

Foreword from the Chair

On behalf of Territory Natural Resource Management I am proud to present the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan 2010 – 2015.



This is a Plan for all Territorians. It offers us a ‘road map’ for managing the land, water, biodiversity and coastal resources of the Territory while improving peoples’ opportunities and quality of life.

This Plan doesn’t just address the work and responsibilities of Territory Natural Resource Management. It draws together the activities of all involved in natural resource management in the Territory, recognising the different roles we all play - whether a non-government organisation such as ours, a community group, an industry or a government agency.

There isn’t a right way, there are many ways, and the plan captures this. Our work needs to be based upon the best available information, knowledge and experience – research-generated, local, and Indigenous knowledge.

We will continue to build this knowledge base and to improve how it informs natural resource management work.

Through integrated natural resource management we can ‘join the dots’: from the top of a catchment to the sea; between people, groups and government agencies; across land tenures and land uses; from the paddock to the region to the nation; and, of course, between the environment and our social, cultural and economic wellbeing.

The Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan 2010 – 2015 is designed to help join these ‘dots’.

‘Many people across the Territory contributed their time and knowledge to developing this Plan.

Thank you to all of you. We look forward to working with you over the life of this Plan.’

Kate Andrews - Chair

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Northern Territory Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan 2010-2015

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PREFACE

THE PLAN IN A SNAPSHOT



Mango farm plantation , Stuart Blanch

‘Joining the dots’

– a snapshot of the Northern Territory Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan (2010 -2015)

The Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan 2010-2015 is designed for all Territorians. Its vision is: ***‘Territorians working together to manage our environment’s natural, cultural and economic values for the benefit of all.’***

This plan follows and draws on the Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan for the Northern Territory 2005 (2005 INRM Plan). It is designed to be a living document and will be revised in 2015. It was developed through consultation with many people, so it represents a wide range of experience, views and priorities.

The purpose of the Northern Territory Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan 2010-2015 (2010 INRM Plan) is to:

- guide investments and activities in Natural Resource Management in the Territory from 2010 to 2015
- encourage greater involvement in NRM in the Territory
- identify opportunities for new partnerships and investors
- inform future NRM policies and priorities of the Northern Territory and Australian Governments, and
- encourage increased funding into NRM in the Territory from diverse sources

Achieving the vision...

This 2010 INRM Plan sets out a range of natural resource management programs under four key themes:

- Addressing the threats
- Supporting ecologically sustainable development
- Managing our environmental assets
- Making it happen

Each program incorporates targets to be achieved during the life of the Plan, management actions to meet the targets and measures for assessing progress.

Finally, this Plan sets strategic directions for natural resource management at the Territory-scale, while capturing the diversity of local concerns and priorities across the Territory with regional action plans for the **Top End**, **Gulf Savanna**, **Tablelands** and **Arid Lands**.

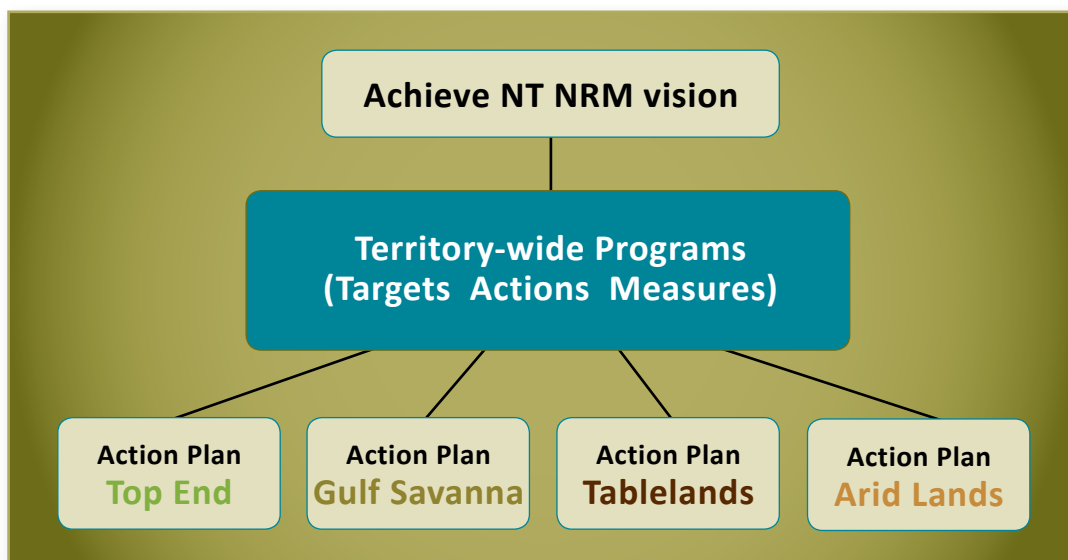


Figure 1. Elements of the 2010 INRM Plan

An aerial photograph showing a wide, muddy river on the left side of the frame. The right side is dominated by a dense, vibrant green forest that stretches to the top of the image. The riverbank is visible as a narrow strip of brown earth between the water and the forest. The overall scene is a natural, undisturbed landscape.

