



# Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework

Miriuwung and Gajerrong Peoples' Guidelines for Developing Management  
Plans for Conservation Parks and Nature Reserves under the Ord Final Agreement.  
Endorsed by Yoorooyang Dawang Regional Park Council, October 2008.  
Presented by Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples

Hill, R., Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, Hill, D.G. and Goodson, S.

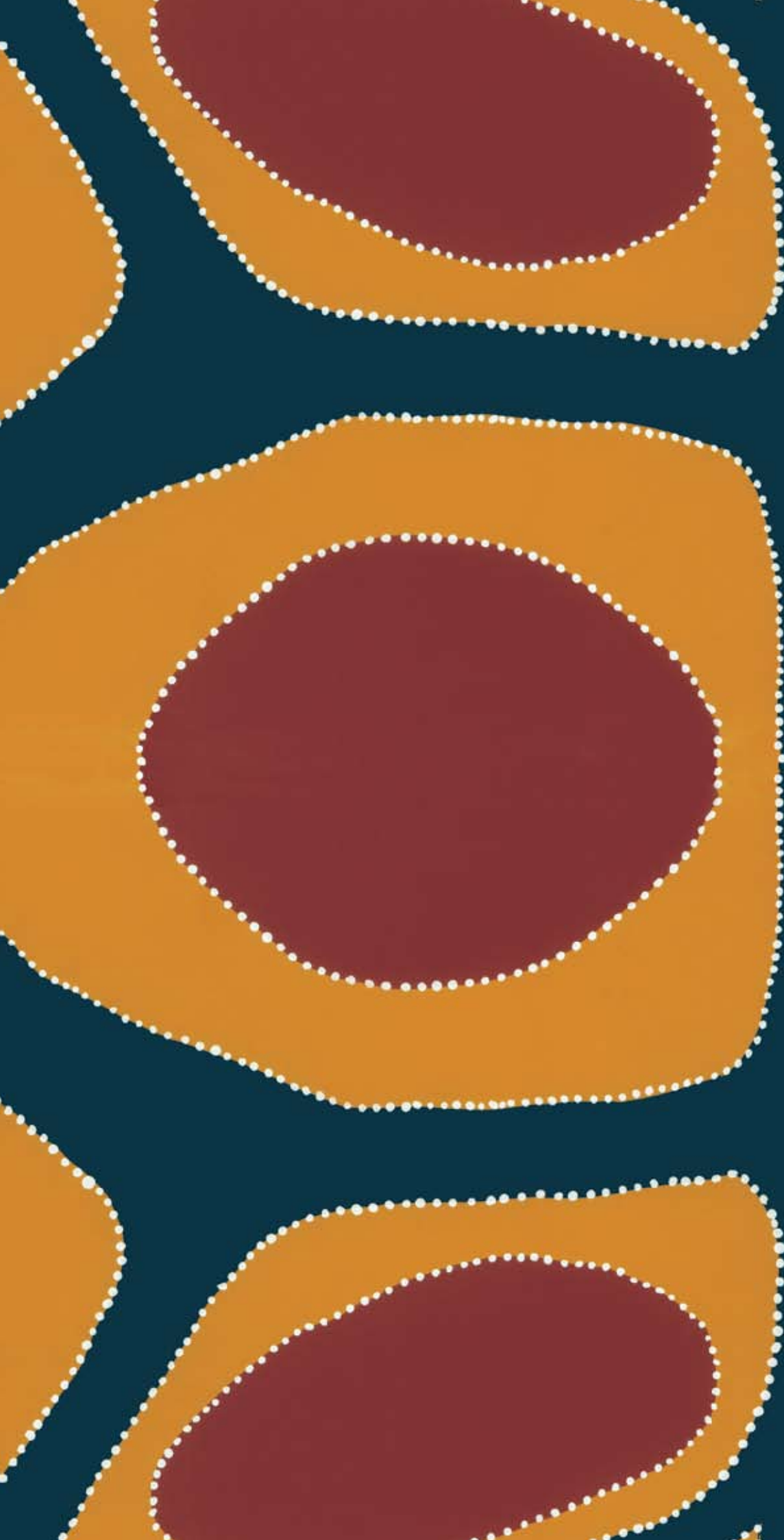
Warning: This document includes the names of deceased Aboriginal people



Department of  
**Environment and Conservation**

*Our environment, our future*





Copyright: © 2008 Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples and the Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong  
Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation

## PUBLICATION DETAILS

First published in Australia by Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) 2008.  
ISBN 978-0-7307-5584-5

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework has been prepared as the first step in planning for management of several new conservation parks created under the Ord Final Agreement.

Many Miriuwung and Gajerrong people contributed their time and energy to make this framework possible. Many senior traditional owners patiently spent time going over the material in this document to make sure it was right.

Funding for development of the framework came through the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) as a result of agreements between the Western Australian Government and Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples regarding joint management of these new conservation parks.

Staff of the Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation provided invaluable support for the planning process, organising Dawang meetings and making sure the planning process followed cultural protocols.

Photographs by Rosemary Hill and Scott Goodson.

© Artwork by Nancy Dilyia. The artist retains the rights to use the artwork as she sees fit.

DEC staff generously committed their time, goodwill and skills to support the planning process, particularly the field work.

CSIRO also supported the project through co-investment of resources to support the research and writing contribution of their consultant.

## USING THIS FRAMEWORK

‘Cultural information’ means any information on language structure, traditional customs or other culture-related aspects.

All cultural information in this document remains the intellectual property of Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples and Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation.

Information in this Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework may be reproduced in whole or part for study or training purposes, subject to the acknowledgment of the source and providing no commercial usage occurs.

Reproduction for any other purpose requires written permission from Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation.

### Recommended citation:

Hill, R., Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, Hill, D.G. and Goodson, S. 2008. Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework. MG Guidelines for developing Management Plans for Conservation Parks and Nature Reserves under the Ord Final Agreement. Endorsed by the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council. Presented by Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples. Perth, Kununurra and Cairns: WA Department of Environment and Conservation, Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation and CSIRO.

## CONTENTS

<b>Section One: Introduction</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Structure of the Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework .....	9
<b>Section Two: The Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples – Our culture and history</b> .....	<b>11</b>
Miriuwung and Gajerrong culture .....	12
Our history .....	15
Our native title rights .....	19
Ord Final Agreement and the conservation parks .....	26
Management planning for the conservation parks .....	29
<b>Section Three: Our Dawawang visions for the conservation parks and nature reserves</b> .....	<b>34</b>
Goomiyig Park (Pincombe and Cave Springs Ranges) .....	35
Barrberm Park (Zimmerman Range) .....	38
Wawoolem and Darram parks (Packsaddle Creek and Springs, Packsaddle Swamp) .....	41
Ngamoowalem Park (Livistona Range) .....	46
Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim parks (Ningbing and Weaber Ranges) .....	48
“Existing Conservation Areas” established before the Ord Final Agreement .....	51
<b>Section Four: Our policies</b> .....	<b>53</b>
Working together .....	54
Protocols, roles and meetings .....	55
Research protocols .....	57
Park boundaries and linkages .....	59
On-country management .....	61
Access .....	61
Living areas .....	65
Bush camps and trips .....	68
Fire management .....	70
Rangers .....	77
Weeds and feral animals .....	81
Visitor management and tourism .....	85
Visitor management .....	85
Tourism business development .....	96
Natural and cultural resources .....	100
Cultural recording and education .....	100
Natural and cultural resources management .....	105
Cultural site management .....	109
<b>Section Five: Reference material</b> .....	<b>111</b>
List of references .....	112
Glossary of Miriuwung words .....	113



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Management planning hierarchical structure, WA State Planning Guidelines .....	30
Figure 2 Joint planning guidelines to drive management planning between DEC and the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples .....	31
Figure 3 Sequence of planning, infrastructure and tourism development, Ord Final Agreement conservation parks .....	33

## LIST OF MAPS

Map 1 Native title determination, Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples .....	24
Map 2 Conservation parks, nature reserves and other features of interest, Ord Final Agreement region of the East Kimberley, WA .....	25

## ACRONYMS

ADP	Aboriginal Development Package
ALT	Aboriginal Lands Trust
ASEIA	Aboriginal Social and Economic Impact Assessment
CALM	Western Australia Department of Conservation and Land Management
CCWA	Conservation Commission of Western Australia
CLAs	Community Living Areas
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre
CSIRO	Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DEC	Department of Environment and Conservation
FESA	Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
KDC	Kimberley Development Commission
KLC	Kimberley Land Council
KLRC	Kimberley Language Resource Centre
MG	Miriuwung-Gajerrong
NAILSMA	North Australia Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance
OES	Ord Enhancement Scheme
OFA	Ord Final Agreement
PBC	Prescribed Bodies Corporate
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
WA	Western Australian
WAGPG	Western Australian Government Planning Guidelines
YDRPC	Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council
YDRPCMP	Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council Management Plan
YDJPG	Yoorrooyang Dawang Joint Planning Guidelines



# INTRODUCTION





## Introduction: Structure of the Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework

We, the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, have developed this cultural planning framework to explain our approach to looking after our country in the new conservation parks.

The cultural planning framework is in five sections.

### Section One: Introduction (this section)

#### Section Two: The Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples – Our culture and history

This section has been written mainly from existing books and reports. We explain some important aspects of our culture, as well as our history since *gardiya*\* (European people) started coming into our country. We also include information about the recognition of our native title rights, the Ord Final Agreement, and the background to the new conservation parks. This section also explains the next steps in our management planning process—working with the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) to bring the cultural planning framework into joint planning guidelines which will guide the development of our management plans.

#### Section Three: Dawawang vision for each conservation park

This section is based on discussions among the Dawawang for each of the conservation parks. For each park, we have included four headings:

- ◇ Our vision for the park
- ◇ Our cultural values and responsibilities
- ◇ Our priorities
- ◇ Steps and resources

In addition, we have included quotes from Dawawang talking about important aspects of their park. These quotes are taken from interviews conducted during the park planning.

#### Section Four: Our policies

Our policies are grouped into four ‘themes’, each with a number of different policy statements: working together; on-country management; tourism and visitation; and natural and cultural resources.

---

\* All Miriuwung words are italicised except for place names and the traditional owner groups Miriuwung, Dawawang, Gajerrong and Gija.

The policy statements are in two parts. The first part is a general statement which summarises the common points made by all the Dawawang. The second part includes direct quotations from people interviewed during the park planning. In the first part, all the policy statements have five headings:

- ◇ Our vision
- ◇ Our cultural values and responsibilities
- ◇ Issues of concern to us
- ◇ Our proposed strategies and actions
- ◇ Steps and resources

In the second part, where people have a lot to say about a certain policy (like fire management), these quotes are broken up into the different Dawang groups. In most cases, the quotes are just presented together under one heading, for example 'Talking about bush tucker and bush medicine'.

Section Five is a list of references and a glossary of the Miriuwung words used in this document.

# SECTION TWO

## THE MIRIUWUNG AND GAJERRONG PEOPLES – OUR CULTURE AND HISTORY

## Miriuwung and Gajerrong culture

Our ancestors created Miriuwung and Gajerrong country in the *Ngarranggarni*, the Dreaming. At the dawn of time our land was covered by the waters of an enormous flood. The waters eventually receded, placing some of the Dreamings, the ancestral beings, on the landscape. Other Dreamings roamed the land, creating creeks, billabongs, hills and escarpments on tracks through our country<sup>1</sup>. They created the different soils, plants and animals, and all the seasons of our country—*ying-geng* (the wet season), *gerloong* (big storm), *barndinyirriny* (dry season) and *wan-gang* (cold weather)<sup>2</sup>. During these sagas of journey and creation, our ancestral beings, who were simultaneously human and animal, also established the all-encompassing moral and practical rules by which succeeding generations of Aboriginal people have lived for thousands of years—our Law, languages and ceremonies<sup>3</sup>.

Our Dreamings became different features of our landscape, and are still present in our country today. Every part of our country has a song. Our Dreamings make connections between our people, plants, animals and parts of our country like water holes, creeks, hills, mountains and tracks through our country. *Yarndungarll* (dingo), *lemoogeng* (blue-tongue lizard), *diwanang and jalareng* (wedge-tailed eagle and egret), *bilbiljing* (grass-hopper) *goorrgoorrjing* (tawny frog-mouth owl) and *gerdan* (frill-necked lizard) are some of the Dreaming stories and places on our country (see box).

### Yarndungarll Dreaming

The Yarndungarll Dreaming is up there in the hill. Those dingoes travelled from this way down Ningbing. They came through there. Moolali turned off that way, what they call Therrin-gin... The dingoes made a way through the gap then to come through and go out see.

*Part of the Yarndungarll Dreaming as told by Bulla Bilinggin to Bruce Shaw<sup>2</sup>.*

<sup>1</sup> Barber, K. and Rumley, H. 2002. Gunanurang: (Kununurra) *Big River Aboriginal Cultural Values of the Ord River and Wetlands*. Kununurra: A Study and Report prepared for the Water and Rivers Commission.

<sup>2</sup> Shaw, B. 1986. *Countrymen The life histories of four Aboriginal men as told to Bruce Shaw*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

<sup>3</sup> La Fontaine, M. et al. 2006. *New Legend A Story of Law and Culture and the Fight for Self-Determination in the Kimberley*. Fitzroy Crossing: Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre.

## Jigoomirri and Boolgoomirri Dreaming

Jigoomirri (False House Roof Hill) and Boolgoomirri (House Roof Hill) were two brothers who were made by that large Rainbow Snake with the big head from the salt water. It spat them out in the same way it made those other animals. From the saltwater part they came and sat down at Reedy Creek, Moolali, in Carlton country... They say if you put your foot in the wrong place there you come out in boils.

*Part of the Jigoomirri and Boolgoomirri Dreaming as told by Grant Ngabidj to Bruce Shaw<sup>4</sup>.*

There is a Dream for boils, Jawin, in those two stone Boolgoomirri and Jigoomirri. When you climb to the top of the hill you get all the sores right up all around. That comes through the Dreaming, those two stones now. The people used to hunt the sores away with mud, and they told me the two stones were hunted from the sea by a devil. Jigoomirri and Boolgoomirri were two brothers who came from the salt water coast.

*Part of the Jigoomirri and Boolgoomirri Dreaming as told by Mandi to Bruce Shaw<sup>2</sup>.*

We also classify different parts of our country according to differences in the soil—*jawinkam* is black-soil plain; *badadang* is red soil plain; *wirrininy* is sand country; *jibgang* is jungle and *jiyilng* refers to springs.

We keep our *Ngarranggarni* strong through story, painting, song and dance, through visiting our country and our Dreaming places and tracks. Our Dreaming tracks link us up to each other and to other Aboriginal groups through wirnan, our ceremonial exchange cycle and trade system<sup>5</sup>. Law lines also extend across the Kimberley through the country of other Aboriginal people, and our traditional governance system in the Kimberley includes a network of collaborative and intricately overlapping leadership responsibilities<sup>6</sup>.

Our Miriuwung and Gajerrong languages were placed in to the landscape of our country by our Dreamings. Miriuwung and Gajerrong are closely related, but still different, languages. They are part of a group of languages called Jerrag by linguists<sup>7</sup>.

---

<sup>4</sup> Shaw, B. 1981. *Pelican Dreaming*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

<sup>5</sup> Akerman, K. 1979. Material culture and trade in the Kimberleys today. In: Berndt, R. M. and Berndt, C. J., Eds. *Aborigines of the West Their Past and Their Present*. Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press. See also *Ben Ward & Others versus State of Western Australia & Others, Federal Court of Australia 1998, WAG 6001 OF 1995*.

<sup>6</sup> New Legend, p. 20 (details in footnote 3).

<sup>7</sup> Federal Court Decision 1998 (details in footnote 5).

Our old people used to follow our custom of changing to a different language when travelling in the country to which that language belongs. Today we still sing songs to our country, and talk to our ancestors on our country when we visit. Some ancestors sing back to us in the form of a bird.

Our country is connected to us through our kinship system, and our totems. All Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples have a skin name, which means they belong to one of 16 different skin groups in our kinship system. Within our skin system, clearly defined roles and obligations are accorded to different skin relations, whether or not the individuals are related by blood<sup>8</sup>. Mutual obligations of ritual, emotional, educational and economic accountability also come from our skin relationships. We like to give skin names to people who work closely with us so we can fit them into our system, and know how to relate to them. Animals, plants, waterholes, Dreaming ancestors, spirits and areas of country all have their own place in the skin system, often referred to as totems.

Within our culture, Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples inherit specific group and personal relationships, as well as rights and responsibilities to particular tracts of country known as Dawang. Dawawang are the people within a group who can speak for that part of our country, that Dawang. Our Dawang groups are responsible for the upkeep of the land and for protection of sites of cultural significance for the community according to traditional Laws and customs handed down from the *Ngarranggarni*. Sometimes anthropologists call our Dawang groups clans or estate groups. Here are the Dawang groups for the different parts of our country in the conservation parks:

<i>Conservation park</i>	<i>Also known as</i>	<i>Dawang Group</i>
Mijing	Ningbing Range	Wardanybeng
Jemandi-Winingim	Weaber Range	Wardanybeng
Goomiyig <sup>9</sup>	Pincombe Range, Cave Springs Range	Bigainbang
Barrberm <sup>10</sup>	Zimmerman Range	Wiram
Ngamoowalem	Livistona Range	Jigoomirri, Galamanda
Darram	Packsaddle Swamp	Yirralalem, Balaboorr
Wawoolem	Packsaddle Springs	Yirralalem

Our Elders have an important role in our culture. Only old people understand the Law in its totality, and senior cultural leaders are the key players and executive decision-makers within our contemporary Aboriginal politics, community development and cultural

<sup>8</sup> New Legend (details in footnote 3).

<sup>9</sup> The spelling agreed for the new conservation park at Goomiyig in the Ord Final Agreement is Goomig.

<sup>10</sup> The spelling agreed for the new conservation park at Barrberm in the Ord Final Agreement is Barrbem.

affairs in the region<sup>11</sup>. In Miriuwung and Gajerrong culture, senior men and women have a responsibility for different aspects of our Law and culture. We have a Women's Law Ground near Kununurra where we gather for cultural meetings during the cold time. Women are the custodians of their own Dreaming stories, sacred sites, song cycles, dances, paintings and ceremonies. Men's Law is defined by the ceremonies, song cycles Dreaming stories and dances that detail the exclusive responsibility of initiated men, most of which is stringently withheld from others. Men and women are prohibited from coming in contact with the sacred sites and ceremonies of one another at various times and places. Men and women often need to travel in different vehicles when visiting different parts of our country. Some important aspects of our culture can only be discussed between men, or only between women.

### Our history

Miriwun Rock Shelter, which is now under water in Lake Argyle, shows we have been present on our country for at least 18,000 years. The archaeologists tell us that excavations showed that our people have been hunting and gathering the same type of food in that area for more than 18,000 years, including wallabies, possums, bandicoots, lizards, rodents, molluscs, reptiles, catfish and eggs.

