

The Savanna Fire Management method extension

The Savanna Fire Management method

The Savanna Fire Management method, or SFM method, uses fire to reduce carbon emissions.

At the moment, only projects in the savanna area in northern Australia can use the Savanna Fire Management method. The IDA is advocating for the government to extend the area so that desert ranger teams in the Northern Arid Zone can also use this method.

Land management organisations that use the Savanna Fire Management method can earn carbon credits and sell them through the Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme, or ACCU Scheme. The Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme is Australia's carbon market.

How does the Savanna Fire Management method work?

The Savanna Fire Management method uses small, controlled burns early in the dry season. These burns are cooler and release less carbon dioxide than larger fires.

Early dry season burns help prevent large, hot wildfires later in the season. Big wildfires release more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Connection to Indigenous burning practices

The fire management practices under the Savanna Fire Management method are similar to traditional Indigenous burning practices. Burning in this way is often called right-way fire.

Indigenous people have used right-way fire to look after Country for thousands of years. It is part of daily life and ranger programs.

In desert areas, right-way fire involves burning selected areas of Country with small fires of different intensities.

Right-way fire:

- reduces the risk of large, hot wildfires later in the season
- creates fire breaks to protect plant and animal species that do not like fire
- helps protect smaller patches of old vegetation that have not burned for a long time, but are important for some animals
- creates a patchwork where different parts of Country have plants at different growth stages, and different plants or animals can always be found somewhere close by.

The Savanna Fire Management method helps Indigenous people in northern Australia:

- do more right-way burning
- achieve healthy Country
- protect cultural heritage
- share traditional ecological knowledge.

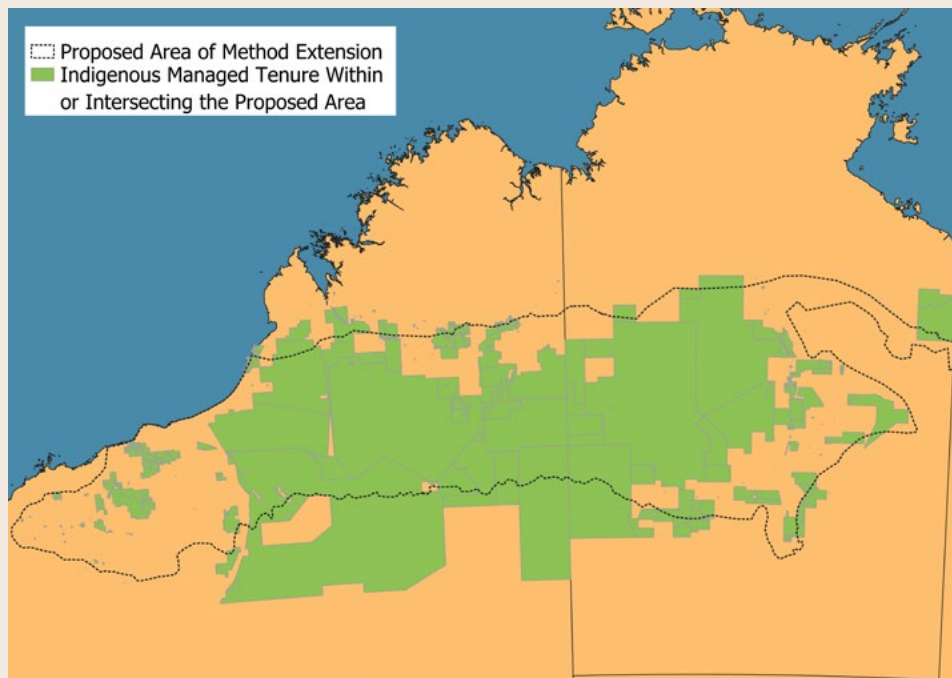
Hannah Cliff, IDA facilitator, Mary Butler, Kiwirrkurra Ranger Team, Desert Habitat Method trial workshop, Kiwirrkurra IPA, 2024



What is the Northern Arid Zone?

The Northern Arid Zone, or NAZ, is a region in the desert that is south of the savanna area. It receives less rain than the savanna but still burns often.

The Northern Arid Zone is mostly Indigenous owned and includes the work area of 15 desert ranger teams.



Indigenous managed lands within the proposed Northern Arid Zone

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At the moment, only projects in the savanna area can use the Savanna Fire Management method.

The IDA has been working with members to advocate to change this. The IDA is asking the government to extend the Savanna Fire Management method area. The IDA wants the government to allow desert ranger teams in the Northern Arid Zone to use the method to generate carbon credits.

In 2024, the Australian Government made work on the Savanna Fire Management method a priority. So, it will be one of the next 4 carbon market methods to be updated.

If the government approves the extension:

- the method will cover 27% of Australia's land
- desert ranger teams in the Northern Arid Zone will be able to use the method
- desert ranger teams will be able to earn credits through the Australian Carbon Credit Unit Scheme.

The map above shows where desert ranger teams work in the area proposed for the extension.

The Minister for Climate Change and Energy will make the final decision on which areas can use the method.

Next steps

The IDA and its partners are helping the government work out the technical details for the extension. We expect ranger teams in the Northern Arid Zone will be able to start using the Savanna Fire Management method in 2027.

IDA nature market fact sheet series

These documents contain general information only. Groups should seek their own legal, technical and financial advice before making any decisions regarding nature markets.

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