

Overviewing a new (draft) process for land & sea research on Kimberley saltwater Country

Developed through the Kimberley Indigenous Saltwater Science Project
2016-2017

Presented by Gina Lincoln, Mosaic Environmental
On behalf of the Kimberley Indigenous Saltwater Science
(KISSP) working group

Background

The Kimberley region is unique in terms of its natural wealth and the rich culture of its Indigenous people.

As a result it provides significant research opportunities



In the Kimberley, Indigenous land & sea managers have come to value the contribution that western science makes to management of their saltwater Country in contemporary Australia.

"All the rangers are working with science and it is a good thing."

"Science data is important to enable people to make decision for themselves for their own country"

"Some of the monitoring we can use Traditional Knowledge, but we can also use science to back us up"

"Science can fill gaps we don't know about, Bardi Jawi fill gaps in science too"

"We are monitoring to enhance ability to look after country"



Over time, many Kimberley researchers have found that the western science they bring to their research projects is only one side of the equation, with Indigenous knowledge providing the balance

They come to place high value the input of Traditional Owners, Indigenous Rangers and other traditional knowledge holders to research projects

“For some of the species we relied on traditional knowledge to gain a better understanding of reproductive ecology - which is relevant to how we interpreted results”

“From an analytical perspective we are working with cutting edge methods, but we relied heavily on traditional knowledge to find the species we were working on”

“We gained some historical understanding of how marine communities have changed over time which was beneficial for interpreting our work”

...and make good use of the network of Indigenous people with skills, knowledge, expertise, resources and interest in land and sea management, monitoring and research.

“It was through traditional knowledge that we were able to find and access and collect the samples we required”

“The success of our project would not have been possible without the help of the traditional owners and rangers”

“We were unlikely to have been able to find what we were looking for without Indigenous knowledge”



Collaborative research (working 'two-ways' or 'right-way research') is the best-practice approach supported by Indigenous people in this region

It works because it:

- ✓ respects both types of knowledge and culture,
- ✓ meets the research needs of all research partners and
- ✓ makes best use of available resources

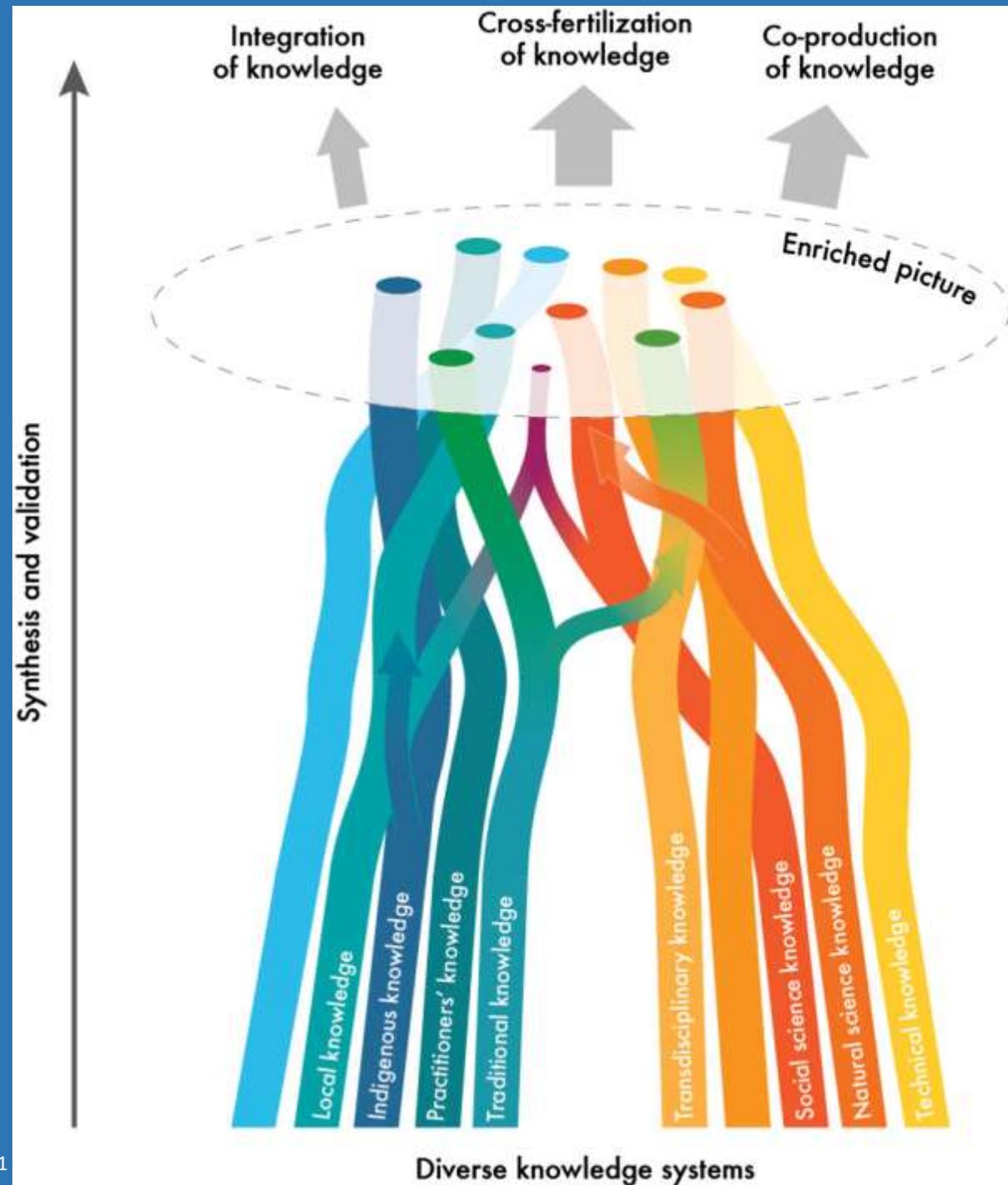
It can be thought of as land and sea research that is jointly owned and run by Indigenous people and their western science research partners in a way that values the contributions of both groups and builds knowledge together