Although some *gardiya* (European) explorers passed through our land and sea country in the nineteenth century, the first settlers did not arrive until after 1880<sup>12</sup>. The first station founded and stocked was Ord River—more than one million hectares that was taken up in 1884. Invanhoe, Rosewood, Lissadel, Argyle and Carlton Hill leases were all taken up and stocked by 1893 by groups of pastoralists including the Durack, Hart, Kilfoyle and other families. Wyndham, the first and only town in the area for a long time, was established in 1886.

Our people suffered greatly during the first 50 years of *gardiya* occupation of our country. We mounted resistance against European intrusions in the form of raids on stations, cattle spearing, and physical retreat to less accessible locales such as the rugged sandstone country. We call this period the 'shooting time' when many of our people in the East Kimberley were killed by settlers and others. Others were taken away to prisons, for use as divers in the pearling industry, and to ration stations at Moola Bulla and Violet Valley. Historical records show that at least 20 multiple killings of Aboriginal people occurred in the East Kimberley between 1884 and 1926, not including killings that were carried out between 1886 and 1892 relating to the Kimberley goldfields and those massacres where no official record was made. The Forrest River massacre in 1926 killed large numbers of our people<sup>13</sup>. Many places where these massacres occurred are on or near our new conservation parks.

---

<sup>11</sup> New Legend (details in footnote 3).

<sup>12</sup> History summarised from Federal Court Decision 1998 (details in footnote 5).

<sup>13</sup> Green, N. 1995. *Forrest River Massacre*. Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Press. Shaw, B. 1991. *Bush Time Station Time*. Underdale: University of South Australia, Aboriginal Studies Key Centre.

### Ningbing Massacres

Soon after Grant was able to walk and run about, William Weaber a German station manager together with his brother and a number of white and Aboriginal station people from Queensland took up Ningbing Station, in 1907-08. Grant witnessed these persons round up many of his local group, most of whom were shot subsequently after he, his sister and their mother were removed from the scene.

*Grant Ngabidj story as told to Bruce Shaw<sup>14</sup>.*

Our country also suffered greatly from the start of the pastoral industry. Most of the East Kimberley has very low carrying capacity for cattle (more than 125 hectares per head). Land used for pastoral leases has been degraded by the impact of cattle on the soil and pasture, and by high rates of soil erosion<sup>15</sup>.

### Pastoral Industry changes on our country in the early days

James Isdell in 1909 described how the pastoral industry affected our country

“In the early days before stocking, all the best pastoral country was full of game of all descriptions, numerous varieties of ground game, rats and bandicoots, opossums everywhere in the timber, emus in large mobs of 50 to 100, native companions in flocks, duck and flock pigeon in hundreds of thousands. In those days both Kimberleys were a paradise for natives all varieties of meat could be caught with little labour... All this is now changed, stocking up the country has completely destroyed and hunted all the ground game. You can travel for weeks without seeing a sign of emus, native companions or plain pigeons. Opossums have totally disappeared. Only a few ducks and kangaroos can occasionally be seen. Natives have no meat, so is it any wonder that they have taken to cattle killing to feed their women and children. Years ago, during the wet season you could get hundreds of different varieties of herbs and vegetables, which were the yearly medicine for the Aborigines that kept their bodily system in good health. Stock have eaten out and killed all the native vegetables.”<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> *Pelican Dreaming* (details in footnote 4).

<sup>15</sup> Graham-Taylor, *the Ord River Scheme*.

<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Federal Court Decision 1998 (details in footnote 5).



Many Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples lived and worked on the Ivanhoe, Carlton and other cattle stations until the 'Pastoral Award' was introduced in 1968. We call this period 'station time'<sup>17</sup>. Although the pastoral industry depended heavily on our labour during this period, our living and working conditions were terrible. Aboriginal employees on pastoral leases received little more than rations, and some wages were withheld in trust accounts that were never paid to us. The Government did not require that wages be paid to us on the cattle stations, and used police resources to enforce the employment permits and indentures held by pastoralists, apprehending and returning Aborigines to pastoral stations they had left<sup>18</sup>. Our accommodation on these stations was grossly inadequate—for example at Ivanhoe in 1961 nearly 90 Aboriginal people were crowded into three two-roomed huts, and one hut with five rooms<sup>19</sup>. Leprosy had a devastating effect on our people from the 1930s.

Nevertheless, living and working on these stations allowed us to keep our connections to our country strong, and to continue our 'bush life'. During station times, we came together for ceremonial, social and other business in the wet season, holiday season for the pastoralists. We visited our families who were living in the ranges and the bush away from the cattle station during the holiday season<sup>20</sup>. After the pastoral award was introduced in 1968, many of our workers and families were forced to leave the stations. We worked hard to find a way back to living on our country and were successful in gaining small leases from the pastoralists to establish some communities in the 1970s and 1980s: Yirralalem, Ningbing, Wirrjilwarim and Worrawoorrem are the ones near our parks. Dingo Springs, Yardungarll, was the first outstation won by Bulla in 1976<sup>21</sup>.

Our country attracted interest from Jewish people during the Nazi era. In 1939 the secretary and founder of the 'Freeland League for Jewish Territorial Colonisation' visited the Kimberley and the Jewish league became enthusiastic about the prospects of tropical irrigated agriculture in the Ord valley and produced the first plan to realise this scheme<sup>22</sup>. The proposal was well received by the WA Government but not the Commonwealth, and so never eventuated. Agriculture started in our country not long after, in 1941, when the Department of Agriculture began trial plots of irrigated pastures on the Ivanhoe Pastoral Lease, and subsequently established the Kimberley (agricultural) Research Station in 1945. Missionaries came into the East Kimberley in 1958. The Ord River Irrigation Project proposal was conceived in three stages: the first involving construction of the diversion dam near the Packsaddle and Ivanhoe Plains in 1962, irrigation of approximately 10,000 hectares of land and creation of the township of Kununurra. The 'second stage' began with construction of the main dam in 1969 at a site approximately 50 kilometres up-stream from the diversion dam on the Argyle Downs pastoral lease and a small expansion of irrigated land on the Packsaddle and Ivanhoe Plains. The 'third stage' was construction of the hydro-electric power station on the main dam in 1996 and reticulation of power to Kununurra, Wyndham and the Argyle Diamond Mine south of Lake Argyle. The area of land now under irrigation is approximately 14,500 hectares.

---

<sup>17</sup> *Bush Time Station Time* (details in footnote 11).

<sup>18</sup> Federal Court Decision 1998 (details in footnote 5).

<sup>19</sup> Kimberley Land Council. 2004. *Ord Stage 1 Fix the past Move to the future. An Aboriginal Social and Economic Impact Assessment of the Ord River Irrigations Project Stage 1*. Kununurra: Kimberley Land Council.

<sup>20</sup> Federal Court Decision 1998 (details in footnote 5).

<sup>21</sup> *Countrymen* (see details in footnote 2).

<sup>22</sup> Graham-Taylor, S. 1982. A critical history of the Ord River Project. In: Davidson, B. R. and Graham-Taylor, S., Eds. *Lessons from the Ord*. Sydney: Policy Monographs, Centre for Independent Studies.

The Ord irrigation scheme impacted heavily on our country, culture and our people. The diversion dam was built on Darram, an important story place. Impacts on the country included loss of the big floods that used to keep our country clean, changes to vegetation, siltation, increased sedimentation in the Cambridge Gulf, restrictions on fish movements in the river, and the spread of weeds<sup>23</sup>. During the 1960s, our traditional connection to the land was denied under a racially discriminatory legislative and administrative regime in which Aboriginal people were governed without our consent. The Ord irrigation project was conceived and executed without reference to or recognition of the rights and interests of Aboriginal people in the region. No consultation occurred with traditional owners and apparently no thought was given to the impact that a development of this scale would have on the Aboriginal people. We suffered loss of our traditional lands and sacred sites, as well as cultural and social loss. Some of these impacts are now being redressed through the Ord Final Agreement (OFA), negotiated as a result of the recognition of our native title rights and the Government's desire to expand the area of agriculture (see page 26).

Our current period of political and cultural renaissance really began in 1978 with the formation of the Kimberley Land Council (KLC), to take up the fight for recognition of our land and cultural rights. Disputes over proposed mines at Noonkanbah and on two important sites near Lake Argyle galvanised us to get organised. The Argyle diamond mine disturbed a woman's sacred site—the diamonds were the remnants of a Dreamtime Barramundi's fat, scales and eggs<sup>24</sup>. Kimberley Aboriginal people held the Ngumpan Culture Festival in 1984, and from that started two new organisations to support Law and culture—the Kimberley Aboriginal Land and Culture Centre and the Kimberley Language Resource Centre. Many big culture festivals have been held since then. In 1991, KLC held a bush meeting at Crocodile Hole in the East Kimberley, which led to a significant report detailing our aspirations for cultural, social and economic development. In Kununurra we established the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Cultural Centre to keep our language and culture strong. In 1992, the High Court in the case of *Mabo & Others v State of Queensland & Others (No. 2)* recognised that Indigenous people possess a form of native title defined by their traditional Laws and customs. We lodged the first claim for recognition of Miriuwung and Gajerrong native title rights in 1994.

### Old People are the Boss

Well the guddeeyu government gotta list to us, he think he's know it all. Blackfella way, old people are the boss. They know the country, and they know the Law. That government there, they just talking from here, he never bin over there. He don't know the country, he just trying to destroy the country. They're fighting for their country in there, you know.

<sup>23</sup> Vernes, T. 2006. Ord: Case Study for Inappropriate Development and Poor Planning. In: Hill, R., Golson, K., Lowe, P. A.; Mann, M. K., Hayes, S., and Blackwood, J. E., Eds. *Kimberley Appropriate Economies Roundtable Forum Proceedings Convened 11-13 October 2005, Fitzroy Crossing, WA, by the Kimberley Land Council, Environs Kimberley and Australian Conservation Foundation*. Cairns: Australian Conservation Foundation.

<sup>24</sup> New Legend, 85 (details in footnote 3).

Oh, some place people feel let down, and they're crying till they get that country, and that station that they owned it. I think what I'm saying to you, (successful native title claimants in other areas) they got it because they're very strong over there. And we should really, we're coming to it too.

*Button Jones, Miriuwung Traditional Owner 2004*<sup>25</sup>

### Our native title rights<sup>26</sup>

Our native title rights and interests as Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples have been recognised over large parts of the north-east Kimberley, including in our new joint-managed conservation parks. Our rights are based on our continuing connection to country in line with our traditional Laws and customs, which have been kept alive since before the British declared sovereignty over Western Australia in 1829. Recognition of our rights was made by 'consent determinations'—agreements reached with governments and other parties through 12 years of hard work between 1994 and 2006.

### History of our native title claims

Miriuwung, Gajerrong and Gija peoples lodged two native title claims in 1994. The first claim (MG#1) covered mainly reserves, leasehold and Crown lands. The second claim (MG#2) covered mainly pastoral lease land.

MG#1 was heard by the Federal Court over 83 days in 1997. A determination of native title was made by Justice Lee in the Federal Court in November 1998, which recognised that Miriuwung, Gajerrong and Gija people are the traditional owners of the land claimed. Native title rights were found to have survived in areas where they had not been extinguished by other interests.

The decision was appealed to the Full Court of the Federal Court, and then to the High Court.

---

<sup>25</sup> New Legend, 87 (details in footnote 3).

<sup>26</sup> Information about native title is drawn from the following court decisions and Kimberley Land Council Newsletters:

- o *Ben Ward & Others versus State of Western Australia & Others, Federal Court of Australia 1998, WAG 6001 OF 1995.*
- o *Attorney General of the Northern Territory versus Ward & Others, Federal Court of Australia 2003, FCAFC 283.*
- o *Ben Ward & Others versus State of Western Australia & Others, Federal Court of Australia 2006, FCA 1848.*
- o *Submissions on Behalf of the Applicant in Support of the Proposed Consent Determination and the Nomination of the Miriuwung and Gajerrong #4 (Native Title Prescribed Body Corporate) Aboriginal Corporation in Ben Ward & Others versus State of Western Australia & Others, Federal Court of Australia 2004, WAD 124.*
- o *Kimberley Land Council Newsletters Number 1 2004, Number 2 2005, Number 4 2005, and Number 12 2006.*

Arguments focused on how matters like pastoral leases, mining leases and reserves affected native title. Justice Lee's findings about the law and the connection of our people to our country were not challenged or overturned in these appeals. In 2002 the High Court found that native title could co-exist with pastoral and mining leases, but was extinguished over nature reserves. The High Court sent the claim back to the Federal Court for a final determination, which was achieved in December 2003 by agreement.

MG#2 was re-lodged in June 2004 and called MG#4 (MG#3 is on the Northern Territory side). The MG#4 native title claim was made over parts of our country covered by three pastoral leases—Carlton Hills Station, Ivanhoe Station and the WA part of Rosewood Station. The claim also covers some reserves inside these pastoral leases, with the total area being 6,758 square kilometres.

Negotiations about MG#4 were put to one side while we worked out the OFA about Ord Stage 2, which was finished in October 2005. The Ord Global Negotiations and Ord Final Agreement ensured our participation as traditional owners in significant discussions about the future of our country. Compensation was also provided for past acts done in creating the Ord Scheme which had disregarded our presence and had great impact on our traditional lands (see next section). Following the signing of the OFA, a further year of negotiation between the parties resulted in agreement to recognise native title over most of the MG#4 claim area (Map 1).

### What the native title determinations mean for our conservation lands

Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples have exclusive possession native title rights over four community lease areas: Wirrjilwarim (adjacent to Ngamoowalem Conservation Park); Ningbing (adjacent to Mijing Conservation Park); Kumbarumba (Goorrboome, near Barrberm Conservation Park); and Flying Fox, Worrawoorrem (near Darram Conservation Park).

The Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples will share rights and interests in the pastoral lease land, including those parts of the pastoral leases which now form the six new conservation parks. These rights include

- a) the right to access and move about the land;
- b) the right to hunt and fish, to gather and use the resources of the land and waters such as food and medicinal plants and trees, timber, charcoal, ochre, stone and wax, and to have access to and use of water on or in the land and waters;
- c) the right to live, being to enter and remain on the land, to camp and erect temporary shelters and other structures for that purpose, and to travel over and visit any part of the land and waters;
- d) the right to light camp fires;
- e) the right to do the following activities:
  - i. engage in cultural activities on the land;
  - ii. conduct ceremonies;
  - iii. hold meetings;
  - iv. teach the physical and spiritual attributes of places and areas of importance on or in the land and waters;
  - v. participate in cultural practices relating to birth and death, including burial rights; and
  - vi. record, conserve, maintain and curate sites and activities arising in subparagraphs (i) to (v) above;

- f) the right to have access to, maintain and protect places and areas of importance on or in the land and waters, including rock art, engraving sites and stone arrangements;
- g) the right to make decisions about the use and enjoyment of the land and waters by the Native Title Holders; and
- h) the right to share or exchange subsistence and other traditional resources obtained on or from the land and waters.

In relation to flowing, tidal and underground waters, native title holders have non-exclusive rights to:

- (a) hunt, gather and fish on, in and from the flowing, tidal and underground waters for personal, domestic, social, cultural, religious, spiritual, ceremonial or communal needs but not for commercial purposes;
- (b) take, use and enjoy the flowing, tidal and underground waters and natural resources and fish in such waters for personal, domestic, social, cultural, religious, spiritual, ceremonial or communal needs but not for commercial purposes.

Our native title rights have been extinguished over some leases for gravel and for grazing. Our native title rights have also been extinguished over the nature reserves adjacent to our new conservation parks—Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve (adjacent to Ngamoowalem Conservation Park); Point Spring Nature Reserve (adjacent to Jemandi-Winingim Conservation Park). Native title has also been extinguished over Mirima National Park and Darram and Wawoolem conservation parks, which were formerly reserves. There is no native title right to hunt fauna or gather plants within 800 metres of Lake Kununurra or Lake Argyle.

Although we recognise and respect the court's decision about how tenure changes have meant that our native title rights in those areas cannot be recognised, we still have connection through our traditional Laws and customs to all our country. We are very interested in working in partnership with others to make sure our country and culture is protected regardless of tenure.

### Exercising our native title rights

We have established two Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs) to represent our native title interests—Miriuwung Gajerrong PBC #1 and Miriuwung Gajerrong PBC #4. The way we use our native title rights and interests has to be in accordance with the laws of the State and the Commonwealth, and with our own traditional Laws and customs. We must respect the rights of pastoralists under their pastoral leases. Everyone has to act reasonably in using their rights and co-existing on the land. The rights of agencies such as Telstra over its installations are protected.

### Justice Lee's findings

I was impressed by evidence of profoundly held views and beliefs given in a forthright manner without embroidery. Evidence given by senior and respected people, and by others who deferred to them, produced a very clear impression of witnesses who understood that they shared membership of a distinct social group or community identified by common beliefs, mutual recognition of membership, shared use of, or reference to, the Miriuwung or Gajerrong languages, and observance, as members of that community, of practices based on traditional Laws or customs. Evidence of an organized community which observed traditional practices, Laws or customs was most convincing<sup>27</sup>.

### Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples talk about their native title rights

The Ngarranggarni is the Law for that country. My father gave me a mandywa, which is a dance, for that Ngarranggarni. I run that dance, meaning I am the boss for that dance, because my father gave it to me and I am the last one to hold it, along with Alan Griffiths. When I am finished my son will be the boss for that mandywa. Having that mandywa and Ngarranggarni means that I am responsible for that country that it comes from. I have to make sure that the Law for that country, which comes from the Ngarranggarni, is followed. That is the Law for Gajirrabeng. I also have to pass that dance on so that the young people will know the Law.

*Paddy Carlton (2004)*<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Quote from *Ben Ward & Others versus State of Western Australia & Others*, Federal Court of Australia 1998, WAG 6001 OF 1995.

<sup>28</sup> Transcript of submission made in relation to native title hearings, held on file by MG Corporation.

The Law comes from the country and controls the Miriuwung tribe. The Law comes from Ngarranggarni, the Dreaming. Ngarranggarni comes from the country. Ngarranggarni provides the reasons and rules, the Law, for how we look after country. The Law is taught by the old people to the young people and is passed on through generations. People can't have country unless they have the Law, because the Law teaches us about the country and how to protect and manage it. When old people say you have to know about country, it means you have to have Law for that country.

