sustainable for-profit or social enterprise cultural and natural resource management organisations achieving demonstrable environment and cultural outcomes. It is also recommended that government agencies consider the type of support necessary for Indigenous land and sea managers to secure employment in cultural and natural resource management in government, business, research and conservation agencies.

Research and consultation for this report have indicated that employment support for Indigenous land and sea management groups must be able to:

- value the environmental, biosecurity and cultural work Indigenous land and sea management groups are undertaking in the national interest;
- provide workforce certainty to Indigenous groups planning to deliver on 12 month to three year environmental and cultural projects and fee-for-service contracts;
- offer career development and training pathways and create incentives for Indigenous land and sea managers to increase their skills and undertake additional work;
- create incentives for Indigenous land and sea management groups to continue to seek out fee-for-service contracts and other commercial opportunities;
- recognise the high levels of turn-over in Indigenous land and sea management groups and the fact that jobs are sometimes shared between several individuals; and
- recognise it is difficult for Indigenous land and sea management groups to guarantee ongoing employment after short-term training programs. Longer timeframes are needed to transition people into jobs.

Expanded Working on Country Concept

It is recommended that the Department of the Environment and Water Resources and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations consider expanding the Working on Country concept in the NT to provide additional employment to Indigenous land and sea management groups.

The initial Working on Country program was developed when CDEP was in place to provide other wage support to Indigenous land and sea management groups. The program has only been in operation for five months, with the initial funding released to Indigenous groups in August 2007. Nevertheless, it has been well-received by Indigenous groups and is expected to be a successful model for delivering employment in Indigenous communities and achieving environmental and cultural outcomes in the national interest.

Given that CDEP is now being phased out in the NT, organisations consulted recommended that the Department of the Environment and Water Resources and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations consider the possible expansion of the Working on Country concept in the NT to
provide additional employment to Indigenous land and sea management groups who are able to successfully meet the criteria for support under the program.

The program could be expanded in the NT for a period of five years. Based on the percentage of Top-up in the Indigenous land and sea management sector and the current capacity of groups, it may be appropriate to initially consider new funding to cover an additional 200-300 positions for Indigenous land and sea managers in the NT over this period. Other government agencies relying on Indigenous groups to deliver land and sea management services, such as the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and Indigenous Land Corporation, could contribute funds to create positions.

It is recommended that these new positions be delivered with the same careful approach that has been taken to the delivery of the current Working on Country program as the program largely meets the six criteria above for an effective wage support program. Funding for employment positions must be directly linked to cultural and natural resource management work in the national interest, evidenced through cultural and natural resource management plans and demonstrated environmental and cultural outcomes. It is important that an expanded Working on Country program also make additional effort to encourage Indigenous land and sea management groups to develop fee-for-service contracts and other commercial opportunities in this area so organisations can decrease their reliance on government grants over the next five years.

This option would deliver employment outcomes for Indigenous land and sea management groups and much needed workforce stability. It would also create the employment certainty required for Indigenous land and sea managers to develop their skills and consider career paths in cultural and natural resource management within Indigenous groups or with other government, business, research and conservation agencies.

The Australian Government made announcement in September 2007, linked to the NT Emergency Response, of a $78.2 million jobs package to create employment positions for Indigenous people working in Australian Government service delivery, including in environmental and pastoral management. This announcement may provide some of the funds necessary to meet this recommendation and expand the Working on Country concept in the NT.

**Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) Program**

Research and consultations suggest that government agencies are also considering how the STEP program may be able to provide training and employment support to Indigenous land and sea management groups. As outlined earlier, the STEP program is delivered by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and assists private sector employers to provide job opportunities for Indigenous people. It provides flexible funds to cover training (including apprenticeships and traineeships and on-the-job training), mentoring and other employment costs. To attract STEP funds, the organisation needs to guarantee that the job will be ongoing after the funding period (usually 12 months). It is understood through consultations that STEP funds are currently allocated to an individual rather than a position within an organisation. This means that if the individual pulls out of the program, the STEP funds are lost to the organisation and they are unable to take on a replacement person with these funds.

This program has been used in the past to support training and employment pathways for Indigenous land and sea managers. However, Indigenous land and sea management groups interviewed indicated that there are three key elements to its design that currently make it difficult for this program to support groups. It can be a challenge for groups to:

- guarantee that there will be a job ongoing after a twelve month period, given they are operating in an uncertain environment to a large extent reliant on other government grants and fee-for-service arrangements;
- maintain a STEP program if an individual pulls out. This is a key issue given retention in training is a major issue in all regional and remote Indigenous communities; and
- liaise with registered training organisations to ensure training is appropriately delivered.

In consultations conducted, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations indicated that the STEP program can be flexible and its application to the Indigenous land and sea management sector
will be more closely examined in light of the phasing out of CDEP. The Department has recently expanded the program to other employment related services, including pre-employment support services and mentoring. This broader STEP ERS program may have a broader application and flexibility although it is unclear at this stage to what extent the program may support Indigenous land and sea management groups in the future.

It is recommended that the above three issues be addressed if STEP ERS is used to replace, to some extent, CDEP support for Indigenous land and sea management groups. One option may be to consider the STEP ERS program allocating positions to Indigenous land and sea management groups, while recognising that the program aims to support the creation of training and employment pathways for individuals. This would assist in stabilising the flow of STEP ERS funds to Indigenous land and sea management groups trying to manage issues of staff retention and turn-over.

The number of Indigenous land and sea management groups able to guarantee there will be ongoing jobs available to STEP ERS participants may slowly increase with the introduction of the current Working on Country program and potential delivery of core operational and capital funding under this Strategic Framework. However, it is recommended that the STEP ERS program be flexible and negotiate individual arrangements with Indigenous land and sea management groups and their host organisations. It may be more realistic to require Indigenous land and sea management groups to provide an ongoing position or assist an Indigenous land and sea manager into a position in another organisation after a period of 24-36 months, however it is unclear whether the flexibility exists for the program to move to this longer-term arrangement.

It is also recommended that greater efforts are made to link STEP ERS participants up with registered training organisations. This will require stronger mechanisms for the coordination and delivery of remote on-site training. Section 7.3 outlines options for government agencies to consider including support for remotely-based regional training coordinators over the next three years.

Work for the Dole

The Australian Government has announced that some CDEP participants are likely to transition to support under the Work for the Dole program from June 2008. Work for the Dole requires individuals receiving government income support payments to participate in community-based activities such as restoring and maintaining services and facilities. There is currently little detailed information available on how the Work for the Dole program may be applied to regional and remote Indigenous communities in the NT. However, current information suggests that the program will not be well-suited to supporting Indigenous land and sea management groups without reforms that allow it to be tailored to the circumstances of these groups.

Research and consultations conducted have highlighted four important issues that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations will need to address to determine how the program might provide useful support to Indigenous land and sea management groups.

First, Work for the Dole has traditionally focused on supporting participation in short-term urban and community-based activities. Many of the environmental and cultural threats being managed by Indigenous land and sea management groups are occurring on remote Aboriginal land and require extensive travel from communities by boat, plane, four wheel-drive or quad-bike. Ongoing long-term management of these lands is required and adaptive workplans for fire, weed and feral animal control, of a minimum one year cycle are currently adhered to. It is not uncommon for environmental and cultural projects to be undertaken for three to five years. Increasingly, Indigenous land and sea management groups are being required to indicate they have the capacity to undertake projects over these timeframes in fee-for-service contracts or under other government grants. They will require workforce certainty to be able to secure these opportunities and this may not be possible under current Work for the Dole arrangements.

It is recommended that urgent discussions take place between the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, other government agencies, land councils and Indigenous land and sea management groups to determine whether it may be possible for Work for the Dole positions to be allocated to Indigenous land and sea management groups or their host organisations for at least a period
of twelve months. This may help Indigenous land and sea management groups plan their activities effectively and maintain their ability to undertake long-term contracts and projects.

Second, consultations undertaken suggest there may be difficulties in the Work for the Dole program being accepted by all Indigenous land and sea managers, particularly senior managers who have been working in this area over a long-time and undertaken a significant amount of accredited training. It may be more appropriate for these people to access employment opportunities through an expanded Working on Country program rather than a transition to Work for the Dole support. There is a risk that the morale of some Indigenous land and sea managers will fall if they are required to transition from what was seen to be a community development program to an income support program. It is recommended that the impacts this has on the Indigenous land and sea management sector be monitored by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations in cooperation with Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Third, there are strong concerns among Indigenous land and sea management groups that Work for the Dole does not allow Top-up wages to be earned as formerly under CDEP before payments cut out. Top-up has been one of the key incentives to encourage people to work in Indigenous land and sea management groups and it has given people higher incomes, greater self-esteem, introduced them to western employment structures including taxation and superannuation and generated increased productivity. Research has indicated that the Australian Government will introduce a CDEP transition payment so that individuals on CDEP top-up arrangements prior to 23 July 2007 can maintain a parity of pay under Work for the Dole. While this transition payment will assist, there may still be cases where individuals joining Indigenous land and sea management groups receive a lower Work for the Dole income than they would have under CDEP and Top-up arrangements while essentially performing the same work.

More importantly, the inability of Work for the Dole to accommodate Top-up and the existence of the CDEP transition payment, may more fundamentally create a disincentive for some Indigenous land and sea management groups to continue to source Top-up funding by way of other fee-for-service or government grant arrangements. Top-up is currently encouraging Indigenous land and sea managers to undertake additional hours and develop full-time work practices. It is also an incentive for Indigenous groups to diversify their funding sources and increase fee-for-service opportunities. It is recommended that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations ensure that the incentives and support Indigenous groups require to develop fee-for-service activities are maintained under any new arrangements. One option may be to increase the support the Department provides Indigenous land and sea management groups under its business development programs.

Fourth, in attracting other forms of government support, such as NHT grants or Indigenous Land Corporation support, Indigenous groups have been identifying CDEP contributions to projects as the communities’ contribution. This has been possible because of the identity of CDEP as a community development program rather than solely as an income support or welfare program. It is unlikely at the present time that Work for the Dole arrangements will be viewed as a community contribution as it is seen as a key platform in the Australian Government’s income support structure. Indigenous land and sea management groups are concerned that this may make it more difficult to attract funds from other sources. It is recommended that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations explore the possibility of instituting a policy that recognises Work for the Dole contributions as community contributions for the purpose of securing additional government grants.

These four issues will need to be addressed if Work for the Dole is to be effectively used to support Indigenous land and sea management groups. Overall, it may be more appropriate for an expanded Working on Country program to support the majority of Indigenous land and sea managers. The STEP ERS and Work for the Dole programs may be more appropriately targeted at supporting junior Indigenous land and sea managers who have only recently entered into Indigenous land and sea management groups and do not have much work experience. However, a career path with incentives will need to be developed for these individuals to ensure they are able to transition into employment.
2) The closure of CDEP organisations and their possible transition to new Job Network and STEP ERS arrangements

The closure of local community CDEP organisations and their possible transition to new Job Network and STEP ERS arrangements may also disrupt the broader support and host arrangements these organisations are currently providing to many Indigenous land and sea management groups. Over 90% of Indigenous land and sea management groups receive wage allocation, administration and human resource services from CDEP organisations. Many Indigenous land and sea management groups also receive access to other forms of infrastructure support such as vehicles, office space and equipment through their local CDEP organisations. With these reforms, some local community CDEP organisations may close and not be replaced with new Job Network or STEP ERS providers at the local community level. In these circumstances, Indigenous land and sea management groups may need to consider new host arrangements. Some CDEP organisations may transition into Job Network and STEP ERS providers and it might be possible over the medium-term for these new organisations to continue to provide host support to Indigenous land and sea management groups. However, there could still be a gap in hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups. This uncertainty over hosting arrangements may be further exacerbated by local government reforms as discussed in section 6.2.

It is recommended that government agencies and other organisations, such as land councils, work urgently to assist Indigenous land and sea management groups establish new governance structures and hosting arrangements in circumstances where their current host arrangements will change over the next 12 months. It may be possible for some groups to move towards independent incorporation but the majority will need new hosting arrangements, at least in the short-term, by local community organisations such as outstation resource centres, the new shires or mid level organisations such as the land councils.

3) Quarantining of Work for the Dole and CDEP transition payments

As part of the NT Emergency Response, the Australian Government has announced that it will quarantine 50 percent of all income received, through Work for the Dole and CDEP transition payments, by Indigenous people living in communities to be income managed by Centrelink for the next 12 months. Individuals will work with Centrelink to identify their expenses and priority needs in terms of food, clothing, housing, health, child care and development, education, training, employment and transport.

This will impact on members of Indigenous land and sea management groups if their wages are supported by Work for the Dole and CDEP transition government support. These individuals will have less discretionary funds available in comparison to individuals in the group that may secure full wages. It is difficult to predict what the effects will be of this wage quarantining on the Indigenous land and sea management sector. While it might be a valuable income management measure, it may also act as a disincentive for some individuals to join Indigenous land and sea management groups. Some organisations consulted were concerned that these new arrangements might cause divisions within Indigenous groups as many of them have previously approached wage funding as a resource to share across the group rather than as a varied salary attached to particular individuals.

It is recommended the impacts this reform has on the Indigenous land and sea management sector be monitored by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations in cooperation with Indigenous land and sea management groups.

4) Removal of Remote Area Exemption

The Australian Government has also announced that it will lift the Remote Area Exemption across NT Indigenous communities, which is currently exempting people in some remote areas from the requirement to seek employment or participate in Work for the Dole to receive income benefits. This is likely to lead to an increase of Indigenous people participating in Work for the Dole schemes over the next 18 months. It has been suggested by some government agencies that these people could work on community activities such as community clean-ups and also potentially land and sea management projects. While it must be recognised that community clean-ups are different to the portfolio of skilled
cultural and natural resource management work currently carried out by Indigenous land and sea management groups, there is some overlap with the environmental health work carried out in this area and there may also be potential for Indigenous groups to supervise Work for the Dole participants undertaking a broader range of cultural and natural resource management activities.

Government support for larger numbers of people to work on land and sea management projects as part of Work for the Dole schemes could boost the Indigenous land and sea management area by providing additional labour. However, organisations consulted indicated that these schemes could also place the emerging Indigenous land and sea management sector under significant stress as functioning Indigenous land and sea management groups lose control of land and sea management activities to Job Network and STEP ERS organisations or government agencies managing Work for the Dole participants. To manage this issue, it is recommended that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations consult with Indigenous land and sea management groups and traditional Aboriginal owners to develop Work for the Dole programs in land and sea management in particular communities.

5) Declaration of five-year leases and removal of the permit system

The Australian Government has stated that as a part of the NT Emergency Response it will declare five-year leases over Indigenous townships and community living areas and remove the permit system in these areas and on access roads. This declaration of temporary leases and the removal of the permit system will only apply to a very small area of Aboriginal land in townships or along road corridors. The current permit system will continue to operate on the vast majority of Aboriginal land.

It is clear from research and consultations undertaken that legal recognition of Aboriginal land, and the associated permit system, are important foundations for Indigenous land and sea management as they establish traditional Aboriginal owners as the landowners with cultural and natural resource management responsibilities. It is recommended that the roll-out of the NT Emergency Response make it clear that these responsibilities are respected and will continue to be supported both in and out of township areas and along access routes. This will require careful discussions between the NT Emergency Response Team and traditional Aboriginal owners.

A number of organisations consulted suggested that a further practical step in recognising continuing traditional Aboriginal owner cultural and natural resource management responsibilities throughout this period could be for government investors to support Indigenous land and sea management groups to manage the environmental implications associated with ending restricted access to communities. Ending restricted access is expected to present a major challenge for weed and feral animal control across the NT with increased road traffic on Aboriginal land. Meeting this challenge will require management techniques such as the installation of wash-down facilities on some access roads. It is recommended that government agencies consider providing work opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups in this area.

6) Closer scrutiny of funding and allocation of resources to priority areas

Under the Emergency Response, Government Business Managers will be appointed in NT Indigenous communities to manage Australian Government funding. These Managers will have wide reaching powers to direct the use of government-funded services and assets but are expected to negotiate with government departments and Indigenous community organisations in the case of any amendments to existing funding contracts and government services. It will be important that these Government Business Managers understand the value of the Indigenous land and sea management sector and act to support government investment in this area. It is recommended that members of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule Bilateral Steering Committee or Operational Group provide a briefing to Government Business Managers on the value of Indigenous land and sea management groups and the outcomes they achieve in line with government policy objectives.

These Government Business Managers may also be involved in more closely looking at the management of Australian Government funding in Indigenous communities. In the majority of cases, closer scrutiny of the funds provided to Indigenous land and sea management groups is likely to show that government resources are being utilised appropriately and that a range of important environmental, social, training and employment outcomes are being achieved. However, as some organisations hosting
Indigenous land and sea management groups may have low levels of financial reporting and poor accountability measures typical of many small community organisations, there may be instances of mismanagement. It is important that these instances are not used to detract from the more important success stories in this area. At the macro-level, some organisations consulted also expressed the concern that a greater risk to the sector is the potential diversion of government resources under the NT Emergency Response away from Indigenous land and sea management groups to areas perceived as being in more urgent need.

7) National attention on NT Indigenous communities

More broadly, the impact the NT Emergency Response will have in terms of directing national attention on to NT Indigenous communities should not be under-estimated. The attention could lead to communities, government, business and philanthropic organisations being more focused on the future of these communities in terms of social, business development and job creation. This provides an opportunity to consider stronger investment in the Indigenous land and sea management sector as an emerging remote area industry with strong cultural foundations, community support and real opportunities for innovative social and business development. This Strategic Framework provides options for government agencies to consider support for the development of this sector.

6.2 NT Local Government Reform

The NT Government has instituted a major reform process across the Territory seeking to amalgamate the current 62 local government councils and associations into four municipal councils and nine shires. This new arrangement is set to come into force in August 2008. This reform will affect many Indigenous land and sea management groups who are either directly hosted, or indirectly supported by, local government councils.

It is understood that NT Government staff will be working through specific transition plans with individual local government councils and proposed shires. It is recommended that the NT Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport ensure these plans take account of how ongoing support may be provided to Indigenous land and sea management groups. This process may also prompt some Indigenous land and sea management groups to consider other options for administrative and financial support such as the in-house provision of these services through establishing an incorporated body or hosting by another agency, at least in the interim, such as a land council or outstation resource centre.

Over time, the local government reform process may also open up new opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups. As new local government shires determine their responsibilities for the provision of some types of land and sea management services such as weed control on arterial roads and community environmental health, this may create contracting opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups.
Key Findings – A Changing Landscape – NT Emergency Response and Local Government Reform

- This is a pivotal moment in the development of Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT. The institutional and funding landscape in which these groups are developing is set to dramatically change over the next twelve months.

- The NT Emergency Response is directing national attention on to NT Indigenous communities. This provides an opportunity to consider stronger investment in Indigenous land and sea management as an emerging remote area industry with strong cultural foundations, community support and opportunities for innovative social and business development.

- There are two high priority challenges that face the emerging Indigenous land and sea management sector:
  - First, it will be essential to effectively manage the transitioning of Indigenous land and sea management groups from the Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) program to other employment and training programs, such as an expanded Working on Country program, Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) program and Work for the Dole.
  - Second, where required, it will be essential to assist Indigenous land and sea management groups to establish new governance structures and hosting arrangements in circumstances where their current host arrangements will change because of the closure of CDEP organisations and their possible transition to new Job Network and STEP ERS arrangements. NT local government reforms will also impact significantly on hosting arrangements for Indigenous land and sea management groups.

- It is recommended that in formulating employment transition arrangements, government agencies implement programs that will be most useful in assisting Indigenous land and sea management groups develop into sustainable for-profit or social enterprise organisations.

- It is recommended that the Department of the Environment and Water Resources and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations consider the possible expansion of the Working on Country concept in the NT to provide additional employment to Indigenous land and sea management groups. This option would deliver employment outcomes for Indigenous land and sea management groups and much needed workforce stability over the next five years. It would also create the employment certainty required for Indigenous land and sea managers to develop their skills and consider career paths in cultural and natural resource management within Indigenous groups or with other government, business, research and conservation agencies.

- The Australian Government has announced a $78.2 million jobs package to create employment positions for Indigenous people working in Australian Government service delivery, including in environmental and pastoral management. This announcement may provide some of the funds to expand the Working on Country concept in the NT.

- The Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) Program may be able to provide training and employment support to Indigenous land and sea management groups. However, it is recommended that the program tailor support to these groups by considering:
  - allocating STEP ERS positions to Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups, while recognising that the program aims to support the creation of training and employment pathways for individuals;
  - a flexible negotiation approach to establishing timeframes for Indigenous land and sea management groups to provide on-going positions within their organisations or in other organisations (24-36 months rather than 12 months); and
  - options to better link STEP ERS participants up with registered training organisations.
There are fundamental issues that will need to be explored before Work for the Dole can effectively support Indigenous land and sea management including whether Work for the Dole positions (traditionally urban-based and short-term) can be allocated to Indigenous land and sea management groups for at least a period of twelve months to allow for the delivery of environmental and cultural projects on remote Aboriginal land.

There are also strong concerns among Indigenous land and sea management groups that Work for the Dole does not allow Top-up wages to be earned as formerly under CDEP before payments cut out. Top-up has been one of the key incentives to encourage people to work in Indigenous land and sea management groups and it has given people higher incomes, greater self-esteem, introduced them to western employment structures including taxation and superannuation and generated increased productivity. It is recommended that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations ensure incentives to perform additional work and seek out contracts are maintained under new arrangements.

The lifting of the Remote Area Exemption across NT Indigenous communities is likely to lead to an increase of Indigenous people into Work for the Dole schemes over the next 18 months. It has been suggested by some government agencies that these people could work on land and sea management projects. For this to work successfully, it is recommended that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations consult with Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups and traditional Aboriginal owners to develop Work for the Dole programs in the land and sea management area.

Overall, it might be more appropriate for an expanded Working on Country concept to support the majority of Indigenous land and sea managers. The STEP ERS and Work for the Dole program may be more appropriately targeted at supporting junior Indigenous land and sea managers who have only recently entered into Indigenous land and sea management groups and do not have much work experience.

Legal recognition of Aboriginal land, and the associated permit system, are important foundations for Indigenous land and sea management as they establish Traditional Owners as the landowners with cultural and natural resource management responsibilities. It is recommended that the roll-out of the NT Emergency Response make it clear that these responsibilities are still respected and will continue to be supported both in and out of township areas and along access routes. This will require careful discussions between the NT Emergency Response Team and traditional Aboriginal owners.

A further practical step could be for government investors to support Indigenous land and sea management groups to manage the additional environmental management implications that will come with ending restricted access to communities. For example, increased road traffic on Aboriginal land will require greater weed and feral animal management controls in some areas and this could provide additional work opportunities for Indigenous groups with government funding on a fee-for-service basis.

It is important that Government Business Managers understand the value of Indigenous land and sea management and act to support government investment in this area.

It is recommended that the NT Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport ensure that local government reform transition plans take account of how new shires will provide support to Indigenous land and sea management groups. The closure of local community councils may mean that some Indigenous land and sea management groups may need to consider new hosting arrangements, at least in the short-term, such as a land council or outstation resource centre.

Local government reforms may create contracting opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management group as new shires determine their responsibilities for the provision of some types of land and sea management services such as weed control on arterial roads and community environmental health.
7. PRIORITY NEEDS – GROWING AN EFFECTIVE INDIGENOUS LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT SECTOR

The research and consultations undertaken for this project have highlighted seven priority issues that require a response from government agencies and other investors in order to support Indigenous land and sea management groups develop into viable for-profit or social enterprise cultural and natural resource management organisations that produce environmental, social and economic outcomes. These needs are consistent with the development of this area as an emerging sector. These priority needs also reflect the critical success factors identified in Indigenous groups that are developing into strong organisations.

The priority needs are:

1. Provide capital and operational funding support to Indigenous land and sea management groups so they can undertake cultural and natural resource management and biosecurity activities and plan for the long-term sustainability of their organisations.

2. Provide employment for Indigenous land and sea managers who deliver environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in the national interest.

3. Develop effective training and development support for Indigenous land and sea managers so they are able to successfully combine Indigenous ecological knowledge with western scientific approaches to cultural and natural resource management and develop careers in this area.

4. Develop long-term management arrangements for large-scale biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues by Indigenous land and sea management groups across regions.

5. Increase fee-for-service income generation and business development opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups so they are able to develop into sustainable profit or social enterprise organisations.

6. Establish a long-term monitoring and evaluation program to provide clear information to Indigenous groups, government agencies and other investors on the environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic development returns on investment.

7. Strengthen delivery models and institutional support structures for Indigenous groups.

These priority needs are connected to one another and should be addressed with a holistic investment package. Addressing these priority needs will require a measured and staged approach, building on successes carefully, over the next five years.

This section details the above priority needs for the Indigenous land and sea management sector. The Strategic Framework in Part B provides information on how investment across these needs might be prioritised and delivered.
7.1 Building Effective Organisations

Over 85 percent of the organisations and individuals consulted indicated that the most important priority need was for government agencies to deliver a package of long-term core operational and capital support to individual groups. This would be aimed at building effective and stable Indigenous land and sea management organisations over the next five years.

As demonstrated in the profile of government support arrangements, Indigenous land and sea management groups currently operate by attracting numerous short-term grants and payments from government agencies and other organisations. While it is likely that groups will continue to operate with a portfolio of funding sources, there is an urgent need to consolidate core operational funding for these groups. This core operational funding could be delivered as part of a tailored package to Indigenous land and sea management groups able to consolidate as, or make the transition to, for-profit or social enterprise businesses over the next three to five years. These funds would be tied to concrete environmental and cultural outcomes and building-up fee-for-service arrangements, independent of government grant funding.

This investment is recognised by both Indigenous groups and government agencies as fundamental to the goal of building a sustainable Indigenous land and sea management sector for the long-term. Building this sector, and securing the economic development and employment opportunities it can provide, is only possible if there are strong Indigenous organisations including core staff of coordinators and senior Indigenous land and sea managers, able to play a key role in its development. This core operational support is also required to assist Indigenous groups develop new hosting arrangements where needed as a result of local government and CDEP reforms.

Increasing the capacity of Indigenous land and sea management groups is also in the direct interests of a number of government agencies who increasingly rely on these groups for services including: Bushfires NT, NT Government Parks and Wildlife, AQIS, Customs and Department of the Environment and Water Resources. In interviews conducted a number of these agencies highlighted the importance of increasing the core operational stability of Indigenous land and sea management groups so these agencies are then able to enter into partnerships for this provision of cultural, environmental and biosecurity services. In particular, it is difficult for government agencies to enter into these partnerships without stable coordinators, senior Indigenous land and sea managers and effective hosting arrangements.

Providing support for stable Indigenous land and sea management groups also in the interest of a range of other government agencies because of the social, education, health employment and economic outcomes being achieved by these groups, including: Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Department of Education, Science and Training and Department of Health and Ageing.

Core operational and capital funding includes funds for the development of strong governance arrangements and business models, salaries for coordinator positions where required, wages for senior Indigenous land and sea managers, infrastructure, equipment and administration. Given low levels of infrastructure in NT Indigenous communities, it is often necessary for Indigenous land and sea management groups to obtain funds to build new, or repair old, housing for coordinators before they are able to recruit and retain people for these positions from outside communities. Due to the expense and scale of this problem, funds available under this Strategic Framework will need to be supplemented with funds from housing programs provided by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and NT Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport. An indicative list of some of the items that could be included in core operational and capital funding is at Appendix Six.

“There number one investment priority is building up the core operations of Indigenous land and sea management groups. This includes properly paying and supporting the network of coordinators who are working on the ground with local people to get programs up and running. This is a structural issue and our natural resource management programs will not be sustainable unless the core operations of Indigenous groups are strengthened. If this investment was made it would change the face of resource management across the NT.”

(Bushfires NT Interview, 2007)
7.2 Employment for Indigenous Land and Sea Managers

All of the Indigenous groups and government agencies consulted stated that it is important that this Strategic Framework is able to provide employment for Indigenous land and sea managers who work on environmental, cultural and biosecurity projects in the national interest. In particular, consultations indicated a transition pathway is needed for Indigenous groups currently relying on CDEP to employment or other training and employment assistance programs. Accordingly, investments in employment and/or training and employment programs must aim to both:

- provide the means for Indigenous people to undertake environmental, cultural and biosecurity work to meet their aspirations for caring for country and the Australian Government’s environmental, cultural and biosecurity protection responsibilities; and
- to provide a mechanism through which Indigenous people previously involved with the CDEP program, can move into jobs or other training and employment programs.

These aims are consistent with the objectives of the Department of the Environment and Water Resources’ current Working on Country program.

There are six criteria for successful employment and training programs for Indigenous land and sea management groups. The programs should:

- value the environmental, biosecurity and cultural work Indigenous land and sea management groups are undertaking in the national interest;
- provide workforce certainty to Indigenous groups planning to deliver on 12 month to three year environmental and cultural projects and fee-for-service contracts;
- offer career development and training pathways and create incentives for Indigenous land and sea managers to increase their skills and undertake additional work;
- create incentives for Indigenous land and sea management groups to continue to seek out fee-for-service contracts and other commercial opportunities;
- recognise the high levels of turn-over in Indigenous land and sea management groups and the fact that jobs are sometimes shared between several individuals; and
- recognise it is difficult for Indigenous land and sea management groups to guarantee ongoing employment after short-term training programs. Longer timeframes can be needed to transition people into jobs.

A discussion on government initiatives that could provide employment support in for Indigenous land and sea management groups transitioning from CDEP is contained in section six.

