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# A Cultural and Conservation Economy for Northern Australia

January 2008

A Proof-of-Concept Study

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# Acronyms Used In This Report

| | |
|---|---|
| ABS | Australian Bureau of Statistics |
| AIATSIS | Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies |
| ANZ | Australia and New Zealand (Banking Corporation) |
| ATA | Aboriginal Tourism Australia |
| ATSIC | Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission |
| BDU | Business Development Unit |
| CAEPR | Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research |
| CERF | Commonwealth Environment Research Facilities |
| CDEP | Community Development Employment Projects |
| CFC | Caring for Country |
| COAG | Coalition of Australian Governments |
| CRC | Cooperative Research Centre |
| CSI | Community Sector Innovation |
| CSIRO | Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation |
| CYLC | Cape York Land Council |
| DAFF | Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry |
| DEW | Department of the Environment and Water Resources |
| DEWR | Department of Employment and Workplace Relations |
| DGR | Deductible Gift Recipient |
| DIA | Department of Indigenous Affairs (WA) |
| DOGIT | Deed of Grant in Trust |
| DPI&F | Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries (Queensland) |
| EC | Ecotrust Canada |
| FSC | Forest Stewardship Council |
| FIM | Family Income Management |
| FRRR | Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal |

| | |
|---|---|
| GAC | Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation |
| GBR | Great Barrier Reef |
| IBA | Indigenous Business Australia |
| ILC | Indigenous Land Corporation |
| ILUA | Indigenous Land Use Agreement |
| INCRM | Integrated Natural and Cultural Resource Management |
| IPA | Indigenous Protected Area |
| IPP | Indigenous Pastoral Program |
| ITEC | Income Tax Exempt Charity |
| KDC | Kimberley Development Commission |
| KIMSS | Kimberley Indigenous Management Support Service |
| KLC | Kimberley Land Council |
| LSMU | Land and Sea Management Unit |
| MB | Money Business |
| MG | Miriuwung Gajerrong |
| MTSRF | Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility |
| NA | Northern Australia |
| NAEA | Northern Australia Environment Alliance |
| NAILSMA | North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance |
| NATSISS | National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey |
| NEIS | New Employment Incentive Scheme |
| NHT | Natural Heritage Trust |
| NLC | Northern Land Council |
| NRM | Natural Resource Management |
| NT | Northern Territory |
| NTRB | Native Title Representative Body |
| OFA | Ord Final Agreement |
| PPF | Prescribed Private Fund |
| RPAs | Regional Partnership Agreements |
| SRAs | Shared Responsibility Agreements |
| TUMRA | Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement |
| US | United States |
| WA | Western Australia |
| WAFMA | West Arnhem Land Fire Management Agreement |
| WTWHA | Wet Tropics World Heritage Area |

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## Project Steering Committee

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# Executive Summary

## 1. Overview

This report presents the outcomes of a collaborative research project facilitated by the Australian Conservation Foundation and partners to test the applicability of the concept of a 'conservation economy' in Australia, and the relevance of the 'Ecotrust model' to foster the emergence of such an economy. The specific objectives of the study were

- *To investigate and report on the relevance of the concept of Ecotrust Canada's 'conservation economy' model for Indigenous and rural sustainable community development in Australia, particularly in Northern Australia.*
- *To investigate and report on the opportunities and any limitations within the current Australian institutional settings, particularly of Northern Australia, that would affect the application of the principles and components of Ecotrust Canada's model.*

A summary of the research findings and recommendations follow.

Cultural diversity affects sustainability concepts and programs throughout the world. The emerging framework for sustainability in Northern Australia is influenced by a significant number of local and regional initiatives led or participated in by Indigenous communities and organisations, including:

- Land and Sea Management Units (LSMUs) and Country-based Management Plans;
- Turtle and Dugong Activity Plans;
- Community Ranger Programs;
- Commonwealth Indigenous Protected Area program, which has protected millions of hectares of land;
- Indigenous fire programs, such as the West Arnhem Fire Management Agreement; and
- Visionary plans such as the Wuthathi's 'Integrating Culture and Conservation' framework for land and sea management in Shelburne Bay.

Throughout Northern Australia, a number of socio-economic and environmental features are important drivers of sustainability, especially:

- the globally outstanding natural and cultural heritage significance;
- the socio-economic disadvantage faced by the people of the region, particularly the Indigenous peoples;
- the rapidly emerging urgent threats posed by climate change (and associated water-shortage driven development interests from the south), altered fire regimes and exotic invasive species; and
- the wide-spread recognition of the need for creative solutions to the challenge of integrating conservation and development, better suited to both the relatively low-productivity landscapes and the human societies particularly, the Indigenous societies.

A number of proposed new solutions for supporting Indigenous and rural communities have emerged from this context, encapsulated in conceptual models including the hybrid, cultural, conservation and appropriate economies. This investigation had identified that the most suitable sustainability framework for Northern Australia that takes into account its unique culture and natural characteristics is a **cultural and conservation economy, which:**

- *recognises Aboriginal culture, rights and title;*
- *builds and supports strong, vibrant, sustainable communities;*
- *provides meaningful work, good livelihoods and sustainable enterprises; and*
- *conserves and restores the environment–supports caring for country.*

While broad consultation with Indigenous peoples across the region was beyond the scope of the study, three community case studies undertaken with Miriuwung Gajerrong people in the Kimberley, Mirarr people in the Northern Territory, and Injinoo peoples in Cape York Peninsula demonstrate that a cultural and conservation economy is highly consistent with their visions and aspirations. A case study with regional Cape York Indigenous organisations identified a relatively low priority to cultural and conservation economies. Indigenous Cape York is already undertaking a process that has much in common with Ecotrust, but reflecting more closely social-development and welfare reform priorities.

## 2. Canadian Ecotrust model: relevance to Northern Australia

The Canadian Ecotrust approach to fostering sustainability through their conservation economy model was investigated and found to be highly relevant to the emergence of a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia. Key aspects of their approach that are most applicable to the Northern Australia context include:

- principles—community development; a relationship-based approach; a sustainability framework; recognition of Aboriginal culture, rights and title; and independence.
- services—planning and information; business development and networking; and business financing.
- an enabling government policy framework—Indigenous, environment and financial institutions, underpinned by a significant body of sustainability research.

- an Ecotrust organisational structure based on these principles that provides a brokering and services portal and an independent funding pool to support entrepreneurial loans, i.e. the endowment of a natural capital fund.

An analysis comparing the Ecotrust model with Northern Australia organisations and services identified a number of key gaps in principles, including:

- no organisation is currently in existence with a similar independence to Ecotrust;
- no organisation utilises a quadruple-bottom line sustainability approach for business development;
- the community development approach is not strongly utilised in addressing Indigenous issues or the cultural, environmental and economic aspects of sustainability;
- the centrality of the relationship-based approach in achieving effective engagement strategies is strongly recognised but not well-implemented; and
- the recognition of Aboriginal rights, culture and title does not extend strongly into current business development approaches.

In addition, many challenges for Indigenous communities were identified for accessing the services that are provided in the Ecotrust model:

- while an impressive number of services appear available from government and other agencies, the community case studies highlight that there appears little connection between these services and Indigenous communities, where a great undersupply is evident;
- capacity for natural and cultural resource related community-based and country-based planning is hampered by changes in government funding priorities, and lack of stable organisational capacity in relevant planning;
- project support is available across a number of sectors, but this is generally through a number of different organisations which often have their main offices in centres outside the region;
- while networks within the Indigenous, environment, business, research sectors are quite strong, networks between these sectors and with governments and the philanthropic sector are weak;
- sustainability information in Northern Australia is relatively undeveloped;
- conflict management skills are poor in many communities, leading to a lack of cohesion and a derailing of potential initiatives;
- access to support from the philanthropic sector is very limited; and
- access to finance does not appear sufficient to meet the community needs.

The priority sectors for developing a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia were found to be primarily in ecosystem services, Indigenous arts and cultural industries, and visitor services. Pastoralism, renewable energy and community infrastructure, social and lifestyle services, and some forms of low-impact aquaculture were also identified as important.

## 3. Options for an Ecotrust model in Northern Australia

A number of options exist for applying the Ecotrust model to support the emergence of a cultural and conservation economy while taking account of the cultural diversity and other unique features of Northern Australia. These options include strengthening existing organisations, including building new networks, and creating new organisations to fill the identified gaps.

**Build on existing organisational capacity**

In particular, the capacity of existing organisations could be enhanced through building new networks and linkages including:

- across the Indigenous, environment, business, research sectors with an interest in culture and conservation, including facilitation of a new group with a non-representative capacity to develop an independent policy stance;
- between existing organisations and the philanthropic and business sectors with an interest in the culture and conservation economy;
- amongst the existing organisations with a strong commitment to recognition of Aboriginal, rights, culture and title, and fostering joint projects between these parties;
- amongst the existing organisations and individual consultants who are undertaking relevant natural and cultural resource community-based and country-based planning, including options for alternative futures, to develop guidelines and resources for planning;
- with relevant organisations in the social sector who have well developed theory and practice in community development (such as the Centre for Appropriate Technology and Oxfam); and
- amongst those organisations most strongly interested in a cultural and conservation economy through development of a Memorandum of Agreement and associated commitment of resources.

Given the focus on Indigenous leadership in the cultural and conservation economy model identified through this research, the roles of Indigenous organisations are particularly important. NAILSMA, for example, is well placed to be a strategic partner in the delivery of Ecotrust Australia's knowledge and information planning and networking and brokering services to Indigenous Communities across Northern Australia. Nevertheless, NAILSMA's Indigenous representative status, and emphasis on the cultural components of sustainability, limits its capacity to provide the full suite of principles, brokering and other services envisioned in the Ecotrust portal. Regional and local Indigenous organisations including for example Kimberley Land Council, Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation and Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation, are similarly important strategic partners Further, a number of government, research and environment organisations are well placed to play important catalytic roles in delivering components of the Ecotrust approach, including Bendigo Bank, the Australian Conservation Foundation, the NAEA, Terrain Natural Resource Management Ltd, and the Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities.

**Establish new organisations**

Further, several new organisations would be highly beneficial in assisting Indigenous and remote communities with achieving improved outcomes for a cultural and conservation economy, including:

a). An Ecotrust Australia organisational structure, based on the identified principles (Fig. E.1), that would provide a brokering and services portal focused on:

- building community planning capacity for sustainable development through a long-tem commitment to communities and through independence from government;
- strengthening the rights, culture and governance structures of local Indigenous peoples;
- development of a detailed database on services from government, corporate and philanthropies. It is likely that this information would be made available to the public via its website;
- development of networks and relationships within government, corporate and philanthropies to ensure that potential service providers can be accessed by local communities;
- aiding quadruple-bottom line business development through financial training, consulting and mentoring (either directly or through networking) and by supportive sustainability frameworks; and
- support business growth through financing new products and services.

The community case studies emphasised that project support needs to be very flexible, and available to individuals, families, clan groups, and larger Indigenous corporations. The gap analysis also identified the Kimberley region as very well placed to benefit from any new Ecotrust Australia organisational structure, as a result of two important factors: Indigenous organisations that are strongly positioned towards supporting emergence of a cultural and conservation economy; and the relative under-supply of support services in the region.

b). Ecotrust Franchises / Community Partnerships

Based on the identified principles, these franchises of Ecotrust Australia would provide locally-owned brokering and services portals that would operate in partnership with existing regional and local organisations and people. This community-owned organisational structure approach is based on the highly successful Bendigo Bank Community Banking model and seeks to provide a more inclusive and connected service to the community. Ecotrust Australia would develop the overall strategy, programs and capacity and become a service entity to the community-controlled and -owned joint ventures and partnerships with local Indigenous and other peoples.

c). An Ecotrust Australia Banking Partner

The Ecotrust Canada financing service has been strengthened significantly through the partnership with Shorebank, a community bank. Ecotrust Australia should similarly seek the support of a suitably qualified business banking partner to assist in development of appropriately tailored business financing products and systems to meet the needs of Northern Australia. A possible partner could be Bendigo Bank Limited, which has demonstrated a strategic fit for this role through its development of a world first Community Banking Model.

d). An Indigenous Sustainability Trust

Indigenous Sustainability Trusts would provide a capacity to strengthen Indigenous ownership of capital associated with business financing operations, and of any community-controlled joint venture or partnership-based franchises.

The relevance of the Ecotrust Canada model in leveraging greater philanthropic support into the cultural and conservation economy was also considered. Philanthropic funding is highly personal and based on the identification of common goals, values and principles. While philanthropy in Australia has a traditional social focus, new wealth coming into the philanthropic sector in Australia has a more diverse and innovative approach, and potentially a greater interest in cultural and conservation outcomes. An Ecotrust Australia, based on the above principles and components, could also provide a vehicle for the interests of a growing group of international funders focused on the environmental and cultural protection of the internationally significant values of North Australia.

Collaboration with the philanthropic sector identified that the requirements for an Ecotrust Australia to leverage greater financial resources are:

- governance by a high profile Board with an excellent mix of skills and experience and a strong commitment to the Ecotrust vision;
- development of a prospectus that very clearly articulates the need, the opportunity, and the benefits for North Australia and for donors, and the required funding;
- a strategy plan that articulates the necessary structures and actions with a timeframe for the first 5 years;
- a fundraising strategy that focuses on building relationships with the key individuals and organisations both domestically and abroad; and
- an initial foundation built upon philanthropic support to enable an independent Ecotrust in Australia.

## 4. The Ecotrust model and current Australian institutions

A number of limitations were identified in the current Australian institutional settings that will affect the application of the Ecotrust model. Tax and charitable donor status do not currently provide incentives for philanthropic and other investment in remote and Indigenous Northern Australia. Indigenous institutions have some success in uplifting Indigenous socio-economic status, but further support for Indigenous land and sea management units and enhanced land tenure arrangements are critical to full economic participation, particularly in the emerging ecosystem services sector. The environmental institutions' success is hampered by the enormous boundaries of the Australian NRM regions in the north, and the lack of coordination between Australian and State governments on key initiatives like Indigenous protected areas. Lack of sustainability science in the region is also a problem. Several options were identified to improve these institutional arrangements.

**Financial institutions** could be strengthened by:

a). Developing a new Tax Incentive Scheme to increase access to capital:

- Broad framing of the program to service remote, rural and underdeveloped communities creating long term sustainable industries would entail a detailed engagement process to seek their input into the definitions of eligibility for the program;
- 100% upfront tax deduction for investments in registered Community Development Investments Schemes as defined by the program;
- Investments fixed for 7 years with interest paid on maturity; and
- Loan guarantee fund established to support a reasonable percentage of loans to each provider. The fund would be managed by government and enable approved investments to receive cover of up to 80% of any one loan and capped to a maximum for each provider of 15% of its total approved loans under management.

b). Creating a new DGR status for Community (Indigenous) Development Organisations

- The development of a new category of Deductible Gift Recipient Status for Community Development Organisations.
- Allows streamlining of the registration process for multiple foci organisations which would reduce the costs of managing and provide catalysis for charitable support of much needed community development work.
- Development of any new DGR category would need to be framed in consultation with Indigenous and other community-development stakeholders to ensure that the definitions for eligibility truly reflect the needs and capacity required to deliver long-term sustainable development.

**Indigenous institutional arrangements** could be further enhanced through:

- Securing the stability of the regional and sub-regional LSMUs across the north with a dedicated recurrent funding arrangement; core recurrent annual funding of $16.5 M is required for a base level of support across the north;
- Making more land available for cultural and conservation outcomes through ongoing support for the Queensland Cape York Tenure Resolution process of voluntary acquisition and return of substantial areas to Aboriginal ownership, and consideration of whether that approach would be applicable in the Kimberley region;
- Making more flexible tenures available for cultural and conservation outcomes including inalienable freehold, possibly through a land rights act in WA or other appropriate legal mechanisms; and
- Improving the health and well-being status of Indigenous people to participate in cultural and conservation activities through adoption of the accountability-based approach (a clear timetable and measures for closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous socio-economic and health status) that has been successful in Canada.

**Environmental institutions** could be further developed through:

- Ensuring a more appropriate fit between Indigenous and local peoples' cultural boundaries and the Australian NRM boundaries by breaking up the large NRM regions in Northern Territory and WA;
- Funding a Northern Australian ecosystem services brokering program at a more suitable scale than currently provided through the NRM regions;
- Providing greater opportunities in park and protected area conservation economies through reform to enable formal joint management of existing parks and protected areas in Queensland and WA;
- Developing greater opportunities in Indigenous Protected Areas economies, including through tripartite arrangements with the Australian Government, State and Territory governments, and relevant Indigenous peoples; and
- Supporting the emergence of ecosystem services markets again by securing the role of Indigenous LSMUs and brokering organisations in enabling the ecosystem services market.

### Supportive Northern Australia research agenda

A Northern Australia cultural and conservation economy research agenda is required to provide the necessary sustainability information, including greatly enhanced efforts in relation to:

- Indigenous peoples' knowledge systems for sustainability;
- Markets for ecosystem services;
- Scientific knowledge systems for sustainability;
- Planning, participatory and governance processes;
- Project development research including pilots relevant to the major sectors; identified as priorities in a cultural and conservation economy;
- Economic research into capital flows and the connections between the cultural and conservation economy and Indigenous socio-economic status; and
- Business development research including pilot projects.

## 5. Summary

Ecotrust Canada's conservation economy model, broadened through the cultural and conservation economy framework, is highly relevant for Indigenous and rural sustainable development, particularly in Northern Australia.

Four key recommendations to strengthen sustainable development in northern Australia emerge from the findings of this research:

- Ongoing information sharing and networking between groups interested in the cultural and conservation economy should occur;
- Continued collaboration between key Indigenous, environment and business groups should be fostered to ensure a policy response from governments;

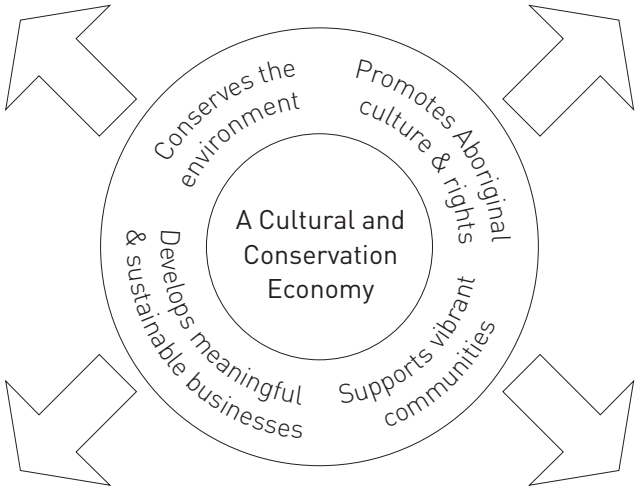
- A future Ecotrust Australia implementation group should be developed with clear commitments reflected in a Memorandum of Agreement or similar document; and
- The implementation of an Ecotrust Australia should be monitored by a research effort aimed at identifying key factors that are associated with successes and/or failures in the applications arising from this proof-of-concept study.

Sustainability/Caring for Country

- offers a choice
- quadruple-bottom line orientated
- Indigenous concepts of sustainability
- research support
- institutional/policy innovation

Local, Indigenous culture & institutions

- respect rights, interests
- build on local initiatives
- Indigenous governance, cultural fit
- cultural mapping




Relationship-based

- trust, long-term commitment
- partner with existing organisations
- develop capacity over time
- flexibility to work at family, clan, community levels

Community-development

- single portal to services
- brokering role
- fosters strategic vision
- local ownership
- community banking, local capital

**Figure E.1.** Role of an Ecotrust Australia in promoting a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia.

# 1 Ecotrust and a Cultural and Conservation Economy in Northern Australia

# 1.1 Northern Australia context

## 1.1.1 Indigenous initiatives and interests in sustainability

The concept of sustainability has been central to Australia's national policy framework since the National Strategy for Sustainable Development was adopted by the Australian Government in 1992 following broad consultation with State and local governments, industry and civil society groups. Nevertheless, the development of policy instruments that provide for continued, long-term economic development without significant degradation of environmental, social and cultural capital remains one of our most significant institutional challenges. In addition, cultural diversity impacts on the development and design of tools and institutions for achieving sustainability.

Indigenous peoples' views of sustainability emphasise both the centrality of culture and of Indigenous governance (Dodson and Smith 2003). Sustainability is related to the way in which Indigenous people can take control of their destiny and in particular to "talk constructively, think about what you are saying, think strategically, and think long-term" (Joe Ross, pg. 31 in Hill et al. 2006). Although a broad range of Indigenous-led initiatives are underway, many emphasise 'caring for country' as a unique Aboriginal land management approach.

Indigenous land and sea management activities centred on environmental management and sustainability have proliferated since the mid 1980s as Indigenous peoples have gained more control over their traditional territories in Northern Australia (Fig. 1.1). Indigenous peoples have also initiated numerous organisations and projects focused on managing country. Land and Sea Management Units (LSMUs) have been established within regional organisations like the Kimberley Land Council and at sub-regional levels such as the Kowanyama Natural and Cultural Resource Management Office. Community Ranger Programs have been successful in many regions, including the current Northern Land Council program supporting more than 300 Rangers in the Northern Territory. Millions of hectares of land have been protected by Indigenous peoples through the Commonwealth Indigenous Protected Area program. Further, Indigenous fire practices have been brought into contemporary management, and many Indigenous groups have been engaged in numerous projects to reduce threats such as invasive species (Baker et al. 2001, Davis 2005, Hill et al. 2004, Northern Land Council 2005). Visionary plans such as the Wuthathi's 'Integrating Culture and Conservation' have also been initiated as the basis for managing traditional lands (Wuthathi Land Trust 2004). While funding

for these projects has typically been from a large number of different government grants including welfare-based programs, the recent *Working on Country* initiative of the Australian Government is finally recognising these roles as legitimate employment with significant environmental outcomes that promote the national interest (Department of Environment and Water 2007).

More recently, Indigenous peoples have sought opportunities for such activities to become the central driver of market-based economic activity in their communities. Markets for Indigenous environmental knowledge and management expertise have been found in guided bush tours such as Kuku-Yalanji Dreamtime Tours on Cape York, education enterprises such as the Bush University on the Kimberley Plateau, carbon offset markets through the West Arnhem Fire Management Agreement (WAFMA,[1]), and integrated heritage and social ventures like Minyirr Park in Broome (McCaul 2005, Corpus 2006, Parker 2007). The Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), established in response to a need to provide strategic and practical support for these innovations by Indigenous peoples across the north, has played a key role in brokering new markets such as through the WAFMA, and securing ongoing government resources for specific projects[2].

**Figure 1.1.** Northern Australia: the zone including the wet-dry tropics. The "wet tropics" region is excluded, in recognition of it very different social, economic, cultural and environment context. Source: Woinarski et al. (2007).

1 http://www.atns.net.au/agreement.asp?EntityID=3638

2 http://www.nailsma.org.au/about_nailsma/index.html

These initiatives occur within a context of highly untenable conditions, with Indigenous people generally having the lowest economic status of all Australians. Key indicators such as life expectancy, income, health, employment status, and educational level, show large differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (Altman 2000). Importantly for the Northern Australian context, Indigenous peoples in remote situations, which includes those living outside the main urban centres, are even worse off with mean earnings of $350/wk (ABS 2004). The data also show that a lack of available jobs is much more frequently identified as the reason for unemployment for remote Indigenous people, with 47.7% reporting that there are either no jobs or none in their line of work, compared to only 18.7% for non-remote people (Schwab 2005). Specific case studies in Northern Australia highlight the significant health problems faced by Indigenous people (Queensland Ambulance Service Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Unit 2000).

