

NAILSMA



**NORTH AUSTRALIAN
INDIGENOUS
LAND AND SEA
MANAGEMENT
ALLIANCE**

Normanby Land Use and Economic Diversification Plan



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Acronyms

AbCF	Aboriginal Carbon Foundation
ACCU	Australian Carbon Credit Unit
BNHCRC	Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre
BoC	Business on Country
CRCNA	Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
CYLC	Cape York Land Council
IBRA	Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia
ICIN	Indigenous Carbon Industry Network
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
KLC	Kimberley Land Council
NAILSMA	North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance
PES	Payment for Environmental Services
Qld	Queensland
RAMP	Remote Animal Meat Processing
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TO	Traditional Owners
UQ	University of Queensland

Introduction

This Land Use and Economic Diversification Plan (LUP) has been put together for the Normanby Aboriginal Corporation, based on meetings, workshops and fieldwork with Normanby Aboriginal Corporation staff and Traditional Owners. This plan has been developed specifically for the Normanby Station.

The LUP focuses on the four business areas identified by Normanby Aboriginal Corporation; Beef Enterprise, Fire Management and Carbon Abatement; Cultural Tourism and Environmental Management.

The LUP includes a Land Rights and Native Title determination Assessment to establish a clear picture of the Traditional Owners (TO) options to use and access their ancestral lands under Australian law. In the case where land rights or Native Title determinations don't exist, further exploration of the land tenure and legislation is needed to ascertain options for access and use of ancestral (or other) *country*. For example, partnerships with current land leaseholders, such as pastoralists may be possible, or opportunities for Traditional Owners to access and establish business enterprises on land under non-Indigenous management may be negotiated.

An historical timeline provides an overview of how the country has been used, accessed and managed since colonisation, providing insight into traditional Owner access and use, related customary values in the land and waters and background for Business on Country (BoC) opportunities.

The cultural and conservation values of the country have further been explored to provide more detailed background as to Payment for Environmental Services (PES) opportunities that may align with Traditional Owner aspirations.

Our Story

Traditional owners from Normanby Station are part of the Balngarrawarra Clan.

Situated one hour northeast from Cooktown in the Southern Cape York Region, Normanby Station lies in the heart of the fourth largest river catchment of the Great Barrier Reef.

Spectacular sandstone escarpments dominate the landscape and contain a large number of cultural heritage sites in need active management to deal with existing pressures. The riverine environment of the Normanby River, and its tributaries, is home to a diversity of plants and animals but also threatened by gully erosion associated with the pastoral enterprise and feral animals.

Balngarrawarra Country – Historical Timeline

Table 1: Significant historical influences on Balngarrawarra land use options.

DATE	Event
1873	Goldfields proclaimed around Palmer river, leading to a massive influx of prospectors, Chinese market gardeners and cattle and related settlements ⁱ
1873–	Infamous battle on the Normanby (Battle Camp) and ensuing massacres in the region.
	Palmerville Dray Track from Palmer River to Cooktown
1879	End of the major gold rush
1880s	Pastoral licences granted (Olive Vale, Battle Camp, Breeza Plains, Boralga, etc.)
1890s	Large scale removal of Aborigines to missions leaving customary lands vulnerable to wild fires, site desecration, damage from cattle, etc. over the long periods of dispossession that followed.
1993	Native Title Act (Cth)
2007	Cape York Peninsula Heritage Area reserve. Under the Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007, the Cape York water plan (under the Water Act) must provide a reserve of water for the purpose of helping Indigenous communities achieve their economic and social aspirations
2017	Federal Government announces \$4 million to reduce gully erosion in the Normanby Basin to address sediment run-off to the Great Barrier Reef.
	Formation of the Normanby Rangers
2018	Cape York Native Title United Number a single Claim (determination pending)

Pastoralism

The initial focus of the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia (CRCNA) supported the BoC project is Normanby Station. Balngarrawarra people hold the pastoral lease and wish to consolidate the livelihood opportunities there before considering neighbouring areas for which they have a customary association. Through BoC process diversification of commercial activities in the PES, the area may lead to contracted work on neighbouring leases not held by Balngarrawarra and possibly scaling up carbon projects with cultural neighbours, such as Western Yalanji. Future arrangements with the Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC) that hold the Welcome and Crocodile pastoral leases may also be prospective. For the next 12 months (2020-21), however, Balngarrawarra wishes to concentrate on growing capability at Normanby.

