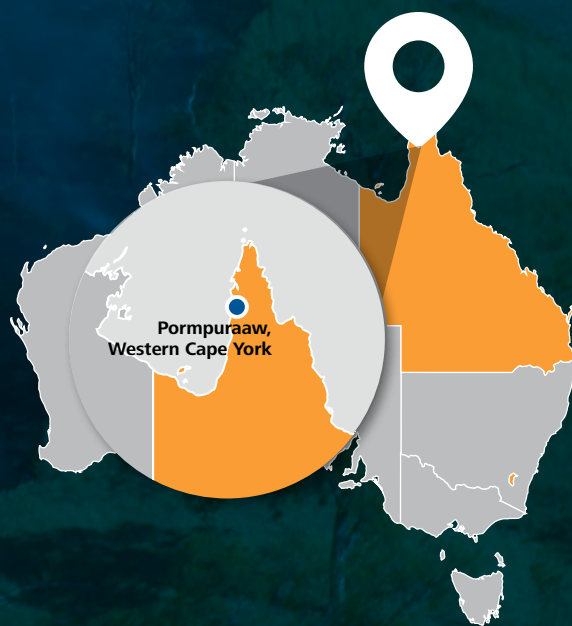




Raak Nguunge – Pormpuraaw Savanna Burning Australia

**Supporting Indigenous Communities to
reduce emissions from wildfires by lighting
cool fires in the tropical winter**



This savanna burning project works with local rangers to undertake strategic aerial and on-ground burning in the tropical winter, so as to reduce fuel loads in later (hotter) months when dry lightning storms begin. By preventing larger late-season wildfires, emissions are reduced when compared against the historical average. Raak Nguunge means 'burning season' in the Kuuk Thaayorre language, and the success of the project is thanks to strong collaboration between the Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire Council and the Pormpuraaw Land & Sea Management Rangers.

The Context

Up until savanna burning carbon projects started in 2013, large uncontrolled bushfires late in the dry season were a regular feature on the Cape York Peninsula. These high-intensity wildfires emit large amounts of greenhouse gases (methane and nitrous oxide), threaten cultural sites and community infrastructure, and damage wildlife habitat and cattle pastures. With less groundcover to stabilise the soil, the heavy monsoonal rains that follow cause increased erosion, further impacting rivers and wetlands.

The Project

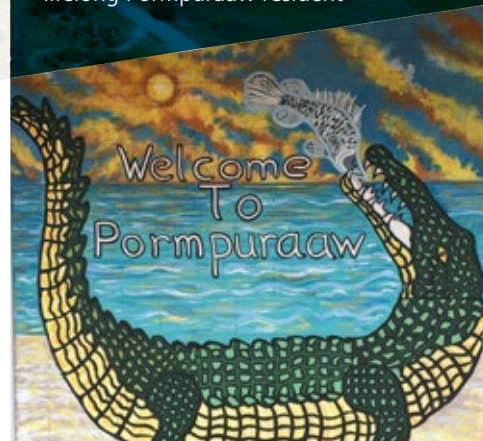
The Raak Nguunge – Pormpuraaw Savanna Burning project within the Pormpuraaw Aboriginal Shire is located on the ancestral homelands of the Indigenous Kuugu, Mungkan, Thaayorre and some Wik peoples. Working with local rangers and the council, the project implements “cool” fires early in the dry season in planned operations across country. These early burning practices, which have been carried out by traditional Indigenous landowners for countless generations, prevent larger emissions from late-season wildfires. As well as carrying out carefully planned seasonal burning, project rangers care for country, improve biodiversity and ensure community environmental health standards by testing food and water quality. Over its 25-year lifetime, the project will also build and refurbish 10 outstations for traditional owners to stay in when out on country.

The Benefits

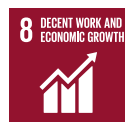
The Raak Nguunge – Pormpuraaw project creates a wealth of benefits for the local community and environment. In the dry season, the protected site is a critical drought refuge for many native animals and plants, including the Cooktown orchid, rare dune vine thickets and mound spring wetlands. The Bull Lake ecosystem, a sacred cultural site and Australian Wetland of National Significance, is also protected. The project provides long-term, stable income streams to remote Indigenous communities by creating local employment opportunities, while the Pormpuraaw Junior Rangers program engages young people in environmental activities and traditional cultural practices. This ensures that knowledge continues to be passed down through generations. The rangers also run a turtle program; each July and August they secure over 300 nests on the northern beaches of Cape York Peninsula to protect Olive Ridley and Flatback turtle eggs from predators.

“There have been significant changes, like the return of some animals you rarely see; the emu, the blue-tongue lizard, the eastern grey kangaroo – they came back because of the early burns.”

- Clinton William
Senior Ranger for 7 years and
lifelong Pormpuraaw resident



Emissions Reduction Fund



Job opportunities

for local Indigenous communities



Restoring access

to traditional Indigenous homelands



75,000+
tCO₂e

mitigated to date through avoided emissions
from late-season wildfires



Turtle program

contributes to Olive Ridley and Flatback turtle
conservation efforts



420,650+
ha

of land covered by the project, protecting
endemic flora and fauna

For more information on the UN Sustainable Development Goals, please visit: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

Official Name: Raak Nguunge | **Registry link:** <https://bit.ly/2Y255hx> | **Registry ID:** ERF 100813

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