“All Ranger Groups aspire to have ‘real jobs’ and wages that reflect the value of traditional Ranger knowledge and acknowledge the extensive training undertaken by most Rangers.”

7.3 Training and Skills Development for Indigenous Land and Sea Managers

Indigenous land and sea management groups recognise the importance of education and training to build their capabilities to manage difficult cultural and natural resource management issues and subsequently enter into fee-for-service arrangements. This is strongly evidenced by the fact that almost all groups undertake regular training and have relatively high rates of completion for certificate courses in this area.

Indigenous people also strongly believe in the importance of transferring Indigenous ecological knowledge to younger generations. The draft North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA) and Tropical Savannas CRC Report into *Indigenous Ecological Knowledge in the NT* states that senior Indigenous people are currently concerned at the lack of opportunities for teaching younger generations about land and sea management.

Due to the complexity of the issues in this area, a training workshop was conducted in August 2007 with key training providers, government agencies and Indigenous organisations as part of the consultations for this project.

The workshop concluded that there are several priority needs that have to be met to ensure education and training in this area is more effective and positioned to build best practice Indigenous land and sea managers. These included:

- Establishing a stronger voice to represent the training and employment needs of the Indigenous land and sea management sector. This may require the Indigenous land and sea management sector to be better represented on an industry training advisory council or in other relevant forums;
- Developing training and employment pathways to assist Indigenous people secure cultural and natural resource management positions in government, business, research and conservation agencies;
- Coordinating the provision of training with stronger links between Indigenous land and sea management groups and training providers, particularly in remote regions;
- Developing curriculum materials specific for NT Indigenous land and sea management groups that can sit along the subjects offered as part of the National Conservation and Land Management Training Package. This will involve job-ready training and courses specific to the NT environmental, cultural and social landscape; and
- Encouraging strong relationships between Indigenous land and sea management groups and the schools in their region, including the incorporation of the two tool-box approach of western science and Indigenous ecological knowledge in the school curriculum.

Other consultations have highlighted additional priority needs including:

- Increasing the number of NT Parks and Wildlife officers to be out-posted to Indigenous land and sea management groups to assist in establishing effective cultural and natural resource management work programs;
- Establishing a leadership and project management initiative for senior and future Indigenous land and sea managers involving Indigenous leaders and the business sector;
- Developing an Indigenous land and sea management group and research institution partnership initiative to provide a voice for Indigenous groups in establishing research agendas and participating in research across the NT; and
- Supporting women’s land and sea management facilitators to increase the engagement of women in the Indigenous land and sea management sector.

Addressing these priority needs would benefit not only Indigenous land and sea management groups but Indigenous and non-Indigenous people working more broadly in the area of land and sea management, including for Australian and NT Government Parks and Wildlife Services.
1) Stronger voice to represent the training needs of the Indigenous land and sea management sector

Currently training needs for the Indigenous land and sea management sector are represented by the Agri-Foods Council who provides advice to the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training on the Conservation and Land Management Training Package delivered to Indigenous land and sea managers across the NT. The training workshop identified the need for the Indigenous land and sea management sector to be formally represented on this Council or in another forum to make sure the training requirements of this emerging sector are conveyed to government agencies who have responsibility for accrediting training packages. Another key training advisory council at the NT level is the Primary Industries Training Advisory Board and it may also be useful for the Indigenous land and sea management sector to be represented on this Board.

It is also worthwhile considering how Indigenous land and sea managers could join with other people working in cultural and natural resource management in the NT, including in Parks and Wildlife Services and conservation agencies, to increase representation for cultural and natural resource management industry more broadly on the Agri-Foods Council and other forums.

2) Developing training and employment pathways for Indigenous people to secure cultural and natural resource management positions

The workshop highlighted the need to ensure that training and employment pathways for Indigenous land and sea managers are linked to employment outcomes. Some Indigenous land and sea management groups consulted highlighted a concern that training is sometimes viewed as an end in itself rather than a pathway to a paid position. Training is particularly useful for Indigenous land and sea managers when it is seen as a stepping stone to an identified position or when it is undertaken by people already in positions and it complements their workplans.

3) Coordination – stronger links between Indigenous groups and training providers

While many Indigenous groups are undergoing certificate training in natural resource management in the NT, there is often great difficulty connecting Indigenous groups to training providers in an ongoing and effective way. There are very significant challenges for training providers in delivering courses to Indigenous people in remote areas, largely because there are not enough qualified trainers and costs can be prohibitive.

The agencies and Indigenous groups at the training workshop recommended funding and recruiting training coordinators in regional areas across the NT to assist Indigenous land and sea management groups access training that is relevant to their workplans. This may allow for the delivery of training courses to several Indigenous land and sea management groups in a region at the one time. A minority of Indigenous land and sea management groups have regional training coordinators at the moment. In these locations, Indigenous groups have been able to access more effective and ongoing training and development.

The workshop also recommended exploring the merits of establishing dedicated cultural and natural resource management training facilities or campuses at regional locations in the Centre and Top End of the NT. Establishing these facilities, and linking them in with the school, VET and university system as well as with Indigenous land and sea management groups, traditional Aboriginal owners and the NT and Australian Government Parks and Wildlife Service, would have the potential to take training and education in land and sea management in the NT to a more sophisticated and effective level.

It is recommended that approximately eight regional training coordinators be appointed to link Indigenous groups in a region with training providers. This initiative could be initially rolled-out for three years while the feasibility study into longer-term regional training delivery models, including the establishment of regional cultural and natural resource management training campuses, is undertaken. These initiatives are required to improve levels of training and skills among Indigenous land and sea managers necessary for part-time or full-time employment within their own organisations or with other government, research, business and conservation agencies.
A further recommendation from the workshop was that Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education work together on data sharing, course sequencing and infrastructure use to provide a more seamless service to Indigenous land and sea managers. The NT Government has Memorandums of Understanding with both institutions and these may provide an avenue to take up this issue.

4) Curriculum materials specific to NT Indigenous land and sea managers

The workshop recommended the development of curriculum materials specific to NT Indigenous land and sea management groups that can sit along the subjects offered as part of the national Conservation and Land Management training package. These materials could include job-ready training and cross-cultural awareness information required for Indigenous land and sea managers to be able to work effectively in the NT.

While there has been significant progress in introducing Indigenous people to western work practices through Indigenous land and sea management groups, there remains a gulf in understanding for some groups about how they might combine Aboriginal priorities and ways of working with western employment structures, rights and obligations. This is a very complex area and requires skilled communication and negotiation, currently carried out by coordinators and senior Indigenous land and sea managers on a day-to-day basis. These coordinators and Indigenous land and sea managers need to be better supported to convey information about western employment practices to Indigenous groups.

Delivering training in this area is particularly important to enhancing the capacity of Indigenous groups to be able to deliver on government contracts and fee-for-service arrangements. The delivery of this training is also now more important with the advent of the Working on Country program providing salaries to some Indigenous land and sea managers.

The delivery of workplace literacy and numeracy training will also remain an ongoing priority. Low levels of literacy and numeracy act as a barrier to some Indigenous land and sea managers completing higher level Certificates in Conservation and Land Management. They are also barriers to Indigenous land and sea managers undertaking project management and coordination roles for their groups.

5) Schools and Indigenous land and sea management

The desktop research and consultations highlighted the importance traditional Aboriginal owners and Indigenous groups place on encouraging younger Indigenous people to take an interest in land and sea management and learn ‘two tool-kit’ approaches to combining Indigenous ecological knowledge with western science.

For these reasons, many of those consulted recommended that this Strategic Framework support Indigenous land and sea management groups to develop closer relationships with the schools in their region. These partnerships are already developing with Indigenous land and sea management groups regularly conducting school visits and holding talks with the students. However, these partnerships could be much more strongly supported. It is recommended that the Strategic Framework support Indigenous groups who are interested in ‘Adopt a School’ and deliver, in partnership with the school, Junior Ranger programs and work experience. The NT Department of Employment, Education and Training can also support work in this area through their Remote Learning Partnership Agreements with Indigenous communities and schools.

Indigenous land and sea managers are seen as role models for community engagement, self-esteem and employment in Indigenous communities. Developing partnerships between Indigenous land and sea management groups and the schools in their region could act to strengthen general community support for the school and encourage greater attendance, retention and achievement.

6) Out-posting of NT Parks and Wildlife Officers to Indigenous groups

Under the Indigenous Ranger Group Development Program, NT Parks and Wildlife out-posts a Parks and Wildlife officer to the Dhimurru Aboriginal Land Management Corporation and is looking to further develop this model and out-post additional officers to other Indigenous organisations who consider they would benefit from this arrangement over the next few years. This approach is supported
as it can provide substantial training and capacity building outcomes for Indigenous land and sea management groups. Additional information on this initiative was provided in section 4.2.

It may also be possible to expand this initiative to develop ranger exchanges under which senior Indigenous land and sea managers are out-posted to NT Parks and Wildlife. This would provide Indigenous land and sea managers with experience working as mainstream rangers in the parks and reserves framework. In particular, this arrangement could assist Indigenous rangers develop confidence in managing tourists. This initiative would need to be progressed carefully to ensure that Indigenous land and sea managers and NT Parks and Wildlife staff have the appropriate training and mentoring and to benefit from the experience.

7) Delivering leadership, exchange and mentoring programs

The research and consultations suggested that greater effort needs to be made in delivering leadership and project management training and mentoring to senior and upcoming Indigenous land and sea managers. There are increasing concerns that as senior managers move on (many of whom are better educated than younger people in the community) capacity gaps will emerge. Taking a broader approach to the training of Indigenous land and sea managers, including leadership and project management skills, will allow for career paths to develop in this area.

8) Encouraging longer-term partnerships between Indigenous land and sea management groups and research institutions

Government agencies should consider possible incentives to encourage long-term partnerships with research institutions and Indigenous communities on the basis that they can deliver scientific training and two way knowledge transfer between the parties. A key issue is empowering Indigenous groups to be able to attract and commission their own research support for their priority cultural and natural resource management projects.

There is also an opportunity for government agencies to work more closely with research institutions and Indigenous groups in the NT to shape research priorities in Indigenous land and sea management. Several major research organisations including CSIRO, Desert Knowledge CRC, Charles Darwin University (and previously the Tropical Savannas CRC) are undertaking work on regional development, potential Indigenous engagement in the ‘conservation’ economy and other aspects of Indigenous land and sea management. This work could more closely feed into government policy development and planning. As part of investment in research over the next three years, CSIRO has developed and is implementing a research theme on Sustainable Regional Development which includes a research stream on Indigenous Livelihoods directed at development of ecosystem service based livelihood options in partnership with Indigenous communities. This has strengthened CSIRO capacity to co-invest in research in this area, particularly on employment and economic development pathways for Indigenous land and sea managers and management groups, roles of ‘broker’ organisations, fire management and other environmental issues.

Research priorities in this area could also be agreed under the Memorandum of Understanding the NT Government has with Charles Darwin University and the University could also be a potential co-investor, including in research on payment for environmental services. These research institutions draw on public funds and are accountable for delivering on national and NT research priorities, including in cultural and natural resource management.

9) Increasing the engagement of women in Indigenous land and sea management

Women face many cultural and social challenges in participating in Indigenous land and sea management groups. Their needs are frequently not being met in a sector that to date has been male dominated. In some Aboriginal communities it is seen as more appropriate for women to form their own land and sea management group or develop their own set of activities rather than join the pre-existing men’s group. While this approach has proved successful in some instances, for example with the separate Djelk Men and Women Ranger Groups, it can be challenging to sustain resources for two individual groups in a community.
The appointment of Aboriginal Women’s Land Management Facilitators and the continued development of initiatives to support women’s engagement in this area is supported. It is recognised that one approach that is currently working well in some locations is for women to be involved in teaching younger school students about Indigenous land and sea management. This could be an avenue for more women to become involved in the sector and branch out into other areas.
7.4 Effective Management of Significant Biophysical, Ecological and Cultural Heritage Issues

The future of cultural and natural resource management and bio-security in the NT will largely rely on the availability and skills of Indigenous land and sea managers, particularly in remote regions. It is vital that efforts be made to boost the ability of these groups to work effectively together on large scale biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues across regions of the NT. Major environmental threats require collaborative approaches with neighbouring Indigenous land and sea management groups and other land users, for example pastoral stations and NT and Australian Government Parks and Wildlife Services.

Currently, funding and capacity limitations have largely restricted Indigenous groups to working on relatively small scale projects in their regions. However, there are a few exceptions including the large scale West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Project, Top End Aboriginal Land Management Employment Strategy (Mimosa Project), Carpentaria Ghost Net Project and Turtle and Dugong Project, all requiring longer-term cooperative work across Indigenous land and sea management groups in a region. These projects have demonstrated the willingness of Indigenous groups to enter into collaborative projects with their neighbours and their understanding of the need for a networked approach to tackling significant biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues.

However, in these collaborative projects it is important that an organisation is identified to perform a coordination, support, monitoring and quality assurance role. With previous projects of this nature, this role has been performed by an NT agency, such as the Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts or Bushfires NT, natural resource management agency, such as the Northern Gulf Resource Management Group, or a research organisation, land council or other Indigenous organisation such as the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance. These coordinating agencies typically perform a birds-eye project management function but are also involved in working closely with Indigenous groups to ensure that scientific methodologies are being used alongside Indigenous ecological knowledge and to assist with skills development.

It is recommended that a similar approach be taken to investing in large scale biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects under this Strategic Framework. The NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources could commission the development of large scale projects to manage or protect high value ecological and cultural environments identified in the NT Parks Masterplan, NT Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan, Indigenous Protected Area Plans and other Indigenous land and sea management plans. Indigenous groups could then be approached and invited to participate under contract arrangements.

It is also recommended that the Natural Resource Management Board (NT) be approached as a potentially significant co-investor in these major projects. The NRM Board has responsibility for the delivery of the regional stream of Natural Heritage Trust funds and is responsible for setting and meeting environmental and cultural targets under its Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan. It has a key role to play in the management of the major environmental and cultural issues.

A major factor in the success of these projects will be the upfront involvement of, and negotiation with, traditional Aboriginal owners and Indigenous land and sea management groups on the identification of priority cultural and natural resource management issues on their land and sea. It is important that government agencies and other organisations respect traditional Aboriginal owners’ knowledge and understanding of their country and use the two tool-box method of combining western science and Indigenous ecological knowledge in developing these projects.

The land councils and NAILSMA could be consulted on projects, in particular key Indigenous ecological knowledge projects. Aboriginal Landcare programs, such as the Aboriginal Landcare Education Program (ALEP) and Tangentyere Landcare, could be consulted on key environmental health projects.
Large-scale projects could be conducted on the below priority areas:

- Fire management and greenhouse gas abatement;
- Maintenance and transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge;
- Invasive weed eradication and feral animal control;
- Climate change and coastal salinity;
- Biodiversity monitoring and threatened species protection;
- Water monitoring and allocation for cultural and economic development;
- Coastal surveillance, protection and collection of marine debris; and
- Environmental health of communities.

1) Fire management and greenhouse gas abatement

Fire management is a critically important component of land management practice in the NT with vast tracts of land at risk of uncontrolled burning each year. Over the last few years fire management has also been linked to greenhouse gas abatement and emerging significant national and international economic development markets in this area.

![Fire Map]

*Source: Bushfires NT, Fires Across Australia 2002-03*

**Burning for biodiversity**

Favourable fire management regimes, largely involving systemic early dry season mosaic burning, can enhance biodiversity. The lack of fire management across some parts of the NT causes very harmful broad-scale late dry-season wildfires that threaten biodiversity and land productivity, including for bush plant products of economic value. For example, in 2004 there were large late season fires in the Gulf of Carpentaria (Waanyi/Garawa Aboriginal Land Trust) that burnt 16,000km² of country including pastoral properties and bio-regions of national significance. This caused significant environmental and economic loss running into the millions of dollars. Damaging fire regimes largely exist in areas where Aboriginal people no longer live or have inadequate access to resources for fire management.

There is strong scientific evidence that the spread of fire weeds such as mission and gamba grass are becoming a major concern in some parts of the NT. Both plants are spreading in the Darwin–Kakadu area, and they provide high fuel loads which allow fires to burn up to seven times hotter, often late into the dry season. This will require ongoing fire management, including increasingly for the protection of life and property. In the centre, the spread of buffel grass also engenders more intense and frequent fires which impact on biodiversity.

**Burning for greenhouse gas abatement**

There is also strong scientific evidence, largely compiled through the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (WALFA) Project and related research, that intense dry season fires (with high fuel loads)
release much larger amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere than early season low-intensity fires. Collaborative research conducted by CSIRO, Bushfires NT, NAILSMA, the Tropical Savannas CRC and other partners has lead to the development a methodology for measuring greenhouse gas abatement linked to fire management across NT savanna landscapes. This has opened the doors to greenhouse gas offset and potential future trading arrangements.

Currently, international guidelines on what constitutes valid greenhouse gas abatement stem from the Kyoto Protocol. Under the current Protocol, carbon dioxide emissions cannot be counted in the case of fire emissions because these are considered to be re-absorbed by new plant growth following fire. However, there is a great deal of evidence that this is not the case for northern Australian wildfires and these guidelines may be subject to change in future national and international agreements.

However, due to these guidelines, the West Arnhem Land project currently only counts the abatement of non-CO$_2$ gases, methane and nitrous oxides, emitted by fire. Even so, 41 percent of the NT’s greenhouse emissions and around two percent of Australia's total greenhouse emissions are due to methane and nitrous oxides from savanna fires (Australian Greenhouse Office, 2006). The potential for substantially increased emissions abatement from savanna burning, possibly by factors of at least 2-3 times, is also likely to be achieved in future years through accounting of ‘indirect’ greenhouse gases (carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), and non-methane volatile organic compounds). The indirect effects of these gases currently cannot be characterised, and while they are reported, they are not included in inventory totals. Discussions are currently well advanced in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) for accounting of these additional gases.

Currently around ten percent of the West Arnhem Land project area is affected by early dry season fires and from 30–60 percent are affected by late dry season wildfires in most years. If early dry season mosaic burning is conducted, it is possible to reduce the extent of late dry season burning to 15–20 percent of the landscape and abate around 100,000 tonnes per annum of CO$_2$-equivalent in greenhouse gas emissions. The current Conoco-Phillips agreement under the WALFA project pays for this greenhouse gas abatement at the rate of approximately $10 a tonne.

If national and international guidelines develop recognising carbon dioxide abatement in fire management then the WALFA project would offset the production of approximately one million tonnes of greenhouse gases per annum. This would be a very significant offset in Australia’s greenhouse gas emissions (equivalent to the entire NSW Greenhouse Gas Abatement Scheme) and open the development of potentially lucrative markets in this area, particularly with the price of carbon per tonne expected to increase over the next few years. However, even with current protocols and methodologies of measuring greenhouse gas abatement in this area, the WALFA project has demonstrated that there are still significant economic development outcomes for Indigenous communities.

There is the potential for effective fire management regimes to be extended across the Top End and Centre of the NT. In particular, fire management regimes for biodiversity and greenhouse gas abatement urgently need to be developed across larger areas Central Arnhem plateau and Gulf country on, and surrounding, the Waanyi/Garawa Aboriginal Land Trust. There is significant potential for Bushfires NT, Indigenous land and sea management groups, the Northern Land Council and businesses interested in greenhouse gas abatement schemes to partner on projects in these areas.

There is also significant potential for these schemes in the Centre, realising this requires parallel research investment on a similar scale to the research that has underpinned the capacity of the Top End land and sea management groups to engage investors and quantify the impact of alternate fire regimes on greenhouse gas abatement, carbon sequestration, biodiversity and socio-economic objectives. Top End research is not directly transferable to the Centre, due to different climatic and ecological regimes, and it is important that Centre-specific research start early to capitalise on potential market opportunities. It would be appropriate for this Strategic Framework to support such projects by providing infrastructure and capacity development support to Indigenous land management groups in these regions and to foster investments in strategic research.

It may also be appropriate for this Strategic Framework to support joint fire management projects in Australian and NT Parks and Reserves and surrounding areas in the Top End and Centre of the NT by
facilitating the engagement of Indigenous groups in these projects on a co-investment basis with Australian and NT Parks and Wildlife Services. This has been identified as an urgent land management issue affecting the cultural and environmental values of nationally and internationally recognised sites of biodiversity significance. Projects should be developed with advice from relevant organisations such as Bushfires NT.

“We admire the great cross-cultural collaboration on this project, and applaud the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Project and Two Tool Kit team for their innovation and perseverance...We also are thrilled to hear that Indigenous children have an increased interest in science at school, after seeing traditional Rangers and Western scientists working on the scheme. We look forward to a new generation of scientists.”
(Australian Museum Director, Frank Howarth, on the WALFA Project – Winner of the Innovative Solutions to Climate Change, Australian Museum Eureka Science Prize)

2) Maintenance and transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge

It is clear from desktop research and interviews conducted that Indigenous land and sea management groups see the maintenance and transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge as a key priority for the ongoing development of the Indigenous land and sea management sector. The value of Indigenous ecological knowledge is emphasised in a draft 2006 Scoping Study of this area prepared by the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance and the Tropical Savannas CRC for the Natural Resource Management Board of the NT.

There are serious concerns about a perceived current lack of support Indigenous ecological knowledge across the NT and fears that as older people pass away, younger people will lose vital information and the skills to manage their country. Many Indigenous groups and agencies working in this area have indicated that this threat cannot be overstated.

Indigenous ecological knowledge currently contributes to the practical delivery of cultural and natural resource management outcomes across the NT, particularly in the areas of understanding environmental, including climate-related change, use of fire, knowledge of plant and animal species and water values and integrity. It is also important for maintaining land and sea stories and history vital to the production of fine art, dance, music and the provision of valued cultural and eco-tourism experiences. Indigenous ecological knowledge also contributes to the motivation and interest Indigenous people have to become involved in organised cultural and natural resource management. This knowledge allows strong Indigenous groups to develop with cultural authority and set the agenda for the management of Aboriginal lands.

Recently the Natural Heritage Trust, through the Natural Resource Management Board of the NT, has supported the development of an Indigenous ecological knowledge project in the Centre and Top End of the NT. It may be appropriate for this Strategic Framework to partner with the NRM Board on this project to allow this investment to support a broader range of initiatives.

It may also be worthwhile for this Strategic Framework to support broader Indigenous ecological knowledge initiatives, partnering with Department of the Environment and Water Indigenous Heritage Program and Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts Indigenous Cultural Support Program. This could include investment in Indigenous ecological knowledge projects aimed at recording, transferring and communicating stories and information about important cultural and environmental sites, including Indigenous Protected Areas.

3) Invasive weed and feral animal control

The range of introduced plant and animal species in the NT is diverse, with many causing environmental degradation on Aboriginal lands. The Strategic Framework could consider supporting major projects associated with the control and eradication of feral animals and invasive weeds.
Feral animals

Donkeys, horses, camels, buffalo, pigs, cats, foxes, cane toads and pest ant species are some of the major animals creating issues on Aboriginal lands. Buffalo and pigs are a problem mostly on floodplains and other wetland systems in the northern areas, while donkeys and camels are prolific in the rangelands and desert regions. In some areas of the NT, these pest species are not only causing the degradation of Aboriginal land but they are also a threat to pastoral and horticulture properties. Some of these feral animals also contribute to the spread of invasive weeds across the NT.

The Strategic Framework could consider supporting high priority projects in relation to:

- Feral animal control in the Victoria River District, Roper and Gulf regions. Feral animals in these regions have a large impact on Aboriginal land and pastoral properties. Parts of this area have previously been identified as at high risk of feral animal damage requiring 50 percent of all feral animals to be culled;

- Exotic ant eradication and control, in particular Yellow Crazy Ants around the Gove Peninsula and the African Big-headed ant, Singapore ant and the Red Imported Fire ant on the Tiwi Islands. These ants can occur in extremely high numbers, forming ‘super colonies’ that cover many hectares. The ants eliminate many native animal species from these areas, and seriously disrupt ecological processes and agricultural production; and

- Camels in the Central NT region. A 2001 survey by the NT Parks & Wildlife Commission estimated the present feral camel population in the NT to be in excess of 200,000 as camel numbers have recently burgeoned in response to a series of good seasons with above average rainfall. Such significant increases in large mammal numbers within the fragile environment of the arid and semi arid regions of the NT are potentially devastating.

It should be noted that feral animals which are often regarded as pests by non-Aboriginal people can be viewed differently by Aboriginal people. For example, in many Aboriginal communities feral pigs, camels and buffalo are often recognised as a resource, both commercially (game meat) and as food. People often need to be convinced that they are causing problems and that control programs need to be established. Control programs which are aimed at reducing numbers or eradicating local populations without making use of the animals are not generally supported. A number of Indigenous communities in the NT have explored the possibility of establishing small cottage industries around these feral animals that would act to reduce their numbers as well as create an income.

In particular, Aboriginal people by and large are opposed to culling camels with no further use for the animals. Management is more focused on exclusion of the animal from important watering points through fencing. A short-term commercial pet-meat enterprise was contracted to take camels over a two-month period in the Central Land Council region. This arrangement provided additional benefits of employment and economic returns to the traditional Aboriginal owners. However, there are few broadly applicable options for camel mitigation other than aerial shooting and or pet-meat. Although export markets are developing for both camels and horses, their impact on the wild populations in the short term will be insignificant due to the high numbers.

Invasive Weeds

Declared weeds are a major threat to biodiversity and land productivity across the NT. These weeds can affect fire regimes, out-compete native plants, reduce habitat quality for native animals, block access to rivers and wetlands and affect land productivity. Systemic eradication and management programs are required to keep them under control. The key invasive weeds are mimosa, buffel grass and gamba grass.

Mimosa is regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its invasiveness, potential for spread, and economic and environmental impacts. It forms dense stands that replace all native vegetation on the ecologically and economically valuable wetlands of the Top End of northern Australia. Mimosa invasion threatens the production, cultural and conservation values of wetlands, and reduces the scope for use of resources by land users. Pastoralists are affected because the inedible and
thorny mimosa smothers and replaces grasslands, blocks access to stock watering points and hinders mustering. Buffel grass and gamba grass are also major problems, particularly as they increase fire fuel loads and out-compete native grass species.

This Strategic Framework could support major weed eradication projects such as an extension of the Top End Aboriginal Land Management Employment Strategy Project focused on eradicating and controlling mimosa in the Top End. Consideration also needs to be given to projects for controlling the spread of buffel grass in the south and within Kakadu, Flora River and Gregory National Parks and gamba grass surrounding Top-end towns, particularly in the Darwin rural area.

It also should be recognised that vehicles and machinery are a major source of weed spread across the NT. The removal of the permit system under the NT Emergency Response is likely to increase traffic on access roads to Indigenous communities. It might be appropriate for this Strategic Framework to invest in Indigenous land and sea management groups being able to provide wash-down facilities for vehicles, in particular earth moving equipment, at low level river crossings and other key sites across the NT.

![Map of Australia highlighting potential mimosa distribution](image)

Source: Northern Land Council 2006, Current and Potential Distribution of Mimosa

4) Biodiversity monitoring and threatened species protection

Given the large landscape and remoteness of parts of the NT, it has been difficult for government agencies and researchers to map the biodiversity of the NT and then monitor its ongoing health. Some Indigenous land and sea management groups are in a position to contribute to this exercise for government agencies. This Strategic Framework could support biodiversity mapping and monitoring projects in areas of high significance as identified in NT Parks Masterplan, NT Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan and Indigenous Protected Area Plans.

**Threatened Species**

The Strategic Framework could also support threatened species projects. Almost all islands along the NT coastline are remote inalienable Aboriginal freehold lands which can help with the management of threatened species. For example, Aboriginal owned islands such as those of the Anindilyakwa archipelago can provide safe environments for threatened species, particularly those at threat from feral animals. Threatened species such as the Northern Quoll, Brush-tailed Rabbit-rat, Northern Hopping-mouse and several species of marine turtle are found here, and the Rangers that operate within the Anindilyakwa Indigenous Protected Area have been actively surveying for threatened species and biodiversity and monitoring turtle populations.
In addition, a quoll translocation program saw quolls from mainland NT moved temporarily to Indigenous-owned unpopulated islands in the English Company Islands group, off northeast Arnhem Land, where they would be safe from the impacts of cane toads. Aboriginal engagement was a vital part of this project, with much interest stimulated among the Aboriginal landowners.

5) Water monitoring and allocation for cultural and economic development

The primary tool for managing and protecting the Territory’s water resources is the **NT Water Act 2004**. Under the Act, various statutory bodies have been established to make decisions about water allocation and use, with members, such as representatives from community groups, land users, and government agencies, appointed by the NT Minister for Lands, Planning, and Environment.

In deciding how water should be used, beneficial uses are identified through consultation with the community, and water allocated accordingly. While Indigenous representation within statutory bodies is strengthening, as shown in the case of the Daly Community Reference Group, there remains an issue of Indigenous engagement in planning for future economic and cultural uses of water. For Indigenous people to be fairly involved in water allocation planning, more flexible timeframes and greater resources must be allocated to the process.

Indigenous groups are increasingly being recognised as a knowledgeable and valuable in monitoring change in the environment, including water bodies and the biota they support. Significant funding has recently been allocated through the Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge Hub (TRaCK) for researchers to work collaboratively with a number of Indigenous groups across the Top End to implement monitoring regimes in river systems, using indicators identified by each of the groups. It may be worthwhile for this Strategic Framework to consider further support for Indigenous engagement in this broad area, including through assisting Indigenous land and sea management groups participate in TRaCK research.