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

1 The role of a natural resource management plan

The natural environment of the Northern Territory sustains us. It provides us with resources essential for day-to-day living, sources of income, and cultural and spiritual well being. It makes us who we are, defines us as Territorians.

But the resources of the Northern Territory are not limitless. Where we use and extract them, we place pressures on the environment; spreading weeds, pests and diseases, creating waste and causing soil loss.

We also face the challenge of managing our natural resources over a vast and sparsely populated landscape. The Northern Territory covers one-sixth of Australia's land and sea and the majority of our nearly 230,000 population live in our four largest city/towns (Darwin, Palmerston, Katherine and Alice Springs).



Mindil Beach Markets, Darwin

Ensuring that people are able to get on to country to manage it is critical to effective natural resource management and will ensure that we can continue to draw sustenance from the natural environment, while minimising adverse impacts.

A natural resource management plan can guide us through this process by taking on board competing demands and plotting a path that allows us to make a living while maintaining or improving resource condition. It identifies the people, resources and information needed to do this; the systems that need to be in place; and the values and threats that need our greatest attention. It provides a coordinated and strategic approach that shows which are the best ways to invest our efforts and resources. It defines the goals we hope to achieve and a means of assessing how far along we are in achieving them.

And, therefore, it gives us a prospectus that can attract support from others wishing to invest in natural resource management in the Territory. Finally, the plan is based on wide consultation and the best available evidence to ensure we achieve the above.

2 Context

Territory Perspective

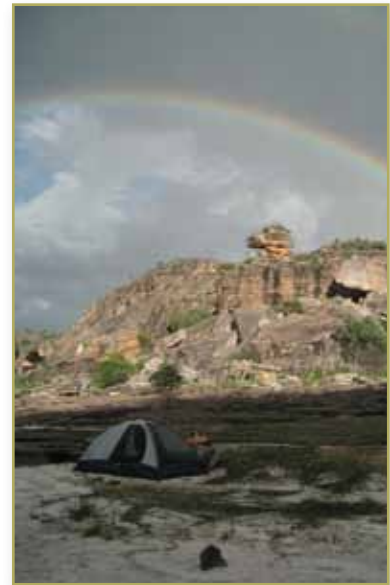
The Northern Territory is a big place with a diverse range of landscapes, environmental values and natural resource management pressures and issues.

The Territory is known for its iconic sites of outstanding heritage value; for its waterfalls, floodplains and billabongs; for its gorges, desert ranges and red sand country. For Indigenous Territorians, the land and seas are bound up in cultural identity and practices. And many of us who have arrived more recently were attracted by the Territory's natural landscapes and the lifestyles they offer.

Our natural landscapes are still largely intact, with extensive woodlands, shrublands and grasslands, and streams that are still lined by native trees. Territory environments have not been subjected to the same pressures of urban expansion or intensive agricultural development as have other parts of country. Agriculture is largely based on an extensive pastoral industry, with smaller areas of country more intensively developed for growing crops, trees, fruits and vegetables. Mining and gas production are also restricted to small areas, where they may have a high, but relatively localised, impact.

However, the Territory faces many challenges. Indigenous people exist under some of the world's most impoverished conditions and have limited job prospects. Many Territorians need to travel vast distances to restock supplies, access services or reach decision makers, who do not always understand these tyrannies of distance. Our industries are far from both markets and suppliers, making it hard to achieve economies of scale. Flooding rains in the wet season hamper access to markets and production is limited by scorching heat in the dry.

In seeking to address these challenges, the 2010 INRM Plan recognises both the diversity of the Territory and the importance of regional action in the Top End, Gulf Savanna, Tablelands and Arid Lands (See Fig. 2).



Gubara, Gay Crowley

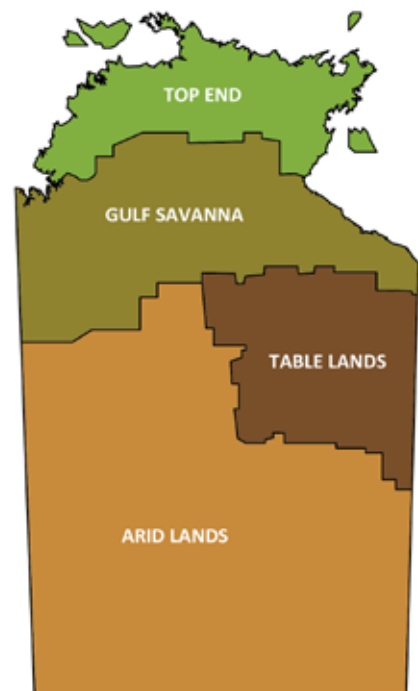


Figure 2. 2010 INRM Plan Regional Areas

INTRODUCTION

Top End - The Top End region covers 13% (176,500 sq km) of the Northern Territory's land area. It includes all of the Darwin Coastal, Tiwi-Cobourge, Arnhem Coast bioregions and most of the Pine Creek, Arnhem Plateau and Central Arnhem bioregions, and parts of the Daly Basin, Victoria Bonaparte, Gulf Fall and Uplands and Gulf Coastal bioregions. (See maps in Appendix) The region is home to 70% of the Territory's population (around 160,000 people). Most of the Top End is Aboriginal land. However the area also includes most of the more arable land in the Douglas Daly, and horticulture is an important, though restricted, land use in the Top End region.

