

Working with community partners

Goal 6 **Caring for land and sea country together**

Goal 7 **Connecting people to nature**

Goal 8 **Communities working together for
protected areas, forests and wildlife**



Goal 6 Caring for land sea together— Indigenous partnerships

Involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in all aspects of protected area and wildlife management ensuring their aspirations of looking after land and sea country are acknowledged, respected and supported through culturally appropriate partnerships.

Why is this important?

For Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, managing the health of landscapes and seascapes is integral to cultural wellbeing, custodianship and in some places people's livelihood.

Over many generations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have developed and passed on traditional knowledge of natural landscapes and seascapes—this is called 'traditional ecological knowledge'. Respect for this knowledge and practice is central to a successful partnership between government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as is respect for Indigenous rights in relation to access

and use of land, sea and wildlife. National and State legislation requires and provides for the involvement of Indigenous peoples and local communities in natural and cultural heritage management.

Collaborative management of land and sea country between government and Traditional Owners helps ensure that protected areas are managed effectively and that species of conservation concern are protected and sustainably used. It also means that Traditional Owners are empowered and engaged at a community level. Formal agreements between government agencies and Traditional Owners can help solidify this collaboration.

Some of the arrangements between Traditional Owners and government for the management of land and sea country include:

Cooperative management of protected areas

- Local agreements such as Memorandums of Understanding (MoU), Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA) and contracts for works and services provide for indigenous input into protected area decision-making and hands-on management.
- National parks (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land) and Naree Budjong Djara National Park (North Stradbroke Island) allow for joint management of national parks by Traditional Owners and QPWS, with an underlying Aboriginal freehold tenure.
- Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA) are areas of Indigenous land or sea country where Traditional Owners have entered into an agreement with the Commonwealth to promote biodiversity and cultural resource conservation.

Land, sea or wildlife use conservation agreements

- Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUA) are a voluntary but legally binding agreement between a native title group and others about the use and management of land, wildlife and waters.



- Brolga cranes at Rinyirru (Lakefield) National Park (CYPAL).
- Weed removal on Annan River Area B Nature Refuge.
- In the Bunya Mountains partnerships between Traditional Owners and other land managers are important for managing country. In the Bunya Mountain Balds Murri Rangers also partner with QPWS to carry out traditional burning.



- Traditional Use Marine Resource Agreements (TUMRAs), administered by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, are one type of formal agreement that describes how Traditional Owner groups manage the traditional use of marine resources.
- Voluntary conservation agreements and nature refuges on Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander land are where Traditional Owners agree to manage their land to an agreed standard for biodiversity and cultural heritage values.

Other management involvement

- Indigenous involvement is always sought when management plans are prepared for protected areas and wildlife.
- Traditional Owners are involved when new developments are planned on protected areas and where possible when special events are organised.
- Information is exchanged between Traditional Owners and QPWS on wildlife and protected area management.
- Dialogue and respectful relationships are sought to guide the presentation and interpretation of cultural heritage values on protected areas.

QPWS employs Indigenous staff on protected areas and in offices throughout the state, with an active Indigenous employment strategy and a number of Indigenous identified positions. Indigenous QPWS rangers as well as community rangers—Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander rangers who work for their community council, land trust or corporation—are vital in the management of protected areas. These rangers are a crucial contact between their local community councils, elders, and tribal corporations, and government departments and agencies. Because of their unique skills and knowledge, they play an important role in ensuring that QPWS officers and Traditional Owners can work together to manage and sustain the ecological and cultural values of Queensland's sea country.

National park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land)

The terrestrial protected area estate has seen stronger partnerships between government and Traditional Owners emerge in recent years. In 2007, the proclamation of the *Cape York Peninsula Heritage Act 2007* amended the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NCA) and *Aboriginal Land Act 1991* to provide a new framework for joint management of national parks on Cape York Peninsula. The NCA now allows for the creation of a class of protected area called 'national park (Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal land)' (national park [CYPAL]).