Building knowledge together

What we've been learning about in this project is how knowledge is both integrated and co-produced during collaborative research projects

This approach allows two quite different knowledge and belief systems to sit next to each other towards a common output, with a range of benefits not commonly associated with scientific research projects

It provides strength to a research project because it gives your research a multiple evidence base



Go to: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yg01sA8_ZAg

Achieving strong collaborative research has not been easy for Kimberley researchers, particularly those new to working with Indigenous land and sea managers

It also hasn't been easy for local Indigenous people to facilitate

Supporting both groups to realise the many benefits of collaborative research is essentially the focus of the Kimberley Indigenous Saltwater Science Project (KISSP)

KISSP products in development:

A multiple-evidence base approach for knowledge integration in Kimberley Saltwater Country

A road-map for enhanced knowledge integration in Kimberley saltwater Country

Guidelines for two-way knowledge work in Kimberley saltwater Country

Regional Kimberley saltwater monitoring framework

Saltwater monitoring toolbox for Indigenous Rangers

Research Protocol for land and sea research on Kimberley saltwater Country



To get to this point we collated input from:

- Around 30 western scientists with Kimberley research experience
- Over 100 Indigenous community members
- A dozen staff members involved in research process development

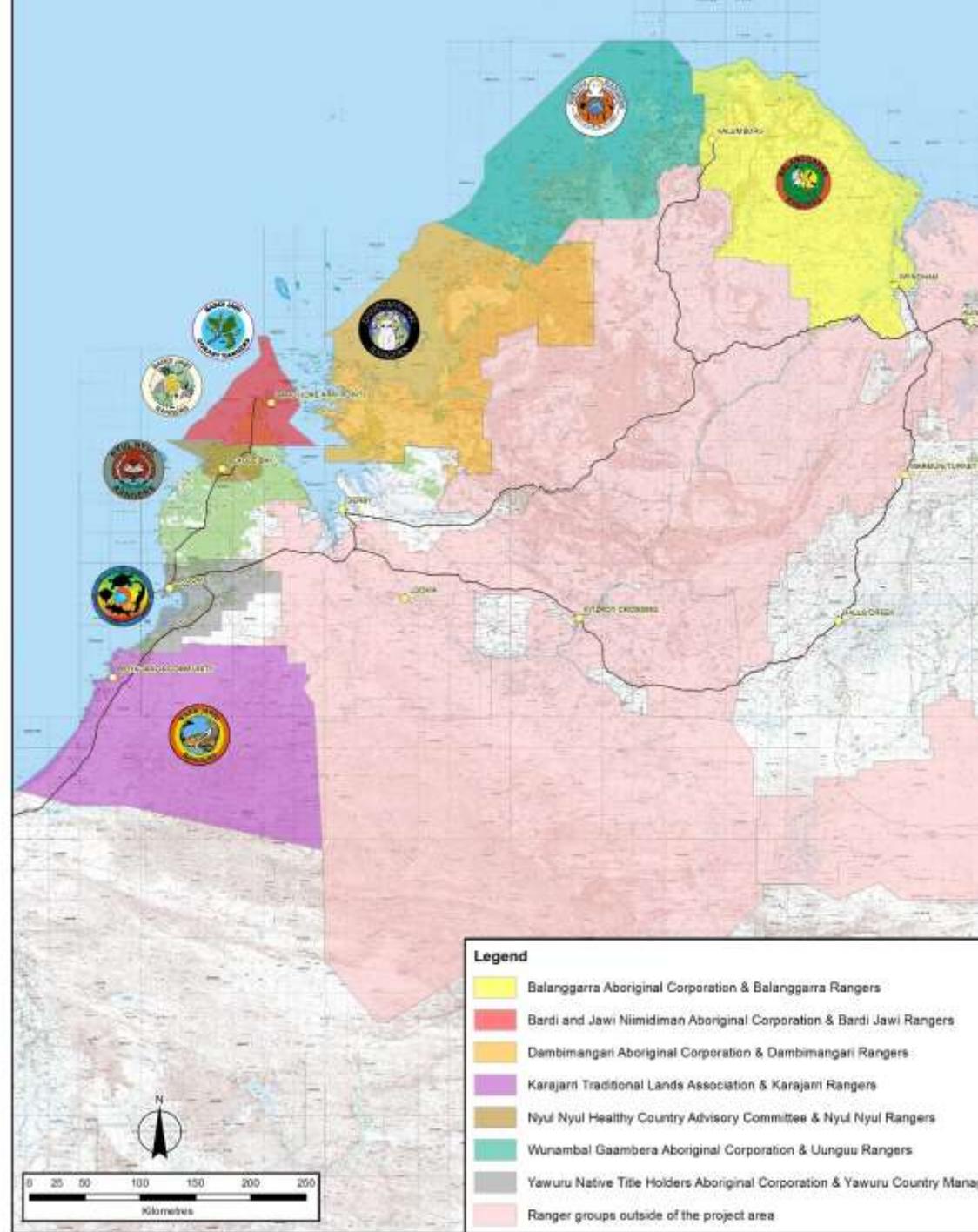


Qualifier

At present, this process applies only to land and sea research in Kimberley saltwater Country, whose Native Title holders agree to support it

A formal process of requesting the free, prior, informed consent of Aboriginal Corporations in each area is occurring over the next few months (starting mid May)

However the best-practice principles can be applied more widely



Research Protocol for land and sea research on Kimberley saltwater Country

Please share your experience of undertaking research in the Kimberley

Your feedback will help us to improve the way we do collaborative research

BEFORE YOU START - please choose your preferred option:

- I would prefer to give this feedback anonymously
- I am happy to provide my contact details

Next

Proposal to undertake natural or cultural resource management research in the Kimberley, Australia

Section 1

