Discover the Power of Place

Geomancia Pty Ltd
Our mission

To build capacity and expertise within communities to record, access and share information so that decisions and actions are better informed and lead to a more sustainable future.
Since 2011, Geomancia has been working alongside community leaders, project partners, and sponsors to build capacity in regional and remote Australia in order to foster prosperous communities and sustainable natural resource management. By embracing the ‘power of place’, our work has been as varied as the landscapes we have travelled through and the people we have partnered with - each with their own specific needs, challenges, and opportunities. From building Indigenous knowledge systems to designing customised mapping technology, we bring our expertise to the collaborative table of community development.

Some highlights from our work are provided on the following pages, starting in the Kimberley region of Western Australia; travelling across the Top End to Cape York in Far North Queensland; then heading south to Central New South Wales; and finally diving into the depths of the Great Southern Ocean.

Geomancia (pronounced geo-man-see-a) is a Spanish word derived from the Greek “geōmantēla” meaning, literally, foresight by earth; a translation of the Arabic term “’ilm al-raml” or the science of the sand. It is a practice said to originate in the Middle Ages when returning Arabic merchants brought the esoteric knowledge from East Asia. The modern use of the term geomancy now includes the Chinese practice of ‘feng shui’ which seeks to manipulate the flow and direction of energy (Qi) based on aesthetics, location, and the position of objects and buildings, to harmonise people with their surrounding environment. Geomancia is our vision of harnessing the power of place to help us better understand the natural world and to work as a community to achieve our aspirations for country and culture.

We invite you to share our journey

Angela McCauley  B. Sc. (Geog.)
Managing Director
21 August 2017
Mapping Wilinggin Country

Wilinggin country covers about 6 million hectares of land in the central Kimberley region of northern Australia. This Country has been home to the Ngarinyin People for many thousands of years. The Ngarinyin represent nearly 60 clans who belong to four larger nations: Arawarri--Nyawngara; Walinjarro--Burri; Werangarri--Nyuwelngana; and Wurlajaru--Marrangarna.

The Federal Court formally recognised traditional ownership of Wilinggin country in the 2004 Wanjina-Wunggurr Wilinggin Native Title Determination. The Wilinggin Healthy Country Plan was the next step on the journey of the Ngarinyin People to regain control of their country and future.

Geomancia provided technical support to the Indigenous communities of the Kimberley including cartography, spatial analysis and training to help develop the Wilinggin Healthy Country Plan [1] and to support the work of the Kimberley Land Council.
Mapping Training for the Ngarinyin People

Geomancia participated in a two-day workshop as part of Healthy Country Planning for the proposed Wilinggin Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). Our contribution to the workshop was to provide mapping training to traditional owners from across the Kimberley region, who mapped places of cultural significance [4]. These newly acquired skills, along with the information recorded during the workshop, assisted in the preparation of maps for the Wilinggin Indigenous Protected Area Healthy Country Plan.

“You are developing some great methods and processes to assist Indigenous land managers.”

- Wilinggin IPA Coordinator, KLC

Interactive Management Maps for the Kimberley Land Council (KLC)

A map series for Indigenous ranger groups in the Kimberley region was produced by Geomancia and supplied to the Kimberley Land Council. These maps show the distribution of landscape features, such as water holes, environmentally sensitive areas, land tenure, mining tenements, and Indigenous Protected Areas. The accessible format of these maps (geospatial PDF) allows the user to view different combinations of map features, zoom, pan, print, annotate, and search for map coordinates without the need for proprietary software or specialist expertise. Six maps were produced, covering lands for Balanggara; Dambimangari; Bardi Jawi; Karajarri; Wilinggin; and the Kimberley Region as a whole [3].

“Great to see these maps – you’re right it’s a very user friendly format”

- Tom Holyoake, Program Manager, KLC
The Top End

Mapping the Arnhem Land Coastline for the Crocodile Islands Rangers

The Crocodile Islands Rangers (CIR) patrol and manage a large area of coastal northern Australia, principally in the vicinity of Castlereagh Bay. The CIR are working in unsurveyed coastal waters and, consequently, have difficulties with unmapped, submerged rocks (propeller damage etc.). They are interested in improving mapping of their sea country and have made some attempt to record marine hazard areas using fish finders and GPS devices. Geomancia created a map of potential navigational hazards for the CIR using freely available satellite imagery, data collected by the CIR, and an analysis of the differential penetration of light of different wavelengths as a surrogate for water depth.

"(the) map that Geomancia made for the Rangers has been invaluable in our land and sea management planning, and used for consultations, training and numerous other activities."

- Simone McMonigal, CIR Program Coordinator
Working with Territory Natural Resource Management - TNRM

Territory Natural Resource Management (TNRM) is an independent not-for-profit organisation that works with landholders, community groups, industry and government in the Northern Territory to ensure sustainable management of water, land, soils and biodiversity. Geomancia worked with TNRM on two projects:

**Dragonfly Field Survey System**

Geomancia delivered the Dragonfly Field Survey System [9] to TNRM to assist with their data collection and monitoring work throughout the Territory. Their field staff were also provided with detailed training on its capabilities, customised features, and applications for natural resource management at a two-day workshop held at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory.