6) Climate change and coastal salinity

The main direct climate change threats in the NT are likely to be extreme weather events and coastal processes such as saltwater intrusion. It is also likely that there will be increased rainfall and a minor rise in temperature. This may lead to an increase in fire intensity and frequency if fuel levels increase following wet season high rainfalls requiring a more intensive and concerted fire management effort.

It may be appropriate for the Strategic Framework to support projects monitoring seawater intrusion into coastal floodplains and wetlands. Ongoing research and monitoring of vulnerable habitats is necessary as this will provide information upon which management strategies can be devised. Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT coastline are well-placed to provide such a service.

7) Coastal surveillance, protection and collection of marine debris

Coastal surveillance and marine protection are critical biosecurity issues given the proximity of NT coastline to South East Asia and the pristine biodiversity values of its marine habitats. There are five types of activities that need to be undertaken to protect this coastline:

- coastal surveillance work for the illegal movement of people and goods, including illegal foreign fishing;
- quarantine sampling and monitoring for pest incursions;
- clean up of marine debris;
- mapping of, and research in, marine estates and their biodiversity values; and
- management of marine areas, including the protection of threatened species such as turtles and dugong.

Due to the remoteness of large parts of the coastline and their knowledge of local areas, Indigenous land and sea management groups are in a position to assist with this work on a long-term basis. As has been
demonstrated elsewhere, these groups have started to work in these areas, including with major regional projects such as the Ghost Nets program and AQIS quarantine work.

It might be appropriate for this Strategic Framework to support large scale coastal surveillance, protection and marine debris projects involving Marine Ranger Groups. Advice on priority areas could be sought from Indigenous groups, the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts, Marine Biodiversity Unit, the Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines, AQIS, Customs and the National Oceans’ Office. One option may be to extend the support arrangements groups receive under the NT Community Marine Ranger Program to all coastal Indigenous land and sea management groups.

8) Environmental health of communities

Some Indigenous land and sea management groups undertake community environmental health work as part of their activities. This includes planting trees in community recreation areas and schools, dust suppression, establishing community nurseries. This work is a priority in many Indigenous communities in the NT and an area that is likely to be focused on in the NT Emergency Response.

It may be possible for this Strategic Framework to contribute to environmental health projects by supporting the involvement of Indigenous land and sea management groups where appropriate. These groups, particularly Landcare groups such as the Aboriginal Landcare Education Program (ALEP) and Tangentyere Landcare have expertise and skills to offer in this area and may able to assist with the planning and oversight of projects.
7.5 Increasing Fee-for-service and Economic Development Opportunities in Indigenous Land and Sea Management

In 2005 the NT Government established an Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce comprising key industry and government representatives to increase Indigenous participation in business and economic development projects throughout the NT.

This Taskforce was consulted during this project and it recommended that the Strategic Framework identify and, where possible, quantify economic development opportunities in the Indigenous land and sea management sector over the short, medium and long-term. They also recommended that the Framework identify possible business models and/or broker agencies with the capacity and professionalism to attract government, private and philanthropic investment in this area.

Key issues in strengthening and expanding fee-for-service and other commercial arrangements

There are four main issues that need to be understood to develop measures to strengthen and expand fee-for-service and commercial arrangements in Indigenous land and sea management. These issues were identified in a report on *Incentive Opportunities for Aboriginal Lands of the Spinifex Deserts* by CSIRO and the Desert Knowledge CRC and are backed up by the research and interviews conducted for this project. There is a need to:

- maximise the alignment of fee-for-service opportunities with the interests of Indigenous groups and traditional Aboriginal owners;
- increase the capacity of Indigenous groups to be able to attract and successfully deliver on fee-for-service contracts;
- consider how ‘market chains’ can be developed, linking Indigenous land and sea management groups with local, national and international businesses; and
- stabilise government support arrangements so they are better tailored to building Indigenous land and sea management as an emerging sector, with a significant fee-for-service component.

Aligning with interests of Indigenous land and sea management groups

As many Indigenous land and sea management groups are developing into social enterprises, the type of fee-for-service and commercial work people are most interested in undertaking is aligned to their broader environmental, social, cultural and employment objectives and motivations. These objectives will be different for different organisations. It is important that in formulating incentives for Indigenous groups to consider fee-for-service and commercial opportunities in their region, government agencies and businesses do not lose sight of the fact that the foundation of these groups is Aboriginal cultures and connections to land and sea country.

In short, taking a strict commercial feasibility approach to developing Indigenous land and sea management groups will not work in the majority of cases and it must be balanced with support for Indigenous people’s holistic approach to the social, cultural and environmental benefits of Indigenous land and sea management and respect for their ways of operating.

As with all people, Aboriginal people also enjoy undertaking work that results in private benefit. For example, many Aboriginal people are most interested in fire management and the maintenance of water sources, which promote the availability of valued plants and animals. There is anecdotal evidence that some Aboriginal Rangers are less interested in weed and feral animal control. However, they may still effectively carry out this work if they have good working relationships, are able to use their traditional and western skills and knowledge and are remunerated appropriately. Work for private benefit may also include work for appropriate income across a broad range of other activities and industries.

Capacity development and training

A key issue identified in the interviews with the Indigenous land and sea management groups and agencies that have entered into fee-for-service arrangements is that there is often a need for some level of up-front and ongoing investment in the capacity of particular groups to take on these contracts. It is
recognised that fee-for-service and commercial work is a relatively new area for many Indigenous land and sea management groups and that they may require assistance negotiating and managing these new arrangements.

The requirement for capacity development can be in a variety of areas but those most commonly cited are: improvements in the administrative and financial systems of Indigenous land and sea management groups; development of work ready skills and an understanding of contract requirements among staff; and specific training in the particular expertise required by the client. Stable and effective hosting arrangements are essential for many Indigenous land and sea management groups to meet these needs.

This has been a challenge for some agencies and organisations that are largely used to contracting to buy goods and services ‘off-the-shelf’. Ensuring the capacity and skills to effectively carry through on the contract is often considered an issue for the organisations who are offering to provide these goods and services rather than an issue for the client. This is likely to remain the view of some agencies and businesses, reflective of the commercial realities of the Australian economy.

However, some other agencies and businesses have recognised that it may be in their interests to assist in developing capacity of Indigenous groups to contract with them. This is due to the restricted availability of service providers in regional and remote NT and the potential long-term partnerships and the unique skills Indigenous land and sea management groups can provide. The restricted business and employment market in the NT is also a key driver encouraging government agencies and businesses to invest in building the capacity of Indigenous groups in this area.

A recent report on the United Kingdom social enterprise sector commissioned by the United Kingdom Cabinet Office suggests that it is appropriate for UK government agencies to support the development of the social enterprise sector with favourable procurement policies that recognise the broader social, environmental and economic outcomes that can be achieved by contracting with social enterprises. In effect, contracting with social enterprises has the dual function of receiving services (albeit at a possible higher cost) and supporting the broader social objectives of the organisation. In a similar fashion, it is open to Australian and NT Government agencies to take social values into account in determining whether or not to contract with Indigenous land and sea management groups. The potential up-front additional costs in assisting their capacity development can be overshadowed by the social, training and employment outcomes they achieve, particularly in disadvantaged communities over the medium to long term.

Development of market chains

Growing fee-for-service arrangements, particularly with national and international businesses and organisations will require the development of a business interface for this sector, linking Indigenous groups to broader market opportunities. This is an urgent issue in the NT given increasing recognition of North Australia one of the world’s remaining natural regions and the associated emerging conservation economy opportunities.

In a similar way to the Indigenous arts sector, the Indigenous land and sea management sector requires ‘broker’ organisations and individuals to represent local groups and create value for the goods and services they can provide. These brokers are also important in creating client confidence and outcomes assurance. In a number of ways, the NT land councils and the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance have been performing this function for Indigenous groups, particularly in terms of their role brokering relationships and funding agreements with government agencies. However, it important that Indigenous land and sea management groups, government agencies, land councils and other stakeholders consider the development of business interface models that are able to more strongly link Indigenous groups to national and international market opportunities. This issue is further addressed in the discussion on delivery models in Part B.

Stable government arrangements to deliver sector support

It is necessary to develop longer-term and more stable government support arrangements to build the capacity of Indigenous land and sea management groups to capitalise on fee-for-service opportunities in this area. A number of people interviewed have highlighted the fact that it is very hard for Indigenous
groups to currently make the most of these opportunities when they are uncertain about government support for key components of their organisations (e.g. funding for coordinators, capital items or wages that will be required to successfully fulfil fee-for-service contracts). While government grants are keeping some groups afloat as they seek other funding sources, the short-term nature of this support is a major inhibitor to groups being able to properly develop strong business arms and make longer-term strategic business decisions.

An example to highlight the gravity of this point is the fact that interviews revealed that unstable government support arrangements for the Jawoyn, Djelk, Adjumarllarl, Manwurrk and Mimal Rangers Groups are making it harder for them to deliver on the West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (WALFA) Agreement and consider other lucrative carbon abatement and offset schemes in the future. This is also true for a number of the Indigenous land and sea management groups looking at developing similar large scale fire and carbon abatement schemes in the Gulf region. These schemes are potentially worth millions of dollars to Indigenous communities and the NT economy as a whole and there is a strong case for more stable government support arrangements to allow these groups to develop these opportunities.

There is also a need for government agencies involved in industry and business development, such as the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Indigenous Land Corporation, Indigenous Business Australia, Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources and the NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development, to be more focused on the delivery of small business development support in this area. The increasing fee-for-service arrangements, high levels of commitment shown by Indigenous people working in this area and longevity of many Indigenous land and sea management groups demonstrate the viability of this sector.

It was clear in some of the interviews conducted, that some agencies have not fully recognised the business development aspects of the Indigenous land and sea management sector because of its broader environmental, social and cultural objectives and the community development origins of many of the groups. The evolution of this sector now requires greater business development support.

It is recommended that the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Indigenous Business Australia, NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development and Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources partner with each other, Indigenous land and sea management groups and key business players to map out an industry strategy for building sustainable Indigenous land and sea management businesses. The Strategic Framework could assist these agencies to develop a greater understanding of the commercial viability of this sector and the type of support required. Indigenous Business Australia has developed similar strategies in the Indigenous housing and construction, arts and timber industries and these may provide a useful template.

“There may need to be a change of thinking by government agencies that have typically focused on what they might offer Indigenous land and sea management groups in terms of grants and other forms of support. Agencies also need to think more seriously about what these groups can currently, and in the future, offer them in terms of the commercial provision of goods and services.”

(Desert Knowledge Cooperative Research Centre, 2007)
Growing specific economic development opportunities

Previous sections have highlighted significant fee-for-service and commercial opportunities already present Indigenous land and sea management sector across the NT. While demand for cultural, environmental and biosecurity services will fluctuate, the fee-for-service and commercial opportunities expected to continue or develop over the next five years include:

- Fire management for carbon abatement and offset schemes;
- Land management on pastoral properties, defence properties and NT and Australian Parks;
- Environmental monitoring and rehabilitation work around mine sites and forestry plantations;
- Landscaping and dust reduction around major towns and communities;
- Control and eradication of weeds and feral animals, particularly in high biodiversity areas;
- Coastal surveillance and monitoring for border protection agencies, including Customs;
- Quarantine monitoring in coastal areas for AQIS;
- Research and monitoring associated with climate change and water quality and usage;
- Biodiversity offsets and the maintenance of intact landscapes;
- Disaster mitigation and search and rescue;
- Indigenous ecological knowledge; and
- Cultural and environmental tourism.

A number of the organisations interviewed suggested that government agencies should invest in tailored capacity development, infrastructure and business planning support for Indigenous land and sea management groups who want to better position themselves to take advantage of these opportunities.

Often businesses and government agencies are willing to contract with Indigenous groups for services but are unable resource the upfront assistance these Indigenous groups require in terms of capacity building, infrastructure and business planning to get these groups at the ‘contract ready’ stage. Under this Strategic Framework, government agencies may be able to invest in capacity development packages for Indigenous groups aimed at securing specific contracts. However, all investors would need sufficient certainty that an ongoing business relationship and market for services will develop. Government agencies may require advice from businesses and research institutions such as the Centre for Appropriate Technology, CSIRO Sustainable Livelihoods Stream and Charles Darwin University prior to investing in the development of some of these opportunities.

The following sections provide a brief description of the fee-for-service opportunities in the above areas:

1) Fire management for greenhouse gas abatement and offset schemes

The West Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (WALFA) Project has demonstrated that current and future business opportunities exists for Indigenous groups to enter into fee-for-service arrangements with companies for fire management and related carbon abatement services. While this arrangement required a great deal of support from, and upfront work by, government agencies, land councils and research organisations, it is now possible to build on this work and develop new commercial opportunities in this area. In addition to Conoco-Phillips, there are other companies considering investment in fire abatement and greenhouse offset and trading opportunities with Indigenous groups across the NT particularly in the Arnhem and Gulf Regions, including Sustainable Forestry Management, Alcan and Xstrata.

It is difficult to predict the value of this emerging business opportunity in the NT because science, national and international protocols and markets are still developing in this area. However, research conducted by Bushfires NT, Tropical Savannas CRC and CSIRO indicate that markets are emerging quickly. This is predicted to be a commercial growth area as international and national greenhouse gas trading develops and a price is set per tonne of greenhouse gases, including for carbon.

If strong greenhouse abatement schemes were developed across the Arnhem, Daly and Gulf regions early estimates indicate it would be possible to abate approximately 500,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases annually across the NT, based on emissions abatement of N\textsubscript{2}O and CH\textsubscript{4} alone. Conservative estimates
indicate this is likely to be worth between $10 and $30 a tonne over the next five years creating an income of between $5-15 million per annum.

2) Land management on pastoral properties, defence properties and NT and Australian Parks

Indigenous groups have already entered into small contracting arrangements for the provision of environmental services on pastoral and defence properties and in NT and Australian Government parks, including those under joint management arrangements with traditional Aboriginal owners. There is significant potential for this work to increase over the next decade as NT landholders face greater pressures to manage their land for productive use and conservation outcomes.

Research conducted indicated that the Department of Defence is interested in exploring longer-term contracts for large NT defence properties such as Bradshaw. The NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts is also currently conducting an audit of contractable tasks within their portfolio with the aim of identifying tasks that could be contracted to Indigenous groups in the Alice Springs region. NRETA has indicated that while the value of these contracts would not be enough on their own to sustain an Indigenous group, they may provide a valuable income stream.

3) Environmental monitoring and rehabilitation work around mine sites and forestry plantations

There are already a number of environmental service contracts between Indigenous groups and mining and forestry companies as identified in previous sections. These include contracts between:

- Alcan Gove and the Dhimurru Rangers and Gamarrawa Nuwul Landcare in Nhulunbuy;
- Newmont Australia work with the Wulaign Rangers through the Tanami Biodiversity Project;
- Matilda Minerals supporting a scoping project for a nursery at Milikapiti on the Tiwi Islands to supply seedlings for mine site rehabilitation;
- Energy Resources Australia are contracting with an Indigenous-owned company, Kakadu Native Plants to supply seedlings for mine site rehabilitation;
- Great Southern Limited contracts with the Tiwi Land Rangers for environmental monitoring services; and
- McArthur River Mine has commenced discussions with Rangers in the Gulf country on possible fire management contracts.

However, there are opportunities for forestry and mining companies to substantially increase environmental monitoring and site rehabilitation contracts with Indigenous land and sea management groups. As many mining and forestry operations have a life of 10-20 years, this can provide groups with a steady income over the longer-term.

In June 2005 the Minerals Council of Australia (MCA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Indigenous Employment and Enterprise Facilitation with the Australian Government. The MOU commits the minerals industry and government to building employment and business opportunities with Indigenous communities on a region by region basis. The MCA recognises that monitoring and offsetting environmental impacts is now a significant aspect of the management responsibility for all mining operations. With increasing international and national focus on climate change, energy efficiency, resource conservation and biodiversity, business opportunities in this area are set to increase. This suggests that there will be ongoing demand from mining companies based in the NT to look more seriously at expanding fee-for-service contract arrangements with Indigenous land and sea management groups in their region.

Research conducted indicated that mining companies may welcome the possibility of expanding their contracting arrangements with Indigenous groups. However, in order for this to occur, the pre-competitive capacity of Indigenous groups needs to be strengthened so they can undertake larger contracts. Mining companies would like to work with government agencies on training and infrastructure packages for Indigenous groups so this contracting capacity is developed.

Contracts with mining and forestry companies create long-term income streams for Indigenous groups. Larger contracts could be of high value and could inject millions of dollars into this sector over the next decade.
4) Landscaping and dust reduction around major towns and communities

Some Indigenous groups, such as the Larrakia Rangers, Aboriginal Landcare Education Program and Gamarrawa Nuwal Landcare have already been successful in securing contracts for landscaping and dust reduction around major towns and Indigenous communities. As new NT local government shire arrangements are bedded down next year, there may be increased work for Indigenous land and sea management groups in this area. The NT Emergency Response may also produce investment in this area by Australian Government agencies. These contracts are likely to be relatively small but will present an ongoing income stream.

5) Control and eradication of weeds and feral animals

Given increased threats to biodiversity and land productivity associated with weeds and feral animals across the NT, this is likely to be a growth area for fee-for-service opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups. There are indications that both the Australian and NT Government Environment Departments are moving away from grant to contracting models in this area. Control and eradication of weeds and feral animals is also a major issue for pastoral and other land-holders, particularly in the Central Victoria River District and Roper Valley area.

It is difficult to predict the value of contracts in this area, because it will be largely dependent on government policy decisions and resources. However, weeds and feral animal controls will be ongoing major environmental issues in the NT requiring tens of millions of dollars of investment over the next decade.

6) Coastal surveillance and monitoring

There is currently only one fee-for-service contract with an Indigenous group for coastal surveillance and monitoring in the NT, which is the between the Djelk rangers in Maningrida and the Australian Customs Service. This contract was developed under a Customs pilot program and is set to be reviewed in early 2008.

The outcomes of this review will determine whether Government is likely to expand contract arrangements with Indigenous groups for coastal surveillance and monitoring work in the future. The fee-for-service contract with the Djelk Rangers has worked well for government and there may be opportunities for other Indigenous groups located in key coastal surveillance sites to undertake this work depending on their infrastructure, including in-survey boats, and skill levels. Indigenous groups that might attract fee-for-service contracts in the future include the Tiwi Marine Rangers, Li-Anthawirrirrara Sea Ranger Unit at Borroloola, Anindilyakwa Rangers at Groote Eylandt, Gumurr Marthakal Rangers at Elcho Island, Garngi Rangers on the Coburg Peninsula and Mardbalk Marine Rangers at Goulburn Island. Early discussions with Customs about possible co-investment in the capacity of Indigenous groups in the above areas could help secure on-going fee-for-service contracts. These contracts are likely to be relatively small but will present an ongoing income stream.

7) Quarantine monitoring for AQIS

Fee-for-service opportunities with AQIS are set to increase over the next three years as they deliver expenditure of the $6.9 million received over four years commencing in 2006-07 to contract with Indigenous groups for quarantine services. This is likely to be valued at approximately $1 million a year over the next three years spread across Indigenous groups in the NT, WA and Queensland.

“Environmental co-management can support Indigenous livelihoods and economic development by engaging Indigenous people in the workforce...Mining companies can encourage Aboriginal people by awarding contracts for environmental management tasks at mine sites – such as rehabilitation, weed control or fire management – to Indigenous organisations. Community ranger groups are a growing force in remote Australia and some are well placed to provide environmental services to the mining industry.”

(Leading Practice Sustainable Development in Mining – Draft 2007)
Approximately 75 percent of these funds are likely to be expended in the NT, reflecting the capacity levels of Indigenous groups in the Territory. AQIS will need to re-bid for additional funds in the 2009-2010 Budget process to continue this program.

There are also broader opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups to undertake biosecurity work in the NT, monitoring animal populations, migration patterns and the health of wild animals where these are disease vectors. Internationally, the transmission and spread of bird flu in the northern hemisphere through migrating waterfowl, draws attention to the need to monitor migratory wild animal populations for biosecurity risks. One example in the NT is the nankeen night herons (which migrate into central Australia) which are vectors for Murray Valley encephalitis. Indigenous land and sea management groups could play a role in monitoring these birds and preventing the spread of disease.

8) Climate change and water monitoring

This is currently not an area producing demand for fee-for-service environmental and cultural services from Indigenous groups at present. However, climate change and associated pressures for Northern development may open up business development opportunities in this area. In particular fee-for-service opportunities may develop for climate change monitoring, particularly in coastal wetlands. There may also be water monitoring and protection projects in areas facing increased agriculture and development including the Daly River and Ti-Tree regions and in areas where water is highly valued such as the rockholes and soakage areas of the Centre.

9) Biodiversity offsets and the maintenance of intact landscapes

International and national research on the emerging global conservation economy predicts a sharp increase in business development opportunities associated with biodiversity offsets and the maintenance of intact landscapes across the world.

Biodiversity offsets are defined as conservation projects which maintain or enhance the biodiversity values of a region in order to mitigate against, or balance, residual or unavoidable environmental degradation associated with industry development. The biodiversity offset project can be co-located near the industry or development site or be established in another location all together. Biodiversity offset projects can be potentially large and of high value to business, government and local communities.

Some industries or businesses are developing biodiversity offset projects in-house where as other businesses are increasingly contracting out this task to biodiversity banking and offset companies. These schemes and companies are on the rise in Australia and across the globe. As Indigenous land and sea management groups develop into sustainable for-profit or social enterprise organisations they will be in a position to offer biodiversity services directly to industries or to biodiversity banking and offset companies.

Below are three examples of current and future biodiversity offset business opportunities across the NT:

- Xstrata are currently developing a biodiversity offset scheme associated with the McArthur River Mine project. Early discussions have commenced with Indigenous groups, the land councils and other stakeholders about possible projects. It is important these discussions consider developing long-term economic development and fee-for-service opportunities for Indigenous groups;

- State governments across Australia are considering the introduction of Bio-banking and offset schemes. These schemes allow landowners to generate ‘biodiversity credits’ by committing to enhance and protect biodiversity values on their land. These credits can then be sold to developers who can use them to counterbalance the impacts on biodiversity values that are likely to occur as a result of development. It may be possible for the NT Government and business investors to consider the development of such a scheme in the NT and the potential economic development opportunities that could be created for Indigenous land and sea management groups and other organisations; and
Businesses across Australia are developing to offer biodiversity offsets to individuals wanting to reduce their ecological, and particularly carbon, footprint. As Indigenous groups develop they may be able to offer these services to individuals or companies through internet donor schemes and voluntary levies. This opportunity is being actively pursued by the Warddeken Land Management Pty Ltd in West Arnhem Land.

It is important that government investors be forward looking and actively encourage the development of sustainable business opportunities around the emerging biodiversity offset market. This market is potentially worth tens of millions of dollars to Indigenous land and sea management groups, traditional Aboriginal owners and the broader NT economy over the next decade.

10) Disaster mitigation and search and rescue

Research indicates that Indigenous land and sea management groups are already performing important disaster mitigation and search and rescue services for their communities. To date, they are largely carrying out these activities for community benefit without remuneration. For example, the Dhimurru Rangers have allowed their two-way radio network to be used by the Nhulunbuy police for search and rescue operations. Search and rescue assistance is also routinely provided by the Li-Anthawirriyarra Sea Ranger Unit at Borroloola and Gumurr Marthakal Rangers on Elcho Island. Indigenous land and sea management groups have also undertaken substantial amounts of community clean-up, road clearing and environmental restoration work after major cyclones in the NT.

While the community contribution Indigenous groups make in undertaking these tasks should be encouraged, there is also potential for NT search and rescue and disaster mitigation services to develop formal contracting arrangements with Indigenous groups in this area. Increasing the formal role Indigenous groups play in the provision of these services may be important in the future, particularly with predictions of increased cyclonic or intense weather events across the Top-end of the NT.

11) Indigenous ecological knowledge

Historically, support for Indigenous ecological knowledge projects has been provided through government grants rather than fee-for-service or commercial arrangements. However, there are exceptions and Indigenous groups have been remunerated on a contract basis for work they have done identifying sacred sites in relation to mapping out major development projects in the NT, such as the Alice Springs to Darwin railway.

There is increasing recognition of the importance of Indigenous ecological knowledge to cultural and natural resource management and Indigenous art, music and dance. Key projects such as the draft North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Scoping Study on this area is creating the foundation for fee-for-service and commercial opportunities for Indigenous people as cultural and ecological advisors. This area may develop over the next five years.

12) Cultural and environmental tourism

Closely related to Indigenous ecological knowledge are the business and fee-for-service opportunities currently in place and developing for Indigenous groups in cultural and eco-tourism across the NT. International and national tourism surveys conducted by the Australian and NT Tourism Commissions and the Australian Government Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources highlight the fact that visitors to the NT are interested in experiencing and learning about Indigenous culture and land and sea management practices and knowledge.

Research shows that Indigenous land and sea management groups want to move carefully into any tourism ventures and balance business development in this area with their broader land and sea management responsibilities. However, some Indigenous land and sea management groups have started to develop business arms linked to cultural and eco-tourism. This includes the Dhimurru Rangers who have established a visitor permit system and are involved in the tourism components of the Garma Festival in East Arnhem Land. The Laynhapuy Rangers also are starting to develop ranger stations and
visitor camping sites on their Indigenous Protected Area so they can develop eco-tourism business opportunities over the next three years.

Sustainable fishing tourism is also a potential opportunity for coastal Indigenous land and sea management groups. The NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines has reported that at least two marine ranger groups have recently taken on work as sustainable fishing tour operators. Several other Indigenous groups have partnerships with other fishing tour operators which include leasing arrangements for bases on Aboriginal land and employment opportunities.

It would be worthwhile for this Strategic Framework to invest in Indigenous land and sea management groups who are interested in exploring cultural and eco-tourism opportunities. In particular investors may wish to support:

- Branding of some Indigenous Protected Areas as tourist destinations, in partnership with NT and Australian Government Parks. This may require investment in permit and visitor management schemes as well as camping sites and other accommodation;
- Cultural and eco-tourism projects with the Anindilyakwa Rangers associated with the development of the Dugong Beach Resort and projects of a similar nature;
- Visitor signage and interpretation projects by Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups in tourist areas, particularly NT Parks and Reserves; and
- Opportunities for some Indigenous land and sea management groups on the coastline to become engaged in sustainable fishing tourism.

7.6 Coordinated Monitoring of Environmental, Social and Economic Outcomes

The majority of Indigenous land and sea management groups consulted indicated that, when aggregated across all their multiple funding contracts, the current government reporting and monitoring requirements are creating an administrative burden. Both Indigenous groups and government agencies indicated that these individual monitoring and evaluation mechanisms also make it difficult to build a picture of the outcomes being achieved for overall investment in this area by government agencies, Indigenous groups and other organisations.

A number of agencies and Indigenous groups suggested that it would be valuable for this Strategic Framework to support a coordinated monitoring and evaluation mechanism to provide an overview of what is being achieved across the Indigenous land and sea management sector and identify where further work needs to be done to improve results. Over time, this coordinated mechanism may be able to replace some of the individual outcomes reporting required by multiple government agencies.

It is important that this overview be valuable for both government investors and Indigenous groups. It may also be possible for comprehensive outcomes reporting to lead to the production of materials promoting achievements by Indigenous land and sea management groups and marketing investment in this sector to a broad range of government agencies, businesses, philanthropic organisations and Indigenous groups.

7.7 Establishing Better Delivery Models and Support Structures

Some Indigenous land and sea management groups and other stakeholders have emphasised the need for government agencies, land councils and other organisations to develop better delivery models and support structures for Indigenous land and sea management groups.

The challenges the land councils face in supporting Indigenous land and sea management groups was addressed in section three. This is an urgent issue for government agencies to address in partnership with the land councils. However, research and consultations indicated that there is also a need to examine broader delivery issues and potential models for this growing area to ensure effective support for this emerging sector by:

- maximising effective coordination among investors;
• establishing streamlined funding and administrative processes for Indigenous groups;
• creating the certainty needed to attract government, business and philanthropic investment and confidence;
• marketing the Indigenous land and sea management sector as an important part of the NT economy;
• ensuring input into investment decisions from Indigenous land and sea management groups
• allowing for timely delivery of investment to Indigenous land and sea management groups, particularly in light of funding uncertainty brought on by the phasing out of CDEP; and
• facilitating brokers being able to work with Indigenous land and sea management groups in a hands-on way for the next 18 months as CDEP and local government reforms create a gap in the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Part B of the Strategic Framework recommends a number of delivery models aimed at coordinating support for Indigenous land and sea management groups over the next five years. These models were raised in the research and consultations and canvass strengthening support for existing structures as well as the creation of potential new arrangements. These models will require adequate resources including stable staffing and high quality financial and administrative systems.
Key Findings – Priority Needs for the Indigenous Land and Sea Management Sector

1. Provide greater operational and financial stability to Indigenous land and sea management groups so they can effectively undertake cultural and natural resource management and biosecurity activities and plan for the long-term sustainability of their organisations.

2. Provide employment for Indigenous land and sea managers who deliver environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in the national interest.

3. Develop stronger Aboriginal land and sea managers able to successfully combine Indigenous ecological knowledge with western scientific approaches to cultural and natural resource management and develop careers in this area.