PLEASE NOTE: Applicants filling out this form need to have read and be following the processes outlined in the document available from partnering Kimberley Indigenous Organizations, entitled 'Collaborative Science on Kimberley Saltwater Country - A Guide for Researchers' first published in 2017, herein referred to as the Guide for Researchers.

Not all Kimberley language groups use this form, as such it is critical that applicants consult the Guide for Researchers to determine if this form can be used for the proposed research.

Your name *

First Name Last Name

Name of accompanying staff member 1 (if applicable)

First Name Last Name

Name of accompanying staff member 2 (if applicable)

First Name Last Name

Your email (used for all email correspondence) *
 ex: myname@example.com

Phone number *
 -
Area Code Phone Number

Collaborative Science on Kimberley Saltwater Country - A Guide for Researchers -



"People who have Indigenous Knowledge are scientists themselves"
(Kimberley Traditional Owner, 2016)

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Prepared by Mosaic Environmental

The process of research within the Guide for Researchers has been put into six stages for land & sea researchers to follow:

1. Preparing for Research

2. Joint Development & Proposal

3. Assessment & Consultation

4. Agreement Brokerage

5. Working on Country

6. Communicating Results



Relationship building throughout

Stage 1 - Preparing for Research

In this foundational stage, researchers are asked to:

- invest time to develop their knowledge of local land and sea management and research priorities
- to learn about the local Indigenous people and their Country
- to extend their understanding of how Indigenous Knowledge can be used to support research
- and learn more about the nature of collaborative Kimberley Indigenous-western science research

Resources are provided throughout the Guide to support progress through each stage

For example, if you are proposing a research project on Dambimangari Country, you'd go to a page of resources about their people and culture, management plans etc. to have a look through

If you needed to brush up on local governance arrangements, you'd head to that page and select links around that topic

Understanding local governance structures

It is important to understand the basics of local governance structures that apply to Kimberley traditional lands before starting your collaborative research journey. Please take some time to read about Native Title, Aboriginal Corporations and Traditional Owners before starting work on Stage 1.

