

# Forest conservation and sustainable livelihoods through nut processing in the Kokoda Track region



## Key details

### Location

Papua New Guinea

### Duration

Start May 2025

End May 2027

### Budget

AUD 400,000

### Commissioned organisation

[Griffith University](#)

### Project Leadership

Shahla Hosseini Bai

### ACIAR Research Program Manager

Dr Nicholas Hogarth

### Program

[Forestry](#)

### Project code

FST/2025/115



## Research need

**This small research activity aims to develop processing protocols for drying, packaging, and food-safe handling of okari nuts. It will also initiate collaboration with stakeholders to assess feasibility of producing a Kokoda trail mix product.**

The Kokoda Initiative Partnership was established to enhance the quality of life of communities living along the Kokoda Track, to protect environmental, historical and cultural values, and to keep the track open and well-managed for visitors. It is a partnership between the governments of Papua New Guinea and Australia, established in 2008, which aims for sustainable development of the Owen Stanley Ranges, Brown River Catchment and Kokoda Track Region.

Sustainable livelihoods for people living in the Kokoda Track region are essential to the mission of the partnership. This project provides an opportunity for communities to sell value-added products from their rainforest trees, with an initial focus on okari nut. The project will draw from successful ACIAR-supported galip nuts projects in East New Britain, where it was demonstrated that tree nut processing and sales can contribute to a mix of livelihood activities needed for low-impact food production and income generation.

By developing protocols and assessing the potential for nut-processing enterprises in the region, the project enables the development of village-based opportunities to process, package and sell nuts to tourists visiting villages along the track, as well evaluate markets and returns along the value chain and explore opportunities to scale up to supply commercial processors.

IMAGE: NPARKS FLORA & FAUNA WEB