Table 2: Priority pastoral leaseholds in project ambit.

#	Pastoral Station	Family/Owner Name
1	Normanby Station	Normanby Aboriginal Corporation

Pastoral leases in Queensland

Approximately 1000 pastoral leases cover about 40% of Queensland (Qld). Pastoral leases in Queensland are established under **the Land Act 1994**, allowing a large area of land to be rented from the Crown for pastoral purposes for a fixed and generally lengthy period.

Pastoral leases may be used for grazing or other agriculture. These leases can also be used in some instances for other purposes – including, for example, the production of energy from renewable sources- provided the purpose of the lease is amended to include the additional purpose and the change of purpose is not inconsistent with native title and continued pastoral operations. Recent changes to the Land Act 1994 also mean that landholders can apply to extend their lease for a term which will be for no longer than the current term of their existing lease (known as a rolling term lease).

The relevant legislation for understanding our tenure and rights

This is a summary of the legislation that is relevant for understanding our tenure and legal rights for Balngarrawarra.

Table 3: Legislation influencing Balngarrawarra land-use opportunities.

Legislation Name	Which Government?	What does this law do?
<i>Aboriginal Torres Strait Island Heritage Protection Act (1984)</i>	<i>Federal</i>	<i>This law is about preserving and protecting areas and objects that are sacred to Aboriginal people.</i>
<i>Native Title Act (1993)</i>	<i>Federal</i>	<i>Native Title can be sought anywhere in Australia, and on pastoral or town lands. But native title gives recognition of traditional rights, it does not give absolute control of the land.</i>
<i>Aboriginal Land Act 1991</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>Enables the transfer of lands to Aboriginal groups under inalienable freehold title</i>
<i>Land Act 1994</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>Enables areas of land to be rented from the Crown for grazing</i>
<i>Qld Heritage Act 1992</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>Enables protection of non-Aboriginal cultural heritage</i>
<i>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>Relevant to the protection of Aboriginal Cultural sites and areas</i>
<i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i>	<i>Federal</i>	<i>Informs opportunities for biodiversity management and includes, for example, protection for the Great Barrier reef from deleterious catchment activities and run-off.</i>
<i>Nature Conservation Act</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>Protect rights to take wildlife for customary purposes. Sets conditions for commercial use of wildlife.</i>
<i>Water Act 2000</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>Provides for: sustainable management (planning, allocation and use) of Qld water resources and quarry material; management of water supply and demand in SE Qld; management of impacts of underground water from resource sector use.</i>

Note: QLD: Queensland.

The Natural Environment at Balngarrawarra

Balngarrawarra lands are located in the Wet Tropics Bioregion of Queensland. This bioregion is classified by the Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) and extends across a section of coastline in the south-east of north Queensland. The area stretches along the north-east coast of Australia for some 450 km and is made up largely of tropical rainforests. This biotope offers a particularly extensive and varied array of plants, as well as marsupials and singing birds, along with other rare and endangered animals and plant species (Qld Govt. 2017). Sandstone escarpments, open woodlands, wetlands and riverine environments are habitats for rare and threatened species and ecosystems of outstanding value. Traditional owners utilise these ecosystems for hunting and gathering bush tucker and wish to continue this practice in a sustainable way.

Normanby Station is also in the Wet Tropics bioregion and has been recognised as an area with abundant actively eroding alluvial gullies from which thousands of tonnes of sediment are released into the Normanby River each wet season. Historical land use, heavy pastoralism and mining have exacerbated this erosion beyond 'normal' amounts. The sediments flow into Princess Charlotte Bay, creating flood plumes which impact the Northern Great Barrier Reef Lagoon. The Traditional Owners wish to manage the erosion to reduce damage to their country, and the quantity of sediment flow each year.

Conservation

The Normanby Aboriginal Corporation is developing and implementing a work plan for Normanby Station. This work is addressing the threat of late-season wildfires; reducing impacts from uncontrolled visitation, feral animals and priority weeds; and identifying and planning soil erosion work priorities. The project will improve ground cover and biodiversity, reduce sediment run-off and provide training in land management skills.

