

***PASTORALISM, SUSTAINABILITY AND SELF
DETERMINATION IN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA:***

***ABORIGINAL MULTIPLE LAND USE AT
UTOPIA***

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*This earth....
I never damage,
I look after...*

*... Each man he stay....
Stay on his own country.
He can't move his country....
So he stay there,
stay with his language...*

*... My culture's hard,
but got to be to keep him.
If you waste him anything now,
next year.... you can't get as much,
because you already waste...*

*... People....
They can't listen for us.
They just listen for money....
Money...*

*... Million no good for us.
We need this earth to live because....
we'll be dead,
we'll become earth.*

*This ground and this earth....
Like brother and mother.*

**Big Bill Neidjie
(Neidjie et al, 1986)**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABTA	Aboriginal Benefits Trust Account
ADC	Aboriginal Development Commission
ALFC	Aboriginal Land Fund Commission
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
BTEC	Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign
CCFAE	Commonwealth Capital Fund for Aboriginal Enterprises
CLC	Central Land Council
DAA	Department of Aboriginal Affairs
DPP	Department of Primary Production
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
HRSCAA	House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs
ILC	Indigenous Land Corporation
NSRMWG	National Strategy for Rangeland Management Working Group
NTDPIF	Northern Territory Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries
NTG	Northern Territory Government
UN	United Nations

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1 INTRODUCTION

The contemporary pastoral industry in Central Australia has a history of Aboriginal displacement and exploitation, yet has provided Aboriginal people with employment and a continued connection with the land. The industry currently faces economic problems within a restructuring national economy, and environmental problems as it confronts the unsustainability of its past practices and their impact upon a fragile arid environment. At the same time Australian society is acknowledging the historic injustices of European occupation and Aboriginal land rights are gaining political recognition and legislative reform. The perspectives held by Australian society of the value of the rangelands are also increasingly reflecting non-market values. These changes are having dramatic impacts on the Northern Territory pastoral sector. In the Northern Territory, Aboriginal people have acquired 23 pastoral leases since the 1970s. As Aboriginal people regain control over traditional lands, they are bringing to the fore different land use systems which combine traditional and non-traditional land uses. This land use system has been labelled *multiple land use* and is a means through which Aboriginal land owners are able to meet their unique and diverse land use aspirations. The transition from an old regime of pastoralism to one of multiple land use has important implications for Aboriginal self determination and for ecological sustainability in the rangelands. Through an examination of the relationships between Aboriginal multiple land use, Aboriginal self determination and ecologically sustainable development (ESD), this thesis argues for a new approach to policy making that gives stronger emphasis to non-market land use factors.

A case study of multiple land use on Utopia Pastoral Lease illustrates the need for rangeland policy makers to reconsider current policies and practices presently geared towards pastoralism to include non-economic criteria. Utopia was purchased by the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission in 1976 and was converted to inalienable freehold title under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* in 1980. Utopia has a comparatively long history of Aboriginal control and represents an advanced model of multiple land use. The pastoral potential of Utopia is limited, yet provides benefits in

terms of social, cultural, traditional, and environmental values. In light of the land use dynamics existing on other Aboriginal pastoral properties it provides a good case study for a consideration of multiple land use, self determination and ESD.

The land use transition towards multiple land use, of which Utopia is an example, is occurring within a policy framework dominated by non-Aboriginal institutions delivering 'top down' approaches to development. The primary body implementing Aboriginal affairs policy is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC). Although ATSIC has an indigenous board of commissioners, and has elected indigenous members at regional levels, it remains a bureaucracy which is accountable to the non-Aboriginal government for spending allocation (Sanders, 1993; Coombs, 1993). These conflicts are apparent in ATSIC's land acquisition and management policies. The purchase of pastoral leases for Aboriginal people is governed by bureaucratic criteria, which have serious implications for self determination. Essentially bureaucratic policies of land acquisition and land management restrict the land use options of Aboriginal land owners and ultimately contradict national policies of self determination. This thesis argues that ATSIC's current land acquisition and land management programs are incompatible with national goals of Aboriginal self determination and ecologically sustainable development, because they focus on economic criteria to the detriment of social, cultural, and environmental conditions.

The land use transition towards multiple land use is also occurring simultaneous to the development of a National Strategy for Rangeland Management. Such a strategy is a formal recognition of the wider concern for the future of Australian rangelands and aims to coordinate all the land users in the rangelands and achieve ESD in a 25 year period.

ATSIC's Land Acquisition and Land Management Programs and the National Strategy for Rangeland Management are both representative of the 'top-down' approaches to development. A comparison between 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches reveals inconsistencies (Crough et al, 1989). In the case of Aboriginal land needs, disparate

knowledge systems regarding the value of land come between the needs of communities who have traditional systems of management and the approaches of government employees setting criteria and making decisions within bureaucracies. The result is the rendering of traditional Aboriginal land values and systems of land management as invalid (Verran, 1995).

1.1 THE LITERATURE

This thesis encompasses the economic, environmental, social, cultural and political dimensions of Aboriginal land use in Central Australia. As a discipline, geography allowed the integrative approach necessary to address the specific issues of this thesis and reach conclusions that have bearing on the policy approaches towards Aborigines on pastoral properties. Nonetheless, as geographer Elspeth Young (1988b: 102) notes;

The study of land use and resources in Australia, as elsewhere, has been regarded as an important and legitimate province of geographers. However, geographers have, for the most part, confined their discussions and investigations to forms of land and resource usage practised by Australia's non-Aboriginal population - agriculture, pastoralism, tourism, mineral exploitation or forestry. They have largely neglected Aboriginal perceptions and use of land. The resultant one-sided viewpoint of land use, while never appropriate, is particularly out of place today.

New paradigms in development theories in geography recognise disparate systems and notions of development. It is within new theories of development that this thesis is situated (Escobar, 1995). To date, development theories have focussed their attention on the international patterns of development in particular to the third world (Dodds and Sidaway, 1994; Slater, 1993). The localised manifestations of such processes, for example, Aboriginal land issues, are minimally covered. Beyond the work of Howitt

(1994) and Young (1995), the application of critical development theories in indigenous contexts remain limited.

Current theories of development neglect local and indigenous issues. In Aboriginal Australia, notions of development have been imposed by non-indigenous systems. New theories of development allow a critique of these notions of development. The 'top-down' approach that dominates Aboriginal affairs policies in Australia is characteristic of this development approach. In considering the developmental approaches of ATSIC and the National Strategy for Rangeland Management in relation to different knowledge and value systems and implications of Aboriginal multiple land use, this thesis goes beyond previous work.

The issues raised in this thesis have been covered partially in existing studies but have rarely been considered cumulatively. Social, environmental, and economic aspects of the emerging land use regime in the rangelands interact in a complex manner. Social values of the rangelands are changing, environmental degradation is being recognised, new goals are being identified and the pastoral industry is declining in its overall contribution to the well-being of the nation. It is vital that these different aspects be considered in terms of their cumulative capacities to achieve Aboriginal self determination and ESD.

The relationship between the pastoral industry and Aboriginal people is a complex one (McGrath, 1987; Young, 1988b; Young and Ross, 1994a). On the one hand, the industry was responsible for the displacement of Aboriginal people from their traditional lands. It was also responsible for the exploitation of Aboriginal labour and knowledge. On the other hand the pastoral industry provided employment and skills to Aboriginal people. More significantly it allowed for the continued connection between Aboriginal people and their land at a time when Aboriginal affairs policies might have prevented it. This complexity manifests itself in current land rights developments.

Government policies throughout the history of the pastoral industry have sustained this contradictory relationship that exists between Aboriginal people and the non-Aboriginal pastoral industry. They have been responsible for the establishment and the running of the industry via the lease tenure system (Holmes and Knight, 1994), and for its continuation through direct and indirect subsidies (Wilcox and Cunningham, 1993; Crough, 1993). Yet, government policy has also been responsible for land rights legislation, which has ultimately challenged the pastoral industry.

Land rights legislation is the product of self determination policies. Throughout the history of non-Aboriginal settlement official government policies have changed from extermination and protection to assimilation and integration (Crough et al, 1989: 79) to a present goal of self determination. The concept of self determination has been identified by the United Nations as "all people have the right to self determination, by virtue of that right they may freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development" (UN, 1960: 1514 (xv)).

Self determination is however a concept that has been poorly defined and poorly discussed, especially in the context of Australian Aboriginal affairs. Central to any notion of Aboriginal self determination is the ownership of land (Commonwealth of Australia, 1991). This is manifest clearly in the homelands movement. The House of Representatives Committee on Aboriginal Affairs defined homeland centres or outstations as "small decentralised communities of close kin established by the movement of Aboriginal people to land of social, cultural and economic significance to them" (HRSCAA, 1987: 7). For over 20 years Aboriginal people have been progressively moving to their homelands in response to their cultural, traditional and social needs (HRSCAA, 1987).

Aboriginal land and culture are inextricably linked, thus self determination is closely associated with land rights. (Commonwealth of Australia, 1991; Young, 1988a; Young et al, 1991; Coombs et al, 1990; Stanner, 1979; HRSCAA, 1987; McGrath, 1987; Rose,

1995; Wolfe et al, 1992; Toohey, 1980). Caring for country is a major priority for the vast majority of Aboriginal land owners (Young et al, 1991; Rose, 1995; CLC, 1994d). It is important to note that the real value of land ownership for Aboriginal people lies in cultural, social, traditional and environmental as well as economic values. However, non-Aboriginal understandings of such issues are limited because of language differences, limited research, and limited cross cultural understanding. Current forms of indigenous land management in Australia are essentially a combination of indigenous and non-indigenous systems and impact upon tradition resulting in an adapted tradition. The emergence of adapted land management systems and adapted land uses as different traditions emerge, brings into question the ability for Aboriginal land owners, managers and users to achieve ecologically sustainable development (Rose, 1995).

One resolution of this dilemma is multiple land use. Multiple land use on Aboriginal land can be defined as a system of land use which combines different cultures and relations with land in order to meet a diversity of land needs ranging from traditional hunting and gathering and sacred site protection, to tourism and pastoralism. The system of multiple land use reflects the unique and diverse land needs and land use aspirations of Aboriginal people, thus enabling a greater degree of self determination.

The land use transition of Aboriginal land owners towards multiple land use is complemented by a wider transition in the way society values the rangelands (Morton, 1993; Fitzhardinge, 1994; Holmes, 1994b). Pastoralism is declining economically as it is overtaken by other activities such as mining, defence, tourism, and manufacturing (Northern Territory Government, 1995). Past environmental degradation is being recognised and new goals of ESD have been established. Non-market qualities of the rangelands, such as culture and the maintenance of ecological biodiversity are gaining increased social value (Holmes, 1994b; Morton, 1993).

The failure of European settlement and the pastoral industry to achieve environmental sustainability in Central Australia has been well documented (Committee on Darwin, 1995;

NSRMWG, 1995; Courtenay, 1982; Morton, 1990; Burbidge et al, 1990; Knight and Holmes, 1994; Young et al, 1991; Heathcote, 1965; Cartres, 1987; Stafford Smith, 1994). Initial estimates of carrying capacities imposed on leaseholders by the government were overestimated and grazing impacts were far reaching, especially in drought times. Other problems associated with European settlement were the introduction of feral animals, disease, and altered traditional fire regimes. Past degradation has important implications for present productivity and therefore carries over to hinder economic sustainability.

The environmental legacies of pastoralism add to barriers limiting the commercial viability of Aboriginal owned pastoral properties. Frequently, the properties most likely to be purchased on behalf of Aboriginal groups are characterised by land degradation and run down infrastructure (CLC, 1992; Young, 1988a). Additionally, there is a tendency for Aboriginal people to be less skilled in the financial aspects of pastoral management. Aboriginal pastoral properties also tend to support far greater populations compared to non-Aboriginal pastoral properties. These forces operate against the economic viability of Aboriginal pastoral stations.

A greater appreciation of these barriers has come about at the same time as the development of ESD principals. Ecologically sustainable development (ESD) has been identified as a national goal for Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 1990; WCED, 1987) and for the rangelands (NSRMWG, 1995). The interacting social, environmental, and economic complexities of land use in the rangelands provide challenges to the identification and achievement of ESD. A definition of sustainability in the rangelands must therefore include the criteria of economic viability, ecological sustainability and social feasibility (Morton et al, 1995).

The issue of rangeland sustainability was officially placed on the Commonwealth agenda in 1993 when the Prime Minister acknowledged that "Australia's rangelands were a neglected national asset, and their continuing degradation was an urgent national problem requiring a national response" (NSRMWG, 1995: 12). This strategy aims to coordinate

the diversity of rangeland users in a multiple use framework to develop a management strategy that is intended to achieve ESD in 25 years (NSRMWG, 1995). In drawing together and examining the processes of multiple land use, this thesis therefore seeks to play a small part in contributing to such a management strategy. Through a consideration of the policy implication for multiple land use, this thesis seeks to play a small part in contributing to a rangeland management strategy and to Aboriginal self determination.

1.2 THESIS OUTCOMES

This thesis assesses a transition in land use which has economic, social, cultural and environmental causes and implications. The rise of Aboriginal land ownership involves a different perspective on the value of the land, different relationships with the land, and different land uses. This land use transition has the potential to advance both national goals of Aboriginal self determination and ecologically sustainable development in the rangelands.

The current transition in land use provides a good opportunity for rangeland users and managers to develop new strategies to achieve ESD and Aboriginal self determination. Aboriginal land ownership is in its early stages. Utopia has one of the longest histories of Aboriginal freehold title, but has been under Aboriginal ownership for only 19 years. Aboriginal land management is however not new. The success of a land management system in the rangelands that incorporates traditional and introduced information depends on the pivotal role of community level decision making.

Associated with this land use transition is an increasing demand for land management on Aboriginal lands. Aboriginal ownership of pastoral properties involves a range of different land uses and increasing populations living in remote areas (HRSCAA, 1987). Aboriginal affairs bureaucracies are at this stage ill prepared for such increasing land management

demands. This is noticeably the case with land acquisition programs, which place excessive emphasis on commercial criteria in assessing pastoral properties.

This thesis seeks to establish that Aboriginal needs, aspirations, and knowledge should be of more central concern in ATSIC's Land Acquisition and Land Management Programs and the National Strategy for Rangeland Management. Aboriginal land ownership characterised by decentralisation and multiple land use allows a greater degree of self determination. This research has important implications for planning and land management in the current environment of land use transition and conscious efforts to adopt management systems that achieve ESD. Because this transition is in its early stages, there is a great opportunity to fine tune the processes in a culturally appropriate manner in order to achieve the stated national goals.

1.3 METHODOLOGY

The power structures that govern the imposition of notions of development upon Aboriginal Australia are closely related to knowledge and the perception of knowledge. 'Top-down' approaches that characterise the National Strategy for Rangeland Management and ATSIC's land policies are closely related to non-Aboriginal misconceptions resulting from different knowledge and value systems. While in a research context, knowledge can be equated with power (Punch, 1986; Maquire, 1987), the importance of this type of research lies in its potential implications for the power relations that exist between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal bureaucracies (Howitt et al, 1990). Because Aboriginal knowledge is not understood or perceived as valid on behalf of non-Aboriginal society, their power as land owners and managers is frequently neglected by the bureaucratic framework.

It is therefore important that this research was carried out in conjunction with the Central Land Council (CLC). The CLC provided the necessary resources, contacts and data for

this research to be undertaken. Working with the CLC ensured access to the views and concerns of Aboriginal people. Methodologically, the research relies on informal interviews and participatory action research in Alice Springs and Utopia. Participatory action research involves a formalised relationship between the researcher and the researched, where the construct of knowledge is not the soul domain of the researcher.

A visit to Utopia allowed for first hand observations of the structure and characteristics of a decentralised, multiple land use property. This visit necessarily supplemented an understanding of the issues that was gained via the primary methodologies. During the visit to Utopia, three communities were visited: New Shop, Atite (Mosquito Bore), and Amperlatwaty. Key players were interviewed in the Northern Territory, Canberra and Sydney. An informal interview framework was chosen to allow a clear and easy flow of discussion and ideas, which suited the nature of the topic. A list of interviewees is located in Appendix A.

1.4 THESIS STRUCTURE

Chapter Two explains the process, policies and issues facilitating Aboriginal land acquisition in the Northern Territory. It considers the complex relationship between Aboriginal people and the pastoral industry in light of contemporary Aboriginal land use aspirations. It also discusses the implications for Aboriginal land acquisition for the pastoral industry. Multiple land use as practiced on Aboriginal land is defined and discussed.

Chapter Three focuses on the challenging forces facing the pastoral industry. It discusses these in light of the wider economic climate, remoteness and the declining position of pastoralism in the national economy. The environmental challenge is considered in terms of the inherent characteristics of the physical environment and the impacts of human use. The social climate surrounding land use in Central Australia is discussed in the context of

changing perceptions of the rangelands. The chapter also addresses the potential of the National Strategy for Rangeland Management.

Chapter Four considers the characteristics of Aboriginal pastoralism that limit potential commercial viability. The dual goal of Aboriginal self determination and accountability is discussed. Furthermore, it addresses ATSIC's Land Acquisition and Land Management Programs in light of Aboriginal perspectives of land, land needs, and diversity of Aboriginal land use aspirations.

Chapter Five provides a case study of Utopia Pastoral Lease in Central Australia. This case study illustrates the issues discussed in the previous chapters. It examines the extent to which the property is suited to pastoralism under Aboriginal ownership, the way in which conditions have improved since the property was destocked, the establishment of Aboriginal land use and hence the emergence of different problems. It also examines whether decentralisation and multiple land use have allowed the people to better meet their land needs and aspirations, and thus, whether the real value of land ownership to Aboriginal people is social, traditional, cultural and environmental as well as economic.

Chapter six concludes the thesis with a summary of the arguments and a conclusion of the issues raised. Furthermore, it considers directions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO:

CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN LAND VALUES

2. CENTRAL AUSTRALIAN LAND VALUES

There has been considerable debate on the economic and environmental future of Australia's rangelands of which Central Australia¹ forms a part. Much of this debate has centred on recent Aboriginal lease purchases and subsequent land claims on pastoral properties via the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*. A common land use direction for these properties has been to relax pastoral activities and engage in a multiple land use system. The relationship between Central Australian Aborigines and the non-Aboriginal pastoral industry is complex (refer to Figure 2.1) and has its origins in the history of frontier conflicts and traditional Aboriginal ties with the land. At the root of these conflicts is government policy on Aboriginal affairs.

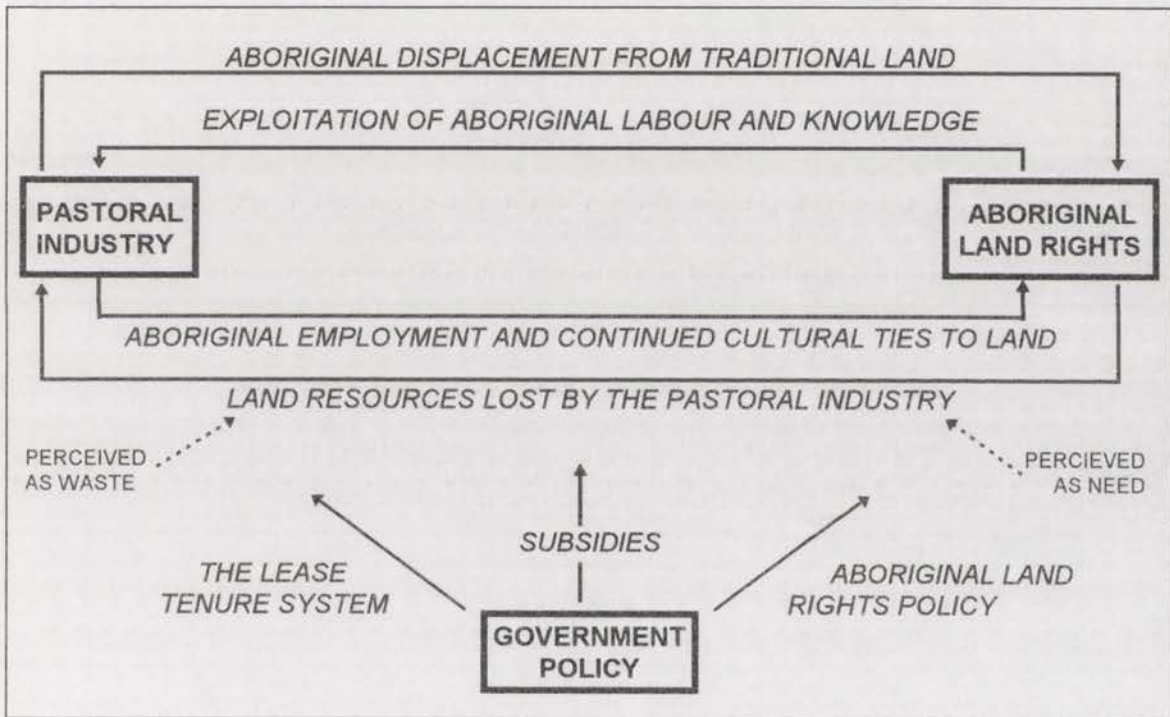


Figure 2.1: The Complex Processes and Contradictory Relationships Underlying this Thesis.

¹ In this thesis 'Central Australia' refers to the CLC region (refer to Map 5.1).

This chapter discusses the dynamics through which Aboriginal people are gaining ownership and control over their traditional lands. Furthermore, it examines Aboriginal relations with and perspectives of land and land management and discusses Aboriginal affairs policies and the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*. This chapter argues that land is vital for Aboriginal self determination and that multiple land use is an avenue through which self determination can be achieved.

2.1 A BRIEF HISTORY

The pastoral industry took control of the more productive lands of Central Australia in the 1870s as the industry expanded from the south. Less productive lands such as Utopia Pastoral Lease were not utilised until the early 1900s. As Aboriginal people were largely allowed to remain on their traditional lands, cultural impacts were minimal compared to that of the south eastern regions of Australia. However, this is not to deny that disruptions to Aboriginal culture and way of life were substantial.

Early reports on the development capabilities of much of the land of the Northern Territory were optimistic and by 1881-1882 the vast majority of the territory was held under application or lease by pastoralists (Crough, 1992). Developments were however, limited to legislation and map drawings. The driving forces of the developments of this region were based on its proximity to the growing markets of Asia (Crough, 1992) - an aspiration still held by the Northern Territory Government (Northern Territory Government, 1995b), despite its limited successes in the last century.

These developments, decisions, legislation, and land uses have impacted upon Aboriginal society. Aboriginal control of resources was compromised and Aboriginal people became "invisible" as they took up location on the fringes of settlements or in relatively less accessible parts of pastoral lands (Crough, 1993). Non-Aboriginal approaches to this issue have varied according to changes in official Aboriginal affairs policies. In 1937,

during the policy era of protection, a report of the Board of Inquiry into the land and land industries of the Northern Territory referred to the issue of "THE ABORIGINAL PROBLEM" (Commonwealth of Australia, 1937). The attitude that the existence of Aboriginal people hinder development is still remnant in many contemporary attitudes (refer to section 3.2). The relationship between the developments of the industry and Aboriginal people has been the subject of controversy in both the political and social arena. While Aboriginal people perceive land as being vital to their culture and wellbeing, the Northern Territory Government along with many pastoralists, generally have the perception that Aboriginal land ownership involves a loss of productivity to the Territory economy. This is partially illustrated through the amount of funding allocated to defend land claims. However, a review of the economic productivity of pastoralism reveals that this is an unrealistic view of the industry (refer to section 3.2).