Traditional Ownership

A Traditional Owner (commonly referred to as a TO) is a person who possesses joint responsibilities of an area of land and/or waters through the system of land ownership and obligation used by Indigenous Australians for many thousands of years. The mechanisms determining traditional ownership are complex and are beyond the scope of this document to explain.

However, some important points for researchers to understand include:

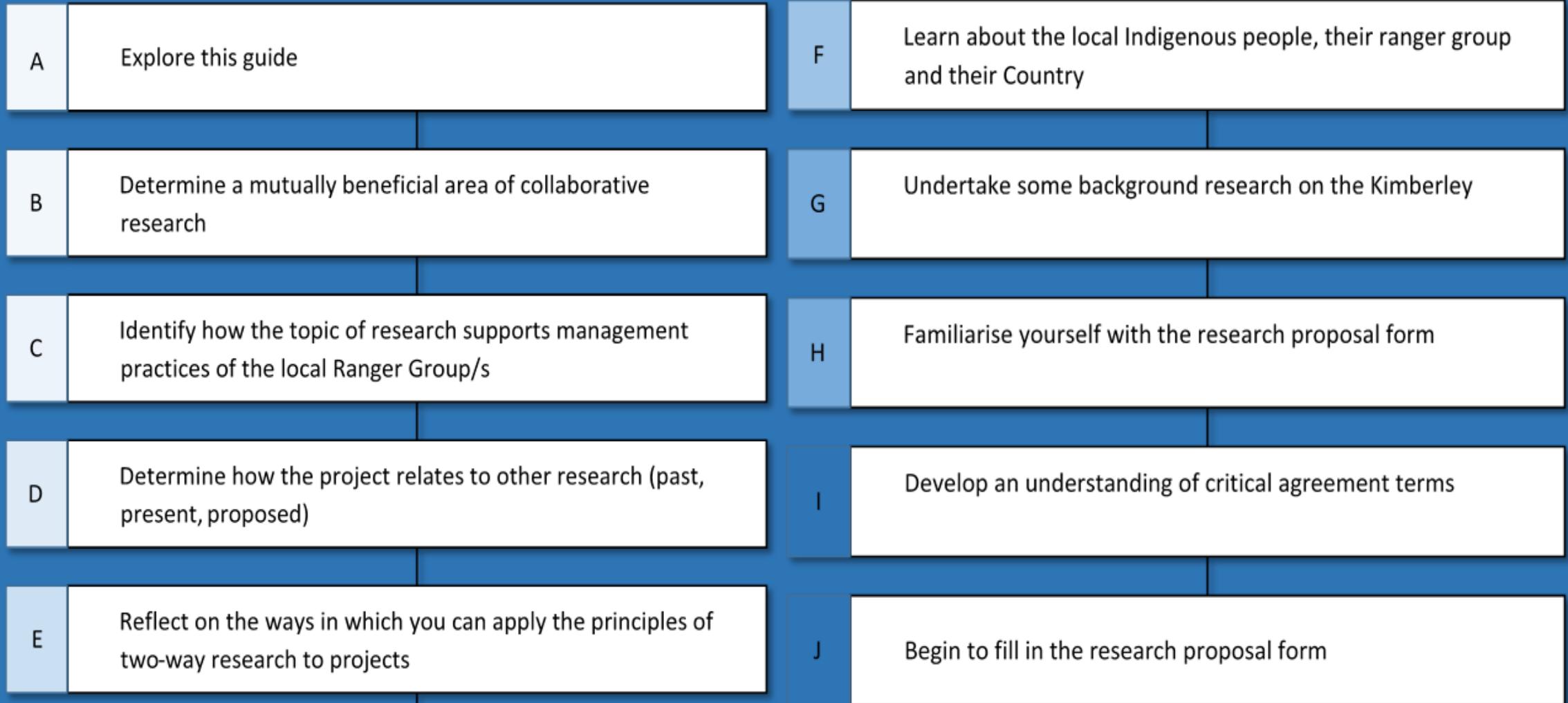
- Country is owned jointly by Traditional Owners from a family group, or as shared traditional estate, but not all family members are Traditional Owners.
- knowledge about Country is held collectively, with different people holding different knowledge and old people being the greatest repository of knowledge for their Country
- being an oral culture, people rely on each other to hold and to check their recollection to ensure accuracy

These are some of the reasons that a number of Traditional Owners need to be consulted about proposed research projects and why researchers may need to be accompanied by more than the minimum standard of one TO and one Indigenous Ranger.