Countering these sobering statistics is the finding that engagement in sustainability-oriented activities appear to have very positive impacts on socio-economic wellbeing—for example 74% of communities report that involvement in Indigenous Protected Areas makes a positive contribution to reduction of substance abuse and contributes to more functional families by restoring relationships and reinforcing family and community structures (Gilligan 2006). These are important outcomes, and highlight the need to recognise and support Indigenous peoples' unique approaches to sustainability.

### 1.1.2 Environmental, social, cultural and economic drivers of sustainability in Northern Australia

These initiatives by Indigenous people to establish sustainability within Northern Australia occur within a context of environment, social, cultural and economic drivers, all of which emphasise the importance of continuing to support approaches for ensuring the long-term sustainability of this region. The key factors impacting on sustainability are discussed below.

Northern Australia has outstanding significance on both global and continental scales for many of its key natural and cultural features and places, and this significance is a key driver of the need for sustainability in the region. The region contains the largest extent of near-natural tropical savannas in the world (Woinarski et al. 2006; Fig. 1.2) and has been identified as a high urgency zone for the protection of mammals, amphibians and threatened birds (Mittermeier et al. 1998, Oviedo et al. 2000, Rodrigues et al. 2003). The Kimberley is home to many threatened and endemic species including the golden bandicoot, scaly-tailed possum, nabarlek, and golden-backed tree rat (Baker et al. 2001). Global assessments have also focused attention on the international significance of Northern Australia as a region of very high ethno-linguistic diversity, perhaps second only to New Guinea to our north. Studies indicate that 32% of people in the eastern two thirds of Northern Australia speak an Australian Indigenous language as their main language at home (Qld OESR 2004). Kakadu in the Top End is listed as a World Heritage natural and cultural property, in recognition of its global significance representing the work of Traditional Owners and nature during thousands of years (Commonwealth of Australia 1999). A recent assessment of the natural heritage significance of Cape York Peninsula found that much of the region would qualify for World Heritage listing (Mackey et al. 2001).

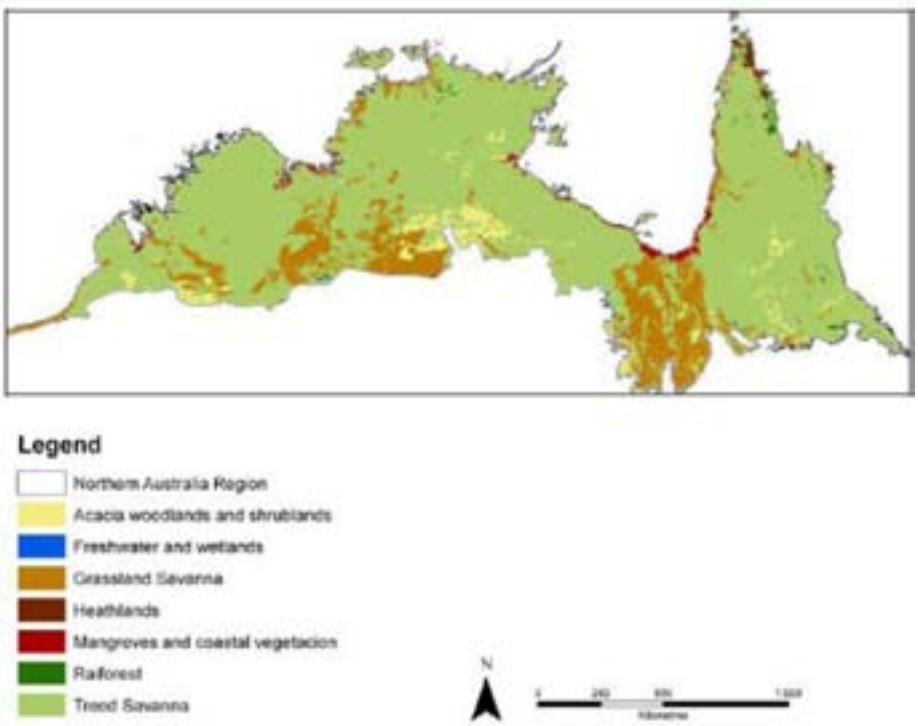



**Figure 1.2.** Broad vegetation groups across Northern Australia.
Source: Woinarski et al. (2007).

While the environmental condition of Northern Australia is generally good (Fig. 1.3), increasing environmental stress from threats including climate change, changed fire regimes, stock grazing and the spread of exotic plants and animals, is evidenced by declines in mammals and granivorous birds, again highlighting the need for enhanced action on sustainability (NAEA 2005, Sattler and Creighton 2002, Whitehead et al. 2003, Woinarski et al. 2006). The recent establishment by the Federal Government of the Task Force to investigate the potential for further land and water resource development in Northern Australia highlights the threats to sustainability in the north posed by growing water shortages in the south associated with global climate change (Prime Minister of Australia 2007; Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport 2006).

The general socio-economic status of the peoples of the region is low compared to other Australians, posing an urgent threat to sustainability and acting as a key driver for enhanced action. Population density is very low, around 0.1 people per $km^2$ (Whitehead et al. 2003). The proportion of Indigenous peoples, particularly outside the major urban centres, is high when compared to Australia as a whole—more than 60% in Cape York Peninsula, around 47% in the Kimberley, and 66% in Arnhem Land, (CYRAG 1997, Government of Western Australia and the KDC 2003, Tropical Savannas CRC 2001).

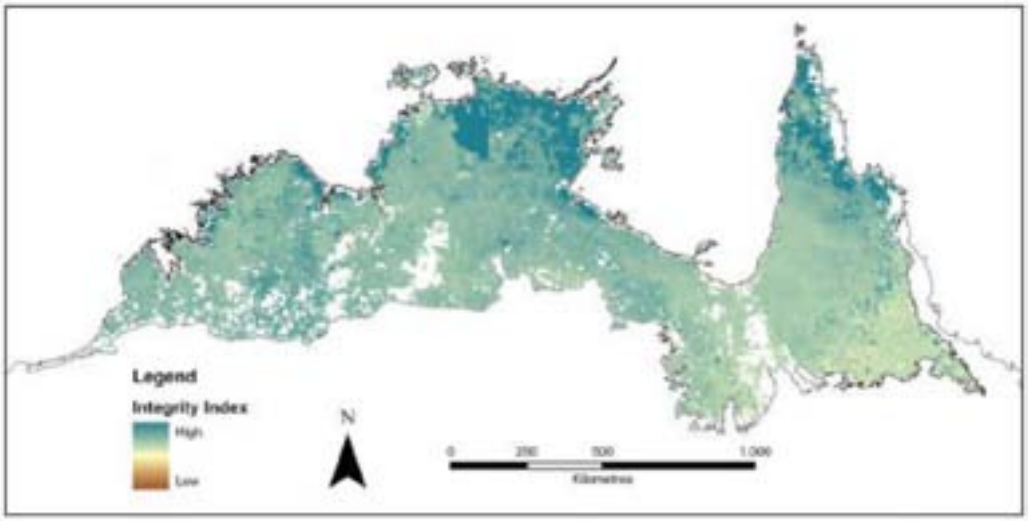



**Figure 1.3.** Landscape integrity index for Northern Australia (Source: Woinarski et al. 2007).

Even outside the Indigenous populations, individual incomes across this region are relatively low—aggregated data for the eastern two-thirds showed 52.1% of the population aged 15 years and over have either a negative or nil income or an annual income of up to $15,599 (Qld OESR 2004).

These poor socio-economic indicators for the region are surprising given that Northern Australia's mineral wealth is currently contributing to a resources boom that is fuelling strong growth in the Australian economy as a whole. Armstrong *et al.* (2005) have identified an overall pattern of "wealth drain" associated with mineral resource development in Northern Australia. The Mirarr Case Study conducted for this report highlights that ongoing community dysfunction has been exacerbated, rather than relieved, by mining-led development. Nevertheless, parts of the mining industry are now among the most progressive in terms of addressing sustainability outcomes, and innovative agreements between resource developers and Indigenous peoples are demonstrating that benefits can be generated (Harvey 2004).

While large-scale irrigated agriculture based around impoundments like the Ord River Dam and associated pastoral intensification have long been viewed as the basis of economic development for the north, low soil fertility and extreme seasonality of the climate are both major limiting factors on agricultural development (Johnson et al. 1999, Woinarski et al. 2006). Major pest outbreaks have caused significant or complete disruptions to past attempts to establish agriculture at Humpty Doo, Cambalin and many other sites (Cooke 2007). Recognition of these past failures of the conventional development model is also a key driver for enhanced action on sustainability.

### 1.1.3 Emerging new economic solutions for Northern Australia

The Indigenous peoples' unique approaches to sustainability, in association with the high natural and cultural significance of the region, the continuing and urgent threats associated with climate change and other factors, and the low socio-economic outcomes produced from mining and agriculturally-based development, have catalysed the proliferation of new conceptual frameworks for sustainability in the north, including:

- The real economy;
- The hybrid economy;
- An appropriate economy;
- A cultural economy; and
- A conservation economy

Although these conceptual approaches overlap considerably, some key divergences are of interest in examining their application in Northern Australia.

The Cape York Institute has focused on the concept of engagement in the "real economy" as the most important factor for achieving improvement in Indigenous socio-economic outcomes. CYI promotes three factors as necessary for viability of remote communities: enhancing individual capability; individuals "orbiting" away from communities; and enhanced market opportunities. The CYI policies reinforce the conventional development approach of focusing on traditional market sectors and economic measures of success.

However, internationally and in Australia, increased attention has been focused on the triple roles of the market, state (government) and customary sectors in economies associated with the hinterlands of industrialised nations where populations remain dominated by Indigenous peoples: known as the hybrid economy. Altman et al. (2005) argue that this is the real "real" economy in the north, and the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey provides strong statistical support for the view that the real economy in remote Indigenous Australia is made up of three, rather than two, sectors. The 2002 NATSISS information reinforces a view that other Australian Bureau of Statistics data ignore the non-market sector and understate the extent of Indigenous economic participation and wellbeing associated with the customary sector. The policy ramifications of this finding are that the customary sector might provide economic opportunity, and that major programs like the CDEP scheme, as well as land rights and native title rights, might be useful instruments to facilitate enhanced customary participation with positive livelihood outcomes. Kwan and Marsh (2006) have also recently demonstrated how a good fit between the three sectors of the hybrid economy contributes to sustainable outcomes in marine harvesting by Indigenous peoples.

The concept of the 'cultural economy' has been fostered by the North Australia Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA). The cultural economy seeks innovative Indigenous engagement in traditional (eg. mining and pastoralism) and emerging (e.g. cultural and eco tourism, carbon sequestration and abatement, conservation management) sectors of the Northern Australian economy, building on Indigenous knowledge and land assets so that the Northern economy sustains Indigenous culture in a contemporary way (Armstrong et al. 2005).

Armstrong *et al.* (2005) argue that linking customary management of Indigenous lands across Northern Australia to these strategic and innovative opportunities for business development requires a considered approach which may include: development of the role of Indigenous local and regional governance structures; local participation and ownership of business development; and dynamic engagement with capitalism that matches the aspirations of Indigenous people. Within a cultural economy conceptual framework, it is centrally important that actions build on the Harvard Project findings regarding the importance of political dynamics and Indigenous political institutions to social and economic development on Indigenous lands (Cornell and Kalt 2003, Dodson and Smith 2003).

The Northern Australia Environment Alliance (NAEA) first introduced the concept of 'appropriate economies' for Northern Australia in 2002 (Hill and Golson 2006). NAEA brings together ten non-government environment organisations around a vision for the future of the north in which economic and social well-being is secured through a new development paradigm that ensures ongoing protection of the natural ecosystems, recognises Indigenous rights and responsibilities, and builds on the comparative advantages embedded in the natural and cultural diversity of the region. According to Hill and Golson (2006), the focus on "appropriate economies" aims to foster viable economic activity across Northern Australia generally, but particularly for Indigenous people, with outcomes that will:

- Protect culture and nature;
- Generate jobs and income; and
- Uplift social conditions.

Supported by this vision, a series of Roundtable meetings were held in the Kimberley and Cape York Peninsula regions, which identified a range of potential appropriate economic activities such as tourism, conservation partnerships, land management, pastoralism, arts and culture and sustainable agriculture (Hill and Turton 2004, Hill et al. 2006). In addition, the Kimberley Roundtable produced a set of Principles that emphasised the rights of Traditional Owners to make decisions about their country and the valuable economic contribution that is already being made through cultural and conservation management.

The Wilderness Society (TWS) has also developed work around the concept of a "conservation economy" in Australia. For example, TWS and the Aboriginal Cultural Development Foundation signed a Cooperation Agreement in December 2006 to work together on a number of initiatives, including 'conservation economy' pilot projects such as existing or planned Aboriginal Cultural Development Foundation (SA) initiatives around spring water with natural fluoride, feral bee management, bush foods and medicinal plant harvesting[3]. TWS view the conservation economy as one where economic and community development restores and nurtures the environment, rather than degrading it[4].

3 http://www.wilderness. org.au/campaigns/wildcountry/sa/acdf/

4 http://wildrivers.org.au/info/indigenous

Davies *et al. (*2006) for the Desert Knowledge CRC recently defined a "conservation economy" as including the elements of biodiversity services, eco-tourism, sustainable grazing, carbon sequestration, and land condition and water resource monitoring. Their 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.

### 1.1.4 Overview of the Northern Australian context for action on sustainability

Northern Australia is emerging as a powerhouse for sustainability innovations, led by Indigenous peoples' unique approaches to sustainability, and catalysed by strong drivers associated with the global cultural and natural significance of the region, the threats from climate change, and the poor socio-economic outcomes from conventional mining and agriculturally-based development. New economic frameworks focused around concepts of Indigenous culture and country are demonstrating early signs of success. However, the gap between the current situation and the achievement of long-term solutions from these innovations remains large, particularly in terms of Indigenous peoples' social and economic outcomes, indicating a need for greater action to support the continued emergence of tailored approaches that meet the aspirations of the Indigenous peoples of the region.

# 1.2 Investigation of the Ecotrust model in Northern Australia

## 1.2.1 Interest in the Canadian conservation economy and Ecotrust model

While the challenges faced by rural and remote communities and Indigenous peoples in Northern Australia have many unique features, parallels can be found in the hinterlands of other first-world nations where Indigenous populations dominate. Exploratory research and partnership building by environment and Indigenous organisations in Northern Australia during 2003-2006 identified that the Canadian organisation 'Ecotrust Canada' (EC) had developed an approach to building a conservation economy that is of potential relevance to emerging sustainability innovations (Hill and Turton 2004, Hill et al. 2006). The Australian Conservation Foundation led a research partnership that was successful in obtaining funding from Land and Water Australia to conduct this "proof-of-concept" study from April 2006 to May 2007, with the results detailed in this report.

## 1.2.2 Research approach

The key objectives of this proof-of-concept study were:

- To prove the relevance of the concept of Ecotrust Canada's 'conservation economy' model for Indigenous and rural sustainable community development in Australia, particularly in Northern Australia.
- To examine the opportunities and limitations within the current Australian institutional settings, particularly of Northern Australia, that would affect the application of the principles and components of Ecotrust Canada's model.

The following key research questions further elucidated the desired outcomes from this 'proof of concept' study:

1. What components and principles of the EC model are found within existing organisations and institutions, and which are missing?

2. How are these organisations positioned in the overall scheme of a conservation economy?

3. What are the existing Australian financial and institutional arrangements that might either constrain or enhance development of an organisation such as EC to promote a conservation economy, (including a comparative analysis of the facilitating mechanisms for EC)?

4. What philanthropic organisations or agents, both nationally and internationally, could contribute to the building of support for such a conservation economy?

5. What institutional arrangements, i.e. new organisation/s or partnerships with existing organisations, could achieve the outcomes of a conservation economy?

6. What are the potential sectors in Northern Australia (e.g. native foods, fisheries, tourism, etc) that might be included in a conservation economy?

The first step in the research plan was to call together a meeting of interested partners to form a Steering Committee. Organisations who agreed to participate in the Steering Committee, and provide various levels of pro-bono support were Kimberley Land Council (KLC), Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation (Balkanu), Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation (GAC), Arnold Bloch Leibler (ABL), The Wilderness Society (TWS), The Christensen Fund (TCF), Poola Foundation (Tom Kantor Fund), Australian Tropical Forest Institute (ATFI), and Bendigo Bank.

Members of the Project Steering Committee visit the Hesquiaht Nation in Canada, June 2006.

The overall role of the Steering Committee was:

> to assist ACF to facilitate completion of the Land and Water Australia (LWA) "proof of concept" study into the potential applicability of the Ecotrust Canada approach to building sustainable development in partnership with local and Indigenous people in Northern Australia. The Steering Committee will also assess the outcomes of the study and make recommendations about future next steps, including any ongoing role for the Committee.

The Steering Committee guided the study by selecting consultants to carry out specific tasks and by contributing to the framing of the research and also to collections of information for the report in a co-research approach. NAILSMA (including researchers from the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research) and Community Sector Innovations were selected as consultants and provided reports which were supplemented by other research.

The research questions were addressed primarily through documentary analysis and literature review, supplemented by telephone interviews with a number of key staff in Ecotrust and in some relevant organisations in Northern Australia. Three community case studies were also undertaken to ensure the research was grounded in remote Indigenous peoples' experiences: a Miriuwung-Gajerrong case study in association with Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation; a Mirarr case study in association with Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation; and an Injinoo Case Study in association with Apudthama Lands Trust. These case studies involved visits to the local areas, documentary analysis, and individual and focus groups interviews with key people identified in partnership with the relevant Indigenous organisations. A regional case study was also undertaken, through documentary analysis, of five "sister" Indigenous organisations that have been active around sustainability issues: Cape York Land Council, Cape York Partnerships, Cape York Institute, Apunipima Health Council, and Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation. Data analysis was undertaken through qualitative techniques of theme identification involving pattern analysis and critical review, with strong oversight through Steering Committee meetings held in August, December 2006 and April 2007.

# 1.3 The Ecotrust model for supporting the emergence of a conservation economy

## 1.3.1 Overview of the Ecotrust approach: principles, services and outcomes

Ecotrust Canada is an organisation whose core proposition is that long-term sustainability is fostered and encouraged by building partnerships with entrepreneurs, rural communities and First Nation peoples through the provision of services embedded in an overall mission of creating a conservation economy. A conservation economy is defined as: 1) providing meaningful work and good livelihoods, 2) supporting vibrant communities and recognising Aboriginal rights and title, and 3) conserving and restoring the environment. The components of Ecotrust Canada's conservation economy activities include: information services, business development /network/marketing services and business financing. Ecotrust Canada has successfully engaged with philanthropic investors, as well as corporate ones, to leverage private assets for the purpose of building the conservation economy in sectors as diverse as alternative energy companies, sustainable forestry, tourism, real estate, aquaculture and community-based fisheries. The embedded principles that underlie all aspects of their work are:

- a commitment to a community development and empowerment theory of social change (Gill 2006, Scholz 2006);
- a relationships based approach;
- a sustainability framework;
- recognition of Aboriginal rights and title; and
- independence from the agendas of governments and other groups, i.e., non-representative organisational structure.

Ecotrust Canada has achieved some impressive outcomes from their approach. For example, during 2005 their initiatives resulted in the following outcomes for First Nation peoples and others:

- $1.9 million in loans to 13 entrepreneurs, including a locally-owned fish processing plant and an Aboriginal owned tugboat company; this brings the total businesses supported through loans since 1994 to 45, which supports some 550 jobs (including part-time and seasonal) in regions with traditionally weak economic conditions;
- GIS support was provided to many communities and the Aboriginal Mapping Network website was further refined;
- A collaboration with the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation produced a marine stewardship program and a marine use plan.
- A partnership with Simon Fraser University launched a Sustainable Building Centre, which is an online and physical resource for the green building industry;
- A tourism management plan was developed through a consortium of North Island First Nations; and
- Research was conducted into the opportunities for using renewable power generation in coastal communities, including the possibility of biodiesel.

Ecotrust Canada is a "sister" organisation to Ecotrust in the US. Both organisations have supported the development of a body of work on the conservation economy which seeks to articulate the framework and institutions that support a sustainable society. An interactive 'pattern map' sets out the foundations in social, natural, and economic capital (Fig. 1.4). The key principles and services of Ecotrust Canada are considered in greater detail in the following sections.

A Project Steering Committee meeting: left, Des Hill, Kimberley Land Council (committee member) and right, John O'Dempsey, Community Sector Innovation (consultant).

### 1.3.2 Principles

Community development is recognised as the body of work aimed at empowering people to take control of their own lives, and to overcome the legacy of passivity, despair and dysfunction, typically arising from colonisation or other experiences such as displacement and war. Community development is the process of the community coming together to identify its common values, needs, problems and priorities, and to make plans to meet their needs and solve problems based particularly on their own as well as others' resources (Richardson et al. 2001). Three sorts of structures are necessary to make community development successful:

- Local structures—people at the local level who are prepared to dialogue with each other about their concerns;
- Partner organisation—usually at the regional level, who can work closely with and support the community; and
- National level links—to bring together the local issues with their national and global aspects.

The relationships-based approach is strongly linked to theory and practice in community development but emphasises the dimension of trust and the establishment of long-term engagements between individuals as a key factor. Its focus is on the inherent processes that underpin long-term success rather than the explicit outcomes of single project. Reid-Kueck (2006) identified trust as a key element for Ecotrust Canada, with the relationship-based approach underpinned by the negotiation of a protocol agreement between Ecotrust and other parties undertaking projects. The agreements set out the goals of Ecotrust and the other party, their mutual goals, and aspects of the working relationships including communications, capacity-building, joint fundraising, confidentiality and other issues (Reid-Kueck 2006). Spencer Beebe (2006), President and founder of Ecotrust, characterises Ecotrust as a "listening" organisation.

The sustainability framework in Figure 1.4 underpins the Ecotrust model, with a 'coherence test' (see section 2.3.1) between environmental, social and economic outcomes providing depth to sustainability knowledge and its application. Ecotrust partners with a large number of research and First Nation organisations with a knowledge generation capacity in relation to sustainability, for example, with the Na Na Kila Institute[5]. Ecotrust therefore has available to it a large body of scientific and Indigenous knowledge relevant to sustainability in the Pacific coastal rainforest bioregion, as well as a clearly articulated sustainability framework.

Recognition of Aboriginal rights and title is reflected in Ecotrust's operations and services including involvement of First Nations' leaders on their Boards, and relevant projects including the Indigenous Leadership Awards, support for treaty processes, Indigenous planning and business development, and support for Indigenous assertions of rights and interests, such as responses to Crown Referrals.