2.2 LAND AND CULTURE

An understanding of Aboriginal perceptions of land is essential in order to understand the dynamics of Aboriginal involvement in the Central Australian pastoral industry. Rose (1995: 7) summarises;

Aboriginal people derive their self-identity from the land. The relationships between people and their environment and the laws which set out the realm of Aboriginal experience are embodied in the beliefs which have been referred to variously as "the Dreamtime" or "the Dreaming" ... The importance of the laws originating from the Dreaming in Aboriginal social and cultural life and in the everyday interaction of people with their environment cannot be over-stressed.

Despite its connotation of being imaginary, the *Dreamtime* is a very real concept for Aboriginal people. The moral, ethical, and legal framework governing Aboriginal life

derives from the actions of spirit ancestors, embodied in the Dreaming. Connections between people or kin groups and particular parts of the land carry with them responsibilities that are passed through generations. These connections and responsibilities vary greatly in nature across Central Australia, and result in fundamental differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal concepts of land use. These differences are grounded in conflicting perspectives of the environment. Aborigines do not view individuals as separate from the environment (Rose, 1995), whereas non-Aboriginal people view it as a resource to be exploited for individual benefit. Initially these conceptual differences led to conflict, Aboriginal displacement and subsequent social, environmental and cultural impacts. In Central Australia, as pastoralism expanded in the 1870s and continued, initial conflicts arose as the new settlers, assuming *terra nullius*, claimed areas that were of most value in terms of supporting the new settlers and providing surplus for economic gain. Waterholes usually provided the most productive land. However, these areas were also of great cultural, economic, and environmental value to the Aboriginal people of the area. McGrath (1987) argues that in traditional Aboriginal culture, waterholes are "key life centres". They are a central resource, not only for drinking and bathing, but as centres for many forms of edible resources, including plants, reptiles, insects, and larger animals that visit waterholes. Waterholes are also places of great cultural significance as they serve as the setting for ceremonies, often representing a birthplace, a symbol of creation and reproduction (McGrath, 1987). Waterholes often have sacred significance, representing the physical manifestation of the activities of the Dreaming spirits. Rights to access are very strict (Rose, 1995). Damage to or loss of waterholes and sacred sites generally occurred throughout many parts of Australia as pastoralists claimed more of the productive land, therefore having major ramifications for the well-being of affected Aborigines.

The Aboriginal population played a fundamental role in the establishment and subsequent development of the pastoral industry in Central Australia, thus developing inter-relationships centred on simultaneous conflict and support. As Aborigines were displaced from their land, their extensive ecological knowledge and their labour was exploited by the

non-Aboriginal pioneers. Without such indigenous and historical knowledge, the pastoral industry may not have survived (Crough, 1993). At the same time, the pastoral industry served an important role as it allowed for the continuation of Aboriginal cultural ties with the land. Unlike elsewhere in Australia, the Northern Territory gave provision for Aboriginal access to pastoral lands;

to all aboriginal (sic) inhabitants of the Northern Territory and their descendants full and free right of ingress, egress and regress into, upon and over the leased land and every part thereof and in and to the springs and natural surface water thereon, and to make and erect thereon such wurlies and other dwellings as those aboriginal inhabitants have before commencement of the lease been accustomed to make and erect and to take and use for food birds and animals ferae naturae in such manner as they would have been entitled to do if the lease had not been made (Hicks, 1938, in McGrath, 1987: 16).

A key component of Aboriginal land management and the sustainability of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal land is sacred site protection. Sacred site management plays a vital role in the protection of biodiversity through the protection of resource rich areas. In addition being of utmost cultural significance, such areas are important for regeneration after drought and local extinction. In a non-Aboriginal context, such conscious protection of resources reflects the motivations, structures and management efforts of conservation areas such as national parks. The idea of the protection of significant, productive areas of the rangelands is central to the priority argument of the advocates of stewardship who argue that future sustainability depends on the protection of the resource rich areas of the rangelands (refer to section 3.1).

Aboriginal land management systems are undertaken in accordance with orally based knowledge systems. While non-Aboriginal knowledge systems are grounded in numeracy, literacy, and are reductionist, objective and positivist, Aboriginal knowledge generation is

based on cumulative collective experiences and is orally woven into the collective community memory (Wolfe et al, 1992). Aboriginal knowledge is generated through continual use is constantly revised. Wolfe et al (1992) also argue that the generation of such knowledge systems means they are inherently slow to develop and are more receptive and slow to adapt to change. They also note that indigenous elders maintain that a slow procedure is necessary to maintain the functioning of the system. This is an important consideration for non-indigenous land management systems interacting with indigenous people. As indigenous responsibilities to particular regions are carried out and as the knowledge base is generated, it is generated in a manner that is site specific, where there will be differences between groups in the way their system functions (Wolfe et al, 1992). The existence and character of indigenous knowledge systems have notable implications for land management.

The different perspectives and priority order of land management issues between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal land managers is illustrated through the different perceptions of feral animals. In non-Aboriginal land management the eradication of feral animals such as rabbits, donkeys, and camels is a major priority for land management and has received large injections of funds and has been the subject of much research. The Aboriginal perception is different. Feral animals are perceived as having no dreaming (Rose, 1995: 110), but are accepted as having a purpose and a right to live on the land (Rose, 1995: 108; Coombs et al, 1990:12).

However, Aboriginal knowledge systems are vulnerable in a cross cultural context. This vulnerability exists because in contemporary Australian society, Aboriginal knowledge systems are perceived as being secondary in a non-Aboriginal social and political system. An example of this is the non-Aboriginal treatment of the Hindmarsh Island bridge affair where Aboriginal women's business was not adequately respected in the legal and political arena. Vulnerability to loss is a result of its oral transfer and storage and the requirement that the learner be totally involved in the process (Wolfe et al, 1992) - something that is not guaranteed in a cross cultural environment. The information transferred and stored by

Aboriginal people is valuable in terms of their cultural sustainability and is vital to their ability to manage their traditional lands.

The scope of Aboriginal knowledge of the remote and variable landscapes of the rangelands would be invaluable to a national strategy for rangeland management. It has been identified that Aboriginal knowledge is comprehensive and localised. The continuing homelands movement means that an increasing proportion of the Aboriginal population is distributed across the various environments of remote Australia. Therefore, there is no need to employ extensive measures relying on non-Aboriginal resources when the expertise and labour required to collect information, monitor and manage rangeland environments already exists².

2.3 ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS POLICIES AND SELF DETERMINATION

In Central Australia, pastoralism has been the only agricultural option that has any potential to reap commercial benefits for non-Aboriginal people, yet has been reliant on subsidies and debt, and has contributed to problems of severe land degradation (refer to Chapter Three). Changes to Aboriginal Affairs policies have impacted greatly on the pastoral industry. Since the 1960s, global trends in the developed world have seen a turn around in official policy toward indigenous people. In Australia, official policy changed from one of extermination in the early stages of invasion to protection, assimilation and integration in the 1960s. In 1962, Aborigines received full voting rights for Commonwealth and Northern Territory elections (Powell, 1982). The 1967 referendum led to a formal recognition of Aborigines as citizens and subsequently gave responsibility for Aboriginal affairs to the Commonwealth Government. Ultimately this created a change of government policy to self management and self determination. In 1967 a wage decision granted equal pay for Aboriginal workers. Previously, Aboriginal workers were paid in kind. This decision had great impacts for the position of Aboriginal people in the

² Personal communication, Patrick Sullivan, Research Fellow, NARU, July, 1995, Darwin.

pastoral industry as pastoralists no longer employed Aboriginal labour. In turn this led to a significant increase in the number of Aborigines living in town camps where they were physically and socially marginalised.

Two major events played a crucial role in the development of land rights legislation for the Northern Territory; the Gurindji walk-off at Wave Hill in 1967, and the confrontation between Nabalco and the Yirrkala people in the Gove peninsula. At Wave Hill, the bulk of Gurindji people who worked at the station walked off in protest over poor working and living conditions. They set up camp at Wattie Creek and petitioned the Governor-General for a lease of some Wave Hill land and some Victoria River Downs land. The Yirrkala people petitioned the Commonwealth Government against the excision of 330 square kilometres of their land for Nabalco's mining interests. Their claim went to the Northern Territory Supreme Court under Mr Justice Blackburn and was not judged in their favour.

The election of the Whitlam Government suggested a more promising stance toward Aboriginal land title. Under Whitlam, the operations of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) received greater attention and increased funding; Willowra station was purchased with money from the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission (ALFC) for Aboriginal use; the Gurindji were granted title to their claimed lands; and an Act was passed that outlawed racial discrimination in Australian society (Powell, 1982).

These political movements were all part of the still standing Aboriginal affairs policy of self determination. The notion of self determination was coined as the catch cry for indigenous affairs in the international domain in the 1960s (United Nations, 1960: 1514 (xv)). Despite its adoption by many bureaucracies, governments and policy makers, it remains poorly discussed and inadequately defined. The most important consequence of this inadequacy is the differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal notions of self determination.

Australian government constructs of self determination are essentially in response to the marginal status of Aboriginal people. As a concept, self determination is not constitutionally or legislatively recognised. Models put forward for Aboriginal self government by governments are essentially modified forms of non-Aboriginal administration (Crough, 1994). As with many non-Aboriginal approaches to Aboriginal issues, a focus on economics leads to the issue of self sufficiency - it is commonly perceived that self determination refers to economic self sufficiency. Hence, non-Aboriginal notions of self determination remain embedded in the capitalist state, where land rights and self determination is only available in areas that are void of profitable production. Even when land rights is available it is dependent on a non-Aboriginal construction of Aboriginality where traditional owners must prove their cultural links to a particular area to a non-Aboriginal court. An example of non-Aboriginal administration of an issue central to Aboriginal culture and self determination is the administration of Aboriginal land acquisition and land management (refer to Chapter Four).

It is only logical that a concept of self determination for Aboriginal people must be defined by Aboriginal people. To be defined or operated by non-Aboriginal people would be to defeat the concept itself. Crough (1994) notes that Aboriginal people aspire to have control over the matters that are important to them, and to receive funding to provide services. Essentially self determination is an inherent and fundamental right that comes with being Aboriginal. Because land and culture is fundamental to Aboriginality, self determination incorporates notions of identity and relationships to land. Control over land is essential for self determination, but in a non-Aboriginal system of government, land ownership does not guarantee self determination. Self determination must incorporate bureaucratic control, Aboriginal control of service provision and land management, and a recognition of traditional law.

Following a policy of self determination, one way in which the federal government aimed to meet the land needs of Aboriginal people living in the Northern Territory was through the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*.

2.3.1 *The Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*

The policy shifts of the 1960s and early 1970s culminated in the final steps leading to the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*. The Aboriginal Land Rights Commission, headed by Mr Justice Woodward produced a report which resulted in the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*. The immediate effect of this Act was to give Aborigines title to most of the Aboriginal reserve lands in the Northern Territory and more significantly, the right and opportunity to claim unalienated Crown Land tied to proof of traditional links. Pastoral leases were excluded from such claim. The land left over for claim tended to be unproductive, and poor in natural resources; land rejected by commercial interests.

In addition to the cultural significance of land to Aboriginal people, security of tenure is vital for self determination. However, the Land Rights legislation was unable to address the needs of Aboriginal people in pastoral areas. These people lived under poor conditions without title to traditional lands or access to basic facilities (Central and Northern Land Councils, 1994). Because government funding of infrastructure was often tied to security of land tenure, Aborigines on pastoral stations were doubly disadvantaged compared to those with freehold title. Pastoral excisions attempted to address such issues but have proved of only limited benefits.

The aim of pastoral excisions is to provide Aboriginal people whose traditional land lies within pastoral lease with land needs. Governmental specifications for pastoral excisions are however only one square kilometre. These excisions are; too small to allow for traditional utilisation of land; only allow for a centralised community structure; subject to the impacts of pastoral activities; rarely located on the traditional or near sacred sites; and are perceived as temporary and are therefore not cared for as much as traditional land over which Aboriginal people had ultimate sovereignty (Rose, 1995: 48). A further problem arises because generally, Aboriginal communities are not entitled to services unless they

have been established for two years. The question of how a community is supposed to establish itself with no basic services is a question that has been left unanswered.

The only means of addressing this pressing issue in the last 20 years has been the purchase of pastoral leases for Aboriginal people. Once purchased by Aboriginal interests, pastoral leases can be claimed under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* and if successful are converted to Aboriginal freehold title where land use options are not restricted under non-Aboriginal law.

Pastoral station purchases have generally been financed through royalty equivalents from mining activities, as specified by the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*. These monies are paid into the Aboriginal Benefits Trust Account (ABTA) and are used to fund land councils and provide financial compensation for Aborigines affected by mining activities. Additionally, some monies have been used for the purchase of pastoral leases. Similarly the former Aboriginal Development Corporation (ADC) and the former Aboriginal Land Fund Commission (ALFC) allocated funds to the purchase of pastoral leases. More recently the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) has also allocated funds to the purchase of land for Aboriginal interests. Yet all these sources remain inadequate. Given the ATSIC's budget of \$950 million and the centrality of land to Aboriginal needs, the funds allocated to land acquisition and management, \$28 million for land acquisition and land management in 1992-1993 (ATSIC, 1995b: 181) are minimal.

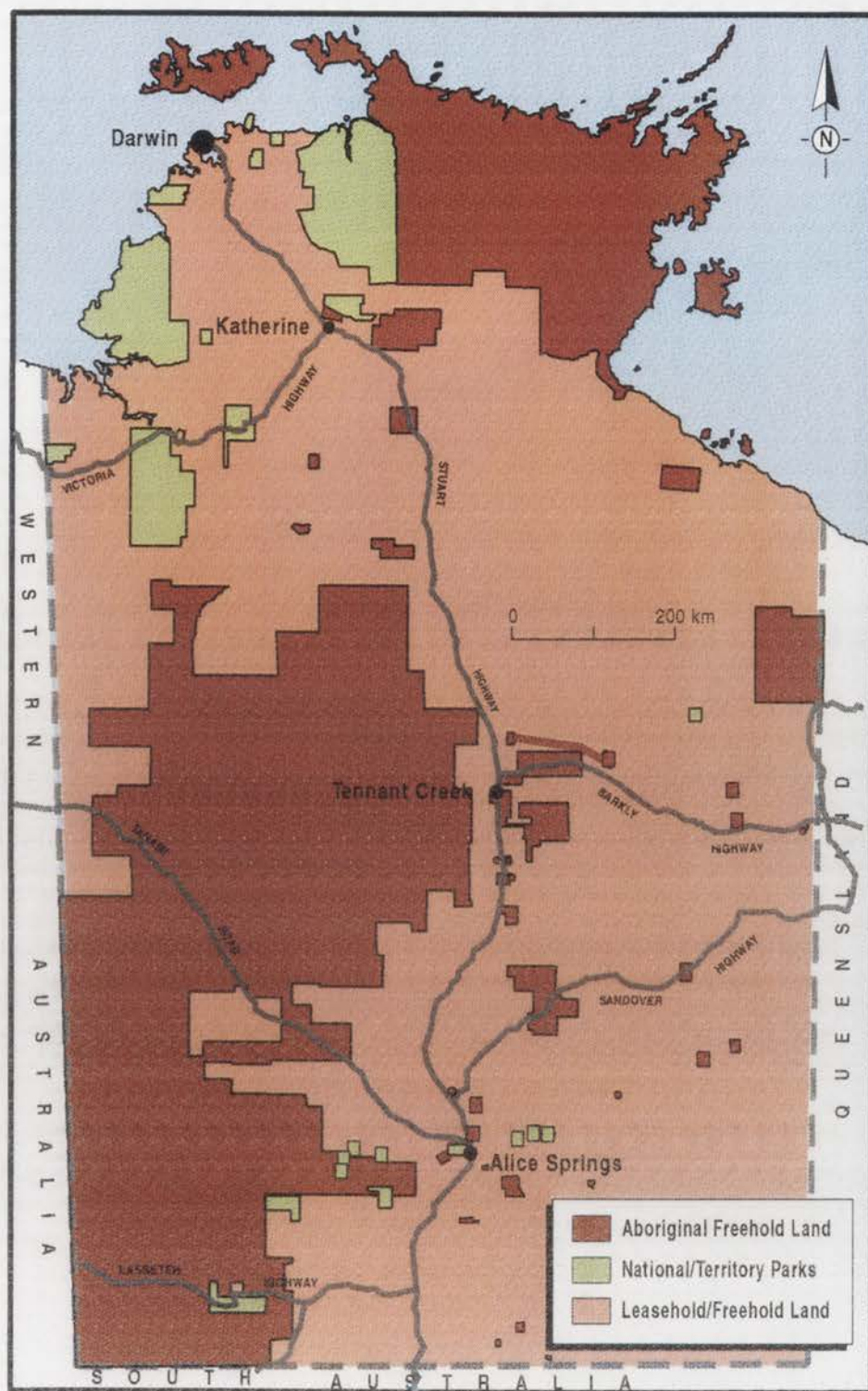
Recent legislation providing for a land fund will have further implications for the acquisition of pastoral properties. This was in the form of the *ATSIC Amendment (Indigenous Land Corporation and Land Fund) Act 1995*. This Act will involve a \$121 million injection to a land fund every year for ten years. \$45 million of this will be used for purchase and land management while the rest is reinvested with the government so that it will continue indefinitely. The Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) will be run by an independent board of directors, 5 of the 7 being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

The recently overturned decision made by ATSIC to spend \$20 million of the available \$24 million, on land acquisition on the Northern Territory over two years has spurred much debate. However, when considered in terms of the sunset clause in the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* it was a logical means of optimising the potential for these funds to benefit Aboriginal people. In 1997, the terms of the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* will wind down and is expected to lead to a rush in demand for properties. At the same time, the ILC will not allocate any funding to the Northern Territory, therefore, the Northern Territory would have only received marginally more funding in comparison to the states³. The decision was overturned in September when ATSIC was challenged in the Federal Court (Dean, 1995).

2.3.2 *Land Rights and Pastoralism*

Presently, over 38% of the Northern Territory is held under inalienable Aboriginal freehold title (Heathcote, 1994) (refer to Map 2.1). This title means it cannot be sold and it is not covered by Northern Territory land use agreements. By providing a more secure tenure it consolidates and strengthens Aboriginal culture and satisfies conditions for access to government services and has particular implications for the position of Aborigines in the economy. Challenges of inalienable Aboriginal freehold land and pastoral enterprises, however limit potential commercial benefits (refer to section 4.1.1). More significantly, Aboriginal freehold title has allowed Aboriginal communities to pursue alternative land uses, in turn addressing pressing issues in the context of rangeland management. Increased Aboriginal control over land has meant the opening up of avenues for economic development and changes in environmental management with the potential for a more sustainable approach to land management. A brief consideration of leasehold and freehold properties under Aboriginal control at present reveals a spectrum of potential outcomes

³Personal communication, Vince Noviello, Assistant Manager, Land and Economic Policy Research, ATSIC, August, 1995, Canberra; Russell Taylor, ATSIC, May, 1995, Canberra.



Source: Adapted from Northern Territory Department of Lands and Housing, Darwin (1990).

Map 2.1: Land Tenure in the Northern Territory

that are dependant on a multitude of factors (refer to Chapter Four). On one end is the pattern of land use which largely follows that of commercial pastoralism and often involves severe land degradation such as Mistake Creek. On the other end are properties that may only maintain a 'killer' herd and engage in multiple land use such as Utopia.

2.4 MULTIPLE LAND USE

A tendency for many pastoral leases converted to inalienable Aboriginal freehold title is for land use to lean towards a system of multiple land use. The concept of multiple land use as practiced by Aboriginal people on their traditional lands is a concept that has not been strongly defined in the literature to date. Multiple land use broadly refers to a spatial and temporal interaction of different land uses. In more specific terms, it is a system of land use that has evolved from the incorporation of two cultures and two different perspectives of land. It is by no means a new phenomenon, but is only just being recognised as a viable land use in the rangelands, both traditional and introduced. Multiple usage of land by Aboriginal people on their traditional lands has been a pattern since the arrival of the pastoral regime in Central Australia, as many Aborigines combined introduced cattle work with subsistence hunting and gathering and cultural responsibilities. More land uses have since emerged with, for example, the realisation of mining and tourism industries. Essentially, a multiple land use regime in the rangelands represents a balance between various aspirations of Aboriginal people, different aspirations of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and income generating and non income generating activities.

Multiple land use essentially reflects the diverse land use aspirations of Aboriginal people. The array of land uses carried out on Aboriginal lands at present have essentially evolved as two different constructs of land have come together. Sacred site protection is a priority for Aboriginal people living on their traditional lands (Rose, 1995), yet at the same time,

an adequate income is also a priority⁴. Multiple land use has allowed the residents of Utopia to meet their traditional, cultural, social, economic and environmental needs as much as is possible with limited resources

2.5 CONCLUSION

Land is central to the social, cultural, and economic well being of Aborigines. The invasion and subsequent exploitation instigated by the pastoral industry had major ramifications for Aboriginal well-being. However, land is also central to the economy of the Northern Territory which is comprised of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures. These two cultures fundamentally represent different approaches to environmental management. Many Aborigines have now assimilated European pastoral knowledge with their own traditional knowledge. The *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* marked the changed political and social attitudes of the time and facilitated much of the dynamics of Aboriginal pastoralism today. Thus, the path is laid for an alternative to the dominant European pastoral activities in Central Australia carrying with it implications for environmental management, regional economics, and Aboriginal culture. Land rights legislation, in particular the spin offs of the High Court's Mabo decision, has and is likely to continue to facilitate a transition in land use from an old regime of pastoralism to one of multiple land use in the rangelands (Young and Ross, 1994). This transition is also fuelled by recognition of the economic, environmental and social challenges facing the pastoral industry. The ability for Aboriginal people to define their own land use priorities is an essential component of self determination for many Aboriginal land owners in Central Australia.

⁴Personal communication, Jeannie Devitt, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

CHAPTER THREE:

RANGELAND USERS AND ESD GOALS

3. RANGELAND USERS AND ESD GOALS

The pastoral regime of Australia's rangelands is under challenge from the economic, environmental and social conditions under which it exists. Under these conditions, pastoralism is giving way to the emerging trend of multiple land use. Aboriginal land users are at the forefront of this regime shift, owning 48% of land in Central Australia (CLC, 1994c) with many properties engaging in a system of multiple land use. This shift is occurring simultaneous to the development of the National Strategy for Rangeland Management which aims to coordinate rangeland users in a manner that ensures environmental sustainability. This thesis claims that ecologically sustainable development (ESD) is critical for the well being of all Australians, but particularly for Aboriginal land users sharing the rangelands with pastoralists. As perceptions and policies change, there is a greater need for Aboriginal needs and aspirations to be considered and Aboriginal involvement catered for in land management issues in the rangelands. This is not to say that pastoralism will vanish, but that there is a need to realise the need for ESD and that this will involve changes in the economic and social spheres of the industry.

