

Resilience of remote Indigenous Communities – how we can achieve it?

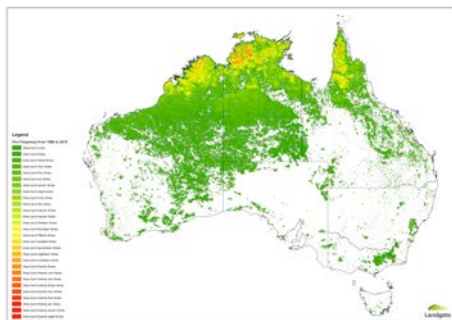


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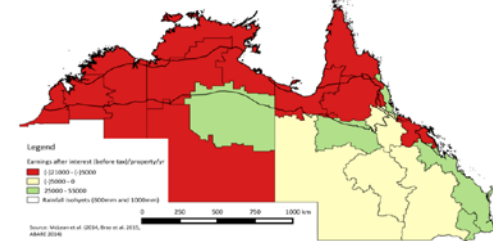
Introduction: Our project applies ecological-economic methods to help build the resilience and sustainability of remote Indigenous communities across northern Australia, as described below:

Background: North Australia is highly prone to tropical cyclones, flooding, and annual wildfires (Fig. 1). Remote Indigenous communities are highly vulnerable under current climate change and socio-political environmental contexts.



Rationale 2. Pasture production for beef cattle is the ‘dominant’ land use in northern Australia with very low to moderate productivity. Currently, the economic returns from a ‘typical’ pastoral enterprise are largely negative (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3: Earnings after interest but before tax (\$/yr/property)



Solution. Ecosystem Services-based economies for managing land, fire, and carbon at landscape scales can benefit local Indigenous communities (and the wider Australian community) in a number of ways:

Benefits for the wider Australian public

- Reduced risk of fire by implementing traditional fire practices, and hence reducing GHG emissions
- Reduced loss of biodiversity, soil and pollution of waterways and hence downstream effects on marine systems

Benefits for the local Indigenous communities

- Economic opportunities through employment for working on country to manage land and fire
- Enhancing and building peoples’ capabilities to practice land/fire management knowledge and skills
- Empowering community resilience

Rationale 1: Indigenous communities comprising ~80% of the total population in remote northern Australia are well dispersed throughout the landscape (Fig. 2), but lack suitable work and enterprise opportunities. Indigenous involvement in land/fire management through appropriate economic opportunities can deliver socio-economic, cultural and ecological benefits while reducing the costs of government expenditure on job training, health and some welfare related services.

Fig. 2: Indigenous land rights and discrete communities