**NRM Plans for Northern Australia**

Geomancia reviewed all of the recent NRM plans for northern Australia and mapped the distribution of issues of significance [10] based a keyword analysis of 904 Management Action Targets. The results of the analysis were presented to northern Australian NRM organisations to promote regional collaboration.
Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Geomancia worked with the Eastern Kuku Yalanji, Olkola and Wuthathi communities on Cape York Peninsula to develop interactive multi-media systems to access and share their knowledge holdings. These HTML-based systems are deployed on user-friendly touch tablets and include documents, photographs, maps, videos and audio recordings [11].

“…(your) specialist contributions to our cultural recording project have been extremely beneficial and improved our management, storage, and maintenance of invaluable cultural information.”

- Yalanjiwarra Jalunji Marrjanga Aboriginal Corporation

Juan Walker (Walkabout Cultural Adventures) demonstrates the Eastern Kuku Yalanji Knowledge System at the Port Douglas Yacht Club, FNQ.
Cultural Mapping & Knowledge Transfer

Geomancia worked with senior members of the Eastern Kuku Yalanji and Wuthathi [12] to map traditional place names, clan boundaries and other features of cultural significance.

Olkola Indigenous Land Managers [13] needed support to establish their data management and IT infrastructure to warehouse their cultural knowledge holdings, field survey records, natural resource data, and other information about Olkola community and their traditional lands. To support this initiative, Geomancia collated and organised the spatial data component of Olkola knowledge holdings into a spatial data library [14] that can be accessed from a portable USB-based Geographic Information System.

The Dragonfly Field Survey System [9] was also adapted to meet Olkola needs and local staff were trained in its use. The system included topographic maps for offline navigation; a customised database to record information on the endangered Golden-shouldered parrot [15]; and the Uw Oykangand and Uw Olkola Multimedia Language Dictionary.
Supporting Small Business
Bathurst, Dubbo, Forbes, Lithgow & Orange

Geomancia delivered a series of free workshops to small business across the Central West of NSW titled “Building the Digital Economy – Place-based Search”. The focus of the workshop was on the mobile consumer and the business benefits of listing on the map services of Apple, Google and Microsoft.

The project was funded by the Murray-Darling Basin Regional Economic Diversification Programme, supported by the NSW Department of Industry, Skills and Regional Development.

Participants rated the workshops as extremely useful and 80% committed to listing their business on an online map service (LINK).

“The workshop was easy to understand, clearly explained.”
“Very informative and helpful.”
“10/10 on all aspects – well done”
- Anonymous workshop feedback
Supporting Natural Resource Management

Partnering with Landcare

From mapping Landcare regions at the State level; to coordinating the business operations of LachLandcare Inc. [18,19]; to delivering information systems and customised maps to local Landcare groups – Geomancia is a key Landcare partner.

NSW Local Land Services - LLS

Geomancia also worked with NSW Local Land Services to deliver a collaborative online mapping initiative for Landcare groups in the south-east of the State [17]; a workshop on stakeholder mapping; and an accredited course in Landcare Action Planning.

“On behalf of everybody at LachLandcare, we would like to thank you for all your support and skills that have guided LachLandcare to where it is today. ”

- Emma Thomas, LachLandcare Inc. Chair
Maps for Conservation Planning
Supporting the Antarctic Ocean Alliance

Friday 28 October 2016, Hobart, Australia - Members of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) agreed to safeguard 1.55 million km² of the Ross Sea in the Southern Ocean [24,25]. In the years leading up to this historic agreement, Geomancia supported the Antarctic Ocean Alliance by producing many detailed maps of the geophysical features and proposed marine reserve boundaries for the Southern Ocean [21,22,23]. These maps were often produced at very short notice as critical inputs to reserve negotiations.

"The maps look great…I hope the others are as pleased as I am."

- Robert Nicholl, Australian Policy Advisor, AOA
CREDITS


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OUR PARTNERS

Geomacia works in partnership with communities, individuals, researchers, natural resource management agencies and the not-for-profit sector. We thank the following organisations for their partnership and support: Antarctic Ocean Alliance; Australian Conservation Foundation; Australian Government Murray-Darling Basin Economic Diversification Program; Bathurst Regional Council; Central NSW Business Enterprise Centre; Central Tablelands Local Land Services; Conservation Management Pty Ltd; Crocodile Island Rangers; Dubbo Regional Council; Ecotrust Australia; Forbes Shire Council; Fullerton Hadley Landcare Group; Kimberley Land Council; LachLandcare Inc.; Landcare New South Wales; Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corporation; Norman Wettenhall Foundation; NSW Government Department of Industry; NSW Small Business Commissioner; Olkola Aboriginal Corporation; Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors New York; South East Local Land Services; Territory Natural Resource Management Inc; The Nature Conservancy; Upper Lachlan Landcare; Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation; Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation; Wuthathi; Yalanjiwarra Jalunji Marrjanga Aboriginal Corporation.
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Geomancia is a not-for-profit Australian company and registered charity dedicated to the advancement of environmental education, the promotion of geoscience, and the application of best practice techniques in natural resource management. Our goal is to build capacity and expertise within communities to record, access and share information so that decisions and actions are better informed and lead to a more sustainable future.

If you would like to support our work, please contact us at:

Geomancia Pty Ltd. PO Box 1403, Bathurst NSW 2795

Office: 02 6337 3576   Mobile: 0432 259 495   Email: admin@geomancia.com.au
gemancia.com.au