   - Establish a stronger voice to represent the training and employment needs of the Indigenous land and sea management sector;
   - Develop training and employment pathways to assist Indigenous people secure cultural and natural resource management positions in government, business, research and conservation agencies;
   - Coordinate the provision of training with stronger links between Indigenous land and sea management groups and training providers, particularly in remote regions. This may initially involve the appointment of regional training coordinators;
   - Develop curriculum materials specific for NT Indigenous land and sea management groups that can sit along the subjects offered as part of the National Conservation and Land Management Training Package. This will involve job-ready training and courses specific to the NT environmental, cultural and social landscape;
   - Encourage strong relationships between Indigenous land and sea management groups and the schools in their region, including the incorporation of the two tool-box approach, western science and Indigenous ecological knowledge, in the school curriculum;
   - Increase the number of NT Parks and Wildlife officers to be seconded to Indigenous land and sea management groups to assist in establishing effective cultural and natural resource management work programs;
   - Establish a leadership and project management initiative for senior and future Indigenous land and sea managers involving Indigenous leaders and the business sector;
   - Develop an Indigenous land and sea management group and research institution partnership initiative to provide a voice for Indigenous groups in establishing research agendas and participating in research across the NT; and
   - Support women’s land and sea management facilitators to increase the engagement of women in the Indigenous land and sea management sector.
4. Increase the effective management of significant biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues by Indigenous land and sea management groups. This includes supporting major projects in the areas of:

- Fire management and greenhouse gas abatement;
- Maintenance and transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge;
- Invasive weed eradication and feral animal control;
- Climate change and coastal salinity;
- Biodiversity monitoring and threatened species protection;
- Water monitoring and allocation for cultural and economic development;
- Coastal surveillance, protection and collection of marine debris; and
- Environmental health of communities.

5. Increase fee-for-service income generation and business development opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups so they are able to develop into sustainable profit or social enterprise organisations. This includes support major projects in the areas of:

- Fire management for carbon abatement and offset schemes;
- Land management on pastoral properties, defence properties and NT and Australian Parks;
- Environmental monitoring and rehabilitation work around mine sites and forestry plantations;
- Landscaping and dust reduction around major towns and communities;
- Control and eradication of weeds and feral animals, particularly in high biodiversity areas;
- Coastal surveillance and monitoring for border protection agencies, including Customs;
- Quarantine monitoring in coastal areas for AQIS;
- Research and monitoring associated with climate change and water quality and usage;
- Biodiversity offsets and the maintenance of intact landscapes;
- Disaster mitigation and search and rescue;
- Indigenous ecological knowledge; and
- Cultural and environmental tourism.

6. Provide high quality information on changes in key environmental, cultural, social, training, employment and economic development indicators (what is working well and areas for improvement) to government and business investors and Indigenous land and sea management groups.

7. Increase the effectiveness of delivery models and institutional support structures for Indigenous land and sea management groups.
PART B

HEALTHY COUNTRY, HEALTHY PEOPLE: A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
1. CONTEXT

The key findings set out in Part A demonstrate that there is an emerging Indigenous land and sea management sector in the NT. This is chiefly due to:

- Indigenous ownership of vast tracts of land and coastline under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory)* 1976;
- high biodiversity values of this land and coastline that require ongoing management; and
- increasing government and business demand for environmental, biosecurity and cultural services.

With strategic investment, this sector can grow and deliver significant environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic development outcomes to Indigenous communities and government agencies in the national interest.

Indigenous land and sea management groups are evolving into for-profit or social enterprise organisations. This partly reflects the growing level of grants and fee-for-service contracts in the sector and the aspirations of Indigenous groups to strengthen the sustainability of their organisations. However, the development of these organisations is being hindered by the fact that most government investment in this sector is delivered via small specific purpose grant funding which fragments investment. This makes it difficult for Indigenous land and sea management groups to develop stable base funding arrangements and plan for the long-term development of their organisations.

Research and consultations undertaken have indicated that there is willingness across Australian and NT Government agencies, and other partners such as land councils, to consider co-investment models to deliver more coordinated and stable investment in Indigenous land and sea management groups. A new strategic investment approach is required to both address shortcomings in the current fragmented grant approach and respond to the changing institutional and funding landscape brought on by the recent Australian Government’s NT Emergency Response, including the phasing out of the CDEP program, and NT local government reform.

This strategic investment approach is also required to take advantage of the opportunity that exists to develop Indigenous land and sea management into a viable remote area industry that delivers environmental, cultural and biosecurity services to government agencies, businesses and philanthropic organisations. Investment in this sector will build on Indigenous people’s skills, interests, location and land ownership to create sustainable employment and economic development outcomes.

This opportunity can be realised by delivering tailored investment packages to Indigenous land and sea management groups to increase their core operational stability and capacity and encouraging them to market their services to government agencies, business and other organisations while staying focused on their broader environmental, social, cultural, education and employment objectives.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Strategic Framework are to:

- develop effective and sustainable Indigenous cultural and natural resource management organisations operating as for-profit or social enterprise businesses that are able to provide environmental, cultural and biosecurity services to their communities, government, land council, business, research and philanthropic organisations and the broader public; and
- increase the number of Indigenous people employed in cultural and natural resource management positions in government, land council, business, research and philanthropic organisations.

Through meeting these objectives, Indigenous people will be able to sustainably work to their agenda of ‘Healthy Country, Healthy People’ and achieve environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in their interests and in the national interest. Meeting these objectives will also lead to significant training, employment, economic development and social outcomes for Indigenous people.
3. PROPOSED INVESTMENT

Tailored Packages

This Strategic Framework proposes that government agencies and peak organisations such as the land councils invest in delivering tailored three year investment packages to individual Indigenous land and sea management groups. These packages will consist of seven investment streams that need to be delivered in an integrated way to enable Indigenous land and sea management groups to transition into sustainable cultural and natural resource management organisations over the next five years. These investment streams directly correlate to the critical success factors and priority needs identified by Indigenous groups, government agencies and other organisations in the research project. Taking a birds-eye view, the streams also represent components of a broader holistic investment package in the Indigenous land and sea management sector as a whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Streams</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Core operational and capital three year support for Indigenous land and sea management groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This would provide ‘one-stop’ three-year core operational and administrative support to Indigenous land and sea management groups who demonstrate the motivation and ability to develop into sustainable cultural and natural resource management organisations. Support would be tailored to individual groups but may include funding for:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formulating a sustainable governance model, including new effective host arrangements where necessary, and business plan that can act as a prospectus;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Wages for a coordinator and senior Indigenous land and sea managers;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flexible resources for administration and operations; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Basic capital items necessary for the functioning of the group, including office space, sheds, vehicles and equipment.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. **Employment for Indigenous land and sea managers who deliver environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in the national interest.**

This would provide wages for some Indigenous land and sea managers who are effectively undertaking environmental, cultural and biosecurity work under their cultural and natural resource management plans and in the broader national interest. The aim of this investment stream is to recognise that it is appropriate to:

- provide the means for Indigenous people to undertake environmental, cultural and biosecurity work to meet their aspirations for caring for country and the Australian Government’s environmental, cultural and biosecurity protection responsibilities; and
- to provide a mechanism through which Indigenous people previously involved with the CDEP program, can move into jobs or other training and employment programs such as the Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) and Work for the Dole.

3. **Training and skills development of current and future Aboriginal land and sea managers.**

This would provide access to a number of training and development initiatives delivered to the Indigenous land and sea management sector as a whole including:

- Training and employment pathways to assist Indigenous people secure cultural and natural resource management positions in government, business, research and conservation agencies;
- Three-year support for eight regional training coordinators linking Indigenous groups in a region with training providers;
- A feasibility study into developing stronger regional training delivery models including the establishment of cultural and natural resource management training campuses across the NT;
- The development of curriculum materials specific for NT Indigenous land and sea management groups that complement subjects offered as part of the National Conservation and Land Management Training Package. This will involve job-ready training and courses specific to the NT environmental, cultural and social landscape;
- Expansion of the out-posting of NT Parks and Wildlife Officers to Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups under the new NT Indigenous Ranger Group Development Program;
- The development of a leadership and project management initiative for senior and future Indigenous land and sea managers involving Indigenous leaders and the business sector;
- The development of an Indigenous land and sea management group and research institution partnership initiative to provide a voice for Indigenous groups in establishing research agendas and participating in research across the NT;
- Three-year support for three women’s land and sea management facilitators; and
- Indigenous land and sea management groups to participate in the ‘Adopt a School’ program and establish Junior Ranger courses.

4. **Facilitating an Indigenous land and sea management group’s involvement in major three year biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects across a region.**

This will provide funds to Indigenous land and sea management groups for training, specific equipment and labour to facilitate their participation in major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects across a region. This investment will build on the core operational and capital support delivered to Indigenous groups under stream one and allow them to build
capacity and expertise in managing particular biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues in their regions.

There will be an emphasis on:

- Fire management and greenhouse gas abatement;
- Maintenance and transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge;
- Invasive weed eradication;
- Feral animal control;
- Climate change and coastal salinity;
- Biodiversity monitoring and threatened species;
- Water monitoring and allocation;
- Coastal surveillance and protection; and
- Environmental health of communities.

These projects will be determined by the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts (NRETA) and the Department of the Environment and Water Resources in consultation with Indigenous groups, research organisations and other representative organisations such as land councils and the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance. NRETA or other research and cultural and natural resource management organisations, such as Bushfires NT will act as the project manager for particular projects and work with Indigenous groups. The arrangements with Indigenous groups will include a capacity development stage over 12 months and a requirement to show clear cultural, environmental and/or biosecurity outcomes.

5. **Facilitating fee-for service and commercial opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups.**

This will provide funds to Indigenous land and sea management groups for training, business planning and infrastructure tailored to securing an identified specific fee-for-service contract or business opportunity involving an Indigenous groups and business, government agency or philanthropic organisation. The potential contract or business opportunity must be for a minimum of three years with projected ongoing opportunities in the area. Possible fee-for-service opportunities include:

- Fire management for carbon abatement and offset schemes;
- Land management on pastoral properties, defence properties and NT and Australian Government Parks;
- Environmental monitoring and rehabilitation work around mine sites and forestry plantations;
- Landscaping and dust reduction around major towns and communities;
- Control and eradication of weeds and feral animals, particularly in high biodiversity areas;
- Coastal surveillance and monitoring for border protection agencies, including Customs;
- Quarantine monitoring in coastal areas for AQIS;
- Research and monitoring associated with climate change and water quality and usage;
- Biodiversity offsets and the maintenance of intact landscapes;
- Disaster mitigation and search and rescue;
- Indigenous ecological knowledge; and
- Cultural and environmental tourism.

This investment will build on the core operational and capital support delivered to Indigenous groups under stream one and allow them to build capacity and expertise to secure specific fee-for-service or business opportunities with businesses or government agencies.

It is also recommended that agencies invest in a study mapping potential demand for Indigenous land and sea management services that includes local industries and national and international bio-diversity offset, carbon offset and conservation economy markets over the next five years.
This will provide information to the Indigenous Land Corporation, the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Indigenous Business Australia, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources and key potential business and philanthropic investors.

6. **Top End and Centre monitoring and evaluation programs carried out by key Indigenous organisations and research institutions in partnership with government agencies and Indigenous land and sea management groups.**

This provides monitoring and evaluation support to individual Indigenous land and sea management groups and the sector as a whole. Government agencies could invite tenders for this work from qualified research institutions and Indigenous organisations who would work in partnership with government agencies. This mechanism would initially complement individual agencies’ reporting requirements but may over time lead to a reduction in the number of individual outcome reports required across agencies.

7. **Adequate administrative and project management resources to effectively deliver the above and future investments and provide administrative and financial support through an institutional framework.**

This stream provides administrative and financial support to individual Indigenous land and sea management groups and the sector as a whole. It will include the identification and/or new appointment of a senior project leader to drive the implementation of the Strategic Framework, chief finance officer and mobile book-keepers and team of brokers to negotiate tailored packages with individual Indigenous land and sea management groups.

These investment streams are not presented in priority order and it is important that they be delivered as integrated packages to individual Indigenous land and sea management groups. Investment streams one, three, six and seven are targeted at building sustainable Indigenous cultural and natural resource management organisations over the next five years. It is vital that these investment are separately and clearly identified during this development phase as the need for these foundation investments has often been overlooked or under-estimated by government agencies and other stakeholders to date. Over time, it will be possible to fold investment streams one, three, six and seven into sub-components of streams two, four and five which are the Indigenous employment, major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects and specific fee-for-service and business development opportunities.

As this Strategic Framework is built on a potential release of a significant Indigenous Land Corporation and Aboriginals Benefit Account investment, it is appropriate that it recommend the delivery of core infrastructure support to Indigenous land and sea management groups to develop their long-term organisational viability. This capitalises on the unique role the ILC and ABA can play in delivering this much needed type of support to Indigenous groups.

The table below illustrates how these investment streams respond to the critical success factors for Indigenous land and sea management groups identified in Part A of the report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Stream</th>
<th>How it addresses the critical success factors for Indigenous land and sea management groups?</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Core operational and capital three year support for Indigenous land and sea management groups. Support would be tailored to individual groups but may include funding for:  
- Formulating a sustainable governance model, including effective host arrangements where necessary, and business plan that can act as a prospectus;  
- Wages for a coordinator and senior Indigenous land and sea managers;  
- Flexible resources for administration and operations; and  
- Basic capital items necessary for the functioning of the group, including office space, sheds, vehicles and equipment. |  
- Core operational and capital three year support will assist Indigenous land and sea management groups concentrate on organisational development, training and capacity building.  
- Providing assistance with governance models will help ensure Indigenous land and sea management groups have a strong mandate from traditional Aboriginal owners and community support.  
- Providing assistance with governance models and business plans will also assist Indigenous land and sea management groups move towards independence or establish clear arrangements with host organisations. This may involve the negotiation of Service Level Agreements.  
- Providing stable wages for coordinators will allow more Indigenous land and sea management groups to access coordinators who are central to helping groups manage the interface with government departments, business and other organisations. Stable funding will also assist with the retention of coordinators.  
- Providing stable wages for senior Indigenous land and sea managers will help secure strong Indigenous leadership for groups.  |
| Employment for Indigenous land and sea managers who deliver environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in the national interest. |  
- Providing wages for Indigenous land and sea managers will ensure the incentive exists for community members to join and support Indigenous land and sea management groups.  
- Providing wages will allow Indigenous land and sea management groups to concentrate on organisational development, training and capacity building.  |
| Training and skills development:  
- Training and employment pathways;  
- Support for regional training coordinators;  
- A feasibility study into developing stronger regional training delivery models;  
- The development of curriculum materials specific for NT Indigenous land and sea management groups that complement subjects offered as part of the national Conservation and Land Management training package;  
- Expansion of the out-posting of NT Parks and Wildlife Officers to Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups;  
- Leadership and project management initiative for senior and future Indigenous land and sea managers; |  
- A focus on training will allow Indigenous groups to strengthen the capacity of their members and the broader organisation.  
- Support for regional training coordinators and an examination of longer-term regional training delivery models will mitigate against the current difficulties connecting Indigenous groups to training providers in an ongoing and effective way.  
- Developing curriculum materials specific to NT Indigenous land and sea managers will allow Indigenous ecological knowledge to be more successfully combined with western approaches. It will also allow senior Indigenous land and sea managers to have input into the delivery of job readiness training and support to junior staff.  |
- Indigenous land and sea management group and research institution partnership initiative;
- Three-year support for three women’s land and sea management facilitators; and
- Indigenous land and sea management groups to participate in the ‘Adopt a School’ program and establish Junior Ranger courses.

- Expansion of the outposting of NT Parks and Wildlife Officers assists Indigenous groups develop networks and longer-term partnerships with NRETA and other government agencies. It also assists in brokering access to science and research support and transferring cultural and natural resource management skills and knowledge.
- The Leadership and Project Management initiative will strengthen current and future senior Indigenous land and sea managers. Strong leadership is one of the fundamental drivers behind the successful development of groups.
- Women’s land and sea management facilitators will work to support women becoming more engaged in Indigenous land and sea management. This will strengthen community support and participation.
- Assisting Indigenous land and sea management groups to participate in the ‘Adopt a School’ program will provide a pathway for younger people to join groups and allow a long-term focus on capacity building, training and organisational development. It will also strengthen community support.

| Facilitating an Indigenous land and sea management group’s involvement in major three year biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects across a region | This will assist Indigenous groups develop networks across a region and develop longer-term partnerships with other Indigenous groups, government and research agencies. It will also increase their access to science and research support. This will strengthen their sustainability over the longer-term. |
| Facilitating fee-for service and commercial opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups | This will assist Indigenous groups develop longer-term business arrangements and partnerships with government agencies, businesses and other organisations. This will strengthen their sustainability over the longer-term. |
| Top End and Centre monitoring and evaluation programs carried out by key Indigenous organisations and research institutions in partnership with government agencies and Indigenous land and sea management groups | This will strengthen partnerships with research institutions and help broker access to science and research support to monitor and evaluate outcomes. |
| Adequate administrative and project management resources to effectively deliver the above and future investments and provide administrative and financial support through an institutional framework | This will provide effective support to Indigenous land and sea management groups and allow them to develop longer-term partnerships with government agencies and other stakeholders. |
4. IMPLEMENTATION

The below flow chart sets out the possible implementation of the Strategic Framework:

**STEP ONE: Long-term vision for the development of the Indigenous land and sea management sector over the next five years**

a) High level agreement to the broad objectives of the Investment Strategy

b) Agree a delivery model to facilitate key stakeholders working together to coordinate investment in Indigenous land and sea management groups

c) Identify “brokers” and establish machinery to roll-out investment, ensuring that the brokers have a clear mandate to negotiate with Indigenous groups on behalf of investors

**STEP TWO: Delivering to Indigenous land and sea management groups – prioritise investment by location**

d) Invite expressions of interest from Indigenous land and sea management groups and consult with Land Councils and other stakeholders to obtain basic profile and business plan information for groups interested in receiving investment

e) Use this information to form a preliminary assessment of a group’s eligibility for investment using the decision-making flowchart that ranks groups according to:

- strength of their governance structures;
- level of commitment to development and training;
- location in relation to land and sea with high biodiversity and cultural values (this will involve assessing location of the group in relation to major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage priorities across the NT);
- access to economic development opportunities (this will involve assessing the group in relation to fee-for-service and commercial opportunities across the NT); and
- existence of a plan for securing services necessary for the functioning of the organisation (e.g. proximity to a serviced community or ability to utilise a viable outstation or work camp structure)
STEP THREE: Delivering to Indigenous land and sea management groups – negotiating tailored packages

- Core operational and capital investment. This may include funding for governance models and business plans, wages for a coordinator and senior Indigenous land and sea managers, flexible resources for administration and operations, and basic capital items;

- Workforce certainty. Wages for Indigenous land and sea managers who provide environmental, cultural and biosecurity services under their Natural and Cultural Resource Management Plans and in the national interest.

- Training and skills development. This may include providing access to regional coordinators, leadership and project management training, facilitating partnerships with research institutions and assisting the group to participate in the ‘Adopt a School’ program.

- Major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects. This will involve payment for the delivery of major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects across a region with project management by NRETA or other research and cultural and natural resource management organisations. A 12 month capacity development stage may be included.

- Securing fee-for-service and commercial opportunities. This may include providing specific capacity building, training and infrastructure resources to enable an Indigenous group to secure a fee-for-service contract for providing cultural and natural resource management and biosecurity services to government or non-government organisations.

- Monitoring and evaluation. This may include providing assistance to a group so they can contribute to an agreed overall monitoring and evaluation mechanism for measuring outcomes being achieved with investment under this Strategy.
STEP FOUR: Delivering to Indigenous land and sea management groups – providing funding and resources

g) Brokers report back to the coordinated group of investors and recommend delivery packages for individual Indigenous land and sea management groups.

h) The investors agree final packages and deliver them to Indigenous land and sea management groups under streamlined contract and reporting processes.

STEP FIVE: Ongoing assistance and monitoring provided by brokers

i) Brokers support Coordinators and Senior Indigenous land and sea Managers and continue to work with Indigenous groups and other organisations including government agencies, Land Councils, philanthropic organisations and business to broker possible investment in, and opportunities for, Indigenous land and sea management groups where requested and appropriate.

STEP SIX: Commence work on delivery under Rounds Two and Three (Years 2-4, 3-5)
**Step One (A): High Level Coordination – Brokers and Delivery Models**

It is clear from research conducted that Indigenous land and sea management groups, government agencies and other organisations recognise that as much effort needs to be dedicated to establishing successful delivery models as is dedicated to determining what investments are required in this policy area.

This is consistent with numerous research reports addressing Indigenous policy development and implementation that emphasise the importance of focusing on workable delivery structures to achieving good outcomes. It is also consistent with reports such as the 2005 Management Advisory Committee Report, *Connecting Government – Whole of Government Responses to Australia’s Priority Challenges*, which illustrates the need to develop robust delivery structures for complex whole-of-government investments. The *Overarching Agreement on Indigenous Affairs*, under which the *Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule* sits, also emphasises this point and instructs government agencies to establish delivery structures that will enable investments to be tailored to the needs of specific Indigenous groups and flexible and responsive to their circumstances.

**Implementation principles**

There are four core principles that should guide the implementation of this Strategic Framework. These are drawn from the research findings on the critical success factors in terms of the operations of Indigenous groups and the delivery mechanisms of government agencies. The principles are as follows:

- Investments need to be delivered in such a way that allows Indigenous groups and government agencies to work together to tailor resources to the specific circumstances of the Indigenous group. This will often require a flexible participatory planning and negotiation approach to be taken.

- Investments should be delivered over longer timeframes (three to five years) to build effective organisations and cultural and natural resource management programs.

- Investments need to be coordinated across government agencies to achieve multiple environmental, cultural, social, training, employment and economic development outcomes.

- The administrative and reporting arrangements should be kept as simple as possible for Indigenous groups to ensure they are able to meet requirements and understand their progress towards achieving the desired outcomes.

**Brokers – negotiation and partnership approach**

All of the Indigenous land and sea management groups interviewed indicated that the current grant application approach to the delivery of the majority of programs and funds in this area can act as a barrier to achieving good outcomes. This is because the approach, which requires high level literacy and numeracy skills and a good understanding of western methods of project application and management, is not well suited to Indigenous groups and their holistic and relationship-based approach to developing projects. It is also because it is extremely difficult to build sustainable organisations applying for various short-term grants. One Indigenous group likened it to ‘trying to build a house when you are unsure of whether or not a core piece of the foundation is secure or in jeopardy of being withdrawn at any moment’.

Accordingly, Indigenous groups have consistently suggested that a partnership and negotiation approach be taken to the delivery of investment in this area. This involves Indigenous groups working directly with brokers to tailor individual investment packages to meet both their goals and the objectives of government agencies. This approach may give Indigenous groups more understanding and control over their resources.

Depending on the delivery model adopted under the Framework, brokers could include government representatives, land council facilitators, NT Natural Resource Management Board facilitators and/or staff from other organisations whose role is to link-up Indigenous land and sea management groups with
The brokers will need to understand both the aspirations and capabilities of Indigenous land and sea management groups and the requirements of purchasers and investors. The term facilitator is also often used to describe this ‘broker’ function. There are currently individuals performing this ‘broker’ function within land councils, NT Natural Resource Management Board structure and government agencies. It may be possible for these individuals to be more strongly linked under a new model to deliver investment in this area. Additional brokers and supporting financial and administrative resources may also be required to deliver new investment.

Government agencies have increasingly recognised that developing partnership and negotiation approaches can also work more effectively to deliver good policy outcomes provided these approaches are backed up with high quality staff and resources. This is evidenced in the adoption of this style of approach under the Indigenous Protected Areas and Indigenous Pastoral Project programs. There are also elements of this approach present in the Australian Government’s increasingly placed-based approach to the overall delivery of government support programs in NT Indigenous communities, under the NT Emergency Response, Regional Partnership Agreements and Shared Responsibility Agreements.

It is recommended that a negotiation and partnership approach be taken with the delivery of investment streams under this Strategic Framework. This will be well received by Indigenous groups and align with the aim of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule which is to enhance whole-of-government coordination of investment and graft new investment on to existing arrangements in this area.

This will require a hands-on approach working with Indigenous groups to determine their individual current funding arrangements, plans and development goals and priority investment needs. It is recognised that a negotiation and partnership delivery approach requires considerable upfront administrative resources and is therefore challenging for agencies. However, this approach is likely to produce a much greater return as investment will be crafted to achieve maximum outcomes. This approach is recommended over next five years while Indigenous cultural and natural resource management organisations develop. After this time, it may be possible to move towards a less hands-on investment approach in this area.

**Delivery models**

It is recognised that government agencies and other stakeholders will need to negotiate to determine the most appropriate delivery models for investment under this Strategic Framework. Government agencies may need to consider delivery models for investment in the short-term, particularly in light of the phasing out of CDEP, with a view to developing more comprehensive investment and brokering structures over the next 12 months. It will be vital that there is a high level of consensus around the most appropriate delivery model for this Strategic Framework with government agencies and other key stakeholders, including Indigenous land and sea management groups and land councils, needing to agree on the way forward.

There are five models that could be considered for the delivery of the investment streams under this Strategic Framework. Each of them adopts a negotiation and partnership approach to the delivery of funds to Indigenous land and sea management groups. These models were raised in the research and consultations and canvass strengthening support for existing structures as well as the creation of potential new arrangements.

It was clear in the interviews conducted that there is a real concern that if new investment is delivered under this Strategic Framework independently of current programs, it will act to further complicate an area that already has a number of uncoordinated separate funding buckets, delivery structures and program requirements. This would not achieve one of the primary goals of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule which is to streamline and coordinate funding arrangements. Accordingly, each of the models below suggests that new investments be delivered in a way that encourages coordination with existing arrangements. This can be achieved either through pooling or packaging funds across the investment streams. Consultations conducted with government agencies indicated that whole-of-government models could be negotiated within Australian Government Department of Finance and Administration and Australian National Audit Office guidelines for multi-agency funding.
Each model provides a method for: overseeing the delivery of investment under the Strategic Framework; making decisions about where resources should be applied; delivering resources to Indigenous groups; and monitoring and reporting back to investors on the outcomes being achieved. Each model is presented here with its major benefits and draw-backs. While complex, it may also be possible for agencies to adopt combinations of more than one model for different purposes. For example, one model could be used for the pooling of investment and another for its delivery to Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Each model envisages a continuation of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group as a loose coordination mechanism across government agencies and other stakeholders including the land councils and NT NRM Board. However, the delivery models all attempt to establish much stronger coordination mechanisms across agencies for the delivery of investments. This is achieved through the pooling of investment and nomination of lead agencies or delivery organisations under memorandum of understanding arrangements.

It is recommended that in examining the merits of these various models, agencies focus on the need for a delivery model that:

- provides an effective governance structure able to manage the delivery of new investment in this area with appropriate financial, administrative and staffing resources;
- maximises effective coordination among investors;
- establishes streamlined funding and administrative processes for Indigenous groups attracting investment;
- creates the certainty and needed to attract long-term government, business and philanthropic investment and confidence in this area;
- markets the Indigenous land and sea management sector as an increasingly important part of the NT economy;
- ensures input from Indigenous land and sea management groups working on the ground into investment decisions;
- allows for timely delivery of investment to Indigenous land and sea management groups, particularly in light of funding uncertainty brought on by the phasing out of CDEP;
- facilitates brokers being able to work with Indigenous land and sea management groups in a hands-on way for the next 18 months as CDEP and local government reforms create a gap in the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups.

In relation to the last point, any new delivery model will need the capacity to respond to uncertain hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups over the next 18 months. As indicated in section six, this uncertainty is likely to develop as a result of the closure local community CDEP organisations and their possible transition to new Job Network and STEP ERS arrangements and amalgamation of local government councils into larger shires. Delivery agencies will need to work proactively to assist Indigenous land and sea management groups to establish new governance structures and hosting arrangements in circumstances where there current host arrangements are changing. It may be possible for some groups to move towards independent incorporation but the majority will need new hosting arrangements, at least in the short-term, by local community organisations such as outstation resource centres, the new shires or mid level organisations such as the land councils. This support will need to be provided quickly and effectively so that the challenge of establishing stable host arrangements does not delay the delivery of much needed investment. In particular, host arrangements for many Indigenous land and sea management groups, with accompanying human resources and contract management support, will be required before it is possible to roll-out employment positions for Indigenous land and sea managers.

A brief description of five models that could be considered to deliver investment is below:
1) Minimal Coordination Model – ILC and ABA

**Description**
Under this model the Aboriginals Benefit Account (ABA) and Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) would coordinate the expenditure of their funds. This could be achieved by the ABA transferring their funds to the ILC under a Memorandum of Understanding. All other agencies would continue to deliver new and existing funds according to their own internal agency processes.

**Project Management**
The ILC would be responsible for overseeing new ILC and ABA investment and delivering annual outcomes reports to the ABA Committee and staff within the Department of Family, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. They would need to employ a senior project leader, finance officers and brokers to manage this investment. The ILC may engage NT agencies and land councils and other organisations to deliver components of the investment.

The Healthy Country, Healthy People Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group would continue play a loose coordination role for investment in the Indigenous land and sea management sector by other government agencies.

**Decision-Making**
Decisions about where to best invest new ILC and ABA funds would be made by the Board of the ILC with loose input from the Aboriginal Benefits Account Committee and Healthy Country, Healthy People Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group. Other agencies would also make their own decisions about where to best place resources with loose input from the Healthy Country, Healthy People Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group.