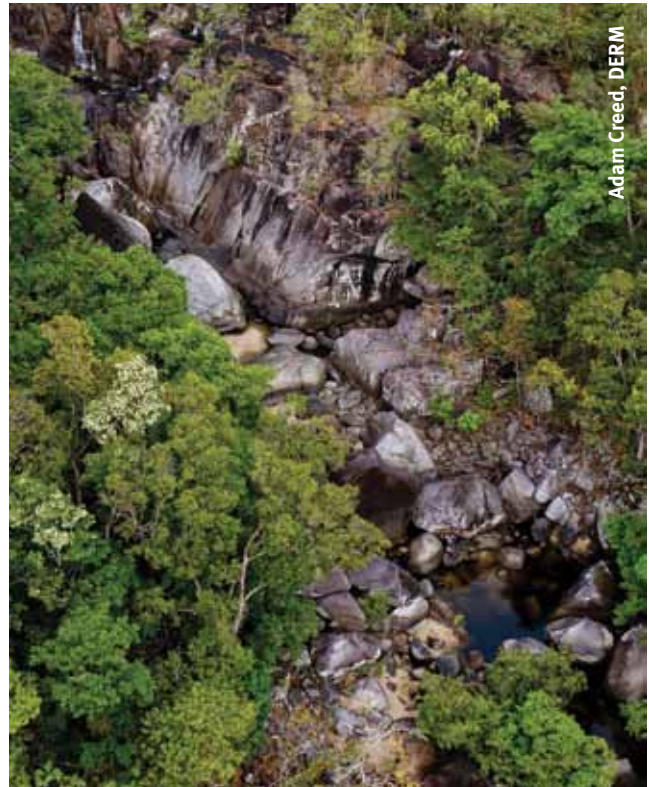
This new class allows for existing and proposed national parks to become Aboriginal land and also be dedicated and managed as a national park (CYPAL). More importantly it allows for joint management of park land by Traditional Owners (represented by a land trust or corporation) and the QPWS. Traditional Owners are the owners of the land through the grant of an Aboriginal freehold title, provided the area will always be managed as a national park (CYPAL) under the NCA.

As joint managers of the land, Traditional Owners are involved in all levels of management. Traditional Owners and QPWS work together to develop resource and visitor management policies, and operational procedures for the day-to-day management of the parks including pest animal and pest plant control, fire management, permits, presentation and facilities.

As joint managers of the land, Traditional Owners may also economically benefit from contract work, commercial tourism and Indigenous ranger employment.

▼ A gorge in KULLA (McIlwraith Range) National Park (CYPAL). The Traditional Owners for this country belong to four clan groups, Kaanju, Umpila, Lama Lama, Ayapathu. The park name is an acronym for these groups and the park is jointly managed by the Kulla Land Trust and QPWS.

► Dugongs are a culturally important species for many Traditional Owner groups.



Adam Creed, DERM

What is our approach?

Queensland's protected area system will provide for the continued expression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' relationships with wildlife, land and sea country and will respect cultural values, including traditional laws and customs. QPWS will:

- recognise and respect Indigenous rights and interests in wildlife, land and sea country which coexist with the protection of natural values.
- recognise the role of Indigenous people as skilled partners in protected area and wildlife management.
- improve the capacity of Traditional Owners to manage wildlife, land and sea country, through training and employment, and by supporting connection to country and traditional knowledge recording systems.
- employ Indigenous staff across all aspects of QPWS business.
- manage the protected area system through cooperation and a range of different partnership arrangements with Indigenous peoples.
- actively seek opportunities for better cooperation and reconciliation.
- respect the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural tenet that only Traditional Owners can speak for their country.

What we will do: priorities for 2020

6.1 Increase involvement of Traditional Owners in planning and management of protected areas, forests and wildlife.

- a) Integrate Indigenous land and sea country management as a core component of planning and management for protected areas, forests and wildlife across the state.
- b) Where appropriate, cooperatively develop Indigenous Land Use Agreements to guide future management on protected areas; support the development of Memorandums of Understanding and other Traditional Owner agreements.