Recent initiatives, supported through CRCNA project, uses innovative science and new partnerships to track and manage feral cattle. This is an important conservation measure on Normanby station as environmental degradation (soil, water quality, invasive species spread, etc.) is exacerbated by increasing numbers of uncontrolled cattle. The technology being piloted here is satellite tracking of tags. A Smartfarms grant and partnership with CSIRO were secured for this potentially ground-breaking project. Tracking, reducing and managing the feral herd is key to revitalising and professionalising the Normanby pastoral concern. In this sense, the strategic focus on fire and environmental management is linked directly to the Normanby cattle project.

Heritage Sites

The Balngarrawarra Traditional Owners have identified priority areas that they want to protect. There are a large number of cultural heritage sites including paintings and burial sites found on Normanby Station. Rediscovering and conserving these sites are a priority, so that they can be preserved for future generations. Some rediscovered

paintings have depicted images of ocean animals, confirming their social and ecological connection to the Great Barrier Reef through the Normanby River. Connecting people to country has always rated high with traditional owner aspirations. The physical and mental health benefits of working, living or visiting country are recognised by Traditional Owners. The process of reconnecting people differs between individuals, so this project would provide a clear pathway agreed upon by all.

We are concerned about:

- Heritage sites getting damaged by tourists and cattle because they are not protected with fences and signs
- Traditional Owners are not able to care for heritage and cultural sites properly

We want to see:

- Heritage and cultural sites protected with signs and fences so that other people (locals and tourists) know where sacred sites are and respect them
- Certain areas closed off during cultural time
- Traditional Owners taking care of sacred sites
- Elders teaching younger generations about culture, songlines and cultural sites
- Our water and sacred sites respected by visitors and tourists

Our strategies to achieve this include:

- Registering our sacred sites so that we can put up fencing and signs, and make sure that they are legally protected
- Building partnerships and working with the pastoralist and other local stakeholders to ensure that our sites are protected and respected

Figure 1: Excerpt from Normanby Land Management Plan (unpublished 2015)

Land Use Business Opportunities

An area of high priority for Balngarrawarra people is identifying and developing business opportunities on traditional country that are in line with community aspirations and vision for the looking after that country.

It is critical to identify possible commercial opportunities on country that support Balngarrawarra Traditional Owners to reconnect and live on their homelands, ensuring that all cultural protocols are adhered to.

Through the BoC process, three key areas were initially prioritised and considered to be compatible with the overall goal; Cultural Tourism, Beef Enterprise and Environmental Management.

Cultural Tourism on Normanby Station

Balngarrawarra Traditional Owners of Normanby Station wish to conduct and expand tourism and associated commercial activities on their homelands.

Normanby Station Aboriginal tours are conducted by Culture Connect and provide genuine cultural experiences connecting tourists with Balngarrawarra people and enabling them to explore rarely seen rock art galleries with Traditional Owners at Normanby Station.

'With its sandstone escarpments and woodland savannah, this area was a crucial place for the survival of Aboriginal people with plenty of water, food and rock shelters. Visitors discover rarely seen mysterious and spiritual rock art as they are guided by an Indigenous Traditional Owner. They learn how the Balngarrawarra are keeping their culture alive. Hear astonishing stories handed down the generations. Discover traditional bush food and medicine whilst enjoying morning tea amongst a bush setting.

With special permission from Traditional Owners at Normanby Station, we are able to grant tourists a unique experience visiting the homelands and ancient rock art with the unique insight of the Balngarrawarra people'.ⁱⁱ

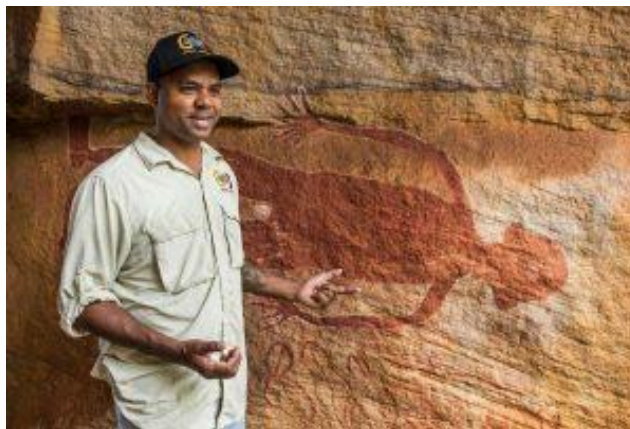


Figure 2 Balngarrawarra tour guide. Normanby Station (Source: Culture Connect 2019)

Mission

To allow Balngarrawarra Traditional Owners to return to homelands by establishing their own commercial tourism ventures on Normanby Station.