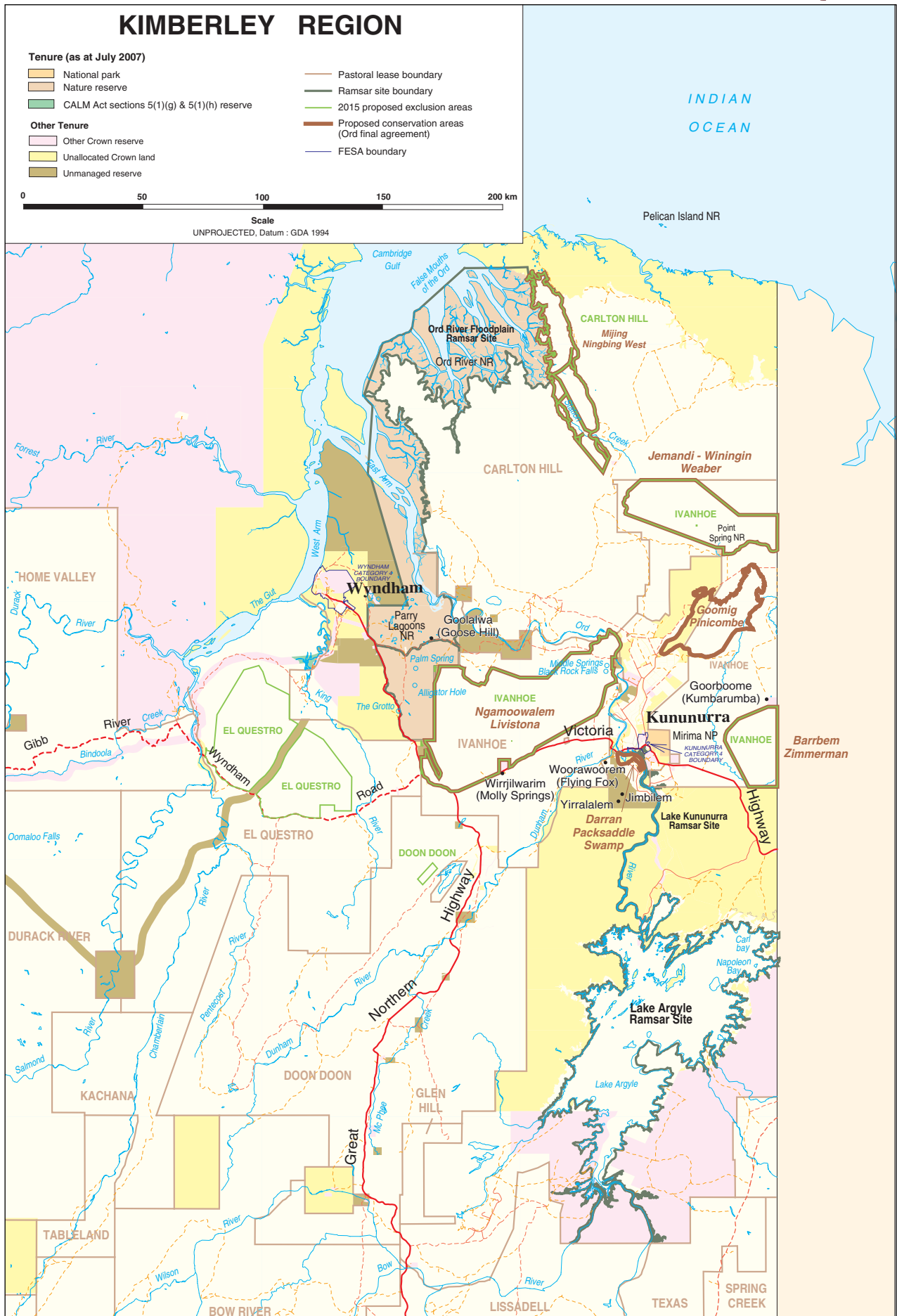
*Ben Ward (2004)*

---

<sup>29</sup> Transcript of submission made in relation to native title hearings, held on file by MG Corporation.







**Map 2** Conservation parks, nature reserves and other features of interest, Ord Final Agreement region of the East Kimberley, WA.

## Ord Final Agreement and the conservation parks

We, the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples of the northern East Kimberley, were not consulted or involved in the development of Stage 1 of the Ord River Irrigation Area project which commenced in the 1960s. When the WA Government opened negotiations with us about 'Ord Stage 2', a proposed expansion of the area under irrigation, we told the Government that it first had to recognise and address the impacts of Stage 1 before we would talk about Ord Stage 2.

In early 2003, following an agreement between the Kimberley Land Council and the WA Government, the Government funded an Aboriginal Social and Economic Impact Assessment (ASEIA) report in relation to Ord Stage 1. This report made 40 recommendations for actions to address the identified impacts. We subsequently commenced the Ord Global Negotiations with the State, seeking an agreement to address:

- ◇ Government acquisition of land for future agricultural and other development;
- ◇ compensation to the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples for the compulsory acquisition of the land;
- ◇ final settlement of native title claims; and
- ◇ reparations for the impact of Ord Stage 1 including an appropriate response to the findings of the ASEIA report.

The Ord Final Agreement (OFA), executed on 6 October 2005, was the outcome of comprehensive negotiations with the WA Government over two years. The OFA is a broad package of measures that provides a platform for partnerships between the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, the State Government, industry and developers for the benefit of the wider community and the region. The OFA recognises the injustices of the past, in particular the ongoing impact of the flooding of Lake Argyle, while structurally shifting the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples' social, economic and political position for the future. The OFA provides that this structural shift is to be achieved by a 'MG Benefits Package', which includes the creation of the resourced Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation (MG Corporation), a long-term investment trust, community and commercial lands, the opportunity for joint management of the conservation parks and a range of social and economic development programs.

Key features of the OFA are now underway, including:

- ◇ Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation (MG Corporation) is receiving and managing the benefits transferred under the OFA, including funding for 10 years to operate an economic development unit. This provides potential for future jobs and training. In this context, over the past two years, we have established a complex new governance structure and, aside from the main MG Corporation, there are three subsidiary companies that will hold on trust the benefits of the Ord Final Agreement. The representative Governing Committee is shaped by a traditional cultural structure. The 32-member Governing Committee is made up of two representatives from each of the 16 dawang, or traditional land areas, which make up the Miriuwung and Gajerrong native title lands. The benefits are to be shared by all Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples for community purposes. No individual payments can be made.

- ◇ A charitable trust will receive \$14 million over a 10-year period for investment.
- ◇ Five per cent of serviced farm lots will be transferred to MG Corporation, with an option to purchase a further 7.5 per cent. Release of this land is on hold following the deferral of expressions of interest for the development of Ord Stage 2 by the WA Government.
- ◇ An Aboriginal development package (ADP) must be negotiated between the developer of Ord Stage 2 and the MG Corporation to include an Aboriginal employment strategy with targets, opportunities for businesses to be owned or operated by Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, consultation about the project design to minimise negative social and cultural impacts, procedures for protection of Aboriginal heritage during development, and an opportunity for Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples to acquire a further five per cent interest in the project. The ADP also depends on the expressions of interest process, and is also currently on hold.
- ◇ Other commercial land—commercial, industrial and residential land in and around Kununurra—will be transferred to MG Corporation. These transfers are under way.
- ◇ Community Land—including 19 Community Living Areas (CLAs), eight of which form part of the 55,000-hectare Yardungarrll block—will be transferred as freehold title. These transfers are under way. A further four CLAs are being transferred from the Aboriginal Lands Trust (ALT): Ribinyeng, Worrawoorrem, Kumbarumba (Goorrboome) and Wirrjilwarim.
- ◇ Ord Enhancement Scheme (OES) provides for the commitment of \$11.195 million over four years to leverage funds to address the recommendations of the ASEIA report. The OES has five key objectives:
  - ◇ Provide the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples with organisation and financial resources to implement the ASEIA recommendations.
  - ◇ Facilitate the involvement of Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples in local and regional decision-making.
  - ◇ Provide a source of supplementary funding for development in the areas of identified need: health and well-being; housing; employment, education and training; municipal services; conservation and land management; family and community services; justice; and culture and heritage.
  - ◇ Establish a mechanism that enables service providers to regularly report on their progress.
  - ◇ Develop new and sustainable partnerships and relationships between Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, governments and the broader community.

The OES is governed through a management committee with seven Miriuwung-Gajerrong representatives and a representative of the Kimberley Development Commission (KDC). Many government agencies are involved in addressing the needs in the ASEIA report, including the East Kimberley Health Services; the departments of Education, Housing and Works, Environment and Conservation, Community Development and Justice; the Shire of Wyndham; TAFE and the KDC.

- ◇ Native title discussions under the OFA resulted in the State recognising that we, the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, are the traditional owners and native title holders, and have now resulted in the finalisation of the determinations discussed in the previous section. OFA settles all compensation claims in relation to past impacts on native title.
- ◇ Significant areas of conservation lands will be jointly managed under provisions in the OFA. We will work cooperatively with the Department of Water to jointly manage reserve land along the eastern and southern shores of Lake Argyle (approximately 127,000 ha). We will work cooperatively with DEC to jointly manage six new conservation parks in the region, and other new parks created in the future, and the five existing parks or reserves on Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples' traditional country when funding becomes available (Map 2).

### Conservation parks in the OFA

The six new conservation areas created under the OFA will be held under freehold title by the Miriuwung-Gajerrong Trustees Pty Ltd and leased to the State to be jointly managed as a conservation park<sup>30</sup> by the MG Corporation and the Executive Director of CALM (now Director General of DEC). Under the OFA:

- ◇ \$1 million will be available to set up the joint management arrangements and develop a plan of management
- ◇ \$1 million will be available for infrastructure in the six new parks
- ◇ \$4 million will be available over four years to operate the parks, with a funding review after four years
- ◇ Employment and training will be available for Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples with a goal of 50 per cent of parks jobs to be held by Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples within 10 years
- ◇ Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples have right of access to the parks for cultural purposes
- ◇ Leases will be for 200 years with peppercorn rental
- ◇ Joint management arrangements and leases will be reviewed every 10 years.

Under the OFA, the parties agreed that the conservation parks “shall be jointly managed by the Executive Director<sup>31</sup> and the MG Corporation on behalf of the MG People”<sup>32</sup>. These two parties are required to jointly manage the land for the following objectives:

- ◇ Preservation and promotion of the Aboriginal cultural and heritage values.
- ◇ Preservation and promotion of the natural and environmental values, including native plants and animals.

---

<sup>30</sup> The provisions regarding the conservation parks leases and management form Schedules 7 and 8 to the OFA.

<sup>31</sup> At the time of the agreement, this referred to the Executive Director of Conservation and Land Management (CALM). The relevant position is now the Director General of the Department of Environment and Conservation.

<sup>32</sup> OFA, Schedule 8, 2.1 (a).

- ◇ Preservation and promotion of archaeological values.
- ◇ Provision of recreational facilities and facilitation of recreational activities.
- ◇ Access to and use of the land by Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples in accordance with their culture and the other objectives.
- ◇ Employment, service provision and training opportunities.
- ◇ Commercial opportunities for the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples and the MG Corporation consistent with the management of the land as a conservation park.
- ◇ Implementation, monitoring, assessment and audit of the effectiveness of the management plan.
- ◇ Provision, construction, repair, maintenance and replacement of buildings and infrastructure on the land.

The Director General of DEC and the MG Corporation are also required to use their best endeavours to develop an initial management plan in respect of all the new conservation lands. The agreement provides for the establishment of a Regional Park Council—Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council (YDRPC)—and park sub-councils for each of the six new conservation areas. The management of the lands are to be administered by the Director General jointly with the MG Corporation through YDRPC, through which the management plans and related policies will be prepared, prioritised, implemented and monitored. Parks sub-councils are responsible for development and review of the management sub-plans for each of their areas.

The Director General is required to consult with the regional park council in relation to budgets for the management plan, and to provide annual reports on the implementation and operation of the management plan. The OFA establishes processes for holding meetings, making appointments to the park councils, quorums and voting arrangements. The regional park council is required to develop, an Aboriginal training and employment program for the parks.

## Management planning for the parks

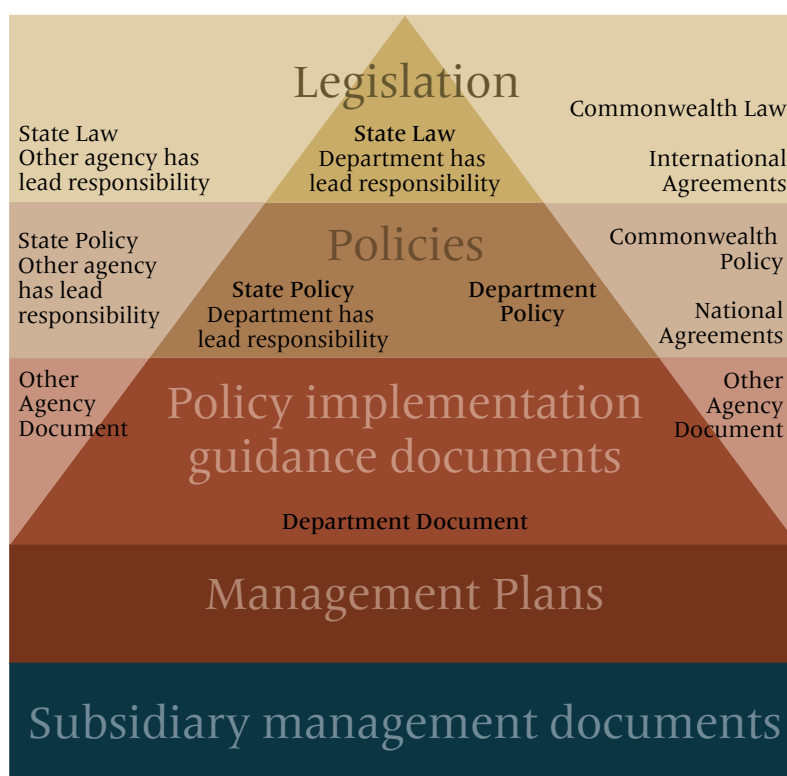
### MG Corporation and DEC

The arrangements described above in the OFA place considerable responsibility on DEC's Director General, and the MG Corporation (Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation) for developing an initial management plan. The MG Corporation acts on behalf of the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, through our governance structures based on traditional Law and custom.

DEC's role in relation to management planning is supported by the Conservation Commission of Western Australia. The Conservation Commission has published interim guidelines for the preparation of management plans for terrestrial conservation reserves (referred to here as the Western Australian Government Planning Guidelines (WAGPG)), which provide clear guidance to DEC about policies and implementation processes. The key concepts are the vertical integration of legislation and policy into the plans, and the horizontal integration on a regionally geographical basis (Figure 1).

Relevant legislation includes the *Conservation and Land Management Act 1984*, the *Local Government Act 1995*, the *Wildlife Conservation Act 1950* and the *Fish Resources Management Act 1994*. At the top level of management planning, important relevant policies referred to include the IUCN Guidelines for Protected Area Management Category and Governance Type; the Planning Policy Statement and the Community Involvement Policy Statement.

Vertical integration means bringing relevant laws and policies into the plans. For example, in relation to environmental weeds, there is a National Weed Strategy and associated plans for weeds of national significance. Other policies are relevant to matters such as feral animals, tourism, cultural heritage and fire. Horizontal integration means considering the management of the conservation areas in relation to surrounding areas. For example, the 'ecological system' may be considered, so that the planning of the conservation area is linked in with planning of corridors for wildlife movement between conservation areas in the region.



**Figure 1** Management planning heirarchal structure WA State Planning Guidelines.

A generic set of headings is provided in the WAGPG, with detail under each, which may vary for particular types of conservation lands:

- Introduction: overview, regional context, values, public role etc.
- Management direction and purpose: vision, management arrangements with Aboriginal people, performance etc.
- Managing the natural environment: plants, animals, climate, weeds etc.
- Managing cultural heritage: Indigenous and non-Indigenous
- Managing recreation and tourism
- Managing resource use
- Involving the community
- Implementing the plan

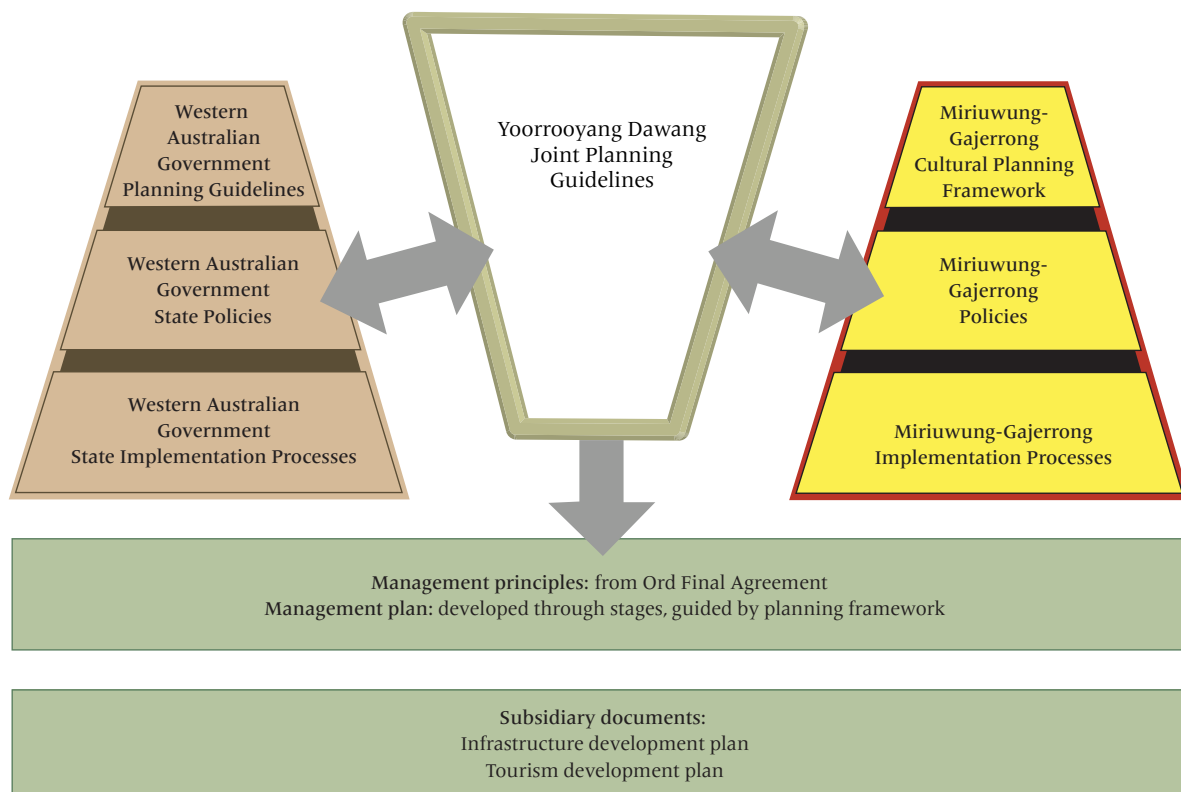
Although the WAGPG are very comprehensive from the State perspective, they do not take account of Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples’ traditional Laws and customs. As such, we felt that if we just used these guidelines, our Miriuwung-Gajerrong traditional Laws and customs would not get equal treatment in the management planning process.

After some discussions, an agreement was made between DEC, MG Corporation, the Conservation Commission and the CSIRO (a national research organisation) to work together on an innovative approach to developing the management plan through a staged process including:

- ◇ Stage one – development of a Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework which documents the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples’ approaches; and concurrent development of a plain English version of the WAGPG that can be easily understood by the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples.
- ◇ Stage two – development of a joint Miriuwung-Gajerrong–DEC planning framework that brings the two approaches together. After adoption by the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council, the joint framework will be known as the Yoorrooyang Dawang Joint Planning Guidelines (YDJPG).
- ◇ Stage three – using the YDJPG to produce the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council Management Plan (YDRPCMP) for the parks.