Figure 8: Karajarri dancers at the Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area declaration (photo courtesy Kimberley Land Council, 2016)

Components of Stage 1 - Preparing for Research



Critical Agreement Terms

There are several parts of research agreements that are consistently the focus of negotiations between the university and the PBC lawyers

This process often involves a series of ever smaller changes to the wording of conditions between lawyers, each change requiring a complete re-assessment of the entire agreement wording

This is a source of considerable delays for researchers and for this reason a new approach is proposed within the Guide

In response to the feedback from dozens of Kimberley researchers who have asked that the process of research projects be expedited, a different approach is being floated

Critical Agreement Terms – Your advice?

Instead of both parties starting with the positions that suit them the most, then negotiating to a shared position acceptable to both over successive agreement iterations, researchers are asked to determine early on all of the different, mutually beneficial positions they (and their institutional lawyers) are prepared to accept in each of six core areas:

1. Intellectual property
2. Publishing
3. Acknowledgement
4. Confidential information
5. Accompaniment
6. Liability/insurance

Resources useful for Stage 1

- Maps
- Key NRM planning documents for each area
- Links to an information page on each group
- Links to the research proposal form
- Key concepts
- Related documents

Relevant resources are provided for each of the stages 1-6

Useful resources for Stage 1

Background information:

[Key concepts](#)

[Critical Agreement Terms](#)

Related documents:

[A Multiple Evidence Base Approach for Knowledge Integration in Kimberley Saltwater Country](#)

[Guidelines for Two-Way Knowledge Work in Kimberley Saltwater Country](#)

[Monitoring framework document](#)

Maps:

[Map of Indigenous Protected Areas around Australia](#)

[Native Title Map \(Western Australia\)](#)

Indigenous research partners and planning documents:

[Balangarra](#)

[Wunambal Gaambera](#)

[Dambimangari](#)

[Bardi Jawi](#)

[Nyul Nyul](#)

[Yawuru](#)

[Karajarri](#)

Forms:

[Research Proposal Form - natural or cultural resource research on Kimberley Country \(via Wunambal Gaambera website\)](#)

[Research Proposal Form - natural or cultural resource research on Kimberley Country \(via Dambimangari website\)](#)

[Research Proposal Form - natural or cultural resource research on Kimberley Country \(via Yawuru website\)](#)

[Research Proposal Form - natural or cultural resource research on Kimberley Country \(via KLC website\)](#)

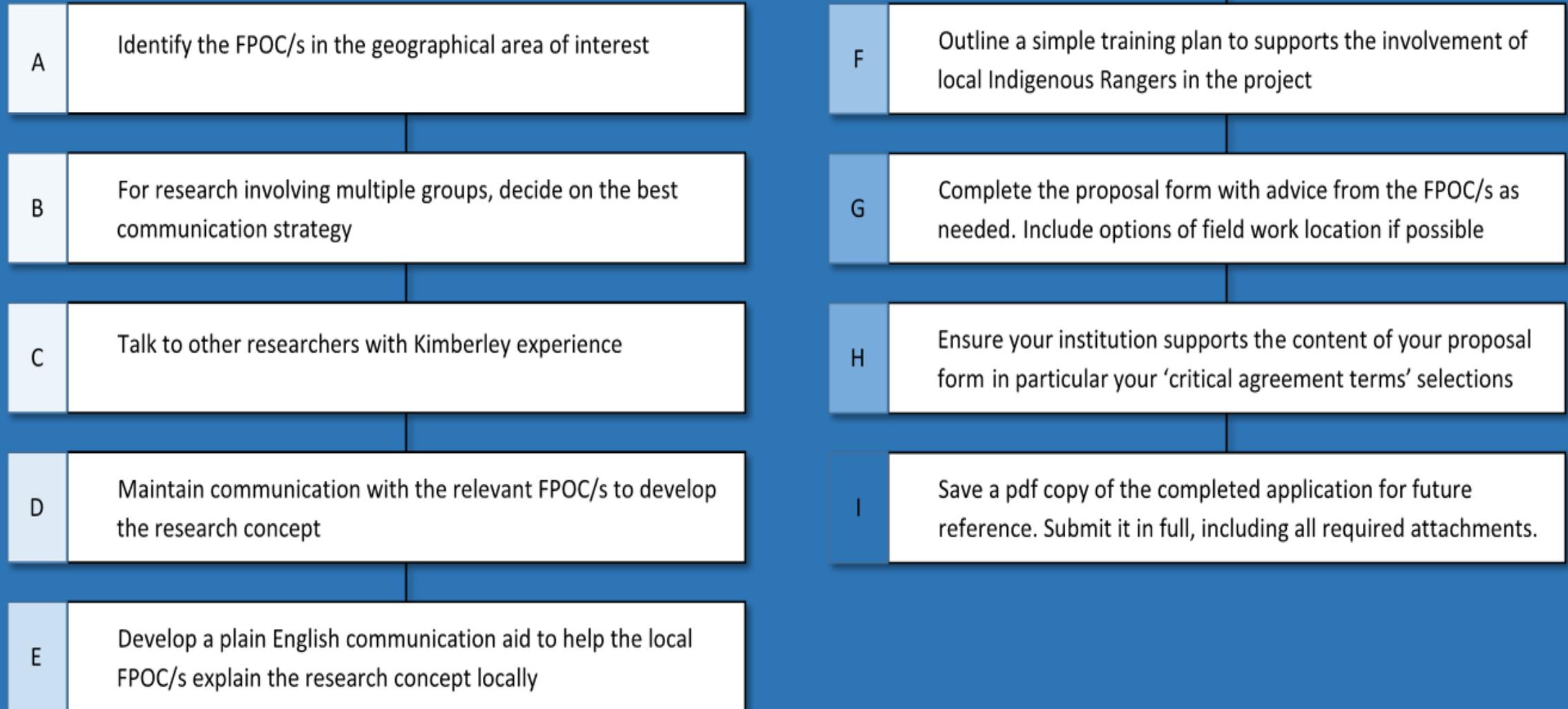
Stage 2 - Joint Development & Application