Vision

To have four Balngarrawarra families permanently settled on Normanby Station by 2024.

Purpose

To preserve and highlight traditional and contemporary Balngarrawarra culture through unique and genuine cultural experiences offered to the tourism and education sectors.

Objective

To establish successful and profitable enterprises for Balngarrawarra Traditional Owners on their homelands without the aid of government funding.

To protect and preserve Balngarrawarra Country from mining interests.

To develop the Balngarrawarra Normanby Ranger Group – Funding is required, and options are being identified to sustain a Ranger group into the long term.

Beef Enterprise

Normanby Station is currently run largely as a cattle enterprise. Grazing has a long history in the region, co-developing with and out-living the gold rush years, from the 1870s. Its long history has taken a significant toll on environmental values in the region, not the least of which is erosion and sediment run-off into the Great Barrier Reef. Other forms of agriculture impact on seasonal water resources are compounding issues for sustainable development and conservation. The scattered pockets of good grazing land require better management frameworks and co-management with a diversity of economic activities to build more robust local and regional communities or industry and to mitigate and perhaps reverse environmental impacts of potentially destructive monocultures.

Traditional owners at Normanby see value and opportunity in developing the pastoral business but see it as one of a few co-manageable priority activities – i.e. with tourism, fire and carbon management, and broader ecosystem services. Two practical initiatives recently started by, and supported through, the CRCNA, link the interest in developing the cattle enterprise with environmental management, employment and training. The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance Ltd (NAISMA) helped secure a SmartFarms grant and partnership with the CSIRO to pilot a satellite-based feral cattle tracking project. The dual aims are to reduce environmental degradation from uncontrolled stock and to understand feral stock behaviour for incorporating them into a managed herd and to understand their behaviour so as to better design and place infrastructure.

This CRCNA supported BoC project also secured Remote Animal Meat Processing (RAMP) support that will value add to the multi-purpose herd management regime.

Fire Management and Carbon Abatement

Savanna burning for carbon abatement is an opportunity that Normanby Rangers would like to explore. A Savanna Burning project for greenhouse gas emissions (carbon equivalents) abatement is being explored on Normanby Station. The market opportunity (compliance and voluntary) is in place for Balngarrawarra as it is for other groups. The incentive exists, and legal right is obtainable for fire management on the Station, but issues of scope and viability of a carbon activity are yet to be resolved.

The Australian Government has agreed to an emissions reduction target of 26%–28% below 2005 levels by 2030ⁱⁱⁱ and to achieve this target has bolstered the 2014 Emissions Reduction Fund amount of \$2.55 billion by a further \$2 billion. Globally, the environmental service sector is a significant economic mechanism for conservation,

rural and remote development, with an estimated potential worth of between US\$33 trillion and US\$125 trillioniv.

Other environmental fee-for-service activities have potential on Normanby Station, such as biodiversity and threatened species protection, erosion/sediment run-off management. At present, the main proponent of environmental fee-for-service activities in Australia is the Australian Government. Corporate procurers of carbon credits are increasingly becoming players in the voluntary environmental fee-for-service market that include 'co-benefits' (see second dot point below). Organisations such as Bush Heritage, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Aboriginal Carbon Foundation (AbCF) are currently, or soon to be, active in this space.

