

PROCEEDINGS OF THE AUSTRALIAN RANGELAND SOCIETY

19th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Official publication of The Australian Rangeland Society

Copyright and Photocopying

© The Australian Rangeland Society 2017. All rights reserved.

For non-personal use, no part of this item may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior permission of the Australian Rangeland Society and of the author (or the organisation they work or have worked for). Permission of the Australian Rangeland Society for photocopying of articles for non-personal use may be obtained from the Secretary who can be contacted at the email address, secretary@austrangesoc.com.au

For personal use, temporary copies necessary to browse this site on screen may be made and a single copy of an article may be downloaded or printed for research or personal use, but no changes are to be made to any of the material. This copyright notice is not to be removed from the front of the article.

All efforts have been made by the Australian Rangeland Society to contact the authors. If you believe your copyright has been breached please notify us immediately and we will remove the offending material from our website.

Form of Reference

The reference for this article should be in this general form:

Author family name, initials (year). Title. In: Proceedings of the 19th Australian Rangeland Society Biennial Conference. Pages. (Australian Rangeland Society: Australia).

For example:

Bastin, G., Sparrow, A., Scarth, P., Gill, T., Barnetson, J. and Staben, G. (2015). Are we there yet? Tracking state and change in Australia's rangelands. In: 'Innovation in the Rangelands. Proceedings of the 18th Australian Rangeland Society Biennial Conference, Alice Springs'. (Ed. M.H. Friedel) 5 pages. (Australian Rangeland Society: Parkside, SA).

Disclaimer

The Australian Rangeland Society and Editors cannot be held responsible for errors or any consequences arising from the use of information obtained in this article or in the Proceedings of the Australian Rangeland Society Biennial Conferences. The views and opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of the Australian Rangeland Society and Editors, neither does the publication of advertisements constitute any endorsement by the Australian Rangeland Society and Editors of the products.



The Australian Rangeland Society

Northern Australia: the new frontier

Luke Bowen

General Manager, Northern Australia Development & Trade, Darwin NT 0801

Australia's North is close to 50% of the continent's landmass yet it holds only 5% of the population. Northern Australia sits within a sphere capturing half the world's population and an increasing share of the economic and strategic power. Almost all of the entire Northern Australia region is rangeland therefore the rangelands are at the heart of our nation's connection with this dynamic region.

It is fair to say that for most Australians, the North is somewhat of a mystery; with prevailing knowledge perhaps informed by the front pages of newspapers, tourism ads and the odd current affairs program focussed on the latest contentious or sensitive issue. Unfortunately much of what is perceived and known bears little relationship to the reality - a fact not aided by the slim representation from Northern Australia in our national parliament.

It is clear that the accepted time scale for human habitation in Australia and Northern Australia keeps getting pushed back, by 15,000 years most recently. What a fascinating time lapse it would be to see the last 65,000 years roll out on the big screen!

While it may be interesting to reflect on what we think it may have been like once upon a time and debate the pros and cons of the impacts of the last 150 odd years, the challenges and opportunities of today cannot be isolated and siloed. The rangelands of Northern Australia must be viewed within the wider national and international context, including the role Northern Australia will play in the future prosperity and security of our nation.