This chapter will discuss the concept of ESD and its definition in terms of rangeland management. It will then address the potential of pastoralism to meet the economic, environmental and social criteria of ESD. A critique of the National Strategy for Rangeland Management will focus on the integration of Aboriginal land management into a mainstream strategy.

3.1 ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE RANGELANDS

A Commonwealth Discussion Paper in 1990 defined ecologically sustainable development as "using, conserving and enhancing the community's resources so that ecological processes, on which life depends, are maintained, and the total quality of life, now and in the future, can be increased" (Commonwealth of Australia, 1990: 3). However, the paper,

maintains an economic focus over an ecological or a cultural focus in regards to agricultural production stating that "the key issue ... is ensuring that agricultural systems at least maintain the productivity of the commercial base" (Commonwealth of Australia, 1990: 28). This illustrates the confusion between two accepted definitions of sustainability. The first is that of sustainable land use as a land use goal: sustainability that is tied to a purpose and merely sustains the land use, rather than the wider ecological system. On a more regional scale, the second interpretation of ecologically sustainable development is tied to the goal of sustaining biodiversity (Morton et al, 1995).

Defining sustainability in the rangelands is difficult due to uncertainties and limited knowledge. Land uses in the rangelands are subject to climatic variability, externally driven markets, vast spatial scales for management, and limited ecological knowledge (Stafford Smith, 1994). These complex interactions between the social, physical, and economic factors illustrate the crucial need for a definition of ESD. The ecological system that pastoralism is partly reliant on is also home to a biologically complex system and is culturally valuable to Aboriginal land users. A broader definition of ecologically sustainable land management has been developed with specific reference to the arid and semi-arid rangelands as "the management of land in such a way as to allow the maintenance of all its ecological functions and thereby ensure the persistence of its biodiversity" (Morton et al, 1995: 203). It carries with it the importance of a regional approach and emphasis on the maintenance of the ecological functioning of the resource-rich areas that characterise arid Australia. These resource rich areas are also the areas with the highest resource use conflict. The land tenure system in Central Australia has evolved in such a way that the majority of these resource rich areas are on non-Aboriginal land. Since land is fundamental to Aboriginal culture, it is necessary to include a socio-cultural dimension to a definition of ESD. The definition of sustainability referred to in this thesis favours the second interpretation of ESD which maintains biodiversity and incorporates the three vital components of economics, environment and society.

CSIRO research¹ (Morton et al, 1995) identified the following three criteria, in no priority order, for ESD in the rangelands;

- economic viability
- ecological sustainability
- social feasibility

For a land use to operate at a level consistent with the principals of ESD, it must be economically viable otherwise it would not be socially desirable. Secondly, it must be ecologically sustainable to ensure long term economic viability and intergenerational equity. Thirdly, to be successful, it must be socially feasible. Such a holistic approach is evident in rangeland management, but remains limited across the range of enterprises (Morton et al, 1995).

A new approach to the problem of integrating conservation and production is the notion of stewardship (Morton et al, 1995). This is a focus on regional sustainability and involves the development of a hierarchical structure for conservation reserves. This approach comes from the awareness that the areas at most risk are the areas of highest ecological productivity, that is, the small pockets of ecological biodiversity. A change towards stewardship would involve the perception that rangeland managers have responsibilities as long term stewards and would therefore be entitled to financial reward. Such a notion has important implications for the position of Aboriginal land owners in the rangelands. The underlying philosophy of such a system is ideal, but at present is facing problems associated with land use strategies that are politically and socially embedded in the management of the rangelands and the void of knowledge required for the success of such a strategy.

¹ Personal communication, Mark Stafford Smith, Senior Research Scientist, Centre for Arid Zone Research, Division of Wildlife and Ecology, CSIRO, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

3.2 THE ECONOMIC PRODUCTIVITY OF THE RANGELANDS

Economics tends to be, for non-Aboriginal land users, the overwhelming grounds on which land use decisions are made. However, the economics of pastoralism are extremely variable and rely on direct and indirect support from the Northern Territory Government. Through a combination of environmental decline and economic distress² and a lack of technological input, the pastoral industry has declined in its relative contribution to the economic well being of the Northern Territory and its local regional economies. The economic viability of the cattle industry in Central Australia is faced with many challenges including distance to markets and distance from resource rich areas that are called upon in times of drought. It is often the case that the economic structures characterising the pastoral industry are incompatible with ESD goals; that the two goals of conservation and productivity are incompatible and are therefore not socially feasible. The result is management that aims to sustain the pastoralist and his or her family under the prevailing conditions, to the detriment of environmental conditions, especially in dry times.

Compared to other industries in Australia over recent decades, productivity in the pastoral industry has remained relatively static. The pastoral industry is presently facing increasing costs without a corresponding increase in returns (Friedel et al, 1990). Therefore, the future viability of the industry is dependent on increased efficiency and consequently on research and development. However, for much of arid Australia, pasture improvements are not feasible and other large scale inputs are not economically viable due to the remoteness of the industry. Developments are limited to CSIRO research which divides its goals between productivity and sustainability.

Cattle production in the Northern Territory has fluctuated markedly over recent years. In 1994 turn off was remarkably higher than previous years due to higher prices and increased turn-off due to drought in the Barkly Tablelands and Alice Springs Districts

² Personal communication, John Holmes, Professor, Department of Geographical Sciences and Planning, University of Queensland, August, 1995, Sydney.

(Northern Territory Government, 1995a). 1994 saw a further increase in live cattle exports as demand increased in South East Asia. Live cattle exports generate higher prices and are growing as they meet the demand of South East Asia, particularly Indonesia and the Philippines. This area of development is the focus of research programs of the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries (NTDPIF), aiming to assist further development and fine tuning of production and management systems to provide live export cattle in accordance to importer specifications (Northern Territory Government, 1995a). However, this growth is also associated with government subsidies within a number of South East Asian countries³. Despite its extensive use of land, in 1991/1992 cattle and buffalo production was only about 2% of Gross Product in the Northern Territory (CLC, 1994a). This figure appears even more marginal when it is noted that the Gross Product of the Northern Territory accounted for only 1.1% of Gross Product of Australia in the same year (CLC, 1994).

Aboriginal interests account for 14% of pastoral properties in the Northern Territory: of the remainder, 67% are privately or family owned, and 19% are company owned. Aboriginal pastoral properties tend to be located on poorer lands (refer to section 4.1.1) and are run down due to their condition at time of purchase and lack of recurrent funding, whilst company owned properties tend to be located on lands more favourable for pastoralism. Hence company owned properties account for about 50% of Northern Territory cattle production (Northern Territory Government, 1995a).

The perception that Alice Springs is important as a regional centre for support services in the industry is outdated. An increasing amount of wealth generated in remote centres is being transferred to the cities⁴. Abattoir developments have declined as Alice Springs is not strategically positioned (CAREDC, 1993). Similarly, Central regions will benefit less from the growing demand of live cattle in south east Asia. Alice Springs is increasingly

³ Personal communication, John Holmes, Professor, Department of Geographical Sciences and Planning, University of Queensland, August, 1995, Sydney.

⁴ Personal communication, John Holmes, Professor, Department of Geographical Sciences and Planning, University of Queensland, August, 1995, Sydney.

supported by Aboriginal dollars as well as providing the role of any major settlement. In 1987-89 it was calculated that Aborigines in Central Australia contributed \$184 million, 34% of Central Australian economy (Crough et al, 1989).

Local industry blueprints present a glossy and simplistic view of these changes. For example, the Central Australian Region Economic Development Strategy lacks awareness and understanding of these issues and concludes that "the pastoral industry's future will become increasingly secure" (CAREDC, 1993: 54). The Northern Territory Government's blueprint speech "Our Territory - The Future", views provisions in Land Rights legislation as impediments to economic development (Northern Territory Government, 1995b). If social development and maintenance of the Territory 'lifestyle' are tenets for the future of the government, how can Aboriginal land ownership and self determination be considered impediments to development?

The inadequacies of the Northern Territory Government's approach to these issues are illustrated in the fact that despite the realisation of the importance of economies of scale, the Northern Territory Government plans to promote a policy of subdividing selected pastoral leases into smaller blocks to enable young farmers to make a start (Northern Territory Government, 1995b). This is reflective of the politics that have maintained the bulk of unsustainable pastoralism through subsidisation. To encourage this is to go against the work of scientists with a vision of environmental sustainability.

To gain a clear perspective of the viability of the pastoral industry it is necessary to distinguish between different types of viability (Friedel et al, 1990; Holmes, 1990). Three have been identified ranging from a drought resistant property that is commercially viable in the long term; a short term, high utilisation, quick turn off approach; and a small killer herd generally managed by a community. A drought resistant property is one that will withstand the environmental and economic fluctuations that pose challenges to the industry, while a killer herd is generally run within environmental limits for community benefit (refer to Chapter Five). The middle range property is vulnerable to climatic and

market fluctuations, and is managed in the short term and consequently compromises environmental sustainability. These properties survive through direct and indirect subsidies. Essentially, these subsidies support the long term degradation of the land and prevent it from becoming available to Aboriginal people who carry strong ties with the land.

3.2.1 Economic and Political Barriers to Sustainability

Economic challenges to pastoralists include short term pressures relating to interest rates and repayments, and long term pressures relating to efficiency, security of tenure, and sustainability. These ultimately impact upon the capacity for pastoralists to manage environmental challenges and play a large part in facilitating land degradation.

The perceived economic viability of the industry is however, based on direct and indirect subsidies provided by the Northern Territory Government. Such subsidies include construction and maintenance of roads used for cattle transportation, research and development and drought relief packages. Although drought is a natural occurrence in the rangelands, marginal pastoralists rely on external sources for support. The effect of this is to reduce incentives for long term sustainable management. Many subsidies to the industry tend to be disguised and are therefore difficult to single out and measure. Wilcox and Cunningham (1993: 4) concluded that the yearly cost of providing services to the industry in the Northern Territory was \$52,000, compared to figures of \$8,000 - \$15,000 for the states. At the same time, CSIRO expenditure on the pastoral zone was \$30 million (Wilcox and Cunningham, 1993: 4).

Similarly, debt remains a constraint to pastoralists as they aim to maximise output and achieve sustainability. The pressure of debt repayments leads to short term productivity emphasis at the expense of long term land conditions. Wilcox and Cunningham (1993:

134) concluded that the average debt held by commercial lenders in the Northern Territory was on average, between \$80 and \$110 per head of cattle.

Governments have attempted to minimise the adversities facing pastoral enterprises through supportive tenure regimes. The contemporary land tenure system in the pastoral lands of Central Australia is a result of a century of government policy decisions and is characteristic of a dominant 'top-down' approach to land management. As pastoralism expanded, the Australian government attempted to control unauthorised settlement in these remote areas. A system of pastoral leases dominates land tenure with leases in the order of 15 to 50 years and perpetual leases. These leases carry covenants ultimately leaving decisions regarding the nature and intensity of land use to the government. The most significant of these is the provision for minimum stocking rates and is now under pressure from pastoralists and environmentalists across Australia. These were established with minimum understanding of the physical natural environment and thus exceeded the carrying capacity of the land. The provisions carried penalties if stocking levels were not met, thus encouraging pastoralists to maximise their cattle numbers. Crough (1993) notes that more recently, the Northern Territory Government has been reluctant to enforce penalties because any subsequent forfeit of the lease would revert it to inalienated Crown land, therefore becoming available for claim under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*.

Recent assessments of the industry have highlighted the adverse effects of intense pastoral practices (Holmes and Knight, 1994). Coupled with the emergence of increasing appreciation of the rangelands' conservation values, this is placing increasing pressure on the current system of lease tenure. Since its establishment, government policy regarding the management of the rangelands has undergone a number of changes. Formerly, providing tax concessions for clearing native vegetation with pastoral productivity in mind, the central philosophy is now sustainability. The *Pastoral Land Act 1991* includes provisions for the prevention of land degradation, participation in land monitoring, as well as improvement of land condition (Northern Territory of Australia, 1994). There are also

moves towards provisions for non pastoral rights geared to resource use (Holmes and Knight, 1994).

The government role as mediator in this debate has resulted in a patchwork of policy approaches that are clearly lacking cohesion. Knight and Holmes (1994: 92-95) summarise these into three categories. The first entails regulatory approaches taking the form of legislation such as the Northern Territory *Soil Conservation and Utilisation Act 1969*. This Act regulates specific pastoral activities and makes provision for advice and assistance to those affected by the Act. Measures such as these are reactionary in nature and hinder the decision making ability of pastoralists. Thus, making these measures less socially acceptable and largely unsuccessful (Knight and Holmes, 1994).

The second policy approach entails education, assistance, and the promotion of landcare ethics, which aim to raise awareness of mistakes made in the early stages of development and make pastoralists aware of the benefits of certain measures, in the hope that they will trickle down to actions on the ground level. New information passed on through various education vehicles is competing against generations of old methods and attitudes. The effectiveness of the above measures is limited during periods of economic downturn when pastoralists are under short term financial pressure. It is clear that while financial challenges facing pastoralists limit sustainable management options, certain types of financial assistance can allow for unsustainable practices.

Financial incentives make up the third area of policy approach regarding land degradation. An example is provisions in the *Income Tax Assessment Act* allowing primary producers to qualify for large tax deductions for actions preventing or combating land degradation problems. Such measures tend to act as buffers and therefore distort economic indicators, in turn fuelling economic and environmental inefficiencies. Financial incentives taking the form of drought assistance can be contradictory; assistance for transportation of stock relieves pressure on the land at a time when it is most vulnerable; yet assistance for fodder supply increases pressure on the land when it is most vulnerable. Financial incentives,

especially tax-based measures, discriminate against low income property owners and therefore can be seen to hold few benefits for Aboriginal pastoral properties.

3.3 LAND USE TRANSITION AND ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

3.3.1 The Physical Environment

The physical environment of inland Australia is unique, characterised by spatial and temporal variability. The low level and the spatial and temporal variability of rainfall has far reaching implications for pastoralism and is the most prominent characteristic of Central Australia. The arid zone of Central Australia receives an average of less than 250 millimetres per year.

This low average level is characterised by less frequent and higher magnitude events that tend to occur at a local level (Friedel et al, 1990; Stafford Smith and Morton, 1990). This variability in turn has major implications for management. The intensity of the event limits the potential utilisation of water, therefore, limiting pastoral productivity. At the same time the intensity has implications for erosion, especially on land exposed through grazing. These rainfall events tend to be unpredictable and are also subject to spatial variability. Therefore, both factors further impede the management of pastoral lands. Rainfall is a critical component of biotic productivity. Rainfall events have a direct bearing on plant and soil condition, and therefore heavily influence productivity on a pastoral property. In an industry that applies little technology and has a low level of inputs, the pastoralist is at the mercy of the climate.

The arid zone of Australia is an ancient and flat landscape with soils that are highly weathered, sorted, and nutrient poor (Stafford Smith and Morton, 1990; Rose, 1992). The soils are typically saline, hard, shallow, water repellent and have a low replacement rate (Stafford Smith and Morton, 1990). These characteristics further challenge the

management of pastoral activities and illustrate the susceptibility of the natural soil conditions to disturbance and therefore the degradation of soils. The arid zone is subject to a high degree of spatial differentiation (Friedel et al, 1990). In addition, the annual nutrient cycle is dominated by the rainfall regime which tends to be unpredictable. Soils in this region also tend to have low infiltration rates. Furthermore, the spatial and temporal characteristics of soils have a direct influence on vegetation. Therefore, soils that are subject to pastoral activities are highly susceptible to degradation (Rose, 1992).

Vegetation characteristics in Central Australia are directly related to rainfall variability and soil conditions. Central Australia is considered to be a mosaic of vegetation types (Stafford Smith and Pickup, 1990), where plant life is directly related to unpredictable rainfall. The majority of vegetation cover in Central Australia is composed of hummock grasses. Characteristic of these areas is a low number of tree species and a relatively high number of shrub species. Woody species tend to occur in areas that receive relatively high levels of runoff from surrounding areas. The role of Aboriginal burning practices and the cessation of these practices has had far reaching implications for vegetation. This practice has only recently been recognised as an important management tool in rangeland management.

Prior to non-Aboriginal pastoral developments in the arid zone the native fauna of Central Australia was naturally adapt to the natural conditions that presently pose challenges to pastoralism (Stafford Smith and Morton, 1990). The ecological balance that existed was subject to episodic events, namely fire and rainfall. In times of drought, flora and fauna were vulnerable and subject to local disappearance. Disturbance to these natural conditions and balances brought about by non-Aboriginal practises, largely pastoralism, had far reaching implications for habitat. Aboriginal people played a vital role in this balance. Their relationship with the land exceeds basic resource needs and sustainable management required the carrying of important cultural meanings and responsibilities.

3.3.2 Environmental Challenges to Pastoralism

The immediate challenge to pastoralists of Central Australia and other regions is realising the damage incurred as a result of past practices, and recognising that the productivity of land comes from the small areas of richness⁵ (Purvis, 1986; Stafford Smith, 1994). This is followed by the further challenge of identifying the relevant parameters of ESD and then implementing them. There is no doubt that since non-Aboriginal settlement of Central Australia widespread land degradation has occurred. There is however, no broad agreement on the causes of this degradation. Many suggested causes of losses of biodiversity are identified and critiqued by Morton and include; droughts and climatic change; introduced predators; introduced mice; disease; rabbits; altered fire patterns; and pastoralism (Morton, 1990). The failure of non-Aboriginal settlement and the pastoral industry to achieve sustainability in Central Australia has been well documented (Courtenay, 1982; Morton, 1990; Burbidge et al, 1988; Holmes and Knight, 1994; Young et al, 1991; Heathcote, 1965; Cartres, 1987; Stafford Smith, 1994).

Loss of biodiversity in Central Australia has occurred as a result of altered land uses and is of great concern to conservationists. More than half of Australia's species of endangered mammals and more than a third of its threatened species occur in the semi arid and arid lands (Morton, 1993). Burbidge et al (1988) argue that the mammal fauna of Central Australia was richer and more widespread than generally perceived.

Further challenges effecting pastoralists are directly related to the cessation of traditional Aboriginal burning practices. The problem of woody weed infestation is a direct result of this (Barr and Cary, 1992). Fire plays a crucial role in the natural balance of ecological systems, the maintenance of species diversity as it removes adult plants and recycles nutrients (Stafford Smith and Morton, 1990). A traditional fire regime curbs the production of woody weeds. Uncontrolled, woody weeds reduce the presence of

⁵ Personal communication, Gary Bastin, Research Scientist, Centre for Arid Zone Research, Division of Wildlife and Ecology, CSIRO, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

palatable grasses by competing with them for water. In turn this exposes the soil to severe erosion, particularly sheet erosion after rainfall (Barr and Cary, 1992).

The environmental problem of introduced animals is perceived as an extremely important issue by non-Aboriginal land managers. This is largely expressed in the amount of money and resources injected into efforts to eradicate or alleviate the problem. Introduced species contribute to vegetation loss and soil erosion and involve high costs in terms of attempted eradication and control. The range of feral animals that impact upon the environments of arid and semi arid Australia include cattle, rabbits, horses, buffalo, donkeys, pigs, goats, camels, dogs and cats. The resultant problems include vegetation removal, soil disturbance, competition with native fauna, the hoarding and transmission of disease. The cost of feral animals in terms of damage to environments, loss of productivity, and costs of attempted control is high. In 1979 it was estimated that feral species in the Northern Territory consumed the same amount as 500, 000 head of cattle which was 30% of the number of cattle at the time (Coombs et al, 1990, 12-13).

However, perhaps the largest challenge facing the achievement of ESD is the overall lack of ecological knowledge. The need to fill knowledge gaps is widely recognised (Morton et al, 1995; Stafford Smith and Morton, 1990; Rose, 1992). Knowledge, including environmental and biological information, is essential in order to measure the level of sustainability of the rangelands. As scientists endeavour to fill knowledge gaps it is essential that comprehensive and localised knowledge held by Aboriginal land users are not underestimated or ignored.

3.3.3 Management Tools

Early pastoralists lacked knowledge of the systems they relied on and mistakes were made in their management efforts. The most significant manager of the rangelands since the establishment of the pastoral industry has been the government as it governments

controlled land uses and regulated their intensity. Land use of the rangelands has been controlled and regulated via the lease tenure system

Because the industry lacks technological input to address degradation issues, the only effective management tool at the disposal of pastoralists is stocking rate; that is, the spatial and temporal manipulation of grazing pressures. Management of stocking rates has changed as land managers learn through trial and error and the industry is starting to realise that quality is better than quantity⁶. Increasing uses of aerial photography and new technologies are being used to determine land characteristics and improve fencing systems.

Secondly, fire played a crucial role in Aboriginal land management but has been slow to catch on as a management tool for non-Aboriginal pastoralists. Areas were 'patch' burned by Aborigines prior to non-Aboriginal occupation as a means of controlling resources (Rose, 1992). The cessation of these burning practices tipped the ecological balance in many arid environments and problems resulted. Fire regimes are now being re-established in many parts, by both Aboriginal and Aboriginal land users.

Thirdly, the Brucellosis and Tuberculosis Eradication Campaign (BTEC) commenced in 1970 and aimed to eradicate brucellosis and tuberculosis by 1992 with the primary purpose of increasing the export potential of Australian beef. Its implications for pastoral management were far reaching. Such institutional measures reveal the extent to which the industry is under the wing of government departments and how government control has continued since its establishment. Millington (1992) argues that the BTEC resulted in a new awareness of resource management as various measures of controlling of livestock such as fencing techniques were emphasised.

Fourthly, the National Landcare Program has proved to be a further management tool available to pastoralists. Landcare brings to light the important notion of a regional and

⁶ Personal communication, Russell Grant, Land Conservation, Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

cooperative approach to land management. As far as the long term goals of ESD in the rangelands, its effect appears to be limited. Essentially, Landcare maintains the status quo⁷. Limitations of Landcare relate to isolation and instances of foreign ownership of pastoral stations. The irony of the position of Aboriginal involvement in new management strategies becomes clearer when it is realised that such programs are aiming to achieve what Aborigines have managed to do for thousands of years. Campbell (1994) argues that in a contemporary sense, Landcare is just as relevant to Aboriginal communities as non-Aboriginal communities. Campbell (1994) also notes that little Aboriginal land is located in target areas and that, generally Aboriginal groups lack the necessary finance to implement Landcare initiatives. Target areas tend to be pastoral areas, as Landcare addresses the needs of the pastoral industry over the environmental, cultural and social needs of Aboriginal land users. However, more Aboriginal people live on these areas, therefore there is more labour and knowledge available to carry out landcare initiatives.