**Delivery**
The ILC would employ staff as brokers able to negotiate tailored investment packages with Indigenous groups. These staff could be based in Darwin, Alice Springs and other regional areas and could work closely with other organisations such as the land councils. All other agencies would develop or maintain their own delivery structures but may loosely attempt to coordinate with the negotiation and delivery of ILC investment packages. These brokers will need the capacity to work with Indigenous land and sea management groups in a hands-on way for the next 18 months as CDEP and local government reforms create a gap in the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups which will need to be resolved.

**Reporting**
The ILC and other agencies would participate in the new agreed joint monitoring and evaluation mechanism funded under the Strategic Framework. The ILC would also be responsible for reporting outcomes back to the ABA under its Memorandum of Understanding.

**Benefits**
- It only requires the negotiation of one Memorandum of Understanding between the ILC and ABA and could allow the release of new investment into this area quickly.
- It keeps the majority of agencies in direct control over their investments in this area, with only the ABA relying on the ILC to deliver its investment.

**Drawbacks**
- It will not greatly enhance the coordination of investment in this area across agencies. In particular, funds available from the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations for wages will not be linked to core operational and capital packages delivered by the Indigenous Land Corporation.
- It will be challenging for the Healthy Country, Healthy People Steering Committee and Operational Group to play a coordination role as agency investment will remain dispersed.
- This model may make it more difficult to attract business and philanthropic interest than would have been possible with a clearer government investment position.
- Although this model would allow for Indigenous people represented on the ABA Committee to have loose input into the delivery of investment, it may not provide an avenue for Indigenous land and sea management groups to be directly involved.
### 2) Enhanced Coordination Model - ILC, ABA, DEW, DEWR and NRETA

**Description**
Under this model the ILC, ABA, Department of the Environment and Water Resources, NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and Department of Employment and Workplace Relations would coordinate their investments. This could be achieved by the ILC, ABA, DEW, DEWR and NRETA delivering their funds to one or two lead agencies within this group under a Memorandum of Understanding or other tight coordination mechanisms. It may be most appropriate for the lead agency role to be performed by a natural resource management agency such as the Department of the Environment and Water Resources and/or the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts. All other government agencies would deliver new and existing funds according to their own internal agency processes. This model is based on the current delivery of the Indigenous Pastoral Project in the NT through the NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines.

**Project Management**
The lead agency/ies would be responsible for overseeing the investment and delivering annual outcomes reports to the other agencies. They would need to employ a senior project leader, finance officers and brokers to manage this investment. They may engage NT agencies, land councils and other organisations to deliver components of the investment.

The *Healthy Country, Healthy People* Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group would continue to play a loose coordination role for investment in the Indigenous land and sea management sector by other government agencies.

**Decision-Making**
Decisions about where to best invest new funds would be made by the lead agency/ies with input from the *Healthy Country, Healthy People* Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group. Other agencies outside this process make their own decisions about where to best place resources with loose input from the *Healthy Country, Healthy People* Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group.

**Delivery**
The lead agency/ies would employ staff as brokers, possibly drawing on the current Australian and NT Government Facilitator Network, to negotiate tailored packages with Indigenous groups. These staff could be based in Darwin, Alice Springs and other regional areas and work closely with the land councils. All other agencies would maintain their own delivery structures but may loosely attempt to coordinate with the negotiation the new investment packages with Indigenous groups. These brokers will need the capacity to work with Indigenous land and sea management groups in a hands-on way for the next 18 months as CDEP and local government reforms create a gap in the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups which will need to be resolved.

Funds could be delivered using the streamlined contact template designed by the Department of Environment and Water Resources as part of the early investment process under the *Healthy Country, Healthy People* schedule.

**Reporting**
Agencies would participate in the new agreed joint monitoring and evaluation mechanism funded under the Strategic Framework. The lead agency/ies would be responsible for reporting back to the other investors under Memorandum of Understanding arrangements.

**Benefits**
- It could deliver increased coordination across key agencies in this area substantially enhancing the effectiveness of investment. In particular, core operational, capital, wage and cultural and natural resource activity investment could be aligned and this may deliver much needed stability to Indigenous land and sea management groups.
- Investment in Indigenous land and sea management groups would be more strongly tied to the delivery of outcomes under major environmental and cultural management projects.
Using the streamlined contract template developed under the early investment process may substantially reduce the administration and reporting burden on Indigenous groups.

**Drawbacks**

- It will require high level negotiation of Memorandums of Understanding among agencies and this will take time. In particular, it will be important to develop protocols for acknowledging various agency contributions and their outcome requirements.
- It will require the lead agency or agencies to make a commitment to delivering coordinated investment in this area for a five year period and this may be an upfront challenge.
- It may still be difficult to attract greater business and philanthropic interest in this area because the arrangement is still focused on coordinating investment within government circles alone.
- Although this model would allow for Indigenous people represented through the land councils’ representation on the *Healthy Country, Healthy People* Operational Group, it may not provide an avenue for Indigenous land and sea management groups to be directly involved.
3) Devolved Delivery Model - Through land councils and other peak Indigenous organisations

**Description**
Under this model the ABA and ILC (as well potentially as the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts) would provide their aggregated investment to the land councils and/or other peak Indigenous organisations to deliver under Memorandums of Understanding. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations would also coordinate their investment with the land councils. All other agencies would deliver new and existing funds according to their own internal agency processes.

**Project Management**
The land councils and/or and other peak Indigenous organisations would be responsible for overseeing new investment and delivering annual outcomes reports to the investing agencies. They would need to employ a senior project leader, finance officers and brokers to manage this investment.

The *Healthy Country, Healthy People* Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group would continue play a loose coordination role for investment in the Indigenous land and sea management sector by other government agencies.

**Decision-making**
Decisions about where to best invest new funds would be made by the land councils and/or other peak Indigenous organisations with input from the *Healthy Country, Healthy People* Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group. Other agencies outside this process would make their own decisions about where to best place resources with loose input from the *Healthy Country, Healthy People* Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group.

**Delivery**
The land councils and other peak Indigenous organisations would employ staff as brokers (possibly drawing on existing facilitators) able to negotiate tailored packages with Indigenous groups. New staff positions may need to be created within the land councils and other peak organisations to be able to perform this function. All other agencies would develop or maintain their own delivery structures but may loosely attempt to coordinate with the negotiation of investment packages by the land councils and other peak Indigenous organisations. These brokers will need the capacity to work with Indigenous land and sea management groups in a hands-on way for the next 18 months as CDEP and local government reforms create a gap in the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups which will need to be resolved.

**Reporting**
The land councils and other peak Indigenous organisations in the new agreed joint monitoring and evaluation mechanism funded under the Strategic Framework. They would be responsible for reporting back to investing agencies under Memorandum of Understanding arrangements.

**Benefits**
- It will draw on the expertise of the land councils and other peak Indigenous organisations in delivering investment. These agencies currently have working relationships with the majority of the Indigenous land and sea management groups across the NT and have some experience in brokering investment.
- In some cases it may prevent double handling of investment as it is likely that funds for Indigenous land and sea management groups in the Tiwi, Central and Anindilyakwa Land Council regions would largely go to these land councils as they are currently hosting these groups.
- This delivery models draws on existing structures but it will still require additional resources and new machinery for it to operate effectively.
- It may allow for coordinated investment packages to be negotiated and delivered to Indigenous groups.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drawbacks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o While the land councils have provided strong support to Indigenous land and sea management groups, additional financial, administrative and staffing resources are required to match the growth of this area, particularly in the Northern Land Council region. This issue would need to be addressed by the land councils and government agencies prior to the delivery of new investment under this model and may require consideration of the current allocation of core funding within the land councils to supporting Indigenous land and sea management and the potential need for additional core funding resources from government agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Government agencies may require that they have direct control over, and responsibility for, prioritising investment in this area, particularly to achieve whole-of-government outcomes. This may not be possible under this model.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4) Devolved Delivery Model – through the Natural Resource Management Board of the NT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Description</strong></th>
<th>Under this model the ABA and ILC (as well as potentially as the Department of Environment and Water Resources and NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts) would provide their aggregated investment to NRM Board to deliver under Memorandums of Understanding. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations could also coordinate their investment in this area with the NT NRM Board. All other agencies would deliver new and existing funds according to their own internal agency processes.</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Project Management</strong></th>
<th>The NRM Board would be responsible for overseeing the delivery of new investment and providing annual outcomes reports to the investing agencies. They would need to employ a senior project leader, finance officers and brokers to manage this investment. The <em>Healthy Country, Healthy People</em> Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group would continue play a loose coordination role for investment in the Indigenous land and sea management sector by other government agencies.</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Decision-making</strong></th>
<th>Decisions about where to best invest new funds would be made by the NT NRM Board in consultation with the <em>Healthy Country, Healthy People</em> Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group. Other agencies outside this process would make their own decisions about where to best place resources with loose input from the <em>Healthy Country, Healthy People</em> Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group.</th>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Delivery</strong></th>
<th>The NRM Board would employ staff as brokers (possibly drawing on existing regional facilitators) able to negotiate tailored packages with Indigenous groups. New staff positions will need to be created within the administrative team associated with the Board to be able to perform this function. These staff could be based in Darwin, Alice Springs and other regional areas and work closely with the land councils. These brokers will need the capacity to work with Indigenous land and sea management groups in a hands-on way for the next 18 months as CDEP and local government reforms create a gap in the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups which will need to be resolved.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Reporting</strong></th>
<th>The NRM Board would participate in the agreed joint monitoring and evaluation mechanism funded under the Strategic Framework. They would be responsible for reporting back to agencies under Memorandum of Understanding arrangements.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Benefits</strong></th>
<th>It will open up the possibility of aligning investment under this Strategic Framework with the Natural Heritage Trust Regional Investment Stream delivered by the NRM Board. It may allow the NRM Board to start to begin performing an investment banker role for Indigenous land and sea management in the NT. This delivery models draws on an existing delivery structure but it will still require additional resources and new machinery for it to operate effectively. It may allow for coordinated investment packages to be negotiated and delivered to Indigenous groups.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| **Drawbacks** | The NT NRM Board is responsible for the delivery of investment in cultural and natural resource management to all groups across the NT. It may strain its identity and capacity to deliver such a large amount of Indigenous-specific investment. The Board has not yet evolved into an organisation able to operate as an investment broker and they may not be able to manage this task in the short-term. Government agencies may require that they have direct control over, and responsibility for, |
prioritising investment in this area, particularly to achieve whole-of-government outcomes. This may not be possible under this model as the Board does not operate using a representative structure with government agencies present.

- All Indigenous Land and Sea Management organisations may not wish to have the NT NRM Board responsible making decisions over the delivery of Indigenous-specific investment. There are some concerns that the Board does not have Indigenous representation, although there are community members on the Board from Indigenous organisations.
- Although this model would allow for Indigenous people represented through the land councils’ representation on the Healthy Country, Healthy People Operational Group, it may not provide an avenue for Indigenous land and sea management groups to be directly involved.

### Establishment of a sub-committee to the NRM Board

A variation on model four suggested by some Indigenous land and sea management groups consulted for this report is the creation of a sub-committee of the NRM Board established to provide advice on the delivery of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Strategic Framework. This Committee could provide an avenue for Indigenous land and sea management groups to be represented in decision-making. This sub-committee could also allow other government investors to be represented. This may require amendment to the Board’s governing legislation and operating procedures.

### Delivery of the major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects stream

It has been suggested that one option may be for the NT NRM Board to deliver investment stream four: major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects. This stream fits closely with current NT NRM Board investments under the NT Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan and Regional Investment Strategy. It would also align NT NRM Board and Healthy Country, Healthy People Strategic Framework funds.

However, this option may not be consistent with the concept of delivering the investment streams as part of integrated packages to individual Indigenous land and sea management groups. It is important that there are tight mechanisms for aligning investment across the seven streams and it would be important to ensure that decisions about the delivery of investment stream four: major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects align with decisions about the delivery of the other investment streams.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>5) Establishment of a new corporate structure for delivering investment Indigenous cultural and natural resource management in the NT</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A new corporate structure could be created for delivering investment in Indigenous cultural and natural resource management in the NT. While detailed work would be required on this structure it may be established to represent Indigenous land and sea management groups, government agencies, business and other investors. It would sit alongside, rather than replace, existing structures such as the land councils who have statutory responsibilities in relation to Indigenous land and sea management under the <em>Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976</em>. Foundation members could include Australian and NT Governments and representatives of Indigenous land and sea management groups. Over time, additional members could be drawn from the business, research and philanthropic sectors. The aim of the structure would be to deliver foundation investment in Indigenous land and sea management groups over the next five years in order to move towards a ‘fee-for-service’ business model with a reduced reliance on government grant funding. The aim would be for this new structure to attract increased business and philanthropic investment as well as providing an effective project and financial management service. Under this model the ABA and ILC (as well as potentially the Department of Environment and Water Resources and NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts) would provide their aggregated investment to this new corporate structure to deliver under a Memorandum of Understanding. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations could also coordinate their investment in this area with this new corporate structure. All other agencies would deliver new and existing funds according to their own internal agency processes but they would be encouraged to deliver via this new structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project Management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The new corporate structure would be responsible for overseeing new investment and delivering annual outcomes reports to the investing agencies, businesses and philanthropic organisations. It would require strong leadership backed with financial officers and brokers. The <em>Healthy Country, Healthy People</em> Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group would perform a loose coordination role until the new structure was up and running effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Decision-making</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions about where to best invest new funds would initially be made by foundation Board members of the new corporate structure. This would include representatives from Indigenous land and sea management groups and NT and Australian Government agencies. Over time, business, research and philanthropic organisations may also provide expertise on where to best make investments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The new corporate structure would employ staff as brokers able to negotiate tailored packages with Indigenous groups. These staff could be based in Darwin, Alice Springs and other regional areas and work closely with the land councils. These brokers will need the capacity to work with Indigenous land and sea management groups in a hands-on way for the next 18 months as CDEP and local government reforms create a gap in the hosting arrangements for some Indigenous land and sea management groups which will need to be resolved. All other agencies would develop or maintain their own delivery structures but may loosely attempt to coordinate with the negotiation of investment packages by the new corporate structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reporting</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The new structure would participate in the agreed joint monitoring and evaluation mechanism funded under the Strategic Framework. They would be responsible for reporting back to investors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Benefits

- Government investors and Indigenous groups would both have the ability to participate in decisions about the allocation of investment. This representative structure will hopefully provide confidence to government investors and Indigenous groups. Indigenous land and sea management groups could be directly involved in decision-making about the allocation of investment.
- It could allow for much faster progress towards greater business, research and philanthropic engagement in the Indigenous land and sea management sector in the NT.
- It could allow for the creation of a dedicated and professional financial and project management team to assist Indigenous groups and investors.
- It could allow for a birds-eye approach to be taken to the development of the Indigenous land and sea management sector in the NT recognising the broad range of environment, social, training, employment and economic development outcomes being achieved. Investment will not be locked in to an isolated cultural and natural resource management paradigm.
- It may allow for coordinated investment packages to be negotiated and delivered to Indigenous groups.

Drawbacks:

- The new corporate structure will to some extent duplicate the services that may already be available through the land councils and peak Indigenous organisations and the NT NRM Board.
- It will take 6-12 months to negotiate and develop this new structure, potentially holding up the release of urgent funds required with the phasing out of CDEP support.

Establishment of new corporate structures for delivering investment Indigenous cultural and natural resource management in the NT - regional / land council model

A variation on model five suggested for consideration by the Aboriginal Benefits Account (ABA) Committee is the possibility of establishing new corporate entities or ‘eco-trusts’ for several regions of the NT. These regions could be identified on a geographic basis, grouping together regions with similar landscapes and biodiversity characteristics. They could also be defined using current NT land council boundaries. Representation on these ‘eco-trusts’ could be similar to the arrangements outlined in model five with government, business and Indigenous land and sea management groups represented.

New Corporate Structure

It would take time for government agencies, Indigenous groups and other stakeholders to negotiate any new corporate structure for the delivery of investment in Indigenous land and sea management over the longer-term. Discussions would need to be held with government agencies, Indigenous groups, business groups, research institutions and philanthropic organisations to make sure the structure was attractive to all parties and would encourage investment in this area. There would also need to be a clear understanding of how any new structure would sit alongside existing delivery models such as the Natural Resource Management Board of the NT and Land and Sea Management Units within the land councils. A key issue would also be establishing an effective mechanism for determining how Indigenous land and sea management groups would be represented on any new structure.

It was clear from consultations conducted for this report that the NT Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce are interested in a model that can attract greater business and philanthropic investment in Indigenous land and sea management over the next five years. The Aboriginals Benefit Account Committee emphasised the need to develop a model that will allow Indigenous land and sea management groups to be represented and actively participate in investment decisions. The ABA also emphasised the need for a model that will allow business groups to bring their investment and financial expertise to the emerging Indigenous land and sea management sector.

These discussions could draw on recent work undertaken for Land and Water Australia by the Australian Conservation Foundation and other project partners on the development of an ‘eco-trust’ model for investment. This work explores possible institutional structures for facilitating the emergence
of a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia, drawing on the Canadian ‘eco-trust’
experience. Ecotrust Canada was formed in 1990 with the aim of building the capacity of communities,
institutions and businesses to participate in the conservation economy. The organisation raises and
brokers capital to accelerate the transition to a conservation economy in the British Columbia region. It
connects conservation entrepreneurs to each other, First Nation (Aboriginal) communities, government
and business investors and to the market.

The Land and Water and Australian Conservation Foundation work in this area examines options for
formulating ‘eco-trust’ arrangements in Northern Australia through strengthening existing organisations
and building new networks. It also examines the possible establishment of a new not-for-profit
organisation, Eco-trust Australia, to provide a brokering and services portal for Indigenous Caring for
Country work across Northern Australia.

The Land and Water and Australian Conservation Foundation Report work in this area indicates that
‘eco-trust’ structures could promote the sustainable development of the cultural and conservation
economy across Northern Australia by:

- recognising Aboriginal cultures, rights and existing title over vast tracs of land and
costline;
- building and supporting strong, vibrant and sustainable communities;
- providing meaningful work, good livelihoods and sustainable enterprises; and
- conserving and restoring the environment.

The work suggests that Indigenous organisations such as the land councils, the North Australian
Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance, business banking partners such as the Bendigo Bank,
government agencies and research institutions could hold initial discussions to shape ongoing work on
this concept.

In developing new investment delivery and brokering models, experience should also be drawn from the
models operating in the Indigenous arts, community stores (Outback Stores) and tourism sectors.

**Step One (B): Building Investment Streams Across Agencies**

Parallel to discussions on possible delivery models, government agencies and other stakeholders will
also need to determine how their resources and programs can be coordinated to support the seven
investment streams. The below tables flesh out the investment streams with information on the agencies
who may be able to contribute resources, implementation arrangements and expected returns.
1) Investment in core operational and capital three year support for Indigenous land and sea management groups.

**Objective:** To provide greater operational and financial stability to Indigenous land and sea management groups so they can effectively undertake cultural and natural resource management activities and plan for the long-term sustainability of their organisations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Description</th>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide ‘one stop’ three-year support to Indigenous groups who demonstrate the motivation and ability to develop into sustainable cultural and natural resource management organisations. Support will be tailored to individual groups and could include funding for:</td>
<td>Funding could comprise contributions from:</td>
<td>Delivered as part of an integrated package with other investment streams to Indigenous land and sea management groups.</td>
<td>Indigenous land and sea management groups able to transition to sustainable profit or social enterprise organisations and deliver effective cultural and natural resource management services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o governance models and business plans;</td>
<td>o Indigenous Land Corporation</td>
<td>1. This funding opportunity will be communicated to all recognised Indigenous land and sea management groups.</td>
<td>o Indigenous employment in regional and remote regions of the NT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o wages for a coordinator and senior Indigenous land and sea managers;</td>
<td>o Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Aboriginals Benefit Account)</td>
<td>2. Expressions of interest and basic cultural and natural resource management plans will be submitted by interested Indigenous groups.</td>
<td>o Achieving measurable environmental, cultural, social, training and economic development outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o flexible resources for administration and operations; and</td>
<td>o Department of the Environment and Water Resources (current Working on Country program)</td>
<td>3. A team of brokers will visit groups who qualify for this support and negotiate the provision of these tailored packages based on their stage of development and current resources.</td>
<td>o Achieving greater efficiency and value for public money through coordinated investment across agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o basic capital items.</td>
<td>o Department of Transport and Regional Services (Regional Partnerships Program)</td>
<td>4. Indigenous groups will need to demonstrate how they will use these resources to transition into sustainable profit or social enterprise organisations and deliver effective cultural and natural resource management services over three years.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The investment may support coordinator housing but this will require parallel support from housing programs run by the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and NT Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport.</td>
<td>o NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines (NT Community Marine Ranger Program)</td>
<td>5. This process will deliver rolling packages over five years to take into account the ongoing development of groups in the NT (Year 1-3, Year 2-4, Year 3-5).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) Investment in employment for Indigenous land and sea managers who deliver environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in the national interest.

**Objective:** To provide: a) the means for Indigenous people to undertake environmental, cultural and biosecurity work to meet their aspirations for Caring for Country and the Australian Government’s environmental, cultural and biosecurity protection responsibilities; b) a mechanism through which Indigenous people previously involved with the CDEP program, can move into jobs or other training and employment programs.

<table>
<thead>
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</table>
| Provide employment for approximately 200 Indigenous land and sea managers either through an expanded Working on Country concept. This could be led by the Department of the Environment and Water Resources but may also include funds from other agencies such as the NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and Indigenous Land Corporation. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
- Department of the Environment and Water Resources  
- NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts  
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations | Delivered as part of an integrated package with other investment streams to Indigenous land and sea management groups.  
1. This funding opportunity will be communicated to all recognised Indigenous land and sea management groups.  
2. Expressions of interest and basic cultural and natural resource management plans will be submitted by interested Indigenous groups.  
3. A team of brokers will visit groups who qualify for this support and negotiate the provision of these tailored packages based on their stage of development and current resources.  
4. Indigenous groups will need to demonstrate how they will use these resources to transition into sustainable profit or social enterprise organisations and deliver effective cultural and natural resource management services over three years.  
5. This process will deliver rolling packages over five years to take into account the ongoing development of groups in the NT (Year 1-3, Year 2-4, Year 3-5). | o Workforce certainty for Indigenous land and sea management groups as they plan for the long-term stability of their organisations.  
o Indigenous employment in regional and remote regions of the NT. |
<table>
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<tr>
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</table>
| A revised application of the Structured Training and Employment and Employment Related Services Program (STEP ERS) for Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups. This would allocate positions to Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups (rather than allocating STEP ERS support to individuals) to create greater certainty for organisations. STEP ERS support would need to be flexible and offered by negotiation with individual groups for a period of 12-36 months depending on their ability to transition people into full employment as they develop their organisations. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations  
- Centrelink | Delivered as part of an integrated package with other investment streams to Indigenous land and sea management groups. CDEP/transition Job Network organisations (STEP ERS Providers) and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations would be involved in negotiating the provision of STEP ERS support. It may be possible for some Indigenous land and sea management organisations to become STEP ERS Providers. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations  
- Centrelink |  
- Training and employment pathway for Indigenous land and sea managers.  
- Indigenous employment in regional and remote regions of the NT. |
| A revised application of the Work for the Dole program for Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups which allocates positions to groups for 12 month periods as long as they are able to keep people in productive work. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations  
- Centrelink | Delivered as part of an integrated package with other investment streams to Indigenous land and sea management groups. CDEP/transition Job Network organisations (STEP ERS Providers) and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations would be involved in negotiating the provision of Work for the Dole support. It may be possible for some Indigenous land and sea management organisations to become Work for the Dole Providers. |  
- Maintenance of Indigenous land and sea management activities for 12 month periods.  
- Capitalising the delivery structure Indigenous land and sea management groups provide for Work for the Dole activities. |
### 3) Investment in training and skills development of current and future Aboriginal land and sea managers

**Objective:** Skilled Aboriginal land and sea managers able to successfully combine Indigenous ecological knowledge with western scientific approaches to cultural and natural resource management and develop careers in this area.

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</tr>
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</table>
| a. Establish training and employment pathways to assist Indigenous people secure cultural and natural resource management positions in government, business, research and conservation agencies. | *In-kind support could be provided by:*  
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations  
- NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development  
These agencies will work in partnership with NORFORCE, NT and Australian Government Parks Services and other government, business and research agencies. | 1. The Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development will negotiate with key government, business, research and conservation agencies to establish realistic Indigenous employment targets over the next five years.  
2. These agencies will work with the land councils, NAILSMA and other peak Indigenous organisations to source potential Indigenous employees. | o Increase the number of Indigenous people employed in cultural and natural resource management positions in government, business, research and conservation agencies. |

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</table>
| b. Three-year support for eight regional training coordinators linking Indigenous groups in a region with training providers. | *Funding could comprise contributions from:*  
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations  
- NT Department of Employment, Education and Training  
These agencies will work in partnership with:  
- Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education  
- Charles Darwin University  
- Other Registered Training Providers | 1. Consultations will be held with Indigenous groups, land councils, NAILSMA and training providers about the most suitable regions and location for the six training coordinators.  
2. Regional coordinators will be recruited and will develop training and development plans tailored to the Indigenous groups in the region.  
3. Regional coordinators will facilitate and monitor the delivery of training.  
The roll-out of this support should take place alongside the negotiation of integrated support packages. | o Clear links between Indigenous groups to training providers.  
o Improved training tied to regional issues and workplans.  
o Increased capacity for groups to sustainably manage environmental, cultural and border protection threats.  
o Increased information sharing and networking across Indigenous groups in a region. |
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<tr>
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<th><strong>Implementation</strong></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| c. A feasibility study into developing regional training delivery models including the establishment of regional cultural and natural resource management training campuses across the NT. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
  - Indigenous Land Corporation  
  - Department of Education, Science and Training  
  - NT Department of Employment, Education and Training | 1. Terms of reference will be negotiated.  
  2. Consultant will be chosen using a select tender process.  
  3. Consultancy will be conducted over six months. |  
  - Clear pathway for the effective delivery of tailored training to Indigenous land and sea management groups over the longer-term. |
| The terms of reference for the study would be developed by the Healthy Country, Healthy People Operational Group with advice from: |  
  - NT Department of Employment and Workplace Relations  
  - Department of Education, Science and Training  
  - Charles Darwin University  
  - Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education  
  - Desert Peoples Centre (Joint Venture between Centre for Appropriate Technology and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education)  
  - Other Regional Training Organisations |  
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<table>
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</table>
| d. The development of teaching/learning resources and curriculum materials specific for NT Indigenous land and sea management groups as resources to support attainment of competencies in the national Conservation and Land Management training package. This will involve job-ready, leadership and project management training and courses specific to the NT environmental, cultural and social landscape. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  - Indigenous Land Corporation  - Department of Education, Science and Training  - NT Department of Employment, Education and Training  The materials would be developed by a consultant working with:  - Senior Indigenous Land and Sea Managers  - School of Indigenous Knowledge Systems, CDU  - Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education  - land councils & NAILSMA  - Regional Training Organisations  - Central Australian Education and Training Network | 1. Develop a Committee representing senior Indigenous land and sea managers, Indigenous organisations and Regional Training Organisations to oversee the development of the curriculum materials. 2. Appoint a consultant to develop the materials. 3. Consultancy will be conducted over 12 months | o More effective training materials for Indigenous land and sea managers.  
o Increased ability of Indigenous land and sea managers to stay in employment and effectively deliver on government contracts and fee-for-service arrangements. |
| e. Expansion of the out-posting of NT Parks and Wildlife Officers to Indigenous Groups (moving from 2 to 8 positions over five years) under the Indigenous Ranger Group Development Program. It may be possible to develop this as an exchange program over time where Indigenous managers are out-posted to the NT Parks and Wildlife Service. | Funding could be provided by:  - NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts. | 1. NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts will negotiate the placement of these officers with Indigenous groups and the Department of Environment and Water Resources. 2. The out-posting of officers would be on the request of Indigenous groups they will need to be at an appropriate stage of development. 3. Officers will be placed with Indigenous groups for long-term periods. The roll-out of this support should take place alongside the negotiation of integrated support packages. | o Transfer of cultural and natural resource management knowledge between NT Parks and Reserves staff and Indigenous groups.  
o Increased effectiveness of the cultural and natural resource management work of Indigenous groups. |
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| f. Establish a leadership and project management initiative for senior and future Indigenous land and sea managers involving Indigenous leaders and the business sector. Non-Indigenous coordinators may also benefit from this training as it could build their capacity to support strong Indigenous leaders able to perform increased coordination and project management functions. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
- Indigenous Land Corporation  
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations  
- Business and philanthropic sectors  
These agencies will work in partnership with:  
- senior Indigenous land and sea managers  
- land councils and NAILSMA | 1. Await the outcomes of the curriculum materials consultancy.  
2. In year two, invite tenders for the delivery of the leadership and project management initiative from organisations who can demonstrate their ability to deliver leadership and project management skills to Indigenous people. | o Indigenous cross-cultural leadership and project management skills  
o Decreased reliance on non-Indigenous coordinators and appointment of Indigenous coordinators from within the local community  
o Increased governance and leadership capacity in Indigenous land and sea management groups  
o Increased ability for Indigenous land and sea managers to transfer into other industry sectors. |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Investment Description</th>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
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</table>
| g. Establish an Indigenous land and sea management group and research organisation partnership initiative to provide a voice for Indigenous groups in establishing research agendas and participating in research across the NT. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
- Indigenous Land Corporation  
- Department of Education, Science and Training  
- NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts | 1. The purpose of these funds is to establish and foster relationships between on-ground Indigenous land and sea management groups and research organisations so that there is greater opportunity for research questions and methodologies to be driven by the Indigenous groups. It will be a three year initiative. | o Positive relationships between Indigenous land and sea management groups and research organisations.  
| | The aim will be to secure ongoing funds within research organisations for this initiative. The above agencies will work in partnership with:  
- Indigenous land and sea management groups  
- Research Institutions | 2. These Departments will invite tenders from Indigenous organisations, including in partnership with research organisations, in the Top End and Centre of the NT who can demonstrate their ability to successfully engage Indigenous people in setting research agendas and developing projects.  
3. Three year pilot funding will be provided to these organisations to engage Indigenous people in research projects. | o Transfer of Indigenous ecological and western scientific knowledge and approaches among the parties.  
| | | | o Skilled Indigenous land and sea management groups able to offer partnerships and services to research organisations. |
| | | | |
| h. Employ three women’s land and sea management facilitators over three years. | Funding could be provided by the Aboriginals Benefit Account. | 1. Consultations will be held with Indigenous groups, land councils and training providers about the best location for the facilitators.  
2. The facilitators will be recruited and will develop plans to assist women whose aim is to become involved in Indigenous land and sea management groups.  
3. The facilitators will facilitate the engagement of Indigenous women and monitor the outcomes. | o Increased engagement of women in Indigenous land and sea management. |
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Investment Description</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Implementation</strong></th>
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</thead>
</table>
| i. Assistance to Indigenous land and sea management groups to ‘Adopt a School’ and deliver Junior Ranger programs and work experience in partnership with teachers. This may also be facilitated through the NT Department of Employment, Education and Training’s Remote Learning Partnership Agreements initiative. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
- Indigenous Land Corporation  
- Department of Education, Science and Training  
- NT Department of Employment, Education and Training | 1. DEST, DEET and the ILC will provide support for Indigenous groups interested in the ‘Adopt a School’ program.  
2. DEET and DEST will examine school curriculum in the area of science and Indigenous land and sea management to encourage a ‘two-toolbox approach.’  
3. Indigenous groups will deliver Junior Ranger programs and work experience opportunities to students. | o Training and career development pathways for younger people to become involved in science and cultural and natural resource management  
o Aboriginal land and sea managers acting as role models for younger people.  
o Inter-generational transfer of Indigenous knowledge alongside western scientific approaches to cultural and natural resource management.  
- Increased school attendance, retention and achievement. |
|  | These agencies would work in partnership with:  
- Indigenous land and sea management groups  
- Local schools |  |  |
4) Investment in three year biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects with Indigenous land and sea management groups across a region. These will include a capacity development stage over 12 months and then the requirement to show clear cultural and environmental outcomes.

