



Ms Alicia Boyle

PhD Candidate

Codesigning the Future in the Intercultural Workspace of the Tiwi Islands Forestry Industry

Project description:

The Tiwi want the forestry industry to play an integral role in their future economic independence and skills-building strategy. The 30,000-ha plantation site is on Tiwi land and is Tiwi-owned, governed by the Tiwi Plantation Corporation (TPC), and managed by the TPC-appointed company Midway. Whilst the majority of the first rotation of Acacia Mangium has been chipped and exported, a second rotation of Eucalyptus Pellita is planned. However, despite the existence of the plantation for over fifteen years, there has been no consistent progress toward high levels of Tiwi employment. The purpose of the research is to explain and address this ongoing employment challenge by examining past and future undertakings surrounding the plantation workspace from an intercultural perspective. This will entail codesigning new model/s of employment to facilitate greater Tiwi engagement in both employment and management of its forestry future whilst sustaining its commercial forestry objectives so central to Tiwi's economic sovereignty aspirations. Whilst a number of specific models may ultimately be proposed or considered to improve employment outcomes, the thesis will focus on the processes needed to formulate a workable intercultural workspace in ways that might apply to other industries or regions.

Using a case study methodology, the research will take a 'bottom-up', strengths-based codesign approach applying a methodological bricolage (Pratt et al., 2022) focusing on past Tiwi employees (and non-employees) on one side, as well as the plantation managers and forestry business on the other. Sen's (1995) Capabilities Approach (CA) theoretical framework will inform the substantive component of the analysis and will be supported by participatory narrative inquiry (Kurtz, 2014) as the preferred methodology for working with Tiwi and disclosing their work-related stories. Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019) will assist with the analysis of the semi-structured interviews with Midway co-designers and participants. The study will take advantage and build on the existing relationships the researcher has developed over the past two years whilst working on the Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia (CRCNA) project 'Maximising Northern Tropical Forestry – Linking Communities and Cutting-Edge Technology'.

Find out more

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