3.4 THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT AND LAND USE TRANSITION

The economic and environmental challenges discussed so far carry over to impact upon the social feasibility of the pastoral regime. Changes in the way society values the rangelands relate to increasing pressure from conservationists and scientists as the knowledge base is increased and the understanding of human impacts on natural environments becomes clearer. These changes are occurring along the same lines as changes in the forestry and fisheries industries (Morton, 1990). The transition in value of the rangelands is primarily one of a move away from market values to non-market values. Expectations of commodity values of the rangelands are declining while the amenity values are meeting the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, rural, and urban societies in a more direct way⁸. Such non-market values include; use values such as Aboriginal use, conservation, non-commercial recreation; existence values including

⁷ Personal communication, Tracker Tilmouth, Director, CLC, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

⁸ Personal communication, John Holmes, Professor, Department of Geographical Sciences and Planning, University of Queensland, August, 1995, Sydney.

biodiversity, cultural values, landscape values; and option values, that is potential land uses of value to society⁹.

Government policies and community attitudes have governed the perceptions of most pastoralists and are only recently opening up to alternatives. Although non-Aboriginal society is showing signs of a move towards a view of these lands as having value in themselves and not merely what they can produce, value of pastoral lands is still ultimately derived from productivity. The carrying capacity of a property is more or less transferred into a dollar value¹⁰. The way in which a 'value' is applied to the rangelands of Central Australia reflects the inherent non-Aboriginal perspective of land present in government departments. Such a perceived method of valuation is misrepresentative of societal values, and only reflects current market circumstances.

The social environment in which this land use transition is taking place is very complex. There is the common perception that Aboriginal land users are wasting the productive capacity of their land. However, a comparative argument is Aboriginal land users should be perceived as custodians of the land and that they carry responsibilities to manage the land sustainably on behalf of the rest of the country and that Aboriginal land owners should therefore be highly respected for their management of the rangelands¹¹. This perception forms the rationale for funding these remote areas. The successful transition to a sustainable land use regime will require the adoption of these perceptions on social and political level.

As this transition is occurring, Aboriginal society is meeting the challenges of achieving self determination. As Coombs et al (Coombs et al, 1990: 1) point out;

⁹ Personal communication, John Holmes, Professor, Department of Geographical Sciences and Planning, University of Queensland, August, 1995, Sydney.

¹⁰ Personal communication, Pastoral Officer, Department of Land, Housing and Local Government, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

¹¹ Personal communication, Mark Stafford Smith, Senior Research Scientist, Centre for Arid Zone Research, CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

The Aboriginal land of Australia can never be returned to the original system of use. The land has changed, the people have changed and any system will be inextricably linked to the political and economic structures of Australia and the world at large. It is not simple to envisage what the sustainable use of Aboriginal land might mean now

As we enter a new regime of Aboriginal land use, ecological sustainability will depend largely upon the social construction of land use. Already there is potential for alternative land uses being realised by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal land users. It is however, widely recognised that great areas will remain under pastoral activities and so it is important to find a sustainable level of management for those that remain (Friedel et al, 1990).

3.5 A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

The National Strategy for Rangeland Management, reviewed here in its draft form, is a formal recognition of the need to manage the rangelands to assure their sustainability. It recognises the diversity of land use aspirations among all Australians, the diverse values of the rangelands, the need to address all levels from local to national, past degradation and questions present management in terms of its potential to achieve ESD. It has aims to work cooperatively with State and Territory Governments, traditional owners, industry, farming communities, and conservation groups. The document introduces new priorities for rangeland management and initiates a new approach for a balanced system of land use.

The policy response to increased awareness and concern over the future sustainability of Australia's rangelands has been addressed from a national perspective. Since it aims to coordinate all rangeland users in a manner that achieves sustainability, it is necessary to review it here, with a particular focus on its capacity to ensure the sustainability of Aboriginal land.

The 25 year vision of the strategy is;

That all Australians will recognise the value and significance of the rangelands, for their aesthetic, ecological, economic, cultural and social diversity, and that everyone with a responsibility for the rangelands will be committed to their ecologically sustainable development (NSRMWG, 1995, 15).

The strategy's nine primary goals are; economic uses of the rangelands; management, conservation of the natural environment, recognition of the special rights and interests of indigenous people; cultural, heritage and social values; research and monitoring; coordinated planning; programs and services; and legislative and administrative framework (NSRMWG, 1995: 19). The huge task of coordinating a wide variety of land uses, values and aspirations over a culturally and ecologically diverse area faces obvious challenges. As with all strategies, success on the ground level is not guaranteed.

The Aboriginal dimension to the strategy is important considering that Aboriginal people own over 12% of the rangelands under inalienable Aboriginal freehold title, and a further 6.5% under leasehold and reserves (Heathcote, 1994). However, Aboriginal representation in the ground work leading up to the draft strategy was primarily left with ATSIC. In terms of land tenure and developments in Aboriginal land ownership, the strategy perceives "uncertainties" (NSRMWG, 1995: 14-18). At this stage the strategy shows an ill preparedness for developments in Aboriginal ownership. This is an issue that must be adequately understood by a management strategy that is aiming to coordinate land uses and achieve sustainability in the rangelands when Aboriginal land ownership is set to rise (Young and Ross, 1994).

A national approach to the issue of rangeland sustainability has been maintained throughout. With a "truly national approach" (NSRMWG, 1995: 11), the strategy is

essentially a 'top-down' approach. It is consultative, but at the same time there is no guarantee that the overall approach taken will be consistent with an Aboriginal system of land management. To impose a land management system on Aboriginal people at the expense of one developed internally may undermine the long term success of such a strategy on Aboriginal lands. Since 48% of the Central Australian region is Aboriginal owned, the long term ability of Aboriginal land management systems to achieve ESD is important for wider society.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The characteristics of the pastoral industry, superimposed on the economic, ecological and social environment of Central Australia, ultimately restrict the potential of the industry to meet ESD criteria. The industry is supported by subsidies that tend to hinder ESD and it is faced with problems such as distance to markets, economic variability and an overall declining in its contribution to the Northern Territory's Gross Product. The natural environment underlying the productivity of the industry is also variable, and past and present unsustainable land use has led to current land degradation problems. These challenges are taking place in the context of a socially complex environment. With changing values and developments in Aboriginal land rights the future sustainability of a new land use regime will depend on a holistic approach to land management that is socially and culturally appropriate for rangeland users. The National Strategy for Rangeland Management is characteristic of the 'top-down' approach (refer to Appendix A) taken by governments in response to a nationally perceived problem. Such an imposing system is incompatible with the internal workings of Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal land management systems. It is this 'top-down' approach, ultimately aiming for sustainability, that is inconsistent with Aboriginal bottom up approaches, therefore limiting its effect on Aboriginal land.

CHAPTER FOUR:

***BUREAUCRATIC BARRIERS TO ABORIGINAL
LAND USE ASPIRATIONS***

4 BUREAUCRATIC BARRIERS TO ABORIGINAL LAND USE ASPIRATIONS

For almost 20 years the importance of land for the cultural, social, and economic well being of Aboriginal people has been acknowledged through the Commonwealth government's acquisition of land on behalf of Aboriginal people. Land acquisition and land management policies are currently administered through ATSIC and involve the purchasing of land on behalf of Aboriginal interests. In a post-Mabo period, land acquisition is being organised around the threefold arms of Native Title, the establishment of the Indigenous Land Corporation, and the Social Justice Package.

This chapter examines the role of the bureaucracies in the implementation of self determination policies through land acquisition and land management, with particular reference to funding criteria. Aboriginal pastoralism is discussed with specific focus on challenges to commercial viability. The need for land management and the notion of a co-management approach between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people will also be discussed. Lastly, the implementation of ATSIC's Land Acquisition and Land Management Programs will be critiqued in the context of their ability to cater for the land use aspirations of Aboriginal land owners, and therefore meet the goals of self determination. Current experience suggests that the cross cultural land management capabilities of existing mainstream bureaucracies are limited.

4.1 ABORIGINAL PASTORALISM

The purchase of pastoral properties remains the primary vehicle to Aboriginal land ownership in the rangelands. To date, much of the rationale for Aboriginal purchases of pastoral properties and funding of pastoral activities has been based on assumptions that the experience of Aboriginal people in the pastoral industry will enable the emergence of viable commercial enterprises. The complex relationship between the pastoral industry and Aboriginal people included the transfer of skills. It is therefore assumed that

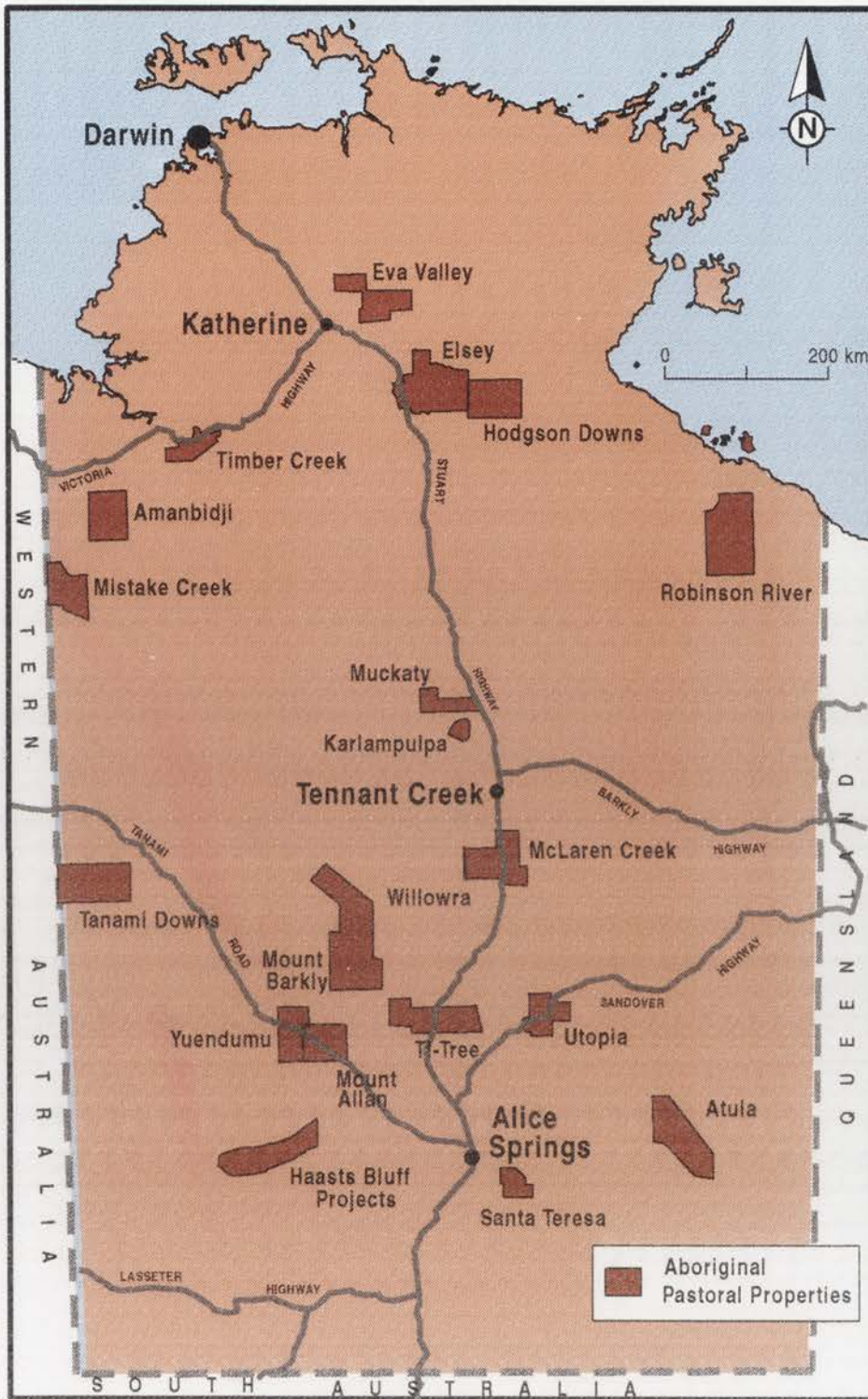
Aboriginal ownership of pastoral properties will lead to increased economic sufficiency and reduced dependency. This has rarely been the case. A significant proportion of Aboriginal owned pastoral leases have been or are in the process of being claimed under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976*, involving the removal of all covenants. This in turn makes of multiple land use a culturally appropriate land use option.

A review of current Aboriginal pastoral properties reveals their diversity. At May 1994, there were 23 major Aboriginal pastoral properties in the Northern Territory; eight in the Northern Land Council region and 15 in the Central Land Council region.

Property	Purchase Date	Carrying Capacity	Current Stock Number	Manag't Agree't	External Funding	Condition on Purchase	Current Status
Fitzroy	1991	3,700	2,500	Yes	Yes	①Poor pastures, run down infrastructure, severe environmental degradation.	#*Operational cattle enterprise.
Muckaty	1991	2,000	0	No	No	①Poor pastures, poor infrastructure, environmental degradation.	#Limited stocking due to severe land degradation.
Elsey	1991	14,500	6,500	Yes	Yes	①Reasonable pastures, poor infrastructure.	#*Operational cattle Enterprise.
Hodgson Downs	1990	7,500	0	No	unknown	①unknown.	#*Destocked through BTEC.
Bauhinia Downs	1994	4,000	3,000	Yes	Yes	④Reasonable pastures, poor infrastructure.	#*Operational cattle enterprise.
Eva Valley		4,700	300 buffalo	No	Yes	①unknown.	~Small scale buffalo operation.
Robinson River		10,000	1,500	No	Yes	unknown.	*Operational cattle enterprise.
Amanbidgee		6,300	600	No	Yes	unknown.	*Operating at small scale.

Source: CLC, 1994.

Table 4.1: Aboriginal pastoral properties in the Northern Land Council region. Small scale operations are not shown; # NLC support; * ATSIC support; Purchase funding; ① ABTA; ② ALFC; ③ ADC; ④ ATSIC.



Source: Adapted from CLC, 1994.

Map 4.1: Aboriginal Pastoral Properties in the Northern Territory.

Property	Purchase Date	Carrying Capacity	Current Stock Number	Manag't Agree't	External Funding	Condition on purchase	Current Status
Alcoota	1993	7,500	7,000	Yes	No	① Reasonable pastures.	# Fully operating cattle enterprise.
Atula	1989	2,500	2,500	No	Yes	③ unknown.	* Fully operating cattle enterprise.
Chilla Well	1978	1,000	0	No	No	② Run down infrastructure.	Non operating.
Daguragu	1975	3,400	200	No	No	② unknown.	Non operational, desire to re-establish pastoral operations. Funding unavailable.
Loves Creek	1992	6,150	6000	Yes	Yes	① Reasonable pastures.	# Fully operating cattle enterprise.
McLaren Creek	1985	3,000	600	No	Yes	① De-stocked. Run down infrastructure, severe land degradation.	# Limited operations. Social restructuring.
Mistake Creek	1991	10,000	12,000	Yes	No	① Severe land degradation.	# Fully operating cattle enterprise.
Mount Allan	1976	3,500	2,000	Yes	Yes	② Reasonable pastures.	# Operating and rebuilding.
Santa Teresa	former reserve	1,000	500	No	unknown	unknown.	* Environmentally sustainable operations but not commercially viable.
Tanami Downs	1989	5,200	5,000	No	Yes	④ unknown.	* Fully operating cattle enterprise.
Tempe Downs	1993	3,000	0	Yes	Yes	④ Poor infrastructure. poor pastures.	# Non operating.
Ti Tree	1975	4,100	3,000	No	unknown	② Good pastures.	* Operations dependant on land conditions.
Utopia	1976	2,300	400	No	Yes	② Poor infrastructure.	# Diverse land use priorities.
Willowra	1973	3,000	0	No	unknown	② unknown.	Diverse land use priorities.
Yuendumu	former reserve	2,500	2,500	No	Yes	unknown.	* Operating but not commercially viable.

Source: CLC, 1994.

Table 4.2: Aboriginal pastoral properties in the Central Land Council region. Small scale operations are not shown; # CLC support; * ATSIC support; Purchase funding; ① ABTA; ② ALFC; ③ ADC; ④ ATSIC.

Aboriginal pastoral properties in Central Australia reflect the diversity of land use aspirations among Aboriginal people. The 15 major pastoral properties in the Central Land Council range from large properties with up to 12,000 head of cattle to small

multiple use properties. The size of the herd generally indicates the land use system on a property.

Aboriginal perceptions of pastoralism are as diverse as the scale of Aboriginal pastoral activities in Central Australia. Rose (1995) notes that pastoralism is seen by many Aboriginal people as a desirable land use associated with wealth and power close to traditional lands. Benefits associated with Aboriginal pastoralism are identified as employment, income and personal satisfaction arising from a strong identification with cattle work and lifestyle. However some Aboriginal people view the industry as one of inequality as few people get control of large pieces of land. Some women view this inequality further as resource use and funding is always under the control of men (Rose, 1995: 58). The diversity of perceptions among Aboriginal people is highlighted through the perceived effects of pastoral activities. It is noted that the impacts of pastoral activities were strongly associated with a lack of rain. This problem was therefore perceived as being short term because they were generally remedied by rain (Rose, 1995: 51). At the same time however, it was frequently identified that the existence of cattle impacted upon bush tucker and other land uses (Rose, 1995: 49).

4.1.1 Aboriginal Pastoralism and Commercial Viability

The policy framework in which the conditions of the Act are implemented carries with it certain limitations. Despite Aboriginal freehold title, many owners of former pastoral leases do not exercise the level of control that their non-Aboriginal counterparts would (Stafford Smith et al, 1994). While the Act provides secure tenure, it limits scope for expansion as trustees of Aboriginal freehold title are unable to use their land as security for financing commercial enterprises (Young, 1988c). In terms of Aboriginal land used for pastoral purposes, a distinction can be made between challenges common to pastoral operations and challenges specific to Aboriginal cattle enterprises (Young, 1988a). This gives further insight into the perceived success or failure of such enterprises. Pastoral

leases tend to be sold in times of low productivity and inherent land degradation problems associated with feral animals and previous resource exploitation. Therefore, land purchased by Aborigines and claimed under the Act tends to be of low value in commercial terms. Thus, measuring the 'success' or 'failure' of Aboriginal pastoral activities is highly subjective. For example, less cattle may mean more bush tucker and less land degradation but may also mean less in terms of income from cattle production.

The skills transferred to Aboriginal people employed in the pastoral industry were limited to non-managerial skills. This deficiency has not been adequately met through various education and training programs (Young, 1988a). This has resulted in the tendency for large scale Aboriginal pastoral enterprises to employ non-Aboriginal managers, sometimes due to conditions placed on them from bureaucracies. Further still, Aboriginal involvement in the decision to set up a pastoral enterprise is often minimal (Young, 1988a). Aboriginal pastoralism is further hindered by grossly inadequate services superimposed by new settlement patterns. The service provision in Aboriginal communities is comparable to third world countries (CLC, 1994b; Young, 1995). At the same time, such properties are expected to support a much larger population. This is hardly feasible considering that the average property in Central Australia is only just capable of supporting one nuclear family. The average cash income for pastoral properties in the Northern Territory in 1991-1992 was only \$17,700 and was projected to fall (Crough, 1993: 16). A lack of managerial skills, poor resources, and different settlement patterns is superimposed by different land use priorities of Aboriginal people.

Expectations that secure title to pastoral land would result in the economic empowerment of Aboriginal people ignored a number of critical factors. The CLC Pastoral Unit Coordinator¹ argues that Aboriginal pastoralism can only succeed in two ways. The first is a large scale commercial enterprise such as Alcoota and Mistake Creek, run by a board of directors ideally representing the traditional owners. However, such an approach may

¹ Personal communication, Paul Mitchell, Coordinator, Pastoral Unit, Central Land Council, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

focus on one land use to the detriment of others and has the effect of disempowering the traditional owners. The second is a small scale community based enterprises. Due to economies of scale and restricted access to other lands for traditional reasons, these operations are unlikely to be commercially viable. Yet, they do not impinge upon other land uses such as hunting and gathering and ceremonies. Such operations are usually run at lower stocking rates and provide a plentiful source of meat for the community and in a good season can provide extra income. Essentially, these smaller scale operations operate as part of a multiple use system and can represent an optimal balance between land use alternatives.

4.2 ABORIGINAL LAND USE ASPIRATIONS

Land use goals on Aboriginal pastoral properties reflect the traditional, social, economic, and environmental needs of the Aboriginal population. Tracker Tilmouth, Director of the Central Land Council identifies three criteria for Aboriginal land use in order of priority as;

- cultural sustainability
- environmental sustainability
- economic (not commercial) sustainability²

In the context of Aboriginal culture, the first two priorities of cultural sustainability and environmental sustainability are inextricably linked. Although the more remote areas of the country often fared better than the more accessible and productive areas, colonialism left a large impact on the Aboriginal culture of Central Australia. The maintenance of Aboriginal knowledge and Aboriginal culture is of utmost priority to Aboriginal people. Cultural sustainability is generally the primary condition of land claims and the driving force of Aboriginal people trying to get their land back. For Aboriginal people in Central Australia it is essential that they live on their traditional lands in order to carry out their

² Personal communication, Tracker Tilmouth, Director, Central Land Council, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

traditional responsibilities to the land. This often leads to the decentralisation of settlements that were previously centralised as a result of government administration structures.

Economic sustainability is a third criteria for Aboriginal land use. According to Tilmouth's model for Aboriginal land use priorities, economic considerations are subservient to cultural and environmental criteria. Economic sustainability in remote Aboriginal communities has a direct bearing on the overall wellbeing of the people. It is therefore at the forefront of mainstream agendas. It is important however, to realise that an economy is defined by the social relations of production in any given society of culture (Tilmouth, nd). Therefore, the characteristics and structure of remote Aboriginal economies will differ from that of non-Aboriginal society. It is also important to note that in traditional Aboriginal perspectives, the relationship between the three criteria have more complex relationships than is recognised by non-Aboriginal society.

In considering Aboriginal economic goals, it is necessary to put the Aboriginal perspective in the context of the non-Aboriginal economy. Aboriginal communities are characterised by low levels of disposable income. In 1986, about three quarters of the Aboriginal population in Alice Spring's surrounding remote communities had annual incomes of less than \$9,000, remembering that these areas are characterised by grossly inflated prices (Crough et al, 1989: 22). It follows that the Aboriginal economy in remote areas largely relies on the subsistence economy to meet its needs. Clearly however, the Aboriginal economy is not separate from the non-Aboriginal system. The funding, legal and political structure of mainstream society are imposed upon Aboriginal communities. When placed in the context of the non-Aboriginal economy, the Aboriginal economy is one of marginalisation. This is one way in which, despite self determination policies and land ownership, the non-Aboriginal society subordinates Aboriginal society. A consideration of ATSIC's Land Acquisition and Land Management Programs illustrate the way in which mainstream bureaucracies fail to recognise the wealth generated in the subsistence economy. Ideally, Aboriginal economy, law and culture are on equal footing with non-

Aboriginal economy, law and culture (Tilmouth, nd), but this demands a reappraisal of the very basis of Australian sovereignty.