- Carbon Sequestration, which involves a deepening of savannah fire management commitments by landowners (25 year project period), to ensure that trees and forests are protected over longer periods. The methodology for sequestration of carbon in dead plant material was released in 2018. However, up-take of the methodology across the savannas has been very slow due to uncertainty in financial viability apprehension about the permanence period requiring 25 year minimum legal and management commitment. A second sequestration methodology, due to be released in 2021, will account for the carbon stored in living tree biomass, significantly increasing the potential earnings from savanna fire management. This will be accompanied by a review of the 2018 methodology addressing current issues raised by potential user groups.
- 'Carbon Co-benefits' is a phrase most often used by Governments and non-Indigenous groups to refer to the collection of environmental, social, economic and other beneficial spinoffs from savanna burning carbon projects. Measures for co-benefits are an important step towards the recognition of a broader Ecosystem Services role that Aboriginal land managers play. Co-benefits may yield a premium (some suggest) of up to 30% on at least a proportion of Carbon Credits sold, or they may represent environmental outcomes monetizable in their own right, such as 'biodiversity credits'. AbCF, Ten Deserts, Indigenous Carbon Industry Network (ICIN), and the Federal Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, amongst others, are now looking to develop credible metrics for co-benefits as the Indigenous Land Manager (ILM) PES sector develops. Far from being 'spinoffs' however, these non-carbon benefits, or 'core' benefits, as referred to by AbCF, NAILSMA, Kimberley Land Council (KLC) and ICIN, for example, are considered by Indigenous land managers as some of the main values in 'caring for country'. Such things as healthy and abundant resources, opportunities for Indigenous Knowledge (IK) transmission, familiarity with cultural estates, respecting important sites, physical and spiritual health, strengthening kin networks, are the main reasons driving their on-ground activity. Carbon abatement and Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) production is predominantly a means to those ends. To this end, capturing and enhancing activities that deliver core benefits is a key part of land use planning and the BoC framework alike.

The existing cattle operation at Normanby is a priority for further investment and improvement. Although there is an opportunity for Carbon Farming through savanna fire management, the income prospects are not substantial enough for it

to be a stand-alone activity. Normanby land managers are, however considering Savanna burning in a way that enhances their fire management requirements and returns at least a complementary income to their overall land-use plan. As the fire management program improves, there may be opportunities to incorporate a future carbon sequestration methodology to increase credit earnings and biodiversity, water quality and social outcomes, for instance, in broader PES. The BoC planning exercise can help connect these activities with the research needed, likely investors and potential markets.

Looking After Country: Ranger Group

Balngarrawarra has two established Ranger groups – one (Normanby Rangers) pertaining to Normanby Station directly. As with other indigenous ranger groups, they are guided by senior Traditional Owners to properly care for Balngarrawarra country. Sustainable funding is still being sought to ensure the social, cultural, environmental and economic values they see to enhance are supported by their Ranger operation.

The Rangers work currently involves:

- Erosion management, caused by cattle, horses, and other animals
- Repairing fences and other infrastructure
- Weed management
- Pest management, including wild cats, cane toads
- Tourism management, including tourist safety, rubbish, dumping, erosion
- Monitor and enhance the health of animals and plants by managing known pressures
- Surveys of the land and water to produce a good understanding of the current state of the environment

As well as the direct or prescribed benefits these activities aim to achieve; there are underlying outcomes Traditional Owners fundamentally seek to deliver, that speak to the connection the group has with their customary lands:

- Traditional Owners sustaining environment resources for the future
- Country left neat and tidy – no rubbish, minimal impacts from any tourism
- Healthy native plants and animals in and around the Waterholes
- Good use of fire and the (re)creation of a fire managed landscape
- Support for elders to pass on stories, songs, and knowledge to younger generations
- Get Balngarrawarra people living back on their country

Much of the work the rangers do contributes to this. That work and other activities need strategic planning and support to keep going. Strategies to support this include:

- Sourcing sustainable funding through WoC
- Developing and IPA over the Normanby Station
- further training and build skills and capability in land management, governance and business management

- Work closely with the neighbouring ranger groups, land councils, NRM bodies, etc.
- Explore funding and income-earning opportunities, business models and partnerships for the ranger group and Traditional Owners more broadly

Employment and Training

There have been and are many training opportunities around. They are often disconnected from specific activity needs and from the broader aspirations and plans Traditional Owners and their land management groups have for the future. Individual career paths and group skills capability are often not tracked and managed, so training can be less than optimal. Tracking skills and training and planning for current and future needs is a strong step to long term goal achievement.

