

RESEARCH

Project 7.1

Project 7.2

Project 7.4

PROJECT 7.3

Technical education and training and participatory domestication of native food plants with the Ma:Mu community

Project Leaders: Professor Roger Leakey (JCU) and Ms Marianne Helling (TAFE)

Elsewhere in the humid tropics, great progress has been made in recent years in developing a new approach to rural development based on the domestication of the traditionally-important indigenous fruits and commonly grown by subsistence farmers in mixtures with their other crops. Evidence is now emerging of increased farmer incomes and carbon sequestration, social and other livelihood benefits, and enhanced biodiversity and other environmental benefits. There is also growing local and regional trade in these products.

In Far North Queensland there is great interest in the development of the Bush Tucker industry, with commercial companies wishing to open up new markets at one end of the scale and at the other, end growers wanting to diversify their farming systems and they are seeking new crops. Potentially, this opens a commercial opportunity for Aboriginal communities, who under the Convention on Biological Diversity have rights over their indigenous knowledge and germplasm, to supply the farming community with planting stock that meets the needs of the commercial trade in Australian foods. This project is primarily seeking to develop technical skills in conservation and land management, project management skills and the horticultural capacity of the Ma:Mu community, but it will also take account of the need to seek IPR protection for the cultivars that are developed by the community.

The project will be seeking to provide the necessary skills and qualifications for the Ma:Mu community to develop superior cultivars of a number of bush tucker species for further multiplication and to successfully operate a plant nursery and orchard enterprises.

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

Richard PAUKU (JCU) PhD

Domestication of Indigenous fruit and nut trees of the Solomon Islands