



## Keeping the desert green—land, science and sustainable Indigenous enterprise

The House of Representatives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs Committee will meet in Canberra to explore the intersection between land title, environmental management and the role of government in building sustainable Indigenous businesses and communities.

The Committee Chair Richard Marles said the Committee will hear from the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) about Indigenous program delivery. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) will tell the committee about the importance of land title to enterprise development, and Commonwealth Scientific and Research Organisation (CSIRO) scientists will outline the contribution Indigenous people make to the eco-management of Australia's fragile remote regions.

DEEWR will explain how new models of program and service delivery for government departments should benefit Indigenous Australians.

Director of research at AIATSIS, Dr Lisa Strelie, will advise on the implications for economic development under land title and present some new ideas about Indigenous community taxation arrangements. CSIRO will outline to the Committee how their existing research, targeted at Indigenous communities, includes an 'Indigenous livelihoods' research stream. This work demonstrates that Indigenous Australians can make an extraordinary contribution to environmental management by building sustainable businesses in biosecurity services, land and fire management, and pest control.

“With 18 per cent of Australia in Indigenous ownership there is tremendous potential to build Indigenous Intellectual Property into culturally affirming industries, with wide rewards for all in the protection of Australia's unique desert and remote landscapes. How land title arrangements and new partnerships agreements are set up may determine the capacity of Indigenous communities to channel benefits into the development of these industries,” Mr Marles said.

### **Public hearing for Thursday 4 September 2008 in Committee Room 2R2 Parliament House**

The hearing will be webcast (audio only) on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

- 12.15pm Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations**
- 12.45pm Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies**
- 1.15pm Commonwealth Scientific and Research Organisation**

Further details on the inquiry can be obtained from the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/atsia>.

For **media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Mr Richard Marles MP, on 02 6277 4330 (Canberra) or 03 5221 3033 (Electorate Office).

For **background information**, please contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4559 or by email at [atsia.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:atsia.reps@aph.gov.au).