5 http://www.nanakila.ca/

**Figure 1.4.** Ecotrust's vision of the conservation economy.
Source: www.conservationeconomy.net

Independence from the agendas of government and other groups is viewed by Beebe (2006) as critical to the success of Ecotrust:

> *We started with 5-6 key people, an economist, a fundraiser, a scientist, others..... it's very important who you start with, you need the right people who are committed to the idea. Organisational structure is important, it doesn't work to have a board of stakeholders with a representative function, need people from diverse backgrounds who are totally committed, need people with lots of energy.*

The Ecotrust Canada Board includes a diverse range of people, and including, as noted above, Indigenous leaders. While these Board appointments are not explicitly representative, the knowledge and experience of these First Nation leaders ensures Ecotrust has accountability back to Indigenous priorities and Indigenous governance principles in its operations. Sharing of Board membership also enables sharing of expertise across the Ecotrust organisations—for example the President of Ecotrust US sits on the Ecotrust Canada Board and vice versa (Scholz 2006). Independence from the changes in government policy and funding priorities was identified as important by communities contacted in Canada—for example Ecotrust Canada's continued hosting of the Aboriginal Mapping Network was very significant for First Nations when government funding for treaty mapping processes was withdrawn in 2001 (Kehm 2006).

### 1.3.3 Services and organisations

The components of Ecotrust Canada's conservation economy activities include: information and planning services, business development and networking services, and business financing.

**Information and planning services**

The information services were developed first and include: community and land use planning, community databases, GIS cultural and natural values mapping and an Aboriginal Mapping Network. Spencer Beebe (2006) expressed Ecotrust's approach to planning very simply as:

> *Ecotrust assists through listening and working with the community. For example, we say let's sit down and help you express this in a set of principles and a land use plan, instead of reacting to other people's proposals, which results in developing a sort of sustainability framework at the community level.*

According to Kehm (2006), Ecotrust Canada has now supported some very substantial planning projects, including the seven-year exercise assisting Heiltsuk Nation's land use plan titled 'For Our Children's Tomorrow,' and in assisting Haida Gwaii to build a mapping program 'Heritage and Forest Guardians' within their office. The theme of the planning work is 'alternative futures' which assists in considering their options, ranging from full conservation to full development. Traditional knowledge is a key driver of how land use decisions are made. In terms of developing the concept of the "Alternative Futures Program", the Ecotrust process is:

> Vision➔Plans (reserve and territory, based on cultural and other mapping and information, traditional knowledge as key driver) ➔Implementation through business plan (including governance arrangements), funding/loans package

The Aboriginal Mapping Network (AMN) ensures large amounts of information about data, funding, mapping methods, laws and other information useful for planning are readily available for First Nations communities (www.nativemaps.org). Ecotrust is not a training provider but has a strong focus on enhancing the capacity of people within organisations to utilise information, and mentoring individuals over time. Ecotrust has a growing focus on working directly with the more senior Indigenous leadership, for example through the Buffet Award for Indigenous Leadership (Scholz 2006).

**Business development and networking**

Ecotrust positions its work in the economy at the intersection between the social, environmental and financial elements of the triple bottom line[6]. Their business development services are therefore not primarily focused on the financial elements, as would be expected in a traditional business consulting framework. Business development is instead built on the knowledge and understanding gained by communities through planning activities such as documentation of their cultural heritage and knowledge, their development of future visions, and by land use plans. Networking with like minded groups for mutual support, understanding and combined capacity is supported by Ecotrust as a key tool for reducing risks and enhancing successful outcomes.

An example of a successful Tsleil-Waututh tourism business—canoeing with Soaring Eagle and Dancing Serpent.

6 'Cultural' is considered a fourth dimension of sustainability in Northern Australia, giving the quadruple bottom line as cultural, social, economic, and environmental.

The business development activities range from business consulting, mentoring and product development to business lending for conservation entrepreneurs. In support of the business start-ups, Ecotrust Canada also provides policy and research activities, market research and capacity-building, business planning, integration and communications strategies. Access to capital through start-up and other loans is also available though Shorebank Pacific and Shorebank Enterprises. The communities' vision of a sustainable future provides the basis for any business development services that Ecotrust provides: from this vision a foundation is built assisting entrepreneurs and community groups to improve their knowledge and understanding of the processes necessary for business development. Business training assists in identifying the steps towards development of a successful business. Business development services are not viewed as one-off projects but instead as a lifelong commitment to ensuring that communities and individual businesses are successful through ongoing mentoring at various stages throughout their development.

Ecotrust has also sought to link individual businesses into more vertically integrated business networks that deliver products from 'paddock to plate.' Ecotrust has been active in supporting remote rural and First Nations communities in reclaiming control of the fishing licences that allow commercial fishing to take place in their local waters.

Ecotrust saw opportunities for production to market integration of these individual fishing businesses, which led to the Trilogy Fish project. Ecotrust put together a consortium with local residents, outside investors and First Nations to purchase a fish processing plant, which without their support would have been sold for real-estate development. Trilogy was established as a community co-operative that owns this processing plant and a fresh seafood retail store in Tofino, sourcing a large percentage of its product from local suppliers, including several First Nations fishers.

**Business financing**

In the United States and Canada, as in Australia, traditional banking models have struggled to service remote rural and Indigenous communities. Small populations and widely distributed communities make the traditional branch model expensive to administer. This lack of banking services in Canada led to a number of challenges for the remote and Indigenous communities Ecotrust was working with including:

- Minimal bank credit histories for community entities and individuals;
- New business models such as FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) Forestry or ownership structures such as Cooperatives in sectors without well established financial histories;
- Lack of financial incentives to invest in new markets; and
- Narrow banking credit analysis tools that did not evaluate the impacts of environmental or social sustainability on long term risk mitigation.

As a result, communities and individuals struggled to obtain access to capital in these remote areas. Ecotrust saw this lack of capital as an opportunity and developed a business financing service. Ecotrust's banking services are provided in the context of their community development activities, but importantly it takes a for-profit, not a charity, approach to the business. Ensuring that proposed business models can meet market performance requirements ensures that long term viability is at the heart of the model. The sustainability overlay provides a more comprehensive assessment of potential risks while the environmental screening process focuses on reliance on native species, waste streams and

energy usage. The social screening process focuses on fair wages, employment practices and Indigenous participation in the workplace. Ecotrust finance assessment process takes a very active role in the development of the business proposals.

Ecotrust's financing program was developed in partnership with Shorebank Pacific (www.shorebankcorp.com) which started in 1973 as Shorebank when its founders bought the South Shore National Bank on Chicago's South Side, with the goal of using the bank to restore the neighbourhood economy through supporting market development in poor and marginalised urban communities. Shorebank is now the largest community bank in the world. In partnering with Shorebank Pacific, Ecotrust was able to access systems for supporting community development in new markets, banking and credit management systems and access to capital. A not for profit charity Shorebank Enterprises Pacific was also established to assist in funding the higher risk transactions not suited to issuance by Shorebank Pacific. These partnerships established a business lending service that supports entrepreneurs, cooperatives and not for profit groups to develop projects that promote economic opportunity, protect the environment and foster social equity. Ecotrust Canada's natural capital fund was established through a grant of $1M from the British Columbia Government and matched by various philanthropic organisations and individuals. The revolving loan fund is now in excess of $6M and projected to grow to beyond $10M in the coming years.

This fish shop and processing plant at Tofino, British Columbia, Canada was catalysed through the initiatives developed by Ecotrust Canada.

### 1.3.4 A cultural and conservation economy for Northern Australia

Although the 'conservation economy' concept of Ecotrust has much in common with both the 'appropriate economies' concept of NAEA and the 'cultural economy' concept of NAILSMA, the Canadian model does not give the centrality to Indigenous culture embedded in the latter two concepts. Culture has emerged as central to notions of sustainability through collaborative projects and innovations in Northern Australia. The Kimberley Principles emerging from the Roundtable process highlight culture throughout, and particularly as the guiding platform for economic activity. In addition the term "caring for country" has gained wide currency in Australia as shorthand for Indigenous adaptive management systems that lead to enhanced outcomes for nature conservation (Smyth 1996). The conceptual framework that most clearly encapsulates the economic, social, cultural and environmental drivers of sustainability in Northern Australia is therefore:

*A cultural and conservation economy, which:*

- *recognises Aboriginal culture, rights and title;*
- *builds and supports strong, vibrant, sustainable communities;*
- *provides meaningful work, good livelihoods and sustainable enterprises; and*
- *conserves and restores the environment – supports caring for country.*

This definition will be used throughout the remainder of the report as a basis for referring to these fundamental aims.

# 2 Relevance of the Ecotrust model in Northern Australia

# 2.1 Indigenous communities: findings from the case studies

## 2.1.1 The Mirarr Case Study[7]

Mirarr people are the traditional owners in the Kakadu region, with almost all of their lands inside the Kakadu National Park, and including the existing Ranger Uranium Mine (RUM), the site for the proposed Jabiluka uranium mine, and the township of Jabiru. Mirarr are a small Traditional Owner group, with 26 adults and around 30 children. They established the Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation with the support of the Northern Land Council in 1996. The agreement for RUM to proceed arose out of the Ranger Uranium Inquiry 1977, and the decision of the Australian government to concurrently grant recognition of land rights in the Northern Territory through the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1975*, and to establish the Kakadu National Park with joint management arrangements, while allowing the Ranger mine to proceed (see website[8], also O'Brien 2003). In recognition of its role representing Traditional Owners, GAC became the royalty-receiving body for the RUM, and continues to disburse payments to a wider group of Aboriginal people affected by the mine. After its establishment in 1996, GAC become very active in opposing attempts to open a second uranium mine on the Jabiluka lease. In 1998, attempts to construct the mine were opposed through a public blockade with Mirarr support which resulted in some 5000 people coming to the site (O'Brien 2003). Work on the mine stopped in 1999 and ERA filled in the portal during late 2003. Mirarr people take very seriously their customary obligation to country, culture and law, emphasising the location of authority and law at the clan level.

GAC and Mirarr produced a statement of their priorities in 2006 which highlights the Mirarr's aspirations for sustainable development. The statement describes the impact of the mine, and the associated social and economic effects, particularly alcohol and money, which has made their situation more complicated and difficult. Key aspirations are the rehabilitation of land after uranium mining; management of financial resources; improvement of living

7 Dr Rosemary Hill conducted the Mirarr Case Study in partnership with Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation.

8 http://mirarr.net/history.html

conditions particularly at Djirrbiyuk, their main outstation; culture; health including alcohol and substance abuse; education; careers in tourism, park management, mining and the arts; and household financial planning.

GAC and Mirarr have previously identified support for ongoing tourism in Kakadu as a priority, but not so as to increase tourist numbers, nor to open up more Mirarr country to tourism. Mirarr are concerned over the manner in which tourism currently operates in the Park as Indigenous tourism ventures take up a lot of money (from royalty, lease payments) and don't return appropriate outcomes back to the people. Cultural maintenance and recording is a major priority, as explained by Yvonne Margarula:

> *Bining here, my family, we go hunting and fishing, still cook traditional way, turtle, false snake, everything we know. Some people forget, say too hard to dig in the ground. My family took all the young ones....lots of balanda tucker on my list, but will still remember bush tucker, is there for us.*

Although the Park has a cultural recording system, developing one controlled by and for Mirarr people is a high priority. Mirarr people's statement of community priorities clearly has much in common with all the elements of the cultural and conservation economy: a focus on culture and rights, building a stronger community, meaningful work and enterprises, and repairing and caring for country.

Mirarr Traditional Owners: from left (visible) Sandra Djandjul, Yvonne Margarula (senior Traditional Owner), Stephanie Djandjul (seated behind Yvonne), Julie Djandjul and Raylene Djandjul.

In regard to improving the opportunities for sustainable development, four issues were identified as overwhelming priorities for the Mirarr: community conflict, alcohol, money (and the connections between these three), and the day-to-day living conditions of Mirarr people. The visit occurred just prior to when one of two annual payments of mining royalties was due to occur, and so it was a time of heightened awareness and conflict around these issues. As Yvonne explains:

> *Everyone arguing about who's the boss for that money. They should have brought it up before when my father was boss – now they see money, they think that money is here (with GAC).*

Other Mirarr commented:

> *Aboriginal way is to talk about it, sort out problem...but vehicles, money, drink..fight, arguments with each other....even fighting among families, even fight between sisters. Money is the problem. They want vehicles, new car.*

While the conflict is about the money, who should control it, and what it should be used for, the alcohol problems greatly exacerbate the situation:

> *Alcohol is the problem. People are addicted to it. People have to get off it themselves. We can't tell them. They don't get off it, only when they're old.*

Mirarr housing problems are a major factor in the community as there is a very limited and aging stock of housing. Djirrbiyuk, the main outstation, has only two houses and a demountable, with often more than 30 people living there. Mirarr are very frustrated that these issues of poor living conditions and extreme social problems have not changed in the last ten years.

Mirarr people have a clear idea of how they would like to be living, and what the current problems are, but ideas for linking aspirations and issues are less clear. People are feeling very disempowered due to the overwhelming nature of their problems and the lack of viable solutions. The mining money has not alleviated poverty, and potentially enabling strategies such as education, employment or cultural activities are not being engaged with on an ongoing basis. Overcoming the community conflict is clearly a major priority for Mirarr, but they are not confident that people can be brought back together, to the old ways of cooperation and sharing. People feel an urgent need for some help to better understand how to overcome the extremely difficult challenges they face.

In relation to the Ecotrust model, the most relevant aspects for Mirarr are the relationships-based approach, networking and the skills development and information services. Mirarr people want solutions built from the ground up, recognising their unique circumstances and history, and their desire to build on their own initiatives, such as the Gunbang Action Committee, and to support their aspirations like cultural recording, and alcohol recovery programs. Money is currently seen as a "poison" rather than an enabling resource, and the financing services of the Ecotrust approach are not as relevant to their community.

### 2.1.2 Miriuwung Gajerrong Case Study[9]

The Indigenous population of the Northern East Kimberley is estimated to be about 2,300, accounting for about one in four of the total population of the Shire of Wyndham East Kimberley. This includes Miriuwung Gajerrong Traditional Owners as well as substantial numbers of other Indigenous peoples from elsewhere who are resident in the area. There are numerous small and discreet Miriuwung Gajerrong Community Living Areas (CLAs) in the region, mostly located several kilometres from town. More Miriuwung Gajerrong (MG) people would choose to relocate to live in these CLAs if access to housing and other community services and infrastructure were improved.

Phyllis Ningamara painting at Waringarri Aboriginal Arts in Kununurra—development of community-based commercial arts and crafts centres are an important aspiration of Miriuwung Gajerrong people.

Many of the Dawang (family land groups) have aspirations of implementing projects on their CLAs in order to become self sufficient, develop their communities independent of government handouts and create jobs whilst keeping their traditional laws and customs alive and strong. This is reflected in the vision statement formed by Members of the Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation, who wish to:

- maintain and respect their cultural traditions and practices;

9 Mr Desmond Hill of the Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation conducted this case study with support from Ms Kate Golson of the Kimberley Land Council, and Mr John O'Dempsey of Community Sector Innovation.

- have access to and the ability to enjoy social, cultural and economic opportunities;
- respect and grow all the assets held for the benefit of all our people for now and into the future;
- work together, make each other strong and build our MG pride, independence and wealth; and
- respect Garrayilng (seniors) rules.

The Miriuwung Gajerrong (MG) people have long sought recognition of their native title rights through legal action in the Federal Court and negotiations with governments and other interests leading to two consent determinations of native title. The MG People are signatories to the Ord Final Agreement (OFA), a broad package of measures which implements a platform for future partnerships between the MG People, WA State Government, industry and developers for the benefit of the wider community and the East Kimberley Region. The Agreement recognises the injustices of the past, in particular the ongoing impact of the flooding of Lake Argyle, whilst structurally enhancing the MG people's social, economic and political position for the future.

The Agreement provides that this structural shift is to be achieved by the creation of the resourced Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation (MG Corp), including community benefits of $24 million over 10 years to establish and operate the new Corporation, with a special economic development unit with an Investment Trust for Aboriginal contribution to future development of Kununurra. MG Corp's mission is to improve the social, cultural and economic well-being of the MG people. In this context, over the past two years, MG people have established a complex new governance structure and, aside from the main MG Corporation, there are three trustee subsidiary companies that will hold in trust the benefits of the Ord Final Agreement. The representative Governing Committee is shaped by a traditional cultural structure. The thirty-two member Governing Committee is comprised of two representatives from each of the sixteen *dawang*, or traditional land areas, which make up the Miriuwung Gajerrong native title lands. The benefits are to be shared by all MG people for community purposes.

The MG Corp Economic Development Unit has been established to provide economic development service and advice at both micro and macro levels:

- assisting with local employment opportunities in the region, including identifying and facilitating relevant training;
- helping to establish small business enterprises, including facilitating relevant training, mentoring, business planning and management;
- liaising with local employers to encourage greater MG participation in the local labour force;
- identifying commercial business opportunities;
- sourcing high level expertise;
- sourcing alternative means of finance;
- assisting MG Corp in making sound financial decisions; and
- supporting MG Development Trust and MG Community Foundation in making sound investment and economic development decisions.

Discussions with the MG Corporation, its governing and management committees and various members, identified that an Ecotrust structure would be invaluable to the Corporation's role in fulfilling the above and supporting community aspirations. An Ecotrust model would function at the individual, family and corporation level to broker various forms of assistance, in addition to those currently flowing from the OFA and the MG Corp's roles. Some areas that an Ecotrust structure could be of assistance are in supporting:

- Individual Dawang enterprises and Joint Ventures (two or more Dawangs) in:
  - community arts, crafts and general store
  - nature-based caravan parks
  - eco-tourism ventures
  - native plants & seedlings nursery (in partnership with mining industry)
  - red claw aquaculture
  - small scale horticultural projects e.g.: mangoes, bananas, grapefruit etc.
  - horse riding tours
  - GIS training and cultural mapping and mentoring
  - marketing management assistance
  - larger scale projects e.g.: construction, real estate etc.

Miriuwung Traditional Owner, Pamela Simon, pointing to her proposed site for a nature-based caravan park at Galjiba (Molly Springs), near Kununurra.

- Miriuwung Gajerrong Corporation projects:
  - corporation held lands real estate joint ventures
  - corporation held lands large scale irrigation / horticulture
  - barramundi aquaculture project
  - assistance in getting outcomes that address the recommendations of the Aboriginal Social and Economic Impacts Assessment Report of the Ord River Irrigation Project Stage 1
  - local business enterprises, e.g., accommodation facilities, construction, shopping centres, etc.
  - marketing, management assistance, and governance/GIS Training, cultural mapping and mentoring

The interests and aspirations of the MG people already incorporate a cultural and conservation economy within a much broader sustainability goal. The historic poverty and disadvantage underpin aspirations for general economic development through a range of strategies including those associated with vocational education and training, access to the formal education system and improvements to address the schooling and higher education needs, particularly of MG young people, and commercial operations in agriculture, horticulture, housing, tourism and social services. However, the MG people are vitally interested in the progress of the Ecotrust approach as a means of fostering a set of particular aspirations around eco-friendly and culturally-friendly businesses at the individual, family and corporation levels as discussed above. The best role for an Ecotrust is likely to be in functioning as a "broker" that links Miriuwung Gajerrong with a range of people and resources.

### 2.1.3 Injinoo Case Study[10]

Injinoo, formerly (until around 1989) known as Cowal Creek and sometimes Small River, is on the west coast of Northern Cape York. It is one of five Indigenous communities which together formed what was formerly called The Northern Peninsular Area (NPA) Aboriginal Reserve. The village of Injinoo predates the other villages and originally comprised the Traditional Owners of the region. Its residents still comprise the bulk of the population although intermarriage between communities means that Traditional Owners also exist in the other villages.

The Apudthama Lands Trust was established as a way that these traditional owners could come together to discuss management issues in their combined lands and provided an interface between the Shire Councils that manage the village /DOGIT lands for the good of the entire community and traditional owners who have particular concerns and knowledge in relation to cultural issues and traditional rights.

The discussions with Injinoo people revealed a range of family, clan and community level aspirations in relation to sustainable development. The range of enterprises considered by the interviewees included:

- cultural tourism;

10 Dr Susan McIntyre-Tamwoy conducted the Injinoo Case study in partnership with the Apudthama Lands Trust.

- land and ecosystem management;
- site recording and maintenance;
- fisheries management;
- aquaculture;
- native timber;
- bush foods cultivation and harvesting; and
- arts and crafts.

The desire to re-establish a land management system of ranger stations and tourist information sites remains a key component of the people's aspirations.

A number of issues were identified in the discussions as of overwhelming priority in addressing the constraints to sustainability that Ininjoo people currently face:

- lack of recurrent funding;
- lack of support for the Land Trust and its activities from Shire Council and government departments;
- community conflict–especially in regard to competition between clan groups since the advent of Native Title and payments from mining companies etc.
- lack of internal cohesion and no unity of purpose;
- controlling access and activities of others especially in regard to the Torres Strait Islander Sea claim;
- perceived lack of support and funding from existing Indigenous support agencies (Balkanu and CYLC) for outstations and enterprises;
- lack of infrastructure and employment opportunities to build on achievements through training; and
- by-passing of Land Trust by outside agencies.

There is currently no funding provided for the operation of the Land Trust or the Land and Sea Unit, greatly limiting the capacity of traditional owners to respond effectively as a group to potentially environmentally threatening or enhancing activities proposed by others. There is a high degree of community conflict as reported by various interviewees:

- conflicts and tensions about money, including conflicts over distribution and allocation of funds flowing from projects and agreements; and
- conflicts and tensions about opportunities, including difficulties in achieving consensus on positive projects and initiatives.

Community conflicts are frustrating to community members and external bodies who would like to assist with positive initiatives. Several of the younger interviewees commented on the need for the people of Injinoo to work together. People commented that a positive value of the Ecotrust model would be to facilitate the community to articulate a common set of objectives or principles that are flexible enough to allow clan/family groups to pursue opportunities consistent with them. Several people commented that organisations set up to help them

establish outstations had not delivered to a sufficient extent in their area. In this sense the concept of an Ecotrust organisation was received positively as a potential alternative source of support for initiatives.

A lot of people from Injinoo have been away for training at one time or another for a myriad of courses but found no opportunity to use their training back at home. Most interviewees felt it was important to have assistance in setting up businesses and enterprises aligned with training opportunities so that enthusiasm and momentum were optimally harnessed.

Fishing is a daily food collection activity for the Injinoo people, including Traditional owners Mrs Clara Lifu, Matthew Sagigi, and Courtney Woosup (front).

Injinoo people, like Mirarr people, have a clear set of aspirations and understand the factors limiting their ability to create new opportunities, but lack ideas and resources for linking aspirations to existing opportunities. While some people are disempowered and frustrated, many younger people are enthusiastic and determined to get things moving. In relation to the "Ecotrust model", the most relevant aspects for Injinoo are:

- the relationships-based approach, and the skills development and information sharing.
- the idea of 'choice—people interviewed were quick to grasp the Ecotrust concept as an alternative to the *'development at any environmental cost for the advancement of our living standard'* approach that is increasingly dominating the councils since becoming shires.

- flexibility, potentially through sustainability planning. The majority of people thought that it was important to have an agreed set of principles which would drive development on Trust Lands and that families or clans could then have the flexibility to take their own initiatives as long as they were consistent with these principles.

Rangers in the Injinoo community see their role as much about transmission of culture as about conservation of the environment. Meun Lifu (front) and Matthew Sagigi (right) are teaching young boys to dance, which is viewed as key ranger business.

While the idea of making money through conserving and managing the environment and culture is attractive to the people of Injinoo, not everyone in Injinoo will be prepared to limit themselves to culturally and environmentally sustainable business opportunities. The long term viability of an Ecotrust organisation will be related to its ability to establish some success stories that demonstrate the powerful possibilities.