Once you have worked through Stage 1 the next step is to talk through your ideas with the relevant first point of contact (FPOC)

The FPOC in each area is the most appropriate community person to contact to introduce yourself as a researcher, discuss potential research areas and co-develop research projects.

They will be your local eyes and ears, provide guidance, and are also the conduit between researcher and the local PBC, who are the in-principle decision-makers in the process (pending approval from the relevant Traditional Owners)

Components of Stage 2 - Joint Development & Application



Stage 3 – Assessment and Consultation

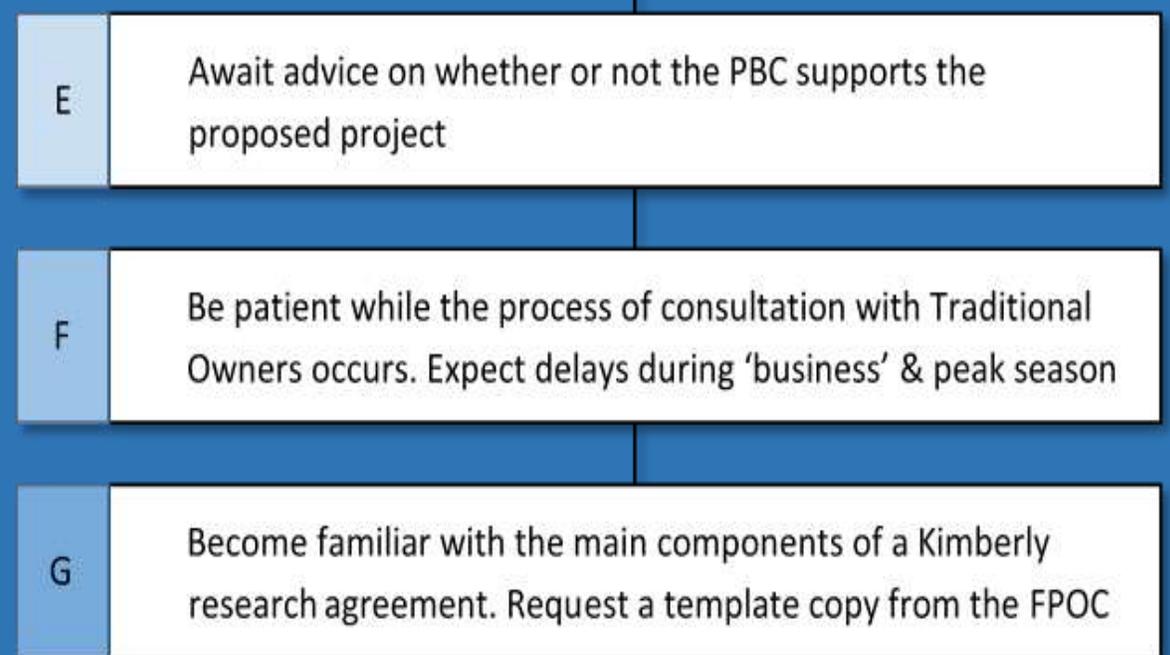
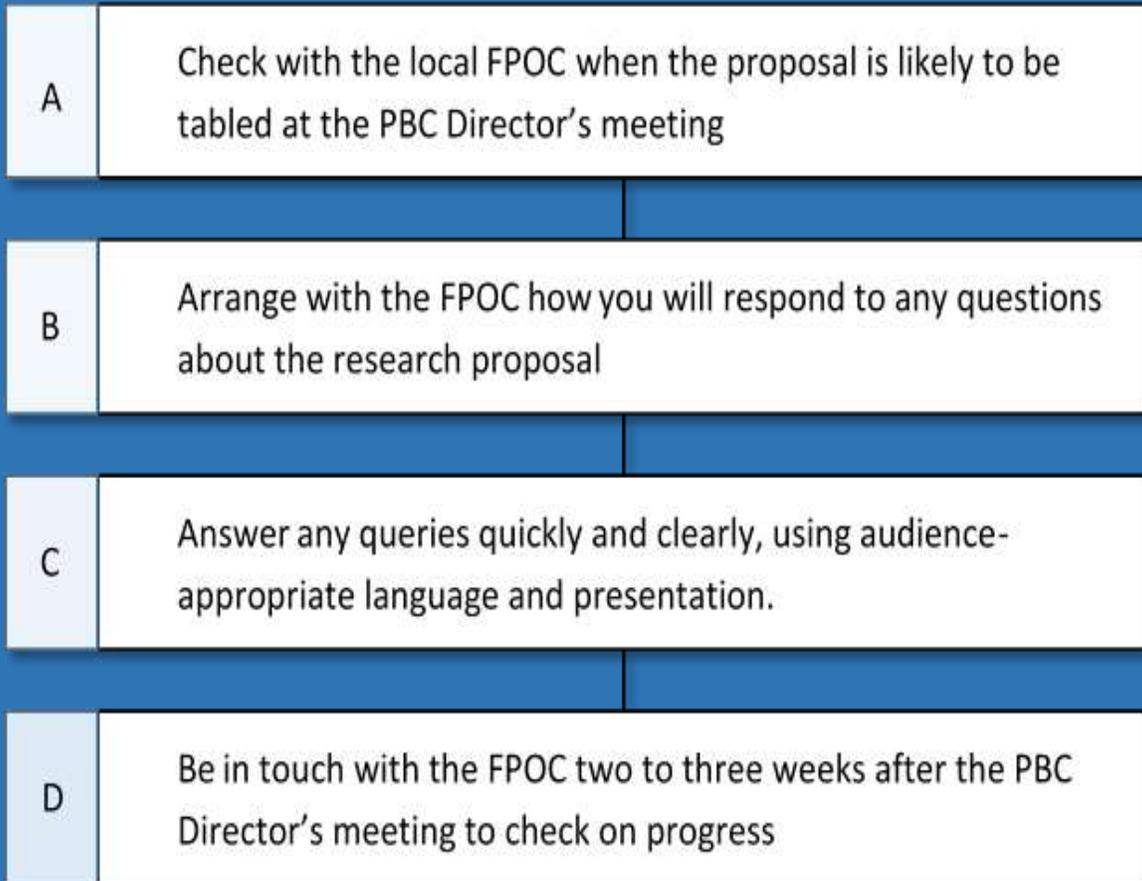
Completed proposals are tabled at the next available timeslot at an upcoming PBC meeting.

Researchers can arrange to attend the PBC meeting to present the research proposal or make arrangements with the local FPOC to be available remotely during that time.

If supported in principle by the PBC Directors, the next step is to receive the free, prior, informed consent of the Traditional Owners of the area of land or water under application.

This is usually facilitated by the local FPOC, Indigenous Rangers and/or PBC Directors on your behalf.

Components of Stage 3 – Assessment and Consultation



Stage 4 - Agreement Brokerage

The step involves developing and signing off on a research agreement with the local PBC.

The purpose of a research agreement between partners is to define in a legally binding format, what has been agreed to and the standards required for research to go forward in a fair and respectful way.

Groups use their own standard template updated regularly to reflect current circumstances and tailored to each research project.

Components of Stage 4 - Agreement Brokerage

A

Request a research agreement template from the FPOC

B

Encourage your institution's lawyer to use the PBC's research agreement template

C

Develop the information required in the works plan with input from the local FPOC

D

Keep in touch with your institution's lawyer and FPOC to keep abreast of agreement progress

E

Begin preparations for any agreed payments, training or other in-kind services

F

Ensure you have applied remote risk management strategies in project planning.