Having considered a range of engaging projects for Normanby and developing a strategic approach to furthering some workable priorities the following interests in training are a start to the process of developing a functional management plan around their skills development:

‘We aim to develop our ranger group capability in caring for our country and to create real jobs for people in our community. Education and training are key to achieving our vision. We want to do training so that we have the skills and qualifications needed to run a ranger group and take care of our country.’ (Senior Ranger, Normanby 2019)

As well as practical concerns about training to run business etc., Normanby TOs are concerned for strong family and culture outcomes:

- Senior TOs returning to their land
- Families living on the station with appropriate livelihood opportunities
- Share experiences with other close and distant land manager groups
- Share knowledge, and to train and work together on country
- Connecting elders and youth on country to pass on their knowledge

(paraphrased from a Senior Ranger, Normanby 2019)

Other skills and training considered through the Business on Country approach and to further the long term LUP include:

- Improved fire management skills relevant to Savanna Burning carbon credit activity
- Administration for Savanna Burning project activity and reporting
- Governance training to develop business capability within and separate from the Ranger group
- Business management training

- Cultural training to underpin and better inform our on-country work
- Skills to be identified through the RAMP project for meat processing
- Training in relation to better herd management and specifically relating to local requirements coming out of the feral herd satellite tracking project with CSIRO

Building Partnerships with other Stakeholders

There are several stakeholders that the Balngarrawarra could look to broker partnerships with stakeholders from land councils, not-for-profit groups, industry associations and government agencies could all play supporting roles in business development.

AgForce Grazing Best Management Practice program

AgForce is interested in the relationship between improved grazing and carbon farming activity in the pastoral landscape. They have struck a unique partnership with Aboriginal Carbon Foundation, for example, to support projects in this space and are active around Normanby.

Cape York Land Council

Key player in Native Title research, applications and determinations. In particular, the Cape York Land Council (CYLC) is running 'Cape York One Claim' on behalf of all the groups on Cape York with Native Title interests in the region. The final determination of this claim and the management regime developed for Native Title holders afterwards will have a significant impact on access and use of customary lands and for decision making in relation to activities on those lands. The CYLC is aware and committed to supporting Indigenous land and sea-based enterprise through the One Claim process as well as through other programs and means.

Queensland Heritage

The Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection support and range of heritage protection programs as well as the Queensland Heritage Council which administers the Qld Heritage Register. Significant heritage, structures sites, areas and objects exist on Normanby station, and the Department Council are important partners in their protection and managers. This partnership informs quite a lot of activity, including, for example, fire and cattle project planning and management.

Community

The Balngarrawarra community is, of course, the core pillar of any development on the Station. Not all the landowner group members are or can be directly involved in activities given employment and beneficial outcome limitations, but they are the focus of inspiration, engagement and opportunity development. Having a 'community' perspective and drivers of land enterprise (as opposed to 'private' motivations) has many ramifications along the development pathway – for consultation, communication, scale, family estate level planning, decision making, distribution of responsibilities and of benefits. 'Community' can bring substantial assets (land, knowledge, skill, support, ownership, authority and credibility, etc.) to the process, and so is the irreplaceable primary partner.

The broader community – the town, the pastoral neighbourhood, adjacent Indigenous groups and others – provide services and support of various kinds. The wider community is an important context for project developers and owners with whom to carefully consider and engage.

Training Providers

Formal training is a key consideration for the Normanby group. They are mapping what is needed to develop and run their tourist operation, carbon project and ranger-based environmental management programs against the skills and expertise they have already. Training is important to ownership and control.

Informal training and learning are also important. This has come from interacting with neighbouring groups and those further afield who have or are developing similar enterprise. Ranger exchanges, ILM forums and the like feature in the Normanby training plan.

Local and customary knowledge is at the core of Balngarrawarra notions of learning. Much of what they plan and do is about 'growing up' the next generation and growing traditional knowledge, leadership confidence, appropriate authority and on—country capability of current Balngarrawarra adults as well. A key capacity to drive this is the return of elders to the station more regularly and increased (semi-)permanent residence. Resources, cross-generational cooperation, and livelihood opportunities present simultaneously to support this.

