Concept Plan SP 2021-002

Working together on rock-wallabies: Managing threats, improving conservation outcomes and monitoring populations.

Animal Science

Project Core Team

Supervising Scientist	David Pearson
Data Custodian	David Pearson
Site Custodian	

Project status as of July 14, 2021, 2:52 p.m.

New project, pending concept plan approval

Document endorsements and approvals as of July 14, 2021, 2:52 p.m.

Project Team	required
Program Leader	required
Directorate	required

Working together on rock-wallabies: Managing threats, improving conservation outcomes and monitoring populations.

Biodiversity and Conservation Science Program

Animal Science

Departmental Service

Service 6: Conserving Habitats, Species and Communities

Aims

1. Conduct surveys with regional staff and relevant indigenous ranger groups to clarify the identity and conservation status of two rock-wallaby populations on the margins of the Great Sandy Desert.

2. Compare possible monitoring techniques to find those most effective and relevant for management of these populations.

3. Mentor, assist and train regional staff and indigenous rangers to undertake rock-wallaby surveys and to establish effective monitoring programs.

Expected outcome

Rock-wallabies are an important part of the mammal biodiversity of WA with two species and two subspecies endemic to the State. We will clarify the distribution and genetic identity of two rock-wallaby populations on the margins of the Great Sandy Desert. We will undertake a trapping program to collect genetic samples to determine the taxonomic status of these populations. The trapping program will provide baseline population information to allow several monitoring techniques (cameras, searching for sign and observations by drones) to be compared.

Management and monitoring protocols will be discussed and developed with Regional staff, indigenous ranger groups and WWF and made available to other groups managing and monitoring rock-wallabies in a range of formats, including a journal article and a report to the local native title holders.

Strategic context

Expected collaborations

Kimberley regional staff based in Broome will likely assist with fieldwork. The work has been discussed with Bruce Greatwich and Alexander Scott.

Nyangumarta Karajarri Aboriginal Corporation and Nyangumarta rangers- native title holders and managers for the areas where rock-wallaby occur along the Kidson Track in the Great Sandy Desert.

Nykina-Mangala Aboriginal Corporation and their rangers- native title-holders and land managers for the Erskine Range area in the southern Kimberley

Rangers from both groups will be employed for the survey under a fee-for-service arrangement. WWF will assist with logistics and the payment of rangers for the work in the Erskine Range.

Funding has been set aside for genetic analysis to be conducted by either Dr Mark Eldridge (Australian Museum) or Dr Kym Ottewell (DBCA)

Researchers from Charles Darwin University have arranged with WWF to undertake drone surveillance flights in June 2021 to detect and monitor rock-wallabies.

Proposed period of the project

March 9, 2021 – June 30, 2024

Staff time allocation

Role	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Scientist Technical Volunteer Collaborator	0.2		

Indicative operating budget

Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Consolidated Funds (DBCA) External Funding	22100 8000 (WWF)		