Gulf Savanna - The Gulf Savanna region covers 23% (311,000 sq km) of the land area of the Northern Territory. It includes parts of Mitchell Grass Downs, Tanami, Gulf Fall and Uplands, Ord Victoria Plain, Sturt Plateau, Gulf Coastal, Gulf Plains, Victoria Bonaparte, Daly Basin, Pine Creek, Central Arnhem and Arnhem Plateau bioregions. The region is home to 9% of the Territory's population (around 20,000 people). Nearly two-thirds of the Gulf Savanna region is pastoral land, and around one-fifth is Aboriginal land. Protected areas account for 12.2% of the region, and less than 1% is being considered as an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). Though accounting for a small total area, horticulture is a small but important land use in the Gulf Savanna region.

Tablelands -The Tablelands region (otherwise known as the Barkly region) covers 15% of the Territory's land area (203,000 sq km). It includes most of the Mitchell Grass Downs and Davenport Murchison Ranges bioregions, all of the Northern Territory section of the Mount Isa Inlier and parts of Tanami, Gulf Fall and Uplands and Sturt Plateau. The region is home to 3% of the Territory's population (around 6,000 people). Nearly three-quarters of the Tablelands region is under pastoral lease, and used for a mixture of cattle grazing, and 17% is Aboriginal freehold. Less than 1% is covered by protected areas.

Arid Lands - The Arid Lands region covers 49% of the land area of the Northern Territory (658,000 sq km). It includes all of the MacDonnell Ranges and Burt Plain bioregions, the Territory sections of the Great Sandy Desert, Simpson Strzelecki Dunefields, Finke, Central Ranges, Channel Country and Stony Plains bioregions, most of the Territory section of the Tanami bioregion and parts of Sturt Plateau, Mitchell Grass Downs and Davenport Murchison Ranges bioregions. The region is home to 19% of the Territory's population (around 40,000 people). About 55% of the Arid Lands region is Aboriginal freehold, 36% pastoral leases, on which cattle are grazed. Though accounting for a small total area, horticulture is an important land use. Current and proposed protected areas make up 36% of the region; the vast majority of this is as proposed Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs).

Comprehensive regional profiles can be found in the regional action plans at the back of this document. The consultation draft plan also contained useful, relevant information, such as a snapshot of the Territory in 2010 and asset updates by selected Territory experts. These are available online at www.territorynrm.org.au.

INTRODUCTION



Barkly Tablelands, Tanya Howard

context cont...

Why and how was the 2010 Plan was developed

This plan arose out of the need to revise the 2005 INRM Plan. Since the previous plan was produced, much of the proposed work has been achieved, new issues and opportunities have emerged and we know more about the environment and how to manage it.

This 2010 Plan was developed over 18 months utilising many different consultation techniques and wide input (see Appendix).

How does this plan differ from the 2005 INRM plan?

The original asset-based structure (Terrestrial biodiversity, Land, Inland waters, Coastal & marine, and Community, NRM institutions & knowledge) of the first plan has been replaced by programs addressing **issues of concern** to Territorians. The asset-based structure used in the 2005 Plan was limiting as

- it relied on the consistent collection and analysis of detailed data about assets. In many cases, this knowledge in the Territory is still at a broad-brush level, and
- it was difficult to have a truly integrated plan as so many issues and management arrangements extended across several asset areas.

The change to an issues of concern focus in the 2010 INRM Plan aims to overcome these limitations and make it easier for Territorians to see how the plan relates to them, and how they can engage with the programs detailed in it.

The 2010 Plan aims to extend previous work by updating Territory and regional priorities; contributing to future NRM policies and the priorities of the Northern Territory and Australian Governments; guiding future actions within the natural resource management community and identifying opportunities for new partnerships with investors further afield.

It sets the agenda in designing future expressions of interest for regional funding allocations, and directing investments through the NT NRM Community Grants and other programs of Territory Natural Resource Management.



Rangers at work

INTRODUCTION

| PROCESS | WHO and HOW | WHAT |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| NRM program logics for NT | Representatives of diverse NRM stakeholder institutions and specialists attended five days of workshops hosted by TNRM during August 2008. | Produced a detailed 'program logic' setting out goals and actions necessary to achieve required outcomes for INRM plan assets. |
| Asset updates | Selected Territory experts in each of the four asset categories, engaged by commission. | Produced structured documents updating scientific knowledge on conditions, threats and management needs for each of the assets with reference to recent research publications. |
| Sector statements | Bodies representing key Territory sectors involved in NRM invited to submit written statements. | Produced short structured statements outlining the sector group's position on NRM issues and their expectations from the Plan review. |
| Policy review | Charles Darwin University review exercise and paper. | A contextual review and synthesis of the evolving national and NT policy environment with relevance to NRM targets and goals. |
| Target progress assessment | Interviews with 33 selected experts holding specialist knowledge of NT natural assets and resource conditions. | Assessment of progress made against INRM Plan targets 2005-2010 with recommendations for amending, discarding or supplementing these. |
| Plan review | In-house | A review of >80 national, Territory, regional and local NRM plans and strategies, released post-2005, for relevant management actions. |
| Public consultation | Draft plan made available for several months from August 2010 and four regional information and consultation sessions hosted by TNRM. | Identified individual management actions required to achieve the plan. |
| MA prioritisation | Five community workshops and two technical prioritisation workshops hosted by TNRM in late 2010. Meeting of Board of Directors & staff in February 2011. | Management actions edited and ranked by region and prioritised by expert panels. Multi-criteria decision analysis used to produce final prioritised list. |

