



**NINTI ONE: CRC REMOTE ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION**

## **CRC for Remote Economic Participation Program 2 – Enterprise Development**

### **Plant Business Project**

**Notes for workshop on 7 April 2011**

**Venue: Corkwood Room, Desert Knowledge Business and Innovation Centre, Desert Knowledge Precinct, South Stuart Highway, Alice Springs**

**9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

### **Background to CRC-REP**

The CRC for Remote Economic Participation ([www.crc-rep.com.au](http://www.crc-rep.com.au)) is a public good research centre established to deliver solutions to economic disadvantage in remote Australia. It started in July 2010 and will run for seven years. Three research programs encompassing 13 projects will systematically investigate regional economic systems, developing enterprises industries and education and employment systems. The CRC-REP is supported by the Commonwealth government and has 54 partner organisations that contribute \$110M in cash and in-kind resources to achieve the goals.

The CRC-REP is governed by Ninti One Limited and its Board of ten people. Jan Ferguson is the CRC-REP Managing Director. Other members of the Board are Paul Wand (Chair), Tom Calma (Deputy Chair), Glenise Coulthard (Adnyamathanha woman and Manager Aboriginal Health for the Port Augusta Hospital Cluster), Ian Davey (Emeritus Professor, University of South Australia), Harold Furber (Arrernte man, and Chair of the Desert Peoples Centre), Tanya Hosch (Social Policy Consultant), Alison Page (Tharawal woman and designer, artist and cultural planner), David Ritchie (CEO NT Department of Lands and Planning) and Tony Tate (Director, Research and Development, Curtin University).

The CRC-REP research Programs are outlined below:

**Research Program 1 – Regional Economies:** This Program aims to build robust and strong regional economies throughout remote Australia through our partners in government, industry and communities. Remote regions have unique characteristics that affect their economies. The projects comprising Program 1 are:

- Population Mobility and Labour Markets

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- Enduring Community Value from Mining
- Climate Adaptation and Energy Futures

**Research Program 2 – Enterprise Development:** This Program will create models for successful medium and small enterprises that best suit remote locations, Aboriginal culture and industry opportunities. It will explore barriers to growth, such as distance from markets, fragile or faulty supply chains and ways to overcome high production costs. The Projects in this Program are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Art Economies
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism Product
- Aboriginal Cultural Enterprise
- Carbon Economies in Remote Australia
- Plant Business
- Precision Pastoral Management Tools

**Research Program 3 – Investing in People:** This Program is about finding and getting the very best from all the talent, ability, skills and potential of two thirds of a million people who live in remote parts of Australia. The current education and training pathways have largely failed to deliver what is needed by remote people, which in turn limits their later ability to participate in local, national and world economies. Our aim in this Program is to find ways to overcome this and deliver the employment, livelihoods, education and training most needed in remote communities and enterprises. The Projects in the Program are:

- Interplay Between Health, Wellbeing, Education and Employment
- Pathways to Employment
- Remote Education Systems

Over 20 workshops with a wide range of stakeholders were conducted in 2008 and 2009 to determine the topics to be researched in the CRC-REP. Since these workshops were held, an application for the CRC was submitted; it was successful in December 2009 and the legal and administrative start-up procedures have been completed (Jan–Nov 2010). The time has finally come when stakeholders and researchers can reconvene to plan and commence the projects of the CRC-REP.

## Plant Business Project background

The Plant Business research project will be conducted by researchers from several of the CRC-REP's partner research providers and in partnership with Aboriginal people and organisations, businesses, state, territory and national government agencies. The project builds on the work on bush tomatoes by the Desert Knowledge CRC (and others) in the last five to ten years. The body of work already undertaken has resulted in a good understanding of the :-

- stocks and flows of bush tomatoes across the value chains over time (Bryceson et al 2008)<sup>1</sup>;
- the main sources of product, trading and sales points (Walsh et al 2011);
- trade-offs between wild harvest and horticultural production for consistency of volume and quality of supply, benefits to Aboriginal people, and growth strategies for the product and industry (Ryder et al. 2009; Cleary et al. 2009);
- situation of Aboriginal people in the value chain and the equity share (benefit) they get from the commercial industry (Cleary et al. 2009);
- cultural values of bush tomatoes (Alyawarr speakers from Ampilatwatja et al. 2010);
- production performance of wild-type specimens under different conditions horticultural conditions (Ellis et al. 2010; Vincent 2010);
- storage management and phytochemistry (De Sousa-Majer et al. 2009);
- genetic range and plasticity of varieties and species (Waycott et al. in press).