Figure 2 illustrates these arrangements.

Stage one—the MG Cultural Planning Framework—was undertaken in 2007. Work on stages two and three has commenced and will be ongoing through 2008–09.

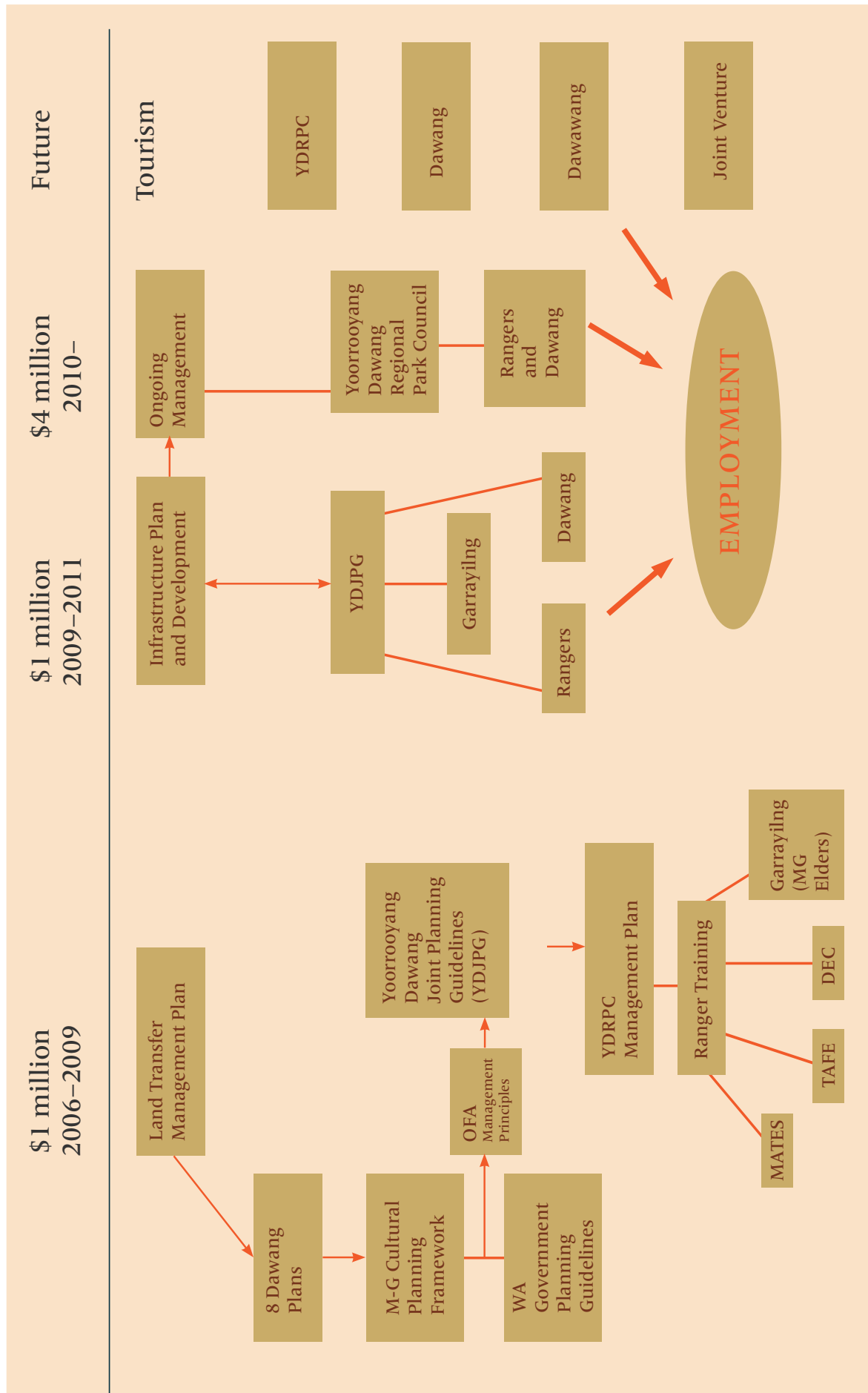


**Figure 2** Joint planning guidelines to drive management planning between DEC and the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples.

### Land transfer and infrastructure development

The OFA requires that the title for the land in the conservation parks be transferred to the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, to be held by the Dawang Land Trust. The funding for the parks through the OFA is allocated in three areas: \$1 million for the land transfers and development of the management plans; \$1 million for the construction of infrastructure on the parks; and \$4 million for ongoing management over four years. Tourism businesses on the parks for Dawang will be a longer-term outcome from these processes. Figure 3 illustrates the sequence of these activities and the relevant outcomes.





**Figure 3** Sequence of planning, infrastructure and tourism development, Ord Final Agreement conservation parks.

# SECTION THREE

## OUR DAWANG VISIONS FOR THE CONSERVATION PARKS AND NATURE RESERVES



## Goomiyig Park (Pincombe and Cave Springs Ranges)

### *Our vision for the park*

Our goals for Goomiyig are:

- ◇ to have all the Dawawang strongly connected to their traditional country
- ◇ for visitors to come and enjoy our country
- ◇ to look at the issue of our rangers looking after our country.

Getting connected back to our country is really important, so that our young people can know their culture, language and country.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities for park planning*

Cultural knowledge and information about Goomiyig is mainly held by our older people. We have a strong responsibility to learn as much as we can about Goomiyig from them now. Bush camps and day trips on country are the best way to do this.

We need to look at the issue of the Goomiyig park boundary very carefully. The boundary seems to be too close to the hill, not leaving any flat land or springs where we can hold our bush camps and conduct our cultural business and education. We would like the boundary to be moved away from the hill so that the park includes some flat land.

The Martin Bluff hills to the south of Martin's Gap have many paintings in them, and should be part of the park so visitor access and tourist businesses in this area can be properly managed. On the Northern Territory side, the Northern Territory Government talks about extending the Keep River Park as far as Niligem lagoon. We'd like to discuss that, as Niligem is a really important place for us.

Other issues that we need to address are visitor facilities (Cave Springs), tourism businesses, access roads into the park, fire management, cattle, weeds and pests, cultural recording and education, rangers, language, art and oral history.

Near to Goomiyig are places where a lot of our people were killed in the 'shooting times'. We need to be respectful of their spirits on country when we visit Goomiyig.

### *Our priorities*

Our highest priority is running bush camps and bush trips taking our older people out onto country to teach others.

We need to have some simple facilities so people can be comfortable—bough shed, toilet, some graded paths. Maggie Johns, Sheba Dignari and Blanche Flyingfox are three of the

most important people for us to spend time with on country. We need our rangers in place to be part of these trips.

We also need access roads that we can use to travel into the park for our cultural camps. We also need to work on all the issues above, like fire management and weeds. Some of our country is so grown over with bush that we can't recognise it.

### *Steps and resources*

For Goomiyig we need some on-the-ground surveys to consider access and boundary issues. We need some advice from and discussions with government agencies about the options for addressing access and boundary issues. We also need resources for the Goomiyig Dawang and DEC to start our bush camps and trips onto country.

### *Goomiyig Dawawang talk about the cultural values and history of the park*



*“Getting back on country is our main goal, getting connected back.”*

*Stephanie Boombi, Cave Springs,  
19 August 2007*

*“Crocodile, turtle, barramundi, sugar gliders, emu and kangaroo paintings are all in those caves in the Martin Bluff hills.”*

*Juju Wilson, Kununurra,  
20 August 2007*

*“Goose Dreaming here, come through Martin Gap, long time ago, Dreaming time.”*

*Toby Banmar,  
Niligem,  
19 August 2007*





“ They were shooting them, all the shooting time came through here, Bucket Spring, Police Hole, Newry, over here, all the bones in the caves. They got picked up in the 60s and 70s, mission mob. Spirits be around tonight, bit hard, kids better not go out tonight.”

Toby Banmar,  
Niligem,  
19 August 2007

“ Can they extend out from the hill, a couple of metres or something. It’s too close to the hill, how are people going to live, hanging on the side of the hill. ”



Stephanie Boombi,  
Goomiyig,  
19 August 2007

Left and below: Car parked at end of fenceline, approximate location of Goomiyig park boundary on east.





*“In Keep River, they talking about extending that park, taking in Niligem where we was camping now.”*

*Stephanie Boombi,  
Niligem,  
20 August 2007*

*Left: Gilbert Riley fishing at Niligem,  
20 August 2007.*

## Barrberrm Park (Zimmerman Range)

### *Our vision for the park*

Our goals for Barrberrm are to:

- ◇ look after our country
- ◇ take visitors there and show them the country, the stories, how our people are connected to the area and lived there in the past
- ◇ build up tourism businesses based in the park
- ◇ involve our young people in managing the area and understanding their roles and responsibilities.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities for park planning*

Barrberrm is a really important story place for sugar-bag and lemoogeng (blue tongue lizard) Dreaming. We need to visit our country to keep our stories strong and to keep in touch with our old people on that country.

Barrberrm country has grown over with trees, shrubs and grass. We want to burn the grass so we can see our country clearly. Fire management is an important issue. We want to spend time out on our country holding bush camps for connecting with our stories and old people on Barrberrm.

We'd like the park management to work in with our community at Kumbarumba. We'd like to build up tourism businesses in the park. We have ideas for a museum and cultural centre on country where we can take tourists and help them understand how people lived in the past. The best place for this centre is at Kumbarumba (Goorrboome Community). Other issues that need work are rangers, cattle, weeds and pests, cultural recording and education, language and oral history.

Our park links up with the Keep River National Park in the Territory. We'd like to talk about how we might be able to work together across the border.

### *Our priorities*

We'd like to get our rangers in place, and start holding bush camps out in country with our old people. We need both men and women, and younger and older people, to work as rangers. Our rangers should team up with the rangers working in the Keep River and other parks nearby in the Northern Territory. We'd also like to develop plans for how we can build tourism businesses in the park. We need better access for both those priorities.

### *Steps and resources*

We need more discussion among the Dawang about how to start building up our rangers and tourist businesses, and how to link in with Goomiyig Park, the Kumbarumba community (Goorrboome) and the Keep River National Park.

### *Barrberrm Dawawang talk about the cultural values and history of the park*

*“Used to be Dreamtime story water here. This country never get dry. Coming all the way to him, lemoogeng. Looking for rock. Come in swimming Kumbarumba now, Barrberrm. Lemoogeng. Chased him, he never get drowned, strong one. He bin come in swimming all the way. Watch him from the gerdewoon. He's in that hill now. Climb up the mountain and sit down. That's the story.”*

*Blanche Flyingfox, Barrberrm, 21 August 2007*



*“ Sugar bag story here, sugar bag on the ants, under the ground, each ant has a bubble on it. Wet season, if you touch the sugar bag, or dig it up, will make a big wet. Not to touch it, will bring thunder and lightning, very bad wet season.”*

*Juju Wilson, Kununurra, 20 August 2007*



*“ Grass been grow, trees been grow. All the trees been grow, look different now.”*

*Sheba Dignari,  
Barrberrm,  
21 August 2007*

Right:  
Sheba Dignari,  
Barrberrm.



## Wawoolem and Darram Parks (Packsaddle Creek and Springs, Packsaddle Swamp)

### *Our vision for the park*

Our goals for these parks are to:

- ◇ protect the country and manage it
- ◇ pass on our Dreamtime stories, language and cultural knowledge to young people
- ◇ protect and maintain Aboriginal cultural knowledge for looking after country
- ◇ recognise our Dawang group for the country
- ◇ recognise our Dawang rules as the main ones for running this country
- ◇ build our capacity for self-management and self-determination in running our own country, and the younger Dawawang's pride and confidence to take over from us.

We want to run a tourism business at Yirralalem—our own business—where we can walk through and talk about country. We would like to take people along Wawoolem, Packsaddle Creek, up to Packsaddle Springs.

At Darram, our main goal is protecting the swamp, keeping it as close to nature as possible, and leaving it as a sanctuary for the birds to nest.

We'd like another business venture at Darram to run our own tours, but it needs board walks, and lots of planning, which will take time. Yirralalem is more straight forward, and more of a priority.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities for park planning*

Dawawang must own the park planning, by putting as much into it as possible, and making it suit their country. Our goal is running the park as closely as possible to our own rules and our own Laws.

Issues that need to be in the plan include tourism businesses, fire management, visitor management and safety, weeds and pests, cultural recording and education, rangers, protocols, oral history and cultural sites.

Yirralalem is full of sites—camping places, walking tracks, story places and cemeteries. Yirralalem is also a place where people used to hide from the police in the early days. People went bush to Yirralalem when they were told to by the authorities in the Second World War, when Wyndham was bombed. The history of Yirralalem at that time is important because it shows our connections to our country before *gardiya*, during first *gardiya* occupation, and still going on today.

We are concerned that the proposed Wawoolem (Packsaddle Creek) conservation area does not include the springs, and a lot of important sacred cultural sites around the springs. The boundary should be changed to make sure this area is included.

Darram is a big bird sanctuary for swamphens, magpie geese and other water birds. We'd like to really preserve it.

There are lots of Dreamings in the Carr Boyd Ranges all around us here—*lemoogeng* (blue tongue lizard) Dreaming, *gerdan* (frilly lizard) Dreaming, *goorrgorrjing* (tawny frogmouth) Dreaming.

### *Our priorities*

The sole reason we pushed for the park here is to protect our country and manage it.

All the issues mentioned above are important.

One of our most important goals is to have resources for bush trips with old people and young people to do cultural recording on country.

Tourism is important to us, because there's not going to be any Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) soon, so we have to look at ways of making some sort of income. A tourism development officer working in DEC or the MG Corporation would be good.

Rangers are a top priority—we need two, one on the business side and one on the management side.

### *Steps and resources*

We want to get started on our tourism business and our rangers, and getting out onto country for cultural recording. We'd like to make sure our training and employment strategy builds up the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, particularly our young people, for planning and other senior park management roles, not just ranger roles. We want to be able to take full responsibility for management of the park in the long term, supported by the necessary resources. We need to start finding resources now to manage our parks, including for example boats, vehicles and equipment.

The Stepping Stones tourism business development course is a good course and can help us in planning. DEC might be able to recruit a Miriuwung or Gajerrong cadet through the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations' National Indigenous Cadetship Project (NICP) to gain tertiary qualifications in planning and work for us in the parks.

*Yirralalem and Darram Dawawang talk about the cultural values and history of the park*

*“ All this used to be part of Ivanhoe Station. We just came and stopped here, put up our tents, they gave us our excision later.*

*There was a proposal to mine the sand here about 15 years ago, but we stopped that.”*

*Warren Gerrard, Yirralalem, 4 June 2007*



*“ Our family was living at Ivanhoe, then they came into town and camped at Lily Creek, after the equal pay, camped where the Celebrity Park is now.*



*Nearby Wawoolem is gerdan, the frilled lizard Dreaming. The lizard was chased through the country by a kind of fire-eating monster, a dragon, and came to rest there, near Jimbilem community.”*

*Helen Gerrard, Yirralalem, 4 June 2007*

*“ We used to fish with our mother here at the waterhole on the other side, grown thick with pandanus now, we mainly sit on this side, catch bream, catfish, barramundi. Bower bird's nest near here.*

*Our great great grandparents are buried here. They firstly put them in a tree to dry them out, paint them, have a big ceremony, put bones high up in a cave.*

*Goorrgorrjing flew up over here in the dreamtime, big hole now with lily roots and a big tree, brought the spring. Snake Dreaming is in Doondoon, continues right down. Janawen runs down the other side into Dunham River.”*

*Carol Hapke, Yirralalem, 4 June 2007*





Above: Janelle Ningamara, Nancy Dilyai, Matthew Ningamara in front of Garn-Garnbe (Barbeque Hill), near Yirralalem community, June 2007.

*“ We used to walk from Ivanhoe and Yirralalem then on Doondoon to Argyle, following the river up. We go fishing at Ivanhoe, Dad would take us bush to get kangaroo, tell us that’s medicine.”*

*Nancy Dilyai, Darram, 6 June 2007*

Below: Darram Conservation Park from Town Beach.



## Ngamoowalem Park (Livistona Range)

### *Our vision for the park*

We want the park at Ngamoowalem to keep our culture and country strong by sharing knowledge. This can be achieved through our Aboriginal rangers and our Dawawang people on the ground sharing stories and keeping them strong.

We also want the park at Ngamoowalem to manage tourists—there are so many people coming here, we need a lot more management. We emphasise tourism management because this is an immediate pressure that needs to be controlled. We'd like to run our own tourism businesses here.

We also want to protect Parry's Lagoon; we don't want anything to happen there. We'd like to have a joint partnership at Parry's Lagoon too with DEC, and start a business there.

We want to protect the water quality in our rivers, lagoons, waterways and springs which are very significant to us and our culture.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities*

There are Dreaming places all through this country that men and women cannot touch—so we have to tell the parks people, DEC, about these places.

Issues that need to be in the plan are rangers, access, visitor facilities and management, tourism business, collecting bush tucker and medicine, cultural recording and education, fire management, protecting cultural sites, and acknowledging and keeping people on country.

### *Our priorities*

The rangers are our most important priority—they need a vehicle for checking all the sites down through Ngamoowalem and for taking old people out onto country.

Minimising damage to country from tourists and visitors, through management and control measures specified by traditional owners (consistent with the overall joint management plan) is also very important.

The driver for this tourism management is to get respect for land and to share stories. Currently, people, both in tour groups and as independent travellers are climbing over rocks, walking over country in places that are not safe and wrecking our roads. Visitors increase the numbers of people on country and, therefore, the impacts. Tour operators seem to disregard the communities and traditional owners and do not request permission to visit. They do not consult with the community or assist with business linkages to their own industry and businesses. Tour businesses need to know the stories for country in order to learn respect for these places.

*Steps and resources*

Our first step is to get our rangers working on the ground. Then we can start working with our Dawawang and DEC to plan out the visitor facilities so we can start managing our tourists. We want to make sure these facilities allow us to develop tourist businesses that are linked to other Dawang tourist businesses on the other parks, or outside them, for example boat cruises along the river.

*Jigoomirri and Galamanda Dawawang talk about the cultural values and history of the parks*



Above: (From left) Sylvia Simon, Pamela Simon, Margaret Moore, Jerry Moore, Lawrence Evans, Barrahnina Webster, Scott Goodson discuss park planning, Ord River, 7 June 2007.

*“When you take people out of that country when they little, still their heart is back here, they long for that country and still they come back. My father Jerry was taken away to Moola Bulla. When they go back they sing for that country keep that country alive.”*

*Margaret Moore, Goose Hill, 7 June 2007*

*“ This country is full of bush tucker, like bush cucumber, jilinybeng. We make bush broom by tying the bushes together from a special plant. The cabbage tree is for making coolamun out of the branches. ”*

*Pamela Simon, Ngamoowalem, 7 June 2007*



Above: Sylvia Simon with *jilinybeng* (bush cucumber).

## Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim Parks (Ningbing and Weaber Ranges)

### *Our vision for the park*

Our goal is to keep the country just as it is. We have to be living on our country to look after it. Our vision for Mijing is to have the Ningbing community up and running again. We need a ranger station to manage the park and would like to see this station based at the community. We want to establish a living area near Point Spring on Jemandi-Winingim.