Figure 3. How the 2010 INRM Plan was put together



Cattle muster, Nigel Weston

3 The 2010 INRM Plan

3.1 The Vision

This plan is written for Territory conditions, people and resources. It builds on the years of collective experience, both traditional ecological knowledge and Territory know-how, along with scientific information to identify the best way to manage our environments. It aims to improve livelihoods, environmental conditions and economic viability, while building management capacity and ensuring the maintenance of cultural knowledge and practices. It helps Territorians to work together to achieve these aims.

3.2 The Four Themes

Addressing threats

Though retaining much of their ecological integrity and productivity, Territory landscapes are losing their environmental value. Extensive tracts of vegetation are no longer home to many of the mammals that once existed in great abundance, and we do not fully understand why. But we do know that they are coming under increasing pressure from disruption to long-standing fire regimes and the pervasive spread of weeds, feral animals and, possibly, disease, and that climate change gives them an even more uncertain future. Fire, weeds, feral animals and climate change are also threats facing the health of the broader landscape and seascape, their cultural sites and their productivity.

This plan addresses these threats to the Territory by supporting coordinated, consultative and collaborative efforts to control fire, weeds and feral animals at a regional scale, and to focus efforts around the key values that they threaten. It aims to prevent the establishment of new weeds, pests and diseases through risk assessment and the screening of all species to be introduced, and by detecting and responding rapidly to the unintentional introduction of problem species. It also prioritises the eradication of existing weed populations that are still small enough to control. It investigates climate change, in terms of impact to our natural environments and how we may need to adapt our management approaches.

The vision of this plan is:

'Territorians working together to manage our environment's natural, cultural and economic values for the benefit of all.'



Feral camels, Michael Barritt



Ranger spraying, Ian Rowbottom

3.2 The Four Themes

Supporting ecologically sustainable development

North Australia is considered by some to have potential for increased agricultural use. At the same time, there is talk about avoiding the mistakes of the south. To do this, we need to do things differently - not just less intensively

The conservation economy offers many opportunities to increase the income we make from the environment, while helping to improve its condition and resilience.

Savanna burning, a Territory initiative, is not only improving environmental health and abating greenhouse gases, but is earning millions of dollars in real wages and real jobs for Indigenous Territorians. Ranger groups are also increasingly deriving income from weed and feral animal management and biosecurity surveillance. Soil carbon offers a means of increasing the profitability of pastoral enterprises without increasing stocking rates. Such innovative approaches of using natural resource management to improve the livelihoods of Territorians are supported by this plan.

If not well managed, both industrial developments and human settlements can have a devastating impact on the environment, requiring water and energy, creating erosion and waste and acting as a reservoir from which weeds and pests can spread. However, our existing industries benefit from our natural environments being in good condition, and recognise the need to keep them so. Our fishing, pastoral, horticultural, agricultural, tourism and mining industries have all undertaken to adopt the principles of Ecologically Sustainable Development into their business practices. This 2010 INRM plan recognises the efforts of industries and aims to assist industry groups to identify how to improve the sustainability of their practices. It does this by supporting industry extension and training programs to disseminate information and through follow up to see the extent to which new practices have been adopted. A key element of this work will be to link improved profitability and efficiency with sustainability.



Barra fisherman, Daly River, Stuart Blanch

the four themes cont...

This Plan supports actions that minimise the ecological footprint of Territory industries and urban and regional centres. It includes strategies and actions that seek to:

Quantify energy and water resources and demands in order to develop more transparent and sustainable allocation; improve and increase facilities for the safe handling and disposal of waste and toxic substances; and minimise the entry of lead into the environment by supporting efforts to phase out the use of lead shot in wildlife hunting.

Good environmental management requires a supportive policy and planning framework. In order to provide this, the Northern Territory Government has been progressively revising its legislation and developing new programs. This plan recognises and supports these initiatives. It aims to extend the well-tested regional planning model adopted in the Daly River area to other areas subject to development pressures. It incorporates actions to ensure that decisions on land and water use take into account all competing interests, including that of maintaining environmental values. This plan also includes actions that support the development of industry frameworks, which identify and, where appropriate, mandate best practice. It also progresses schemes to use off-reserve conservation to augment the conventional conservation estate in a strategic manner and to offset unavoidable environmental degradation caused by industrial development by investing in biodiversity management.

‘Recreational fishing in the Northern Territory is strongly based on sustainable fishing practices and the health of our environment. There is recognition that we are all involved in the process of natural resource management and that the future of our fishing activities is reliant on the effectiveness of our management practices.’

Chris Makepeace,
Executive Officer, Amateur
Fishermen’s Association of
the NT Inc.