North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance Ltd

The North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance works with traditional owners and Indigenous land and sea managers across northern Australia and is committed to supporting Indigenous land and sea owners and managers to care for country and create livelihoods on country. Balngarrawarra has worked with NAILSMA this year and are keen to continue working together to achieve their vision for Normanby.

The BoC framework application specifically is proving to be valuable but requires a much longer-term commitment than was afforded during this CRCNA project period as various initiatives evolved and downstream needs become clearer.

Normanby: Land Owner and project engagement/development activities

The Business on Country framework cannot be undertaken merely as a desktop or remote exercise. Whilst there are many sources of useful, though often disconnected information to inform land-use planning, face to face and on-ground activities are cornerstones to the process. Ownership and control are as important as being well-informed and striking partnerships. The tables below show the kinds of on-ground and face to face engagement afforded by this CRC project, and a snapshot of (sub) projects identified through this process as complementary and able to be built-on or collaborated with to mutual and ultimately Balngarrawarra advantage.

Table 4: Project engagement and development activities.

Activity	Proponent/partnership	Participant numbers	Location	Date	Details	Funding source
Initial engagement	NAILSMA and CDU	10	Cooktown	8–12 Apr 2019	First field visit to introduce and discuss the suitability of BoC with Normanby Rangers	CRCNA
Fund seeking	NAILSMA, CSIRO, CDU	4	Darwin	9 May 2019	Initial discussion and planning for Smart Farms grant application for Feral heard tracking at Normanby	CRCNA, CSIRO
Fieldwork	NAILSMA, CSIRO,	15	Normanby Station	Aug 2019	Fieldwork on feral animal collaring/tracking	CRCNA, CSIRO
Fieldwork	NALSMA					CRCNA
Fieldwork	NAILSMA					CRCNA
RAMP scoping and application	NAILSMA, UQ, CSIRO	8	Cooktown	From Dec 2019	RAMP	Innovation Alliance
Feral animal management	NAILSMA, CSIRO	15	Normanby Station	October 2019	Smartfarms grant for innovative feral animal management using satellite tracking	National Landcare Program
Sav Fire Forum	NAILSMA, CDU	2	Darwin	Feb 2020	Education and knowledge exchange opportunity with other Indigenous and sector participants	NAILSMA

Note: BoC: Business on Country; CDU: Charles Darwin University; CRCNA: Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia; CSIRO: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation; GHG: Greenhouse Gas; NAILSMA: North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance; RAMP: Remote Area Meat Processing; UQ: University of Queensland.

Normanby – Other Partner/collaborator project synergies

Table 5: Project synergies incorporated with other partner activities.

Partner/collaborator / service provider	Related Project	Specific sub-project funding source	date	Existing complementary Initiative	CRCNA project Initiative
CDU/BNHCRC	AIDR Leadership training	AG – BNHCRC	19–24 Aug 2019	X	
ILSC, NLC	Savanna Fire Management Carbon Abatement Project	ILSC SFMP	From 2017	X	
AbCF	Initial carbon and co-benefits discussion and carbon feasibility assessment and	ILSC SFMP	2018	X	
AbCF	Carbon Farming training course	ILSC	Oct 2019	X	X
ILSC	Remote Area Meat Processing	ILSC	Feb 2020	X	

*Note: **AbCF**: Aboriginal Carbon Foundation; **AG**: Australian Government; **BNHCRC**: Bushfire and Natural Hazards Cooperative Research Centre; **CDU**: Charles Darwin University; **CRCNA**: Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia; **ILSC**: Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation; **SFMP**: Savanna Fire Management Program.*

Next Steps

NAILSMA has continued to strengthen the relationship with Normanby Rangers through the robust engagement enabled within this Land Use planning process. Opportunities arising from this work will strongly influence economic and cultural activities on Normanby Station into the future. One of these key outcomes has been enabling strategic collaboration and co-design for the highly innovative SmartFarms feral management project. This will enable a strong platform for continual engagement, targeted design and implementation, and improved livelihoods.

NAILSMA has committed donor funds to various initiatives being implemented on Normanby Station. Through the partnership with Normanby Rangers there is an opportunity now to leverage investment to develop aspects of the Normanby Land Use Plan.