4.2.1 Aspirations Through Multiple Land Use

The experience of Aboriginal pastoralism in the Northern Territory suggests that the goals and expectations of mainstream bureaucracies in funding Aboriginal pastoral purchases do not reflect the land use aspirations of all Aboriginal land ownership. On hand back, people are excited about getting their land back and in many cases, the land use priority is to reassert their culture on the land³. This leads to the development of a multiple land use system. Multiple land use is a land management trend that is a direct result of the attempts of Aboriginal people to meet their cultural, traditional, social and land needs. Utopia (now Angarapa Land Trust) is one such property where people are meeting their land use needs through a decentralised, traditional community structure (refer to Chapter Five).

The reduction of pastoral activities on Aboriginal land and the development of multiple land use has become a contentious issue in the conservative rural environment of the Northern Territory. The legislative framework for land rights policy has and continues to favour a change in ownership of pastoral properties in Central Australia. The general perception is that it is tolerable to allow Aboriginal ownership, but for this to lead to a change in land use is intolerable and perceived to be a complete waste of productive land (ATSIC, 1992: 10). This rural conservatism is at the forefront in the denial of the validity of Aboriginal knowledge systems and land management systems.

Despite an overall void of support from the pastoral industry and its representative organisations, it is apparent that Aboriginal people are developing approaches that combine pastoral and traditional land use practices in a manner that contributes to an

³ Personal communication, Toly Sawenko, Coordinator, Land Management, Central Land Council, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

achievement of Aboriginal self determination and ESD. The merging of these two approaches calls for a co-management approach between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal approaches to rangeland management. The need for a co-management approach is reflected by the Director of the CLC;

Aboriginal people realise that in this changed environment, the old ways are no longer sufficient to manage all of the issues that must be faced. New technologies and new ways of using land have to be developed using some of the knowledge of land scientists together with the deep and respectful knowledge of the land that Aboriginal people hold. We have to look at the land from two ways now, because if we look from only one perspective we will not be looking to the future and we may well repeat the mistakes of the past (Tilmouth, 1994: 24-25).

The initial challenge to the achievement of a suitable balance of co-management is overcoming the unwillingness of the mainstream non-indigenous community to accept indigenous knowledge and land use as validated in its own right. If there is not mutual understanding and respect for these two systems, a suitable balance for land management of Aboriginal lands will fail in the long term. With limited knowledge of Aboriginal land it is vital that Aboriginal knowledge is comprehensively documented. Efforts to overcome the void of knowledge of Aboriginal land and merge Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal knowledge are limited in mainstream bureaucratic organisations and appear to be limited to organisations such as the CLC.

While the history of non-Aboriginal land management in the rangelands has had the ultimate effect of impairing sustainability, current Aboriginal land use trends of multiple land use have the potential to improve sustainability. However, land management policies that exist for Aboriginal land are insufficient to meet increasing demands and mainstream bureaucracies are ill prepared. Some form of co-management approach is therefore necessary to meet land management needs. It must be a system where the Aboriginal

people are in control and are supported by the resources of non-Aboriginal society. In order to succeed in the long term, it must also be an internally created system evolving from community based decision making.

4.3 ACCOUNTABILITY VERSUS ABORIGINAL SELF DETERMINATION AND ESD

ATSIC is aware of the need to balance public accountability with their drive towards self determination. As an organisation it is willing to examine and review its work (Sanders, 1993) and among its principals for reform is the recognition that its role is to achieve "empowerment, self determination and self management ... to achieve more effective and efficient delivery of services, remove unnecessary duplication and allow better application of available funds" (ATSIC, 1995a: 8). At the same time ATSIC recognises that "mainstream programs continue to fall short in addressing the unique aspirations and needs of indigenous peoples, especially at a community level" (ATSIC, 1995a: 12).

The issue of public accountability within ATSIC has been an issue since its initial formation. The overall goal of ATSIC has been to find a balance between the two imperatives of Aboriginal self determination and public accountability (Sanders, 1993). The final legislation to form ATSIC was essentially a policy compromise in favour of greater accountability. The original ATSIC legislation proposed in 1988 by Minister Gerry Hand was subject to criticism and demands for more public accountability. Following negotiations, ATSIC legislation was finally passed with stringent accountability for the expenditure of public funds, greater ministerial oversight, and clear specifications of procedures to be followed by ATSIC (Sanders, 1993).

ATSIC was essentially born from the Department of Aboriginal Affairs (DAA) and the Aboriginal Development Corporation (ADC). Its aim was to combine regional and national aspects as well as play representative and executive roles in Aboriginal affairs. Its

formation came soon after a number of inquiries into the administration of Aboriginal affairs which criticised levels of accountability, failure to adequately assess the ability of Aboriginal people to engage in particular enterprises, and a widespread failure for grantees to comply with grant conditions (Sanders, 1993). These criticisms the strongly emphasised the issue of public accountability. When critics spoke of 'responsibilities', they did so in a manner that suggested primary responsibility was to the taxpayer, who are keen to see their money put to good use, rather than the nation 'responsible' or 'accountable' to the indigenous people of this country and their mistreatment so far.

In 1994, \$12 million was available to meet the need of \$170 million worth of assessed applications⁴. Furthermore, there are problems with prioritisation methods. The current system of prioritisation of purchase proposals is still subject to an assessment based on economic criteria. The system of prioritisation for land acquisition applications within ATSIC is based on a three tiered system. The first is at the regional council level, where 36 regional councils receive and prioritise applications and expressions of interest with a regional perspective. Secondly, these applications are reprioritised across regional councils with a state perspective, and thirdly, at a national level with a national perspective. Guidelines for the land acquisition and land management programs apply at all three levels of the decision making structure (refer to Appendix B). In the absence of a clearly defined policy framework, decisions are often politically driven rather than needs based. Ultimately, the needs of small, diverse groups is subject to criteria that is externally derived by government employees who are far removed from issues affecting the funding applicants.

ATSIC's Land Acquisition Program was preceded by the Commonwealth Capital Fund for Aboriginal Enterprises (CCFAE) and activities of the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission (ALFC). The development of ATSIC's Land Acquisition Program was based on the notion that Aboriginal people could gain economic power through replacing non-Aboriginal land owners and utilising rural land, hence reducing Aboriginal dependency. At

⁴ Personal communication, Russell Taylor, Manager, Land Division, ATSIC, May, 1995, Canberra.

the same time the Land Management Program aims to increase the effective utilisation of properties and increase community income, employment and standards of living (ATSIC, 1992). This economic criteria was further enhanced by the political caution regarding the contentious issue of using public funds to purchase land for Aboriginal people. Contention would be reduced if the funds were seen to be achieving economic self sufficiency. Misleadingly, ATSIC, largely due to its accountability, perceive economic self sufficiency as the first step in achieving Aboriginal self determination - a reflection of non-Aboriginal notions of Aboriginal self determination. This accountability factor, inherent in bureaucracies, superimposed on undefined notions of Aboriginal self determination, remains a barrier to Aboriginal land use aspirations.

This economic emphasis exists within a policy framework that is characterised by multiple objectives - to meet the economic, social, traditional and cultural needs of Aboriginal people. However, current priority order of proposal assessments governed by the accountability of ATSIC, does not adequately meet the non-economic needs of the people. The positioning of the program within ATSIC maintains this economic focus. The Land Acquisition and Land Management Programs are administered from the Division of Land and Economic Policy Research. Yet the program has a social and cultural component and is structurally located where these components may not be adequately addressed.

Shortcomings of ATSIC's reliance on economic criteria were identified in an impact evaluation of the Land Acquisition Program carried out in 1992 (ATSIC, 1992). Primary to the findings of the evaluation was the inherent impediments to the economic viability of Aboriginal pastoralism. The impact evaluation noted;

land purchased for remote Aboriginal communities was marginal to extremely marginal in value, and in a poor to badly degraded condition ... [and] unless there was to be a change of purpose to the use of the land purchased for Aboriginal communities, from economic to social or socio-

economic, the government would be required to provide significant financial inputs over extended periods (ATSIC, 1992: 11).

The inextricable relationship between Aboriginal culture and land is significant within the context of national goals of sustainability. This is also noted in the evaluation;

The attitudes that Aborigines have to land use are clearly compatible with the goals of sustainability and environmentally benign land use which are characteristic of this new milieu (ATSIC, 1992: 95).

The report also noted that within an unclear and potentially confusing policy framework;

Most existing Aboriginal land-holding communities also appear confused as to ATSIC's current expectations ... It is unlikely that [management information systems] are adequate to provide any clear basis for needs assessment, or more importantly for strategic development of this program which has been driven by issues such as the market availability of land and Aboriginal, Torres Strait, local and other politics (ATSIC, 1992: 3).

The issues raised in the evaluation support the notion that the avenue of Aboriginal multiple land use and freehold title appears an optimal outcome in terms of the cultural, social, environmental and economic well being of Aboriginal people living on their traditional lands. An assessment of this information implies that, within a self determination policy framework, the economic focus should be removed and a decision making process be allowed to evolve on Aboriginal properties.

ATSIC's construction of productivity and wealth as put forward in their programs is inherently non-Aboriginal. They render the wealth generated in the subsistence economy as invisible.

4.3.1 ATSIC's Land Acquisition and Land Management Programs

The inherent accountability factor within the operations of ATSIC are apparent in the *Land Acquisition and Management Guidelines* (ATSIC, 1995c) (refer to Appendix B). Within this context, ATSIC's accountability acts as a barrier to the principals of self determination of Aboriginal people aspiring to live on their traditional lands, aiming to meet a diversity of cultural, social, traditional, environmental, and economic needs. The document is riddled with contradictions that ultimately reveal the lack of clarity of the program highlighted by ATSIC in 1992.

Despite the project objective;

To enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities to acquire land for economic, traditional, social and or cultural purposes (ATSIC, 1995c: 1).

the guidelines go on to state;

The concept of economic sustainability will be important therefore be absolutely critical to funding decisions in relation to ATSIC funded land purchases and management. There will be a focus on viability and proposals should clearly show that property acquisitions :-

- *contribute significantly to economic development within the community; and*
- *be self sustaining and NOT require continued funding (ATSIC, 1995c: 1).*

An assessment of the guidelines for land management reveals the same economic and development focus where the project objective is;

To facilitate the efficient management, operation, and maintenance of properties owned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations or the Commission (ATSIC, 1995c: 2).

where non-economic criteria occur at the end of the priority list and are considered a priority area when "circumstances warrant special and urgent consideration" (ATSIC, 1995c: 2).

These guidelines merely pay lip service to the uniqueness and diversity of Aboriginal needs. It is widely recognised that Aboriginal pastoralism generally cannot be economically viable at the same time as being culturally and socially appropriate (refer to section 4.1.1). It has also been established that pastoral properties purchased for Aboriginal people tend to be in extremely poor condition and therefore require continued funding just to meet the needs of its population, let alone assure its economic viability. Yet guidelines for land acquisition maintain an economic focus. The categories of land management grant funding reveal a focus on economic and development land needs over and above environmental needs, with only one category out of a total of seven specifically related to environmental management. This is largely inadequate considering that land is the most central component to Aboriginal well-being, and that larger populations on pastoral properties are faced with environmental problems such as dust and waste disposal.

Ultimately, ATSIC guidelines for land acquisition and land management reflect a non-Aboriginal perspective of land, concerned more about continued funding requirements rather than non-economic needs. Through imposing non-Aboriginal notions of development, they place restrictions upon Aboriginal land use options. To follow the criteria provided by ATSIC is inefficient in terms of accountability and benefits to Aboriginal people. The above criteria essentially represents a major incompatibility with self determination policies.

With a strong relationship between self determination and multiple land use, this policy conflict spills over to impact upon the sustainable management of Aboriginal land. An economic focus is also incompatible with ESD criteria. Although the crux of ATSIC's goals and strategies lies with self determination and the well-being of Aboriginal people, given the relationship between Aboriginal well-being and land, a consideration of the environmental status of that land is vital. ATSIC's environment policy (ATSIC, 1994a) considers most aspects of Aboriginal land management needs, recognises that indigenous resource management is compatible with sustainability and outlines goals and strategies to meet these needs. Similarly, ATSIC's *Draft National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rural Industry Strategy* (1994b) recognises the priority of ESD. Both documents are however, limited to a policy format and makes no planning or funding commitment to environmental management. Nor does it review the environmental implications of its overall operations.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has established that Aboriginal pastoral properties are unlikely to operate at commercially viable levels as a result of the array of characteristics that disadvantage Aboriginal pastoral operations compared to non-Aboriginal operations. This chapter has also established that land use perceptions and aspirations are diverse and involve vastly different priorities and value systems compared to non-Aboriginal perspectives and aspirations. Furthermore, an assessment of the *Land Acquisition and Management Guidelines* illustrates the impact that public accountability has on the workings of ATSIC. Official policies regarding Aboriginal issues and programs of land acquisition and management are grounded in non-Aboriginal concepts of land, society and economics. Essentially, the economic focus of the Land Acquisition and Management Programs hinders Aboriginal land use aspirations as it favours potentially economically viable properties above others. It is ironic that in reality, the national goals of self determination

and ecological sustainability in the rangelands can best be met through Aboriginal multiple land use which requires minimal pressure from Aboriginal bureaucracies. However, the Land Acquisition and Management Programs within ATSIC are characterised by an overall emphasis on the economic dimensions of Aboriginal land ownership at the expense of cultural, traditional, social, and environmental needs. This apparent neglect of Aboriginal value systems stems from the 'top-down' approach (refer to Appendix A) taken by ATSIC. Ultimately, this attempt at meeting Aboriginal land needs and achieving self determination through land acquisition is inconsistent with Aboriginal values and aspirations and is therefore limited in its effect. The establishment of the ILC and its eventual administration of the land acquisition and the land management programs of ATSIC provides an optimal opportunity to rework and meet more of the land management needs of the Aboriginal population.

CHAPTER FIVE:

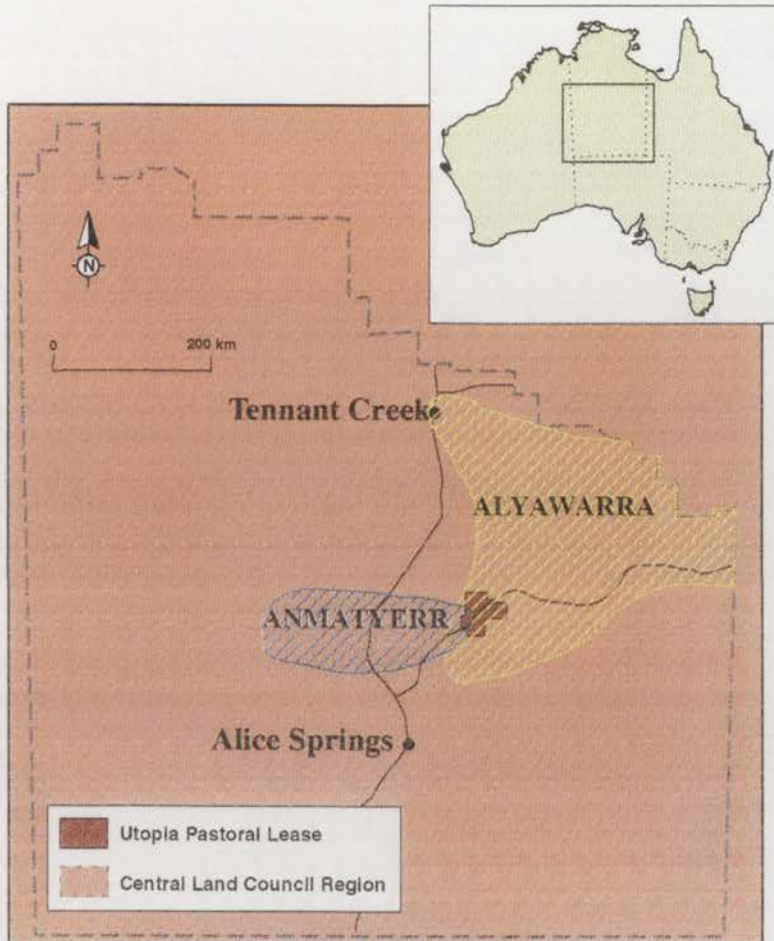
MULTIPLE LAND USE AT UTOPIA

5. *MULTIPLE LAND USE AT UTOPIA*

The land use history of Utopia Pastoral Lease provides an example of the shift from an old regime of pastoralism to one of multiple land use. Furthermore, this case study illustrates the complexity of Aboriginal and pastoral relationships; challenges facing Aboriginal pastoralism; the diversity of Aboriginal land use aspirations; the unsustainability of the property in regards to pastoralism; and reveals a community structure that is not compatible with the structure favoured by bureaucracies responsible for service provision. Utopia is one of the first properties to move from a pastoral regime to one of Aboriginal land use and is in a more advanced stage of community development compared to many of its neighbouring properties. Its tendency to meet the broad land needs of Aboriginal people has been widely recognised (Young, 1988d; Rose, 1995; Commonwealth of Australia, 1987). Yet, this tendency is not acknowledged in the functioning of current land acquisition and land management programs nor the external management and administration of the communities on Utopia. Since it is a property with the longest history of Aboriginal title in the region, it represents the diversity of Aboriginal land needs and demonstrates a way in which they can be met. Therefore, it is a good point of study in terms of the future means by which the government policies aim to meet the land needs of Aboriginal people.

This chapter will outline the pastoral history of Utopia Pastoral Lease and consider recent community decentralisation in light of multiple land use and Aboriginal land use aspirations. The physical environment of Utopia will be discussed in terms of its pastoral suitability and future sustainability. A discussion of bureaucratic barriers to Aboriginal land use aspirations will follow. Lastly, a consideration of a small community on Utopia will illustrate one specific approach to multiple land use. This chapter argues that the case of Utopia holds lessons for bureaucratic approaches to meeting Aboriginal land use aspirations.

The case study area lies on traditional land of the Alyawarra and Anmatyerr language groups and is now known as Angarapa Land Trust¹. Utopia pastoral lease was purchased in 1976 and an application under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act (Northern Territory) 1976* was lodged in November 1978. Utopia is 1963 square kilometres and is situated approximately 200 kilometres north-east of Alice Springs (refer to Map 5.1).



Source: Adapted from CLC, 1994 and Hobson, 1985.

Map 5.1: Location of Utopia Pastoral Lease and Alyawarra and Anmatyerr Language Regions.

¹ The name Utopia is still used by local people and by local organisations and in this thesis refers to the area shown in Map 5.3.

5.1 UTOPIA LAND USE HISTORY

The land of Utopia fell under the pastoral regime in 1926 (Westcott and Associates, 1995), a time much later than the more suitable lands elsewhere in the country. This means that the Anmatyerr and Alyawarra people of the region were subject to cultural imposition at a later stage and for a shorter period. The policy of assimilation, effective from the 1930s to the 1960s saw a further breaking down of the traditional economy under "the pressure of institutionalisation, enforced schooling, cultural domination and manipulation and economic dependency" (Thiele, 1982: 4). However, these specific trends were absent in the area around Utopia Pastoral Lease². The first school did not arrive until 1969. In the 1970s when the Alyawarra and Anmatyerr were granted their traditional lands they did not have to engage in a process of de-institutionalisation as other such properties have. Typical of numerous pastoral areas, the pastoralist had taken on the role of administration on behalf of the state. Traditional activities were not prevented but were impacted upon through limited access to lands, labour demands of the pastoralist, and environmental impacts from pastoral activities. The nature of non-Aboriginal pastoralism further allowed them to remain on their traditional land and continue with cultural practices as they provided labour and knowledge to the pastoralists. Therefore, these people were in a better position to reassert their tradition and culture and meet their own needs when they were eventually granted land rights.

In 1965 the lease was transferred from Alexander Henry McLeod to Charles Malcolm Chalmers and Rose Anna Chalmers. The Chalmers surrendered an area of 426 hectares in the south western corner of the pastoral lease in 1974 and by 1976 expressed interest in transferring the lease to the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission for \$150, 000 (Wescott and Associates, 1995). An area of 1540 square kilometres north of the property was the subject of land claim in 1978 and became Alyawarra Aboriginal Land Trust adjoining the northern boundary of Utopia (refer to Map 5.3). Atnwengerrpe Aboriginal Land Trust on

² Personal communication, Toly Sawenko, Coordinator, Land Management, Central Land Council, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

Ammaroo pastoral lease adjoins the north eastern boundary of Utopia. In addition, the owner of Artartinga Pastoral Lease granted an excision with an outstation known as Mulga Bore (refer to Map 5.3).

At the time of purchase the property was in very poor condition. The land claim notes;

When the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission acquired Utopia, a bangtail muster showed there were about 3010 cattle, with virtually no bullocks or heavy steers suitable for southern markets but with a large number of 10-month to 2-year old steers. Yards and watering points were in a 'shocking condition', with most of the internal fencing 'beyond repair' (Toohey, 1980: 7).

Evidence suggests that the former pastoralists, the Chalmers, had poor management and poor maintenance of their land in the years previous to a sale to the ALFC (Pastoral Inspector's Report, 1975). By 1980, after four years of Aboriginal ownership and partial bureaucratic management, conditions had remained much the same. An inspection prior to the conversion of the property noted;

The lease condition in respect of maintenance is not being complied with. All internal fencing is in urgent need of maintenance and much of it has deteriorated to such an extent that it is of no value in its present state. Maintenance is also urgently required on several bores ... It is doubtful if the required number of 1895 head would be on the lease (Pastoral Inspector's Report, 1975).

In the early stages of Aboriginal ownership, cattle operations were run under the Angarapa Cattle Company Pty Ltd, largely the initiative of the DAA. Following a vision of pastoralism and economic self sufficiency, Aboriginal administration efforts directed operations into a system that many observers now recognise as being culturally and

socially inappropriate (CLC, 1992; DPP, 1983). The establishment of the cattle company saw the employment of a non-Aboriginal manager and the consultancy services of an agricultural management firm, which was dismissed soon after in 1977 followed by the resignation of the manager. Up to 1980, the DAA injected large amounts by which time sales were only able to meet credit payments. At this stage funding was in the hands of the ADC who insisted that the viability of the project be assured before funding would be granted. However, the structures for a cattle company on Utopia were inappropriate from the beginning³. A lack of social cohesion regarding the operation of one large company saw the break up of the cattle herd into four distinct operations run by separate people with separate brands (Toohey, 1980: 8).

5.1.1 Community Decentralisation

The decentralisation of Utopia began with the breakdown of the Angarapa Cattle Company in 1977. The first few years saw the emergence of a traditional community structure, adapted to both traditional and non-traditional land uses. The initially large central community developed according to clan groups into five camps separated by about 100 to 200 metres. These groups were known as the Alparra, Uriltja, Atilia, Atargita, and Allalgara people (Toohey, 1980: 7). Cattle operations were seen to be secondary to the more traditional and cultural aspects of the hand back. These groups perceived their land ownership to be a social base rather than a business asset (Young, 1988d). One large scale cattle enterprise utilising the whole property was inappropriate and impossible to manage in traditional terms. Cattle operations subsequently split into four separate operations according to traditional land connections. Limited funding coupled with the absence of suitable management and a limited social commitment to cattle work, cattle

³ Personal communication, Toly Sawenko, Coordinator, Land Management, Central Land Council, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

numbers declined. Decentralisation was ultimately a part of the Aboriginalisation⁴ of Utopia in which traditional structures were reasserted over the land.