**Objective:** Long-term capacity for Indigenous groups to effectively manage of significant biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues. Demonstrable environment and cultural protection outcomes.

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<tr>
<th>Investment Description</th>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Delivery</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Plan, finance and implement strategic three year projects, with emphasis on: Fire management and greenhouse gas abatement; Maintenance and transfer of Indigenous ecological knowledge Invasive weed eradication; Feral animal control; Climate change and coastal salinity; Biodiversity monitoring and threatened species; Water monitoring and allocation; Coastal surveillance and protection; and Environmental health of communities. This would expand the delivery investment from a placed-based approach to a regional and issues-based approach linking Indigenous land and sea management groups across a region.</td>
<td>Funding could comprise contributions from: Indigenous Land Corporation Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Aboriginals Benefit Account) NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts Department of the Environment and Water Resources (Working on Country) NT NRM Board NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines Agencies or organisations with overall responsible for delivery would depend on the delivery model chosen for the roll-out of the Strategic Framework.</td>
<td>Delivered as part of an integrated package with other investment streams to Indigenous land and sea management groups. 1. NRETA and DEW will determine projects in consultation with research institutions and other representative organisations. The projects will align with biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage priorities identified in the NT Parks Masterplan, NT Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan and Indigenous Protected Area Plans. 2. NT NRM Board will be approached for contributions as a co-investor with responsibility for major environmental and cultural projects under the NT Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan. 3. The team of brokers will invite Indigenous land and sea management groups to participate in these projects and negotiate resource packages. Indigenous groups will be approached on the basis of their capacity to manage or protect high value ecological and cultural environments.</td>
<td>Effective action in managing locally, nationally and internationally important cultural and environmental values. Maintenance of high biodiversity values and intact landscapes. Increased long-term capacity of Indigenous groups to manage high priority biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Investment Description</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agencies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delivery</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>This investment will build on the core operational and capital support delivered to Indigenous groups under stream one and allow them to build capacity and expertise in managing particular biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage issues in their regions.</td>
<td>4. NRETA or other research and cultural and natural resource management organisations such as Bushfires NT will act as the project manager and work with Indigenous groups to ensure good outcomes. 5. This process will deliver rolling three year projects over five years to take into account the ongoing development of groups (Year 1-3, Year 2-4, Year 3-5).</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
5) Investment in three-year capacity building and infrastructure packages to develop concrete fee-for-service opportunities with Indigenous groups.

**Objective:** Increased fee-for-service and commercial contract opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups leading to economic development and employment outcomes.

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Investment Description</strong></th>
<th><strong>Agencies</strong></th>
<th><strong>Implementation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Return on Investment</strong></th>
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</thead>
</table>
| a. Plan, finance and implement strategic three year projects to develop fee-for-service and commercial opportunities between government agencies, businesses and Indigenous land and sea management groups in the areas of cultural and natural resource management and biosecurity. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
- Indigenous Land Corporation  
- Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Aboriginals Benefit Account)  
- NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development  
These agencies would work in partnership with:  
- Mining, pastoral, defence, forestry, conservation and tourism industries  
- Border protection agencies  
- NT and Australian Government Parks and Wildlife Services  
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations  
- Indigenous Business Australia  
- NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines  
- Indigenous land and sea management groups  
Agencies or organisations with overall responsible for delivery would depend on the delivery model chosen for the roll-out of the Strategic Framework. | Delivered as part of an integrated package with other investment streams to Indigenous land and sea management groups.  
1. A team of brokers will invite Indigenous land and sea management groups to participate in packages to develop concrete fee-for-service opportunities.  
2. NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and the Indigenous Land Corporation could negotiate these arrangements with businesses and other government agencies (through the NT Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce). The delivery of investment will rely on the agencies or businesses contracting with Indigenous groups guaranteeing fee-for-service arrangements for three years or more.  
3. Funding for capacity building and infrastructure could be provided by the ILC and ABA.  
4. This process will deliver rolling packages over five years to take into account the ongoing development of groups (Year 1-3, Year 2-4, Year 3-5). | o Diversification of income streams for Indigenous groups to commercial trading.  
o Increased business viability of Indigenous land and sea management groups.  
o Skills development in commercial trading and business partnerships, linked to a multiplier effect of interest in these arrangements across Indigenous communities.  
o Increased employment linked to fee-for-service opportunities. |
<table>
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<th>Investment Description</th>
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<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
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</table>
| b. Develop a map of current and potential future demand for Indigenous land and sea management services across the NT, looking to emerging national and international conservation economy markets over the next 5-10 years and exploring possible market interface structures. | Resources for the development of the report could be provided by:  
- Indigenous Land Corporation  
- Department of Employment and Workplace Relations  
- Indigenous Business Australia  
- NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development  

These agencies would work in partnership with:  
- Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources  
- NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines  
- Mining, pastoral, defence, forestry, conservation and tourism industries  
- Border protection agencies  
- NT and Australian Government Parks and Wildlife Services | 1. Commission the development of an action research report mapping current and potential future demand for Indigenous land and sea management services across the NT and options for growing interest in this area from national and international conservation economy businesses. This will include exploration of possible market interface structures. | o Framework for business and industry development agencies to consider greater investment to boost this emerging sector in the NT. |
6) Investment in Top End and Centre monitoring and evaluation programs carried out by Indigenous organisations and research institutions in partnership with government agencies and Indigenous land and sea management groups.

Objective: Providing high quality information on changes in key environmental, cultural, social, training, employment and economic development indicators (what is working well and areas for improvement) to investors and Indigenous land and sea management groups.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Description</th>
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<th>Implementation</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 1. Establish an agreed monitoring and evaluation mechanism for measuring outcomes with Indigenous groups, research organisations and government agencies. | Funding could comprise contributions from:  
- Indigenous Land Corporation  
- Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs  
- Other investing agencies | 1. Invite tenders for this work from qualified research organisations and Aboriginal organisations.  
2. Offer a three-year contract, to be renewed for an additional two years dependent on achieving demonstrated results.  
3. Establish the monitoring and evaluation process and infrastructure (including computer and training requirements). This will require the research organisations and Indigenous groups to work closely with government agencies.  
4. Conduct monitoring and provide annual evaluation reports to investing agencies. | o Timely feedback to Indigenous land and sea management groups on progress allowing for improvements in the effectiveness of their management activities over time.  
o Reporting more clearly linked to understanding the return on investment in this area.  
o Over time, replacing the multiplicity of outcome reports required by government agencies into an overarching reporting process. |

This mechanism would initially complement individual agencies’ reporting requirements but may over time lead to a reduction in the number of individual outcome reports required across agencies.
7) Investment in a finance and administration package to effectively deliver this Strategic Framework and support Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups. The details of this package would vary according to the delivery models outlined below but will an essential component to all models.

**Objective:** Increasing the effectiveness of delivery processes and to provide finance and administration support to Indigenous land and sea management groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Description</th>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Delivery</th>
<th>Return on Investment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>a.</strong> Dedicated senior project leader to drive the implementation of this Strategic Framework, including by leading a joint team (representing the investors).</td>
<td>Subject to delivery model chosen</td>
<td>Recruitment process with appropriate selection criteria reflecting the need for high level leadership and negotiation skills.</td>
<td>○ Clear appointment of a senior project leader charged with the successful implementation of the Strategic Framework&lt;br&gt;○ Ability for the Strategic Framework to be championed and for timely negotiations to be conducted among government agencies and with Indigenous organisations, businesses and philanthropic organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b.</strong> One chief finance officer able to manage investment funds and deliver timely financial information to Indigenous groups and investors. Resources to deliver business planning and financial assistance to Indigenous land and sea management groups. This may include mobile book-keepers able to work on-the-ground with these groups.</td>
<td>Subject to delivery model chosen</td>
<td>Recruitment process with appropriate selection criteria reflecting the need for high level financial and project management skills</td>
<td>○ Effective management of finances under the Strategic Framework.&lt;br&gt;○ Delivery of robust financial information and assistance to Indigenous groups and investors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investment Description</strong></td>
<td><strong>Agencies</strong></td>
<td><strong>Delivery</strong></td>
<td><strong>Return on Investment</strong></td>
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| c. Establish a team of approximately 5 brokers (representing the investors) based in Darwin and Alice Springs to carry-out the on-ground work necessary to implement the Strategic Framework. In particular, this joint team will be responsible for identifying Indigenous groups qualifying for investment packages and negotiate the delivery of these packages to them in an effective and timely way. | Subject to delivery model chosen. | This may involve the recruitment of new staff as well as utilisation of existing facilitators working for the land councils, NT NRM Board and Department of Environment and Water Resources. | ○ Clear team of people with responsibility for implementing the Strategic Framework.  
○ Effective delivery of investment packages to qualifying Indigenous groups. |
**Additional Items for Action:**

It is suggested that, in addition to the implementation of the Investment Streams, government agencies also work to undertake the following activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Agency Responsible</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NT Emergency Response</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Discussions take place between the Department of Employment and Workplace</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relations, other government agencies, Land Councils and Indigenous land and</td>
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<td>sea management groups to determine whether it may be possible for Work for</td>
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<td>the Dole positions to be allocated to Indigenous land and sea management</td>
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<tr>
<td>groups. Consultations should be conducted with current Indigenous land and</td>
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<tr>
<td>sea management groups and traditional Aboriginal owners to develop Work for</td>
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<td>the Dole programs for particular communities.</td>
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<td>2. In the event that Work for the Dole is introduced into the Indigenous land</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and whole-of-government monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and sea management sector, its impacts on wages, work incentives and the</td>
<td>and evaluation framework</td>
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<td>morale of Indigenous land and sea managers is monitored.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The increased application of business and industry development programs</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, NT Department of Business,</td>
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<tr>
<td>to the Indigenous land and sea management sector be explored as part of</td>
<td>Economic and Regional Development, Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources</td>
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<td>CDEP transition options.</td>
<td>and Indigenous Business Australia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Explore the possibility of instituting a policy that recognises Work for</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
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<td>the Dole contributions as community contributions for the purposes of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous land and sea management groups securing additional government</td>
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<tr>
<td>grants.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Explore support for Indigenous land and sea management groups to manage</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water Resources, NT Department of Natural Resources,</td>
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<tr>
<td>the environmental implications (largely weed and feral animal control)</td>
<td>Environment and the Arts and the Indigenous Land Corporation</td>
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<td>associated with ending restricted permit access to communities. This may</td>
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<td>require the installation of wash-down facilities on access roads and this</td>
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<tr>
<td>could provide work opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management</td>
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<tr>
<td>groups on a fee-for-service basis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Briefings be provided to Government Business Managers on the value of</td>
<td>Healthy Country, Healthy People Bilateral Steering Committee and Operational Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous land and sea management groups and the outcomes they achieve in</td>
<td></td>
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<td>line with government policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NT Local Government Reform</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Local Government Transition Plans take account of how ongoing support</td>
<td>NT Department of Local Government, Housing and Sport</td>
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<td>may be provided by new shires to Indigenous land and sea management groups.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Training and Governance</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Efforts are made to ensure the training requirements of the Indigenous land and sea management sector are represented on the Agri-Foods Council or in another forum to ensure the training requirements of this emerging sector are conveyed to government agencies that have responsibility for accrediting training packages.</td>
<td>NT Department of Employment, Education and Training and Department of Education, Science and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Explore utilising the Indigenous Community Volunteers Program to link Indigenous land and sea management groups with cultural and natural resource managers and business leaders.</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Prepare governance and business models for Indigenous land and sea management groups to consider, and adapt to their circumstances, drawing on fifteen years of experience in the NT Indigenous land and sea management sector.</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water Resources, NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Charles Darwin University and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education work on data sharing, course sequencing and infrastructure to provide a more seamless service to Indigenous land and sea managers</td>
<td>Charles Darwin University, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education and NT Department of Employment, Education and Training</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Research Priorities</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Government agencies invite major research organisations, including CSIRO, Desert Knowledge CRC, Charles Darwin University and Centre for Appropriate Technology, to work with them to establish research priorities for the Indigenous land and sea management sector, particularly on employment and economic development pathways for Indigenous land and sea management groups, roles of ‘broker’ organisations and fire management. These research organisations could be co-investors in research in these areas.</td>
<td>Healthy Country, Healthy People Operational Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Step Two: Delivering to Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups – Prioritise by Group and Location

There are two decision-making tools that agencies will require in order to make effective investment decisions under this Strategic Framework. The first tool will provide basic profile information on current Indigenous land and sea management groups and allow agencies to prioritise investment. The second tool will assist agencies to commence negotiations with Indigenous groups about what investments might best suit them.

First Tool – Profiling Indigenous Groups and Prioritising Investment

Government agencies and other organisations responsible for the roll-out of this Strategic Framework will need to be able to prioritise investment. Given the investment streams are to be delivered as an integrated package, investment can only be prioritised by making decisions about investment in individual groups and locations. This will ensure that investment in groups is not spread too thinly and achieves its objective of assisting Indigenous land and sea management groups to transition into sustainable enterprises.

In order to prioritise investment in groups, the government agencies and other organisations responsible for the roll-out of this Strategic Framework could invite expressions of interest from Indigenous land and sea management groups and consult with land councils and other stakeholders to obtain basic profile and business plan information for groups interested in receiving investment. The land councils and other organisations may be able to assist Indigenous land and sea management groups to compile these profiles. They should not be a lengthy application but a short description of the group, including their current financial arrangements and potential partnership and fee-for-service opportunities. An example of a short profile that could be used to develop a template is at Appendix Three.

This information could then be used to form a preliminary assessment of a group’s eligibility for investment using the decision-making flowchart that ranks groups according to:

- strength of their governance structures;
- level of commitment to development and training;
- location in relation to land and sea with high biodiversity and cultural values (this will involve assessing location of the group in relation to major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage priorities across the NT);
- access to economic development opportunities (this will involve assessing the group in relation to fee-for-service and commercial opportunities across the NT); and
- existence of a plan for securing services necessary for the functioning of the organisation (e.g. proximity to a serviced community or ability to utilise a viable outstation or work camp structure).

The below flow chart is predicated on the principle that to ensure the overall development of the Indigenous land and sea management sector and effective cultural and natural resource management of the NT over the longer-term, it will be necessary to support consolidating, emerging and new groups across the Top-End and Centre of the NT. This means that investment may not only be directed towards only the current well-developed Indigenous land and sea management groups. Investment should also support emerging or new groups where they have significant potential and reside in areas with high biodiversity significance and/or concrete fee-for-service and economic development opportunities linked to cultural and natural resource management. The staggering of investment over rolling three year period (years 1-3, 2-4 and 3-5) for operational packages is also designed to allow investment in emerging and new groups as they develop. Spreading investment across consolidating, emerging and new groups also reflects the fact that environmental, cultural and biosecurity threats may require management across a region and need to involve a number of groups at different stages of development.
4.4 Step Three: Delivery – Negotiating Tailored Packages

Second Tool – Negotiations with Indigenous groups about the investment package

Once the government agencies have identified Indigenous land and sea management groups that may receive investment packages under this Strategic Framework, the brokers will be required to visit the groups to have detailed discussions. The brokers will make a final assessment of the group’s eligibility for investment and develop a tailored investment package that suits their needs and development aspirations. The brokers will perform a needs analysis identifying what resources and support structures Indigenous groups currently have and what they require to increase their long-term capacity and sustainability.

Brokers could use the below series of questions as a tool for working with Indigenous groups to tailor effective investment packages:
### Tool Two – Tailoring Investment Packages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes – consider the delivery of funds aligned to this plan.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Does the group have a basic business plan?</strong></td>
<td>No – support the formulation of a basic prospectus and business plan (either before or alongside any new investment). If the group does not have a business plan, investment decisions can also be made with reference to their cultural and natural resource management plan. Business planning should recognise that many Indigenous land and sea management groups are evolving into sustainable enterprises and that commercial feasibility objectives need to be balanced with support for Indigenous people’s holistic approach to the social, cultural and environmental benefits of Indigenous land and sea management and respect for their ways of operating.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Does the group have a clear governance and organisational structure?</strong></td>
<td>Yes – consider the delivery of funds to support this structure.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No – fund necessary participatory planning and organisational development. This may include the negotiation of Service Level Agreements with host organisations. It may also include identifying new host arrangements in circumstances where existing host organisations can no longer perform this function due to the phasing out of CDEP and local government reforms. This should be done prior to delivering tailored funding packages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the group have a coordinator either dedicated to them or working across a region? Is this a relatively stable arrangement?</strong></td>
<td>Yes – provide funds to increase the stability of this arrangement if necessary.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No – provide funds for a dedicated coordinator or ensure access to a regional coordinator.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What are the core operational and capital requirements for the group over the next three years?</strong></td>
<td>- What are the group’s priority needs? – determine how the group would increase in effectiveness if it had these resources.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- What has the group already secured? – make enquiries to ensure these resources are secure.</td>
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<td>o flexible resources for administration and operations; and</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>o basic capital items (office space, sheds, vehicles, equipment).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How many staff does the group currently have?</strong></td>
<td>- What are the group’s priority staffing needs? – determine how the group would increase in effectiveness if it had these resources.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- What has the group already secured in terms of wages for these staff? – make enquiries to ensure these resources are secure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</table>
| **How does the group currently access training and what are their training needs?** | - What are the group’s priority training needs? – To feed into the delivery of regional training coordinators and other training and skills development initiatives.  
  - What has the group already secured in terms of training? – make enquiries to ensure these resources are secure. |
| **Are there women who are currently involved in, or wish to become more engaged in, Indigenous land and sea management?** | - What type of support do the women require? – To feed into women’s land and sea management facilitators.  
  - What has the group already secured in terms of support for these women? – make enquiries to ensure these resources are secure. |
| **Is there interest in strengthening or establishing Junior Ranger initiatives through the ‘Adopt a School’ program?** | - Does the group have a Junior Ranger program?  
  - What type of support would people need to establish this program? – To feed into the ‘Adopt a School’ initiative. |
| **What is the current capacity and interest level in the group to be a part of large-scale biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects?** | - What projects are the group currently involved in and what are the priorities in their cultural and natural resource management plans?  
  - What projects are the group interested in and what might they require to participate in major projects? – To feed into the major projects initiatives. |
| **What is the current capacity and interest levels in the group to be a part of major fee-for-service and economic development projects?** | - What fee-for-service projects are the group currently involved in? What relationships do they have with businesses and industries in their region or beyond?  
  - What projects are the group interested in and what might they require to obtain fee-for-service contracts and economic development opportunities? |
| **Are groups interested in participating in a streamlined monitoring and evaluation project?** | - What are the current monitoring and reporting processes? – to feed into the monitoring and evaluation project.  
  - What type of support would people need to participate in this project? – to feed into the monitoring and evaluation project. |
4.5 Step Four: Delivery – Providing Funding and Resources

Once tailored investment packages are negotiated with Indigenous groups, the brokers will report back and recommend these packages to the coordinated group of investors. It is vital that brokers have been given an effective upfront mandate to negotiate these packages so that at this stage of the process, the normal procedure will be for the investors to agree to the brokers’ recommendations, barring any major issues or unforeseen circumstances. The system will not work effectively if coordinating agencies are not able to rely to a large extent on the brokers’ recommendations and instead seek to use alternative means to determine appropriate levels and locations for investment. Too many layers of decision-making and approval would be likely to create significant delays and hold up the release of investment.

It will be important that effective coordination and delivery models are put in place at the outset to ensure that the investing agencies are able to release resources and funds quickly to implement these negotiated packages. Establishing upfront pooled funding and coordination arrangements under the delivery models outlined above will greatly assist.

Agencies and other stakeholders responsible for the roll-out of the Strategic Framework may be able to draw on the streamlined contracts that have been negotiated between the Department of the Environment and Water Resources, Indigenous Land Corporation and Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs for delivering a series of early investments under the *Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule*. Streamlined terms and conditions and reporting arrangements are contained in a head agreement with individual program investment scheduled at the back. This is likely to be easier for Indigenous groups to manage as they only need to undertake one monitoring and evaluation process to provide information back to investors under the contract.

4.6 Step Five: Ongoing Assistance and Monitoring

It will be important that the brokers and other staff including financial officers are available to provide ongoing assistance to Indigenous land and sea management groups. They will need to form good relationships with senior Indigenous land and sea managers and coordinators and continue to facilitate access to resources and investment, including from the business and philanthropic sectors.

Brokers will also need to be pro-active in collecting the information necessary to deliver rounds two and three of the investment streams under Step Six of the implementation plan. This Strategic Framework staggered investment over rolling three year period (years 1-3, 2-4 and 3-5) and brokers will need to facilitate investment in emerging and new groups as they develop.
5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

This Strategic Framework recommends that a streamlined monitoring and evaluation mechanism be established across government agencies, Indigenous land and sea management groups and other agencies to measure outcomes in this area.

Aim of monitoring and evaluation

The aim would be to monitor the results of the investment against the broad objectives of:

- developing effective and sustainable Indigenous cultural and natural resource management organisations, operating as for-profit or social enterprise businesses; and
- increasing the number of Indigenous people employed in cultural and natural resource management positions in government, business, research and conservation agencies.

Groups will be considered to be increasing in their effectiveness and sustainability if they can demonstrate:

- environmental, biosecurity and cultural protection and management outcomes;
- clear goals, cultural and natural resource plans of management, governance structures and business models, endorsed by traditional Aboriginal owners and community leaders;
- stable core staffing arrangements with real training, employment and economic development opportunities for individuals;
- a workable portfolio of government, business, research and philanthropic grants and fee-for-service contracts assessed to provide a fair degree of funding certainty across three year cycles (when compared to other not-for-profit conservation groups or natural resource management businesses in the NT); and
- a community development contribution to social outcomes, such as the promotion of education, health and wellbeing.

Monitoring and evaluation mechanism

This streamlined monitoring and evaluation mechanism will initially complement individual agencies’ reporting requirements but may over time lead to a reduction in the number of individual outcome reports required across agencies.

This monitoring and evaluation mechanism could be delivered through a partnership of qualified research organisations, Indigenous groups and government agencies. The organisations undertaking this work would be required to establish a monitoring and evaluation process that provides meaningful outcomes information to both government investors and Indigenous land and sea management groups. Reports would be provided to investors and Indigenous groups on an annual basis.

The monitoring and evaluation mechanism may include a combination of techniques including:

- most significant change information on a broad environmental, cultural, social, training and economic development indicators;
- detailed information on environmental and cultural outcomes for major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects; and
- detailed information on employment and economic development outcomes for major investment in fee-for-service and commercial development projects.

The organisations undertaking this work could be encouraged to use multi-media and other interactive approaches that assist Indigenous land and sea management groups to present and evaluate the outcomes they have achieved.

A streamlined monitoring and evaluation process will provide:

- timely feedback to Indigenous land and sea management groups on progress allowing for improvements in the effectiveness of their management activities over time;
• reporting more clearly linked to understanding the return on overall government and other investment in this area; and
• replacing the multiplicity of outcome reports required by government agencies into a single reporting process.

“The key performance indicators for the project should be based on outcomes not outputs, and in particular should not require onerous drafting and redrafting of project proposals and lengthy written project reports. This does not mean that people who receive funding for projects should not be held accountable; however, accountability needs to be in the context of the level of education of the people involved and the outcomes for their communities and the environment. For example, reporting could be limited to photos or a video which tells the story of the work completed and the outcomes achieved.”

(NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines, 2007)

It will be important that information available from annual evaluation reports be able to be used over time by Indigenous groups and other organisations wanting to showcase the development of the emerging Indigenous land and sea management sector in the NT and market it as a location for future ‘conservation economy’ investment.
6. RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Investment should be driven by results and reward Indigenous land and sea management groups who strongly contribute to the achievement of environmental, cultural, social and economic development outcomes over the next five years. Investment in the seven priority areas identified above is expected to produce the following returns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Return</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Core operational and capital three year support packages. | • Indigenous groups able to transition to sustainable for-profit or social enterprise organisations.  
• Delivery of effective cultural and natural resource management services.  
• Greater efficiency and value for public money with coordinated investment. |
| 2. Employment for Indigenous land and sea managers who deliver environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes in the national interest. | • Indigenous employment and career development in regional and remote parts of the NT.  
• Greater workforce certainty for delivery of cultural and natural resource management services. |
| 3. Training and skills development of current and future Aboriginal land and sea managers. | • Skills development and increased capacity of current Indigenous land and sea managers.  
• Role modelling and career development options for younger Indigenous students in science and land and sea management. |
| 4. Major biophysical, ecological and cultural heritage projects with Indigenous land and sea management groups across a region. | • Demonstrable environmental, cultural and biosecurity outcomes over Aboriginal land with high biodiversity and cultural value.  
• Increased ability of Indigenous land and sea management groups to undertake major projects.  
• Increased productivity of Aboriginal land. |
| 5. Increasing fee-for-service and commercial opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups. | • Increased business viability of Indigenous land and sea management groups as for-profit or social enterprise organisations.  
• Diversification of income stream reducing reliance on government subsidy. |
| 6. An annual monitoring and evaluation program to track environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic outcomes. | • Increased understanding of ongoing return on investment in terms of environmental, cultural, social, employment and economic development outcomes. |
| 7. Administrative and project management resources to effectively deliver the investments. | • Effective management of investment under the Strategic Framework. |
APPENDIX 1 – FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT OF THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

By any conventional evaluation, the Strategic Framework proposed has the potential to deliver more efficient and cost-effective land and sea management programs on Indigenous lands in the Northern Territory. The improvements will be delivered firstly by efficient application of resources, both among the Indigenous land and sea management groups and in government agencies; and secondly by introducing a co-ordinated strategic focus to the funding of these activities and the achievement of their long-term goals. The Strategic Framework also has strong potential to deliver other indirect economic, educational and cultural benefits more broadly to the communities affected.

It is widely accepted by government and the Australian community that the function of land and sea management has intrinsic economic value, cultural and community priorities aside. It conserves natural resources and habitat, facilitates efficient use of land and cultural heritage, and may off-set greenhouse gas production elsewhere in the economy. It is also recognised that failure to manage, or delays in managing, land and sea habitats (for example, noxious weed control) results in long-term damage and consequently increased costs of rectification. The economic consequences of a decision to fund, or curtail, such programs are both self-evident and measurable.

The positive economic consequences of land and sea management programs are both direct and indirect:

- Increased current utility of the land or waterway
- Saved future cost of restoration
- Employment provided directly and indirectly by the projects
- Capacity-building within the communities
- Educational opportunities for Indigenous land and sea management groups, other participants and other members of the relevant communities

The economic value of the work carried out by land and sea management groups can be calculated using conventional methods. Substantial subsidiary benefits also arise, including:

- Ancillary education and training opportunities for other members of the community
- Reduced reliance of Indigenous land and sea management groups and their communities on welfare
- Economic multiplier effect of wages paid to Indigenous land and sea management groups and money invested in education and training in the community
- Commercial revenue (fee-for-service) activities developed using the skills and networks developed by Indigenous land and sea management groups

There is now a need for on-going investment to build on gains made in land and sea management, and recent advances in education and training achieved by the groups. The resulting financial stability will also aid Indigenous development by reducing the motivation for successful Indigenous land and sea managers to leave their communities, and drawing relevant skills into the programs from outside.