The cultural and conservation economy concept is highly relevant to, and consistent with, the aspirations of Injinoo Traditional Owners. Key points of interest are their focus on cultural renewal, the need to develop an independent robust recurrent income stream to fund the ranger service and the need to involve multiple levels of enterprise (i.e. community, clan and family) so those aspects of the Ecotrust model concerned with start-up funds and business development are especially relevant.

### 2.1.4 Cape York Case Study[11]

The Cape York case study undertaken by the NAILSMA consultants considered the Indigenous organisations Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation, Apunimpima Health Council, Cape York Land Council, Cape York Institute and Cape York Parnerships. Overall these Cape York organisations do not prominently emphasise cultural and environmental aspects. Some of the Ecotrust Canada services components are reasonably well represented, but the principles are not as well reflected in the more loose partnerships between Cape York organisations.

In essence, the difference between the Ecotrust model and the Cape York Indigenous model is largely a matter of emphasis and sequence. The more desperate social situation on Cape York has produced a more urgent health/housing/education emphasis. In some cases, cultural and environmental elements have been regarded as potential constraints to the short term well-being of Cape Indigenous communities, e.g. concerns have been expressed by Indigenous peoples about the Wild Rivers legislation and potential World Heritage declaration. However, a new type of approach which disposes of the mutually exclusive 'either/or' choices in resource use and builds on the concept of an integrated vision of society and the environment may be welcome.

By assessing the extent to which existing partnerships reflect the capacity to achieve Ecotrust outcomes, the need for new partnerships can be evaluated. Existing partnerships under the Balkanu structure and the emerging partnerships under the Cape York Institute structure combined with State, Federal and Cape York Peninsula Development Association partnerships may be able to deliver at least some outcomes of an Ecotrust model.

The Ecotrust Canada outcomes which are most poorly reflected in past and present Cape structures are the brokering of entrepreneurial initiatives and the linking of these initiatives to real markets and to triple-bottom line criteria, despite attempts and some limited successes. There are a number of reasons for this weakness, most of which originate in the lack of community readiness to become engaged in the economy, and the shortage of leaders with a practical commercial bent. The development of any business is difficult for those without prior experience and perhaps even more daunting when further filters of 'sustainability' might be applied to creating the initial enterprise.

Indigenous Cape York is already undertaking a process that has much in common with the Ecotrust concept but it has an agenda which is being delivered through several organisations and partnerships. All organisations have full, if not overflowing, work programs and it was not possible for the leadership of the organisations in the case study to give the Canadian Ecotrust concept *per se* a full hearing at this time. However, the case study participants saw possibilities for connecting the Ecotrust model to existing organisations through improved networking and leveraging of funding to synergistically improve social and capacity-building outcomes. The recommended approach is for any future Ecotrust to liaise more fully with the Cape York organisations, specifically on environmentally, socially, economically and culturally sustainable development with a view to:

- linking all relevant organisations on these matters;
- putting an Ecotrust type concept forward as a formal Cape York Agenda item;

11 Professor Brian Roberts conducted the Cape York Case Study as part of the NAILSMA consultancy team.

- working with NAILSMA to accomplish these ends; and
- developing a "cultural and environmental economies" portfolio and attendant trust fund within the existing Cape York Business Development unit.

### 2.1.5 Themes and issues from the Community and Cape York Case Studies

Aspirations for business development from the community case studies showed a high level of consistency with those sectors that emerge as most relevant to a cultural and conservation economy (see section 2.3):

- tourism—horse riding, nature-based caravan park, river cruises, bus tours;
- cultural recording—mapping, GIS, site recording;
- ecosystem services, protected area management, land and sea management;
- arts and crafts;
- social development—community planning, alcohol recovery;
- forest, bush and marine products—native timber, bush foods, native plant nursery; and
- aquaculture and horticulture.

Those components of the Ecotrust model that were of interest in communities included:

- the relationships-based approach;
- flexibility in engagement at individual, family, clan or corporation level;
- the brokering concept—linking people up with resources and opportunities at lots of different levels;
- the community development approach—working out things together with the community through co-research; and
- choice—being able to access assistance for environmentally and culturally sustainable economies rather then only desiring a financially based economy.

However, the Cape York case study also identified that culture and environment generally, and conservation particularly, are low priorities for the CYP Indigenous regional organisations. The key priority identified in the Cape York region by the Indigenous organisations examined in the case study is for welfare reform and social development—the building blocks of health, education and employment established through rebuilding social norms and incentives structures. However, more resources would allow these organisations to give the Ecotrust concept more attention.

Nevertheless, the Injinoo case study identified that at least this Cape York community sees support for cultural and conservation enterprises as very important, and is disappointed in the current lack of support generally available. The Injinoo case study concluded that an independent Ecotrust organisation, working co-operatively with the current structure of Cape York Indigenous regional organisations and their social development focus, would enhance opportunities for those seeking a greater focus on cultural and conservation economy outcomes.

# 2.2 A gap analysis of Ecotrust's components

The case studies indicate that many Ecotrust principles and services are of relevance to the urgent needs of Indigenous communities, and that further support for the emergence of a Northern Australian cultural and conservation economy would be beneficial. An analysis of the 'gaps' or missing elements of the identified Ecotrust principles, and services, in relation to existing Indigenous, environmental, research, government, social sector and other organisations was therefore undertaken (Appendices One and Two). The key results from this investigation are discussed in the following sections.

### 2.1.1 Principles

The new Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities within the Australian Tropical Forest Institute in Cairns, Queensland, has the most clearly articulated social change theory of community empowerment:

> The Centre's theory of change has its foundations in a holistic, multi-disciplinary approach to assist Indigenous and other local communities to find culturally relevant solutions that will enable them to remain on their traditional lands as fully functioning, socially and economically viable communities.

None of the other Indigenous, environment or research organisations examined have an explicit commitment to a community development or empowerment approach, although the role of the community in development appears important to several organisations. NAILSMA's "cultural economies" has theoretical groundings in a strong role for the community, with connections to the Harvard project on Indigenous governance and its Australian counterpart, and a focus on integrating local and global perspectives through establishing networks and linkages (Armstrong et al. 2005). The ACF Northern Australia Program is "committed to working with Indigenous communities on conservation and sustainable development in Northern Australia"[12]. Balkanu is "committed to supporting the Indigenous people of the Cape York Peninsula to improve the economy, society and culture of the region"[13]. The Kimberley

12 www.acfonline.org.au/default.asp? section_id=134

13 http://www.balkanu.com.au/corporate/index.html

Land Council positions itself as a community organisation working for and with Traditional Owners of the Kimberley, "to get back country, to look after country and to get control of our future"[14]. The Northern Land Council positions itself as a representative organisation whose most important responsibilities are to consult with traditional owners[15]. A number of socially-oriented organisations in Northern Australia do have well-developed theory and practice in community empowerment and development: the Centre for Appropriate Technology, and Oxfam Community Aid Abroad, which is now working with the NT Department of Community Development, Sport and Culture.

A relationships-based approach, based on trust and commitment, is integral to many of the protocols established by Indigenous peoples for communication. For example:

> be open, honest, and sincere...Off-duty relaxation with Aboriginal people can help in the development of relationships which make work easier (Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and Development 1998, 26).

Negotiation of agreements has been very important to underpinning collaborative work on sustainability in Northern Australia—for example, the Cape York Peninsula Land Use Heads of Agreement[16], and the KLC/ACF/EK Letter of Agreement (see Appendix B in Hill et. al 2006). Explicit commitment to a relationships-based approach was only identified during this study in the ACF's Northern Australia Program, where it appears as one of ten key principles[17]. A relationships-based approach is integral to the Australian community banking model initiated and fostered by Bendigo Bank. Byrne *et al.* (2005) argue that the Australian community banks provide an exemplar of relationship management, infused with mutual trust and commitment. The structure of each community bank provides an effective framework to facilitate relationships; dialogue is achieved through interaction between the bank and the local community, and value is co-created amongst all participants providing a mechanism for rewarding commitments.

None of the organisations documented in this study have a clearly articulated sustainability framework. The scientific and Indigenous knowledge systems relevant to sustainability, and a cultural and conservation economy, are in their infancy compared to those available to Ecotrust in North America. However, a number of organisations and programs have begun to develop both Indigenous and scientific agendas relevant to sustainability, considered further in Chapter 4.

Most of the Indigenous organisations include recognition of Aboriginal rights, culture and title as implicit in their business and approach overall. The Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre is the only organisation identified in this study with a specific focus on strengthening customary law and culture amongst Aboriginal peoples. The Land Councils have a legal responsibility as Native Title Representative Bodies for pursuing recognition of Aboriginal rights under Australian law. A number of the environment organisations that form the NAEA have an explicit commitment to and policies about the recognition of Aboriginal culture, rights and title, including the ACF, Environs Kimberley, TWS, WWF and CAFNEC. ACF and

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14 http://www.klc.org.au/

15 http://www.nlc.org.au/html/abt_menu.html

16 http://www.atns.net.au/biogs/A000107b.htm

17 http://www.acfonline.org.au/articles/news.asp?news_id=503

TWS have both been active in the Cape York Tenure processes to deliver land to Aboriginal people as members, together with Balkanu, CYLC, and three Queensland Government Ministers, in the Cape York Tenure Resolution Implementation Group. ACF Northern Australia Program has a strong focus on Indigenous culture and rights (McCaul 2005). NAEA provides funding opportunities for projects with Aboriginal cultural focus. The Poola Foundation (Tom Kantor Fund) and The Christensen Fund are both engaged in supporting projects that foster Aboriginal rights and culture. Generally government, business and research agencies do not explicitly adopt policy positions in relation to this issue.

Organisations that are independent of government funding and with skills-based rather than representation-based governance appear to be rare in Northern Australia. Terrain Natural Resource Management Ltd is the only organisation controlled by a diverse board of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who operate in an independent capacity. Two Board members are appointed for their skills in providing accountability back to Indigenous governance. However, Terrain Natural Resource Management Ltd is currently fully dependent on government funding. The NAILSMA Board includes Indigenous and non-Indigenous people operating in a representative capacity and accesses government, philanthropic and corporate funds to some extent. The Land Councils and many of the Indigenous organisations have community-based structures where governing bodies require people chosen through cultural processes (generally not elections) to represent their communities, and are fully dependent on government funds. Other than the Land Council, the Cape York Indigenous organisations have corporate structures. These organisations are largely dependent on government funds, but also access some philanthropic and corporate support. The environment organisations are largely independent of government funding, but governance structures are primarily representative rather than skills-based.

### 2.2.2 Services and organisations

**Information and planning services**

The requirement that accredited regional natural resource management plans are approved through the Australian Natural Resource Management program has driven a large effort in planning across the country. In the Far North Queensland NRM region, a partnership with the Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre enabled some very high-quality planning work to occur, as many more resources became available. This partnership also supported production of the Wet Tropics Aboriginal Cultural and Natural Resource Management Plan[18], which has set the benchmark for Indigenous NRM planning Australia-wide. Burdekin Dry Tropics NRM region has also prepared a Caring for Country Plan[19]. Guidelines for Indigenous country-based planning activities have been produced by the Australian Government[20].

Similar opportunities for NRM planning have not been available to Indigenous peoples in the Kimberley and NT regions—these regions are both enormous in area, which does not provide for a fit with cultural boundaries such as have occurred between the Far North Queensland NRM region and Rainforest Aboriginal peoples. The Kimberley Roundtable was a collaborative

18 http://www.jcu.edu.au/rainforest/nrmplans.htm#BamaPlan

19 http://www.burdekindrytropics. org.au/resources/caring_for_country_plan.html

20 http://www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/publications /guidelines.html

planning exercise which identified a number of opportunities for ongoing planning and other work, including the development of Kimberley Regional Sustainable Development Plan as a priority (see Hill et al. 2006). The Kimberley Land and Sea Management Unit of KLC is involved in a large number of country-based planning exercises including Karajarri Coastal Access Management Plan, North Kimberley Sea Country Plan, and Salt Water Country Project.

Numerous projects are also being carried out by the 'Caring for Country' unit of the Northern Land Council, several of which have planning-related elements. Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation has a component of planning within their Business Development Units. The Traditional Knowledge Recording Project of Balkanu, using innovative multi-media technologies with commercial potential, also has a strong focus on using the knowledge for management, and has succeeded in making some changes to management of the Lakefield National Park. Sea Country Planning is an important new initiative that has been supported by the National Oceans Office within the Department of Environment and Water Resources[21], and includes several planning exercises in Northern Australia.

Within the Great Barrier Reef, Traditional Use of Marine Resource Agreements (TUMRAs) are another form of sea-country planning. Girringun and Darambul, with help from the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, have developed TUMRAs to help ensure the on-going sustainability of traditional uses of marine resources[22]. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems are engaged with alternative futures planning for the GBR through a scenarios approach that builds on previous work in the wet tropics[23].

Aboriginal people in central Australia have been engaged in a large number of planning projects for their country (Walsh and Mitchell 2002). The development of a Cultural Planning Framework by the MG Corporation for their new Aboriginal-owned joint-managed conservation parks builds on these approaches, with support from CSIRO. The Centre for Appropriate Technology has also provided substantial support to community-based planning from its office in Alice Springs to central Australian communities and from its office in Cairns to Cape York and wet tropics Aboriginal communities.

Information on sustainability practices in Northern Australia is relatively undeveloped, as noted above, and a large body of enhanced research is required to underpin emergence of a cultural and conservation economy. The socio-economic context and history of Northern Australia is such that people have very low access to gaining skills as well as employment—tertiary participation rates in the north for example are the lowest in Australia. Although capacity building and mentoring has been an important focus of government policy in recent years, relevant programs for people working in communities are not well developed. On the other hand, Indigenous people have shown great strength in building community-based organisations that know their local constituents, understand their protocols and have extensive capacity in mediating an "intercultural zone" (Thorburn 2006). There is an Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre[24] which may be a useful partner for recognising

21 http://www.environment.gov.au /indigenous/scp.html

22 http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/info_services/media/media_archive/2006 /2006_08_30b.html

23 http://www.healthycountry.org/reports/GBRbooklet.pdf

24 http://www.tropicalfutures.nt.gov.au/index. cfm?contentid=12

Indigenous leadership in a cultural and conservation economy context. Nevertheless, all of the planning initiatives described here are characterised by short-term, unstable project funding, and associated difficulty in building long-term organisational capacity in planning.

**Business development and networking services**

Many of the Indigenous, environment, business and research organisations examined in this study have a strong focus on networking—less so then the government agencies, which appear strongly focused on their particular responsibilities. However, the networks appear strongest within each of these sectors, rather than between them, and the sectoral networks are supported by formal structures such as the NAILSMA, the NAEA, and the Cooperative Framework on Tropical Science, Knowledge and Innovation (a science network). As well as its Indigenous networking capability associated with supporting projects with the Kimberley, Carpentaria, Northern Land Councils and Balkanu, NAILSMA is developing business and government networks, which have been important in supporting emergence of the West Arnhem Land Fire Management Agreement. This representative organisation's ability to fully develop these roles in the cultural economy will be enhanced by its current initiatives to improve the clarity of program responsibilities and roles in relation to its partners.

The Kimberley Land Council, Northern Land Council, Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation and Balkanu provide specific sustainability-related information, and networking support through their Land and Sea Management/Caring for Country Units. NAEA is a peak body representing the various non-governmental environmental organisations operating in Northern Australia and it has been operating to improve networking, co-ordination and effectiveness of environmental organisations and their activities. While NAEA's environmental focus includes recognition of Indigenous approaches to sustainability, the ability to support the Indigenous agenda is limited by resources and attention to other priorities.

Numerous government agencies offer services relevant to business development (see Appendix 1). However, many of these services have their offices in centres outside the region, and thus their capacity to directly build capacity locally is often limited. The exception is the Kimberley Development Commission with offices in Broome and Kununurra, although its emphasis is not on cultural and conservation opportunities, and it does not provide support for ecosystem services for example. Many NT services are available in Darwin, and Top End communities have access to a larger and more targeted range of services than their counterparts in Queensland and Western Australia.

The Balkanu Business Development Unit (BDU) is responsible for facilitating Indigenous enterprise development across Cape York. The mission is to assist in the creation of viable, self sufficient businesses, rather than to provide broad economic development advice or to facilitate government support. Sponsors include Indigenous Business Australia, Department of State Development and Innovations, Westpac and Boston Consulting Group. Balkanu BDU can play a significant role in the development of a cultural and conservation economy (within the strategy and timing determined through the Cape York Indigenous agenda) and is well placed to be a strategic partner in the delivery of business development services to Indigenous communities on Cape York, as recommended in the Cape York case study.

The New Employment Incentive Scheme (NEIS) is a government program that helps eligible unemployed people to start and run their new, viable small business. The NEIS program started in 1985, and is Australia's longest running and most successful employment program. Over that time, more than 100 000 people have participated in the program. One of the key

success factors has been the fact that over 80 per cent of participants indicate that they are either still operating a business, employed and/or in some form of education or training 15 months after starting their NEIS business. NEIS can play a key role in the development of the cultural and conservation economy of Northern Australia.

**Business financing**

Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) is a government agency responsible for creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities to build assets and wealth. IBA has a number of programs that support this objective including;

- **IBA Homes**—is designed to increase home ownership participation rates by providing affordable home loans to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.
- **IBA Enterprises**—aims to provide Indigenous people with skill development services and alternate funding products to achieve greater independence from Government and improve business management capabilities.
- **IBA Partnerships**—is responsible for the management of Community Homes and the Policy and Liaison Units.
- **IBA Investments**—has a central role in working with the private sector and local Indigenous people to encourage and foster Indigenous economic independence. The Program invests directly in business opportunities, often through joint venture arrangements with expert industry partners and Indigenous organisations, communities and/or individuals.

IBA has delivered significant benefits in many Indigenous communities through the provision of business development and financing services. However, they have a limited presence on the ground, and do not have a focus on utilising quadruple bottom line criteria for leveraging business outcomes.

Bendigo Bank has been highly effective at expanding its business across Australia through its world first Bendigo Community Banking model. This profit sharing joint venture that allows local peoples to establish their own Community Bank through leveraging its capital has been warmly received in rural and urban environments where the community has felt deserted by traditional banking. Its joint venture and community owned structure has delivered significant benefits to communities and has ensured that business banking and financing remains strongly community focused.

Family Income Management (FIM) and MoneyBusiness (MB) are two separate programs focused on building the money management skills and developing a stronger savings culture with in Indigenous Communities across Northern Australia. These programs are assisting individuals, families and communities to gain control of their financial futures. FIM was the originator of the concept and was developed by Cape York Partnerships in conjunction with Westpac. It has been highly successful at changing the financial paradigms operating within Indigenous families by helping each member more effectively take control of their personal financial responsibilities. MB is a partnership between ANZ and the Department of Family and Community Services and provides a similar program of financial supports to families.

The success of the cultural and conservation economy will depend on building financial literacy in communities. The quality of the projects and the long term viability of the programs and businesses will be intrinsically linked to the skills of the managers who will be responsible for the delivery of these services.

### 2.2.3 Philanthropic support[25]

Australia's philanthropic sector has been strongly influenced by the traditional role of government in social welfare intervention and by the lower proportion of wealthy individuals as compared to North America. In 2004, philanthropic giving in the USA was 1.6% of GDP compared to 0.68% in Australia. In Canada in the year 2000, donations were equivalent to 0.46% of GDP (see Giving Australia report[26]). When the differences in the size of the two economies are taken into account, the USA generates more than twice the level of giving of Australia, and Australians give about one and a half times as much as Canadians on average. However, in recent years the number of individuals in Australia with significant wealth has increased and individual giving has increased by 88% since 1997. This is demonstrated, in part, by the number of individuals and families taking advantage of the new prescribed private funds category for philanthropy (see below).

The philanthropic approach to funding is often highly personal, based on strong relationships of trust, and the identification of common goals, values and principles. Most foundations have a small staff with limited knowledge of the environmental and Indigenous sectors, and a history of giving into social development. However, Australian philanthropy has begun to take a more outward looking and analytical approach and appears to be on the cusp of becoming a more diverse and innovative sector. This is in part due to new wealth coming into the sector, bringing new priorities and ways of operating. This new wealth is often represented by individuals who have made their own money, not inherited it, are interested in the environment and often prefer to take a business approach to their philanthropy and often have their funds in a Prescribed Private Fund (PPF). Many of these PPF's are still in the capital accumulation phase and will have significant investments to distribute in the future. As of September 2006, there were 440 approved PPF's holding a total of around $505.8 million in a mix of cash, shares and property. The biggest known PPF has a corpus of around $40 million.

Statistics show that 4.3% of PPF donations went to environment issues and unofficial research shows that national environment organisations receive few donations from the philanthropic sector (outside of their usual membership base donations) and much of this is given for private land purchase. However, there is a growing interest in environmental issues and many donors are just beginning to fund in this area. A new organization called the Australian Environmental Grantmakers Network is soon to be established and its main aim will be to educate environmental grantmakers on current environment issues and the solutions to these issues.

25 Ms Amanda Martin from the Poola Foundation (Tom Kantor Fund) undertook important research to assist analysis of the philanthropic sector, supported by Mr John O'Dempsey from CSI and Mr David Edwards from ACF.

26 http://www.partnerships gov.au/philanthropy/philanthropy_research.shtml

Additional research shows that little philanthropic funding is given to the Indigenous sector. This funding is largely aimed at service delivery, health and education and large donations are relatively small, in the hundreds of thousands of dollars range. The Indigenous Affinity Group has assisted Indigenous communities to gain better access, supporting publications such as the Australian Indigenous Guide to Philanthropy, which raises awareness of the services available from the sector. The Indigenous Affinity Group can play a useful role in the development of the cultural and conservation economy through providing vital philanthropic information to new or existing organisations.

The Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) works with business, philanthropy, government and the community to improve regional, rural and remote communities' capacity to respond positively to the challenges facing rural Australia. The foundation supports the development of regional community foundations, and uses seed funding and challenge grants to move regional development project funding into a more dynamic context. FRRR's capacity to support the Ecotrust model would likely be in supporting the networking and brokering services and funding other organisations to complete on-the-ground work.

There is increasing interest from mainly US trusts and foundations in Australian environmental and Indigenous cultural issues and projects. Some international trusts and foundations see Australia as offering valuable opportunities to achieve significant gains in the protection of the important ecological and cultural values that exist here, particularly in Northern Australia and south-west Western Australia. This interest is sparked by the fact that Northern Australia's largely intact ecosystems and Indigenous cultures are of global significance as such places are rapidly diminishing elsewhere. Also, Australia has a stable political and economic system—and as such presents a relative risk free investment opportunity. The development of a cultural and conservation economy could offer opportunities and a vehicle for these trusts and foundations to effectively and efficiently invest in suitable programs across the north.

Apart from individuals who make donations as part of their regular giving, a variety of different donor bodies exist. While it is important to work with organisations that have a historic and high profile role in philanthropy, there are several other types of trusts and foundations that should not be ignored. These include the following categories:

**Private Charitable Trust**

- Set up by an individual, family and or friends;
- Is entitled to be endorsed as an Income tax Exempt Charity and is therefore exempt from tax on it's income and entitled to refunds of franking credits;
- Not limited to funding only Deductible Gift Recipients but often prefer this;
- No deduction or tax advantage is given for donations; and
- Examples include the Ian Potter Foundation, The Myer Foundation and The Besen Family Foundation.

**Prescribed Private Fund (PFF)**

- Is a DGR and is usually income tax exempt;
- Is usually controlled by a family or group;
- Is relatively easy and inexpensive to establish;

- Trustees can manage their own investments;
- Must give to DGRs that are also endorsed charities; and
- Build a capital base or corpus before they begin distributing funds.

