

INCLUDING WOMEN IN FIRE MANAGEMENT ON WAANYI AND GARAWA LANDS



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WAANYI-GARAWA RANGERS IN THE REMOTE SOUTH-WEST GULF OF CARPENTARIA HAVE LONG AWAITED INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN THEIR HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL FIRE ABATEMENT PROGRAM. THEIR FRESHLY DECLARED INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA ALLOWS NEW INVESTMENT INTO COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT. THIS RESEARCH AIMS TO COLLABORATIVELY DEVELOP A FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUDING WOMEN IN FIRE MANAGEMENT ON WAANYI AND GARAWA COUNTRY.



This BNHCRC project is carried out in partnership with the Waanyi-Garawa rangers, who are employing women across all the four Waanyi and Garawa clan groups to participate in the research. So far fieldwork has been conducted throughout the *Wuyaliya* clan estate, and this poster presents perspectives on the project form from senior women (respectfully know as *badibadi*) connected to this country through their fathers, mothers, or marriage.

Left: The rangers arranged for women to observe new fire scars from prescribed burning through their collaboration with the Carpentaria Land Council. Some *badibadi* are seeing their country for the first time.

"Well, we'd like to see more young girls involved. We never did that fire business in the stock camp, just if there was a fire, us kids flogged him with flour sacks! [When we got our land back] our father would just take them boys in his car, so I never even learnt to speak my native tongue! But I gotta see that country, it's been too long, and them young girls need to too!"

- Topsy Green

"I just want to learn from my sisters, and show my grandchildren this country. I never go to any of those meetings, because I don't know this country. I want to be able to go to meetings because I'm a traditional owner. I never thought I'd come back here. We said goodbye to everything here."

- Katie Seccin

"We've never been here....and I am a traditional owner! That's why we've gotta be here! We have to come!"

- Joy Seccin

"I've been complaining for years! HEY! Where are the women? But government won't listen. So, all we can do is complain silently to our husbands: HEY! So now you're going to walk all over my sites, burning? Men have always been able to come back, but when is our turn? You cannot just do this once: women have to be equal in this bushfire business. This is the start. [] I told those boys, it's our time now! We've gotta start going together!"

- Iris Hogan

"We never got to burn, no, never, nothing. You know...it's true what they say about what those whitefellas did, going round killing people... So us women just did all the hard work in the camp! Working, working, working...so we never know. So they gotta take us now! We have to share!"

- Margaret Cutta

"We don't know that country, but that was our mimi's [mother's father's] country, for the people who grew us up. I wish those old people could show us themselves, that would be better. But at least now we can see it this way."

- Kathleen O'Keefe

