



Carbon Factsheet

Content from this factsheet was drawn from the Discussion Paper on Indigenous participation in the Carbon Industry developed with input from Dean Yibarbuk (Warddeken Land Management), Shaun Ansell (independent consultant) Sam Johnston (International Savanna Fire Management Initiative) and Anna Boustead (Indigenous Carbon Industry Network).

Interest in and demand for Indigenous derived carbon products is growing rapidly as more businesses and governments set targets to reduce carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon farming involves changing the way country is managed to store carbon or reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Examples include savanna fire management to avoid hot and destructive fires, planting trees, removing grazing pressure to allow a forest to restore naturally, or changing the way livestock is managed. Every tonne of carbon stored or emissions avoided is rewarded with a carbon credit which can be sold or traded with a buyer to offset their carbon emissions.

Carbon farming projects can provide Indigenous landholders with income while also improving the health of Country, employment and training opportunities, an independent source of revenue and enable the practice of culture and protection of heritage. As a result, Indigenous-produced carbon units are a highly valued, premium product that can fetch above market prices.

Carbon projects can be effective vehicles of self-determination. Aligning a strong market return with Indigenous peoples' aspirations to manage and Care for Country creates wealth that strengthens communities whilst building organisational capacity.

While the Indigenous carbon industry has been concentrated in northern Australia the growing market and new methods are creating opportunities – and challenges – for Indigenous people across Australia.

Challenges

- Less secure land tenure and property rights outside Australia's northern savanna zone makes it harder for Indigenous people in southern Australia to directly participate in the carbon industry.
- Carbon projects can be technically, legally, and financially complex to manage and start-up costs can be high.
- Growing demand for carbon is driving competition for land and increasing pressure on Indigenous landholders to sign up with third-party providers.
- Third-party project structures can disempower Indigenous people.
- Free, prior and informed consent processes are not always upheld.
- Indigenous people are not always aware of their carbon rights and interests.
- Independent advice and support can be difficult to access with most of these skills held by third-party providers.
- Impacts of climate change can threaten the viability of carbon projects (in some cases due to increased insurance costs).
- Indigenous people are under-represented in national carbon policy and market development discussions.



Wardaman rangers discussing ideas on fire project funding.



Wardaman ranger discussing ideas on fire project funding.



Tiwi Ranger Willie Rioli opening the third annual Savanna Fire Forum at Charles Darwin University.

Opportunities

- Carbon projects are becoming more viable with increased carbon prices, global interest, and the release of new methods.
- With Indigenous carbon potentially fetching higher prices the potential to certify and brand Indigenous carbon is being explored.
- Some carbon methods – e.g. blue carbon, whole of landscape and savanna fire management methods – are highly aligned to culture and traditional land and water management.
- The availability and type of funding is increasing via government programs, private investment, debt finance and philanthropic sources.
- Additional financial rewards for caring for country are possible through co-benefit markets.
- The consent right of non-exclusive Native Title holders as Eligible Interest Holders provide an opportunity to develop innovative partnerships with non-Indigenous landholders.
- Strengthening of Indigenous-led initiatives for example the Indigenous Carbon Industry Network (ICIN) and other collaborations.

Tell Us What You Need

How can the ILSC best support your participation in the carbon industry? Should we:

1. Provide information on where carbon industry opportunities exist and how to take advantage of those opportunities?
2. Help to build your business planning and capabilities? e.g. feasibility studies, capacity building, links to technical advisors and networks.
3. Link you with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and groups to learn from each other? e.g. sharing ideas, lessons and business models that work, supporting conferences etc.
4. Actively support Indigenous-led organisations, networks, alliances and initiatives to have a greater voice in industry development and government?
5. Provide funding support for projects?
6. Other suggestions?

Projects supported by the ILSC

Since 2018 the ILSC has supported 12 carbon related projects with a total investment of over \$4 million across industry development and research, opportunity identification and project start-up, including:

- the acquisition of Gracevale Station (Turraburra) for cultural, environmental and tourism purposes, including carbon opportunities;
- supporting workshops and the expansion of seven Indigenous enterprises' carbon projects across the Kimberley;
- supporting industry development with business planning support for the Indigenous Carbon Industry Network;
- supporting the Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Ltd team to develop and deliver the first accredited training program for savanna burning based on traditional fire management practices.

Since 2017, the ILSC has delivered the \$34 million Savanna Fire Management Program on behalf of INPEX.

To find out more about what we do please go to www.ilsc.gov.au and check out our Project Profiles.



Join The Conversation



Come along to one of our face-to-face sessions or join an online session. Visit our website to book in.



Complete the on line survey.



Phone us on 1800 818 490 for a confidential chat.



Email your submissions to NILSS@ilsc.gov.au to share your thoughts.



Get your full Information Pack: visit www.ilsc.gov.au, or email NILSS@ilsc.gov.au.



A feedback report summarising what we have heard from you and how we will use this important information will be available on the website.



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