**Sub-fund within a Community Foundation**

- A community foundation attracts tax deductible donations to its public fund and builds a corpus which is invested in perpetuity;
- Income earned from the corpus is distributed as annual grants to DGRs;
- Donors can establish named funds but relinquish legal control over funding; and
- Examples include The Melbourne Community Foundation, The Queensland Community Foundation

**Corporate Foundations**

- Are established as entities separate to the parent company but usually maintains close ties with the donor company;
- Funds are largely derived from the profit making business of an organisation;
- Are subject to the same rules and regulations as other foundations; and
- Examples include the RACV Foundation, the AMP Foundation

**Government-initiated Foundations**

- Gain their income from government directed funds as well as the general public or sections of it e.g. levies on cigarettes, gambling funds; and
- Examples include the Victorian Women's Trust, Lotteries Commission of Western Australia.

**Trustee Companies**

- Trustee companies are for-profit businesses that, among other activities, offer management services to foundations. They can legally administer estates and the affairs of those needing assistance;
- Carry out the instructions of the donor usually in perpetuity. Generally, the trustee receives advice on the distribution of funds from a committee; and
- Examples include ANZ Trustees, Perpetual Trustees and State Trustees

Funds invested by trusts, foundations and individuals represent a higher proportion of all funds than those distributed as grants. Trusts, foundations and individuals are increasingly recognising the importance of investing these funds in ways that support their charitable giving aspirations. The option of tapping into the investments of this sector has not been maximised as a funding resource and this represents a significant opportunity. Investment advisors are often used by trusts, foundations and individuals and seeking their input and support for the Ecotrust model could help to catalyse significant funds being invested in North Australia.

Other financial and legal advisors besides investment specialists can also have a significant influence over the approach that a trust, foundation or individual might take with both their financial giving and investment choices. In the long run, it is important that a relationship between this sector and any new organization be fully explored.

### 2.2.4 Summary of the gap analysis

A number of organisations are currently engaged in components of the Ecotrust model. Yet, none are fulfilling the role of an Ecotrust organisation in supporting the emergence of a cultural and conservation economy. Given the focus on Indigenous leadership in the cultural and conservation economy model identified through this research, the roles of Indigenous organisations are particularly important. NAILSMA, as a partnership between the Kimberley Land Council, Northern Land Council, Carpentaria Land Council and Balkanu, is well placed to be a strategic partner in the delivery of Ecotrust Australia's knowledge and information networking and brokering services to Indigenous Communities across Northern Australia. However, NAILSMA's Indigenous representative status and emphasis on cultural approaches limits its capacity to provide the full suite of principles, brokering and other services envisioned in the Ecotrust portal. Within this context, the Land Councils individually are also well placed to be strategic partners, as are local Indigenous organisations, particularly Gundjeihmi Aboriginal Corporation and Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation. Balkanu may also be amendable to being a partner within a network of organisations on CYP, led by an Indigenous agenda. The recommendations from the Kimberley Appropriate Economies Roundtable and the strong support provided by the Kimberley Land Council have demonstrated that they are a ready partner in the development of principles, brokering and other services envisioned in the Ecotrust portal in the Kimberley region. KLC have identified that cultural fit between any Ecotrust portal and their set of existing Indigenous organisations, including for example their own Land and Sea Management Unit, as well as Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre, will be vital in the successful development of an Ecotrust approach in the region.

A number of government, research and environment organisations are well placed to play important catalytic roles in delivering components of the Ecotrust approach, including Bendigo Bank, the Australian Conservation Foundation, the NAEA, CSIRO and the Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities. Terrain Natural Resource Management Ltd's skills-based Indigenous and non-Indigenous governance structure, and its roles in partnering with the Aboriginal Rainforest Council's major cultural recording project and country-based planning, along with the organisation's ecosystem services brokering services, align it closely with the Ecotrust approach and thus it will be an important strategic partner, within the constraints of a local focus and dependence on government funding.

Nevertheless, analysis of the application of key principles that underpin the Ecotrust model identified a number of key gaps in principles, including:

- no organisation is currently in existence with a similar independence to Ecotrust;
- no organisation utilises a quadruple-bottom line sustainability approach for planning and business development;
- the community development approach is not strongly utilised in addressing Indigenous issues or the cultural, environmental and economic aspects of sustainability;

- the centrality of the relationship-based approach in achieving effective engagement strategies is strongly recognised but not well-implemented; and
- the recognition of Aboriginal rights, culture and title does not extend strongly into current business development approaches.

In addition, many challenges were identified for accessing the services provided within the Ecotrust model:

- while an impressive number of services are available from government and other agencies, the community case studies highlight that there is often a weak connection between these services and Indigenous communities, where a great undersupply is evident;
- strengths and capacity for natural and cultural resource related community-based and country-based planning is hampered by changes in government funding priorities, and lack of stable organisational capacity in relevant planning;
- project support is available across a number of sectors, but this is generally through a number of different organisations. The support services that are available frequently have their main offices in centres outside the region;
- while networks within the Indigenous, environment, business, research sectors are quite strong, networks between these sectors and with governments and the philanthropic sector are weak;
- conflict management skills are poor in many communities, leading to a lack of cohesion and a derailing of potential initiatives;
- access to support from the philanthropic sector is very limited; and
- access to finance does not appear sufficient to meet the community needs.

# 2.3 Key sectors in a cultural and conservation economy

## 2.3.1 Overview

Ecotrust's approach in North America to identifying sectors that can contribute most to a conservation economy is to focus on activities where economic, social and environmental outcomes can be achieved simultaneously. According to Spencer Beebe (2006):

> *We focused on opportunities where we could truly join together and work at that intersection between environmental, economic and social development... Ecotrust mapped the distribution of rainforest and found the Kitlope area in the Haisla Nation territory to be the most important environmentally. Instead of launching a typical environmental "campaign" for protection, we went to talk with the Haisla about options for protection. The Key Haisla concern was over suicide rates—so we got the Haisla Women's Rediscovery Program going to address healing needs in the community, and also establishment of a protected area....first two years after establishing the program there were zero suicides in the community...still lots more work to be done....*
>
> *Everything we do passes through the "coherence test"—will the initiative hope to improve environmental, social and economic conditions—where are those places and initiatives where these three are mutually enforcing.*

A framework that builds a uniquely Australia approach to targeting priority sectors, building on the new economic solutions discussed in the prior section, could therefore:

- apply a simple direct production coherence test to determine if the initiative improves environment, Indigenous cultural, social and economic conditions in a mutually reinforcing manner for the people engaged in the production side;
- apply an economic component coherence test to assess if the initiative has relevance in the customary, market and State components of the economy; and
- partner with and stimulate a greatly expanded research effort in Northern Australia to elucidate Indigenous cultural, social, environmental and economic conditions and sustainability.

### 2.3.2 Ecosystem services sector

The emergence of an ecosystem services market is still in its infancy in Australia. The Katoomba Group[27], an international alliance established to foster the emergence of ecosystem services internationally started with a meeting in Australia in 2000. As a result of this meeting, CSIRO and the Myer Foundation formed a partnership to investigate the emergence of ecosystem services in Australia that has now produced a number of useful publications[28]. The key markets are likely to be in water, carbon and biodiversity. As yet no trading schemes at the national level have been established, although some institutional and state-based schemes are underway.

In March 2007, State and Territory Premiers have agreed to establish their own carbon emissions trading scheme[29] if the Australian government does not act soon. Landcare has launched the CarbonSmart scheme[30], through which farmers and landholders can earn money by planting and maintaining vegetation for biodiversity, funded by a number of State governments and private corporations. Terrain Natural Resource Management Ltd is emerging as a very effective brokering organization for ecosystem services, including an initiative with Biocarbon called 'Degrees Celsius' aimed at the market for carbon offsets within the North Queensland region (*Cairns Post April 28, 2007*). A range of other ecosystem service market type opportunities are emerging in the area of biodiversity protection and threat abatement, including IPAs, exotic pest management (cane toads, pigs, weeds), endangered species management (turtle and dugongs), ghostnet management, border protection including coastal surveillance and quarantine, and post-mining and post-agricultural rehabilitation.

Davies *et al.* (2006) investigated the design of market-based instruments to provide incentives for biodiversity conservation in the spinifex deserts of Australia. They recognised the importance of the customary sector with the concept that "market mechanisms will be inefficient if they crowd out customary institutions that are already contributing to biodiversity conservation." Participants in their case studies envisaged the best kind of market system is one in which Aboriginal landowners 'sell' their land management skills and knowledge. Enabling factors for such a market and its components were identified, and included brokers (and mid-level organisations to house brokers), planning and plans, and structures (that engaged customary Aboriginal institutions such as elders). A market chain that would allow for this new style of conservation includes purchasers of ecosystem services (both government and industry), brokers, Indigenous landowner collectives (land management units), and individual landowners and family groups. They recommended separate mid-level organisations to coordinate landowner delivery of services, and brokering organisations to facilitate market linkages. The connection between improved health and well-being outcomes and engagement in delivery of ecosystem services was also identified.

27 http://ecosystemmarketplace.com/index.php

28 http://www.ecosystemservicesproject.org/index.htm

29 http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/emissions-trading-deadline-at-risk-as-report-battle-rages/2007/03/04/1172943276257.html)

30 http://www.carbonsmart.com.au

The recent review of Indigenous Protected Areas (Gilligan 2006), and the investigations into the biodiversity incentives (Davies et al. 2006) highlighted the role of the mid-level Indigenous coordinating organisations, generally known as land and sea management units (LSMU). LSMU exist at the regional (KLC, NLC, Balkanu, Carpentaria Land Council, Aboriginal Rainforest Council), sub-regional (e.g. Injinoo Land Trust, Dhimurru etc.) and local levels. A recent review of the thirteen LSMUs in Cape York found that these were critically important to ongoing provision of natural resource management services and their general demise since the end of NHT1 has caused significant problems in communities (Allan Dale, CEO Terrain NRM, pers comm. March 2007). The Injinoo Case Study highlights (see section 2.1.3) the difficulties caused by the closure of that LSMU due to lack of ongoing funding.

As noted above, there is a growth of purchasers of protection and threat abatement services in biodiversity, carbon credits and water trading that will open opportunities in Northern Australia more generally where ecosystem services are in good condition. Examinations of the ecosystem services market generally highlight the need for new brokering services.

### 2.3.3 Other sectors

**Indigenous Arts and Cultural Studies**

The field of Indigenous arts and cultural industries in Northern Australia is very large, encompassing activities including painting, weaving, carving, other artefact production, broadcasting, video, production of web sites, language programs, mapping and site recording, and more. The case studies conducted for this study, as well as the previous Kimberley and Cape York Roundtables, highlighted the great importance of art and cultural industries for Indigenous peoples, and emerging business opportunities through innovative multi-media approaches to cultural recording like the Traditional Knowledge Recording Project (see also section 2.2.2).

The National Association for the Visual Arts Limited (2006) provided a snapshot of the economic value of the Indigenous art industry:

- it contributes $100 million annually to the economy;
- most Aboriginal art is bought and sold in the Northern Territory, where tourists spend about $50 million a year on Aboriginal art. 70% of that is traded in the malls, galleries and shops of Alice Springs;
- on the secondary market Aboriginal art is estimated to be worth $12 million a year at fine art auctions; and
- the value of the overall market has been estimated by some to be up to $200 million when all forms of artwork are included.

Despite the critical role of Indigenous organisations in providing both a coordinating and a brokering role for the Indigenous arts and crafts market, anecdotal evidence emerged during this study that the arts centres are suffering many of the same problems as the LSMUs discussed in the previous section in relation to accessing appropriate government support. The current Senate Inquiry into Indigenous Visual Arts and Crafts should clearly identify any such limitations, and implementation of its findings will be important to the cultural and conservation economy in the north.

### Visitor services

Business opportunities in the provision of services for visitors and tourists is of key interest in many communities and interest in tourism emerged in the case studies conducted for this study (see section 2.1), as well as the previous Kimberley and Cape York Roundtables, particularly in relation to:

- cultural and environmental tours;
- "Bush university" and similar programs;
- fishing and hunting safaris; and
- specialist accommodation including lodges and nature-based caravan parks.

Indigenous Tourism Australia[31] provides a range of services to assist in tourism business development and showcases many Indigenous tourism businesses, although these are not particularly targeted to address sustainability issues. Aboriginal Tourism Australia[32] is a national organisation that provides leadership and a focus on tourism development consistent with Aboriginal economic, cultural and environmental values. ATA has recently developed a "relationships, responsibility, respect" approach to guiding visitors on to Aboriginal land.

Some Indigenous tourism ventures with a strong sustainability focus are now emerging including Murdudjurl Tours in Kakadu National Park, Iga Warta Resort tours in the Flinders Ranges of SA, Guurrbi Tours in Queensland, Coorong Wilderness Lodge in South Australia, Brambuk Cultural Centre in Victoria, Anangu Tours and Desert Tracks in Central Australia, Lombadina Aboriginal Adventures in Western Australia, and Kuku-Yalanji Dreamtime Tours in the wet tropics (Liston-Burgess 2007).

### Renewable energy and community infrastructure sector

The Mirarr Case Study highlights the overwhelming desire of people for better community infrastructure, including housing and other facilities, to enable a decent lifestyle. Such a basis is viewed as fundamental to enabling any economic engagement. The Miriuwung Gajerrong Case Study identified interests in construction and real estate. The Centre for Appropriate Technology[33] is Australia's national Indigenous science and technology organization, active since 1980 to increase the access of Indigenous people to a range of services that enable them to live safely and happily in communities, often in remote locations. Services provided by CAT include water reticulation, telecommunications, renewable energy systems (bushlight), housing, community facilities, stoves and kitchens, waste management, and transport.

### Pastoralism

Opportunities in sustainable pastoralism as part of a cultural and conservation economy featured strongly in both the Kimberley and Cape York Roundtables. Aboriginal people now own and manage significant numbers of properties in Northern Australia. In the Kimberley area, 30 per cent of leases are currently Aboriginal-owned and this number is predicted to

31 http://www.indigenoustourism.australia.com/

32 http://www.aboriginaltourism.com.au/

33 http://www.icat.org.au/

rise. In Cape York, Aboriginal people owned 7.1 per cent of the total pastoral lease area in 1995 and the area has since increased (Cotter 1995). The value of these lands may go beyond financial or economic concerns to incorporate cultural and social needs. Many Aboriginal people enjoy cultural economy opportunities provided by the cattle industry. For this reason, Aboriginal management approaches can differ markedly from their non-indigenous counterparts[34]. Sustainable re-development of this well-established industry can occur through integrated natural and cultural pastoral management (see Schiller 2006) and control of pastoral impacts on water courses, springs, and cultural sites.

**Forest, bush and marine products**

Sustainable wildlife harvesting is recognised as an emerging market opportunity in Northern Australia (Altman and Cochrane 2003), as illustrated by the case studies conducted for this project. A range of other interests in this sector were also identified:

- commercial harvesting of non-timber forest products: seeds, flowers, medicines, foods;
- native plants and seedlings nursery;
- bush foods cultivation and harvesting;
- commercial fishing; and
- native forest timber.

The Traditional Owners of Kakadu National Park rejected a proposal for the Park to become a multiple use (IUCN category 6) protected area so that harvesting of forest, bush and aquatic products could occur. Historically, management of environmental impacts in the harvesting of forest and marine products has proven controversial in Australia, reflected in recent exclusion of 35% of the Great Barrier Reef from fish extraction, and ongoing disputes over native forest timber extraction. Further research is needed into this sector's market opportunities and appropriate sustainability practices.

**Social and lifestyle services**

Social and lifestyle services have proven very important in the Ecotrust approach in North America. Potential opportunities identified in this study include:

- community-run schools, health and healing programs; and
- retail outlets in communities.

The Mirarr Case study highlighted the need for more effective alcohol rehabilitation and recovery programs to assist individuals with addiction issues. The Australian Network for Promotion, Prevention and Early Intervention for Mental Health[35] provides a range of information about mental health, addiction and other programs targeted for Indigenous Australians. There currently appears to be a very significant under-supply of such programs in Northern Australia. The provision of affordable healthy food choices through retail outlets in communities is also recognized as a major impediment to healthy lifestyles throughout Northern Australia.

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34 http://www.savanna.org.au/all/grazing.html

35 http://www.auseinet.com.atsi/ contacts.php

### Agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture

A range of opportunities in agriculture, horticulture and aquaculture were identified, including established and new enterprises that may require some land clearing in order to develop enhanced markets in native fish and crustacean species.

Very significant environmental problems are associated with broad-scale land clearing, including loss of biodiversity, land degradation, soil salinisation and acidification, as well as associated problems with changes to rivers after impoundment for water extraction (see Vernes 2006 for a relevant case study on the Ord River). Opportunities for sustainable re-development of agriculture exist in a number of already cleared sites in Northern Australia, where many agricultural enterprises have been abandoned due to a combination of environmental and economic problems (Cooke 2007). Aquaculture also involves some considerable environmental risks associated with the introduction of excessive nutrient loads and pest species into wild populations. Some forms of aquaculture systems that utilise native species with cultural significance in low input or isolated systems, have fewer risks. The Kimberley Aquaculture Aboriginal Corporation is investigating a number of such opportunities in black tiger prawn, trochus, barramundi, oysters, freshwater prawns (cherabin) and aquarium fish with support from the Kimberley Development Commission. Sponge aquaculture has been recognized by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority as a potential low impact form of aquaculture that has been successful in a number of Pacific Island communities[36].

### Mining

Mining is a strongly established industry in Northern Australia that gives large returns in relation to gross regional product. A major aim of the cultural economy concept of NAILSMA is reform of the mining industry to take greater account of its potential to indirectly benefit Indigenous and other communities. The positive response of some mining companies to this process has been noted (Harvey 2004). However, both the Mirarr and Injinoo case studies highlighted the community conflict and other social problems that are often associated with mining enterprises in Indigenous community.

36 http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/ corp_site /management/ eim/palm_sponge

# 2.4 Evaluating options for developing a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia

Although a vast array of existing organisations across Northern Australia seek to provide a means for enhancing social welfare and spurring economic development in Indigenous communities, it is clear from the prior section's analysis that significant gaps exist in the principles, organisations and services necessary for creating a cultural and conservation economy for the region. This investigation also highlighted the significant challenges posed to remote communities in accessing appropriate information and services. Most communities and individuals are not well resourced and do not have access to extensive networks and as a result it is likely that most programs are not being fully utilised. Below, the key approaches for strengthening future opportunities for linking culture and conservation are discussed.

## 2.4.1 Strengthening partnerships, networks and existing organisations

The capacity of existing organisations could be enhanced through building new networks and linkages including:

- across the Indigenous, environment, business, research sectors with an interest in culture and conservation, including facilitation of a group with a non-representative capacity to develop an independent policy stance;
- amongst the existing organisations with a strong commitment to recognition of Aboriginal, rights, culture and title, and fostering joint projects between these parties;
- amongst the existing organisations and individual consultants who are undertaking relevant natural and cultural resource community-based and country-based planning, including options for alternative futures, to develop guidelines and resources for planning;
- with relevant organisations in the social sector who have well developed theory and practice in community development (such as the Centre for Appropriate Technology and Oxfam); and

- amongst those organisations most strongly interested in a cultural and conservation economy through development of a Memorandum of Agreement and associated commitment of resources.

The analysis in this report also supports the need to improve the funding for other organisations and enhance their networking capacity so that they can facilitate improved Indigenous engagement in the cultural and conservation economy. The organisations that would significantly benefit from increased financial support include the Indigenous Land and Sea Management Units, (regional and sub-regional) which would enable them to operate effectively and to coordinate Traditional Owner delivery of ecosystem services. Further, the core representative bodies, such as NAILSMA and NAEA must have a strong commitment from the member groups in order to maintain a consistent degree of engagement with communities throughout the remote areas of Northern Australia.

### 2.4.2 New organisations

Missing services identified in the gap analysis and case studies could be met through an information, business development services and capital broker that is committed to the principles of the Ecotrust model and which provides communities with a portal to these functions through one integrated source. Feedback from the community case studies highlighted the need for new services and improved solutions-oriented approaches. For the Mirarr in Arnhem Land in Northern Territory the "most relevant aspects were the relationships-based approach, and the skills development and information—people urgently need some help to understand better how to overcome the extremely difficult challenges they face". The Injinoo case study on Cape York likewise found the relationship approach attractive while acknowledging that "access to quality advice is very important and having assistance in bringing together all aspects of an initiative from planning, to training, to finance and infrastructure development would be an invaluable step in the right direction". For the Miriuwung Gajerrong in the Kimberley "the best role for an Ecotrust is likely to be in functioning as a broker that links Miriuwung Gajerrong with a range of people and resources."

This brokering and service role could be played by a newly established Ecotrust Australia. This entity would provide on the ground assistance to communities through information provision and capacity-building services, and access to existing services from government, corporate and philanthropic organisations. The following elements of an Ecotrust model would be used as a basis for establishing such an organisation:

**Principles**

- community empowerment and development principle for facilitating a cultural and conservation economy;
- relationship-based approach relevant to Northern Australia, achieved by:
  - following Indigenous protocols, and
  - building mutual trust and commitment through having an effective conflict management framework in place to facilitate relationships between collaborating parties;

- commitment to recognition of Aboriginal rights, culture and title; and
- diverse governing body of skills-based Indigenous and non-Indigenous people acting in an independent capacity, including the capacity to be accountable back to Indigenous governance bodies.

**Services**

- capacity to access a range of government, philanthropic and corporate funds;
- strong capacity for natural and cultural resource related community-based and country-based planning, including options for alternative futures;
- strong capacity for project support and building of relevant partnerships with existing support organisations and services across the sectors of ecosystem services, visitor services (tourism), arts and cultural industries, renewable energy and community infrastructure, social and lifestyle services, sustainable pastoralism, and low-impact aquaculture;
- flexible project support available to individuals, families, clan groups, and larger Indigenous corporations;
- capacity to bridge between the local peoples and communities and the regional and national-level policy-makers and decision-makers;
- commitment to raising the individual and agency capacity of the local and Indigenous peoples through direct interactions (not through consultancies) including through mentoring, recognition and linkage programs;
- development of a detailed, publicly available database on services from government, corporate and philanthropies;
- development of networks and relationships within government, corporate and philanthropies to enable understanding and ensure that communities can seek Ecotrust Australia's assistance in introducing their organisation to potential service providers;
- business development and financial advice; and
- business financing.

The general structure of a new organisation and its associated entities is considered in further detail in the following chapter.

# 3 Establishing an Ecotrust Australia

# 3.1 A vision for a cultural and conservation economy supported by Ecotrust Australia

### 3.1.1 Rationale

The analysis of the positioning of current organisations identified that no single organisation, either alone, or in combination with other service providers, is currently able to sufficiently support the genesis of a cultural and conservation economy in NA. Although several organisations demonstrate an interest in, and some commitment to, aspects of the principles and services inherent in the Ecotrust model, no organisation demonstrates all these principles and services. Limitations have been identified in the capacity of existing organisation and alliances with an interest in the cultural and conservation economy, such as NAILSMA, NAEA and ACF to foster the necessary support.