Irrigation at Katherine/Daly catchment, Stuart Blanch



INTRODUCTION



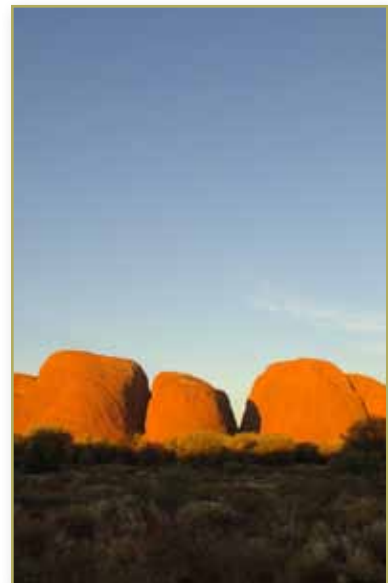
Talc Head on an Eco Tour by Untamed Outback Images

the four themes cont...

Managing environmental assets

This plan supports the targeted collection of information needed to manage the Territory's environments, helping us to understand and protect environmental values. It also supports the effective dissemination and two-way sharing of this information. It does this at three scales - land and seascapes, significant sites and species. Through its actions it will improve land, vegetation and soil mapping, and initiate the incorporation of cultural information into natural resource maps. Mapping will be focused around specific management issues – such as land clearance, fire management and sustainable grazing – and will be an element of many of the projects supported by the plan. Marine habitats and riparian condition will be mapped at a scale necessary to inform planning and management.

Through the identified actions, this plan sees a concerted effort to institute monitoring of environmental assets, to assess trends in condition, and to determine impacts of resource use and restoration efforts in terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments.



Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, Michael Nelson
Parks Australia

the four themes cont...

Management of soil resources is a key area in the plan. This includes identifying and addressing risks; developing best practice guidelines; and intervening where there is active or historical soil erosion. Actions regarding environmental restoration efforts will include the remediation of legacy mines, particularly where poor historical practices have resulted in the leakage of toxic substances into our waterways.

The management actions in this plan also support the management of cultural sites and landscapes. Previously under-resourced and largely protected only by remoteness, sites of cultural significance need protection from fire, feral animal damage and visitor impact. Again, in order to protect these sites, it is necessary for the responsible Traditional Owners to know where they are and what condition they are in. The development of Indigenous-driven cultural site management and monitoring programs supported by this plan will benefit from sharing expertise developed in a range of existing cultural heritage programs.



Ghost net removal, GhostNets Australia

*While much of the Territory has biodiversity value, 67 sites, making up about 15 % of the Territory, have been identified as having the highest conservation significance. This Plan will protect the values of these Sites of Conservation Significance (SoCS) in the NT through actions aimed at the management of fire, weeds and feral animals. It will also examine the extent and causes of saltwater intrusion into coastal SoCS, and, where possible, develop preventative management options.

Another focal area of this plan is the decline of small mammals. This rapid loss remains as yet unexplained. Accordingly, actions focus on work to be undertaken to identify the causes of the recent loss in the Top End, using an adaptive approach that implements and assesses a range of management options. In the Arid Lands, where remnant threatened species populations are suffering unsustainable predation, control of cats and foxes will be similarly trialled to develop effective management techniques.

Marine mammals are among the least known of our potentially threatened species. We are only just beginning to understand how dolphins, whales and dugongs use Territory waters. Many of these species are declining elsewhere in the world and could be vulnerable to developments along our shorelines. Information will be collected to inform the conservation management of these marine species.

* Harrison et al. 2009. **An Inventory of Sites of International and National Significance for Biodiversity Values in the Northern Territory.** Dept. of Natural Resources, Environment, the Arts and Sport, Darwin.

the four themes cont...

Making it happen

None of this environmental management would happen if there were no people ready and willing to undertake the work. While there are many groups whose core focus is natural resource management, several of these groups are struggling through lack or loss of skills and resources. Similarly, pastoralists, farmers, horticulturalists and fishers are keen to ensure the Territory's land and waters are kept in good condition, but may lack the knowledge, skills and resources to do so. This plan therefore aims to improve the viability of natural resource managers by providing business support, opportunities to be paid for environmental management, and access to training, information and networks.

The Plan recognises the importance of knowledge and experience in managing the Territory's environments, which are so different from the parts of the world where many of the text books are written. Traditional ecological knowledge and associated management practices have shaped the Territory's environments for thousands of years, and the diminishing of these practices, particularly of traditional fire management, has contributed to environmental degradation. The plan will therefore support Indigenous efforts to revive the use of traditional ecological knowledge in natural resource management, by resourcing the collection, storage and ongoing application of this knowledge in appropriate ways.

The Plan also recognises the importance of the experience of long-term Territorians with knowledge of other aspects of natural resource management, from soil management practices suitable for tropical or arid environments to undertaking urban Landcare. There will be opportunities for the recording of this information in ways that ensures it will continue to contribute to best practice management.

Natural resource management relies upon people, and many donate their time and efforts willingly to conservation work, particularly in urban and peri-urban environments. It is important to look after these volunteers, for them to be appreciated and supported. Community engagement to maintain and increase the volunteer-base for natural resource management is an important part of this plan; providing support and resourcing to the Landcare and Coastcare movements, as well as to other volunteer organisations.