G

Make arrangements to undertake cultural awareness training as recommended by the FPOC

H

Allow yourself time with Indigenous research partners in their community after field work is complete

I

Budget to return to the Indigenous community to present the research findings

Components of Stage 5 - Working on Country

A Get in touch with the FPOC a week or so before the field work is scheduled to begin

B Be sure to check the weather and road conditions close to field work commencing

C Take a signed hard copy of the full research agreement with you

D Allow extra time for logistical preparations once you arrive in the community

E Seek media consent as arranged with the FPOC

F Undertake the cultural induction as arranged

G Undertake the field work as agreed. Use local place, plant and animals names whenever you can

H Spend time with the research participants in their community after the field work

I Ensure any agreed payments are received promptly

J Make arrangements to return the research results to the community (in person or remotely)

Components of Stage 6 – Communicating Results

A Maintain communications with research partners throughout the data analysis & interpretation stage

B Involve Indigenous Rangers in data analysis, interpretation & write-up where possible

C Return preliminary results of the research to or the local community

D Provide opportunity for Indigenous research partners to contribute their perspective

E Appropriately acknowledge the contribution of all participants, including co-authorship

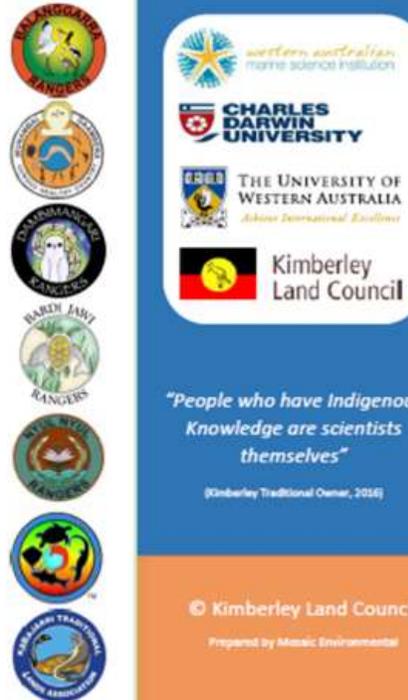
F Provide final drafts of any products to Indigenous research partners for their feedback

G Return digital copies of all media

H Fill in a *Researcher Feedback Form* so we can learn from your experience

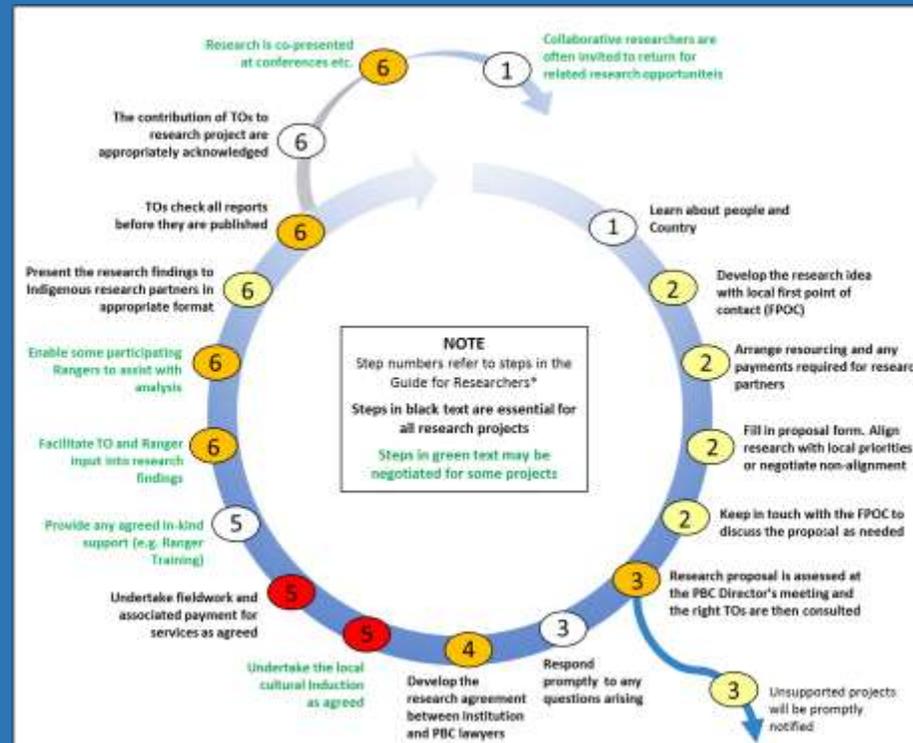
Questions? Comments?

Collaborative Science on Kimberley Saltwater Country - A Guide for Researchers -



"People who have Indigenous Knowledge are scientists themselves"
(Kimberley Traditional Owner, 2016)

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Prepared by Mosaic Environmental



The Guide is open for comment over the next month (9th May)

This process needs to work for the research community - your input is important

Fill in your contact details on the sheet going around if you'd like to be sent a draft copy of the Guide to provide comment

Any other questions – please be in touch:

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Thankyou