

MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: News Editors, Political, Resource and Environment Reporters

Traditional Indigenous Knowledge Gains National Award

A stunning book on Aboriginal fire management in north Queensland, stemming from collaboration between the Rainforest Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) and Eastern Kuku-Yalanji people, has been honoured with a prestigious national award today.

Eastern Kuku-Yalanji people from Mossman and Wujal Wujal communities north of Cairns, together with the Rainforest CRC, accepted the award for their book '**Yalanji-Warranga Kaban: Yalanji People of the Rainforest Fire Management Book**' at the Cooperative Research Centre Association's (CRCA) Awards for Excellence in Innovation Dinner in Melbourne. The award recognises the book's outstanding contribution to education, training and public outreach.

Written in both English and Yalanji language, the book invites the broader community to learn about Yalanji beliefs and customs and the importance of Traditional Owners living on and caring for Country.

For the Yalanji people, the award caps almost ten years of collaborative work on fire research with the Rainforest CRC based at James Cook University in Cairns. Accepting the award on behalf of the Yalanji Traditional Owners from the World Heritage listed Daintree rainforest, Ms Francis Walker said "It's not just a book for us, it's cultural survival, it will keep our language, culture and Law alive".

Senior Traditional Owner, Mr Edward Barney said "This book will help government land managers understand our way of running fire management on our Country from our Law and culture."

The book's senior researcher and writer, environmental scientist Dr Rosemary Hill of the Australian Conservation Foundation, said she hoped the book would dispel the popular myth that Aboriginal fires destroyed rainforest.

The book is the outcome of a research collaboration led by Yalanji people and Dr Hill, partnered by the Rainforest CRC, Cape York Land Council, Wujal Wujal

Aboriginal Council and Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku, with support from the Australian Conservation Foundation, Natural Heritage Trust, James Cook University and publisher Little Ramsay Press.

The partner organisations see the award as a resounding endorsement of the value of Traditional Indigenous Knowledge for land and natural resource management across northern Australia.

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