Our vision for Point Spring is to get the country back to what it was before it became a nature reserve. We want to live close by Point Spring to look after it.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities*

Mijing is an important area to us, because several massacres happened in this area in the early days. We don't want people just going into those caves or into the gorge. Many caves and hills on our country are story places. There is an important cultural site opposite Ningbing community. At Jemandi-Winingim there are important cultural sites where access needs to be restricted. People need to ask our permission before going on to country, otherwise they will not be safe. Visitors need guidance.

We would like to see a change to the boundaries of Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim Parks so they are connected, and not separated by other land uses. Our old people walked that way between these parks, and we want to see that connection maintained.

Point Spring is a big issue to us. Ever since it's been made a nature reserve, the Government has never looked after it. The whole area has become overgrown with weeds and bushes. Many animals that used to visit the spring are not there any more because they can't get to the water—ducks, broilgas, cockatoos. We think the fence has caused a lot of problems, although we recognise that the construction of this fence was requested by traditional owners. Nearby areas that are not fenced, where cattle graze, are still in really good condition.

Issues that need to be addressed in the plan include living areas, rangers, a youth program, research that is inclusive of traditional owners, protocols, tourists, cattle, access/roads, cultural education, cultural recording, water management and working together.

We need to talk more about cattle on our country. Some of our Dawawang think cattle can be good on our conservation lands provided there is no overstocking, while others of us would like to keep the cattle out.

### *Our priorities*

Our main priority is to get our community at Ningbing up and running again, and to establish a community near Point Spring, a small place, where we can play a caretaker role. Ningbing Community needs a fence to keep the cattle out, as they camp in the buildings during the wet season. We need a ranger base to be established. Rangers based near Ningbing can also look after Cape Dommett during the dry season.



We want to fix up the country at Point Spring, starting by taking the fence down, particularly the inner barbed wire fence. Another priority for us is running social programs, for example a youth program in our park, to teach our children respect and discipline. A place on country for old people would also be good.

In the future, we'd like to establish a tourist business at Mijing, and to fence off an area for cattle for the community. We'd like to obtain a coastal fishery licence.

### *Steps and resources*

We want to start with getting our rangers going, getting a ranger base established and getting trips out onto country. Fire management is an important first step.

### *Wardanybeng Dawawang talk about the cultural values and history of the parks*



*“I want to come back here and look after all that country, see. Look after this area and the community. My father got that community. The way he got it was through a mining lease.”*

*Fred Gerrard, Ningbing,  
22 July 2007*

Left: Fred Gerrard with son Dean.

*“Emu story here, emu been run through from that way, from Cape Dommett.”*

*Thelma Birch, Ningbing, 23 July 2007*



Above: Thelma Birch.



Above: Our concerns about outcomes from DEC management at Point Spring.

*“ We want to come and live here, we gotta look after this country ourselves, we Aboriginal people. ”*

*Merle Carter, Point Spring, 24 July 2007*



Above left and right: Overgrown country at Point Springs which DEC has fenced off.



Right: Nearby swamp where cattle are still grazing.

## 'Existing Conservation Areas' established before the Ord Final Agreement

### *Our vision for the existing conservation areas established before the Ord Final Agreement (OFA)*

Under the OFA Schedule 10, we agreed that the existing conservation areas will be jointly managed by the Director General of DEC, and the MG Corporation, on behalf of the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, in accordance with the OFA, the management plan and the Conservation and Land Management Act.

We also agreed to develop the management plan for the new conservation parks first, and then start work on the existing conservation areas when resources become available.

The existing conservation areas include Mirima National Park, Point Spring Nature Reserve, Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve and the Ord River Nature Reserve.

Since the OFA, we have also agreed that Packsaddle Creek Reserve and Packsaddle Springs will come in under the joint management arrangements.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities for planning in the existing conservation areas*

In order to start working together, Dawawang, park sub-council members, alternate members and Dawang representative members must be available for each of the existing conservation areas. The MG Corporation has the responsibility to work with the Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples to identify the right people for these roles.

We have agreed that the Dawawang, park sub-council members, alternate members and Dawang representative members for Point Spring Nature Reserve are the same as those for Jemandi-Winingim Conservation Park.

We have agreed that the Dawawang, park sub-council members, alternate members and Dawang representative members for Parry Lagoons Nature Reserve are the Galamanda representatives for the Ngamoowalem Conservation Park.

We have agreed that the Dawawang, park sub-council members, alternate members and Dawang representative members for Packsaddle Creek Reserve (Wawoolem) are the Yirralalem representatives for the Darram Conservation Park.

We can start working together on joint management for those existing conservation areas, and include them in our joint planning guidelines and our management plans.

We can't start working on joint management for Mirima National Park and the Ord River Nature Reserve until the MG Corporation is provided with resources to identify the right people as the Dawawang, park sub-council members, alternate members and Dawang representative members for these areas.

*Our priorities for planning in the existing conservation areas*

Our priority is to work on planning and joint management for the new conservation areas, and the three associated existing conservation areas. We would like to also work on Mirima National Park and the Ord River Nature Reserve, but the MG Corporation needs resources to identify the right people before we can start working on joint management there.

We can also start some cooperative activities on Mirima National Park and the Ord River Nature Reserve as a way of building our capacity to work together on joint management in the future.

*Steps and resources*

MG Corporation and DEC will talk together about how to obtain resources for the MG Corporation to identify the right people as the Dawawang, park sub-council members, alternate members and Dawang representative members for Mirima National Park and the Ord River Nature Reserve.

When the right people have been identified, we will consider how and when to bring them in to the YD Regional Park Council and the management planning process.

# SECTION FOUR

## OUR POLICIES



# Working together

- ◇ Protocols, roles and meetings
- ◇ Research protocols
- ◇ Park boundaries and linkages

## Protocols, roles and meetings

### *Our vision for protocols*

Our vision is to have our protocols, our rules for consultation and decision-making about the parks, clearly laid out and followed by everyone. Dawawang are the key people for decision-making. Clarity is needed about which people are members of the Dawang groups and need to be involved in making decisions about the parks. We also want to show respect for people who may not be able to speak for a place but who have connections to it, by consulting them on major issues.

We need to have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all the different groups involved in the joint management arrangements—the MG Corporation, the Dawang Land Trust, DEC, the regional park council, and the park sub-councils.

Our vision is for meetings to be places where our decision-making processes and our ways of doing business come to the front.

### *Our values and responsibilities for protocols*

All the decisions in the park need our free prior informed consent. Each Dawang group has slightly different rules for how decisions are made in their group. We need to follow the rules in each group. Sometimes the discussions in our group need to go on for a while before a decision can be made.

The Ord Final Agreement lays out in general terms the roles of the MG Corporation, DEC, the Dawang Land Trust (MG Trustees Pty Ltd), the regional park council and the park sub-councils in our conservation areas. These roles and responsibilities are very important to us because it took a long time for us to reach agreement with the Western Australian Government, and we put a lot of thought into the arrangements.

### *Protocol issues of concern to us*

Protocols need to cover processes for letting people know when they want to come onto our country for meetings. We are tired of people just arriving, and trying to get people for the day, interrupting what we are doing.

The protocols need to put the Dawang in the driving seat for decision-making. We also want to show respect to people who may not be able to speak for a place but have connections to it, by consulting with them on major park management issues such as tourism development. The protocols also need to cover the roles of the Dawawang, the park council, MG Corporation, the Dawang Land Trust and DEC in decision-making and building on the general agreements laid out in the OFA. The Dawang Land Trust can play an important role by exercising its veto power over development decisions through the lease agreement.

Some clear protocols for resolving conflicts within and between all these groups are needed.

We want to make sure that all the agreements made in the Ord Final Agreement about our conservation parks are followed properly. We need to follow agreed processes that we understand. According to the agreement, DEC has to consult with the regional park council about budgets. This consultation needs to be done in a way that we can understand. Sometimes meetings that are run *gardiya*-style are hard for us to follow—we want meetings that respect our cultural processes.

### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

We would like one big protocol to cover all the parks, and a special protocol for each of the parks. We need more discussion about how to develop our protocols, and what should be in them. The OFA is an important starting point.

As discussed above, part of the protocol should cover the roles of the park council, MG Corporation, the Dawang Land Trust and DEC in decision-making. In the event that the Dawang Land Trust needs to appoint an advisory committee in relation to the conservation parks, then that advisory committee should be made up of one representative from each Dawang from the conservation parks.

Dawawang should develop rules of working together so that there are less arguments and more agreed ways to manage conflict and disagreements at all levels—between Dawawang and between the traditional owners and others. One idea was to agree on a process of parking issues of dispute in Dawang meetings until the issue can be dealt with at a more suitable time.

Part of the protocol should be about how to hold park council meetings. We'd like to discuss the use of Kriol, Miriuwung and English language at the meetings. Some of the meeting time should be spent in smaller groups. We like the idea at Nitmiluk where all the Jawoyn people on the board get together the day before to go through all the issues on the agenda. We need time to think about things before being asked to make a decision on

them. Dawawang should have the opportunity to come together to talk before meetings with the park council, DEC and others. We should go out and visit places that we are making decisions about.

We would like to put together a list of names of elders to contact for meetings for DEC business. We also need to keep updating the genealogical database held by the MG Corporation with names of all the family members who were young when the database was put together, or have been born since. DEC could assist the MG Corporation to do this so that there is always access to current information. We also need to make sure consultation processes about big decisions include people with connections to country who are not part of the Dawang.

Visitors need to be made aware of our protocols through a range of different information sources including signage at the entrance to parks, information on the websites of DEC and the MG Corporation and other relevant agencies, and through the visitor information centre.

### *Steps and resources*

The first step will be to agree on a process to develop our protocols, including for conflict resolution, which might include some workshops. Some resources that might help our workshop discussions include:

- ◇ Free prior and informed consent processes in parks—Toni Bauman’s research from Nitmiluk.
- ◇ Nitmiluk Board meeting processes—including pre-meetings and field inspections.

### *Talking about protocols*

*“ I have hunted people away from my house, government people because they just turn up when they feel like it, over the years people just dropping in, dropping in, promising and nothing happening, I got sick of it. ”*

*Carol Hapke, Yirralalem, 6 June 2007*



*“ The (park council) meetings should be conducted in English, language and Kriol. Part of the meeting should be broken up into Dawang groups. Once we have toilets and shelters in place, we can have meetings out in the bush.”*

*Stephanie Boombi, Goomiyig, 20 August 2007*



Above: (From left) Jessie Gumbai, Alice Boombi, Scott Goodson and Stephanie Boombi discussing park management, Goomiyig, 19 August 2007

## Research protocols

### *Our vision for research*

Our vision is to have all researchers informing us about their research, and engaging traditional owners in their research as much as possible. We would also like to conduct our own research.

### *Our values and responsibilities for research*

We support people coming onto our country to carry out research, but they also need to show respect for Dawang and for our responsibilities to country.

### *Research issues of concern to us*

We are concerned that we don't know about the research being conducted on our country. We are also concerned about people going onto our sacred sites and culturally sensitive places. We are also concerned that researchers don't let us know what they have found

out—sometimes information gets passed onto others without us even getting a copy of the report. In the past, researchers have taken information from us without returning any benefit to the community. We don't want that to happen again. We want our intellectual and cultural property rights to be properly protected.

Our own priority is for research that strengthens our cultural knowledge, for example our knowledge of bush medicine.

### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

Researches should work under a code of ethics to ensure confidentiality, and must follow protocols that ensure our intellectual and cultural property rights are protected. Researchers must have permission before sharing any information gathered from Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples. We would like researchers to seek our permission before going onto the parks. The MG Corporation should include information on its website for researchers letting them know that they need to contact us before starting their research. We would like a copy of all the research reports.

We would like traditional owners to be paid to go out onto country to work with researchers. Researchers should include traditional owner payments in their budgets when they are applying for research grants. Our young people can learn on the job with researchers in the field.

Research programs addressing bush medicines should be part of our cultural recording program.

### *Steps and resources*

We need to develop research protocols for our parks that put traditional owners in the driving seat and ensure appropriate engagement and protection for our intellectual and cultural property rights. We could start by collecting other research protocols—for example from North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), the Desert Knowledge CRC, or from other jointly managed parks.

### *Talking about research*



*“ We don't know who's coming onto our country. That group there reckon they're studying all our caves. Others might be studying our wildlife and flora. That's why we need a ranger.”*

*Merle Carter, at the Gorge, 22 July 2007*

## Park boundaries and linkages

### *Our vision for park boundaries*

Our vision is to have boundaries for the parks that reflect our cultural connections to our country and allow us to look after our country properly. We also want to have good linkages with country and people on the other side of our park boundaries.

### *Our values and responsibilities for park boundaries*

All of our traditional country is important to us, and we recognise that not all of it will be in the new parks—for example some of our traditional land will become new agricultural areas under the OFA. However, the boundaries need to be practical for our use and management of country. We need to be able to visit and camp on our country to look after it. We need the boundaries to include important cultural sites in each area for which we have responsibility—we don't want situations where the most important cultural sites are just outside the park boundary.

Our traditional lands inside the parks are also affected by the actions of people outside the parks. We have traditional links with nearby traditional owner groups, and we want our management to strengthen these linkages. We also want to develop cooperative management with non-Indigenous landholders on the other side of the park boundaries—for example to make sure their cattle, fires and weeds etc don't cross over into our parks. In some cases, we will need fences. We want to make sure that all our parks are connected with country that allows our native animals to move across it.

### *Boundary and linkage issues of concern to us*

Many of our parks do not have good boundaries:

- ◇ *Goomiyig*—this park boundary seems to mainly follow a contour line around the Cave Spring and Pincombe Ranges, excluding flat land and nearby springs. The boundary makes it very difficult to fulfil our cultural responsibility to be on our land to manage it, as there is no flat ground to camp on near water. We would like the boundary to be moved away from the hill so that the park includes some flat land near water holes. We would also like the boundary to move south to take in Martin Bluff hills to the south of Martin's Gap—this area has many paintings and cultural sites in it which we need to be able to manage. On the Northern Territory side, the Government talks about extending the Keep River Park as far as Niligem lagoon. We would like the Goomiyig park to link up with Niligem and the country around it.
- ◇ *Barrberrm*—this park borders the Keep River National Park on the NT side of the border. We would like our management to work closely with the NT park joint management and the traditional owners, with whom we have strong cultural connections.
- ◇ *Wawoolem and Darram*—the proposed Wawoolem boundary leaves out the most important sacred cultural sites in this area, as well as the spring. That boundary will make management very difficult indeed, as the spring attracts visitors, who impact on our cultural sites and on the water, rock, soil and vegetation in the area.

- ◇ *Ngamoowalem*—Ngamoowalem and Parry Lagoons management needs to be closely coordinated, we would like to see joint management extended to cover Parry Lagoons.
- ◇ *Mijing and Jemandi-Winigim*—these parks are both the country of the Wardanybeng Dawang. We would like to see a change to the boundaries of Mijing and Jemandi-Winigim parks so the two parks are connected, and not separated by other land uses. Our old people walked that way between these parks, and we want to see that connection maintained. We would also like to see the Point Spring Nature Reserve included into Jemandi-Winigim, and the joint management extended to cover this area.

The park boundaries do not link up our country, as all our parks are separated by other land uses. In the long term, a lot of this land may be cleared or damaged so that our native plants and animals can't cross it easily. We would like to look at ways of making sure our parks have good linkages in the long term. The park boundary and linkage issues are also important in maintaining water quality. During the OFA, it was agreed that fences would be constructed around our community living areas to keep cattle out—we'd like to make sure this happens.

### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

Although the general park boundaries have been agreed, they have not yet been surveyed. Some of these issues may be able to be addressed through the on-ground surveys. We would also like to discuss the boundary issues through the OFA Implementation meetings between the WA Government and Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples. We also think there may be opportunities to address the park boundary issues by looking at the lands allocated as buffers around the future agricultural development areas.

### *Steps and resources*

We would like to bring these boundary and linkage issues to the attention of the Government as soon as possible, and before the surveys are undertaken.

# On-country management

- ◇ Access
- ◇ Living areas
- ◇ Bush camps and trips
- ◇ Fire management
- ◇ Rangers
- ◇ Weeds and pests

## Access

### *Our vision for park access*

Our vision is to have access for getting onto our country for management and fulfilling our cultural responsibilities. We need all-year round access to our communities and tourism businesses on the park.

### *Our values and responsibilities for access*

Under our Law, we have to visit our country and be on our country to keep it healthy.

### *Access issues of concern to us*

We want to be free from arguments with the State Government about access to our country. We would like good access roads and a simple system of ringing up the manager of any stations we need to pass through.

Poor access roads to our parks and our communities make it hard for us to develop tourism businesses, and cause us problems when visitors get bogged.

### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

All the different parks need a road and access strategy. Raising the necessary funds to maintain the roads is a big challenge, and could be helped by:

- ◇ Charging for permits to visitors to travel on the roads and using the funds for maintenance.
- ◇ Charging entry fees for the parks—funds could be divided so that 25 per cent goes to running the management plan for the parks, 25 per cent goes to maintaining roads and 50 per cent goes to Dawang groups for activities on their parks.
- ◇ Forming partnerships with pastoralists to maintain common roads, like the one to Mijing.
- ◇ Negotiating with miners to fund roads, including the mining exploration group currently based at Sorby Hills inside the Goomiyig Park.

### *Ngamoowalem access issues*

Our key access issues are:

- ◇ The road into Galjiba needs to be upgraded to suit the development of a caravan park and camping ground.
- ◇ The road into Wirrilwarim also needs attention, the Aboriginal Lands Trust may be able to assist with this.
- ◇ The Middle Springs bog needs proper drainage.
- ◇ Main issue is to stop people getting bogged—need some culverts, better drainage.
- ◇ The road to Goose Hill needs to be all weather for our community and for our tourism business there—some road upgrading may happen here as part of the farm development.

### *Wawoolem/Yirralalem and Darram access issues*

Our key access issues are:

- ◇ Road into Yirralalem needs to be all weather—this is being upgraded as a result of the Ord Final Agreement, but we are concerned there may not be enough money for proper bridges. The bridge is the key priority for investing funds, as creek crossings are the main barrier to all-weather access.
- ◇ Darram access is currently by boat only; we need a proper access road for Darram.

### *Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim access issues*

Our key access issues are:

- ◇ The road into Mijing needs upgrading so we have all-year round access. We recognise that the cost might be prohibitive, but it could be considered as part of the Aboriginal Development Package for Ord Stage 2. An airstrip for the community for emergency access would be useful. An agreement with the pastoralists about this road would be a good way to go.
- ◇ The road to Jemandi-Winingim also needs better drainage—it would be easier to make this road all weather. This road might be upgraded for the agricultural expansion. If not, we would like to consider other options to upgrade this road to all-weather standard.