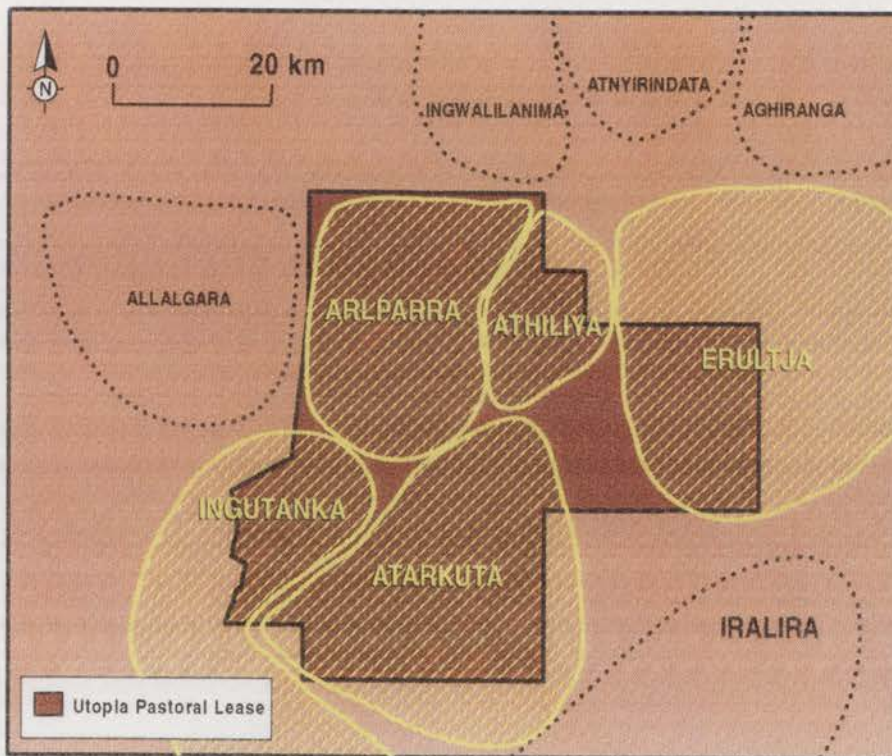
The decentralisation was also a result of the gradual return of people living marginal lives on pastoral excisions and in town camps to traditional land. At the time of repatriation the Anmatyerre and Alyawarra landowners numbered about 400 people. After the land was handed back there was a dramatic increase in population as people from surrounding areas took up residence. By 1981 the population was around 800 people (Devitt, 1988). This reflects the homelands movement occurring over much of the country (HRSCAA, 1987).

There exists a conscious effort to maintain this decentralisation, despite efforts of the relevant bureaucracies favouring a more centralised system of service provision and administration. The decentralised community structure of Utopia is necessary in order for its residents to meet their cultural needs and traditional responsibility. This structure is however, incompatible with the preferred centralised systems of mainstream bureaucracies, and therefore, maintains a barrier to these systems. Ultimately, this barrier from the administration has contributed to a level of self determination for its residents.

Soon after purchase, it was clear that the property was not going to be a viable cattle enterprise and that the priority within the communities was to 'Aboriginalise' the landscape. The application for land claim of Utopia Pastoral Lease was lodged on behalf of the traditional owners by the Central Land Council on 20 November 1978. It was not until May 1981, after various Northern Territory Government attempts to delay or prevent the claim, that the land under Utopia Pastoral Lease was handed back to the traditional owners. Utopia became the first pastoral lease to be successfully claimed by Aboriginal people (CLC, 1994b).

⁴ Personal communication, Toly Sawenko, Coordinator, Land Management, Central Land Council, June, 1995, Alice Springs.

Utopia's decentralised structure is directly related to the cultural structure of the land owners. Utopia pastoral lease covers the land of five patriclans. A patriclan is a group of persons tracing their descent in a male line from a common ancestor or ancestors (Toohey, 1980). In the land claim these were identified as Ingutanka, Atarkuta, Athiliya, Alparra, and Erultja. Map 5.2. shows the regions that these patriclans are responsible for. Each patriclan has specific responsibilities to care for the land of their particular area.



Source: Adapted from Toohey, 1980.

Map 5.2: Traditional Regions of the Five Patriclans on Utopia Pastoral Lease.

The Land Claim notes the division of patriclans into parts where responsibility for the 'complete patriclan estate' is described as Level II country and the responsibility for smaller component parts known as Level I countries (Toohey, 1980: 9). The responsibility of the five land holding patriclans on Utopia Pastoral Lease have been summarised as follows;

- Ingutanka is a Level II country occupying the south-western part of the property and extends to adjoining properties, comprising two Level I countries; Ingutanka, a site on the Sandover River and Alkukatji, a site on the Waite River lease south-west of Utopia.
- Atarkuta is not divided into Level I countries, lies to the north-east of Ingutanka and extends to Delmore Downs and Macdonald Downs.
- Athiliya is not divided into Level I countries, lies in the north-eastern corner of the property and extends to Ammaroo.
- Arlparra is not divided into Level I countries, lies in the north-western section of the property.
- Erultja is a Level II country occupying the eastern part of the property and extends into Ammaroo and Derry Downs, comprising two Level I countries; Erultja, within Ammaroo and Anungerapa.

(Source: Toohey, 1980)

Utopia land claim was the first to include kurtingurla as traditional owners with responsibilities to the land. "Kurtingurla are the children of the female members of the patriclan. A man's kurtingurla will be his sisters' sons and daughters together with his own daughters' children. A woman's kurtingurla will be her own sons and daughters together with her brothers' daughters' children" (Toohey, 1980: 5). The kurtingurla have particular functions that include holding knowledge, teaching, bearing witness, punishing, caring for and protecting and to work for country (Toohey, 1980: 13-14). This marked an important recognition of the complex Aboriginal system of land management. The movement is dictated by traditional responsibilities according to patriclan. Furthermore,

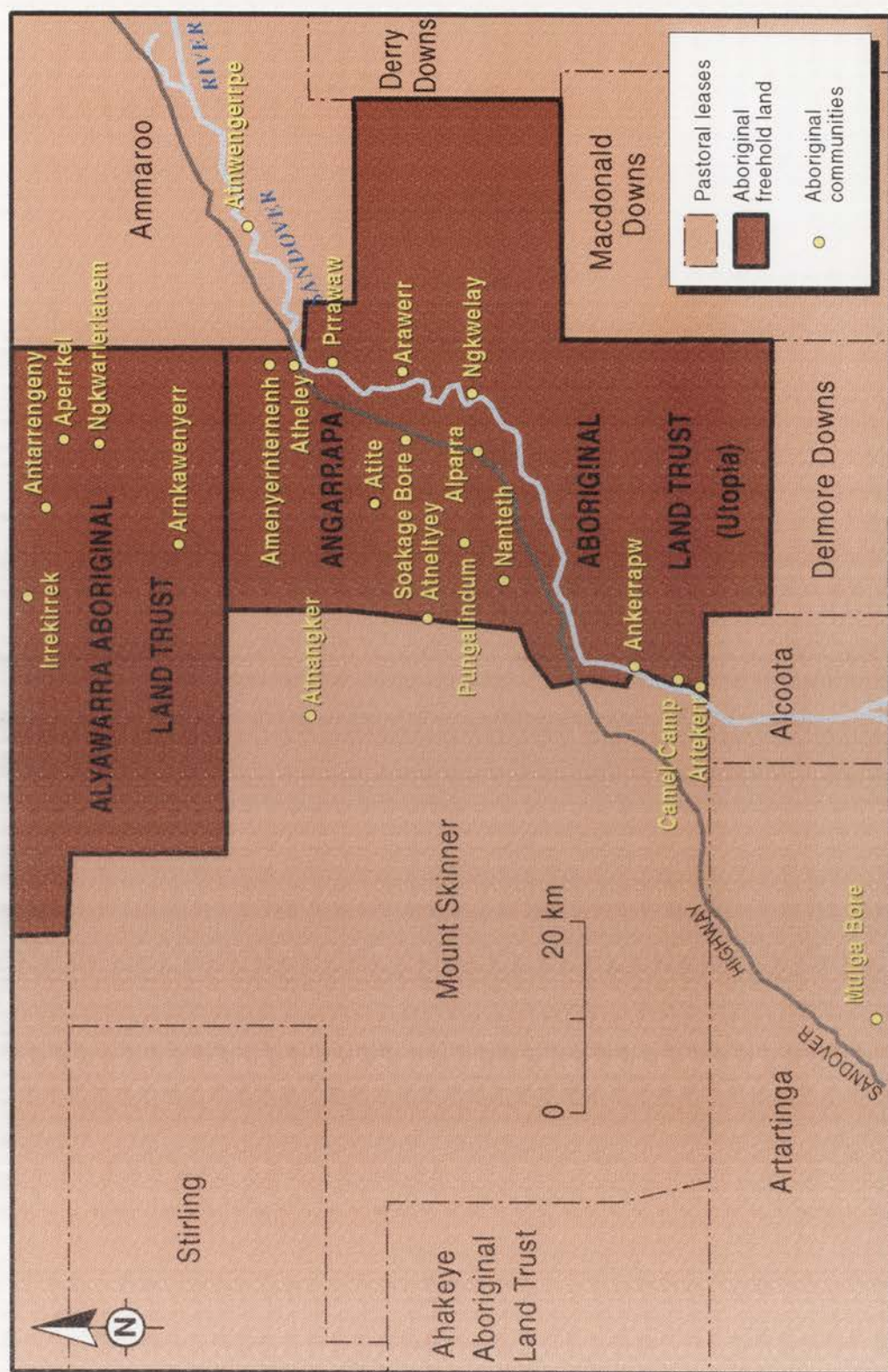
the role of the kurtingurla has also been maintained further revealing their strength of culture and commitment to traditional responsibilities. This case study also illustrates the importance of land to Aboriginal people. These people were relatively free of institutional dominance and therefore maintained a strong connection with the land. However, as they were faced with problems as pastoralism impacted upon their lifestyle, contemporary cultural connections with the land reveals the strength of their culture.

The land claim was a formal recognition of the role of Aboriginal people to care for their country through their traditional responsibilities to particular tracts of land and to sacred sites. Evidence given for the land claim demonstrated a large number of sites within the claim area. The number of sites and the intensity of their distribution varied where a higher number and intensity tended to reflect better country, particularly along the Sandover River, and a lower number and intensity of sites reflected the relative aridity of the sandhill country (Toohey, 1980: 10).

The management of sacred sites is comparable to that aspired to by promoters of ESD in which ecologically productive areas are given conservation priority. For land users who are also land owners and land managers, cultural relationships with the land equals the sentiment that is required of non-Aboriginal society in order to achieve long term ecological sustainability. The cultural responsibility to care for country demonstrated by the people living on and around the former pastoral lease is consisted with ideals of sustainable land management. However, faced with new problems such as dust from motor cars, changing land uses, increasing populations and feral animals, the role of Aboriginal bureaucracies and independent organisations must be to provide education, resources and support for Aboriginal land management. The failure to do so may hinder the future sustainability of Aboriginal lands. Crucial to this challenge is the development of new organisational structures to deliver services and infrastructure.

The decentralised community structure of Utopia is presently made up of 23 communities, 16 of which are established outstations. These communities are administered under the

Urapuntja Council. The Urapuntja Council and the Urapuntja Health Service support the decentralised structure of Utopia and aim to reflect the needs of the community members. The Urapuntja Council administers the health service and is basically responsible for financial and budgetary situation of the community. Essentially, the Council is the official organisation for the community in its dealings with the mainstream bureaucracies, namely ATSIC and various departments of the Northern Territory Government.



Source: Adapted from CLC, 1994.

Map 5.3: Location of Communities in Case Study Area.

5.2 MULTIPLE LAND USE ON UTOPIA

The unique and diverse land use aspirations of the people living in the case study area have largely been met through multiple land use. Current land uses include small scale pastoralism, art and craft production, traditional hunting and gathering, and residence. Potential land on such land uses include tourism and mining. Through multiple land use people are able to meet their cultural needs with limited restrictions to ceremonies and access to sites; their social needs as they exercise self determination; their environmental needs as they care for sacred sites; and their economic needs as they merge traditional subsistence hunting and gathering with enterprises. The communities are characterised by people that make their own decisions regarding land use and organise their own social and cultural world. A further social benefit for the residents at Utopia has been the successful policy of no alcohol (Devitt, 1988).

Aboriginal multiple land use incorporates a number of land uses that directly relate to the needs of Aboriginal people. These have been summarised according to the needs they address (refer to Table 5.1).

Multiple land use is not confined to Aboriginal lands. It is progressively being realised as an alternative to large scale pastoralism. Non-Aboriginal owners of pastoral leases are expressing interest in alternative activities and are mounting pressure for a restructuring of the lease tenure system⁵ (Purvis, 1986). Aboriginal land use is at the forefront of current change in the rangelands.

⁵ Personal communication, Elspeth Young, Director, Graduate Studies in Environmental Management and Development, National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University, May, 1995, Canberra.

NEEDS:	ECONOMIC	SOCIAL	CULTURAL	TRADITIONAL	ENVIRONMENTAL
Met through:	HUNTING AND GATHERING				
	PASTORALISM				
				MOSAIC BURNING	
	RESIDENCE				
	ART AND CRAFT PRODUCTION				
	MINING				
	TOURISM				
		SACRED SITE MANAGEMENT			
		CEREMONIES			

Source: field research, June, 1995, Alice Springs and Utopia.

Table 5.1: Aboriginal land uses summarised according to Aboriginal needs and aspirations on former pastoral properties.

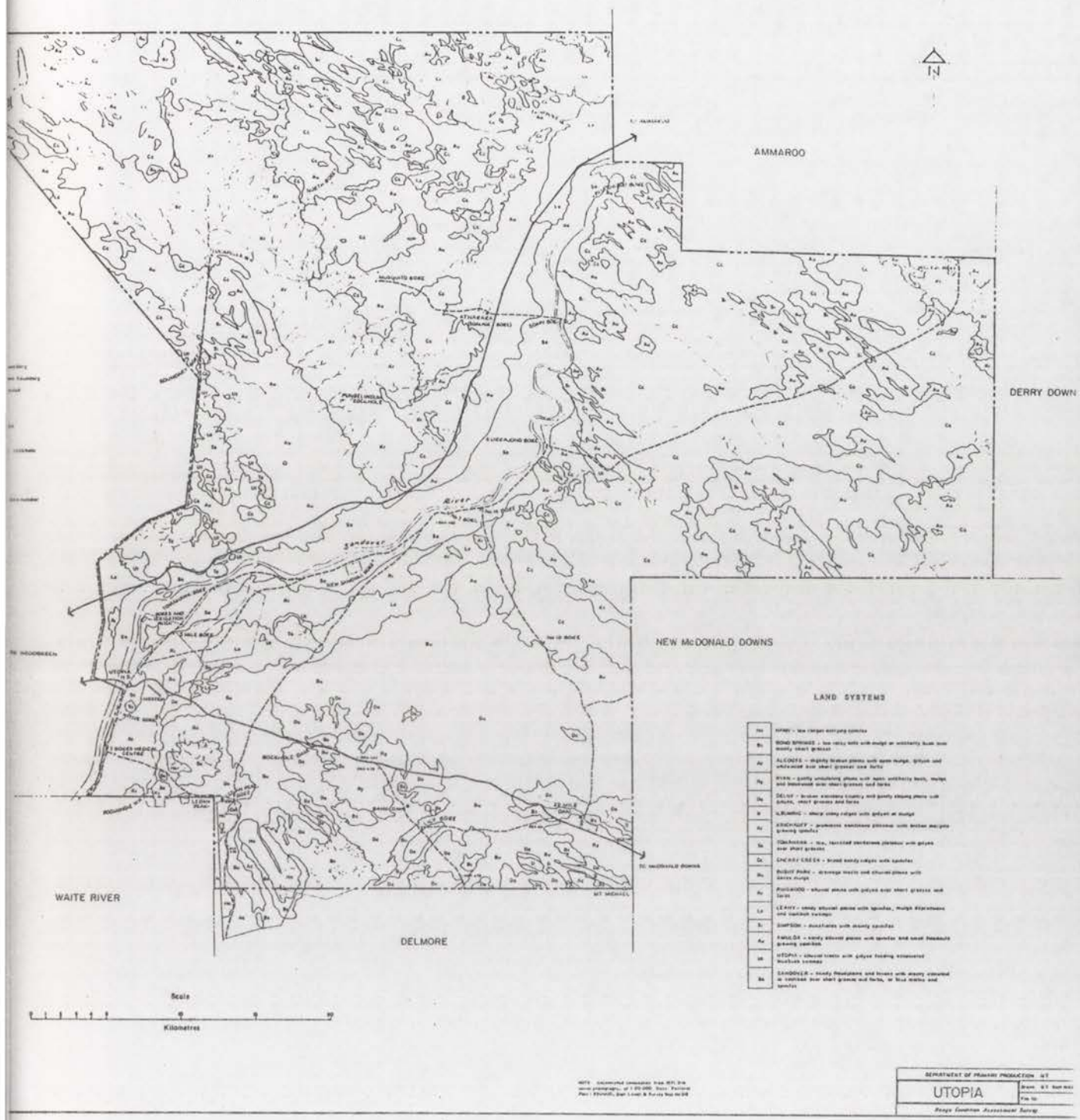
5.3 THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Land is the central component of Aboriginal traditional, social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing. It is therefore, essential that any consideration of Utopia and its potential to meet the needs of its Aboriginal residents centres on land resources and the planned utilisation of such resources. The initial bureaucratic assumption that the property would provide a base for a viable cattle enterprise has proved inappropriate in the prevailing social environment. Furthermore, a consideration of the physical environment of Utopia reveals that it is unsuitable to pastoralism compared to other properties in the region. It remains necessary to assess the land in terms of the multiple land uses that will impact on the environment.

The physical environment of Utopia is typical of Central Australia. It is spatially and temporarily variable in terms of vegetation, soils, and landforms making for a diverse

range of localised environments. Because rainfall is low and variable, people rely on traditional means of accessing water through soaks, rockholes, waterholes and trees (Devitt, 1988) as well as relying on bores. Annual temperatures range from freezing in the winter nights to heights of 45°C in the summer days. Devitt (1988) notes that extreme high temperatures coincided with times of reduced foraging that took place in the late afternoons, if at all. Similarly, in winter, activities would not begin until mid morning when temperatures were warmer. Winds are predominantly from the south east and humpies or wind breaks are built accordingly.

The most comprehensive study of Utopia's physical environment was carried out in the early 1980s by the Department of Primary Production (DPP, 1983). It was carried out within the context of pastoral use but also considers the socio-cultural environment. The report identified 16 land unit categories on Utopia Pastoral Lease. Each land unit is considered in terms of their condition, grazing capacity, management hazards and recommended land uses. Overall Utopia was not considered to be of primary pastoral quality. The carrying capacity was assessed to be 2080 in a 'normal' year and 1000 in a 'drought' year. Such figures are far from optimal in terms of economies of scale. The results and conclusions of this work are summarised in Map 5.4 and Table 5.2.



Map 5.4: Land units of Utopia Pastoral Lease.

<i>LAND UNIT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION</i>	<i>Krichauff (Kr)</i>	<i>Tomohawk (To)</i>	<i>Cherry Creek (Cc)</i>	<i>Delny (De)</i>
	Bold sandstone plateaux with deeply dissected margins and minor valley floors in central northern part of the station. 132 square kilometres.	Sandstone Hills with plateaux peaks and hill slope terraces with stony surfaces north of the homesteads. 16 square kilometres.	Sand covered ridges with minor sandstone out crop growing predominantly spinifex. 483 square kilometres.	Broken and dissected country with gidgee woodlands predominant and minor creeks and watercourses in the southern part of the property. 53.1 square kilometres.
<i>CONDITION</i>	Degradation in small areas particularly in the vicinity of larger waterholes.	Range condition good due to limited cattle use.	Range condition good. Little pastoral value, potential drought reserve. Abundance of bushtucker.	Fair condition, perennial grasses lost, palatable annual grasses have declined, weedy plant invasion, minor rilling, moderate wind sheeting, and extensive erosion of watercourses due to past overgrazing.
<i>LAND USES:</i>				
<i>Carrying capacity</i>	1.5 head per square kilometre.	3.2 to 4.8 head per square kilometre.	1.6 to 2.4 head per square kilometre.	6.4 to 9.7 head per square kilometre.
<i>Pastoral Hazard</i>	Slight hazard.	Slight hazard.	Negligible hazard.	Moderate hazard.
<i>Community</i>	Negligible hazard.	Negligible hazard.	Negligible hazard.	Negligible hazard.
<i>Roads and tracks</i>	High hazard.	Moderate hazard.	Negligible hazard.	Moderate hazard.
<i>fire</i>	Negligible hazard.	Negligible hazard.	Negligible hazard.	Slight hazard.

Source: adapted from DPP, 1983

Table 5.1: Condition and relative land use hazards according to land classification on Utopia.

<i>LAND UNIT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION</i>	<i>Ryan (Ry)</i>	<i>Bushy Park (Bu)</i>	<i>Ringwood (Ri)</i>	<i>Leahy (Le)</i>
	Very productive gently undulating plains with granite tors and domes between Rockhole, 22 Mile Dam and New MacDonald Downs. 16.1 square kilometres.	Mulga woodland on stable level to slightly undulating red earth plains. 161 square kilometres.	Stable alluvial plains growing gidyea adjacent to the homestead and 3 Mile Bore. 32.2 square kilometres.	Land unit is characterised by sand plains, dunes, swamps. 35.4 square kilometres.
<i>CONDITION</i>	Fair condition. Problems include; perennial grasses replaced by wire grasses, decline in mulga and woollybut grasses, potential woody weed infestation, mulga productivity decline, virtual exclusion of palatable perennial grasses due to stocking.	Degradation due to wild fire. Degradation within three kilometres of water due to cattle. Hazards associated with pastoralism include; productivity decline with overstocking, accelerated wind sheeting in drought.	Fair condition. Degradation has included; declined productivity of gidyea woodlands, decline in abundance of palatable perennial and annual grasses, wind sheeting and drift. Serious erosion persists due to past damage.	Good condition due to light grazing. Swamps are heavily grazed therefore potential damage to palatable species.
<i>LAND USES:</i>				
<i>Carrying capacity</i>	3.2 to 12.8 per square kilometre.	2.4 to 5.6 per square kilometre.	3.2 to 8.1 per square kilometre.	1.6 to 4 per square kilometre.
<i>Pastoralism</i>	High hazard.	Slight hazard.	High hazard.	Negligible hazard.
<i>Community</i>	Negligible Hazard.	Negligible hazard.	High hazard. Problems include dust, population pressures.	Negligible hazard.
<i>Roads and tracks</i>	Moderate Hazard.	Negligible hazard.	High hazard.	Negligible hazard.
<i>Fire</i>	Moderate Hazard.	Moderate hazard.	Moderate hazard.	

