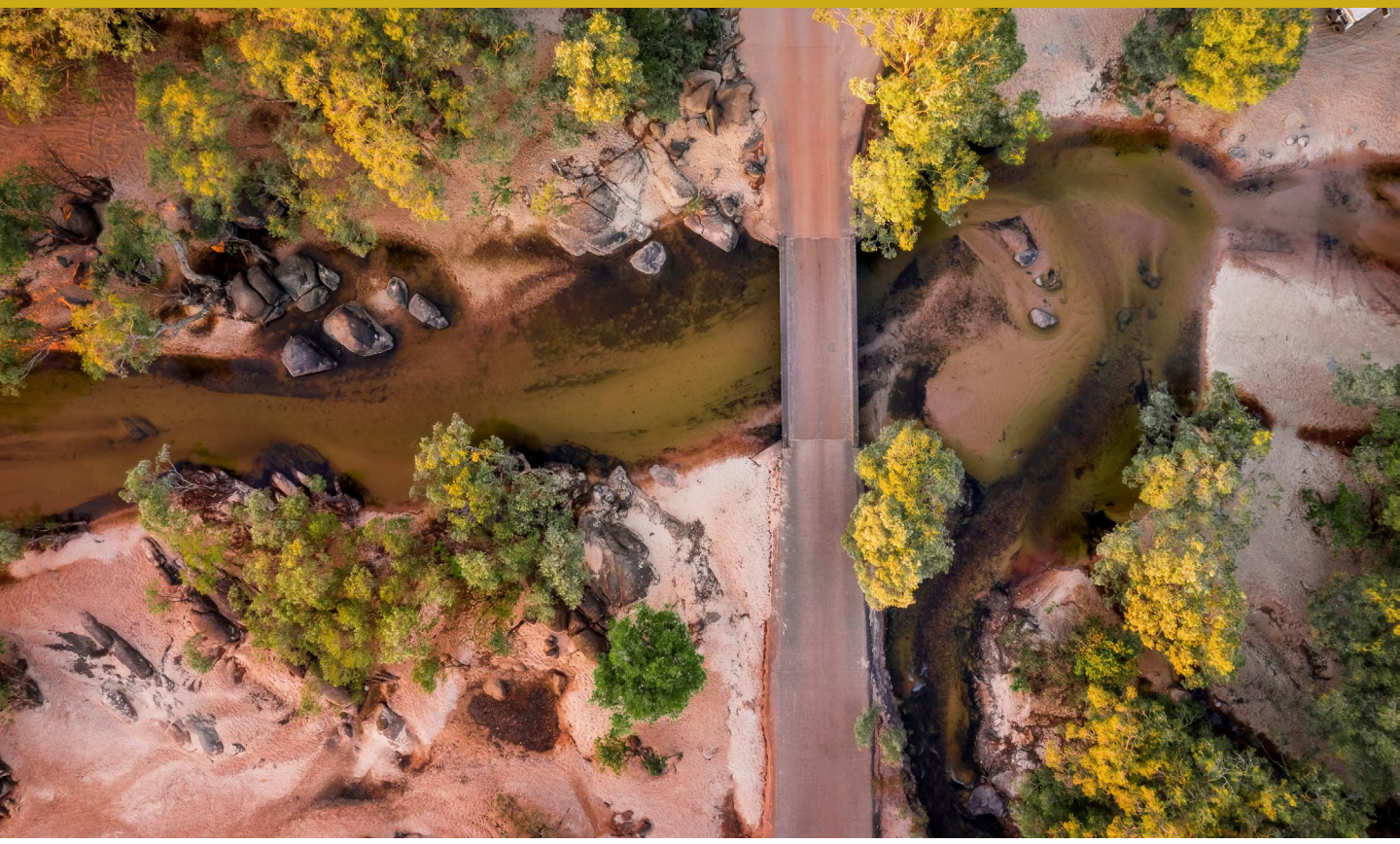
Activating Indigenous Peoples Water Rights Under the Cape York Water Plan

Project Fact Sheet



Project Overview

Overview: This is a research project about the water rights of Cape York Indigenous peoples as set out in the Cape York Water Plan 2019. The project will develop a Cape York Water Manual to inform Indigenous peoples about their water rights, related opportunities that could be available from these water rights, and how they can be activated through licensing to and leasing by eligible Trustees of Aboriginal freehold and Registered Native Title Body Corporates (RNTBCs).

The project will also inform the Queensland Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water licencing processes to ensure water is allocated in line with the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent of Traditional Owners.

To inform water policy more broadly a Northern Australia Policy implications report will also be developed.

Project Partners: Cape York Land Council, Northern Australia Land and Sea Management Alliance, Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia, Queensland Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water, Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry, Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation, Water Trust Australia.

Project Leader: Dr Jim Turnour of The Cairns Institute, James Cook University.

Project Activities:

1. **Situation Analysis (Present -June 2024):** The Project is undertaking a desk top situation analysis to understand the operations of the Cape York Water Plan 2019 including water licencing and leasing to eligible parties and related opportunities and constraints to the use of available water.

2. **Catchment Case Studies (July 2024 – June 2025):** The project will conduct two catchment case studies with eligible parties to further understand how the Cape York Water Plan 2019 operates.

3. **Cape York Water Manual Information Meetings (July 2025 - June 2026):** The situation analysis and catchment case studies will inform the development of a Cape York Water Plan Manual that will be shared with eligible Aboriginal freehold Trustees and RNTBCs through information meetings in Cape York.

Project Outputs:

- **Cape York Water Manual:** A comprehensive guide to water rights for Indigenous communities in Cape York Peninsula developed based on research findings.
- **Research Publications and Reports:** Findings will be disseminated through the Cape York Water Plan Manual and research publications and reports.
- **Northern Australia Policy Implications Report**: Informing water policy more broadly.

Project Outcomes:

- Eligible Aboriginal parties including Aboriginal freehold Trustees and RNTBCs managing and activating their water rights for economic, cultural and environmental outcomes.

Dissemination of Findings:

- **Information Workshops:** Held in Cape York Peninsula to explain project findings and demonstrate the use of the Cape York Water Manual.
- **Online Availability:** The Cape York Water Manual will be accessible online for broader dissemination and use.

Further Information Contact:

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