Cape York Peninsula

- c) Complete Indigenous Land Use and Management Agreements for Cape York Peninsula Aboriginal lands and national parks.
- d) Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land and sea country management is an integral component of any management framework for the proposed Cape York Peninsula World Heritage area*.

* Actions from Queensland's draft biodiversity strategy Building Nature's Resilience.

Target

- By 2020, all existing national parks on Cape York Peninsula will be transferred to national park (CYPAL) and will be jointly managed with Traditional Owners through an Indigenous Management Agreement.

North Stradbroke Island

- e) Finalise the North Stradbroke Island national park conversions and associated Indigenous land use and management agreements.

Target

- By 2021, 75 per cent of North Stradbroke Island is converted to national park.

Wildlife

- f) Involve Traditional Owners in wildlife management wherever possible, and respect traditional skills and knowledge about plants and animals. Recognise the strong links between nature and culture.
- g) Work with Traditional Owners to develop partnership agreements for the sustainable take of turtle and dugong, and for monitoring activities on marine populations in sea country.



6.2 Strengthen partnerships to support management of land, sea and wildlife.

- a) Support Indigenous forums or reference groups to advise on protected area management issues. Use these forums to coordinate approaches to protected area-specific issues, facilitate consultation, and advise and assist where necessary in resolving regional and local issues and in regional and statewide planning.
- b) Where Traditional Owners request this, establish nature refuges on Aboriginal freehold land of conservation significance.
- c) Continue to develop active partnerships between Traditional Owners, Indigenous natural resource management agencies and QPWS across Queensland. Investigate opportunities for QPWS to work with regional Indigenous owned and operated organisations involved in land and sea country management.
- d) Investigate options to improve integration of Indigenous cultural use and values into conservation planning, including engaging with Traditional Owners at the conceptual stage of planning and management.



Tamara Vallance, DERM

6.3 Support employment, training and economic opportunities.

- a) Use a range of programs to provide employment for Indigenous peoples in all aspects of conservation management. Ensure that appropriate training is provided and that long-term employment opportunities exist.
- b) Encourage Indigenous peoples wishing to establish businesses linked with park management and visitors within relevant policies and guidelines.
- c) Work with Traditional Owners and Indigenous members of the North Stradbroke Island community to exchange skills and build capacity of individuals and families to participate in culturally based land and sea management as part of the government's North Stradbroke Island package*.

Target

- By 2012, five per cent QPWS rangers identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.

* Action from Queensland's draft biodiversity strategy Building Nature's Resilience.



Simon Thompson, DERM

- An interpretive sign outlining a cultural story. Communication and interpretation is a key way that QPWS can demonstrate and encourage respect and recognition for Indigenous culture.
- Conducting a pest assessment of KULLA (McIlwraith Range) National Park (CYPAL).

6.4 Recognise and respect Indigenous culture through communication and interpretation.

- a) Continue to work with Traditional Owners when interpreting Indigenous culture. Encourage visitors to respect culture and sites on protected areas and forests.
- b) Use Indigenous language where possible when interpreting Indigenous culture.
- c) Work towards using dual names of national parks on all signage and where requested through declaration of new potential areas.

▼ The new Naree Budjong Djara National Park (on North Stradbroke Island) will be jointly managed by the Quandamooka people and QPWS.

The North Stradbroke Island Strategy

The first stage of Naree Budjong Djara National Park, covering more than 5000 hectares, has been gazetted on North Stradbroke Island. Naree Budjong Djara National Park will be jointly managed by the Quandamooka people—the island’s Traditional Owners—and QPWS to ensure it is protected for the enjoyment of future generations.

By the end of 2011, 50 per cent of North Stradbroke Island will be national park, expanding to 75 per cent by 2021 and 80 per cent by 2026.

Further information on the Naree Budjong Djara National Park is available from

◀www.derm.qld.gov.au▶