The Plan will also support efforts to engage the broader community through public awareness and outreach programs, green tourism initiatives and addressing issues of concern to the community.

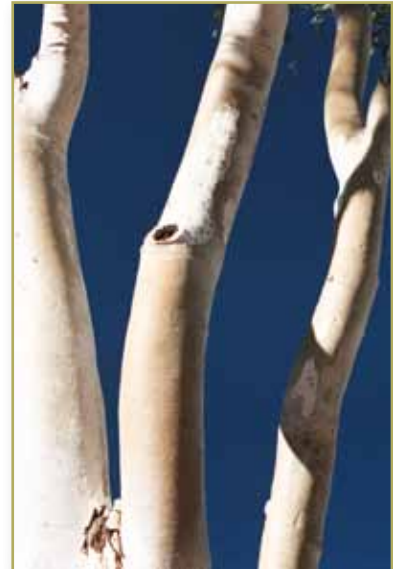
These activities form an integrated approach to natural resource management in the Territory by strategically addressing the broad range of concerns identified by Territorians.

3.3 How is the plan organised?

This Plan has a two-tiered structure, setting strategic directions for natural resource management at the Territory-scale (the Territory-wide plan), while capturing the diversity of local concerns and priorities across the Territory through regional action plans for the Top End, Gulf Savanna, Tablelands and Arid Lands. These regions largely align with the previous three NRM regions of Top End, Savanna and Arid Centre, the latter region now being divided in two - the Barkly Tablelands and Arid Lands - in recognition of differences in environments and management issues.

The Plan contains 14 programs arranged into four themes that are listed in the table below. Each program has a number of targets that will be achieved during the life of the plan, but will also work towards long-term targets set for 2030 in order to align with the Territory 2030 Strategic Plan. Management actions have been developed to meet each of these targets. A list of measures has also been provided for assessing progress towards target achievement.

The 2010 INRM Plan provides a profile of each of the programs, describing the issues that need addressing and the actions that will be taken to do so. Long- and short-term targets are listed, along with the contributing management actions, which describe the activities to be undertaken in the broadest sense. They encourage and guide future activity within the Territory NRM community and identify opportunities for new partnerships with investors further afield.



Ghost Gum, Hannah Seward

Full profiles (including maps) of the management actions can be found on the Territory Natural Resource Management website www.territorynrm.org.au. Each management action has been prioritised using a technical assessment (see Appendix - Preparation of a consultation draft) and the resultant priority ratings are presented in each profile. Each management action pertaining to a specific region has also received a community priority rating, and these are presented in the regional action plans.



For detailed Management Actions visit www.territorynrm.org.au

Long Term Targets (2030)

Fire-1 By 2030, Territorians are working together to manage fire, based on knowledge of cultural, biodiversity and production values, threats and the best management options

Weeds-1 By 2030, Territorians are working together to manage weeds at the catchment scale, based on knowledge of cultural, biodiversity and production values, threats and the best management options

Ferals-1 By 2030, Territorians are working together to manage feral animals, based on knowledge of cultural, biodiversity and production values, threats and the best management options

Biosecurity-1 By 2030, collaborative biosecurity programs are in place to reduce the likelihood of new weeds, pests and diseases becoming established in the Northern Territory

Climate Change-1 By 2030, Territory natural resource managers have adopted a range of options to better cope with climate change impacts

Conservation Economy-1 By 2030, the conservation economy is an integral part of natural resource businesses in the Northern Territory providing employment and enhancing enterprise viability

Sustainable Practices-1 By 2030, Territory livelihoods and environmental conditions are benefiting from more efficient and sustainable practices

Ecological Footprints-1 By 2030, domestic and commercial water and energy use is sustainable, with minimal environmental impact

Ecological Footprints-2 By 2030, Territory towns, suburbs and regional centres are environmental show cases of good environmental planning and management

Ecological Footprints-3 By 2030, the entry of toxic chemicals into the environment from private and commercial activities has been reduced

Policy & Planning-1 By 2030, the Territory's policy, planning and legislative framework supports more sustainable natural resource management

Policy & Planning-2 By 2030, the Territory's planning, policy and legislative framework supports employment in conservation stewardship activities

Land & Sea-1 By 2030, use of land and sea country is based on sound information about the distribution, characteristics and tolerances of ecosystems and species

Land & Sea-2 By 2030, condition of landscapes and seascapes is being regularly monitored, and any identified deterioration is being addressed

Significant Sites-1 By 2030, environmentally- and culturally-significant sites are being managed cooperatively, based on knowledge of values, threats and the best management options

Species-1 By 2030, we have reduced the decline in native species through improved knowledge of threats and management needs

Knowledge & Capacity-1 By 2030, Territory natural resource managers are incorporating the best available knowledge, information and data into their management

Knowledge & Capacity-2 By 2030, environmental stewardship roles on all land and sea tenure types is a major source of employment and income in remote areas

Community Engagement-1 By 2030, volunteer participation in land and sea management activities and community commitment to principles of ecologically sustainable development have increased