The research and feedback from the Indigenous community case studies highlights the need for a new provider 'Ecotrust Australia' for Northern Australia that can fully implement the concept of a cultural and conservation economy that fosters the aspirations of Indigenous peoples. An independent Ecotrust Australia would provide communities with a portal to information, business development services and funding, including services from government, corporate and philanthropies, within a framework guided by a set of core sustainability principles, a relationship-based approach, a community development focus and a strong commitment to Indigenous rights. (Fig. 3.1).

Ecotrust Australia's role would include:

- building community planning capacity for sustainable development through a long-tem commitment to communities and through independence from government;
- respecting the rights, culture and governance structures of local Indigenous peoples;
- development of a detailed database on services from government, corporate and philanthropies. It is likely that this information would be made available to the public via its website;

- development of networks and relationships within government, corporate and philanthropies to ensure that potential service providers can be accessed by local communities;
- aiding quadruple-bottom line business development through financial training, consulting and mentoring (either directly or through networking) and by supportive sustainability frameworks; and
- support business growth through financing new products and services.

### 3.1.2 Organisational structure

Ecotrust in the US and Canada are charitable entities structured as companies limited by guarantee. The Directors are responsible for the recruitment and replacement of the Board. Ecotrust US and Canada have been deliberately structured to not be broadly representative as is the case with membership-based entities, such as the Australian Conservation Foundation. Spencer Beebe (2006), one of Ecotrust's founders, stressed "organisation structure is important and it doesn't work to have a Board of stakeholders with a representative function. What is required is a diverse, committed and highly skilled group focused on delivering the vision of the organisation".

This traditional method of management within the charity sector ensures that control of Ecotrust rests with the Board of Directors, which provides a highly focused and effective operation that responds rapidly to emerging issues and needs. Such a structure is not easily distracted by the challenges of meeting multiple community or organisation expectations. However, the structures also need to recognise the critical role of accountability to Indigenous governance highlighted throughout this report.

It is vital that the new organisation be structured to best meet the needs of Northern Australia. Two options for the structure of new entity include:

- Ecotrust Australia
- Ecotrust Australia and Ecotrust Partnerships/Joint Ventures

**Ecotrust Australia**

This structure would mirror the US and Canadian model and would see Ecotrust Australia be incorporated as a Company limited by guarantee. It would apply to become an Income Tax Exempt Charity (ITEC) and seek Deductible Gift Recipient Status (DGR), preferably under a newly created Community Development Organisation category (see section 4.3).

Ecotrust Australia would not develop a membership base, although it would attempt to select a Board of Directors that has a breath of experience in planning, management, banking, community development, leveraging philanthropic support, sustainability knowledge, Indigenous governance and brokering to effectively span the broad range of services required by many communities. The Board of Directors would be independent of any individual or community and be chosen based on their ability to develop and support Ecotrust Australia, including recognition of the skill of providing accountability back to Indigenous governance. Ongoing recruitment and replacement of Board members would be the responsibility of the existing Board of Directors.

Under this model, a community or individual will not own Ecotrust Australia, with any assets and knowledge it accumulates over time being held solely for the benefit of the organisation and its charitable purposes. All ITECs in Australia are required by the Australian Taxation Office to have a clause in their constitution that requires the transfer of the net assets of the organisation to another like entity on dissolution.

Sustainability/Caring for Country

- offers a choice
- quadruple-bottom line orientated
- Indigenous concepts of sustainability
- research support
- institutional/policy innovation

Local, Indigenous culture & institutions

- respect rights, interests
- build on local initiatives
- Indigenous governance, cultural fit
- cultural mapping

Relationship-based

- trust, long-term commitment
- partner with existing organisations
- develop capacity over time
- flexibility to work at family, clan, community levels

Community-development

- single portal to services
- brokering role
- fosters strategic vision
- local ownership
- community banking, local capital

**Figure 3.1.** Role of an Ecotrust Australia in promoting a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia.

Ecotrust Australia would be responsible for the delivery of all services including:

- information and planning services;
- sustainability information services;
- brokering / networking services;
- business development services; and
- business financing services.

**Ecotrust Franchise / Community Partnership**

Development of Ecotrust Australia organisational structures includes opportunities to initiate community-controlled and -owned franchises that would operate in partnership with existing regional and local organisations and people. This community-owned organisational structure approach is based on the highly successful Bendigo Bank Community Banking model and seeks to provide a more inclusive and connected service to the community. Ecotrust Australia would develop the overall strategy, programs and capacity and become a service entity to the community-controlled and community-owned joint ventures and partnerships with local Indigenous and other peoples.

**Ecotrust Australia Banking Partner**

The Ecotrust Canada Financing Service has been strengthened significantly through the partnership with Shorebank. Ecotrust Australia should similarly seek the support of a suitably qualified business banking partner to assist in development of appropriately tailored business financing products and systems to meet the needs of Northern Australia. A possible partner could be Bendigo Bank Limited, which has demonstrated a strategic fit for this role through its development of a world first Community Banking Model.

**Indigenous Sustainability Trust**

Indigenous Sustainability Trusts would provide a capacity to strengthen Indigenous ownership of capital associated with business financing operations, and of any community-controlled joint venture or partnership-based franchises.

**Initial Project Focus**

The community case studies emphasised that project support needs to be very flexible, and available to individuals, families, clan groups, and larger Indigenous corporations. The gap analysis in relation to the Ecotrust model also identified the Kimberley region as very well placed to benefit from any new Ecotrust Australia organisational structure, as a result of two important factors: Indigenous organisations that are strongly positioned towards supporting emergence of a cultural and conservation economy; and the relative under-supply of support services in the region.

### 3.1.3 Value-adding to existing efforts

Several organisations in Northern Australia already play a key role in business development and capacity-building and the establishment of an Ecotrust Australia would need to acknowledge and link with the appropriate services provided by these entities. In order to properly engage with the existing organisations and to ensure effective partnerships are promoted, a full analysis of the community needs and service delivery by those bodies would be undertaken by Ecotrust Australia prior to any project initiation. Projects will undoubtedly frequently involve partnerships with local and regional communities, Ecotrust and one or more existing organisations.

### 3.1.4 Leveraging philanthropic support

This analysis shows that while not immediate, philanthropic support for the Ecotrust model in North Australia could be significant. To achieve the level of funding required, considerable time and effort in developing an Ecotrust prospectus and building relationships and support from the philanthropic sector would be required. As discussed in section 2.2.3, a focus on Prescribed Private Funds (PPFs) is probably wise.

A new Ecotrust Australia could take advantage of the growing interest in environmental and Indigenous issues within the Australian philanthropic sector and the growing number of philanthropic funds including PPF's. Importantly, the Ecotrust model could offer an innovative and effective vehicle to achieve the social and environmental aspirations of trusts, foundations and individuals by offering an investment option for the philanthropic sector's sizeable investment funds. It is important to recognize that this will require a significant effort over time, and that relationship building will be key to accessing philanthropic funds in Australia. The Ecotrust model could also provide a vehicle for the interests of international funders interested in the environmental and cultural protection of the internationally significant values in North Australia.

# 3.2 Next steps

While this investigation has identified that a new Ecotrust Australia could strengthen sustainability outcomes in Northern Australia, consideration has not been given to building the partnerships and structures that would be necessary for its success, except in the most general terms. Several actions would enable the project partners to proceed:

1. Ongoing information sharing and networking through annual dialogue and/or major conference.
2. Formation of an implementation committee to:
   - Seek ongoing funding for implementation of the report findings; and
   - Develop a process for building a new "Ecotrust Australia", including necessary fund-raising, governance structures, cultural fit with existing Indigenous organisations, recruitment of key staff, and prospectus formulation.
3. In order to ensure active follow through, organisations that become part of the implementation group should be able to make a significant commitment, either through pro-bono time of senior staff and specialists within their organisations, or through financial contributions.
4. Members of the implementation group would need to make clear commitment to the Ecotrust Australia vision through a written Memorandum of Agreement.
5. Organisations that are not able to make such commitment should be able to remain involved and contribute through an annual dialogue and proposed conference.

Leveraging of support from the philanthropic sector would be dependent on ensuring:

- governance by high profile Board (implementation committee) with an excellent mix of skills and experience and a strong commitment to the Ecotrust vision;
- development of a prospectus that very clearly articulates the need, the opportunity, and the benefits for North Australia and for donors, and the required funding;
- a strategy plan that articulates the necessary structures and actions with a timeframe for the first 5 years;
- a fundraising strategy that focuses on building relationships with the key individuals and organizations both domestically and abroad; and
- an approach that begins by building philanthropic support to enable an independent approach to building a new Ecotrust in Australia.

# 4 Institutional factors supporting a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia

Institutions are the formal and informal arrangements, rules, regulations and social norms that shape our behaviour. In this section we are interested in the formal institutions that are in place that affect the emergence of a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia. Indigenous, environmental and financial institutions are considered separately. In addition, the ongoing research efforts relevant to the sustainability innovations in the north are considered.

# 4.1 Indigenous institutions

Indigenous institutions have undergone a period of rapid change in Australia following the establishment of the *Native Title Act* in 1993, and the abolition of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Commission in 2004. Land ownership and appropriate forms of tenure are recognised as essential to the emergence of sustainable tourism and other entrepreneurial ventures in Indigenous communities, and underpin many other aspects of a cultural and conservation economy (Schmiechen 2006). In addition to the native title regime, there are some land rights regimes and opportunities in Queensland and Northern Territory level jurisdictions that are worth consideration. These regimes are important because under Australian constitutional arrangements the State and Territory jurisdictions are responsible for land tenure arrangements. While Australian Federal and High Courts can ensure legal recognition of native title rights over a range of tenures, Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) can enable tenure changes at the State level to better accommodate this recognition.

The enabling Indigenous policy institutions in Australia which recognise Aboriginal rights and title are not as well-developed in some ways as those in British Columbia, Canada, but also provide some opportunities that are unique to this country, including:

- The *Native Title Act 1993 (Commonwealth)* and Indigenous Land Use Agreements provide for recognition of Aboriginal land rights throughout Australia where people have maintained their customary law which is similar to treaty processes in British Columbia;
- *Aboriginal Land Act 1991 (Queensland),* and the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1975 (Commonwealth)* provide for recognition of land rights and inalienable land tenure which provides a flexible land base for economic activities. However, WA lacks legislation to provide for inalienable land tenure and many Aboriginal people hold lands in pastoral and other tenures with limited flexibility in relation to cultural and conservation activities;
- The Queensland Government Cape York Tenure Resolution process is delivering a substantial land base for a cultural and conservation economy through voluntary acquisitions and return of substantial areas to Aboriginal ownership which do not appear to have parallels in Canada;
- Shared responsibility agreements between the Australian government and Indigenous peoples, and the new *Working on Country* program are providing some important support for the emergence of a cultural and conservation economy including through small business opportunities in environment threat reduction; these have some parallels in government funding programs in Canada but appear better developed in Australia.

Further, Indigenous organisations appear to have better access to ongoing recurrent funding for land and sea management coordination in Canada than in Australia, where funding remains insecure and short-term, and has resulted in many organisations collapsing after initial periods of successful achievement. The Canadian approach to socio-economic disadvantage built on the accountability-based approach of establishing key indicators of socio-economic disadvantage and an agreed timetable between First Nations people and the governments, resulting in a reduction in the life expectancy gap between the general population and Indigenous people to 3 years—while it remains at 20 years in Australia (National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and Oxfam 2007).

Opportunities to strengthen Indigenous institutional arrangements to enable a cultural and conservation economy in Australia, include:

- Securing the stability of the regional and sub-regional LSMUs across the north with a dedicated recurrent funding arrangement; core recurrent funding of $16.5 M is required for a base level of support across the north;
- Making more land available for cultural and conservation outcomes through ongoing support for the Queensland Cape York Tenure Resolution process of voluntary acquisition and return of substantial areas to Aboriginal ownership, and consideration of whether that approach would be applicable in the Kimberley region;
- Providing more flexible tenures available for cultural and conservation outcomes in WA including inalienable freehold possibly through a land rights act or other appropriate legal mechanisms; and
- Improving the health and well-being status of Indigenous people to participate in cultural and conservation activities through adoption of an accountability-based approach (a clear timetable and measures for closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous socio-economic and health status) that has been successful in Canada.

# 4.2 Environmental institutions

While environmental institutions in Australia and Canada have many similarities, the Australia arrangements have several unique features that are important in the establishment of a cultural and conservation economy through:

- Indigenous Protected Areas, and linked opportunities in Indigenous land and sea management and Ranger programs now funded federally through the Indigenous Protected Areas and Working on Country programs;
- the regional natural resource management arrangements supported by bilateral agreements between Australian and State/Territory governments, and associated funding for local community engagement in projects with cultural and conservation outcomes; however, the boundaries of the NRM regions in WA and NT (one region) greatly limits the effectiveness of these programs in these areas, particularly in relation to relevant planning;
- emerging market for ecosystem services linked to a range of funding mechanisms including national and state government stewardship schemes, biodiversity development offsets, and trading in carbon credits are providing opportunities in both Australia and Canada (see section 2.3.2); and
- Co-management and joint management opportunities are also providing significant prospects for the emergence of a cultural and conservation economy in both Canada and Australia, although the legal arrangements are not always fully enabling.

In Australia, the term 'joint management' is generally used to refer to situations where authority is shared between governments and Aboriginal people through the establishment of legal partnership and management structures that reflects the rights and responsibilities of both parties (Smyth 2001). Joint managed arrangements have recently been greatly expanded in the Northern Territory, legislative reform has also occurred in South Australia, and the Western Australian Government has recently agreed to six new jointly-managed Aboriginal-owned conservation parks in the Ord region. However, in WA the lack of appropriate tenure appears a significant barrier to Aboriginal ownership of parks. While both the Queensland and WA governments have had proposals to implement legislative reform to provide broadly for formal joint management, no such arrangements are in place in either jurisdiction. Significant work in Queensland and WA is required to institute reform to deliver joint management that genuinely empowers Aboriginal people and provides meaningful employment opportunities in land and sea management of protected areas.

Opportunities to strengthen environmental institutional arrangements to enable a cultural and conservation economy in Australia, include:

- Ensuring a more appropriate fit between Indigenous and local peoples' cultural boundaries and the Australian NRM boundaries by breaking up the large NRM regions in Northern Territory and WA; a Northern Australian ecosystem services brokering program could make core recurrent funding available for brokers across the region at a more suitable scale than currently provided through the NRM regions;
- Ensuring greater opportunities in park and protected area conservation economies through reform to enable formal joint management of existing parks and protected areas in Queensland and WA;
- Increasing opportunities in Indigenous Protected Areas economies, including through tripartite arrangements with the Australian Government, State and Territory governments, and relevant Indigenous peoples; and
- Supporting the emergence of ecosystem services markets again by securing the role of Indigenous LSMUs and brokering organisations in enabling the ecosystem services market.

# 4.3 Financial institutions

The North American financial institutions provide a number of important mechanisms to the business financing available through the Ecotrust organisations. These organisations and their services include:

- Western Economic Diversification Small Business Conservation Finance Program—essentially a Loan Loss Reserve, which provides capital protection for many Ecotrust loans.
- Indian Economic Development Loan Guarantee Program - available to on-reserve Indian entrepreneurs to overcome the security restrictions under Section 89 of the Indian Act and to enable them to develop long-term credit relationships with mainstream financial institutions.
- Community Futures Development Corporations—provides support to the over 90 CFDCs across Western Canada. CFDC's are run by the federal government under the Western Economic Diversification agency. They are non-profit corporations run by volunteer boards of directors with the aim of providing grants and lending to regional companies.
- Community Economic Development Technical Assistance Program (CEDTAP) —offers funding for technical assistance training for staff and volunteers of Community Economic Development (CED) organizations and Community Based Organizations (CBOs).
- British Columbia Small Business Support—offer tax credits to investors.
- New Markets Tax Credits—permits US taxpayers to receive a credit against Federal income taxes for making qualified equity investments in designated Community Development Entities (CDEs).
- Community Re-investment Act—regulated financial institutions have continuing and affirmative obligations to help meet the credit needs of the local communities in which they are chartered.

The North American focus on delivery of services to communities has a far greater emphasis on community development as its core delivery mechanism. In the US it is the Community Reinvestment Act and New Markets Tax Credit, while in Canada services to communities are built around the Community Futures Development Corporations that act as hubs for accessing services.

In Australia, key taxation arrangements relevant to the support of an Ecotrust Australia include the Income Tax Exempt Charities (ITEC) and Deductible Gift Recipients (DGR) category. However, the narrow focus required to obtain either status limits their effectiveness

in supporting community development initiatives. An ITEC is an organisation that is instituted to advance or promote charitable purposes. Types of organisations that may be charitable institutions include welfare agencies, churches, public libraries, parents and citizens associations, refuges and research institutes.

New charitable funds must meet at least one of three tests including:

- Australian Purposes Test—the charitable fund incurs its expenditure principally in Australia and pursues its purposes solely in Australia; or
- Deductible Gift Recipient—the charitable fund is a DGR; or
- Distributions Test —it distributes solely, to either or both of the following:
  - charities that, to the best of the trustee's knowledge, are located in Australia and pursue their purposes solely in Australia and incur their expenditure principally in Australia; and
  - charities that, to the best of the trustee's knowledge, are DGRs.

Approved ITECs are exempt from Australian income tax and many State based taxes such as Payroll Tax.

A Deductible Gift Recipient is a fund or organisation that is approved to receive tax deductible gifts. All DGR categories (except those listed by name in the income tax law or regulations) need to be endorsed by the Tax Office. If they are not endorsed donors they cannot claim income tax deductions for their gifts. DGRs include a wide variety of organisation types ranging from institutions established for education, research, health, religion, the environment, art and other purposes.

An Ecotrust Australia organisation could seek DGR status in a broad range of categories, although the most obvious are public benevolent institution, environmental organisations register, cultural organisations register. In order to secure DGR status Ecotrust Australia will need to show that the dominant purpose of its objects is aligned to an individual DGR category. However, the current DGR structure that does not adequately support or recognise entities whose objects focus on community development. Community development by nature addresses a broad range of issues including immediate humanitarian aid in disaster zones to long term development that addresses infrastructure, health, education, self sufficiency and financial independence. The failure of the current system is most obviously evident in the context of International Aid and Development Agencies, such as World Vision and Oxfam. These organisations have developed extensive program expertise in the delivery of community development activities that address community need from a holistic perspective. They are highly successful, well recognised and very well supported by the Australian community, yet if operating such an approach in Australia, they may struggle to obtain DGR status.

This gap analysis highlights a number of opportunities to strengthen environmental institutional arrangements to enable a cultural and conservation economy in Australia, including new tax incentives schemes and a new community development DGR category, as discussed below.

**Tax Incentive Scheme to increase access to capital**

The lack of financial services and capital are significant barriers for the development of remote indigenous communities who are seeking to establish strong, prosperous and self sustaining communities 'on country.' A new Community Development Tax Incentive Scheme which is a blend of the existing US and Australian systems with the following elements could provide significant opportunities for leveraging more capital into these regions:

- Broad framing of the program to service remote, rural and underdeveloped communities creating long term sustainable industries would entail a detailed engagement process to seek their input into the definitions of eligibility for the program;
- 100% upfront tax deduction for investments in registered Community Development Investments Schemes as defined by the program;
- Investments fixed for 7 years with interest paid on maturity; and
- Loan guarantee fund established to support a reasonable percentage of loans to each provider. The fund would be managed by government and enable approved investments to receive cover of up to 80% of any one loan and caped to a maximum for each provider of 15% of its total approved loans under management.

**New DGR status for Community (Indigenous) Development Organisations**

The development of a new category of DGR for Community Development Organisations addresses one of the main challenges within the existing taxation arrangements for Indigenous organisations and any future Ecotrust Australia organisation. A new DGR category for community development created to streamline the registration process for multiple foci organisations would significantly reduce the costs of management and provide a catalysis for charitable support for community development work. Development of any new DGR category would need to be framed in consultation with Indigenous and other community-development stakeholders to ensure that the definitions for eligibility truly reflect the needs and capacity required to deliver long-term sustainable development.

# 4.4 Sustainability research institutions

Throughout Northern Australia, there exist a diverse range of both scientific research bodies and Indigenous cultural and knowledge organisations that support initiatives and studies within a broad sustainability agenda. Many of these organisation's projects could provide useful guidance in establishing the parameters of an Ecotrust Australia and for developing appropriate sectors, creating new economic marketplaces and stimulating cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural thinking.

In relation to building Indigenous peoples' knowledge systems for sustainability, the most relevant programs appear to be:

- Balkanu's Traditional Knowledge Recording Project;
- Aboriginal Rainforest Council's Cultural Mapping Project;
- NAILSMA's Indigenous Knowledge Conservation Strategy; and
- The new Centre for Sustainable Indigenous Communities based in the Australian Tropical Forests Institute.

Most of these initiatives also recognise the contribution of scientific and local knowledge.

In relation to scientific knowledge systems for sustainability, the most relevant programs are:

- CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems Themes on Sustainable Regional Development and Streams on Indigenous Livelihoods and Adaptive Governance;
- Markets for Ecosystem Services project jointly undertaken by CSIRO and a number of project partners;
- Sustainable Tourism CRC Indigenous research agenda;
- Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research and their work on the hybrid economy and associated concepts;
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) project Living Country, Working Country: A Sustainability Strategy for the Kimberley Region of Western;
- The Marine and Tropical Science Research Facilities programs, particularly in developing a framework for measuring status and trends in relation to ecosystem services;

- Australian Tropical Forests Institute and their Tropical Landscapes Joint Venture;
- The Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge Research Hub - theme on sustainable enterprises;
- Land and Water Australia's portfolio, particularly that in relation to bi-cultural natural resource management;
- The Tropical Savannas Cooperative Research Centre (due to close in mid 2008) and the linked research of NAILSMA;
- REMPLAN, the regional economic modelling tool developed from Compelling Economic and La Trobe University; and
- Terrain Natural Resource Management Ltd and their Biocarbon partner in brokering ecosystem services.

Most of these research initiatives recognise the role of local and Indigenous knowledge systems to some extent. Together these initiatives form a significant research and development contribution relevant to facilitation of a cultural and conservation economy. Two points are noteworthy:

- The initiatives focused on Indigenous knowledge systems all have an insecure funding base and need both more funds and more long-term security; and
- The more scientific initiatives are all embedded in larger research programs with a different focus, fragmenting the effort and giving the appearance of greater total effort than is actually the case.

A greatly enhanced sustainability research effort is needed to support the emergence of a cultural and conservation economy in Northern Australia. Much of this research needs a co-research approach to effectively engage local and Indigenous peoples. Particular areas where enhanced effort is required include:

- Indigenous peoples' knowledge systems for sustainability:
  - Cultural mapping and recording;
  - Indigenous sustainability principles; and
  - Indigenous indicators for cultural, social, environmental and economic well-being.
- Markets for ecosystem services:
  - Institutional and organisational arrangements that will support ecosystem service markets in Northern Australia;
  - Measures for biodiversity credits, carbon credits, and biodiversity-enhanced carbon credits for trading;
  - Verification and certification models for biodiversity and ecosystem service products;
  - Measures and processes for differentiating residuals from mitigation measures for offsets in biodiversity markets;
  - Ensuring disincentives for voluntary and customary actions are not produced in emerging ecosystem service markets; and
  - Balancing incentive with regulatory approaches.

