

Name:	2. COMMUNITY-BASED FIRE MANAGEMENT IN AUSTRALIA		
Region	Oceania	Country	Australia
Ecosystem	Rangeland and grassland; Forest & woodland		
Nature of approach	Improvement in capacity, design and policy measures (incorporation into relevant strategies); Implementation of EBA measures (natural resource management)		
Description of approach	<p>Objective/Expected outcomes West Arnhem Land is a remote, tropical savanna region in Australia's Northern Territory. Wildfires play an important role in the management of the ecosystem, although uncontrolled wildfires are a risk to adjacent land managers and globally significant rock art sites, and can threaten ecosystems, overwhelming their adaptive defences. Climate change impacts are expected to increase the size, intensity and frequency of wildfires in Australia, and extend the fire season. The intervention involves prescribed fire management to avoid seasonally occurring disastrous wildfires, in partnership with the local Aboriginal people who manage parts of Arnhem Land in this way, resulting in a low incidence of devastating wildfires.</p> <p>Actions The project works with indigenous fire managers to reduce unmanaged wildfire across an area of 28,000 km². The fire management includes early dry-season burning that breaks up the landscape and makes it more difficult for wildfires to spread across the fire breaks later in the year.</p> <p>Results achieved Limiting wildfires in this way prevents the degradation of different plant communities and helps conserve environmental and cultural values in Arnhem Land. Greenhouse gas emissions are also reduced as studies have shown that early dry season fires emit less greenhouse gases per area affected than the more intense, late dry season fires. A partnership with the owners of a nearby Liquefied Natural Gas plant provides around US\$1 million to the Aboriginal Traditional Owners of Western Arnhem Land to implement the annual prescribed burning, to offset some an estimated 100,000 tonnes of CO₂-equivalent per year.</p> <p>Lessons learned The outcomes achieved by the West Arnhem Fire project have potential application across fire-prone tropical Australia and other fire-prone savannas of the tropics. Fire management provides co-benefits, including climate change mitigation and economic benefits through employment. However, it requires repeated annual implementation in order to be successful.</p>		
Type of organisation	Government	Name of organisation:	Northern Territory Government, in partnership with others.
Further information and contact details	<p>ProAct Network 2008. The Role of Environmental Management and eco-engineering in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation.</p> <p>http://savanna.cdu.edu.au/information/arnhem_fire_project.html</p> <p>Colls, A., Ash, N. and Ikkala, N (2009). Ecosystem-based Adaptation: a natural response to climate change. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN</p> <p>Contact: Dr Jeremy Russell-Smith, Fire Management Consultant, jeremy.russell-smith@nt.gov.au</p>		