Dust storm, Michael Schmid

Table 1
Organisation of programs in the NT INRM Plan

| Theme | Program | Targets | | Management Actions |
|---|---|---------|-----------|--------------------|
| | | 2030 | 2010-2015 | |
| Addressing threats | Harnessing fire | 1 | 3 | 6 |
| | Controlling weeds at the catchment scale | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| | Reducing feral animal impacts | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| | Strengthening biosecurity surveillance and response | 1 | 1 | 3 |
| | Understanding climate change | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Supporting economically sustainable development | Entering the conservation economy | 1 | 5 | 7 |
| | Supporting industry adoption of sustainable practices | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| | Minimising ecological footprints | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | Policy and planning for sustainable use | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| Managing environmental assets | Managing land and sea country based on sound information | 2 | 6 | 11 |
| | Protecting significant sites | 1 | 4 | 12 |
| | Recovering species through adaptive management | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Making it happen | Building natural resource management knowledge and capacity | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| | Engaging the community | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| Totals | | 19 | 40 | 90 |

Figure 4.

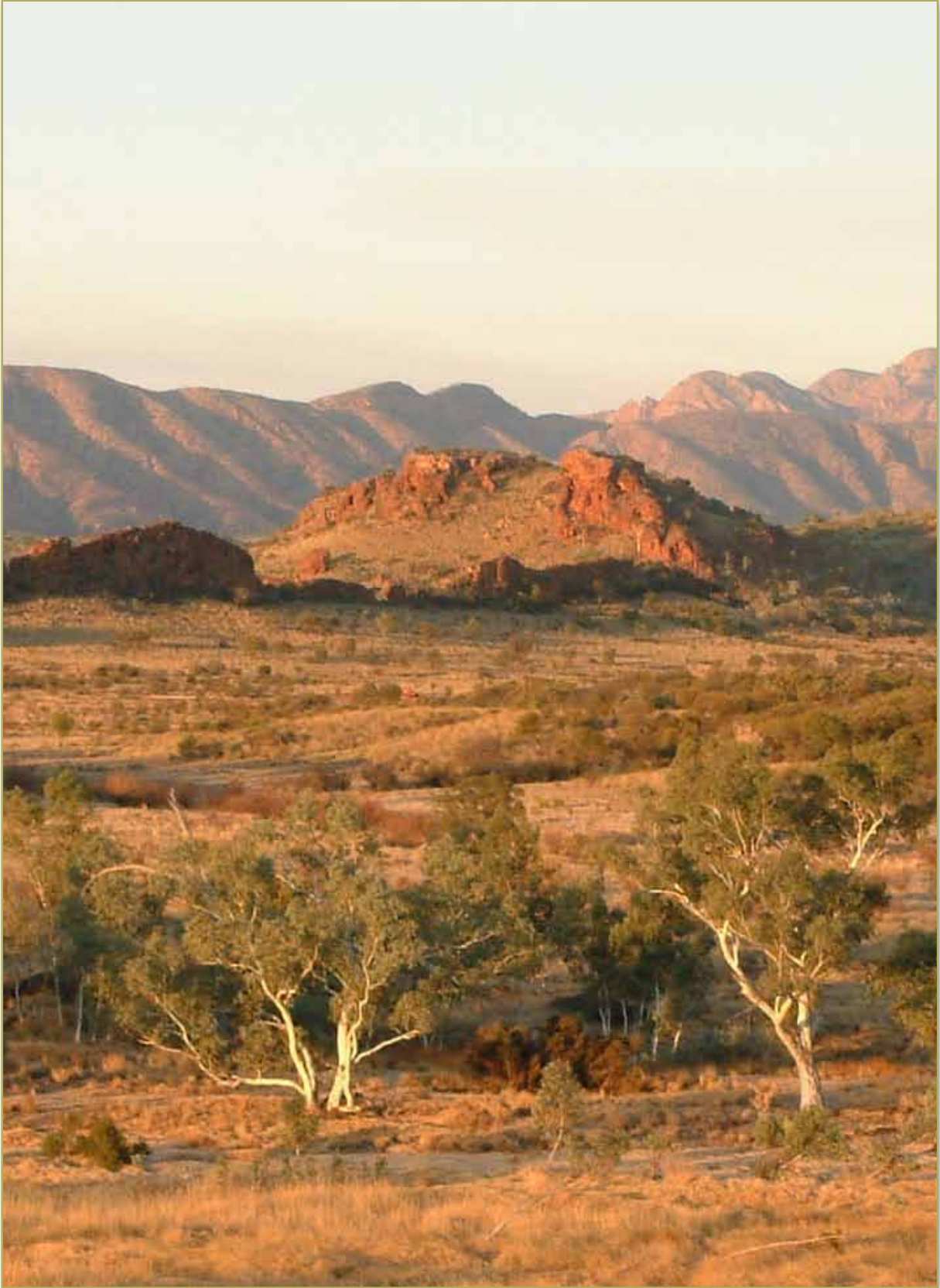
The four regional action plans are programs of activity reflecting local capacity, resource conditions and priorities. While the regional action plans prioritise actions and set targets according to local conditions and community aspirations, together with the Territory-wide Plan, they address the strategic targets set for the Territory as a whole in this 2010 INRM Plan (Figure 1.)

