

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

CBRM Database

Date:	May 17, 2010	Entry Number:	1090
Case Study Name:	Indigenous Community-based Fisheries in Australia		
Authors:	Carter, J., and Hill, G.		
Document Type:	Journal article		
Year:	2007		
Language:	English		
Document Location:	Journal of Environmental Management 85, 866-875		
Full Citation:	Carter, J., and Hill, G. 2007. Indigenous Community-based Fisheries in Australia. <i>Journal of Environmental Management</i> 85, 866-875		
Region:	Oceania		
Country:	Australia		
Ecosystem Type:	Marine		
Social Characteristics:	Indigenous community-based, aboriginal		
Scale of Study:			

Resource Type:	fisheries
Type of Initiative:	Research driven project
Community Based Work:	Fisheries management
Keywords:	Community-based fisheries; Indigenous Australians; Design principles
Summary:	<p>The commercial sea cucumber species known as Sandfish (<i>Holothuria scabra</i>) occurs intertidal and sub tidally in the Northern Territory of Australia, on or adjacent to Aboriginal land. A 4-yr program of community-based fisheries research with Aboriginal Australians was implemented to assess the viability of indigenous Australians' involvement in the wild-stock fishery. The research involved extensive and intensive indigenous participation, unusual in Australian biophysical sciences research, during field survey and habitat mapping, complemented by commercial catch data modeling and discussion of its implications. Field surveys produced Sandfish distribution and site-specific density, and revealed some areas that were not commercially fished. Catch data modeling results suggested that no additional effort could be sustained, however commercial fishers increased their effort, expanding their operations into the newly mapped areas. These actions effectively precluded indigenous peoples' aspirations of entry into the commercial fishery. The efficacy and outcomes of participatory program design with indigenous Australians need critique in the absence of the political will and statutory backing to provide equitable access to resources.</p>