While there is broad acceptance of the value of habitat management, this is not reflected in the existing system for funding indigenous land and sea management projects. Funding is ad hoc, short-term and grant-based. It requires frequent approval or renewal, in a cycle which does not correspond with the potential to achieve objectives. In contrast, the underlying programs have macro-level, longer-term objectives, with an obvious economic merit which sits uncomfortably with a short-term funding cycle.
The current funding system also promotes inefficiency, requiring proponents to seek periodic funding renewals from multiple sources, and funding bodies to conduct frequent reviews of applicants, often out of cycle with project milestones. Both parties are therefore required to commit resources to funding applications and their evaluation, when these funds could be better utilised in undertaking work on the ground. The need to apply for funding at frequent intervals encourages a grant mentality, and duplicates effort unnecessarily for both the applicant and the funding body.

Existing programs may be funded from as many as ten different sources, often provided on an annual basis. Such an approach is manifestly inefficient, with significant resources devoted simply to raising funding. Putting in place a fixed investment plan would allow resources to be allocated more efficiently to achieve the land and sea management objectives.

A further argument in favour of an investment plan is the need for a long-term strategic view in funding land and sea management across large areas of the Northern Territory. Any short-term approach will necessarily lose focus on broader objectives, and be influenced by trends or fashions. The risk from this approach is that important projects will remain unfinished, failing to fulfil objectives, and leaving increased costs to complete projects after interruptions. Inconsistency of government funding would also tend to suggest that some past programs were faddish or opportunistic.

The economic rationale for establishing an investment plan for indigenous land and sea management is therefore clear. The programs broadly have self-evident merit economically, socially and culturally; they generally have long-term outcomes against which short-term assessment may be difficult; and the need to seek periodic funding renewal has counter-productive effects on both the recipient and the provider of funding.

Certain components of the Federal Government’s recently announced Indigenous funding package have the potential to disadvantage Indigenous land and sea management groups or programs which are working towards broader government objectives. For example, the removal of CDEP without the effective replacement of this funding support may mean that knowledge and initiative already built up by Indigenous land and sea management groups could be lost. In addition to the lost employment and expertise, any renewed deterioration in land and sea management could be difficult and expensive to reverse. It would be counterproductive to curtail the efforts of those groups already operating successfully, which could discourage initiatives by other groups or regions. The elimination of CDEP therefore risks being seen as removing reward, and indeed introducing penalties, for efforts at self-management and self-improvement. The adoption of this Strategic Framework provides an opportunity to balance these apparent contradictions, and provide funding to priority areas under the umbrella of a high-level strategy which is consistent with the government’s stated objectives.

The creation of a dedicated fund will emphasise the importance of the task of land and sea management, and improve the efficiency of the groups by eliminating the need to source core funding from multiple agencies or donors. Providing a long-term commitment of funding for these groups will reinforce the message that management of cultural and natural resources has a value. Putting in place long term investment funding, replacing an ad-hoc grant funding approach where possible, strengthens such a message.

This Strategic Framework concludes that management of land and sea resources on Indigenous lands is well-recognised as a priority. In financial terms, there can be no better means of facilitating it than through the creation of a substantial, committed, long-term fund governed by a high-level strategic objective and monitored effectively and efficiently.

Prepared by: Mr Steve Armitage, Financial Investment Consultant
APPENDIX 2 – TABLE OF LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT GROUPS

It should be noted that the table identifies the key host agency for each Indigenous land and sea management group, however the NT land councils play a key role in supporting all Indigenous land and sea management groups throughout the NT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranger Group</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Host Agency</th>
<th>Years in Operation (at 2007)</th>
<th>Coordinator/Facilitator</th>
<th>Group numbers</th>
<th>CDEP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Landcare Education Program</td>
<td>Darwin, Adelaide River, Daly River, Jawoyn region</td>
<td>Greening Australia (previously partnership with Northern Land Council)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acacia Larrakeyah Land Management</td>
<td>Operate on the Delissaville/Wagait/Larrakia Aboriginal Land Trust –</td>
<td>Northern Land Council</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50km south of Darwin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjumarllarl Community Rangers</td>
<td>Operate in West Arnhem region: East Alligator River catchment and surrounds</td>
<td>DEMED Association</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(out of Gunbalanya)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aninidilyakwa Rangers</td>
<td>Groote Eylandt and 40 surrounding islands</td>
<td>Anindilyakwa Land Council/Angurugu Community Government Council/ Umbakumba CDEP</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asyrikarrak Kirim Rangers</td>
<td>Operate in Western Top End: Daly River/Port Keats Aboriginal Land Trust (out of Peppimenarti)</td>
<td>Northern Land Council</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Yes 0.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bek Rangers</td>
<td>Operate in West Arnhem region: Mann River catchment (out of Mannmoyi)</td>
<td>DEMED Association</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belyuen Land and Sea Management Group + a women’s horticulture program</td>
<td>Cox Peninsula: west of Darwin</td>
<td>Belyuen Community Government Council</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>20 women</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhimurru Rangers</td>
<td>Far north-east Arnhem region</td>
<td>Dhimurru Aboriginal land management Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Yes + EO + 4 support staff</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djelk Rangers</td>
<td>Arnhem Land escarpment to coast- central north-Arnhem region</td>
<td>Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Yes + 3 group coordinators</td>
<td>22 (inc. women)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Region/Location</td>
<td>Land/Resource Centre</td>
<td>Directors/Advisors</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamarrwa Nuwul Landcare</td>
<td>North-east Arnhem region (out of Yirrkala)</td>
<td>Yirrkala Dhanbul Community Council</td>
<td>Yes + Director + senior cultural advisor</td>
<td>40 (inc.women)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garawa Rangers</td>
<td>Operate on the Garawa Aboriginal Land Trust – Gulf region</td>
<td>Mungoobarda Resource Centre</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garmgi Rangers</td>
<td>Croker Island, surrounding islands and sea country – north of east Arnhem coast</td>
<td>Minjilang Community Council</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>14 (4 women)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumurr Marthakal Sea Rangers</td>
<td>Elcho Island plus Wessel and English Company islands – off north-east Arnhem coast</td>
<td>Marthakal homelands resource centre</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7 (1 woman)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gurrwurruling Rangers</td>
<td>Arafura Swamp-East Arnhem region</td>
<td>Ramingining Homelands Resource Centre</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jawoyn Rangers</td>
<td>Operate within the following Aboriginal Land Trusts: Jawoyn, Beswick, Eva Valley- Central Top End</td>
<td>Jawoyn Association</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kakadu Native Plants</td>
<td>Kakadu National Park</td>
<td>Independent Company</td>
<td>2 Directors of the Company – Peter and Sandra Christophersen</td>
<td>6 (incl 1 apprentice)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larrakia Rangers</td>
<td>Metropolitan Darwin region</td>
<td>Larrakia Nation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lianthawirryarra Sea Rangers</td>
<td>McArthur River, surrounded islands and sea country in west Carpentaria Gulf region (out of Borroloola)</td>
<td>Mabunji resource centre Aboriginal Association</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malak Malak Land Management</td>
<td>Malak Malak Aboriginal Land Trust – Daly River south of Darwin, Top End</td>
<td>Maddaingya Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandiddi Rangers</td>
<td>Operate in West Arnhem region: Goomadeer River Catchment (out of Mamadawerre)</td>
<td>Northern Land Council/DEMED</td>
<td>Yes (0.5)</td>
<td>5 women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manwuruk Rangers/Warddeken Pty Ltd</td>
<td>West Arnhem Plateau–west-central Arnhem region</td>
<td>Northern Land Council/DEMED</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mardbalk Marine Rangers</td>
<td>Goulburn Islands and adjacent coastal areas of the mainland</td>
<td>Warruwi Community Government Council</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>11 (5 women)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimal Rangers</td>
<td>Southern Arnhem region – upper catchments of Goyder, Blyth and Mann Rivers</td>
<td>Northern Land Council/Gulin Gulin Council</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8 (2 women)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Rangers</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Rangers</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minyerri</td>
<td>Alawa Land Trust (Hodgson Downs Station)</td>
<td>Northern Land Council/Alawa Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8 (5 women)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mulayee Women rangers</td>
<td>Victoria River District – Fitzroy Aboriginal Land Trust, Bradshaw Station (out of Timber Creek)</td>
<td>Northern Land Council/ Ngaliwurru Wuli Association</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yes (0.5)</td>
<td>6 women</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngaliwurru Wuli Land Management</td>
<td>Victoria River District- Timber Creek, Bradshaw Field Training Area</td>
<td>Northern Land Council/ Ngaliwurru Wuli Association</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngatpuk Land Management</td>
<td>Delissaville/Wagait/Larrakia Aboriginal Land Trust- Finiss River Floodplain (out of Bulgul)</td>
<td>Ngatpuk Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbulwar Numburindi Amalahgayag Inyung Rangers</td>
<td>150km stretch of the coastline: Gulf of Carpentaria- Walker River to Roper River</td>
<td>Numbulwar Homelands Resource Centre</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6 (inc. women)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-East Arafura Catchment Rangers</td>
<td>Southern &amp; south-eastern part of the Arafura Swamp – eastern central Arnhem region</td>
<td>Mirrngadja Community</td>
<td>~15</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thamarrurr Sea and Land Rangers 3 groups: Inland, Women and Sea Rangers</td>
<td>Daly River/Port Keats Aboriginal Land Trust – coast and hinterland around Wadeye (Port Keats) West Top-End</td>
<td>Thamarrurr Regional Council</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32 (10 women)</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi Marine Rangers</td>
<td>Tiwi Islands</td>
<td>Tiwi Land Council</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi Land Rangers</td>
<td>Tiwi Islands</td>
<td>Tiwi Land Council</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waanyi Garawa Rangers</td>
<td>Waanyi/Garawa Aboriginal Land Trust – NT/Qld border, Top End</td>
<td>Northern Land Council</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wagiman Guwardagun Rangers</td>
<td>Wagiman Land Trust: Upper Daly River Region – south of Darwin, Top End</td>
<td>Benang Association, Pine creek Aboriginal Advancement association</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>20 (inc. women)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanga Djakamirr Rangers</td>
<td>Northern Arafura swamp, coastal surveillance around Milingimbi –central north coast, Arnhem region</td>
<td>Ramingining Homelands Resource Centre</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Eagle Land Management Group</td>
<td>Finiss River Aboriginal Land Trust – Finiss Basin, south of Darwin, Top End</td>
<td>White Eagle Aboriginal Corporation</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yantjarrwu Rangers</td>
<td>Daly River/Port Keats Aboriginal Land Trust, northern section-West Top End</td>
<td>Northern Land Council/Yantjarrwu Resource Centre</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Yes (0.5)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yugul Mangi Rangers</td>
<td>South-east Arnhem region, Roper River and coastal areas (out of Ngukurr)</td>
<td>Yugul Mangi Community Government Council</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>13 (10 women)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangers</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Directorate/Host</td>
<td>Contact/Involvement</td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Additional Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yirralka Rangers</td>
<td>Laynhapuy IPA – north Blue Mud</td>
<td>Laynhapuy Homelands Association Inc.</td>
<td>5 Yes 20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Section</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amoonguna Rangers</td>
<td>Amoonguna</td>
<td>Central Land Council/ possible hosting by Ingkerreke</td>
<td>2 No 5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anmatyerre Rangers</td>
<td>Ti-Tree</td>
<td>Central Land Council/Anmatjere Community Government</td>
<td>1 No 6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julalikari Burumana Landcare</td>
<td>Tennant Creek</td>
<td>Julalikari Council</td>
<td>3 Yes 8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KaltuKatjara Rangers</td>
<td>Docker River</td>
<td>Central Land Council</td>
<td>1 Yes 12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 planning for parallel women’s program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muru-Warinyi Ankkul Rangers</td>
<td>Tennant Creek</td>
<td>Central Land Council/Julalikari Council</td>
<td>2 Yes 8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 (inc. women)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangentyere Landcare</td>
<td>Alice Springs</td>
<td>Tangentyere Council</td>
<td>5 Yes 10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tjuwanpa Rangers</td>
<td>Hermannsburg</td>
<td>Central Land Council/Tjuwanpa Outstation Resource</td>
<td>2 Yes 20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 additional 10 loosely involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlpiri Rangers</td>
<td>Yuendumu</td>
<td>Central Land Council</td>
<td>5 Yes 8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wulaign Rangers</td>
<td>Lajamanu</td>
<td>Central Land Council</td>
<td>3 Yes 12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 (+ 6-10 women informally)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>494 455</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northern, Central, Tiwi and Anindilyakwa Land Councils
Northern Land Council Region – Location of Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups

Management Areas of Sea Ranger Groups across the Top End
Northern Land Council, Tiwi Land Council and Anindilyakwa Land Council Regions

Source: Northern Land Council, 2006

Source: Central Land Council, 2007
## APPENDIX 3 – TEMPLATE: PROFILE OF AN INDIGENOUS LAND AND SEA MANAGEMENT GROUP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLC PROFILE NUMBER</th>
<th>Group Base (if any)</th>
<th>Yuendumu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Group Base</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Name(s)</th>
<th>Warlpiri Rangers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Names (if any)</td>
<td>Yuendumu Rangers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Composition</th>
<th>Number: Varies up to 8 according to activity.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age range</td>
<td>18 - 55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>To be determined @ this stage CLC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Past participation has been confined to young men from Yuendumu and Willowra but in its current phase of re-establishment there is mixed interest of young men and women in equal proportion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basis of Participation</td>
<td>In the past and up until recently the group has existed with the support of CDEP. With a Senior man working with younger men and a Ranger coordinator undertaking specific projects as organised by CLC Land Management section. This is likely to remain the situation minus the CDEP element. Participation in specific projects may be for up to 10 days at a time, although more commonly for 3-4 days.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-ordination</th>
<th>Two significant developments in 2007 placed the future of the Warlpiri Ranger Group on a firmer footing:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. sufficient co-ordination funding was secured from the NRM Board (NT) to appoint a new Warlpiri Ranger Co-ordinator in March 2007 to implement southern Tanami components of three NHT-funded projects for priority weed control, strategic fire management and priority threatened species recovery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. CLC successfully secured funding from DEW’s IPA Program for a <em>Southern Tanami IPA Feasibility Study</em> as a basis for providing long-term resourcing for the Warlpiri Ranger group and wider indigenous NRM activity in this area. A Southern Tanami IPA Development Officer was appointed in June 2007 with additional part-time support provided from CLC resources to engage Aboriginal women from the region in the associated traditional owner consultation and planning processes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Contact Details: | Warlpiri Ranger Co-ordinator: Jamie Moore |
|                 | Southern Tanami IPA Development Officer: James Young |
|                 | Women’s Participation Support: Anna Meltzer (Yuendumu-based anthropologist) |

| Background to Establishment | The Warlpiri Rangers program was initiated in 2002 on a part-time basis under supervision of the CLC Regional Land Management Officer (Tanami). |
A full time ranger coordinator was recruited in late 2004 for a 12 month period with 2003-2004 NHT funding under a project titled *Tanami Indigenous Land Management Co-ordinator*. Opportunities were made available periodically to community members on from Nyirripi, Willowra and Yuendumu to engage in land management activities which provided CDEP-based participants with ‘top-up’ wages in addition to on-the-job training. In addition to the NHT, ABA provided valuable funding to equip the ranger group with field and survey equipment enabling the group to undertake Land Management works in this region. During this 12 month period negotiations for longer term funding took place with IPA funding now in hand to investigate the feasibility of a southern Tanami region IPA as a basis for long term funding for rangers to manage the natural and cultural values of their country.

Due to significant interruption to NHT funding and staffing difficulties the group was without a co-ordinator for 2006. As a result community engagement, work opportunities and the Ranger group itself became fragmented but for some minor weed control and biological survey work through late 2006 early 2007. With a Co-ordinator now re-appointed the reinvigoration of the Warlpiri Rangers has initially received a lot of interest from community members previously engaged in the Ranger programme and a significant amount of new interest. At this stage it looks likely to comprise a broad cross-section of the community, with senior Women, Men and younger Women and Men all showing an interest in Land Management activities in this early stage of redevelopment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Operation</th>
<th>Land Tenure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>· Yuendumu ALT&lt;br&gt;· Central Desert ALT&lt;br&gt;· Wirliyajarrayi ALT (Willowra)&lt;br&gt;· Newhaven Reserve (potentially) - pastoral lease under NT Government conservation agreement.&lt;br&gt;· Yinggaalyala ALT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hosting Arrangements (collaborative partners, CDEP admin. etc.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The CDEP coordinator in Yuendumu had agreed for up to 8 places in each of the affiliated communities (Yuendumu, Willowra, Nyirripi) to engage in land management activities supported by the CLC’s Land Management section. More places may be available in the future depending on participation levels. This arrangement is likely to change with the Commonwealth Governments CDEP reforms. It is unclear at this point in time of future hosting arrangements. CLC will still be able to engage a handful of people with project specific funds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Newmont Australia* Granites operations have been, and are still very supportive of the ranger group through providing ongoing work contracts and on site training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditional owner links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Previous groups have had direction from Traditional Owners via CLC consultations and some direct involvement on the ground. With a Southern Tanami IPA development officer currently employed in Yuendumu and interest being shown from the wider community it is foreseen that Traditional Owner links with the Ranger group will increase to include more direction as to where work is undertaken on country, what work should be done and to see Traditional Owners participating in field work to assist in training rangers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure &amp;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demountable building (potential office in need of repair), Toyota troop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Past Funding Arrangements & Activities | Facilitated through CLC land management section the Yuendumu Rangers have had coordination with funds provided by NHT.  
- NHT project 2003/73 'Tanami indigenous land management coordinator' (completed Nov 2005);  
- On-ground weed control at Yuendumu (~2000-2001). Parkinsonia, rubber bush, athel pine and mesquite. NRETA weeds branch assisted by CLC & CDEP.  
- The Warlpiri Rangers (Yuendumu) have received field-based training through Greening Australia and have been involved in weed control operations with Newmont Mining.  
- Yuendumu CDEP has participated in on-ground weed control to assist the NRETA Weeds Branch to treat Parkinsonia, Athel Pine, Rubber Bush and Mesquite at Yuendumu. |
| Current Funding Arrangements | The Yuendumu rangers are currently supported through the CLC land management section who have employed a coordinator through various funding streams comprising of  
- NHT Project (2005/166) - Community based weed control in the southern Tanami  
- NHT Project (2005/095) – Implementing Recovery Actions for Bilby and other Threatened Species;  
- NHT Project (2005/099) – Best Practice Community Fire Management on Aboriginal Lands in Arid NT.  
Each of these funding arrangements have the scope to provide “top up “ wages to a limited amount of participants in these specific projects. |
| Current Activities |  
- Sangsters Bore Fox & Bilby Monitoring – Tracking and Trapping for threatened species and predators, controlling fox populations via 1080 baiting  
- Tanami Biodiversity Monitoring Strategy – Annual Flora & fauna survey conducted across 12,000 sq. km. in the Tanami region  
- NHT Weeds Project- Parkinsonia, Rubber Tree, Mesquite and Athel Pine removal around selected sites in the Yuendumu region.  
- NDMP/NHT Fire work – Fire mitigation in the southern Tanami. |
| Past & Current Contracts | The Warlpiri Rangers (Yuendumu) have been involved in weed control operations with Newmont Mining.  
- Yuendumu CDEP has participated in on-ground weed control to assist the NRETA Weeds Branch to treat Parkinsonia, Athel Pine, Rubber Bush and Mesquite at Yuendumu.  
- Fauna monitoring for the Birds Australia managed Newhaven Reserve. |
| Other Opportunities (contracts, enterprises etc.) | Further mine-related contract opportunities through the Tanami Regional Partnership Agreement (RPA) between CLC, Newmont Mining, the Minerals Council, DEWR and other agencies. A dedicated Tanami RPA Co-ordinator is hosted by CLC to facilitate uptake of contracts identified at the Tanami mine by both the Lajamanu and Yuendumu-based ranger groups in the following areas:  
- Water Monitoring  
- Track Audits and rehabilitation  
- Exploration Site Rehabilitation  
- Prescribed Burning |
**Weed Control**

**Top-soil Harvesting**

**Newhaven Reserve Co-management:** With a change in ownership and management there is further scope for the Yuendumu ranger group to engage in a broader range of land management activities on Newhaven reserve.

Opportunities exist for Rangers to become involved in feral animal control programs in the Southern Tanami, including aerial culling, fencing of significant sites etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training (to date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To date previous and current participants have undertaken some or all of the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- weed control training with <em>Greening Australia</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- onsite fauna monitoring techniques (through Tanami Biodiversity Monitoring)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <em>Conservation &amp; Land Management</em> training through Batchelor College.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training (required_requested)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Chainsaw handling and Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Shooters License</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tracking / Animal Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Motorcar/machinery training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Level 1 &amp; 2 Bushfire Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- First aid Training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Comments**

Other Interests in the Southern Tanami area:

1. **Mt Theo** – interest has been shown from the coordinators of the substance-abuse program at Mt. Theo outstation to implement a “ranger” type programme to assist their clients. The Warlpiri Ranger Coordinator will investigate options for this group and a potential affiliation with the existing program.

2. **Willowra** - There is interest in Willowra to have a continuing ranger programme based there – there are a host of issues surrounding this – supervision, the right people working on the right country being the two main ones

3. **Nyirripi** - It is also reported that since Nyirripi has had the presence of a fulltime police officer, the community is more stable and people have started to move back who are interested in land management activities. The interest shown in the Nyirripi rockholes programme being run by *Greening Australia* may be an indicator of this. The IPA development officers may be able to assess interest in Nyirripi through his/her consultation process.

*Source: Central Land Council 2007*
APPENDIX 4 – LIST OF KEY PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS

Listed below are key planning documents and reports related to cultural and natural resource management across the NT, particularly on Aboriginal-owned land.

General

- **Northern Territory Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (2005)**
  This document establishes a framework for Natural Heritage Trust Funding, particularly under the regional investment stream managed by the Natural Resource Management Board of the NT. It contains: a description of the NT’s natural assets, their condition and any threats and issues with their management; identified actions to protect these natural assets (with an emphasis on tackling root causes and not symptoms); and targets to monitor and manage the condition of natural resources. This plan is being progressively implemented through Natural Resource Management Board (NT) Regional Investment Strategies. The Board has recently released its second strategy for the period 2007-2010. The Strategy attaches broad funding streams to the achievement of cultural and natural resource management outcomes and invites grant applications from individuals and organisations across the NT.

- **Northern Territory Parks and Conservation Masterplan (Draft 2005)**
  This document provides a framework for the management of the NT’s cultural and natural resources, focused on its parks and reserves. At the core of the plan is the identification of terrestrial areas of highest priority for the conservation of biodiversity including: concentrations of threatened plant and animal species; concentrations of endemic and restricted range species; wetland habitats; important aggregations of wildlife and sites of botanical significance. It identifies twenty areas of national significance and a further forty-eight sites of national significance. The Masterplan sets out initiatives to enhance the NT parks system, improve tourism infrastructure and develop partnerships with landholders, including Indigenous groups, for conservation planning and management outside parks.

- **The Nature of Northern Australia: Natural values, ecological processes and future prospects (2007)**
  This research report provides a comprehensive assessment of the natural values of Northern Australia. This includes a description of its ecological processes and recommendations on how best to protect the country and wildlife. It covers the NT, Qld and WA.

Specific to Indigenous-owned lands

- **Environmental Management Status Reports for Aboriginal Lands in the Northern Land Council Region (2004)**
  This document provides environmental status reports on identified land basins in the Northern Land Council region. It covers 30 basin areas across the Victoria River District and Darwin/Daly, West Arnhem, East Arnhem, Ngkurr, Booroloola and Barkly Regions. It identifies key targets and resource needs for the management of these areas.

- **Resource Condition Analysis of Aboriginal Land in the Central Land Council Region (Draft 2007)**
  This set of nine documents provides a description of Aboriginal land, tenure arrangements, ownership, demographics and resource conditions across nine regions including: Alice Springs, South West, North West, Tanami, Western Desert, Tennant Creek, Eastern Sandover, Eastern (Plenty) and Anmatyerr. It identifies priority land management actions.

- **Tiwi Islands Regional Natural Resource Management Strategy (2003)**
  This strategy profiles the cultural and natural resources and values of the Tiwi Islands. It establishes a vision for the management of these resources, identifies key cultural and environmental threats and sets out an action plan for ongoing management.
• **Anindilyakwa Indigenous Protected Area Management Plan (2006)**
  This plan briefly profiles the Anindilyakwa Indigenous Protected Area and establishes management priorities to: protect and value traditional ecological knowledge; protect cultural and visitor sites and marine estates; create resource management partnerships; build capacity in the workforce; and maintain high biodiversity and the pest-free status of the country.

• **Dhimurru Land Management Aboriginal Corporation Indigenous Protected Area Management Plan (2000)**
  This plan briefly profiles the Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area and sets up a planning and administrative framework for its management. It sets out management issues relating to the protection of Yolngu values and an implementation and performance framework.

• **Laynhapuy Indigenous Protected Area Management Plan (2006)**
  This plan establishes a framework for the management of the IPA area setting out immediate, high and moderate priority actions in the following areas: managing visitors; protecting cultural sites; managing terrestrial biodiversity; managing the sea and coastline; sustainable economic development; and building capacity.

• **Northern Tanami Indigenous Protected Area Management Plan (2007)**
  This plan establishes a framework for the management of the IPA area, focusing on tackling the threats of wildfire, weeds and feral animals. It describes the high conservation value of the IPA area with the NT Parks Masterplan identifying approximately two-thirds of the landmass as being a biodiversity hotspot.

It should be noted that most Indigenous groups have cultural and natural resource activity plans, although less formal, developed using participatory planning processes supported by the Land Councils. Complete copies of these plans are held by the land councils.

**Key Reports**

  This report explores the geography of the Indigenous estate, its environmental significance, and some of the approaches adopted by Indigenous landholders to protect the natural and cultural value of their land. It argues that environmental service provision might provide alternative development opportunities on the Indigenous estate.

• **Central Land Council, Rose Report One and Two: Review of Land Management Issues on Aboriginal Land in Central Australia (2005)**
  These reports provide an overview of land management issues on Aboriginal land in Central Australia from the perspective of non-Aboriginal people (Report One) and Aboriginal people (Report Two). It sets out recommendations for the meaningful engagement of Aboriginal people in setting land management priorities, decision-making and cultural and natural resource management work.

• **CSIRO Aboriginal Land and Sea Management in the Top End: a Community Driven Evaluation. (Draft 2007)**
  This draft report evaluates the Caring for Country Program, hosted by the Northern Land Council. It is based on extensive consultations with Indigenous groups and communities and outlines their goals for cultural and natural resource management and thoughts on how the Northern Land Council and other agencies could better support them achieve these goals.

• **North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance and Tropical Savannas CRC. Indigenous Ecological Knowledge – A Northern Territory Scoping Study (Draft 2006)**
  This report defines, and scopes the extent of, Indigenous ecological knowledge across the NT. It identifies how Indigenous ecological knowledge contributes to practical natural and cultural resource
management outcomes. It also identifies ways that the identification, transfer and recording of this knowledge could be better supported.

  This report outlines the findings of an evaluation into the Indigenous Protected Areas Program. It identifies the program’s key successes and nominates areas for further support.