- Scientific knowledge systems for sustainability:
  - Frameworks for measuring ecosystem service status and trends;
  - Indicators of cultural, economic, environmental and social sustainability relevant to the Northern Australian region; and
  - Basic research on Northern Australia's ecosystems and processes, including greatly increased knowledge of threatening processes such as climate change and exotic pests, and likely responses.
- Planning, participatory and governance processes:
  - Effective community development and community-based planning frameworks;
  - Governance frameworks to effectively reflect Indigenous customs and minimise community conflict;
  - Effective co-management planning for parks and protected areas;
  - Cultural planning frameworks;
  - Regional and local natural and cultural resource planning; and
  - Country-based planning.
- Project development research including pilots relevant to the major sectors identified as priorities in a cultural and conservation economy:
  - Ecosystem services;
  - Indigenous arts and cultural industries;
  - Visitor services including tourism and educational tourism;
  - Renewable energy and community infrastructure;
  - Social and lifestyle services;
  - Pastoralism; and
  - Low-impact aquaculture.
- Economic research on:
  - Identifying the capital flows within the Northern Australian region through REMPLAN or similar model to enable understanding of opportunities to capture capital;
  - Modelling flows of direct and indirect benefits into the Northern Australia region from a cultural and conservation economy in comparison to the conventional model; and
  - Investigating the linkage between cultural and conservation activities and improved socio-economic and health outcomes for Indigenous peoples.
- Business development research including pilot projects relevant to:
  - Effective models for supporting Indigenous businesses through all stages of the business cycle
  - Effective business governance models that recognise Indigenous custom and law while effectively protecting capital.

**Options for enhancing the sustainability research in Northern Australia include:**

- Hosting a cultural and conservation economy conference that brings together a significant body of the existing research effort;
- Building an email network and exchange program between relevant researchers;
- Bringing together a range of interested research organisations to commit to a "cultural and conservation economy" research program through a Memorandum of Agreement; and
- Pursuing a dedicated Northern Australia cultural and conservation economy research funding stream from governments.

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# **Appendix 1** Institutions Supporting a Cultural and Conservation Economy in Northern Australia

**Table 1. Federal Government Programs**

| Government Agencies | Principal Programs | Expenditure/ Performance |
|---|---|---|
| Indigenous Business Australia | **IBA Homes** - is designed to increase home ownership participation rates by providing affordable home loans to eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. | **IBA Homes** – has a total loan portfolio of $368Million (Annual Report 2004-05). In that year, it approved 502 new loans worth $94.1million. |
| | **IBA Enterprises** - aims to provide Indigenous people with skill development services and alternate funding products to achieve greater independence from Government and improve business management capabilities. The programme provides eligible Indigenous applicants with a range of funding products for the acquisition, establishment and/or development of commercially viable small to medium sized enterprises that have demonstrated, or have the potential, to achieve long-term commercial viability. | **IBA Enterprises** – Business loans totalling $66million |
| | **IBA Partnerships** - is responsible for the management of Community Homes and the Policy and Liaison Units. | |
| | **IBA Investments** - has a central role in working with the private sector and local Indigenous people to encourage and foster Indigenous economic independence. The Program invests directly in business opportunities, often through joint venture arrangements with expert industry partners and Indigenous organisations, communities and/or individuals. The objective is to assist Indigenous organisations, communities and/or individuals to participate in business | **IBA Investments** – has equity and other investments worth $120million |

**Table 1. (continued)**

| Government Agencies | Principal Programs | Expenditure/ Performance |
|---|---|---|
| **Indigenous Land Corporation** | The ILC acquires land for grant to Indigenous people under four Program Streams –<br>• The **Cultural Acquisition Program** (CAP) – assists Indigenous people to acquire land of cultural significance;<br>• The **Social Acquisition Program** (SAP) assists Indigenous people to acquire land for a range of social and welfare needs;<br>• The **Environmental Acquisition Program** (EAP) assists Indigenous people to acquire land to derive environmental benefits; and<br>• The **Economic Acquisition Program** (ECAP) assists Indigenous people to acquire land to establish and maintain viable land-based businesses.<br>The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Fund is a public trust account. It was established over ten years by annual allocations from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The final allocation was made in June 2004. | From the commencement of operations on 1 June 1995 to 30 June 2005, the ILC has purchased 176 properties and distributed ownership to 114 Aboriginal Corporations. The properties:<br>• Cover 5.14 million hectares;<br>• Total approximately $160 million in value. |

**Table 1. (continued)**

| Government Agencies | Principal Programs | Expenditure/ Performance |
|---|---|---|
| Department of Environment and Heritage | Indigenous Heritage Fund | **Indigenous Heritage Fund** – (previously the Preservation and Protection of Indigenous Heritage Program) - $12million in funding. |
| | **Working on Country (new funding in 2007)** | |
| | **Indigenous Land Management Facilitators Network** - To help Indigenous Australians to address their land management needs, contribute to national objectives and to gain access to Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) funding, the Australian Government has established a national network of 13 Indigenous Land Management Facilitators. The Facilitators provide assistance to Indigenous people involved in land management. They are funded by the NHT and are employed through regionally based host agencies in each state and territory. | **Indigenous Land Management Facilitators Network** – total annual expenditure 2004-05 $1.8million. |
| | The **Indigenous Protected Areas Program**, a component of the National Reserve Systems Program, provides funding to Indigenous organisations and communities to establish and manage protected areas on Indigenous owned land and to establish cooperative (joint) management arrangements between Indigenous groups and the relevant government nature conservation agencies on publicly owned protected areas. | **Indigenous Protected Areas Program** - total annual expenditure 2004-05 $2.5million. |
| | Funding is available for State and Territory Agencies and community groups, including Indigenous groups, to purchase land for the establishment and management of ecologically significant protected areas for addition to Australia's terrestrial **National Reserve System**. | **National Reserve System** - total annual expenditure 2004-05 $2.5million. |
| | In those areas of Australia not serviced by a main electricity grid, electricity generated from renewable sources is often an effective way of reducing reliance on fossil fuel for electricity generation. The **Renewable Remote Power Generation Program** (RRPGP) provides financial support to increase the use of renewable generation technologies in remote parts of Australia that presently rely on fossil fuel for electricity generation | The **Renewable Remote Power Generation Program.** In 2004-05, the Department pr638 grants totaling $22.4 million. In total 3608 projects have been funded to date. |
| | **Three of the six Commonwealth National Parks, namely Kakadu National Park and Uluru - Kata Tjuta National Park in the Northern Territory and Booderee National Park in the Jervis Bay Territory are managed jointly with their Aboriginal Traditional Owners**. | |

**Table 1. (continued)**

| Government Agencies | Principal Programs | Expenditure/ Performance |
|---|---|---|
| Department of Environment and Heritage<br>(continued) | **Sea Country Plans**<br>The development of Sea Country Plans as part of Regional Marine Planning in Australia. Australia's Oceans Policy recognises the responsibilities and interests of Indigenous peoples in ocean environments. The Policy's objectives include "to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the use, conservation and management of Australia's marine jurisdiction".<br>The Australian Government, through the National Oceans Office, has taken measures to engage Indigenous people in progressing key goals of Australia's Oceans Policy. Australia's first Regional Marine Plan – the South-east Regional Marine Plan (SERMP) – was released in 2004. One of the actions identified in the Plan is the development of Sea Country plans as a potential vehicle for Indigenous involvement in natural resources uses and management.<br>Sea country planning aims to help Indigenous people negotiate with other marine managers and users to develop policies and institutional arrangements that are respectful of Indigenous peoples' rights, interests and responsibilities in sea country. A Sea Country Plan seeks to marry Indigenous communities' priorities and aspirations with those of other oceans stakeholders to enhance shared investment in sustainable oceans management.<br>**Indigenous career development and recruitment strategy**<br>The Department of the Environment and Heritage is working to expand employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Indigenous) people.<br>To guide this work, the Department of the Environment and Heritage has developed the Indigenous Career Development and Recruitment Strategy. The strategy is part of the Department's Workplace Diversity Program, reflecting key elements of Government policy and legislation concerning the employment and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.<br>The Department of the Environment and Heritage (DEH) currently employs 65 Indigenous staff. The aim of the strategy is to ensure that Indigenous people are able to gain access and progress to positions at all levels across all Divisions in DEH. This will enable Indigenous staff to expand their range of skills and increase the number of Indigenous people in higher positions, including senior management positions. The strategy has been developed as an agency-wide response. Each division within DEH is expected to develop individual division plans to implement the agreed actions. | |

**Table 1. (continued)**

| Government Agencies | Principal Programs | Expenditure/ Performance |
|---|---|---|
| **Department of Employment and Workplace Relations** | Operates a number of programs under the Indigenous Employment Policy framework. These include:<br><br>**Structured Training and Employment Project** – provides flexible funding for projects that provide sustainable employment for Indigenous job seekers;<br><br>**Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment Project** – encourages a partnership between individual companies and the Australian Government to create more jobs in the private sector for Indigenous Australians;<br><br>**Wage Assistance** – helps individual Indigenous job seekers find ongoing employment through the Job Network, Indigenous Employment Centres or their own efforts through the provision of wage assistance for eligible employers;<br><br>**National Indigenous Cadetship Program** – improves the professional development of Indigenous Australians by linking students and employers in an arrangement that involves full-time study and work placements;<br><br>**CDEP Placement incentive** – provides an incentive payment of $2200 to CDEP providers for each participant placed in ongoing employment and no longer in receipt of CDEP payments;<br><br>**Indigenous Community Volunteers** – links skilled volunteers with communities that are seeking expert assistance in areas such as business, financial management and the trades;<br><br>**Indigenous Self Employment Program** trial – helps individual Indigenous Australians establish their own small business by providing business advice and support, financial literacy training and up to $5000 through a repayable loan;<br><br>**Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme** – provides Indigenous businesses access to commercial finance and culturally appropriate professional mentoring support services through participating financial institutions;<br><br>**Indigenous Employment Centres** – provide assistance in CDEP projects to help participants move into unsubsidised employment;<br><br>**Indigenous Youth Employment Consultants** – enhance education, training and employment outcomes for disengaged Indigenous Youth aged 15-19 years; | Total expenditure on all of these programs was $38.09million in 2004-05 (DEWR Annual Report). |

**Table 1. (continued)**

| Government Agencies | Principal Programs | Expenditure/ Performance |
|---|---|---|
| **Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs**<br>Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination | **Aboriginal Hostels Ltd** - was established in 1973 to provide a national network of hostels that makes affordable, temporary accommodation and meals available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly where there are no other suitable accommodation options.<br>Since 1990, AHL has been structured as a company wholly owned by the Australian Government. It is within the Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs portfolio.<br>FACSIA also delivers a range of other programs which do not directly focus on economic development and advance, but which might form part of organized social services within the designated communities. Some of these programs are specifically targeted at Indigenous people, whilst others are mainstream programs which can also be accessed by Indigenous organisations. These include:<br>• Family and Community Networks Initiative<br>• Family Violence Program<br>• Family Violence Partnership Program<br>• Family Violence Regional Activities Program<br>• Indigenous Child Care<br>• Multifunctional Aboriginal Children's Program<br>• Mobile Children's Services and Toy Libraries<br>• Indigenous Parenting and Family Wellbeing Program<br>• Responding Early Assisting Children Program<br>• Communities for Children<br>• Early Childhood – Invest to Grow<br>• Local Answers<br>• Aboriginal Rental Housing Program<br>• Building a Better Future Program<br>• National Homelessness Strategy<br>• Supported Accommodation Assistance Program<br>• Reconnect<br>• Community Housing and Infrastructure Program<br>• National Aboriginal Health Strategy<br>• Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Program<br>• Indigenous Financial Management Initiative<br>• Household Organisational Management Expenses Advice Program | |

**Table 1. (continued)**

| Government Agencies | Principal Programs | Expenditure/ Performance |
|---|---|---|
| **Business Ready Program for Indigenous Tourism**<br>Ausindustry | The Business Ready Program for Indigenous Tourism is designed to assist existing and start-up Indigenous tourism businesses to develop the business skills and knowledge required to establish and run a commercially viable tourism operation. The program will fund business mentors to work directly with a portfolio of such businesses to transfer skills to individuals in the businesses on all aspects of small business and the tourism industry. | $3.8 million budgeted |
| **Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts** | Under the Telecommunications Action Plan for Remote Indigenous Communities (TAPRIC) *Internet Access Program Phase 2*, DCITA is making available computer equipment to selected remote Indigenous communities connecting to a suitable high bandwidth Internet service under the Australian Government's Higher Bandwidth Incentive Scheme (HiBIS). Phase 1 of the Program provided funding for 135 communities.<br><br>The *Indigenous Communities Online Program* will assist remote Indigenous communities across Australia to develop appropriate community, cultural or educational online resources, according to their needs. Applications are currently being assessed.<br><br>Both of these programs have provided significant support for some Indigenous communities. | |

**Table 2. State/Territory Government Programs**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Queensland**<br><br>**Indigenous Employment and Training Support Program** | The Indigenous Employment and Training Support Program consists of a network of Indigenous Employment and Training Support Officers (IETSOs) who provide culturally appropriate mentoring and support to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander apprentices, trainees and vocational students during the course of their employment and/or training program.<br><br>Assistance is also provided to unemployed Indigenous jobseekers and young people seeking opportunities for re-engagement pathways to education and/or training.<br><br>The program aims to increase the retention and completion rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander apprentices, trainees and vocational students and to maximise employment opportunities for Indigenous job. | Priority areas include:<br><br>Northern Peninsular Area of Cape York<br><br>Palm Island<br>Cooktown/Laura/Wujal Wujal/ Hope Vale/Mossman Gorge<br>Kowanyama/Pormpuraaw<br>Lockhart River/Coen<br>Aurukun/Weipa/Napranum/<br><br>Mapoon<br>Torres Strait<br>Doomadgee/Burketown/<br><br>Lower Gulf<br>Mornington Island<br>Townsville/Thuringowa<br>Cairns/Mareeba/Atherton/<br><br>Yarrabah |
| **Queensland**<br><br>**Indigenous Economic Development Strategy** | The QIEDS contains broad strategies designed to achieve enhanced economic development for Indigenous people in Queensland. The many specific actions to be undertaken in implementing these strategies will result in a wide range of targeted outcomes. These detailed outcomes can be grouped into the following key outcomes:<br><br>• A greater degree of economic equality for indigenous people;<br><br>• Improved levels of employment for Indigenous people; and<br><br>• Improved levels of Indigenous participation in business.<br><br>The long-term aim of the QIEDS is to assist Indigenous Queenslanders to achieve comparable levels of economic independence as enjoyed by the wider Queensland community. | $2.5million allocated for 2006-07 |
| **Queensland**<br><br>**Looking After Country Together** | *Looking After Country Together* sets out three key main things that need to be done over the next ten years. These include:<br><br>• Better Indigenous access to land and sea country;<br><br>• Better Indigenous involvement in planning and management of sea country; and<br><br>• Better Indigenous involvement in and impact on natural resource planning and policy making.<br><br>See: http://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/pdf/partnerships/summary.pdf | |

**Table 2. (continued)**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Queensland**<br>**Indigenous Employment and Training Managers Program** | The aim of the Indigenous Employment and Training Managers Program is to achieve greater coordination within specified regions, between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, government agencies (at all levels), registered training organisations and industry to identify and create sustainable employment and training opportunities and outcomes for local Indigenous people.<br><br>The Indigenous Employment and Training Managers (IETM) work closely with the Indigenous Employment Training and Support Officers (IETSOs) for the identification of employment and training opportunities in local Indigenous communities, as well as the effective implementation of the Indigenous Employment Policy for Queensland Government Building and Civil Construction Contracts (20% Policy) | Five areas have been identified to be serviced by the role:<br>1. Torres Strait and the Northern Peninsular Area of Cape York<br>2. Eastern Cape York<br>3. Western Cape York<br>4. North and North West Queensland - including the Lower Gulf Area<br>5. Central Queensland<br>6. South East and South West Queensland |
| **Queensland**<br>**Community Jobs Plan - Work Placements**<br>(Mainstream Program) | Under Community Jobs Plan - Work Placements, community and public sector organisations receive funding to employ long-term unemployed people, and those at risk of long-term unemployment, for three to six months in a range of public works, community and environmental projects.<br><br>Community Jobs Plan - Work Placements projects must benefit the community and help job seekers to gain recent work experience and develop competencies and work skills relevant to local employer needs. | $27.1million budget 2006-07 |
| **Queensland**<br>**Indigenous Land Use Agreements** | The Queensland Government has worked with traditional owners and companies to gain agreement for usage of lands that may be subject to Native Title claims. As part of this work, the Government through various agencies offers a compensation package to the traditional owner groups. This package may include employment and training provisions. Companies may also offer employment and training provisions in return for usage of the land.<br><br>The Indigenous Employment Programs Unit negotiates the employment and training components offered by the State Government. Once the Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) has been signed and registered, then traditional owner groups are able to call on Government or companies to comply with the agreement. | |

**Table 2. (continued)**

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|---|---|
| **Queensland**<br><br>**Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation**<br><br>Indigenous Business Capacity Building Program | Objectives:<br><br>To help Indigenous people to increase their economic independence, take up employment opportunities, and improve their quality of life. To meet these priorities, a State Indigenous business development scheme will give grants to help Indigenous people:<br><br>• increase their economic independence;<br><br>• take up employment opportunities; and<br><br>• improve their quality of life. |
| **Queensland**<br><br>**Indigenous Business Establishment Program**<br><br>Department of State Development, Trade and Innovation | The objectives of the grants are to:<br><br>• build knowledge, skills and abilities in businesses within Indigenous communities, including how to start and keep businesses operating efficiently;<br><br>• help identify and develop businesses and employment projects for Indigenous people and communities;<br><br>• help create partnerships and joint ventures between Indigenous organisations, businesses, government and the corporate sector;<br><br>• show leadership in establishing Indigenous-owned businesses and in increasing Indigenous employment.<br><br>The grants fall into two categories:<br><br>• business capacity building;<br><br>• business establishment;<br><br>• and will be awarded to specific projects.<br><br>Eligible projects include:<br><br>• have the potential to become commercial and self-funded;<br><br>• are consistent with the Queensland Government's Cape York Partnerships and Queensland Indigenous Economic Development Strategies;<br><br>• have significant potential to provide effective business development;<br><br>• emphasise employment and community/ regional economic development for Indigenous people;<br><br>• where appropriate, have accessed business advice and support services. |

**Table 2. (continued)**

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|---|---|---|
| **Queensland**<br><br>**Indigenous Community Development Program (ICDP)**<br><br>**Provider:**<br><br>Department of Local Government Planning Sport and Recreation | **Objective:**<br><br>To provide funding to Aboriginal Shire councils, Torres Strait Islander councils and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to support better opportunities for Indigenous people to participate in sport and active recreation in their communities.<br><br>**Overview:**<br><br>Funding is available in only ONE of the following two categories:<br><br>• **Planning, Education and Training and Participation** Organisations applying for planning, education and training and participation initiatives can receive funding for one year only. Application can be made up of some or all of the components of planning, education and training, and participation.<br><br>• **People** Organisations can apply for funding for People projects for up to two years. If successful, approved funding would be made available on an annual basis. | Maximum $50,000 grant. |
| **Western Australia**<br><br>**Aboriginal Economic And Employment Development Officer Program (AEEDO)** | The role of the AEEDO is to increase the involvement of Indigenous communities and organisations into work by developing local employment and training initiatives.<br><br>AEEDOs are currently located in Wyndham, Fitzroy Crossing, Broome, South Hedland, Geraldton, Mandurah,<br><br>Bunbury and Laverton. | |
| **Western Australia**<br><br>**Department of Housing and Works** | **Community Housing Construction and Upgrades**<br><br>AHID's community construction activities provides for the design, tender and construction of new housing and upgrade maintenance exclusively within discrete Aboriginal Communities, where no other housing assistance can be accessed.<br><br>Communities provide major input into the design and siting of their housing, and training and employment opportunities are available for community members associated with the construction, repair and maintenance of buildings within their community. | |

**Table 2. (continued)**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Western Australia**<br><br>**Department of Local Government and Regional Development** | **Indigenous Regional Development Program (IRDP)**<br><br>IRDP will provide grants from $10,000 to $500,000 for capital works, infrastructure and other major capital items, to assist in projects that strengthen the confidence, economic capacity and sustainability of Indigenous communities. Eligible applicants are incorporated Aboriginal Associations. Local Government organisations, non-Indigenous community groups, businesses and other bodies (such as educational institutions) where these organisations are in partnership with incorporated Aboriginal Associations and where the majority of the project's benefits will accrue to the Aboriginal Association or Indigenous community are also eligible to apply. |
| **Western Australia**<br><br>**Indigenous Arts and Tourism Facilities Funding Program (IATFFP)** | Some Current Projects include:<br><br>**Kimberley**<br><br>Warlayirti Artists Aboriginal Corporation, which received $22,523 for the refurbishment of facilities for the Glass Workshop Program for the Balgo Community.<br><br>Canila Pty Ltd t/as Turkey Creek Roadhouse, Warmun Community, which received $30,314 for the upgrade of the Caravan Park and Gija Visitor Centre development at the Turkey Creek Roadhouse.<br><br>Kundat Djaru Aboriginal Corporation (KDAC), which received $80,000 for a new arts and culture centre at Ringer Soak community near Halls Creek. |

**Table 2. (continued)**

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|---|---|
| **Northern Territory**<br><br>**Indigenous Economic Development Strategy** | The NT Government has a detailed Strategy which can be found at: http://www.nt.gov.au/dcm/eco_development _strategy /regional_initiatives/indigenous.shtml<br><br>The NT IED Strategy, released in May 2005, identifies opportunities for economic development in thirteen industry sectors:<br>• Aquaculture and Fisheries,<br>• Arts,<br>• Community Services,<br>• Construction,<br>• Forestry and Agri-business,<br>• Government,<br>• Horticulture,<br>• Knowledge and Culture,<br>• Mining and Production,<br>• Natural Resource Management,<br>• Pastoral,<br>• Retail and Services, and<br>• Tourism |

**Table 3. Philanthropic Institutions that support Indigenous people and organisationsorrganisations**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **AMP Foundation** | www.amp.com.au | Distributes $4million per annum. Invests in two key areas – community involvement and youth employment.<br><br>Supports Social Ventures Australia in partnership with the Smith Family, WorkVentures Ltd and the Benevolent Society.<br><br>No known direct history of supporting Indigenous people but a member of Philanthropy Australia's Indigenous Advisory Group. |
| **Commonwealth Bank Foundation** | www.commbank.com.au/about/ | Capitalised with a $70 million contribution by the Bank. The income stream from this Fund supports projects. Not seeking applications for funding at this stage.<br><br>No known direct history of supporting Indigenous people but a member of Philanthropy Australia's Indigenous Advisory Group. |
| **Dusseldorp Skills Forum** | www.dsf.org.au/index.php | Forum seeks to improve the learning and work transitions of young Australians by cooperating with communities, industry, government and non-government organisations to generate ideas, research, tools and information, and to build networks of common interest.<br><br>No known direct history of supporting Indigenous people but a member of Philanthropy Australia's Indigenous Advisory Group. |
| **Dymocks Literacy Foundation** | www.dymocksliteracy.com.au/ | The Dymocks Literacy Foundation is an Australia-wide, tax-deductible charity that raises funds to assist kids learning to read and write effectively and fall in love with reading.<br><br>Supports Indij Readers. Indij Readers is an innovative and unique, not-for-profit company that develops and publishes contemporary, Indigenous literacy materials for Indigenous and non Indigenous students learning to read and write. |