A key finding of the Land Use Planning process is how integral trusted relationships are toward successful outcomes, regardless of the nature of the concept. Moving forward on mutual ground, creating mutual benefit will create substantial opportunities leading to healthy people, healthy country, and healthy economies.

References

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Qld Ranger Program Partnership Prospectus: https://www.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0025/93715/ilsr-partnership-prospectus.pdf

Normanby Catchment Water management plan: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/259624242_Normanby_Catchment_Water_Quality_Management_Plan

Normanby Catchment Story 2017: <https://wetlandinfo.des.qld.gov.au/wetlands/ecology/processes-systems/water/catchment-stories/normanby/transcript-norm-intor.html>

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Endnotes

ⁱ Cole. N. Battle Camp to Boralga: a local study of colonial war on Cape York Peninsula, 1873-1894: <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/p171001/pdf/article07.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Culture Connect 2020: <https://cultureconnect.com.au/normanby-station/>

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^{iv} Costanza, R., de Groot, R., Sutton, P., van der Ploeg, S., Anderson, S., Kubiszewski, I., Farber, S. & Turner, R. 2014 Changes in the global value of ecosystem services. *Global Environmental Change* 26 152-158

Prospectus for potential partners

A statement of intent regarding commercial activity on Balngarrawarra lands and waters from the Balngarrawarra Aboriginal Corporation

The Opportunities:

We have considered options available to apply our interests in land to create new and improved livelihoods and to enhance the well-being of the Balngarrawarra peoples. With the information presently available to us, we consider that commercial developments in:

- cultural tourism;
- carbon Farming (Savanna Burning);
- environmental and conservation services (including erosion, feral animal and biodiversity management) underpinning heritage protection; and
- beef enterprise (including some meat processing) should be actively pursued.

Why partner with us:

Balngarrawarra people are the traditional owners of the lands and waters in which we seek to develop enterprise. We are forever connected to this land, culturally responsible for its health and highly knowledgeable about its management and use. Partnering with us will be secure, environmentally responsible and economically significant to both you and our community.

Best Practice:

We:

- **have secured recognition of ownership and other rights** in significant parts of our ancestral lands and waters; and
- **have consulted carefully and comprehensively** with our Nation's landholders and community; and
- **have bolstered our foundational capacity to protect values important to us** through development of land management capability, related institutions and governance systems based on traditional obligations and practice; and
- **acknowledge the technical, financial and logistical support of various government and non-government organisations**, including the Cooperative Research Centre for Northern Australia, the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance and the Aboriginal Carbon Foundation, and partner in good faith with them.

Appendix 1

Preparatory work:

Work already completed or underway to advance our understanding of these opportunities includes:

- review of a pre-existing cattle enterprise and group held pastoral lease;
- functioning ranger group;
- innovative feral animal tracking pilot project;
- Remote Area Meat Processing (RAMP) project;
- local tour operation; and
- existing heritage conservation management work.

How you can partner with us:

We acknowledge that more work is required to fully appraise and realise these opportunities and invite interested parties to collaborate with us to complete assessments and, where warranted, develop business cases for each of them. We envisage that new collaborative work will include:

- further development of ranger group scope and capability;
- improve fire management planning and implementation to align with cultural needs, pastoral project needs and Savanna Burning options as they arise;
- assess and develop skill sets relevant to tourist operations, cattle and various PES opportunities, based on mapping career and organisational pathways;
- cross-referenced business plans for tourism, PES and cattle, including multiple land use management planning to avoid conflict and duplication; and
- develop Normanby Aboriginal Corporation (and other relevant) business functionality and professionalism.

Our commitment:

To facilitate this work and optimise prospects of successful completion, we undertake to:

- establish effective methods and forums for productive interaction with interested parties;
- foster engagement of all relevant landholder and community representatives with the authority to make binding decisions;
- facilitate and communicate prompt decision-making when the quality of information and analysis meets the needs of landholders and other key decision-makers; and
- seek, in conjunction with potential partners, access to the financial and other resources needed to access relevant information and undertake the necessary high-quality analysis.

We seek to begin work during the 2020 calendar year. Our contact details are:

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