



# AUSTRALIA



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## **Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

### **Tenth Session 10-14 July 2016**

#### **Australia Statement on Item 8: INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FOLLOW UP TO THEMATIC STUDIES AND ADVICE ON THE RIGHTS TO CULTURAL HERITAGE AND HEALTH**

**Thursday 13 July 2017**

Australia recognises the importance of cultural heritage, in all its forms, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In particular, Australia acknowledges the deep significance of land and sea to the cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In order to protect this heritage, Australia is actively working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as custodians of the land.

By supporting Indigenous rangers we are recognising the traditional knowledge of, and connection to, land and sea by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and supporting the continuing practice of this knowledge.

The work of Indigenous rangers not only protects cultural and environmental heritage through a combination of traditional knowledge and conservation training, it also brings strong social and cultural benefits to communities and society through employment and economic development.

Rangers also engage in two way learning by working in partnership with research, educational and other organisations to share skills and knowledge.

One example of the work of rangers is the use of controlled burns to decrease carbon emissions. This raises funds from carbon offsets and regenerates the land.

In addition to supporting Indigenous rangers through the commitment of more than \$550 million to 2020, the Australian Government has announced a new Capacity Building for Indigenous Rangers Strategy to help build the technical skills and capabilities of Indigenous rangers across Australia.

The Capacity Building for Indigenous Rangers Strategy will enable Indigenous rangers to take advantage of training in biosecurity, fisheries and border protection, and will support Indigenous youth and promote career pathways.

The opportunities and benefits are multifaceted. The activities of rangers have benefits for the environment, for maintaining traditional lands, for enabling the transmission of culture from one generation to the next, and to increasing employment opportunities.

We commend the Expert Mechanism for their study.

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