**Table 3. (continued)**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **Macquarie Bank Foundation** | www.macquarie.com.au/au/about_macquarie/macquarie_in_the_community.htm | The Macquarie Foundation focuses its resources in six core areas: education, the arts, health research and health care, welfare and the environment.<br><br>The Macquarie Bank Foundation is contributing almost $1 million over three years to the Cape York Institute's Higher Expectations Program, which aims to encourage students in remote indigenous communities to pursue tertiary education.<br><br>The Higher Expectations Program enables selected Cape York students to attend top Queensland boarding schools, giving them a greater chance to qualify for university entry.<br><br>It is part of a series of programs designed to build a self-sufficient Cape York economy and community, in a region where as few as 6 per cent of students complete Year 12. |
| **Mary Potter Trust Foundation** | www.marypotterfoundation.org.au | The Mary Potter Trust Foundation has been established by the Sisters of The Little Company of Mary. Its mission is to restore social equality in a society where the gap between incomes and opportunity seems to be widening.<br><br>The Foundation exists to support community groups and activities that work towards addressing the human rights and social justice needs of the disadvantaged. It supports political, educational and resource efforts which will help those that are disadvantaged and marginalised, to become aware of and help develop their own individual talents and skills so that they can participate more fully in society.<br><br>Has contributed to the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service |
| **Mercy Foundation** | www.mercyfoundation.com.au | The Mercy Foundation seeks to create a more just society, not by helping people to cope with their poverty, but by helping them to change the things that are making them poor.<br><br>The Mercy Foundation is committed to help bring about a greater degree of social justice in Australian Society through:<br><br>• Education<br>• Project Funding<br>• Advocacy<br><br>In 2005, provided a grant of $15,000 to Chain Reaction to conduct Enablers Program for Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders in Mount Druitt to build leadership and improve self-determination. |

**Table 3. (continued)**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **Perpetual** | www.perpetual.com.au | Perpetual is trustee or co-trustee of over 400 charitable trusts valued at approximately $900 million. Perpetual receives over 1,000 applications annually for funding from not-for-profit groups and distributes close to $35 million each year.<br><br>Has program streams across the five areas of Arts & Culture, Environment, Education, Medical Research and Social Welfare.<br><br>Manages the Australian Bush Heritage Fund. |
| **Sisters of Charity Foundation** | www.sistersofcharityfoundation.com.au/ | The broad aim and purpose of the Sisters of Charity Foundation is to:<br>• Assist in the creation and nurturing of ministries identified with the mission of the Sisters of Charity, particularly those that impact on the poor and the under-served.<br>• Build on and expand those current ministries identified with the Sisters of Charity that provide for the poor and under-served in the community.<br>• Make grants for charitable public purposes that promote the mission of the Sisters of Charity.<br><br>Provides an annual education scholarship to assist a NSW rural Indigenous young person. |
| **The Smith Family** | www.smithfamily.org.au | A key priority for The Smith Family is to provide ongoing opportunities for Indigenous Australians through education and community based initiatives.<br><br>The Smith Family runs a number of targeted initiatives in Esperance, Port Hedland and Moorditj that have been developed to meet the specific needs of these Indigenous communities.<br><br>The Smith Family has a number of strong, close and long-term partnerships tailored to harness the goals and synergies between individual businesses and us. These include partnerships with Microsoft Australia, AMP Foundation, ANZ, Cisco Systems Australia, BHP Billiton, Westpac, Stuart Alexander's Rosella Foundation, Colgate - Palmolive, Fogarty Foundation, The University of Sydney, Centennial Coal, American Express and PricewaterhouseCoopers.<br><br>The Smith Family is working with Indigenous communities as a focus area for future initiatives. |

**Table 3. (continued)**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **Westpac Foundation** | www.westpac.com.au | The Foundation's focus is on creating and sustaining social enterprises in disadvantaged communities. A social enterprise is defined as a not-for-profit entity that derives its income primarily through activities aligned with its social purpose.<br><br>A particular emphasis is given to programs that:<br><br>• Enable life long learning and education leading to employment<br>• Encourage youth leadership and empowerment<br>• Support youth and families at risk<br>• Promote financial inclusion and responsible money management<br><br>5.2% of its $30million in expenditure in 2004 were focussed on Indigenous support.<br><br>• Beneficiaries included:<br>• Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation<br>• Bama Ngappi Ngappi Corporation<br>• Cape York Institute<br>• Cape York Partnerships<br>• First Australians Business<br>• Indigenous Business Australia<br>• Indigenous Capital Assistance Scheme<br>• Indigenous Community Volunteers<br>• NT Government Indigenous Advisory Group<br>• Tangentyere Council, Alice Springs, NT<br>• Yothu Yindi Foundation – *Garma Festival*<br><br>**Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships (IEP)**<br><br>Westpac is a founding corporate partner of IEP and is working on programs to help build the financial independence of communities in Cape York. |

**Table 3. (continued)**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **ANZ Executors & Trustee Co** | www.anz.com/australia/charitabletrusts/guFinding.asp | The ANZ Community Fund enables people in ANZ branches throughout regional and rural Australia to identify, fund and support projects or initiatives that are important to their local communities. Allocates approximately $350,000 per annum.<br><br>ANZ has committed $3 million over the next three years to deliver a range of Community Development Finance programs to assist people facing financial hardship.<br><br>ANZ partners with the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) to offer Seeds of Renewal, a small grants program. Seeds of Renewal provides funding for projects to encourage regeneration and growth in communities of less than 15,000 people.<br><br>ANZ is launching an initiative that gives shareholders the opportunity to elect to donate some or all of their cash dividend entitlements to a nominated charity. ANZ is the first Australian company serviced by the major share registries to offer shareholders the opportunity to donate their dividends under a program which offers a choice of charities. Whilst Reconciliation Australia is in the list of 28 organisations supported through this program, no Indigenous organisation is listed. Partners with the Traditional Credit Union in Darwin.<br><br>ANZ has commenced a mutual capacity building program where its people are seconded to work in Indigenous organisations for periods of up to 12 months. The program enables employees to improve their understanding of Indigenous culture and ways to promote a more inclusive Australian society. These secondees partner with Indigenous organisations to share and develop their knowledge and expertise and to build mutual capacity in governance, financial management and project management.<br><br>Four secondments are currently underway:<br>• Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships<br>• Reconciliation Australia<br>• First Nations Foundation<br>• The Long Walk |

**Table 3. (continued)**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **Colonial Foundation** | www.colonialfoundation.org.au | The Board of Colonial Foundation has determined that, for the time being, the Foundation's funds should, in the main, be directed towards assisting the following areas in the community:<br>• community health, including Aboriginal health<br>• education and vocational training<br>• migrant community welfare<br>• disadvantaged people in our society<br>• community quality of life, including the arts and cultural activities<br>• research in relation to any of these areas.<br>New grants are not being considered or made in the 2005-06 year.<br>Has supported Indigenous Enterprise Partnerships ($750,000 over 3 years). |
| **The Foundation for Young Australians** | www.youngaustralians.org | The Indigenous Youth Leadership Programme (IYLP) is a leadership programme for young Indigenous Australians delivered by The Foundation for Young Australians. The IYLP is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST)<br>Up to 250 scholarships will be awarded from 2006-2009 to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary and tertiary students from remote locations. The IYLP will provide selected scholars access to educational opportunities at high performing government and non-government schools.<br>Its Indigenous Small Grants program funds initiatives that enhance youth participation or create opportunities for the development of Indigenous young people aged 12 – 25.<br>It also operates the Robert Riley Scholarship Program to promote the pursuit of justice and human rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through supporting education of young Indigenous people.<br>Up to four scholarships of $5,000 each will be awarded to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 25 years or under for the pursuit of studies in the fields of law, legal practice, human rights, child protection, criminology and criminal or juvenile justice. |

**Table 3. (continued)**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **The Fred Hollows Foundation** | www.hollows.org | Has delivered the Fred Hollows Foundation Indigenous Health Program since 2000.<br><br>The projects are undertaken in the Indigenous communities of Barunga, Beswick (Wugularr), Manyallaluk and Bulman (Gulin Gulin), which lie to the east of Katherine in the Northern Territory.<br><br>The Foundation works in partnership with the Jawoyn Association, Sunrise Health Service Aboriginal Corporation, and the Indigenous communities to the east of Katherine. |
| **Gandel Charitable Trust** | | Supports the Yachad Accelerated Learning Project - designed to improve outcomes and address inequalities in Indigenous and Remote education. |
| **The Ian Potter Foundation** | www.ianpotter.org.au | Established with a $50million bequest by Sir Ian Potter.<br><br>The Foundation has seven areas of interest:<br><br>• Arts<br>• Education<br>• Environment & Conservation<br>• Health<br>• Medical Research<br>• Science<br>• Social Welfare<br>• Travel<br><br>While the Foundation has previously funded an Indigenous Health Program in a South Australian community, it does not have a strong focus on Indigenous issues. It is also a member of Philanthropy Australia's Indigenous Advisory Group. |

**Table 3. (continued)**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **The Myer Foundation** | www.myerfoundation.org.au | Between 2006 and 2010, there will be a stronger focus on achieving change by making larger grants over longer periods of time. Through the Large Grants Program, more resources will be targeted to fund strategies that the Foundation believes will help it to achieve its objectives.<br><br>Large grants will be made in five areas:<br><br>• The Arts and Humanities<br>• Australia in the Asia-Pacific Region<br>• Education<br>• Poverty and Disadvantage<br>• Sustainability and the Environment<br><br>Within each of these areas, large grants will be made, for up to 3-5 years, to support services and projects that could make a substantial impact on our understanding of, response to, or prevention of, issues in these areas.<br><br>It also delivers a Small Grants Program to a maximum of $10,000. It has funded many Aboriginal projects in Australia. |
| **Opening the Doors Foundation** | www.openingthedoors.org.au | An Indigenous Education Foundation established to:<br><br>• empower and support Indigenous Families to make choices in educational opportunities for their children;<br>• help "open the doors" of independent educational institutions in Victoria for Indigenous students;<br>• be a model of self-empowerment and self-determination by creating an organisation that responds directly to the needs of its own community. |
| **Rio Tinto Aboriginal Foundation** | www.riotinto.com | The Rio Tinto Aboriginal Foundation in its first full year of operation has allocated $1.1 million to health, sport, cultural and education programmes as part of a continuing commitment to support initiatives that enhance the status and welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islands people.<br><br>The Company has a dedicated Indigenous Policy and a strong commitment to Independence employment and economic development.<br><br>Fields of Interest Community Benefit – General, Culture, Employment, Medical Research, Community Development, Education &Training, Literacy, Social Justice, Health &Well-being, Arts & Culture, Diabetes, child health. Target Groups: Indigenous people. |

**Table 3. (continued)**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **Scanlon Foundation** | www.scanlonfoundation.org.au | The Scanlon Foundation was established in June 2001. Its mission is: *"to support the creation of a larger cohesive Australian society"*<br><br>It makes grants for general charitable purposes in Australia. The principle area of interest is Cultural Diversity and Social Cohesion<br><br>The Foundation is able to fund nationally but will continue to give preference to Victorian based applications during these early years of its operation. |
| **The Shell Company of Australia** | www.shell.com.au | Shell is a corporate supporter of Indigenous Community Volunteers, a not-for-profit company that places skilled volunteers in Indigenous communities to facilitate the transfer of skills ranging from strategic planning to horticultural training. |
| **Poola Foundation** | Phone: 03 9348 2122<br><br>amanda@poolafoundation.org.au | The Poola Foundation's aim is to support positive and practical projects in the fields of environment and social justice that lead to a more sustainable, just and peaceful world. Fields of Interest: Environment, Conservation & Heritage. Target Groups: Indigenous people.<br><br>Annual disbursement - $2 million. |
| **Telstra Foundation** | www.telstrafoundation.com | In 2002, as part of its strong tradition of community involvement, Telstra established the Telstra Foundation - a giving program devoted to enriching the lives of Australian children and young people and the communities in which they live.<br><br>The Telstra Foundation has two main programs - the *Telstra Foundation Community Development Fund* and the *Telstra's Kids Fund*. Each fund has its own guidelines to support a diverse cross section of the community.<br><br>In 2004/2005, the Foundation contributed approximately $4.4 million in grants to over 850 not-for-profit organisations that help children and young people in Australia to reach their potential.<br><br>Since it was established in 2002, the Community Development Fund of the Telstra Foundation has provided support for 69 Indigenous projects, which will significantly benefit Indigenous children and young people. |
| **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Development Fund (ATSIF)**<br><br>**National Council of Churches** | http://www.ncca.org.au/natsiec/atsidf?mysource_site_extension=printer_friendly_pages | The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Development Fund (ATSIDF), of the National Council of Churches in Australia, is a tax deductible fund set up to assist Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples by giving small, usually one-off grants for community development projects. Total annual funding of less than $20,000. |

**Table 3. (continued)**

| Foundation/ Institution | Website | Past Support for Indigenous People or Organisations |
|---|---|---|
| **Jessie Street Trust (NSW)** | Email: mburn@nla.gov.au | Fields of Interest: Peace & Security, Social Justice,<br>Women's rights, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights, the elimination of all forms of discrimination, peace and disarmament.<br>Target Groups: Indigenous people, Women & Girls. |
| **Sandhurst Trustees Ltd ATF Community Enterprise Foundation** | www. communityenterprise. com. au | Inspire, support and enable individuals and communities who wish to create positive, lasting change.<br>Fields of Interest: Culture, Community Development, Education & Training, Arts & Culture, Environment, Conservation &Heritage.<br>Target Groups: Indigenous people, People in rural and remote communities. |
| **Yothu Yindi Foundation** | | The YYF was established in 1990 by elders from five of the Yolngu clans, the Gumatj, Rirratjingu, Djapu, Galpu and Wangurri clans. The Garma Festival is the centrepiece of YYF's vision.<br>One of the key objectives of YYF is to support and further the maintenance, development, teaching and enterprise potential of Yolngu cultural life. In addition to the Garma Festival, the Foundation has instigated a number of other related projects which achieve its aims.<br>One of the key objectives of the Yothu Yindi Foundation is to support and further the maintenance, development, teaching and enterprise potential of Yolngu cultural life. |

# Appendix 2
## Additional Organisations Reviewed

| Organisation Type | Name | Location | Primary Mission and Services |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Indigenous** | North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance | Northern Australia | NAILSMA consists of a partnership between the Kimberley, Northern and Carpentaria Land Councils and the Balkanu Cape York Development Association. It aims to support practical Indigenous land and sea management using strategic approaches to care for country with an emphasis on practical management by Traditional Owners. |
| | Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation | Cape York, QLD | Balkanu is committed to supporting the Indigenous people of the Cape York Peninsula to improve the economy, society and culture of the region. Services include the Business Development Unit, C.Y. Digital Network, Caring for Country unit, Homelands Housing project and Property Planning. |
| | Cape York Partnerships | Cape York, QLD | In 1999 CYP was established through a 'partnership' between Indigenous Cape York and the State of Queensland in order to work to improve the life of Indigenous people on Cape York. |
| | Cape York Institute for Policy and Leadership | Cape York, QLD | CYI is a pubic policy organisation that champions reform in Indigenous economic and social policies. It is focused on issues in Cape York, but aims to have a national influence and is an entity of Griffith University but not an academic institution. Policy and research, and youth and leadership are the two broad themes of the institute. |
| | Cape York Land Council | Cape York, QLD | CYLC is an Aboriginal Corporation for the purposes of the *Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976* (Cth). It is primarily charged with pursuing native title claims and negotiating Indigenous Land Use Agreements in accordance with the NTA. |

**Appendix 2. (continued)**

| Organisation Type | Name | Location | Primary Mission and Services |
|---|---|---|---|
| Indigenous (continued) | Kowanyama Land and Natural Resource Office | Cape York, QLD | KLANRO consists of a project officer, five rangers, and a homeland coordinator, and its role is to further the Community's land and sea management interests. |
| | The Northern Land Council | N.T. | As well as performing statutory roles under the ALRA, the NLC carries out functions under several NT laws including: the Aboriginal Land Act; the Special Purposes Lease Act and the Pastoral Land Act. The NLC also provides Land Management Services which includes an Indigenous Pastoral Program (IPP) and a Caring For Country Program with some 300 community rangers (male and female) working in 20 Ranger groups across the Top End. |
| | The Kimberley Land Council | W.A. | KLC's principal role is as an NTRB for which it is funded. Together with WA Ag, the KLC formed the field component of an Intergrated Natural and Cultural Resource Management project, blending traditional, contemporary and scientific approaches to land use. |
| | Kimberley Aboriginal Pastoralists Association | W.A. | Kimberley Aboriginal Pastoralists Association was established in the late 1980s. Its role included providing a voice for Aboriginal pastoralists in the region and it has also been involved in some development and assessment work relating to Aboriginal properties |
| | Kimberley Indigenous Management Support Service | W.A. | KIMSS has evolved from an initiative of the State Government's department of agriculture and in its present from is an example of collaboration between the Commonwealth and State Government agencies, namely the Indigenous Land Council (as a funder) and WA Ag (as a field operator). KIMSS aims to build capacity by providing practical pastoral advice to Aboriginal properties through the agency of skilled field staff. |
| | Kimberley Sustainable Development Trust | W.A. | The purpose of the Trust is to relieve social and economic disadvantage of Kimberley Aboriginal people, and to pursue and develop economic and business opportunities for Kimberley Aboriginal people by using Aboriginal land equity as a negotiating base. |
| | Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre | W.A. | To mission of the KALCC is to assist and promote the ceremonies, songs and dance of Kimberley Aboriginal people, to encourage and strengthen their social, cultural and legal values and ensure their traditions a place in Australian society. |

**Appendix 2. (continued)**

| Organisation Type | Name | Location | Primary Mission and Services |
|---|---|---|---|
| Indigenous (continued) | Kimberley Language Resource Centre | W.A. | The KLRC is an Aboriginal incorporated association dedicated to keeping language strong in the Kimberley. It was the first community language centre in Australia established to maintain Aboriginal languages. |
| **State Government** | Department of Indigenous Affairs | W.A. | The Department is WA government's lead Indigenous agency. Their core activities are: the management and protection of heritage and culture; management and transfer of land; and co-ordination of a whole of government approach. The DIA have a memorandum of understanding with the KLC on development issues. |
| | The Office of Aboriginal Economic Development | W.A. | The Office provides support for the development of large businesses and will only deal with projects that have a professional and business-like corporate structure. Projects must demonstrate that they are commercially viable, that they could survive without such subsidies as CDEP and that personnel have the necessary management skills. |
| | Wunan Trust | W.A. | The Wunan Trust was established in 1997 with the assistance of the former ATSIC. Its aim was to improve the socio-economic position of people in the east Kimberley. The organisation provides business support and project management services to communities and community organisations. It operates on a fee for service basis. |
| | Kimberley Development Commission (KDC) | W.A. | The Commission is a statutory body of the Government of Western Australia. Its role is to promote economic and social development in the Kimberley region. The KDC can provide small amounts of seed funding to Aboriginal businesses |
| **Common-wealth Programs** | Australian Bush Heritage | National | ABH buys or acquires land of high conservation and manages and protects that land in perpetuity. Our aim is to protect the remarkable diversity of life in Australia. We also work with others to support their work of protecting their land and encouraging native plants and animals. They currently own and manage 25 reserves throughout Australia covering 675 000 hectares. |
| | Greening Australia | National | GA has over 25 years of industry experience in creating sustainable environmental outcomes. It is solutions driven and committed to practical outcomes using science and community engagement. |

**Appendix 2. (continued)**

| Organisation Type | Name | Location | Primary Mission and Services |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Environmental NGOs** | Northern Australia Environment Alliance | Northern Australia | The aim of the Alliance is to improve strategic conservation outcomes across Northern Australia through cooperation between environment non-government organisations. |
| | Australian Conservation Foundation | National | ACF is committed to inspiring people to achieve a healthy environment for all Australians. They promote solutions through research, consultation, education and partnerships and work with the community, business and government to protect, restore and sustain our environment. |
| | Australian Marine Conservation Society | National | The Australian Marine Conservation Society is the voice for Australia's coasts and oceans. They work with local communities to protect ocean life and the habitats they call home. |
| | Australian Wildlife Conservancy | National | AWC acquires land, and works with other landholders, to establish sanctuaries for the conservation of threatened wildlife and ecosystems. AWC now owns 14 sanctuaries covering 917,000 ha (2.3 million acres) in places such as north Queensland, the Kimberley, western NSW and the forests of south-western Australia. |
| | The Nature Conservancy | National | The Nature Conservancy's mission is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive by purchasing land. They have also developed a strategic, science-based planning process, called Conservation by Design. |
| | The Wilderness Society | National | The Wilderness Society (TWS) is a national, community-based, environmental advocacy organisation whose purpose is to protect, promote and restore wilderness and natural processes across Australia for the survival and ongoing evolution of life on Earth. TWS works through the avenues of public education and empowerment, advocacy and negotiation, and desk and field research. |
| | WWF Australia | National | WWF-Australia is part of the WWF International Network, the world's largest and most experienced independent conservation organisation. Their mission is to stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature. |

**Appendix 2. (continued)**

| Organisation Type | Name | Location | Primary Mission and Services |
|---|---|---|---|
| Environ-mental NGOs (continued) | Cairns and Far North Environment Centre | North QLD | The Cairns and Far North Environment Centre Inc. (CAFNEC) is a not-for-profit organization that was formed in 1981 by concerned members of the Far North Queensland community seeking better protection for Far North Queensland's natural environment |
| | NQ Conservation Council | North QLD | NQCC is a voluntary regional conservation group whose area of interest extends along the Queensland coast from South of Bowen to North of Cardwell and Westward from this coastal strip to the Northern Territory border. |
| | Queensland Conservation Council | South QLD | Queensland Conservation Council is the state's peak non-government environment group. They have been working to protect, conserve and sustain Queensland's environment for more than 35 years. |
| | Environment Centre of the Northern Territory | N.T. | The Centre was established in 1983 and has played a crucial role in improving environmental protection and management throughout the Territory. |
| | Environs Kimberley | W.A. | EK is an independent community environmental organization dedicated to protecting the nature and culture of the Kimberley region. |
| | Conservation Council of WA | W.A. | The Council is the state's peak non-government environment organisation — a voice for the environment since 1967. |
| **Other** | Terrain Natural Resource Management Ltd | North QLD | Terrain NRM Ltd is the designated body established to work with and represent the community in managing the region's natural resources. The Company's role is recognised under the Natural Heritage Trust of Australia Act and its core business is the development and maintenance of the Wet Tropics Regional NRM Plan and the alignment of regional effort towards achievement of the plan. |
| | Centre for Appropriate Technology | Northern Australia | CAT is strongly adopting a community development approach is its new body of work on Securing Sustainable Livelihoods through the use of technology. CAT has a 'Livelihood Opportunity Project' with the overall goals of increasing the ability of remote communities of Indigenous people in Australia to achieve their desired livelihood outcomes. |

**Appendix 2. (continued)**

| Organisation Type | Name | Location | Primary Mission and Services |
|---|---|---|---|
| Other (continued) | Oxfam Community Aid Abroad | National | Oxfam has developed, on the basis of experience, a way of working with people - commonly called "developmental". Developmental work is work which is involved in the realities of people's everyday lives. Oxfam Community Aid Abroad believes that developmental work has a rightful place alongside other contributions that help people to live better lives. |