### *Goomiyig and Barrberrm access issues*

Our key access issues are:

- ◇ The road into Cave Springs goes too close to the springs—we'd like it to be cut short with a car park and a track for people to walk into the springs.
- ◇ The Goomiyig Park needs roads right around that hill and into the park that can be used by rangers and Dawang for management, including a road in between the Cave Springs and Pincombe Ranges. We would like this road to be exclusively for park management and Dawang use. At the moment it is really difficult to get into this park.
- ◇ We'd like to negotiate a potential contribution to road construction from the mining exploration company currently using Sorby Hills for their camp.
- ◇ We would like to see a lookout area developed for Goomiyig.
- ◇ We would like to discuss with the station manager use of their roads.
- ◇ Some areas of Goomiyig might not be suitable for roads. In that case we'd like to consider a walking trail.
- ◇ The road through to Kumbarumba community is very rough. We'd like a better access road that is more suitable for tourism. Some years ago work started on a better road alignment from Red Creek to Kumbarumba, but it was never finished. The priority should be to improve the current access road by grading and gravelling rather than building a new road on a different alignment.
- ◇ The mountain range at Barrberrm is an important story place, and very dangerous. No road should go near this place.

### *Steps and resources*

We need to start with an access strategy for all the parks, and then work on priorities for getting resources for upgrading the access.

*Talking about access*



*“ Access issues are quite big. People want access to Goose Hill for starting a business—we’d like to be taking tourists down to the swamp.”*

*Margaret Moore,  
Goose Hill,  
7 June 2007*

*“ We need better roads so that we don’t get problems like these erosion gullies where roads used to be.”*

*Merle Carter,  
near Ningbing,  
22 July 2007*



*“ We need a road, for rangers only, to give access to that hill, so our rangers can go check.”*

*Stephanie Boombi,  
Goomiyig,  
19 August 2007*

Left: Fenceline access road into Goomiyig.



### Living areas

#### *Our vision for living areas*

Our vision is for all our Dawang to be able to spend time on our country to look after it and fulfil our obligations. We need to be able to live on our near our country.

#### *Our values and responsibilities with living areas*

We want our living areas on country to be good places where people show respect and discipline. We don't want problems with alcohol or drugs in these areas. Living areas on country are for our young peoples' future, and for our own well-being.

Many of the new conservation parks already have communities nearby, where people can work in with the parks:

- ◇ Ngamoowalem—Wirrjilwarim, Goolalawa
- ◇ Wawoolem—Yirralalem, Jimbilem
- ◇ Darram—Worrawoorrem
- ◇ Mijing—Ningbing
- ◇ Barrberm—Goorrboome (Kumbarumba)

#### *Living area issues of concern to us*

The main place where a living area is needed is at Jemandi-Winingim. We also need to get the Ningbing Community up and running again at Mijing to work in with park management. Another living area might be needed at Mijing to accommodate all the Dawang.

At Goomiyig, we need bush camps to visit occasionally; there is no need currently for a living area.

#### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

Our current funding arrangements for the parks do not provide any resources for developing living areas. Funding for building new living areas may be able to be accessed through the Ord Enhancement Scheme and the Department of Housing and Works.

At Ningbing, we need to start working together with the MG Corporation to get people living there more often and working on the community. In the longer term, we would like our communities at Ningbing to be the centre for tourist businesses and management on the park, but we have a lot of work to do first:

- ◇ Fixing up houses and power system
- ◇ Building new houses
- ◇ Getting water and sewerage systems working.

Our young people need to come and live out here to form proper connections with their country. At Point Spring, we want to live close by so we can start cleaning it up—we need a small living area here, so we can live nearby and play a caretaker role.

For existing communities nearby to our parks, we would like to explore ways to work in with DEC.

*Steps and resources*

The main priorities for living areas are at Ningbing and Jemandi-Winingem. More discussion and planning work is needed between the Dawang groups for those parks. We need discussions with DEC about how communities can work in with park management.

*Talking about living at Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim*

*“ First thing is to burn the area (Point Spring), get rid of all the rubbish. We need to clear the grass, get rid of all the weeds. Before CALM fenced it off, it was beautiful, beautiful, there was no weed like there is now today, you could go right to the spring where the water comes out like into a bath tub, then it runs down out into a flat swamp area.”*

*Merle Carter,  
Point Spring,  
24 July 2007*





*“ My dream is to come back home and live here, I'd like to die out here, I'd like to be buried out here, my kids are going to grow up out here too, that's my dream for everybody out here. I'd like to see this place, you know, keep our culture and keep our kids back home, our Dawang, so the things that belong in the country stay in the country. We're not from anywhere else, we can't go anywhere else, we're from here.”*

*Fred Gerrard, Mijing, 22 July 2007*



### Bush camps and trips

#### *Our vision for bush camps and trips*

Our vision is to for bush camps and trips with all our Dawawang to be central in our park management.

#### *Our values and responsibilities with living areas*

We need strong connections to our country to look after it properly. Bush camps and bush trips are an opportunity for our old people, younger people and children to spend time on country together. We need this time on country to pass on knowledge and responsibilities to country, and to fulfil our obligations to our cultural sites, and to our ancestors on the country. Spending time on country together is the also best way for us to start working together with the DEC staff.

#### *Bush camps and bush trips—issues of concern to us*

The main barriers for us to organise bush camps and bush trips is the lack of access, and the lack of vehicles and resources.

Some of our old people need some simple facilities to make bush camps and bush trips comfortable for them.

#### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

We have already started having bush camps and trips as part of the planning work for this framework, and so we can keep doing them. We would like to construct some facilities to make bush camps and trips more comfortable for our old people so we can take them out for longer:

- ◇ Bough sheds with a concrete floor
- ◇ Composting toilets
- ◇ Tanks for drinking water
- ◇ Paths for wheeled walkers.

Charging fees for tourists on our parks may be one way to finance the basic infrastructure, such as toilets.

#### *Steps and resources*

We need to plan out some bush camps and trips for each of our Dawang groups every year. Some of the work during these trips will be about passing on cultural knowledge and information, and we can also continue with planning about specific issues, like fire management and access.

The Ord Enhancement Scheme (OES) has contributed seed money to the Mirima Dawang Wooralab-gerring Language and Culture Centre to undertake on-country trips for children over 10 years old. Purchase of a second-hand bus for further trips is currently being

investigated. We'd like to coordinate with the OES and the language and culture centre so that we can pool our resources to make bush trips more effective, and avoid doubling-up. Partnerships are the most effective way to get our bush trips program going.

We may be able to access funding from Envirofund and Community Water Grants to assist in construction of composting toilets, water tanks and other infrastructure—putting in for some grants would be a good place to start.

*Talking about bush camps*

*“ We can take our people out on bush camps, and show them bush tucker, painting, stories. When we get people back on country they will listen and get our language.”*

*Minnie, Lumai and Stephanie Boombi,  
Goomiyig, 20 August 2007*



Above: Camping out at *Niligem*.  
Left: Malarty Boombi  
Below left and right: Malarty, Gilbert Riley and Cody Ward enjoying some time out bush.



### Fire management

#### *Our vision for fire management*

Dawawang should burn their own country. The older people will tell and show the younger people how to burn. Our rangers will be the right Dawawang for the parks with the right cultural connections for burning.

#### *Our cultural values and responsibilities*

Under our Law and culture, only Dawawang can burn their country. According to our Law and culture, government people are not allowed to light fires—only Dawawang for that country can light the fires. We need to burn country for cultural reasons, for Law. We burn to freshen up the country. Fire is part of our culture. When we don't burn it kills part of our culture. We burn country to clear snakes away from areas where we live and camp, and to clear areas where we want to walk. The Dawawang have knowledge about the timing of fire, and how to do fires in different parts of their country.

#### *Fire management issues of concern to us*

We are concerned that DEC is lighting too many fires, burning every year and at the wrong time—burning at the cold time when animals are breeding. Cold time is also when bush tucker animals are fat—the country should not be burnt then. Burning around March month will freshen up bush tucker. Smoke is a health hazard for old people and young people living on country in the late dry season. Fire happens from other people burning our country. We are also concerned a lot of places on our country have grown over with shrubs and grasses from not enough fires.

Authorities have brought in big fines to stop us burning our country. We are very concerned when our old people are threatened with fines for lighting fires on their own country, which is part of their cultural responsibility. When we don't burn our country at the right time when we want to, later on very hot fires come and burn the whole place out. Fires sometimes threaten our personal safety and our property.

Global warming is also affecting the way we manage fires on our country, we are looking at earlier season burns.

#### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

We need to burn the country off so our older people can recognise it. We know DEC has its own ideas about burning country. We are also aware of issues around health and safety regulations that affect the Government's approaches to fire management.

We'd like to sit down with DEC and talk about burning country. We will put forward our views about how country should be burnt. DEC should put its ideas forward.

The Dawawang should take DEC people out on country and show them how to burn it according to our Law and custom. Hopefully if we talk we can reach agreement.

We would also like to coordinate our plans between DEC and Dawang for fire management on our country in the parks with other fire management plans for country outside the parks. Some of this country is managed by DEC and other agencies are also involved, including the local shire and the Fire and Emergency Services Authority of WA (FESA). We would like to work together to reach agreements with these agencies so our old people don't get threatened with fines for lighting fires on their country, which is an important part of their cultural obligation. We want to be able to undertake fire management on all our country, not just the country in our community living areas and our parks.

### *Steps and resources*

We'd like to start with DEC and ourselves listening to each other's approaches and rules. We need some trips onto country to do fire management together. We want to come up with some agreed approaches, both with DEC and with other agencies that are involved in fire management on country. We'd also like to share information about some other approaches to bringing Indigenous and science-based approaches together:

- ◇ Western Arnhem Fire Abatement Project is implementing traditional owner-run fire management programs based on science.
- ◇ Through the Balkanu's Traditional Knowledge Revival Pathway, traditional owners are implementing their burning practices on Lakefield National Park in Queensland.
- ◇ The Kimberley Regional Fire Project organised traditional owner fire control teams to conduct burning while it was operating.
- ◇ New Kimberley Fire Project through the Kimberley Land Council is aimed at carbon trading.

DEC has a substantial role in working with agencies like FESA and the shire on fire management, and is in a good position to assist traditional owners towards better outcomes.

### *Talking about fire management—Yirralalem and Darram Dawawang*



*“ When you don't burn, you got scrub, you can't walk, you can't teach, you can't look country, you can't protect that country, you can't do anything on it. I'd like to see country burning after the wet, just before this grass gets really really dry. When it's a cool fire. This time of year is not a good time for lighting fires until all the birds can fly, all the babies, young ones.*

*Now the grass is too long, can't walk about the country. They would have burnt their country by now, but can't (authorities stop them).”*

*Carol Hapke, Yirralalem, 6 June 2007*

*“ Bush fire makes good ochre—when you burn ochre, it goes a deeper, richer colour. Another reason you need fire too, for boonang. When fire goes through naturally and burn the trees and logs and everything properly it makes the boonang<sup>33</sup>. ”*

*Carol Hapke, Yirralalem, 6 June 2007*



*“ You know that place up there, we been burn there, we see them fire men come up behind us. They say ‘don’t burn the grass’. On my country, try to stop me burning. We bin tell him, we can burn here, it’s walkaround for hunting.*

*One time you burn the grass, you see all the cattle coming back on, comeback on the green grass, turkey, kangaroo. Turkey comes back onto the green grass, eats seeds, eats grasshoppers, any insects.”*

*Nancy Dilyai, Yirralalem, 6 June 2007*

<sup>33</sup> Bunang is ash to mix tobacco for chewing.





*“ Darram needs fire protection in that area—slashing it so it doesn’t get all burnt out. Swamp needs to be protected from fire, all the cumbungi goes up, all the bird habitats, lots of quails and ground dwelling birds, they suffer with fire. We do need to burn but not too close to the swamp—fire needs to be really controlled.”*

*Carol Hapke, Darram, 16 June 2007*

*Talking about fire management—Ngamoowalem Dawawang*

*“ Snakes and goannas got their eggs now so you have to be careful with fire. Snakes are all right in fires. They know how to get out of the way.*

*We burn to make grass green for kangaroos. We light fires around Wirrjilwarim. We make sure we clean up first around our solar plant and house so those things don’t catch on fire. Then we burn the grass.”*

*Pamela Simon, Ngamoowalem, 8 June 2007*



Above: Fire at Molly Springs, lit from the road, June 2007.

*Talking about fire management—Ngamoowalem Dawawang*

*“ We’ve been told we can’t burn at Goose Hill. Fire brigade tell us we can’t burn.”*

*Margaret Moore, Goose Hill, 8 June 2007*

*“ I burn my place, burn the grass.”*

*Jerry Moore, Goose Hill, 8 June 2007*



Above: Galamanda, Goose Hill, north of Ngamoowalem.



*Talking about fire management—  
Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim*

*“Grass been burnt for special reasons. Yeh clean em up. Animals and everything can be clean... country looking after, birds.”*

*Thelma Birch, Ningbing, 23 July 2007*

*Talking about fire management—Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim*

“When that rain first come and go, then after that we burn the country. Because that first rain brings everything out of the ground, all that worm and everything that comes out that’s no good for cattle and people. Then you burn it, you burn that country, it just gets rid of worms and ticks. Everyone knows that first rain brings sickness. That grass will be a little bit green. Then when the rain comes, that grass is still green enough, and it holds the soil, it can stop erosion.”

*Merle Carter, Ningbing, 23 July 2007 (recently burnt country at Mijing)*



*Talking about fire management—  
Goomiyig and Barrberrm*

“We can’t see him, too much scrub, we can’t know this country.”

*Blanche Flyingfox, Barrberrm, 21 August 2007*

*Talking about fire management—Goomiyig and Barrberrm Dawawang*



*“ Generally round about March, January, February, March and April. March, April, good green grass, old people old men go hunting. Burn the grass, early part you know. Long grass you burn it May or June. March even. When the dry start, when I was working the station, you see all the cattle, you can't burn. They been change that rule now, that law. Had a big meeting, pastoral mob, manager, stop us burning, station mob tell us not to burn any more. Station masters burn it themselves now, helicopter. We never burn it now, just burn our community area.”*

*Toby Banmar, at Goomiyig, 19 August 2007*

*“ Rangers can burn the park, Dawang can assist. We need to be burning the country off to see where all the old roads are, and so the older people can recognise it, specially the older women when they go back. We need to light fires for hunting goanna, kangaroo, and turkey, they come back for grasshoppers on the new shoots. ”*

*Stephanie Boombi, at Goomiyig, 19 August 2007*



Above: (From left) Jessie Gumbai, Alice Boombi, Scott Goodson and Stephanie Boombi discussing park management, Goomiyig, 19 August 2007

## Rangers

### *Our vision for rangers*

Rangers working on the parks should be part of the Dawang for that park, with the right family connections. We need two rangers for each park at the start, and four in the longer term, two men and two women for each park, and including both younger and older people. Our rangers working on the parks need to know Miriuwung-Gajerrong cultural business and knowledge for that country.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities for rangers*

Rangers will have lots of work related to cultural matters—organising cultural trips out onto country between old people and young people, keeping the Law and knowledge of country strong, doing fire management, keeping the country clean, making sure rubbish bins are emptied, controlling pests and weeds, and monitoring wildlife. Rangers will also be involved on the business side with tourists, for example in talking with tourists, and managing visitor sites.

Any *gardiya* ranger that needs to work in the park must have cross-cultural training and work under a code of ethics to they do not share knowledge without consent. *Gardiya* people should not be telling stories for country, but letting people know who to contact to find out about those stories. Our Dawang rangers need to work with the rangers employed by DEC, to share experience.

### *Proposed strategies and actions*

Our rangers will need training in lots of *gardiya* business on the parks, but they have to be able to back up *gardiya* knowledge with their own cultural knowledge.

Ranger training has to include Miriuwung-Gajerrong cultural business and knowledge of country. After they've finished their training down south, when they come back they've got to learn through the Miriuwung-Gajerrong side, here on their own country. Rangers need on-country training, not just in the classroom. Older Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples need to be involved in training rangers on country.

Two-way training in both *gardiya* and cultural knowledge could be achieved through:

- ◇ TAFE courses
- ◇ A cultural training program developed in partnership with the Mirima Dawang Woerlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre
- ◇ Post-training evaluation and review—rangers need to take out the older (and younger) people out to show them management in operation, to identify if any more input is required, and if they are doing things the right way according to the older people
- ◇ Post-training skill demonstration—rangers need to take the old people out and demonstrate to them the *gardiya* approaches to management, and the opportunities that are available
- ◇ Ongoing mentoring of the rangers by older people.

Rangers need powers for enforcement when working on country to prevent potential problem actions such as theft of livestock or natural items and illegal camping. Tourists need to know that the rangers have real capacity to enforce the rules. Rangers need to be able to issue fines. The main role of rangers is to ensure country is not damaged—by visitors when they are out there, or by anything else.

Rangers may also have some community members working alongside them, who are not fully trained as rangers, but can contribute to some of the work on country. Infrastructure development such as toilets, roads, buildings and walkways need to be decided in partnership between Dawawang and rangers.

Our Dawang rangers need to work together with other DEC rangers to share experiences. We would also like our rangers to work with rangers from nearby parks in the Northern Territory, including Keep River National Park.

### *Ngamoowalem rangers*

Our rangers need to be strongly involved in managing the tourism sites in Ngamoowalem Park. We want them to check all the sites, keep them clean, and pick up the rubbish. They will need a vehicle.

Rangers should be taking the old people out on country, to learn about the country and how to manage it.

### *Wawoolem and Darram rangers*

Our rangers need to be feeling proud of themselves and what they are doing. We don't want the rangers to be just picking up rubbish.

One of the rangers should be working on the tourism side, and one on the management side.

### *Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim rangers*

Our vision is to have our rangers look after both the country and the people. We would like our rangers to work across both our park and our native title land up to Cape Dommett from a ranger base near Ningbing.

Our rangers need to control and maintain our parks, keep our springs clean, check the burial grounds, visitors, fishing, coastline, and to monitor wildlife, including endangered species. We want them to monitor and control pests like cane toads, and educate tourists to look after the place, and take away their rubbish. Rangers need to supply fire-woods to campsites so visitors don't start using nearby timber. Our rangers need to be aware of people coming and going so they can check that people are safe. Rangers should give visitors information on road conditions and the location of fresh water.

We need two male rangers, one for Mijing and one for Jemandi-Winingim. Later on we'd like to look for some girls to be involved.

We would like our ranger for the Mijing park to be based at Ningbing community—have a workstation there, a shed with necessary tools. The rangers will need a 4WD with radio and emergency equipment.

### *Goomiyig and Barrberrm rangers*

We need two men and two women rangers who could work across both Goomiyig and Barrberrm.

We want the rangers to look after our country, and to take Dawang around on country. We particularly want the rangers to be working with our old people, Blanche Flyingfox, Sheba Dignari and Maggie Johns and organising bush trips and camps to teach the younger ones.

We think an experienced *gardiya* ranger should work with and train the Aboriginal rangers. We also want our rangers to team up with the rangers working in parks across the NT border.

### *Steps and planning resources*

We need a training and employment strategy to get the rangers going. Some useful resources are:

- ◇ DEC's Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme (MATES)
- ◇ Conservation and Land Management certificates II, II and IV offered through Registered Training Providers, including DEC and TAFE.