Source: adapted from DPP, 1983

Table 5.1 continued: Condition and relative land use hazards according to land classification on Utopia.

<i>LAND UNIT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION</i>	<i>Simpson (Si)</i>	<i>Sandover (Sa)</i>	<i>Amulda (Au)</i>	<i>Utopia (Ut)</i>
	Near parallel sand dunes and swales which grow predominantly spinifex. 19.3 square kilometres.	Sandy river plains adjacent to Sandover River. 92 square kilometres.	Spinifex sand plains, distributary creeks and floodouts adjacent to sandstone ranges or sandy ridges. 259 square kilometres.	Alluvial fans, drainage depressions and channels flooding out into bluebush swamps at the base of adjacent ranges. 4.8 square kilometres.
<i>CONDITION</i>	Good condition. Little pastoral value. Rich in traditional foods.	Fair condition. Past overgrazing has lead to decline in perennial grasses, windsheeting and scalding, woodlands are susceptible to wind erosion.	Good condition with limited grazing. The Mosquito Creek floodout is more productive and could be used for holding a small killer herd. Rich in traditional foods and raw materials for artefacts and shelters.	Condition ranges from good/excellent to poor/fair depending on grazing intensity and distance from water.
<i>LAND USES:</i>				
<i>Carrying capacity</i>	1.6 to 2.4 per square kilometre.	3.2 to 9.7 per square kilometre.	2.4 to 4.8 per square kilometre.	8.1 to 22.5 per square kilometre.
<i>Pastoral Hazard</i>	Negligible hazard.	Severe hazard.	Minor hazard.	Moderate hazard.
<i>Community</i>	Negligible hazard.	Slight hazard.	Minor hazard.	Negligible hazard.
<i>Roads and tracks</i>	Negligible hazards. Subject to sand drift.	Severe hazard.	Medium hazard.	Minor hazard.
<i>Fire</i>	Negligible.	Moderate hazard.	Minor Hazard.	Moderate hazard.

Source: adapted from DPP, 1983

Table 5.1 continued: Condition and relative land use hazards according to land classification on Utopia.

<i>LAND UNIT</i>	<i>Bond Springs (Bs)</i>	<i>Ibumeric (Ii)</i>	<i>Hann (Hn)</i>	<i>Alcoota</i>
<i>DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION</i>	Low hills of metamorphic rock. 25.8 square kilometres.	Small areas of low sandstone, quartzite and siltstone ranges found in the southern part of the station.	Low quartzite and conglomerate ranges and sandy footslopes dominated by spinifex in the southern part of the station. 8.1 kilometres.	
<i>CONDITION</i>			Excellent range condition.	
<i>LAND USES:</i>				
<i>Carrying capacity</i>	4.8 to 6.4 per square kilometre.	3.2 per square kilometre.	1.6 per square kilometre.	4.8 to 16.1 per square kilometre.
<i>Pastoral Hazard</i>		Minor hazard.		
<i>Community</i>		Negligible hazard.		
<i>Roads and tracks</i>				
<i>Fire</i>		Minor hazard.		

Source: adapted from DPP, 1983

Table 51 continued: Condition and relative land use hazards according to land classification on Utopia.

The classification system reveals the complexity and diversity of land resources in Central Australia. The information given in Table 5.2 reveals that degradation has occurred as a result of past over grazing on the property in the form of erosion, plant loss, and overall reduced productivity. Degradation is however, only considered in the context of its effect on pastoral productivity. Loss of biodiversity and damage to sacred sites is not considered. To gain a clearer perspective of the figures for carrying capacity it is necessary to note that drought figures apply to two dry summers and if drought conditions persist, figures should be lowered further. In the variable climate of Central Australia, drought frequently exceeds two years (DPP, 1983).

The land under Utopia Pastoral Lease was used for pastoral activities for about 50 years and was subject to land degradation and a reduction in pasture productivity (DPP, 1983). The recovery in rangeland condition noted in the few years preceding the DPP report and coinciding with Aboriginal ownership was equated to lower stocking numbers. It was recommended that for continued recovery, conservative stocking and summer spelling of pastures is necessary (DPP, 1983). As land uses have changed, where land had appeared to suffer from overgrazing in the pastoral regime, residents are now provided with bush tucker and game (Young, 1988d). In times of drought it has been noted that biodiversity at Utopia compares favourably with that of neighbouring cattle stations⁶.

The productive areas that suffered the most degradation correspond to the areas that contain the majority of sacred sites (Toohey, 1980) and receive the most care in terms of Aboriginal land management. The Aboriginal tendency towards multiple land use also corresponded to DPP recommendations.

A consideration of grazing capacities of the six main residing clan group areas reveals that the traditional lands of the Alparra people, the main group engaging in cattle enterprises, are "very poor" in terms of quality of pastoral land. The total grazing capacity of this area was assessed as being 231 to 390; hardly commercially viable. The land of the Angutinga

⁶Personal communication, Lesley Alford, Field Officer, Central Land Council, June, 1995, Darwin.

and Atarkata people is considered to be fair, Attilia people poor and Irultja and Allarga unsuitable for pastoral operations (DPP, 1983: 69) (refer to Map 5.2).

5.4 BARRIERS TO ABORIGINAL LAND USE ASPIRATIONS

The barriers to land use options at Utopia exceed those created by the physical environment. The manner in which residents at Utopia meet their unique and diverse land needs is subject to dominance and manipulation on the behalf of the non-Aboriginal administering structures. Apart from the overall problem of a lack of funding is the problem of inefficient and unsuitable funding for communities aiming to meet their own needs. Such problems create barriers and are incompatible with national policies of self determination.

In addition to the range of land uses under a multiple land use regime, properties such as Utopia are also the point of distribution of services and citizen entitlements such as social security payments. The bodies responsible for this allocation however prefer a centralised system of service provision. Through funding, bureaucracies exert a certain degree of control over remote, decentralised Aboriginal communities and are often criticised for their sheer inappropriateness⁷. A signpost of this sort of inappropriate allocation of resources is visibly obvious at the site of a large, unused basketball court resembling an aircraft hanger at a community on the highway, alongside people with limited supplies of food and water⁸.

Where the adapted traditional Aboriginal economy and the mainstream non-Aboriginal economy overlap, the Aboriginal one is dominated by non-Aboriginal administration and management. This is particularly so in the case of a decentralised community structure at Utopia. Added to limited services is challenges associated with remoteness and a lack of

⁷Personal communication, Toly Sawenko; Paul Mitchell, Jeannie Devitt, Jack Crosby, Patrick Sullivan, 1995.

⁸Field research observation, Utopia, June, 1995.

conformity within an imposed economic system. The financial problems facing the Urapuntja Council have been met by the recent appointment of a grant controller by ATSIC and the Office of Local Government is an external presence resented by the members of council. It is argued that the financial problems facing the region are a result of "government agencies continually under funding the community in an attempt to achieve full centralisation of the people and its services" (Wescott and Associates, 1995: 6).

5.5 THE ATITE MOB

The operations of the Atite people provide an example of a killer herd within a multiple land use regime. Many Aboriginal people living on Utopia have a strong connection with pastoral activities and the dominance of multiple land use has not meant the exclusion of pastoral activities. The Atite mob are part of the Alparra patriclan whose traditional country is in the north-western corner of the property. These people had a strong relationship with the former pastoral regime, are highly skilled in cattle work and have aspirations for a small killer herd to provide employment, fresh meat and extra income in good years. In 1977, the Alparra people spurred the decentralisation of the cattle enterprise as they moved their cattle operations along with most of the resources to Soakage Bore and dominated the cattle enterprises on the property.

The Atite community moved back to their homelands as Utopia continued to decentralise. With limited funding and without external pressure they were left to their own devices. The decision to establish a small scale cattle operation was made by traditional owners and required the consultation of all traditional owners of the area (CLC, 1992). The committee of the Atite Cattle Aboriginal Corporation currently consists of six traditional owners. It is important for such an operation not to disturb the traditional country of neighbouring communities. New fencing, using the old fencing material, therefore has followed traditional boundaries.

The land resources at Atite are generally poor for cattle and comprise some of the most limiting resources of the region (refer to Plate 5.1). During its non-Aboriginal ownership, it is believed that this area was used as a reserve areas only in times of drought⁹. However, the Atite people are restricted to run cattle on this area due to cultural ties to land and a priority of cultural sustainability. At present the corporation is in the process of designing and building necessary infrastructure, particularly a cattle yard with the support of the CLCs pastoral unit (refer to Plate 5.3). Current operations involve the mustering of feral cattle and horses for stock work and sale.

The size of the Atite herd coincides with the recommendations of the DPP land capability study (DPP, 1983). The carrying capacity for the Atite operation has been assessed as 128 head of cattle in drought season and 181 in normal season (CLC, 1992). Cattle operations are balanced with other land uses. The area also provides a place of residence, cultural activities, and bush tucker. The traditional owners have an extensive knowledge of flora and fauna in the area. In field research at the community, Louis Purla, the Public Officer of the Atite Cattle Aboriginal Corporation, identified numerous sources of bushtucker on a track to a bore (refer to Plate 5.3). At the same time parts of the country that were good for cattle were noted, as were those areas that had been burned to allow for vegetation growth.

⁹ Personal communication, Paul Mitchell, Pastoral Unit Coordinator, CLC, June, 1995, Alice Springs and Utopia.



Plate 5.1: The landscape of the Atite land. Paul Mitchell, Pastoral Unit Coordinator and Louis Purla, Public Officer, Atite Cattle Aboriginal Corporation are standing in front of a Kurrajong tree.



Plate 5.2: More landscape of the Atite land. Louis Purla is showing *alyitjerong*¹⁰ (woollybut), used for bush tucker and feed for cattle.

¹⁰ Approximate spelling of local Aboriginal language.

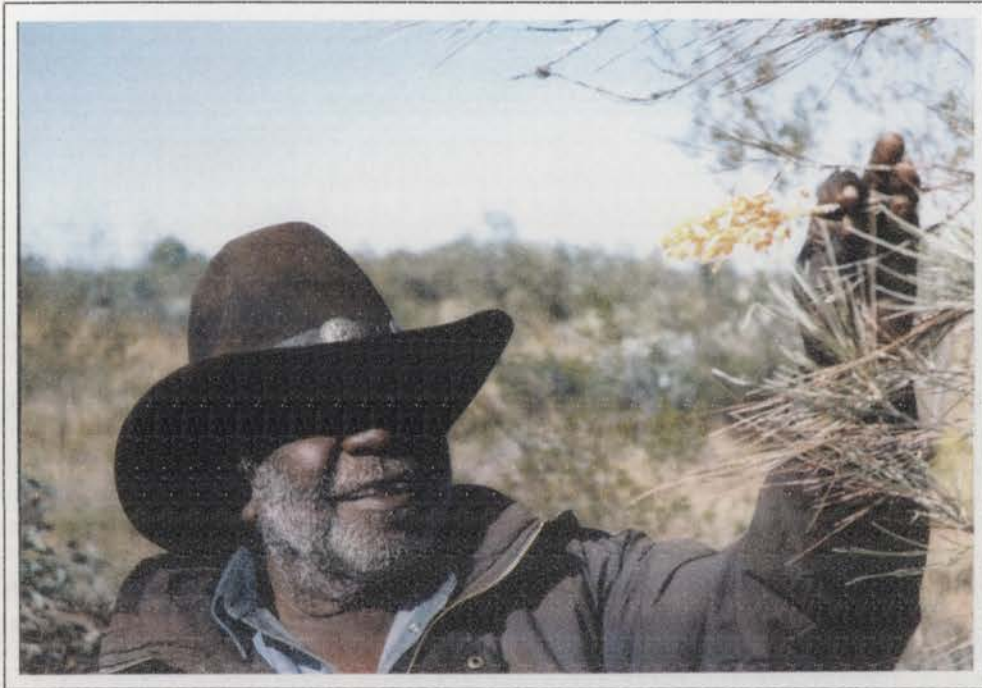


Plate 5.3: Louis Purla showing *zarakata*¹¹ (Honey Grevillea). Honey can be sucked from the flower.

¹¹ Approximate spelling of local Aboriginal language.

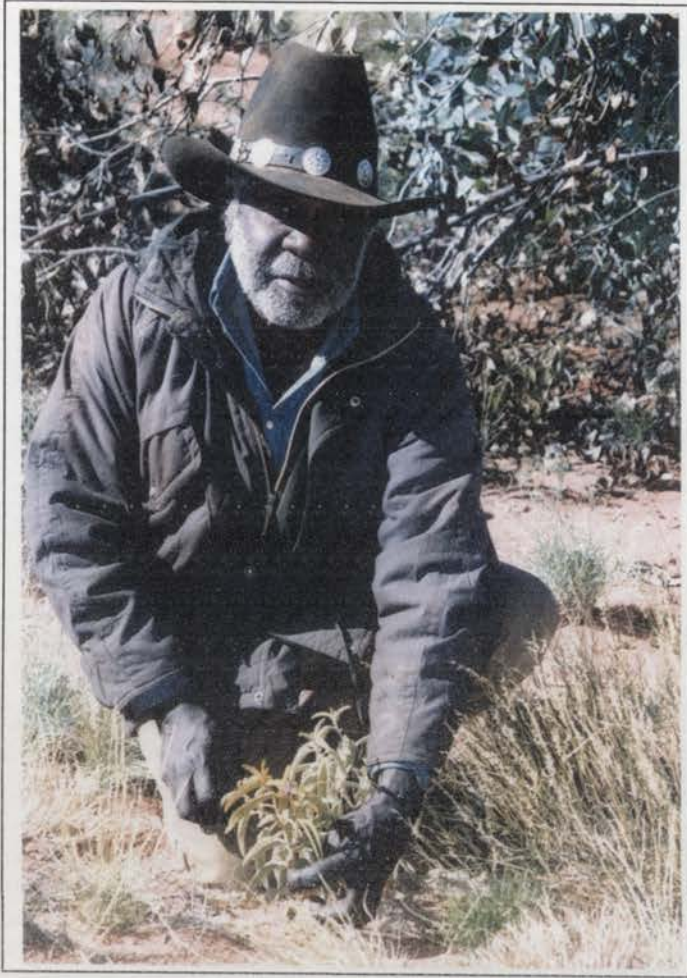


Plate 5.4: Louis Purla showing *akajira*¹² (bush tomato).

¹² Approximate spelling of local Aboriginal language.

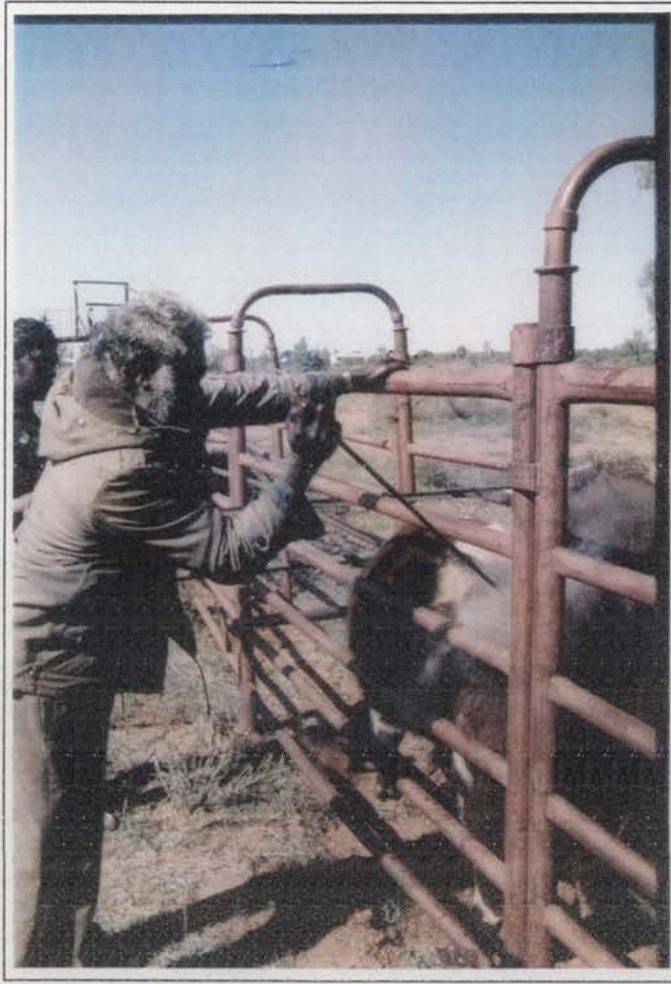


Plate 5.5: Louis Purla branding cattle.

The operations at Atite reflect the priorities of the traditional owners. A strong involvement in the pastoral industry and expertise in cattle work has contributed to the aspirations of the people of this community. At the same time their cultural priorities dictate the limits to their operation and they are aware of the need to prevent their operations impacting on the land uses of nearby communities. The Atite mob combine traditional knowledge with skills gained in the pastoral industry within a multiple land use framework. This land use system is ultimately an expression of self determination. Secondly, it falls within the recommendations for sustainability (DPP, 1983; CLC, 1992).

The traditional owners of Utopia inherited a property with run down services and suffering land degradation as a result of over fifty years of overestimated carrying capacities. The land use trends at Utopia also reveal the introduction of new problems such as dust problems associated with cars and roads. To manage these problems the future environmental and cultural sustainability of Aboriginal lands like Utopia will be dependent on education, support and the adaptation of the bureaucracies to the unique needs of remote dwelling Aboriginal populations. This necessary land management must be a result of community level decision making with support and education.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The case of Utopia illustrates the way in which Aboriginal people are aiming to meet their unique and diverse land use aspirations. Multiple land use has been the vehicle through which Aboriginal people have achieved a degree of self determination. Furthermore, multiple land use has allowed the land to recover from past over grazing and is therefore more suited to the variable physical environment. This direction in land use is being hindered on other properties as the bureaucracies place greater value on economic criteria when assessing applications for funding. In order to assure Aboriginal self determination and ecological sustainability in the rangelands, Aboriginal bureaucracies need to move away from their current focus on narrowly defined commercial factors, and take on a

responsive rather than dictatorial role of monitoring and supporting Aboriginal land management. It has been established that Aboriginal people decentralised for traditional and cultural reasons and that a large scale approach to pastoralism was socially inappropriate.

CHAPTER SIX:

CONCLUSION

6.1 SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS

This thesis has examined the land use transition from an old regime of pastoralism to a regime of multiple land use in Central Australia. In particular this thesis examined the relationship between multiple land use as practiced by Aboriginal people on former pastoral leases, and the two national goals of Aboriginal self determination and ecologically sustainable development (ESD). It argued that multiple land use on Aboriginal land is compatible with Aboriginal self determination and ESD, and that the two are mutually achievable. Furthermore, it has been argued that this relationship is compromised through bureaucratic implementation of Aboriginal affairs policies and that there is an urgent need for reappraisal of such bureaucratic approaches.

An explanation of the conditions which have brought about the situation in which Aboriginal land users are at the fore of the emergence of a multiple land use regime in the rangelands has been provided in Chapter Two. The complex relationship that exists between Aboriginal people and the pastoral industry has been facilitated through government policies relating to pastoralism and Aboriginal affairs. It is part of this relationship that forms the rationale for funding of Aboriginal pastoral properties and enterprises. This chapter argued that land is vital for Aboriginal self determination and that multiple land use is an expression of this self determination.

An examination of the economic, environmental, and social challenges facing the pastoral industry has been provided in Chapter Three. Despite being supported through subsidies and low rental payments, the economic position of the pastoral industry is declining. At the same time, the inability of the industry to achieve ESD has been socially and scientifically recognised and formally addressed through the development of a national strategy for rangeland management. This environmental concern is reflective of changing wider social values of the rangelands which are increasingly including non-economic values. A consideration of the National Strategy for Rangeland Management reveals a 'top-down' approach that is inconsistent with Aboriginal land management systems.

Ultimately, this chapter argued that the current pastoral regime in Central Australia is inconsistent with ESD criteria, thus setting the scene for a consideration of an alternative land use regime.

A critique of ATSIC's Land Acquisition and Management Programs in relation to the land values and land needs of Aboriginal people was provided in Chapter Four. It was established that land use on Aboriginal pastoral properties is diverse and thus reflects the diverse land use aspirations and priorities of the people. Furthermore, it established that there are a wide range of challenges specific to Aboriginal pastoralism which further limit its potential commercial viability. Despite this, land acquisition and land management programs are characterised by an economic focus on funding criteria. Current approaches to land acquisition and land management programs limits the achievement of Aboriginal self determination and ESD by disregarding multiple land use as a viable land use trend and favouring economic enterprises, namely pastoralism. The economic focus can be attributed to overall non-Aboriginal approaches to meeting Aboriginal needs, a non-Aboriginal notion of self determination and ATSIC's accountability. This chapter argues that current bureaucratic approaches to Aboriginal land needs limit the achievement of Aboriginal self determination and ESD.

In the case of Utopia Pastoral Lease, a multiple land use system has allowed the people to meet their own land use aspirations, therefore achieving a higher degree of self determination. At the same time, multiple land use has allowed the land to recover from previous exploitation. Ultimately, this case study illustrates the non-economic significance of Aboriginal land rights and argues that non-Aboriginal approaches to meeting Aboriginal land needs fail to accommodate for these land values and therefore limit Aboriginal self determination and ESD.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

It has been widely established in the literature that land is central to Aboriginal tradition and culture (Commonwealth of Australia, 1991; Stanner, 1979; Rose, 1995; HRSCAA, 1987; Coombs et al, 1990; Toohey, 1980; Wolfe et al, 1991; Young et al, 1991) and that control over land is vital to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people (HRSCAA, 1987; Commonwealth of Australia, 1991). A closer consideration of this literature however, reveals that the administrative and policy structures responsible for the implementation of recommendations in the above publications is in need of review.

The recognised importance of land for the self determination of Aboriginal people forms the rationale for ATSIC's Land Acquisition and Land Management programs. Since land is vital for the well-being of Aboriginal people, it is vital that government land acquisition and land management programs are administered in a way that achieves optimal results. The primary conclusion of this thesis is that land use needs of Aboriginal people and the criteria for ESD represent the same concerns and can potentially be met through multiple land use. Future environmental sustainability will be dependent on suitable land management that is a result of community level decision making. The strong relationship between multiple land use, self determination and ESD has been overlooked by mainstream Aboriginal bureaucracies as they place a focus on the economic criteria over social, cultural and environmental criteria in funding and management decisions. This results in a contradiction with the notion of Aboriginal self determination as put forward in this thesis (refer to section 2.6). As this relationship is neglected, it also leads to a policy framework which is incompatible with the notion of ESD which requires that non-economic qualities of natural environments be valued (refer to section 3.1).

