

CSOs and NGOs working for the Rights of Women and Indigenous Land¹

Name of Organisation: Wide Bay Conservation Association (WBCA)

Website of Organisation <https://iwda.org.au/wide-bay-conservation-association>



Facebook of Organisation: N/A

Organisation of DTP Alumni Y/N: Yes

Wide Bay Conservation Association (WBCA) is an association made up of clans from the Wide Bay area of East Pomio, New Britain. Seeing women excluded from large-scale development projects on community land, women and men leaders of two clans founded WBCA in 1994. WBCA works to strengthen recognition of women as traditional custodians of the land, and as equal leaders in their communities. WBCA supports local communities, especially women, to have control over decisions about their land and resources. WBCA works in East Pomio District, in East New Britain Province, Papua New Guinea, where most land ownership in East Pomio is matrilineal; women are the traditional custodians of land.

Thanks to the work of WBCA, women's priorities have been incorporated into seven Ward Development Plans, and nine communities have decided to refuse palm oil plantations on their lands. In doing this work, Wide Bay Conservation Association realised that women were not fully taking part.

Projects

WBCA's project work in East Pomio is aimed at empowering Indigenous peoples and women through:

- The Meri Kirap – Tokaut na Tokstrait Project, which means “Women Arise – Talk Out and Talk Straight”. WBCA has worked with communities to ensure community plans are inclusive of women, youth and other stakeholders. They have also strengthened the East Pomio Women's Association's ability to address the needs of local women and advocated to local government to meet these needs.
- WBCA with the International Women's Development Agency are making a long-term investment in the confidence, skills and knowledge of women in East Pomio. This project supports women to engage in natural resource management and to build sustainable ways of making a living.

Thematic priorities

- Self-organising and empowerment
- Women's inclusion
- Custodial land and resource rights

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¹ The Diplomacy Training Program (DTP) is an NGO affiliated with the Faculty of Law at UNSW in Sydney. Since 1990, It has provided training to over 2600 human rights defenders and community advocates. These individuals work for a wide range of organisations working to promote shared values of human rights – in different ways. This profile is part of a series developed by DTP (www.dtp.unsw.edu.au) to illustrate the richness and diversity of the organisations working to promote the rights of Indigenous Peoples more broadly.

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