### *Talking about rangers*

“Rangers gotta learn what's on the country for animals, where they are, name of the hill, all that sort of thing. Whoever does that training will be a lucky person, they'll just learn so much.”

Carol Hapke, Yirralalem, 6 June 2007

Right: (From left) Helen Gerrard, Carol Hapke, Nancy Dilyai, Janelle Ningamara talking about rangers and park planning, 6 June 2007.



*Talking about rangers*



*“ When I talk (language), sometime when I talk they understand. They need to know who their granny and grandpa, what skin group, all that.”* Nancy Dilyai, at Yirralalem, 6 June 2007.



*“All the young boys, some want to be rangers, some don't know much, need training.”*

*Alice Boombi, at Goomiyig, 19 August 2007*

*“The first thing for Rangers is the whole of the Park, they control that, and maintain it.”*

*Fred Gerrard, the Gorge, 22 July 2007*



## Weeds and feral animals

### *Our vision for weed and feral animal management*

We want our country to be free from problems caused by introduced weeds and feral animals. We want to keep our native animals safe in a sanctuary while the cane toads arrive on our country. We would like native plants to be used to rehabilitate areas after weed removal.

### *Our values and responsibilities for weed and feral animal management*

Weeds and pests have arrived on our country with the *gardiya*, and so we rely a lot on their knowledge for management. We want control methods that fit in with our cultural values. Some pest animals can be culled, but others have special values and different approaches are required for their management.

We want environmentally friendly ways of managing pests and weeds. A lot of our people suffered chemical poisoning in the Ngoorburr program. Chemical poisons can harm our rivers and springs, and the animals that live in them, so we need to be careful that chemicals used to spray weeds do not get into our waterways. We don't want poison to be used to kill wild dogs and other pest animals, because some animals go and die in the water, causing pollution. Trapping is a big job and can be cruel.

### *Weed and feral animal management issues of concern to us*

Some of the weeds and feral animals of concern to us are:

- ◇ Mission grass, mimosa, salvinia
- ◇ Cane toad, particularly getting into Darram
- ◇ Wild dogs
- ◇ Donkeys
- ◇ Cattle
- ◇ Pigs
- ◇ Horses
- ◇ Cats
- ◇ European bees.

Cane toads are particularly alarming to us, as they could destroy our main bush tucker animals.

### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

Each Dawawang group needs to discuss the weeds and feral animal issues on their country. A weed and feral animal management plan is needed for each park, designed with the Dawawang.

We'd like to take immediate action to stop weeds spreading into new areas, like the mission grass spreading into Yirralalem, Kumbarumba and other communities. Rivers carry and disperse seeds, so special attention should be paid to weed control near waterways—while making sure waterways are not polluted with chemicals.

We'd like to run a nursery to supply native plants for rehabilitation of areas following weed removal, and be involved in projects to replant these areas.

Donkeys cause particular problems with erosion because they pull plants out of the ground rather than just grazing them. Donkeys also have special values to some of us because of the importance of the donkey in the birth of Jesus Christ. Donkeys can be used as transport and to pull carts. Pigs cause a lot of erosion on our country.

Cattle are special to us, because even through they are not native animals, many of our people have grown up working with cattle. We would mostly like to keep cattle off our parks, because they cause erosion problems and damage springs and other places. We support fencing of waterways to protect them from cattle damage, although monitoring is needed to make sure such fencing does not have unintended results. Some Dawawang might like to fence off an area on the park to keep a small herd to use for community food supplies.

Some Dawawang think cattle can be good on our conservation lands provided there is no overstocking. Cattle can look after the country, keep the grass down, and fertilise it with their manure. Where pastoralists want to graze on our conservation lands, they need to reach agreement with the traditional owners so that there are benefits for Aboriginal people.

We don't really like donkeys, horses and cattle to be culled and would rather see them mustered and a use found for them, as working animals or killer.

Wild dogs can be shot because they might go savage and bite us or our children. Cats are a real problem to control. They need to be shot or removed from our conservation lands.

European bees are becoming feral across our lands. These exotic bees make it really hard for our own native bees by taking overall all the nectar and pollen. Our bees are important for making sugar bag and for cultural reasons, so we don't want them pushed out by European bees.

Mapping weed outbreaks with a GPS is the best way to start to understand how big our weed problems are. Donkeys and horses should be radio-collared and tracked, so we can find the herds and start mustering them.

### *Steps and resources*

Some resources that might help us develop our strategies to control weeds and pests include:

- ◇ the MG Corporation Weeds Project
- ◇ reports—Not from here, Plant invasions on Aboriginal lands; Towards more strategic management of weeds on Top End Aboriginal Lands.
- ◇ the Department of Agriculture and Food's weed identification and weed science programs.

We need to be able to identify weeds and pests. The MG Corporation Weeds Project will include some training for communities in weed identification, and in weed eradication.

*Talking about management of weeds and feral animals*

*“Dad used to come home dripping with that poison (used for Ngoorburr). Me and Mum used to wash all his clothes, we were directly exposed to it. He had a big cancer on his shoulder when he died.”*

*Carol Hapke, at Town Beach, 6 June 2007*



*“Mission grass is a new problem here, first came in at the irrigation channels. Now it's starting to move up the creek, just in the last couple of years. We'd like to get rid of it before it gets up to the springs.”*

*Helen Gerrard with Tamayne Reid, at Yirralalem, 4 June 2007*

*“Where the cane is coming through on that side, they're going to lose the bush, lose everything. I think it's going to ruin this country. We're lucky they're not coming this far. That's why with the parks, we should get rid of all the cattle, just fence off an area where we can keep a few for community use.”*

*Fred Gerrard, near Ningbing, 23 July 2007*



Above: Cattle on the marsh country.

*“Whatever the cattle is in our area, in the mustering season we should muster them out, with the horses we might give them to the station.”*

*Stephanie Boombi, Goomiyig, 20 August 2007*



*“ You can’t kill them donkey, how I am thinking about the donkey is Mary with the baby Jesus on the donkey.”*

*Minnie Lumai, Goomiyig,  
20 August 2007*

# Visitor management and tourism

- ◇ Visitor management
- ◇ Tourism business development

## Visitor management

### *Our vision for visitors*

*Gardiya* and other visitors are welcome to enjoy our country. Visitors have a responsibility to respect our country and to respect Dawawang and our living areas while they are here.

Visitors need to be kept safe while they are on our country.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities for visitors*

Dawawang have a responsibility for looking after country and any people visiting on their country. Under our Law, visitors must have *malyab* or *mantha*, water from Dawawang, for protection.

We can't do this for everyone, so there has to be a strong focus on visitor safety. Visitor management and safety need to go hand-in-hand with tourist business development by Dawawang.

Some places can't be shown to visitors—they might be sacred sites, places where people might get sick or sites with gender restrictions. Visitors need permission to take photos or paint country. Visitors need to ask permission to take photos of rock art sites. Taking photos of some art on rocks is *googbeng*—forbidden by Law. Photos taken for commercial purposes (films, books) need a different permission process.

Responsibility goes both ways. Visitors who come on to our country must agree to seek the information on that area they are visiting and to behave in the right way, as instructed by the Dawawang.

### *Visitor management issues*

Many visitors do not respect our country. Damage is caused by people taking sand, taking paperbark from trees, digging up plants, riding motorbikes through creeks, collecting seeds, taking artefacts, leaving rubbish, taking sand and bark, getting bogged and messing up our roads.

Visitors need advice on dangerous animals, and about places where they should and shouldn't swim. Visitors sometimes go into caves and cultural sites where they are not supposed to be. They also sometimes drive right up to our community or through our community on their way to Wawoolem, stirring up dust and disturbing our homes.

Water catchments need to be protected from visitor impact—facilities are needed so visitors are not washing their plates in the rock holes, and polluting them.

### *Proposed visitor management strategies and actions*

Strategies for visitor management include:

- ◇ Protocols—information about tourist destinations shouldn't be distributed without Dawawang permission, protocols should also cover how visitors should behave on country.
- ◇ Signage:
  - ◇ All signs should use correct Miriuwung-Gajerrong names.
  - ◇ There should be signs at all places explaining Indigenous values for country and appropriate behaviour—stay on paths, don't take anything from country, permission is required to photograph certain areas etc.
- ◇ Times when visitors can come.
- ◇ Structures—tracks, tables, toilets, rubbish bins, barbecues for all high-impact visitation sites, parking areas to draw cars away from the water.
- ◇ Education—making information available in print or orally through story telling.
- ◇ Guides—all visitors should keep to walking tracks with signage, unless accompanied by a traditional owner guide.
- ◇ Permits—to keep track of peoples' whereabouts, using a booking or permit system through the park council.

### *Steps and resources*

We have documented our main priorities for visitor management. Specific plans for each park and each site, approved by the Dawang, are needed before we start any construction. Participatory planning is really important for all this infrastructure.

## Ngamoowalem visitor management

Management infrastructure is needed in Ngamoowalem to reduce impacts and provide business opportunities for Dawawang. The five priority sites are *Galjiba* (Molly Springs), *Bandaba* (Valentine Springs), *Jaiying* (Bubble Springs), *Mayiba* (Middle Springs) and *Thegooyeng* (Black Rock Fall). Business opportunities are through running the camping/caravan park at Molly Springs, and guides for visitors at the other sites. The Dawawang need to be strongly involved in planning and building all these facilities.

### *Galjiba (Molly Springs)*

*Galjiba* is currently experiencing a lot of negative impacts from visitation. People are walking up and over the rocks. At night people light candles and leave the wax on the rocks. The spring water is being polluted by people swimming in it with their dogs and washing their dishes and clothes in it. This pollution potentially affects both the quality of water downstream and the water goannas that are used for food in the community.

Molly Springs should be developed as a camping and caravan area to manage these impacts, and provide business opportunities for the Dawawang:

- ◇ Caravan turn-around with toilet and bathroom
- ◇ Solar system for phone for safety, also solar pump, lights
- ◇ Safe walking track over the rocks
- ◇ Shed for washing clothes, laundry tub
- ◇ Environmentally friendly infrastructure, composting toilet.

The tourism opportunities at *Galjiba* should be linked with walking and bus tours within the parks, as well as river tours, including through joint ventures.



*“ We used to walk here from our camp, all our kids swimming here in the hot time. Travellers in their car and caravan can come, they can come and camp here, they pay to come in, we charge a fee. We need it graded so there’s a roundabout to turn around. Bore water, toilet and bathroom. Need composting toilet. Swimming in the hot time, lots of people come here. We want to make it properly for walk through. Some people come here in the cold weather, drinking, smoking no good, I can’t help that now. We want to look after it properly.”*

*Pamela Simon, at Molly Springs, 8 June 2007*

### *Bandaba (Valentine Springs)*

Picnic facilities are needed at Valentine Springs, including interpretive signs, tables, barbecues, firewood, bins, parking areas and toilets.



“*Bandaba used to be the main place for kangaroo and emu in the old days, not there any more.*

*We used to come here from Ivanhoe Station, walk, no road in those days. Snake Dreaming place here, stories passed down from our grandfather. Wallarring, dimalan trees on the river here.*”

*Pamela Simon, at Molly Springs, 15 September 2006*

### *Jaiying (Bubble Springs)*

Jaiying needs similar facilities to Bandaba. Visitors are damaging the site, washing their dishes in the spring. Many useful trees are found here, fruit trees (*mejerren*, black plum) glue tree; ironwood used for shields, boomerang, long spears; *wanyarring* tree for honey; Leichhardt tree (*jambeng*). Jaiying is also a story place.



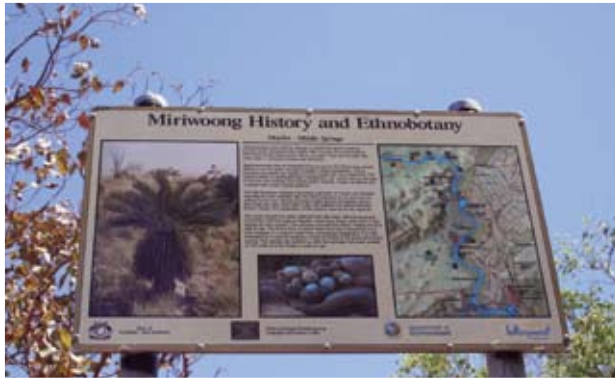
Above: Molly Simon, at Bubble Springs, September 2006

### *Mayiba (Middle Springs)*

Picnic facilities are also needed at Mayiba and a parking area to move people back from the water. A stall here would be good with people selling arts and crafts, showing tourists how to carve boab nuts and do other crafts.



Above: Molly pointing to where a parking area should be developed, back away from the water, September 2006.



Signage like this is very welcome. Some signs have been pulled out of the ground.

The access road at Middle Springs is a problem and needs to be fixed.



*“ All the gardiya come and get bogged in the wet season, we pulled out couple of people ourselves.”*

Below: (From left) Lawrence Webster, Barrahnina Webster, Margaret Moore, Rexaled Webster at Middle Springs, June 2007.

*“ Need table and chair here for people to sit down under the trees. They can bring their kids here for swimming. Rangers should be involved, checking them out. Arts and crafts here too, carving boab nuts.”*

*Pamela Simon, at Middle Springs, 8 June 2007*



### *Thegooyeng (Black Rock Fall)*

Black Rock needs a parking area and picnic facilities too. Black rock hole is a dangerous one for snake Dreaming.



Above: Molly Simon with tourists at Black Rock Fall, September 2006.

### *Northern Side of Ngamoowalem*

Walking tours are the priority for the northern section of the park. We could develop these walking tours on old stock and wagon routes—the exact location of these needs to be discussed with older people in the community.



Some suggested trails included:

- ◇ Old road from the back of Middle Creek to Molly Springs
- ◇ The trail from the back of Valentine Creek
- ◇ Trail to Mantinea Bore
- ◇ Through from Button Gap, along the northern part of the range, through Parry's Lagoon to Goose Hill community.

Development of these trails is very important, and the older people need to be closely involved to gather more information about this country and the stories. We need to plan out the routes, and the camping sites, and develop these trails as a business.

Tourist safety is very important. Collection of anything, including rocks and plants, and going off tracks puts people at risk. Tourists need to consult with traditional owners before doing any of these things.

### Wawoolem and Darram Visitor Management—Packsaddle Creek and Springs and Packsaddle Swamp

Visitor facilities are needed at Wawoolem to ensure safety, manage environmental impacts, and protect the privacy of the community.

#### *Wawoolem*

In Wawoolem Creek, there is already a walking track up to Packsaddle Spring, which needs improvement. We would also like signage re-established—the sign that was there was pulled out by some locals by chaining it to a 4WD. The signage needs to let tourists know they can't take motorbikes up the creek. They should stop at the car park and walk up to the spring with the permission of the Dawang. There needs to be a car park, toilet and rubbish bin provided here.



*“ We want people to stick to the track when they walk in and out. We want the park to help us make a proper trail here so tourists don't come into the community.”*

*Warren Gerrard, at Yirralalem, 4 June 2007*

#### *Garn-Garnbe (Barbeque Hill)*

People drive up this hill to watch the sunset, but it looks out over our community and removes our privacy. Under the Ord Final Agreement, the area was supposed to be fenced off so people didn't drive there any more. People can walk up the hill with permission, but they need to ask first and leave their car at the bottom of the hill.



*“There is a big cultural site behind Barbeque Hill for spear making, which needs protection.”*

*Carol Hapke, near Garne-Garne (Barbeque Hill), 6 June 2007*

### *Darram*

At Darram, board walks would need to be constructed for visitors, and it could be developed into a bird watching area, with bird hides. We need to think of some infrastructure here, like access, car park, toilets, rubbish bins and signage to inform people of the place, its values and how we want them to behave.

### *Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim Visitor Management—Ningbing and Weaber/Point Spring*

Currently the gorge is attracting a large number of visitors. Facilities are needed here, including a car park, but further down the track. We would prefer not to allow a camping area at the gorge. We need to develop a plan for facilities on our park, not just start building at the gorge. Our priority is to re-establish our presence on our country.

We need people to know that we are the traditional owners for the country, and to recognise and respect our roles. There should be a gate with signs letting people know they are entering native title lands, and who the traditional owners and native title holders are. We would like to identify the best places for camping in the park. Many people are camping at Cape Dommett. We would like visitors to Cape Dommett to register at Ningbing so we can be aware of their safety.

Currently some station managers are giving permission for people to visit our parks without consulting with us—we need to ensure permission processes come through the traditional owners for the country.



Large camp at the Gorge on 22 July 2007. This group of families was from the Illawarra Speleological Society, and was exploring caves.

*“We want to share our country. It’s a beautiful country, let them see it, let them see how we look after it. We’ll put a sign here, a little road to here. Might be a camping area here, and from there they can walk.”*

*Merle Carter, the Gorge, 22 July 2007*



*“Cape Dommert is the main area where facilities are needed. It’s on our (native title) land, but it’s not on our park. So we’d like to work across both areas.”*

*Fred Gerrard, near Cape Dommert, 23 July 2007*

### Goomiyig and Barrberrm visitor management—Cave Springs Range/Pincombe Range and Zimmerman Range

Cave Springs is the main site experiencing a lot of visitation. We need facilities here for the tourists for day trips and for camping—toilets, showers, chairs, tables, barbecues, ablutions block, water tank so we don't need to draw water from the springs. We would also like to have a separate camping area for the Dawang.

*“ At Barrberrm, we'd like to have a museum or interpretive centre, with old photographs and artefacts, so people can understand how Aboriginal people lived here before, how they managed to get their food and what it was like here. We can take people there before they go on a chopper ride over the range. At the moment, we just take them to the billabong and tell stories.”*

*Juju Wilson, 21 August 2007*



Above: Gayle Carlton, Alice Boombi, Cody Ward and Gilbert Riley at Cave Springs, 19 August 2007.

### Tourism business development

#### *Our vision for tourism*

Our vision is for Dawawang to run all the tourism on the parks. Rangers should be part of our tourism businesses. All tourism businesses on our parks need to be managed so that protection of the natural and cultural values of the parks come first.

Tourism is also about educating our young people to build their capacity, and the community's capacity, to manage the places tourists visit. We need to know all the names and stories for these places, and how to look after them.

#### *Our cultural values and responsibilities for visitors*

We value tourism opportunities highly as tourism businesses can be run from our communities and provide us with independence from government support and welfare. Tourism can provide an income as the basis for self-management and self-determination.

#### *Tourism issues*

Aboriginal tour guides should be Dawawang from that country. We learned that in the Northern Territory, there are currently businesses where Aboriginal tour guides are not on their own country, and this is causing problems.

We need a lot of assistance and resources to build up our tourism businesses. Funding to start tourism businesses is not part of the funding we have for joint management out of the Ord Final Agreement. We need to understand how we can access help for our tourist businesses.

Currently many tourists are coming onto our country without any benefit to us. We need more information about how DEC manages tourism, including how permits are issued and what happens to income from tourism. Tourism arrangements for our parks need to take account of our freehold title under the parks. The roles and responsibilities of the MG Corporation, our prescribed bodies corporate (PBC) and MG Trustees Pty Ltd need to be clearly spelt out.