The bureaucratic focus on economic criteria is paramount in ATSIC's Land Acquisition and Land Management Programs. A closer examination of ATSIC's criteria for prioritisation, low levels of funding and the inherent accountability factor within ATSIC, reveals that the programs are grounded in economics. The emphasis of the programs is on

“economic empowerment”, “economic sustainability” and “commercial viability” and ultimately limits the land use options of traditional owners at the expense of social, cultural and environmental land use aspirations. ATSIC’s approach to Aboriginal land needs is characteristic of top down approaches employed by the government in response to nationally perceived problems. Such an approach does not accommodate for the diversity of Aboriginal concerns. It is a situation in which externally derived criteria are imposed upon communities. Ultimately, as funding favours economic criteria, this focus has the effect of limiting the ability of Aboriginal people living on former pastoral leases elsewhere in the country to achieve self determination. In turn, through resulting land use trends, this has the effect of limiting the achievement of ESD.

Aboriginal self determination is identified as the primary aim of contemporary Aboriginal affairs policies (RCADC, 1991; ATSIC, 1995a: 10). Self determination is however, a concept lacking in definition and discussion. This lack of definition and clarity has contributed to its patchy implementation. This thesis argues that any notion of Aboriginal self determination should be defined by Aboriginal people and should be administered in a manner appropriate to the society, economy, culture, environment and diversity of Aboriginal communities. To do otherwise would contradict the term itself.

This relationship between multiple land use, Aboriginal self determination and ESD is overlooked in current policy implementation. Self determination, as constructed by the Australian government, tends to lean towards a definition of economic self sufficiency with a view that Aboriginal people need to achieve economic self sufficiency in order to achieve control over their own affairs enough to warrant the term self determination. This reflects an imposition of non-Aboriginal values of land, and is in itself contradictory to the real notion of Aboriginal self determination as put forward in this thesis (refer to section 2.5).

As the environmental qualities of Australia’s rangelands are increasingly being valued by wider society and efforts are being made to coordinate land uses, multiple land use is being

recognised as a system consistent with ecologically sustainable management (Young and Ross, 1994; Holmes, 1994). However, a comprehensive examination of the Aboriginal dimension of multiple land and its ecologically sustainable potential is lacking. With Aboriginal people having legal title over more than 12% of the rangelands (Heathcote, 1994: 161), 38% of the Northern Territory (Stafford Smith et al, 1994: 77) and 48% of Central Australia (CLC, 1994), it is vital that Aboriginal multiple land use and land management is placed on the research agenda and incorporated into a national strategy for rangeland management.

The discipline of geography has allowed and encouraged the integrative approach necessary to address the economic, environmental, social and political characteristics that combine to bring about the situation in which Aboriginal people are essentially deprived of a true sense of Aboriginal self determination, and in turn are not guaranteed a sustainable future. The topic of this thesis fits into development theories within geography. However, the discipline is overwhelmingly concerned with non-Aboriginal issues while development theories are concerned with international and third world dimensions. Geographers, namely Young and Howitt, have addressed these issues of Aboriginal development and Aboriginal enterprises. At the same time, Geographers, namely Holmes, have addressed the concept of a multiple land use regime in the rangelands but has not focussed on the Aboriginal dimension to such a regime. The important relationship between Aboriginal multiple land use, self determination and ESD has not been examined elsewhere. Therefore, this thesis makes a small but valuable contribution to the discipline as well as the problem it addresses. This work is situated between that of Howitt, Young and Holmes, and through bringing together and extending their work, this thesis takes the issue of Aboriginal land and development further.

The argument put forward in this thesis demands a reappraisal of criteria used to make decisions regarding support of Aboriginal land use practices. The criteria should reflect the value and importance of non-economic criteria such as the cultural, social and environmental significance associated with land ownership, as they are perceived by

Aboriginal people. This would require a change in the approaches of mainstream Aboriginal bureaucracies to play a less dictatorial role and a more supportive role. In order to be culturally appropriate and successful in the long term, land management on Aboriginal land must be the result of community level decision making.

6.3 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This thesis produces neither a definitive argument nor a blueprint for Aboriginal land issues. However, it does provide an important new perspective on Aboriginal land use and its relationship with the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal goals of self determination and ecological sustainability. Through addressing the issues of Aboriginal self determination and ESD in a way that contributes to their achievement, this thesis has in mind the interests of Australian society and in particular the Aboriginal population who have suffered the gross injustices of a non-Aboriginal system of values. The argument put forward here has a number of spin off issues that have not been covered in this thesis and require research attention, particularly in relation to notions of self determination, cross cultural understanding and land management of Aboriginal land.

Within a system dominated by non-Aboriginal bureaucracy, the achievement of self determination depends on its definition. Presently, it is a concept that is relatively undefined and is not legislatively recognised. The result is an array of approaches to its achievement and an overall misconception that ultimately delays the achievement of Aboriginal self determination. The effective implementation of self determination policies requires that a working definition of the concept be made by Aboriginal people and that it includes a degree of control over administration, service provision and funding criteria as well as ownership and control over land.

Somewhat related to misconceptions of Aboriginal self determination, is the limited cross cultural awareness, and furthermore, the limited attempts to bridge this void of

understanding. A successful cross cultural management of the rangelands is dependent upon an integration of information and awareness between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people and organisations. ESD in the rangelands essentially requires the sharing of knowledge between scientists and indigenous knowledge systems. Cross cultural approaches are lacking in the bureaucratic framework of mainstream Aboriginal organisations and are limited to organisations like the CLC. With a pending national strategy for rangeland management that requires the building in of Aboriginal land management systems, cross cultural awareness and skills are vital and should be given research priority.

As the amount of land under inalienable Aboriginal freehold title increases, support for the development of a system of Aboriginal land management is long overdue. The danger of the National Strategy for Rangeland Management lies in its top down approach which may not be compatible with existent land management systems on the vast amount of Aboriginal land in the rangelands. Land management on Aboriginal lands must therefore be the result of community level decision-making and requires the supportive and educational role of organisations like ATSIC.

Sustainability on Aboriginal lands is vital for the future benefits of land ownership and is of value to wider society. Community growth in remote areas alleviates environmental problems caused by pastoral activities but introduces new problems. The relevant organisations are however ill prepared for such demands. As multiple land use emerges as a new land use regime, Aboriginal people find themselves in a better position in terms of self determination and the land begins to recover from past exploitation, new problems are emerging and will continue to emerge as new land uses and living patterns develop. Contemporary systems of multiple land use on Aboriginal land are in the early stages of development and the type and scope of problems is unknown. It is an area that requires attention, management and, in time, solutions. At such an early stage in the emergence of a new land use regime on Aboriginal land, with examples such as Utopia, characterised by a more advance model of community development, there exists an optimal opportunity to

provide the necessary information, education and support to Aboriginal land users and therefore, ensure the sustainability of natural environments on Aboriginal land.

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APPROACHES TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FORBIDDEN APPROACH

- design and/or implement for government
- policy priorities set exclusively by local area
- funding decisions made exclusively by central government
- government limited to one project
- government used to control programme
- local area has authority to compete for central funds
- decisions taken by local area

APPENDICES

LIST OF APPENDICES

- *Appendix 1: The National Health Service (NHS) and the Department of Health*
- *Appendix 2: The Department of Health and the NHS*
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APPENDIX A: COMPARISON OF TOP-DOWN AND BOTTOM-UP APPROACHES TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TOP-DOWN APPROACH

- decision-makers employed by government
- policy priorities set externally to local area
- funding decisions made according to externally developed criteria
- consultation limited and often formal
- accountability used to control programs
- local interests often made to compete for limited funds
- decision making linkages are principally vertical (between clients and bureaucracy) rather than horizontal (between client groups)

BOTTOM-UP APPROACHES

- decision-makers employed by local groups policy priorities set by consensus within local area
- funding decisions negotiated between local interest groups
- consultation between groups and funding bodies continuous and includes informal as well as formal contact
- accountability does not extend to external control of funds
- local interests negotiate use of available funds
- horizontal linkages very common

(Source: Crough et al, 1989: 70)

APPENDIX B:

LAND ACQUISITION AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

*Land Acquisition**Program Objective.*

To enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities to acquire land for economic, traditional, social and or cultural purposes.

Under this sub-component, land and property may be acquired using funds allocated to the sub-component in accordance with Section 14 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act, 1989.

Owing to the very limited levels of funding available and also the fact that ATSIC's land functions will cease in 1997, few land acquisitions will occur other than in the Northern Territory.

The Commission policy enhances the economic empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through providing funds to eligible community organisations to enable them to acquire land and buildings for traditional, social, cultural and economic purposes.

Community organisations applying for grants must be an incorporated organisation under the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976 or a declared organisation under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Act, 1989.

Land will be acquired on the basis of needs expressed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations. The needs assessment process will be an integral part of the community and regional planning process and will be fundamental to achieving the aims of a community plan.

The concept of economic sustainability will be important therefore be absolutely critical to funding decisions in relation to ATSIC funded land purchases and management. There will be a focus on viability and proposals should clearly show that property acquisitions :-

- contribute significantly to economic development within the community; and
- be self sustaining and NOT require continued funding.

Grants to eligible community organisations should only be made provided:

- a) significant numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will benefit;
- b) there is a demonstrated need for the community to acquire land;
- c) the organisation has the capacity to effectively manage and develop the land;

- d) the property is viable from the outset and requires no or only nominal recurrent funding;
- e) in the case of the Northern Territory, the application of the Land Rights (NT) Act is a relevant consideration.

Land Acquisition funding may also be available through the Regional Land Fund (RLF) under Section 68, where such allocations are made by Regional Councils. The use of funds from the RLF will follow principles which are consistent with the Land Acquisition Guidelines.

Land Management

Program Objective

To facilitate the efficient management, operation and maintenance of properties owned by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations or the Commission.

Land Management activities consist of, or relate to, the managed use, care or improvement of land, and more specific details are shown at Attachment A.

Key priority areas for Land Management funding are:

1. Costs associated with ownership by ATSIC and divestment of such properties (minimum and compulsory needs);
2. Payment of Statutory charges (where ownership is at risk);
3. Commercially viable projects (capital replacement needs only);
4. Properties potentially viable with limited and clearly identifiable capital development needs;
5. Cultural and Social proposals where circumstances warrant special and urgent consideration.

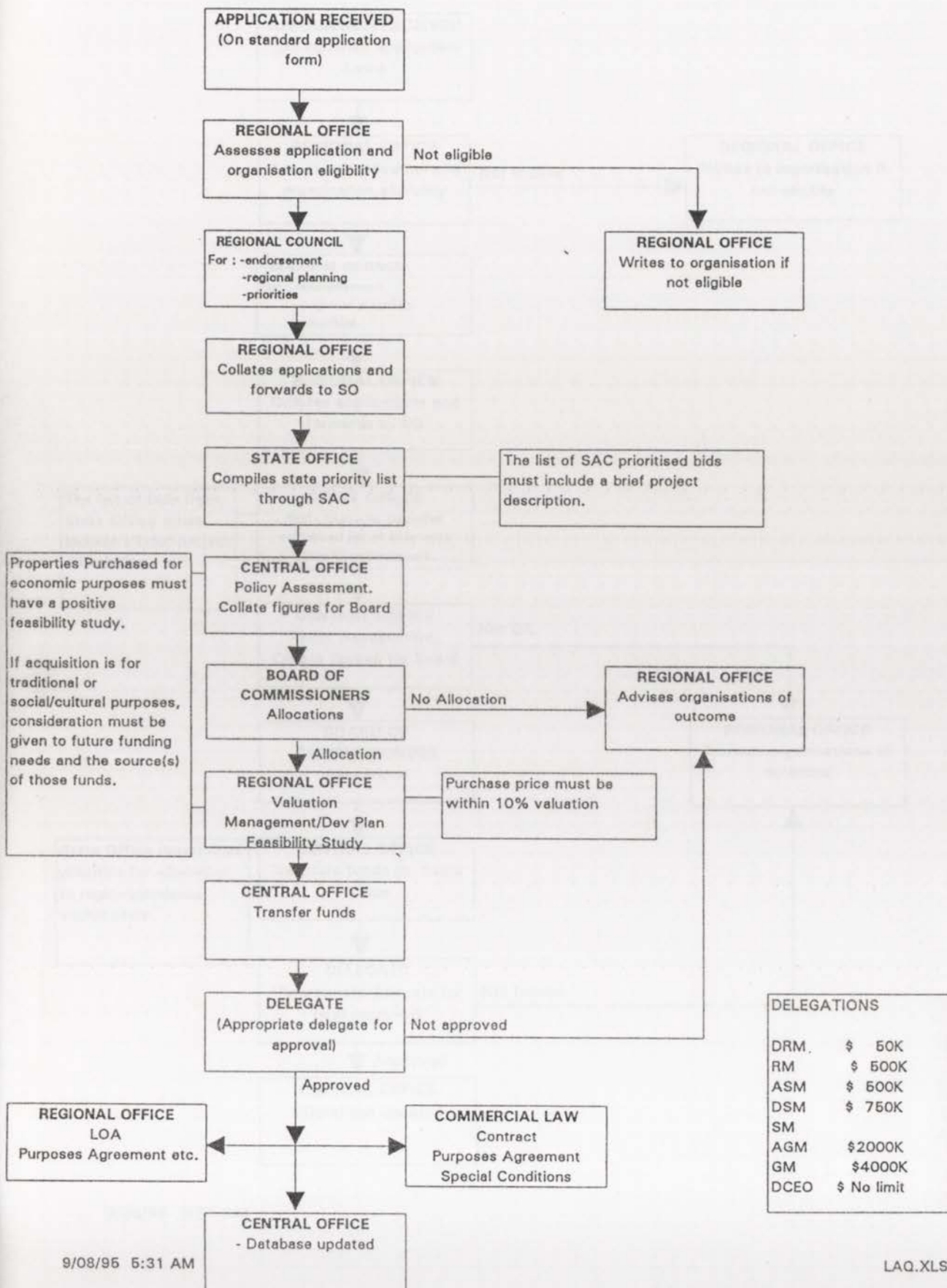
Land management funds should not be allocated to a land function if the project is eligible for funding from other sources particularly where the primary responsibility for funding is clearly another ATSIC program and/or an external agency.

Categories for grant funding under land management are provided in Attachment B.

Current policy has enabled Land Management expenditures to be managed, under delegation, at the State level.

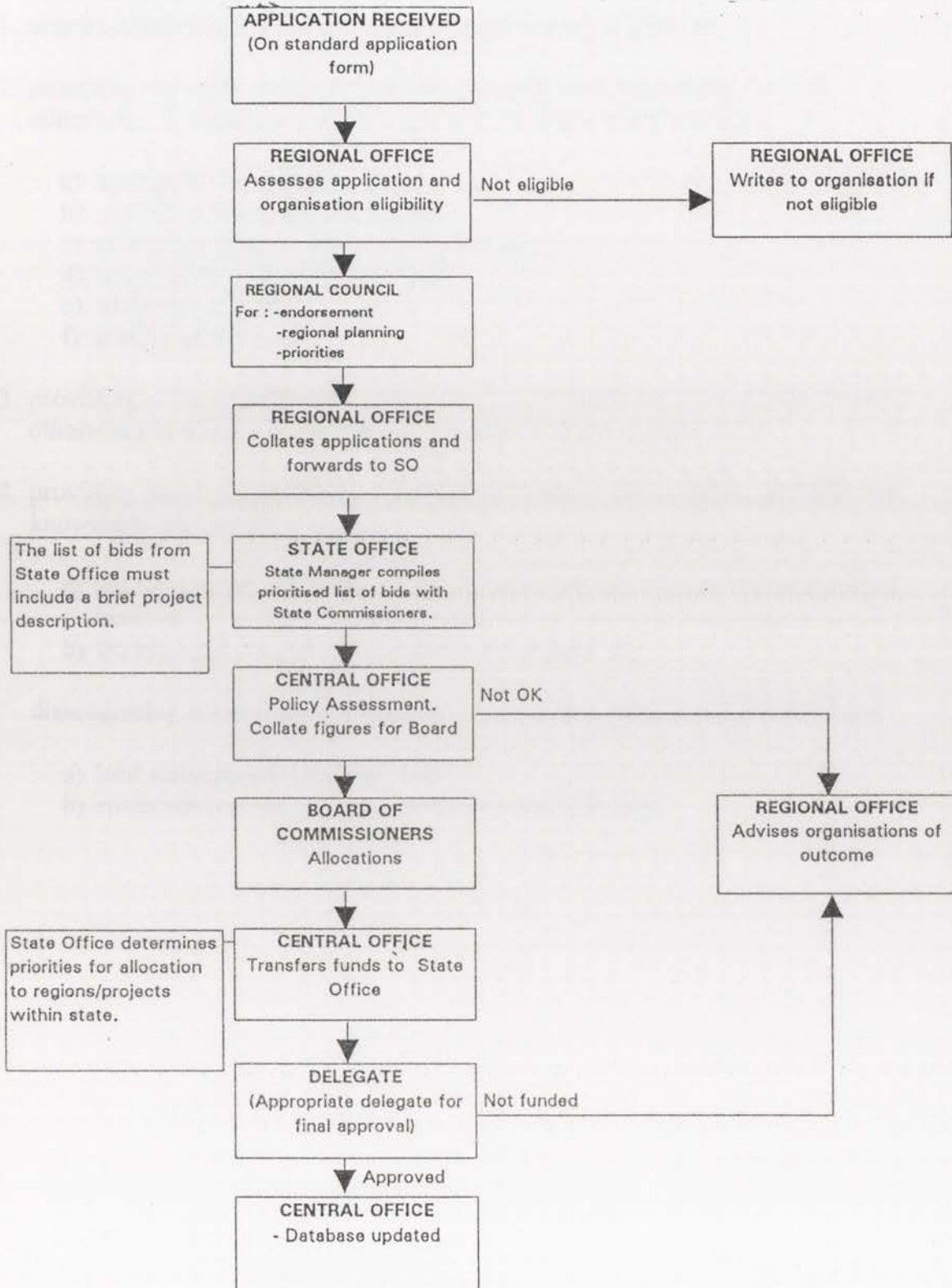
ATTACHMENT A

LAND ACQUISITION - DECISION MAKING PROCESS



ATTACHMENT B

LAND MANAGEMENT - DECISION MAKING PROCESS



ATTACHMENT C

Land Management activities consist of, or relate to, the managed use, care of improvement of land, and includes:

1. activities that involves the use, care or improvement of land; or
2. providing any of the following services (whether on a commercial basis or otherwise) in connection with the use, care or improvement of land:
 - a) management services;
 - b) clerical or administrative services;
 - c) services relating to financial administration;
 - d) technical or professional services;
 - e) advisory services;
 - f) similar services; or
3. providing environmental management services (whether on a commercial basis or otherwise) in relation to the use, care or improvement of land; or
4. providing training (whether on a commercial basis or otherwise) in the skills and knowledge relevant to:
 - a) the carrying on of a business that involves the use, care or improvement of land; or
 - b) the managed use, care or improvement of land; or
5. disseminating information (whether on a commercial basis or otherwise) about:
 - a) land management practices; and
 - b) environmental management practices relating to land.

Land Management grant funding is provided for under the following categories:

1. Physical assets;
 - i) machinery,
 - ii) equipment,
 - iii) fencing,
 - iv) sheds, etc.
- Infrastructure;
 - i) roads (where the roads are used exclusively in the conduct of the property),
 - ii) housing (where it is **essential** to land management).

Funding for this category should be sought from state departments of agriculture and other similar agencies in the first instance.

2. Stock;
3. Environment and Landcare;
 - i) prevention of weed infestation,
 - ii) prevention of damage from feral animals,
 - iii) prevention of land degradation.

Funding for this category should be sought from state departments of agriculture and other similar agencies in the first instance.

4. Management;
 - i) employment of a manager,
 - ii) engagement of a consultant for management advice,
 - iii) engagement of a consultant to manage a property.
5. Wage subsidy;
 - i) where funds are used to subsidise CDEP wages for worker employed in land management.

Training;

- i) eg. trainee manager.

6. Operational;
 - i) transport costs (eg. stock transfer),
 - ii) fuel,
 - iii) equipment maintenance, etc.
7. Statutory charges and covenants;
 - i) land taxes,
 - ii) pastoral leases,
 - iii) rates, etc.

The examples given under each category are not exhaustive but give an indication of the acceptable areas of expenditure under land management.

APPENDIX C: FIELD INTERVIEWS**Lesley Alford,***(30 June, 1995, Darwin)*

Field Officer, Central Land Council, Alice Springs.

Lived at Utopia for two years and worked in the area for six years.

Gary Bastin,*(16 June, 1995, Alice Springs)*

Research Scientist, Centre for Arid Zone Research, CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology, Alice Springs.

Lindsay Bookie,*(21 June, 1995, Utopia)*

Coordinator, Eastern Office, Central Land Council, Alice Springs.

Jack Crosby,*(June, 1995, Alice Springs)*

Senior Project Officer, Policy, Central Land Council, Alice Springs.

Russell Grant,*(23 June, 1995, Alice Springs)*

Land Conservation, Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory, Alice Springs.

Rik Dance,*(14 June, 1995, Alice Springs)*

Manager, Rangeland Production, Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Alice Springs.

Jeannie Devitt,

(26 June, 1995, Alice Springs)

Spent time at Utopia studying women and subsistence and remains familiar with the region (refer to Devitt, 1988).

Graham Griffen,

(16 June, 1995, Alice Springs)

Senior Research Scientist, Centre for Arid Zone Research, CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology, Alice Springs.

John Holmes,

(2 August, 1995, Sydney)

Professor, Department of Geographical Sciences and Planning, The University of Queensland.

Paul Mitchell,

(13, 20 and 22 June, 1995, Alice Springs and Utopia)

Coordinator, Pastoral Unit, Central Land Council, Alice Springs.

Vince Noviello,

(10 August, 1995, Canberra)

Assistant Manager, Land and Economic Policy Research, ATSIC, Canberra.

Pastoral Officer,

(14 June, 1995, Alice Springs)

Department of Lands, Housing and Local Government, Alice Springs.

Bruce Rose,

(June, 1995, Alice Springs)

Project Officer, Land Management, Central Land Council, Alice Springs.

Toly Sawenko,

(22 June, 1995, Alice Springs)

Coordinator, Land Management, Central Land Council, Alice Springs.

Dr Mark Stafford Smith,

(16 June, 1995, Alice Springs)

Senior Research Scientist, Centre for Arid Zone Research, CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology, Alice Springs.

Patrick Sullivan,

(29 June, 1995, Darwin)

Research Fellow, North Australian Research Unit, Australian National University, Darwin.

Russell Taylor,

(17 May, 1995, Canberra)

Manager, Land Division, ATSIC.

Tracker Tilmouth,

(26 June, 1995, Alice Springs)

Director, Central Land Council, Alice Springs.

Fiona Walsh,

(19 June, 1995, Alice Springs)

Land Resource Assessment Officer, Land Assessment Unit, Central Land Council, Alice Springs.

Ian Williams,

(18 May, 1995, Canberra)

Indigenous Land Corporation, Canberra.

Dr Elspeth Young,

(18 May and 10 August, 1995, Canberra)

Director, Graduate Studies in Environmental Management and Development, National
Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University, Canberra.

