



A catalogue of research
undertaken in the
Alligator Rivers Region

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June 2003



supervising scientist

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Background

The SSD has to have access to any past research in the Alligator Rivers Region (ARR) that could have a bearing on the impact of mining, particularly uranium mining, on people and ecosystems.

Whilst reasonably complete listings of papers published on research undertaken in the ARR have been compiled in the past (eg OSSCAT – the SSD library catalogue; SSAR – the catalogue of *eriss/oss* publications; the Magela database; and others), none of these databases constituted a fully comprehensive record of publications relevant to the ARR. Consequently, the Alligator Rivers Region Information (ARRI) database project was initiated to compile a single, integrated bibliographic database of all the ecological, social and cultural information that has been published about the ARR.

In addition, much of the research on the region has not been published, but written up in the form of ‘grey literature’. This material is dispersed amongst the records and collections of the organisations that carried out the research. The ARRI Database includes ‘grey literature’ where possible, but does not claim to identify all such materials.

Project objective

The objective of the ARRI database project was:

to provide a complete as possible listing of all published information on the ARR in the form of an updated, comprehensive database.

Methodology

The project was undertaken in two stages. The first stage involved searching existing databases such as those of the International Nuclear Information System (INIS), the Institute for Scientific Information and various web info-mediaries such as INGENTA, the British Library Inside web and the CSIRO library network catalogue.

The second stage involved searching the libraries of a number of external, Darwin-based organisations for information not held in the SSD library. Organisations that kindly enabled access to their library holdings included Parks Australia North, the CRC Tropical Savannas, the Northern Land Council, EWL Sciences, the Tropical Ecosystems Research Centre (CSIRO), the Parks and Wildlife Service (DIPE), the Department of Mines & Energy (DBIRD), the Museum and Art Gallery of the NT and the NT State Library. In addition, the Bushfires Council allowed *eriss* to archive all their satellite imagery of the ARR, this comprising 60 separate datasets captured over the period 1991–2002.

Results

The search conducted (table 1) identified 2546 ARR-related references that had not yet been listed in the SSD library. These, together with the 4087 existing records in the library, means that the total number of ARR-related references available to stakeholders and researchers, regardless of their particular interests, is, at the time of publication, 6633.

Table 1 Number and sources of ARR-related references found during the course of the study

Source	No. of new records obtained	Notes
International Nuclear Information System (INIS)	700	Covers period 1970 to 2001. Includes abstracts and Koongarra reports (ARAP)
Institute for Scientific Information (Current Contents)	22	Includes abstracts
INGENTA (web infomediary)	72	Covers period 1997 to 2001
British Library Inside web	4	
CSIRO library network catalogue	71	
CSIRO Tropical Ecosystems Research Centre (Darwin)	162	
Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory	181	
CRC Tropical Savannas	208	
Northern Land Council	254	
Northern Territory Library	156	
EWL Sciences	195	Some with abstracts
Parks Australia North	266	
Museum and Art Gallery of the NT	16	
Department of Mines & Energy	135	The quality of some records is unsatisfactory
Reports on Nabarlek	17	Examination of reports in SSD library
Senate Select Committee	6	Public hearings – November 1996
Pancontinental Mining Ltd	59	Review of Jabiluka Environmental Studies by Macquarie University
Alligator Rivers Analogue Project	22	Review of Koongarra Study (1977–1997)
TOTAL	2546	

Discussion

Due to the logistical difficulty of locating everything that has been written about the ARR it is acknowledged that, in spite of the effort made during the course of this project, the ARRI database is still incomplete.

Nevertheless, in its existing form the present database should serve as a primary source of reference material for all research efforts in the region. It represents an important information resource for all *eriss/oss* projects and should greatly facilitate the undertaking of reviews of particular issues (eg mining) or subjects (eg weeds) in the ARR.

Key features

The key features of the ARRI database are:

- its compatibility with the SSD's Data Management System and INMAGIC/DBTextworks software used for managing the SSD library;
- its keyword search facility enabling selection by geographical location, subject and author;
- identification, wherever possible, of the accession and /or barcode numbers of ARR-related material held in the libraries of external organisations; and
- the provision of abstracts wherever possible.

Recommendations

It is recommended that provision be made for regular updating of the ARRI database as well as the acquisition of library copies (hardcopy) of the most relevant material. In the interest of sharing data with contributors to the ARRI database and stakeholders in the NT it is also recommended that the database is made accessible on the EA website (this is currently being investigated) .

Where possible, hypertext links to electronic versions of items in the database will be added to the database records.

The usefulness of the database would be greatly enhanced if controlled vocabulary indexing terms were added to all entries. It is proposed that the *SSD Data Management Thesaurus* be extended for this purpose, because

- it has been developed to deal with much of the research carried out in the ARR,
- multiple Thesauri would not have to be maintained, and
- it would be familiar to SSD users.

It may be possible at some time in the future to provide links between the two systems (for use by SSD staff only).

Finally, it recommended that, should time ever permit, each item in the ARRI database is given a site record (ie geo-referenced) and linked to a GIS.

Acknowledgements

The SSD is indebted to the many organisations that assisted by allowing access to their libraries or supplying lists of ARR-related data in their respective libraries. We are most grateful, in particular, to the following people: Dr Peter Jacklyn – CRC Tropical Savannas, Barbara McKaige – CSIRO Tropical Ecosystems Research Centre, Jenny Saunders – Department of Mines & Energy, Dr Tony Milnes – Earth, Water & Life Sciences, Ann Sheehan – Northern Territory Library, Michael Storrs & Janet Cubillo – Northern Land Council, Dr Rod Kennett – Parks Australia North, Dr Jon Woinarski – Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory, Andrea McKee – The Museum and Art Gallery of the NT, Francois Barr – Northern Territory Archives Service, Andrew Edwards – Bushfires Council.