‘The Northern Territory Horticultural Association (NTHA), on behalf of the Northern Territory horticultural sector, welcomes this opportunity to contribute to outlining how the Territory’s natural resources will be managed for the next five years.

Sustainability is one of the key drivers influencing horticultural development in the Northern Territory and the NTHA invests considerable effort on natural resource management issues. We hope that the reviewed INRM Plan will be another mechanism by which industry can ensure a better understanding of, and support for, its ongoing pursuit of sustainable land management strategies.’

Northern Territory Horticultural Association

INTRODUCTION



West MacDonnell Ranges, Michael Barritt



NRM project volunteers, Ben Hoffman

3.4 Whose Plan is it?

This is a Plan for all Territorians. While Territory Natural Resource Management has coordinated the preparation of the plan, it does not own it. We have consulted widely across all sectors of the Territory NRM community to find out what is important to us (the themes and programs); what we all want to achieve (the targets); what management actions we, as Territorians, need to undertake; and what information, resources and opportunities we need in order to do so.

Many individuals and organisations have an interest in natural resource management and are actively working to improve the condition of our environment and its ability to sustain us. The enormity of the task means that communities, industry and government involvement is needed to get the job done. It therefore includes actions that will support community groups to undertake environmental management and develop NRM-based businesses; and to help industry to improve management.



Mission grass eradication at Fogg Dam



Ranger meeting, Caroline Biggs

3.5 How will the Plan be delivered?

Targets of the Plan will be achieved both by activities funded through Territory Natural Resource Management and by work undertaken independently of Territory Natural Resource Management.

In the first instance, Territory Natural Resource Management will fund activities that help deliver Territory-wide and regional level solutions and maintain the capacity of the regional community to address Australian Government targets. The size of Territory Natural Resource Management's annual investment will depend on the amount of funds awarded to us by the Australian Government, as well as funds that we manage to attract from other sources.

Secondly, Territory Natural Resource Management will act as a broker to facilitate the funding of projects by third party investors.

Thirdly, Territory Natural Resource Management and other organisations will be working to progress arrangements that assist natural resource managers to be self-funding, largely through opportunities offered by the conservation economy. These payment-for-environmental-services arrangements will allow organisations not only to undertake the work for which they have been paid, but also to build the capacity and resource base needed to undertake their own priority natural resource management.

Finally, Plan targets will be met through the core activities of organisations not seeking external funds to do so. This will particularly be the case in the event of the Northern Territory Government developing new legislation or policy frameworks.

3.6 Principles guiding the delivery of this Plan

The following principles will be used to guide the delivery of this Plan.

- **Integration** - Recognising that issues of land, water, coasts, their biodiversity and people are all connected and need to be addressed together.
- **Prioritisation** – Management actions will remain focussed and relevant through continued assessment of priorities. This will include identifying the most effective methods of delivery and the highest priority areas in which to do the work.
- **Collaboration and consultation** - All management actions will be undertaken in consultation with all appropriate stakeholders. Their opinions will be respected and used to shape activities. Projects that involve the full range of stakeholders will be prioritised over those that do not.
- **Ownership** - Wherever possible, the Plan will support projects that are driven by the land holders, industry representative bodies or Indigenous groups that own, use or manage the resources, with the support of the appropriate agencies and/or research institutions.
- **Partnerships** – Creating and embracing opportunity to bring together a broad range of expertise both within and between sectors to promote engagement, information sharing and collaboration.
- **Scale-appropriate approaches** - Projects funded by the Plan must address issues at an appropriate scale. For example, water quality management needs to occur at the catchment scale whereas fire management needs to be addressed at a regional scale. Biosecurity also needs to include cross-border collaboration.
- **Sustained outcomes** - We will be encouraging people to think about how their efforts will be sustained beyond the life of the project. Territory Natural Resource Management also commits to supporting NRM practitioners efforts to access long-term resources for ongoing work.

An adaptive management approach will be taken in all aspects of this Plan. As more information comes in, management actions and regional plans will be revised. Progress will be measured and lessons will be fed back into project delivery. It may be that by the end of the five years some of the objectives in this Plan will seem unrealistic and other priorities may have come to the fore.



Darwin Harbour Clean Up, Hannah Seward



Turtle entangled in ghost net, Dhimurru IPA, Alistair Dermer



Mimosa project meeting, Tipperary Station, Nigel Weston

3.7 How will the Plan's progress be assessed?

There are several mechanisms for assessing the Plan's progress. At the project level, monitoring and evaluation will be built in to the projects arising from each management action as part of milestone agreements - usually reported on a quarterly basis. At the program level, there will be an annual assessment of Plan targets, and of how the management actions have contributed to achieving them.

This will be achieved by reporting against the list of measures provided under each target.

Towards the end of the Plan period, the progress towards achieving the long-term targets of the plan will also be assessed. In the fifth year, the plan will be revised and a new Plan formulated drawing on the lessons learnt in the previous two plans.

'The INRM Plan has... proven to be a valuable framework for pursuing the land management agenda of Aboriginal people in this region across a range of interests and continues to have considerable relevance.'

David Alexander, Manager
(Land Management),
Central Land Council