

Hosted by

Institute for Social Science Research
Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Engagement)
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Island Studies Unit



CREATE CHANGE

Seminar & Book Launch

“Too Close to Ignore: Australia’s Borderland with Papua New Guinea and Indonesia”

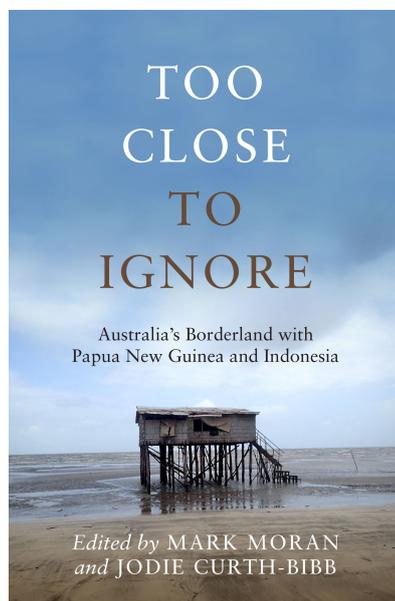
Professor Mark Moran from the Institute for Social Science Research will present the results of three years of research into the unique social and political geography of the borderland.

Less than five kilometres from Australia's northernmost islands in the Torres Strait lies the southern coast of Papua New Guinea (PNG). The people living on the PNG side of the border along the South Fly coast endure a near total absence of services and infrastructure. The disparity in income, housing, and health outcomes when compared with their nearby neighbours and relatives in the Torres Strait Islands is extreme.

The Torres Strait Treaty between Australia and PNG serves to construct a complex institutional layering, a tiered economy and a hierarchy of identities between those South Fly villagers who have rights under the Treaty to travel into Australia, and those who do not. This creates a politics of expectation and frustration that permeates everyday life along the South Fly coast, through which development projects must navigate.

The border is the focus of a range of interventions by the Australian and Queensland governments, including border protection, quarantine, marine resource management, and infectious disease control, including an alarming outbreak of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis. Restrictions are increasing on trading, fishing, and access to Australian services. However, questions remain as to whether this focus is having unintended consequences, increasing the destitution and frustration on the PNG side, in turn exacerbating the security threat to Australia. And as the Australian border hardens, the Indonesian border beckons.

Limited copies of *Too Close to Ignore: Australia’s Borderland with PNG and Indonesia* will be available for purchase at the seminar.



Mark Moran

Professor of Development Effectiveness
Institute for Social Science Research

Professor Mark Moran leads the Development Effectiveness Group at the Institute for Social Science Research, University of Queensland.

His career spans academia, nonprofits, government and consultancy. He has worked in a range of international and indigenous contexts, including Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste, China, Bolivia and Lesotho, and remote Indigenous communities in Australia.

His writing has appeared in the Griffith Review, The Conversation and The Australian newspaper. His book *Serious Whitefella Stuff: When Solutions Became the Problem in Indigenous Affairs* (MUP) was published in 2016.

Date: Monday 16 March
Time: 12–1pm Presentation and Q&A
1–2pm Networking Reception
Location: Room 275, GCI Building
St Lucia Campus, UQ
RSVP: 4:00pm Friday 6 March
[Register here](#)

Contact us

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