The proposed focus for bush tomatoes in this project is on the development of plant varieties that will make horticultural production easier and more profitable. The value in a successful outcome from this focus is sustained growth of value in the bush tomato commercial trade, potential small business opportunities for Aboriginal people living in remote areas and greater equity share value returned to Aboriginal people for the genetic resources that are used commercially.

The research will use the cultural, horticultural and genetic understanding already completed by the DKCRC to undertake the following proposed project activities:

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<sup>1</sup> Links to some of these papers below

- engage Aboriginal groups in discussion about plant breeding with a view to approval for the use of plant varieties from different geographic locations that have traits useful for the breeding program;
- engage Aboriginal groups in discussion on how the combination of varieties (common property) will be handled in a commercial agreement;
- conduct plant breeding with multiple CRC-REP partners
- work collaboratively all partners across the country and employ Aboriginal researchers as much as possible.

The proposed product(s) of the project will be :-

- genetic library of bush tomato characteristics established as intellectual property in trust for Aboriginal owners;
- new higher yielding plant varieties that are more likely to be economically profitable under horticulture;
- IP rights (patenting and plant breeders) for varieties leading to licenses for the use of best lines;
- Knowledge, protocols and experience that could be used for the development of further plant-based enterprises;
- training material to support the establishment of small businesses (if applicable);
- post graduate students and VET or vacation student training;
- Aboriginal researchers trained to continue to develop plant varieties for commercial benefit;
- reports, papers, films and products in other media to effectively communicate the results with stakeholders.

## Workshop format

The objectives of this workshop are:

- To hear from stakeholders and researchers regarding:
  - Current and predicted future opportunities, challenges and aspirations for bush tomatoes and other plant-based enterprises
  - Research needs and priorities
  - Recommended models of engagement of Aboriginal groups in discussions about plant breeding with a view to approval for the use of plant varieties from different geographic locations and also in discussions on how the combination of varieties (common property) will be handled in a commercial agreement;
- To discuss the processes by which research activities will be developed and initiated including:
  - Consultation with additional relevant stakeholders
  - Formulation and confirmation of research questions with stakeholders and partners
  - Activities within the research program
  - Short, medium and long-term outputs and goals

See you there,

Kevin Williams

Links to further reading available from Desert Knowledge CRC publication website :

[www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC\\_Angka-Akatyerr-akert\\_A-Desert-raisin-report.pdf](http://www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC_Angka-Akatyerr-akert_A-Desert-raisin-report.pdf)

[www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC\\_Bush%20Food\\_IS-1\\_Bush%20Tomato\\_July09.pdf](http://www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC_Bush%20Food_IS-1_Bush%20Tomato_July09.pdf)

[www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC-Report-40-Value-Chain-Analysis.pdf](http://www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC-Report-40-Value-Chain-Analysis.pdf)

[www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC-Report-46-Post-harvest-storage-of-Solanum-centrale-and-impact-on-produce-quality.pdf](http://www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC-Report-46-Post-harvest-storage-of-Solanum-centrale-and-impact-on-produce-quality.pdf)

[www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC-Working-paper-31\\_Sustainable-Bush-Produce-Systems-Progress-Report-2004-2006.pdf](http://www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC-Working-paper-31_Sustainable-Bush-Produce-Systems-Progress-Report-2004-2006.pdf)

[www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC\\_Respecting-Aboriginal-people-and-their-knowledge.pdf](http://www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC_Respecting-Aboriginal-people-and-their-knowledge.pdf)

[www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC-Working-Paper-48\\_Perspectives-of-cooperative-arrangements-for-bush-harvested-bush-tomatoes.pdf](http://www.desertknowledgecrc.com.au/resource/DKCRC-Working-Paper-48_Perspectives-of-cooperative-arrangements-for-bush-harvested-bush-tomatoes.pdf)