



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

The Hon Jenny Macklin MP

Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

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INDIGENOUS RANGER JOBS HELP CONSERVE THE CAPE

Environment Minister Peter Garrett on Sunday visited Napranum, a remote community on Cape York, to see the benefits of on-ground conservation jobs, and announce a further \$46 million worth of funding to employ Indigenous rangers to work on country.

The Napranum Aboriginal community is another leading example of how a community can combine employment with their cultural traditions of looking after their country.

“Napranum is a strong community with connection to country and culture. I am thrilled to announce funding of up to \$2.3 million over four years for Napranum, through the Working on Country initiative, for Indigenous land and sea management activities,” Mr Garrett said.

“The project will involve training and employment of five Indigenous rangers to undertake important environmental work such as visitor management, protecting cultural sites, protecting marine turtle rookeries, removing marine debris, and rehabilitating dunes, estuaries and wetlands”.

Napranum is one of 20 Working on Country projects across Australia which Minister Garrett announced today. The Australian Government is funding these projects to employ 115 Indigenous rangers to manage land and sea country.

This is in addition to the 300 Indigenous ranger positions the Australian Government announced as part of Caring for our Country.

The Working on Country projects will be delivered in partnership with Indigenous communities from 2009 through to mid 2013 with a total investment of \$46 million.

Indigenous Affairs Minister Jenny Macklin said traditional owners were vital partners in caring for Indigenous owned land and land with significant cultural value which contain many of our rarest and most threatened ecosystems.

“Working on Country draws on the significant skills and knowledge that Indigenous people bring to land management. When traditional methods and contemporary practices are used hand in hand you get the best results for the environment,” Ms Macklin said.

“These projects also create economic opportunities in some of our most remote places for Indigenous people.”

The establishment of Indigenous Protected Areas across the country is also a tribute to the key role of traditional owners, and since the concept was first championed in the early

1990s, 31 Indigenous Protected Areas have been declared in Australia covering more than 20 million hectares.

“Working on Country and Indigenous Protected Areas are perfect examples of how innovative, culturally-aware, sustainable conservation can provide jobs for Indigenous people” Mr Garrett said