A complete list of the documents reviewed is in the Bibliography at Attachment Three.
## APPENDIX 5 – TABLE OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

### Core Infrastructure and Activity Funding for Land and Sea Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Investment</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Process for applying</th>
<th>Requires Co-investment</th>
<th>Duration of Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Fund</td>
<td>Indigenous Land Corporation</td>
<td>Previously application at any stage but the ILC has moved to calling for applications at set times.</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired</td>
<td>1-3 year funding. Not recurrent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginals Benefit Account</td>
<td>Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</td>
<td>Previously application at any stage but the ABA is moving to calling for applications at set times.</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired</td>
<td>1-3 year funding. Not recurrent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Partnerships Program</td>
<td>Department of Transport and Regional Services</td>
<td>Applications at any stage with support from Area Consultative Committees.</td>
<td>Co-investment of at least 50% required in most cases</td>
<td>1-3 year funding. Not recurrent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Land Council</td>
<td>Core ABA Funds and other resources</td>
<td>Negotiations with the Land Council.</td>
<td>Usually funds provided in the absence of other investors.</td>
<td>By negotiation with the Land Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Land Council</td>
<td>Core ABA Funds and other resources</td>
<td>Negotiations with the Land Council.</td>
<td>Usually funds provided in the absence of other investors.</td>
<td>By negotiation with the Land Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anindilyakwa Land Council</td>
<td>Core ABA Funds and other resources</td>
<td>Negotiations with the Land Council.</td>
<td>Usually funds provided in the absence of other investors.</td>
<td>By negotiation with the Land Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi Land Council</td>
<td>Core ABA Funds and other resources</td>
<td>Negotiations with the Land Council.</td>
<td>Usually funds provided in the absence of other investors.</td>
<td>By negotiation with the Land Council.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Wage Support and Employment Training Schemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Investment</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Process for applying</th>
<th>Requires Co-investment</th>
<th>Duration of Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Development in Employment Projects (CDEP)</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Expression of interest with local CDEP organisation</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>CDEP is currently being phased out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working on Country</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water Resources</td>
<td>Expression of interest and then application.</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Three years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured Training and Employment Projects and Employment Related Services (STEP ERS) Program</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Application and negotiation with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations at the moment. STEP ERS providers will be identified.</td>
<td>Requires identification of potential host employer.</td>
<td>By negotiation. Historically 12 month funding was provided but there may be flexibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work for the Dole</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Application and negotiation with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Centrelink at the moment. Work for the Dole providers will be identified.</td>
<td>Requires identification of host organisation.</td>
<td>By negotiation. Work for the Dole Program are historically for discreet projects of short duration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage Assistance</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Application and negotiation with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations at the moment. Job Network providers will be identified.</td>
<td>Requires identification of potential host employer.</td>
<td>By negotiation. Historically 12 month funding was provided but there may be flexibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Partnership between individual companies and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Requires identification of potential host employer.</td>
<td>Flexible funding package.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/Investment</td>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Process for applying</td>
<td>Requires Co-investment</td>
<td>Duration of Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Heritage Trust – National</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water Resources / Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia</td>
<td>Applications for specific rounds advertised.</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Typically 12 months but longer agreements may be possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Heritage Trust – Regional Stream</td>
<td>Natural Resource Management Board</td>
<td>Applications for specific rounds advertised by the Board.</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>1 – 3 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Heritage Trust – Local (Envirofund)</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water Resources</td>
<td>Applications for specific rounds advertised.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Heritage Program</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water Resources</td>
<td>Applications for specific rounds as part of FACSIA single Indigenous budget submission. Some funds kept in reserve for applications outside the round.</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threatened Species Network Grants</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water Resources</td>
<td>Applications for specific rounds</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Small grants for 12 month or less duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Species Recovery and Protection Grants Program</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water Resources</td>
<td>Applications for specific rounds</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Typically 12 months but longer agreements may be possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Stewardship Program</td>
<td>Department of the Environment and Water</td>
<td>Expression of interest – at this stage restricted to Box-Gum Grassy</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>By negotiation as payment for environmental service. Could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/Investment</td>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Process for applying</td>
<td>Requires Co-investment</td>
<td>Duration of Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Marine Rangers Program</td>
<td>NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines</td>
<td>Expression of interest.</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>12 months but with likely ongoing support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Indigenous Ranger Group Development Program</td>
<td>NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts</td>
<td>Expressions of Interest and Negotiation.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>12 months but with likely ongoing support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Parks and Reserves Joint Management Funds</td>
<td>NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts</td>
<td>Negotiated under joint management arrangements.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Dependent on projects. Can be ongoing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Biodiversity Division Collaborations</td>
<td>NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts</td>
<td>Negotiation aligned to the NT Biodiversity Division collaborations</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Project-based funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Indigenous Engagement Pilot</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia</td>
<td>Applications for specific rounds</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Short-term grants of up to $50,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and Education</td>
<td>Department of Employment, Education and Training</td>
<td>Expression of Interest.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>One off funds for training courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt a School</td>
<td>Department of Education, Science and Training.</td>
<td>Expression of Interest to the Local Community Partnership provider within the region.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>According to the duration of the Local Community Partnership funding agreement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Indigenous Cadetship Program</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Application at any stage.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>According to the duration of the cadetship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/Investment</td>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Process for applying</td>
<td>Requires Co-investment</td>
<td>Duration of Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Youth Mobility Program</td>
<td>Department of Education, Science and Training (through Mission Australia in the NT)</td>
<td>Application at any stage.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>According to the duration of study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured Training in Employment Assistance Program</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Application and negotiation with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations at the moment. STEP providers will be identified.</td>
<td>Requires identification of potential host employer.</td>
<td>By negotiation. Historically 12 month funding was provided but there may be flexibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Development Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/Investment</td>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Process for applying</td>
<td>Requires Co-investment</td>
<td>Duration of Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Small Business Fund</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations</td>
<td>Application at any time</td>
<td>Co-investment required for funds over $33,000</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBA Enterprises, IBA Partnerships and IBA Investments (Business Plans and Loans)</td>
<td>Indigenous Business Australia</td>
<td>Application at any time</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired. Loans may require co-investment.</td>
<td>Usually 12 months for business planning. Loans may be over variable periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Indigenous Business and Industry Services</td>
<td>NT Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development</td>
<td>Expression of interest</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Small amounts of financial assistance and in-kind support over a flexible period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme</td>
<td>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations / Westpac</td>
<td>Application at any time</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Loans and financial advice over variable periods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible Employment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/Investment</td>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Process for applying</td>
<td>Requires Co-investment</td>
<td>Duration of Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT Parks and Wildlife Flexible Employment program (under joint-</td>
<td>NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts</td>
<td>Expression of interest. Through negotiation of joint-management arrangements.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Dependent on length of employment contract, can include casual hours up to part-time work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program/ Investment</td>
<td>Department</td>
<td>Process for applying</td>
<td>Requires Co-investment</td>
<td>Duration of Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Australia Quarantine Strategy</td>
<td>Australian Quarantine Inspection Service</td>
<td>Expression of interest to AQIS</td>
<td>Will require co-investment of resources by Indigenous group</td>
<td>Dependent on fee-for-service contracts. At this stage, they are 12 months duration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot – Indigenous Coastal Surveillance</td>
<td>Australian Customs Service</td>
<td>One year pilot at this stage. Expressions of interest to Customs for future opportunities.</td>
<td>Will require co-investment of resources by Indigenous group</td>
<td>Dependent on fee-for-service contracts. At this stage, the pilot is 12 months duration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Programs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/ Investment</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Process for applying</th>
<th>Requires Co-investment</th>
<th>Duration of Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NT Community Benefit Fund</td>
<td>NT Department of Justice</td>
<td>Application in rounds to a Committee</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Short term small grants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Responsibility/Regional Partnership Agreements</td>
<td>Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</td>
<td>Expression of Interest</td>
<td>Co-investment highly desired.</td>
<td>Flexible. Usually 12 months to three years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX 6 – LIST OF CORE OPERATIONAL FUNDING ITEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- HAZCHEM Lockup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Wash-down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Repairs and Maintenance area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Meeting space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ablution facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required in some cases:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Training facility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Boat ramp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Helipad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Smaller Ranger Bases – outstations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Accommodation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Coordinator house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other staff quarters (perhaps on outstations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Short stay facilities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transport</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 4X4 (2 or more)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Trailer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Quad bikes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Boat (minimum surveyed 6 metre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required in some cases:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tractor to clear roads</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Radio frequency across region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Vehicle radios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Computers – e-mail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Phones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Equipment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Chainsaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Spray equipment and tanks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Backpacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Repairs and maintenance tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uniforms and boots (OH&amp;S Requirements)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Camping equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Refrigerator – to keep samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- GPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Firearms safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Projector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cameras</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Whiteboard
- Photocopier
- CD burner
- Fax
- Office furniture

**Core Staff Positions**

- Indigenous Manager/Director
- Coordinator/Facilitator
- 2-3 core Rangers
- Bookkeeper/administrator

**Core Operations**

- Insurance
- Finance and administration system
- Legal
- Core funds for travel, meetings, conferences and training
- Core funds for fuel
- Core funds for TO and community consultations (e.g. cultural consultant)
ATTACHMENT 1 – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Healthy Country, Healthy People Strategic Framework

The Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule to the Overarching Agreement on Indigenous Affairs was signed in September 2006. Since then administrative arrangements have been established to implement the Schedule. These include a Bilateral Steering Committee co-chaired by the Chief Executive of the Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts and the Secretary of the Department Environment and Water Resources. The Operational Group supports the Bilateral Steering Committee and comprises relevant NT and Commonwealth Departments as well as representatives of all NT Aboriginal Land Councils.

The Indigenous Land Corporation and the Commonwealth Department of Family, Community Support and Indigenous Affairs, which administer the Aboriginal Benefits Account, have indicated they are willing to contribute $10M each to the Schedule over 2 years. To be confident that the release of these funds will fulfil the desired outcomes, the Corporation and Department need assurance that a rigorous and accountable mechanism is in place.

This is to be achieved through an Strategic Framework which identifies the key outcomes of the Schedule, priority Indigenous land and sea management issues, a process of project selection and the expected outcomes. The Terms of Reference for the Strategic Framework were developed by the Operational Group. The consultancy will be funded through equal contributions from the Office of Indigenous Policy Co-ordination, Department of Environment and Heritage, Family Community Support and Indigenous Affairs and the Indigenous Land Corporation. NRETA is providing “in-kind” support through co-ordination of the tender and consultancy process.

Objective

The consultant will develop an Strategic Framework, consistent with the objectives and outcomes of the Healthy Country, Healthy People Schedule, which will direct the investment of up to $20M in Commonwealth funding to Indigenous land and sea management activities in the Northern Territory.

Target Audience

The principal target audience is the Operational Group, Bilateral Steering Committee and the Advisory boards of the Aboriginal Benefits Account and the Indigenous Land Corporation.

The Consultant will provide a research report based on a desk top audit and telephone interviews, which will:

- Define key outcomes from the Schedule;
- Profile Indigenous land and sea management activities across the NT. This will include location, area, tenure, land use, the activities of specific groups, number of people involved and current sources of funding;
- Include a literature review to identify existing planning documentation, applicable to indigenous owned and potentially indigenous owned lands, that is pertinent to conservation and land management across the NT;
- Identify priority Indigenous land and sea management issues that address key outcomes from the Schedule including biophysical, ecological and culture heritage resources;
- Identify a range of Indigenous land and sea management projects that address the schedule and ascertain their key characteristics (such as project definition, governance and agency support mix) to identify those elements necessary for success. (These success factors can then form a set of criteria to be used to identify projects for funding); and
- Identify stakeholders that can contribute to the objectives of the bilateral and how their programs and activities might address Indigenous land and sea management priorities in the NT.
Following this research, the Consultant will develop a strategic approach to land and sea management funding over the next 3-5 years, identifying the following:

- Essential implementation arrangements including access to support programs;
- Achievable outcomes within the bi-lateral framework;
- A decision making framework for use by the Operational Group to assess and evaluate potential projects; and
- Potential priority projects for the next 3-5 years.

**Methodology**

Part 1 of the project is principally a desk-top exercise collating and summarising pre-existing information from existing printed sources and with verification and further information obtained through telephone contact with key stakeholders.

Part 2 requires analysis of collated data and the development of procedural arrangements necessary to implement the outcomes of the Schedule.

**Contract Management**

The management of the contract will be through an Ordering Officer and the Operational Group. They will ensure the Consultant’s efforts and outputs are consistent with the required outcomes of the consultancy. The Consultant will be expected to meet regularly with the Ordering Officer and members of the Operational Group. It is expected that the meetings will be held in Darwin at least fortnightly with the Contract Co-ordination Committee. The Consultant is to attend all Operational Group meetings held during the term of the consultancy and provide feedback on the progress and issues arising from the contract.
## ATTACHMENT 2 – ORGANISATIONS WHO PROVIDED INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indigenous Land and Sea Management Groups – Top End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjumarllarl Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhimurru Aboriginal Land Management Corporation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djelk Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gumurr Marthakal Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larrakia Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laynhapuy Yirralka Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manwurrk Rangers/ Warrddeken Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mimal Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minyerri Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbulwar Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thamarrurr Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi Land and Marine Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanga Djakamirr Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wangamaty Landcare Group and Malak Malak Rangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarralin Rangers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indigenous Land Management Groups – Centre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangentyere Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amoonguna Rangers (through the Central Land Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anmatyerre Rangers (through the Central Land Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KaltuKatjara Rangers (through the Central Land Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muru-Warinyo Ankkul Rangers (through the Central Land Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tjuwanpa Rangers (through the Central Land Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warlpiri Rangers (through the Central Land Council)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wulaign Rangers (through the Central Land Council)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Councils and other organisations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginals Benefit Account Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anindilyakwa Land Council Land and Sea Management Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Land Council, Land Management Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Land Council, Caring for Country Unit and Executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiwi Land Council, Natural Resource Management Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance
Bushfires NT
Centre for Appropriate Technology (Alice Springs)
School of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems (CDU)
Newmont Australia Limited / Minerals Council of Australia
CSIRO
Desert Knowledge CRC
Natural Resource Management Board of the NT
  • Board
  • Regional Facilitators
Larrakia Nation Wulna/Limilngan Representative – Donna Jackson
ABC Corporate Development
Institute for Aboriginal Development
Aboriginal Landcare Education Program (Greening Australia)
Australian Government Agencies
Australian Quarantine Inspection Service
Department of Education, Science and Training
Department of the Environment and Water Resources
  • AG Natural Resource Management Facilitators (NT)
  • Indigenous Policy and Strategies Section
  • Indigenous Land Management Section
  • Working on Country Programme
  • Indigenous Heritage Programme
  • Parks Australia North
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
  • Indigenous Coordination Centre (ICC) Managers’ Meeting and Darwin ICC
  • Funding and Governance Reform Group
  • Aboriginals Benefit Account Secretariat
  • Petrol Sniffing Unit
Department of Finance and Administration
Department of Health and Ageing
Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources – Sustainable and Indigenous Tourism
Department of Transport and Regional Services
Indigenous Business Australia
Indigenous Land Corporation
NORFORCE
Northern Territory Government Agencies

| Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development |
| Department of the Chief Minister (Office of Indigenous Policy) |
| Department of Employment, Education and Training – Employment and Training Division |
| Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines |
| Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts |

Workshops and Meetings attended as part of the project:

- Menzies School of Health Research Workshop - Healthy Country, Healthy People: Indigenous Natural and Cultural Resource Management and Health Outcomes;

- Market-based Instruments Seminar: Status, Opportunities and Constraints, School for Environmental Research, Charles Darwin University;

- Australian Government Indigenous Affairs Forum of the NT

- Aboriginals Benefit Account Advisory Committee

- NT Indigenous Economic Development Taskforce attended by representatives from:
  - Alcan Gove
  - Telstra
  - Newmont Mines
  - Indigenous Land Corporation
  - Indigenous Business Australia
  - Aboriginal Art Australia and Cultural Centre
  - NT Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Forestry Australia
  - NT Department of the Chief Minister
  - NT Department of Employment, Education and Training
  - Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

- Healthy Country, Healthy People Training Workshop attended by representatives from:
  - Tiwi Land Council;
  - School of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Charles Darwin University;
  - School of Science and Primary Industries Conservation, Charles Darwin University;
  - Central Land Council, Land Management Unit;
  - Tjuwanpa Ranger Co-ordinator
  - Tennant Creek Ranger Co-ordinator
  - Caring for Country Unit, Northern Land Council
  - Ngapuk Rangers- Bulgul Community
  - Department of Education, Science and Training
  - Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation
  - DEMED Corporation
  - Natural and Cultural Resource Management, Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (Batchelor, Nhulunbuy)
  - NT Department of Employment, Education and Training
  - Youth workx NT
  - NT Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts
  - Department of the Environment and Water Resources
ATTACHMENT 3 - BIBLIOGRAPHY


Gabrys, K, Campbell, M. and Pearson, D. (Draft in publication) *Funding Aboriginal Land Management in Central Australia: The Role of CDEP and Other Factors – Interim-preliminary Findings from Desert Knowledge CRC Core Project 1 Livelihoods InLand™*.


Luckert, M.K, Campbell, B. and Gorman J.T. (Draft for Publication) *The Case for Investing in Indigenous Natural Resources Management: Promise and Problems in the Wet-Dry Tropics of the Northern Territory*.


Newmont Australia. (2005) *Now and Beyond – Sustainability Report (Tanami –Australia)*.


Northern Land Council (1996) *Caring for Country Workshop, 3-4 April, Mirambeena Tourist Resort, Darwin*.


Department of Natural Resources Environment and the Arts. (Draft 2005) *Northern Territory Parks and Conservation Masterplan*. 

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ATTACHMENT 4 – HEALTHY COUNTRY, HEALTHY PEOPLE SCHEDULE

HEALTHY COUNTRY, HEALTHY PEOPLE

Supporting Indigenous Engagement in the Sustainable Management of Land and Seas

Statement of Intent
The Australian and Northern Territory Governments value the past and ongoing work of Indigenous people protecting and sustaining country and the productive use of natural and cultural resources of the Northern Territory for future generations. The role the Northern Territory Land Councils’ Caring for Country programs have played in supporting the engagement of Indigenous people in this area is acknowledged. Under this schedule, the Governments commit to support the effective engagement of Indigenous people in the decision-making and management processes in this area, including by taking a more focused and coordinated approach to the implementation of existing, and development of new, policies, legislation and programs.

This schedule sets out improved joint working arrangements between the Australian and Northern Territory Governments in the area of supporting Indigenous engagement in sustainable land and sea management. It is understood that the implementation of the schedule must take full account of Indigenous aspirations, priorities and preferences. Delivery of this schedule will therefore include full and ongoing consultation, participation and partnership development with Indigenous communities and representatives.

Scope of Indigenous Management of Land and Sea
Sustainable Indigenous management of land and seas is defined to include a broad range of employment, economic development, training, community and cultural activities in the areas of:

- natural and cultural resource management including biodiversity conservation;
- land and sea monitoring and reporting for border protection, including assisting in the identification and reporting of domestic and foreign illegal fishing;
- active participation in the sustainable economic use of land and sea in industry sectors such as mining, pastoralism, forestry, tourism, fisheries, aquaculture, horticulture, wildlife utilisation and the commercial provision of environmental services; and
- practical maintenance of Indigenous knowledge, culture and heritage.

Background
The Northern Territory Land Councils’ Caring for Country programs have been critical to building Indigenous engagement in land and sea management. The programs have been based on wide consultation with Indigenous landowners and have provided a mechanism for Indigenous people to address their natural and cultural resource management interests. They have also provided an avenue for Indigenous people to undertake economic development activities relating to land and sea management on their lands, particularly in remote areas of the Northern Territory.

Both the Australian and Northern Territory Governments currently recognise the key role Indigenous people need to play in Indigenous management of land and seas in the Northern Territory. For example, the Australian Government Environment Protection and
Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 legislates a role for Indigenous people in the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Australia’s biodiversity and promoting the use of Indigenous knowledge in cooperation with the owners of this knowledge.

The Northern Territory Government’s Parks and Reserves (Framework for the Future) Act 2003 establishes joint management arrangements between the Territory Government and Traditional Owners, acknowledging and incorporating Indigenous culture, knowledge and decision making processes into the Territory’s parks and reserves system. The Northern Territory Indigenous Economic Development Strategy 2005 identifies natural and cultural resource management as a key sector for development over the next fifteen years due to the importance of biodiversity conservation work in the Northern Territory and its linkages to enterprise development in related sectors, including the tourism industry.

In particular, it is recognised that the engagement of Indigenous people in land and sea management is vital for achieving cost-effective biodiversity protection, conservation and border security outcomes in remote regions of the Northern Territory. Indigenous people are very significant landholders currently having stewardship responsibilities for at least 44% of the Northern Territory’s landmass, as well as 84% of its coastal areas.

The Australian and Northern Territory Governments also acknowledge the range of environmental, socio-cultural and economic benefits provided by the engagement of Indigenous people in land and sea management. These benefits provide a clear case for ongoing government support and investment in this area. There is growing evidence that activities in this area enhance the self esteem and confidence of participants; reduce social alienation; and act to promote and preserve health, particularly in remote communities.

Well coordinated and effective government investment in this area will strengthen environmental, cultural and heritage values, including those of national significance. It will also ensure the practical maintenance of Indigenous knowledge and cultures alongside scientific approaches to land and sea management.

Additionally, both Governments agree that investing to improve the governance and operational capacity of local Indigenous groups engaged in land and sea management projects, including Indigenous Land and Sea Rangers and Indigenous Land Management Officers. This may increase the take-up and creation of training, employment and economic development opportunities, particularly in remote areas.

Objectives
Consistent with the multiple benefits provided by the engagement of Indigenous people in land and sea management, the Australian and Northern Territory Governments commit to pursue the following four objectives under this schedule:

Better Coordination
The parties agree to improve the coordination of whole-of-government investment in Indigenous land and sea management in the Northern Territory. This will include focusing on better coordination of government support for planning, training and capacity building, enterprise development, infrastructure and employment, including fee for service work.
Consistent with the *Overarching Agreement on Indigenous Affairs*, it is the intention of both parties to:

- work in a whole-of-government way to simplify and streamline funding support to individual groups engaged in land and sea management projects;
- improve collaboration between all parties including Northern Territory and Australian Government agencies, land councils and Indigenous organisations and communities and promote the development of new partnership arrangements;
- ensure that mechanisms are developed to map existing Australian and Northern Territory Government investment in this area and ensure that future investments are complementary; and
- better target government investment in this area to deliver environmental, socio-cultural and economic benefits in a cost-effective fashion.

In order to achieve these objectives, the parties agree to establish a steering committee of government agencies, to be jointly chaired by the Australian Government Department of Environment and Heritage and the Northern Territory Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts in conjunction with the Australian Government Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination and Northern Territory Office of Indigenous Policy.

The steering committee will be informed by representatives from the land councils, other Indigenous organisations and Indigenous communities on progress with the implementation of the schedule and to raise any issues for improvement.

The steering committee will oversee implementation of this schedule and be tasked with examining options for better coordinating investment in Indigenous engagement in land and sea management activities in the Northern Territory. This will include, but not be limited to, examining the potential for:

- new structural arrangements for the delivery of Australian and Northern Territory Government funding. This will include consideration of a ‘virtual pool’ of Australian Government funding for Indigenous engagement in land and sea management. This pool will include existing funding sources as well as a $10 million commitment over two years for land and sea rangers in the Northern Territory from the Australian Government’s Aboriginals Benefit Account. As part of this investigation, the steering committee will consider options for reducing the administrative burden on land and sea ranger groups, through simplified funding delivery mechanisms; and
- the Australian and Northern Territory Governments nominating officers responsible for assisting with the coordination of government investment in this area and liaising with the land councils and Indigenous groups. The governments will allocate the necessary resources to achieve this.

The steering committee will report to senior officials with recommendations on how to best implement the new arrangements under the schedule by October 2006.

The Australian and Northern Territory Governments agree to pilot the new arrangements starting with Indigenous groups identified through processes as determined by the steering committee. It is agreed that groups will be identified for support under these new
arrangements on the basis that they are operating, or have the potential to operate, with strong leadership and high levels of community engagement; ensuring a geographic spread across the Northern Territory; and selecting groups at different stages of development.

The Australian and Northern Territory Governments agree that the pilot projects will also aim to improve knowledge of the workforce requirements in the fields of environmental management and sustainable land use. In particular they will examine the potential for improved employer arrangements, streamlining training and clarifying career pathways into related businesses and industries.

Employment and Economic Development
Both parties recognise the importance of natural and cultural resource management as a key remote area industry which has significant employment potential, particularly when linked to other established and emerging resource-base industries in the Northern Territory including mining, pastoralism, tourism, fisheries, aquaculture, forestry, horticulture and the application of Indigenous knowledge and culture to the commercial provision of environmental services. Over the medium to long-term, the Governments aim to elevate the importance of these industries and strengthen the employment and economic opportunities they can provide, particularly for Indigenous people living in regional and remote areas of the Territory.

Consistent with this understanding, the parties will:
- ensure that Australian and Northern Territory Government programs and projects, strategically coordinate, including in conjunction with the private sector, to effectively increase stable commercial and economic opportunities for Indigenous groups engaged in land and sea management projects.
- Actions may include:
  - investigating relevant and related scholarships, cadetships and traineeships;
  - the development of a strategic plan identifying and coordinating these opportunities and commissioning relevant studies to identify how these may be best delivered by and to communities;
  - ensuring the effective use of existing and new activities and programs to build opportunities for Indigenous people to enter mainstream employment or take-up enterprise development in established or emerging markets associated with natural resource management and sustainable land and sea use;
  - mapping the range of flexible employment models, including fully paid, full time, seasonal, fee for service contract and job sharing, that may be effectively used to improve employment and economic development outcomes for Indigenous people in this area; and
  - investigating opportunities presented by arrangements established under the Employment and Economic Development schedule to the Overarching Agreement on Indigenous Affairs.

- assist Indigenous groups to access training and expertise in areas that enhance natural and cultural resource management skills (recognising existing traditional knowledge and management practices) as well as improving literacy and numeracy through the use of training providers and informal mechanisms such as mentoring and seconded officers
placed in Indigenous groups from government, not-for-profit and business organisations;
- The Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations and Department of Education, Science and Training, the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training and organisations such as Indigenous Business Australia and Indigenous Community Volunteers will play key roles in this area.

- consider options for better utilising existing government agencies, including the Australian and Northern Territory Government parks and wildlife services, the Australian Customs Service and Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, Defence, the Australian Fisheries Management Authority and the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines as key employers (sponsoring apprenticeships/traineeships) who may be able to create pathways for Indigenous people engaged in land and sea management work from the Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) program and training into fully paid employment inside or outside these agencies;

- ensure that Indigenous business development advice and support programs are readily available and effective for Indigenous groups engaged in land and sea management activities and also consider the broader economic development opportunities to which they may be linked. Where appropriate, the Governments may help to facilitate partnerships with Indigenous individuals, groups and the not-for-profit and private sectors; and
  - The Northern Territory Department of Business, Economic and Regional Development, Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations through their existing program areas and the economic development activities of Indigenous Business Australia and the Indigenous Land Corporation will play key roles.

- link the expansion and enhancement of the Northern Territory protected lands network, including through the development of Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) under the Department of Environment and Heritage IPA program, to the identification of related employment and enterprise opportunities for Indigenous people, ensuring people receive the support necessary, including training and infrastructure, to consider and take-up these opportunities.

*Improved Planning and Sustainable Partnerships*
Both parties support ongoing planning to underpin Indigenous engagement in land and sea management in the Northern Territory. Consistent with the coordination objective of this schedule, both parties will:

- seek to more effectively tailor government investments and partnership arrangements as closely as possible to plans that have been effectively developed by Indigenous groups;
- ensure that the development of land and sea management projects contribute to wider community aspirations and are matched to other activities to reinforce or complement other government or private investments; and
- consider the provision of additional government investment in the planning process.
Both parties also recognise the importance of developing and maintaining longer-term partnerships between Indigenous groups, government agencies, not-for-profit organisations and the private sector in the area of land and sea management. Both parties recognise that these partnerships:

- should be reciprocal and collaborative, recognising the traditional decision-making practices and knowledge of Indigenous people, the objectives of government and aspirations of the broader Northern Territory community; and
- need to be flexible, creating opportunities for Indigenous landholders to determine their priorities for looking after their land and sea and their plans for training, employment and potential economic development, at the same time fulfilling the priorities and outcomes sought by the Northern Territory and Australian Governments.

**Broader Indigenous Engagement**

Both parties recognise the importance of facilitating greater participation of senior community members, women and younger people in Indigenous land and sea management projects. This can promote the intergenerational transfer of traditional knowledge and bring social benefits in terms of strengthening community governance mechanisms and improving self-esteem. It can also assist younger people identify future training and career pathways. Options for encouraging greater participation of these groups will be examined by the steering group established under this schedule, with a report back by December 2006.

**Data and Information Sharing**

Recognising and building on previous research and evaluation work on Indigenous land and sea management in the Northern Territory, including the recent review of the Northern Land Council's Caring for Country Program and preparation of regional resource condition reports by the Central Land Council, the parties agree to establish a monitoring and evaluation framework to build up comprehensive qualitative and quantitative information in this area. In so doing, the parties agree to have particular regard to the following issues, and make recommendations as appropriate:

- levels of Indigenous engagement, including qualitative information on the development of land and sea management plans, governance arrangements for Indigenous groups and the experiences of Indigenous people working in this area;
- the biodiversity conservation, resource security and border protection outcomes being achieved by Indigenous people, including through the Indigenous Protected Areas program;
- CDEP contribution to Indigenous land and sea management activities and the transition of people from CDEP to independent seasonal, part-time or full-time work;
- numbers of Indigenous people engaged in both accredited and non-accredited natural and cultural resource management training activities, as well as literacy and numeracy, administration and business and other types of training provided by government agencies linked to employment pathways;
- levels and types of employment for Indigenous people engaged in land and sea management;
- delivery of small business advice and support programs for Indigenous people seeking to explore economic development opportunities associated with this area;
• consideration, and take-up, of these economic development opportunities, including the numbers of business plans developed and start-ups, with ongoing analysis of the reasons for success and failure;
• numbers of young people and women engaged in land and sea management activities and qualitative information on the maintenance and passing on of traditional knowledge as appropriate;
• levels of natural resource management grant funding being used by Indigenous groups to support land and sea management activities;
• the administrative burden placed on Indigenous groups by funding arrangements and reporting requirements for Indigenous groups, including Indigenous land and sea rangers, accessing government support in this area;
• ownership of intellectual property by Indigenous people (pre-existing and gained through proposed processes) is recognised as an important issue, particularly access to and ownership of data collected as a result of processes stemming from the implementation of this schedule;
• related social, physical and mental health benefits; and
• specific actions and new approaches taken by agencies to directly support delivery of this schedule, together with resource impact assessments.

Performance Indicators
The parties agree to report on progress in delivering the four objectives of this schedule in one year from announcement.

The parties further agree on an ongoing basis to evaluate objectives and mechanisms developed under this schedule. This will include an evaluation of:
• the work of the steering committee established under this schedule;
• the outcomes of the steering committee, and whether these were achieved within the agreed timeframes;
• the implementation of actions agreed to by the steering committee during this period;
• efficiency of streamlining procedures for funding support arrangements; and
• should the concept of pilot regions be adopted, an initial evaluation of these pilots should be included in this report.