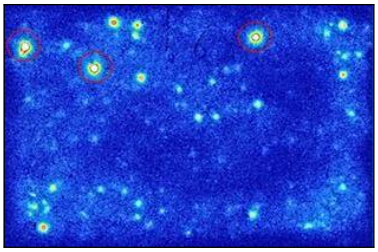

Investigation of radionuclide contamination at Montebello Islands to understand implications for turtles and researchers

Aims This project is designed as a staged approach. Stage 1 is to investigate the level of contamination and the potential residual impacts of radionuclides at Montebello Islands on turtles and researchers. Stage 2 will be based on the results of Stage 1. If significant radionuclides are found, then further studies will be.

Relevance Three nuclear tests were conducted at the Montebello Islands in the 1950s on two islands. Studies conducted in the 1990s suggested that soil plutonium concentrations were six and 10 times higher on Trimouille Island and Alpha Island respectively than after the clean up a Maralinga. Plutonium, uranium and other radionuclides are of interest as they remain at elevated concentrations, and some will persist for thousands of years. The degree to which actinides can accumulate in, and impact plants and animals, has both conservation (e.g. what are potential impacts to turtles nesting on contaminated Montebello beaches) and workplace safety implications.

NWSFTCP Code OA R15

Collaborators Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation, (ANSTO), DBCA.