

THE REVIEW WORKSHOP

A project workshop will be held at Northern Territory University in April 1999 to review the current state of knowledge and identify the key fire management issues that may be addressed by research.

Topics include:

- Regional overviews of fire management
- Fire research and management on Aboriginal and pastoral land in northern Australia
- Role of fire in forestry management, agriculture and animal husbandry
- Economic and cultural issues in eastern Indonesia
- Use of remote sensing

International research funding bodies currently working in eastern Indonesia will also be represented. The presented papers and the recommendations and resolutions of the discussion sessions will be published in the ACIAR workshop series.

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FIRE AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT

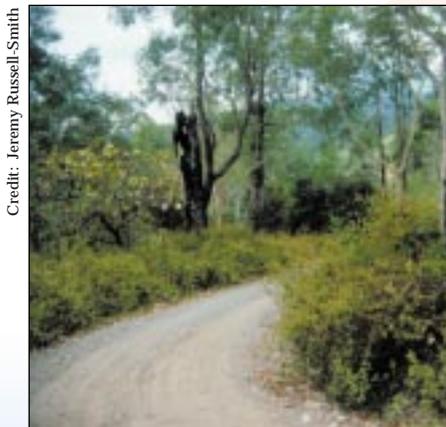
Eastern Indonesia and Northern Australia

A scoping project on fire management to establish links and identify research priorities between Australia and Indonesia.

Funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research



TROPICAL SAVANNAS CRC
Cooperative Research Centre for the Sustainable Development of Tropical Savannas



The dense cover of Siam weed (*Chromolaena odorata*) has invaded the open forest (*Eucalyptus urophylla*) of former grazing areas in Eastern Indonesia.

Credit: Jeremy Russell-Smith

TROPICAL SAVANNAS OF THE REGION

Northern Australia and eastern Indonesia are dominated by fire-prone savanna vegetation – lands covered by grasses and scattered trees.

The project brings together scientists, managers and researchers from Indonesia and Australia. Collaborating Indonesian agencies include the Information Centre for Agricultural Development in Semi-Arid Eastern Indonesia, centred in Kupang, and key Ministries dealing with forestry, agriculture and land management. Australian participation is coordinated through the Tropical Savannas CRC (TS-CRC) and includes the Northern Territory University and the Bushfires Council of the Northern Territory.



Credit: Jeremy Russell-Smith

These burnt pastures (on the hills) in Eastern Indonesia emphasises the seriousness of catchment management in the region.



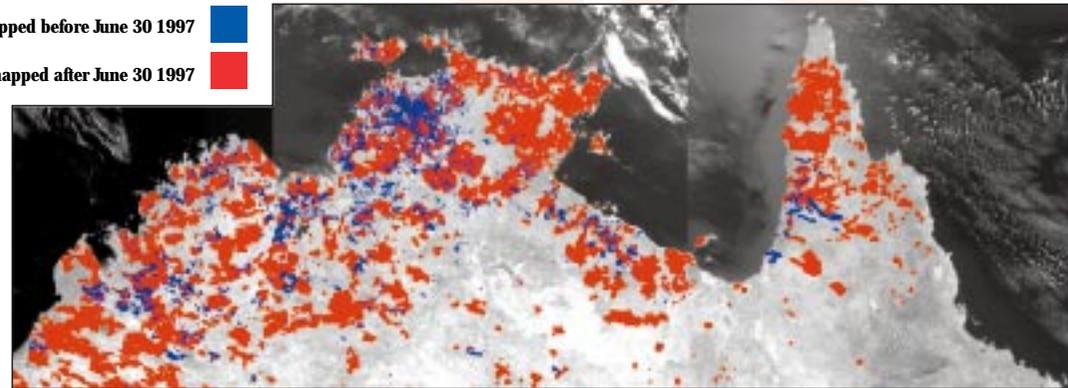
THE PROJECT

The project developed from discussions between Indonesian universities and the Northern Territory University. Indonesian groups such as the Information Centre on Semi-Arid Agriculture in Kupang have identified collaborative projects on fire management as a priority.

Fire scars mapped before June 30 1997



Fire scars mapped after June 30 1997



Credit: Department of Land Administration WA

This map of fire scars across northern Australia was produced by the Western Australian Department of Land Administration, Bushfires Council of the NT and the TS-CRC. TS-CRC can draw on a wide range of expertise throughout northern Australia.

FIRE ISSUES IN THE REGION

Fire is a fundamental part of traditional and current land management in both northern Australia and Eastern Indonesia. Eastern Indonesia depends on subsistence agriculture and faces major problems of land and forest degradation.

Some burning and grazing regimes encourage the invasion of weeds into grazing lands, threatening property, forestry reserves, water catchments and the livelihood of farmers.

Changes to fire regimes in eastern Indonesia are poorly documented and the processes affecting fire behaviour are little understood. Community education is needed to implement beneficial fire regimes as these regimes must accommodate economic and cultural values.



Credit: Deborah Rose

Fire is a fundamental part of traditional and current land management in Australia and Indonesia

FIRE MANAGEMENT EXPERTISE

The Tropical Savannas CRC draws together scientists and researchers from a range of relevant disciplines including fire ecology, fire behaviour, weed management, pastoral systems and remote sensing. TS-CRC has a wealth of expertise in the following areas of fire management:

- Assessing the effects of fire regimes on vegetation structure and composition
- Ecological modelling to predict fire behaviour
- Understanding the role of fire in weed management
- Economic and cultural bases of fire management
- Remote sensing to monitor the extent and frequency of fires

This project extends the work of the Tropical Savannas CRC internationally to include eastern Indonesia. TS-CRC's partner agencies provided daily satellite imagery of fires in eastern Indonesia to its Environment Ministry during the crisis in late 1997.