



Building Indigenous Ranger Monitoring Capacity

Indigenous Rangers play a vital role improving the health of land, water and biodiversity. It's a complex job requiring a mix of Traditional Knowledge, technical expertise and practical on-ground experience, all of which were covered during an NQ Dry Tropics Traditional Owner & Indigenous Ranger training event, held over three days in Townsville.

The training was developed through consultation with the Burdekin Dry Tropics Traditional Owner Management Group (TOMG), a forum comprising representatives from 14 Traditional Owner groups across North Queensland.

TOMG members had highlighted the need for a workshop focused on developing the capacity of Indigenous Rangers to undertake monitoring and reporting for their work, including data capture methods, and photo point monitoring.

Workshop participants represented four North Queensland Indigenous Ranger groups — MinggaMingga Rangers (Palm Island), Gudjuda Reference Group Aboriginal Corporation (Lower Burdekin); Yunbenun Land and Sea Rangers (Magnetic Island); and Gurambilbarra Rangers (Townsville).





They spent day one in the classroom with Troy Mallie, a consultant with Environmental Systems Solutions, learning how to store monitoring data using the Fulcrum information management platform.

Armed with this information they spent days two and three in the field at Alligator Creek and Yunbenun, putting what they had learnt into practice while walking Country and learning valuable Traditional Ecological Knowledge from Elders including Eddie Smallwood (Bindal), Russell Butler (Banjin and Warragamay), Richard Cassidy (Manbarra), Troy Johnson and Virginia Wyles (both Wulgurukaba).

Yunbenun Land and Sea Rangers Coordinator, Troy Johnson, said the training would support Rangers to gather the information required to highlight their impact on the ground.

“Ongoing monitoring and data capture are a very important part of demonstrating the effectiveness of the work we do as Rangers,” Troy said. “It helps us tell the story of what was achieved, and why it matters, which aids with securing ongoing funding required to keep looking after Country.”

NQ Dry Tropics MERI Coordinator, Dr Jules Funnell, said ongoing funding for training through the Regional Coordination and Evaluation project, provided a great opportunity to build capacity around monitoring. “Having funding over several projects has given us the ability to build on the training we had done previously,” Jules said. “It was also rewarding to work with our Traditional Owner Management Group to determine what training would be of most value, and then be able to deliver it.”



Photographs: First page (top) Workshop participants pictured on day 2 at Alligator Creek, from left: Rosie Kidman (NRM Partnerships Facilitator), Richard Fischer, Holly Zaro (Gudjuda Ranger); Troy Mallie (Environmental Systems Solutions), Alan Palm Island Jr and Reggie Palm Island (MinggaMingga Rangers); Cultural Fire Project Officer Trinity Georgetown; Gudjuda Rangers Jemima Sutherland and Rullington Zaro; Uncle Russell Butler (Bandjin and Warragamay), Gudjuda Ranger Uncle Eddie Smallwood, and Gurambilbarra Ranger Heath Fraser. First page (bottom left) Gudjuda Rangers Holly and Rullington Zaro practice photo point monitoring at West Point, (bottom right) Mingga Mingga Ranger Alan Palm Island Jr, Troy Mallie (Environmental Systems Solutions); Mingga Mingga Ranger Reggie Palm Island. Second page (top right) Pictured during the photo point monitoring training are, from left, Classroom session on how to use Fulcrum, run by Troy Mallie (Environmental Systems Solutions), (top left) Yunbenun Land and Sea Rangers Coordinator, Troy Johnson (left) with Gudjuda CEO Eddie Smallwood (Bindal). Left: Virginia Wyles, (Wulgurukaba).

The training was delivered through the Regional Coordination and Evaluation project, funded through the Queensland Government’s Natural Resources Recovery Program. It was also supported by the Fighting Invasive Species Together project, funded through the Queensland Government’s Natural Resource Management Expansion Program.

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