#### *Proposed tourism strategies and actions*

Getting establishment of the visitor facilities and management outlined in the previous section is really important for our tourism businesses. We need expertise to help us with tourism planning, and with resources to get our businesses going. We are interested in partnerships.

We want tourism to be run as a network through a central system. All the parks opportunities should be linked together to provide different tourism activities at different parks, like fishing in one place, and bush-tucker talks in another. By doing it this way, we can make sure we are not doubling up and we can also share resources such as a bus, camping equipment etc. We also consider it important to make tourism infrastructure



and resources available, where appropriate, to support on-country trips and educational tours for our children in the school holidays, as part of community capacity building.

We need tourism business plans—a plan for each area, and a big plan to network all the tourist businesses.

A planning workshop would be a good way to start, but we need ongoing assistance. We need to understand what role the parks can and cannot play in tourism development, and the roles of all our MG Corporation.

A tourism development officer in the MG Corporation would be useful. MG Corporation has started supporting the Yirralalem Community with planning and business development for their tourism enterprise.

We also need to identify how we are going to make sure all the tourist businesses allowed on the park are not damaging natural and cultural values. We will need a permit system, coordinated centrally, as part of the management plan. The processes for managing permits should be considered by the regional park council. Permits will help us to know where visitors are and where they are going. Permits should be required for people to take photos of or paint our country in the parks. Where activities involve commercial benefits, the permit systems need to be different—for example, a proper agreement is needed where people want to take photos for commercial purposes.

A cultural site survey has to be done in partnership with Dawang before any tourism development occurs.

### *Steps and resources*

We need to start by understanding how DEC usually manages tourism and gives out permits, and what happens to the money from tourism. The roles and responsibilities of the MG Corporation, our PBCs and MG Trustees (which will hold the freehold title) need to be considered alongside the usual DEC processes. From these first two steps, we can develop our processes, including how Dawang can get permission to operate tourist businesses on our parks.

A lot of planning and business development work is needed for our own businesses—not just to get us started but to assist us along as we grow and manage our tourism businesses. We could start by identifying the roles of various organisations to assist us in tourism development. Some useful resources for business development include:

- ◇ Stepping Stones for Tourism—a tourism development program for Indigenous communities—holding a workshop for Yirralalem in October
- ◇ Nitmiluk Tours Pty Ltd, the Jawoyn owned company which runs all most all the commercial activities in the Nitmiluk Park
- ◇ Ecotrust, an emerging organisation to assist with environmentally friendly business development
- ◇ Many tourism business development programs in government.

The roles of MG Corporation and DEC are also important.

## Tourism businesses on each park

### Wawoolem

*“ For our tourist venture here, we’re looking at doing a joint venture with some partners. We need to get some capital to get the infrastructure established. We’d like to have artists working in the community linked to the business. The main part of our business would be walking through the country with people, and talking about the country. ”*

*Warren Gerrard, at Yirralalem, 4 June 2007*

### Darram

Tourist businesses here would be based on bird watching.

### Ngamoowalem

On the southern side, the caravan and camping park at Molly Springs will be our main business. We’d like to get the artists working again in our facility at Wijilawirram, and link that into our tourist businesses. We need one of the younger educated Dawawang to run the business side. We’d like our Dawawang taking tours into all the visitor sites.

On the northern side, our emphasis will be on walking-trail based tourism, and not on vehicle access—we would provide bus access to keep low impact. We would also like to develop a tourism business taking people in to look at Goose Hill Swamp.

We would like all the tourism businesses run by Dawang in the parks to be linked, so people can go from camping, to walking, to boat cruises on the river and on to a cultural centre and other experiences. Ivanhoe Crossing would be a good place to join a boat cruise.

### Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim

*“ Our vision on Wardanybeng country is to have Ningbing community as the centre of our tourism businesses. Tourism businesses are needed to make our communities viable. We’d like to run fishing expeditions, have guided tours through the gorge, and run camping areas where visitors pay a fee. We’d also like to be able to sell produce from our community (eggs, vegetables) to tourists passing through. We like to be involved in making and selling bush crafts and beads. For anybody going down to Cape Dommett, the first point of call would be Ningbing. ”*

*Merle Carter, at Ningbing, 23 July 2007*

*“In the future, guided fishing expeditions are a good tourism opportunity on the park—we can take them out on a boat and show them how to fish.”*

*Fred Gerrard, 16 August 2007*

*“Some sort of small caravan park there at Point Spring would save people taking their caravans down to the Keep River. They can go fishing for the day, and come back in the evening.”*

*Emily Hester, 17 August 2007*

*“We would also like to explore opportunities to link with tourism business at Cape Dommatt, including a safari tent operation. We would like a fishery licence on the coast for Gajirrabeng people.”*

### **Goomiyig and Barrberm**

A tourist business could be developed based around Cave Springs, but more discussions are needed between the Goomiyig Dawang. Juju Wilson's running some tourism business into Barrberm. This business would be helped by the development of a museum and interpretive centre. The best place for such a centre would be at Kumbarumba (Goorboome Community).

# Natural and cultural resources

- ◇ Cultural recording and education
- ◇ Natural and cultural resources management
- ◇ Cultural site management

## Cultural recording and education

### *Our vision for cultural education*

Our vision is for all Miriuwung-Gajerrong children to know their own language fluently, to know their own culture and their own country, including all the sites, tracks and stories on their country.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities for visitors*

In our culture, to know your own language and your own culture you have to know your own country. We have a strong responsibility to keep our knowledge of culture, language, and Law strong to look after country.

### *Cultural knowledge issues of concern to us*

Cultural knowledge is being lost by the younger generations. You learn about the *gardiya* approach, but not the cultural side.

Cultural site recording is very important, but in the past researchers have recorded our information and taken it for their own use without benefit to the traditional owners. Our main reason for recording our sites is for our young people's education. Some information has been recorded and is held in the language centre.

### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

Our main priority is to have resources for bush trips with old people and young people to go out on country, and do cultural recording and cultural education.

We need resources for cultural education, like a book of bush tucker and medicine, and videos, books of the dreamtime stories. We need to make these materials without the faces and voices of people so they can be used for cultural education when the old people pass on.

We need to make sure our intellectual property rights are protected when we're doing cultural recording and cultural education. At Mijing, in the long term, we'd like to run social programs, for example a special youth program, a 'boot camp', emphasising the values of respect and discipline. A place on country for older people would also be good.

### *Steps and resources*

Cultural recording needs to be done through systems under our control, and that protect our intellectual property. We could start with a workshop to look at some different systems for cultural recording that protects our property rights including:

- ◇ Balkanu's Traditional Knowledge Revival Pathways
- ◇ NAILSMA's Indigenous Knowledge Strategy
- ◇ Aboriginal Rainforest Council's Cultural Mapping and Heritage Information Project
- ◇ Uluru Cultural Recording System
- ◇ Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre.

Some examples of cultural education resources:

- ◇ Jawoyn Plants and Animal Book
- ◇ Yalanji Fire Management Book.

### *Talking about cultural education*



*Helen Gerrard, Yirralalem, 4 June 2007,  
talking with Carol Hapke*

*“We had a joint project between the health centre and the language centre to document all the bush tucker and bush medicine in the district. But we can't really use the video now for teaching our kids because all those people have passed on. We need to do it again to use it for teaching. If we did it again, we'd look at making it a product on its own so it can be used without the old people's faces and voices. We should have a look at the material and see what can be used, that's valuable information.”*



*“ That book all good. You can do that and everyone can see. This way you gotta put those animal names like that, all that good for school. Dreamtime stories in glossy books would be good too.”*

*Nancy Dilyai, 6 June 2007*

Left: Nancy and Janelle looking at Jawoyn plant and animal book.

*“ Kids have to be able to call their country right through, from inside out. When you call a country you start from inside, and you call him out now. From inside of your country, where your country is, you start calling out, and you go out from there. ”*

*Carol Hapke, at Yirralalem, 6 June 2007*

### Cultural education and Youth Program for Mijing



*“We can start that up here, with juvenile justice program, taking the kids bush instead of sending them to Perth or other places. Parents can come with them.”*

*Emily Hester, at Ningbing, 23 July 2007*

Left: Thelma and Margaret Birch playing in a gerdewoon (boab) tree near Mijing.



*“ Two main things I want to teach young people. Respect and discipline, respect for property.”*

*Merle Cater, at Ningbing, 23 July 2007*

Left: Margaret Birch playing in a gerdewoon (boab) tree near Mijing.

Below: Camping out near Cape Dommett during park planning.

*“ Old people and young people going out together, learning about country, learning about the language, traditional names for everything. Working together with the language centre, learning about country, with them garrayilng (old people).”*

*Merle Carter, at Ningbing, 23 July 2007*



*“ Women from the Newry side want to go out to the Womans' Ground at Flying Fox.”*

*Minnie Lumai, at Goomiyig, 20 August 2007*



*“ Bush tucker, we can do that bush tucker and bush medicine book. That’s where you’re going to have to get the mob working at the language centre, they deal with that side, we can take them out to the area for language and culture.”*

*Stephanie Boombi, at Goomiyig, 20 August 2007*

*Left: Jessie Gumbai, with Gilbert Riley and Malarty Boombi.*

*“Teaching language to the young kids is good. All the kids can understand the language, but they can’t talk it.”*

*Right: Blanche Flyingfox, Barrberrm, 21 August 2007, pictured with Sheba Dignari and grandson.*





## Cultural recording and education

### *Our vision for cultural education*

Our vision is to look after all the bush tucker, bush medicine and all the important places for these. Waterways, rivers and springs have special cultural significance and need special management attention in our country.

### *Our cultural values and responsibilities*

Important bush tucker on this country includes magpie geese, Burdekin duck, fish, turkey, goanna, snake, blue-tongue, gooseberry, bush tomatoes, sugar-bag, echidna, bush orange, emu, turtle, crab, kangaroo.

Other important plants include cypress pine, kapok tree and iron wood.

All bush tucker animals depend on our waterways, rivers and springs and protecting the quality and quantity of our water resources is very important. These waters have great cultural significance to us.

### *Natural and cultural resources issues of concern to us*

A lot of bush tucker, bush medicine and useful plants are not as plentiful as they used to be. There are many examples. Bandaba (Valentine Springs) was a main place for emu and kangaroo in the old days but they're not there any more.

Commercial bee hives have taken over from the wild bees and sugar-bag is really hard to find these days. *Jendooboojgeng* used to be plentiful, especially down at Ivanhoe Crossing. Magpie geese, flying fox, turkeys, echidna, dingo and emu numbers have also declined. Pines used to be plentiful through the Keep River country, but there's hardly any there now.

The construction of the dams on the Ord River brought many changes to the plants and animals in and nearby the river, and those changes are continuing.

### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

We'd like to restore the country. Collecting seeds and replanting areas that have been damaged, for example by mining, would help. We'd like to grow our own bush food and native flora for restoring country. The parks service people have a lot of knowledge about setting up and running a nursery, and could help us develop business enterprises. Getting the pines back onto our country is important.

We'd like to develop programs to increase the numbers of animals back to what they used to be. Projects to protect and restore water quality in our springs and waterways, and in the Ord River, are very important.

At Mijing and Jemani-Winingim Dawang, one idea is to start a botanical garden, with examples of the plants to be found in their parks.

We'd like to get copies of all the recent studies of the plants and animals on our country. For example, we understand there was a recent survey of wetland birds, including birds on Darram. This information is an important starting point for our actions.

*Steps and resources*

We need more discussion to identify the first steps to start building up our natural and cultural resources again, including the condition of our rivers, waterways and springs. We need traditional owner-directed research help identify the causes of declines in our natural and cultural resources, and to identify actions to bring our country back to good condition. Our intellectual and cultural property rights must be protected in this and all research. The research can start by pulling together all the recent studies about the condition of plants and animals on our country.

*Talking about bush tucker and bush medicine*



*“Black foot swamp is the best place for collecting magpie goose eggs.”*

*Margaret Moore, at Black foot swamp, 7 June 2007*



*“Namit-namit, black-headed python, is good tucker. We use wire to roll them up and cook them on the fire.”*

*Pamela Simon, snake on the road through Ngamoowalem, 7 June 2007*



*“ Ti-tree is the best for sugar-bag, gives us beautiful clear honey.”*

*Pamela Simon,  
Ngoowalem,  
7 June 2007*

*“ Some of our bush tucker plants are joogoorroong (bush orange), thelawoong (bush potato), ganngooning (water lily) and mijad (hairy yam).”*

*Jessie Gumbai,  
Goomiyig,  
20 August 2007,  
pictured with Gayle Carlton*



*“ There used to be big mobs of turkey around here, especially from the marsh, but now there are hardly any, you only see one or two.”*

*Thelma Birch,  
Mijing,  
22 July 2007*



Above: Keep River.

*“When we used to go to Keep River fishing and camping, we always stop to get pine needles and cones, they’re good for mosquitoes when you burn them. Today you can hardly see any there now, there used to be a big mob through that area.”*

*Carol Hapke, at Jmbilem, 19 July 2007*

*“ I want to have a botanical garden, made up of just bush plants, with all the rare things, white, orange and purple orchids, so we can show people what’s on our country. You can see these native plants, but you can’t touch them.”*

*Merle Carter, near Ningbing,  
23 July 2007*



Above: Fruiting pandanus near Mijing.

## Culture site management

### *Our vision for cultural site management*

Our vision is that all our story places, camping places, cemeteries, walking tracks and other sites will be recorded by us, and the information used for good management and protection of these sites. Some cultural sites also need restoration and rehabilitation.

### *Our values and responsibilities for site management*

Under our Law, knowledge of the story places and cultural sites, and the responsibility for protection and management, comes through your connection to your country.

### *Cultural site management issues of concern to us*

A mine has been built on a stone tool site so restoration is required. Other places where paintings have been damaged need special restoration works, performed by the right people with responsibility for the sites.

Sites where our people have been killed during the early days need strong recognition and special protection.

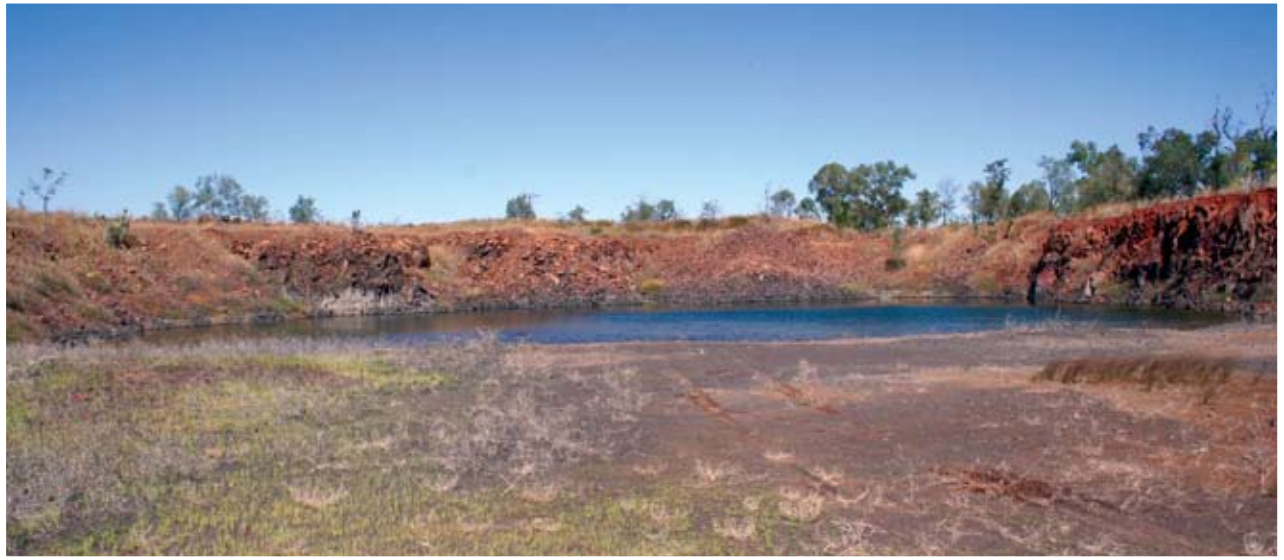
Some sites need protection from erosion by revegetation projects in gullies and other erosive surfaces.

### *Our proposed strategies and actions*

We need to develop maps for use in park planning with rules for the rangers to use. We need to develop plans and processes for restoring damaged sites.

### *Steps and resources*

Recording the location of our cultural sites needs to be through cultural mapping systems under our control, as discussed in the cultural education section. Through recording our sites, we will be able to identify management actions that are needed, including restoration and rehabilitation.



*“ Sharp rocks, our old people used to make spears out of this rock, been a long time (since the mine stopped). That stone in the mine is very important to make axe and knife, have to make sure those stones are looked after. Could fill it in (the pit) and plant trees.”*

*Pamela Simon, mine site opposite Wirrijilwarim, 8 June 2007*

*“Our old people’s bodies are in those caves, where they’ve been shot there, our grannies and grandpas. Police used to camp at Ningbing. That Sergeant was named Weaber who led them. That’s why we want the name of that range changed.”*

*Emily Hester, Barrberrm, 22 July 2007, at Mijing, pictured with niece Margaret Birch.*



# SECTION FIVE

## REFERENCE MATERIAL



## List of References

Akerman, K. 1979. Material culture and trade in the Kimberleys today. In: Berndt, R. M. and Berndt, C. J., Eds. *Aborigines of the West Their Past and Their Present*. Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press.

Barber, K. and Rumley, H. 2002. Gunanurang: (Kununurra) *Big River Aboriginal Cultural Values of the Ord River and Wetlands. Kununurra: A Study and Report prepared for the Water and Rivers Commission*.

Graham-Taylor, S. 1982. A critical history of the Ord River Project. In: Davidson, B. R. and Graham-Taylor, S., Eds. *Lessons from the Ord*. Sydney: Policy Monographs, Centre for Independent Studies.

Green, N. 1995. *Forrest River Massacre*. Fremantle: Fremantle Arts Press.

Kimberley Land Council. 2004. *Ord Stage 1 Fix the past Move to the future. An Aboriginal Social and Economic Impact Assessment of the Ord River Irrigations Project Stage 1*. Kununurra: Kimberley Land Council

La Fontaine, M. et al. 2006. *New Legend A Story of Law and Culture and the Fight for Self-Determination in the Kimberley*. Fitzroy Crossing: Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre.

Shaw, B. 1981. *Pelican Dreaming*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Shaw, B. 1986. *Countrymen The life histories of four Aboriginal men as told to Bruce Shaw*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Shaw, B. 1991. *Bush Time Station Time*. Underdale: University of South Australia, Aboriginal Studies Key Centre.

Vernes, T. 2006. Ord: Case Study for Inappropriate Development and Poor Planning. In: Hill, R., Golson, K., Lowe, P. A., Mann, M. K.; Hayes, S., and Blackwood, J. E., Eds. *Kimberley Appropriate Economies Roundtable Forum Proceedings Convened 11-13 October 2005, Fitzroy Crossing, WA, by the Kimberley Land Council, Environs Kimberley and Australian Conservation Foundation*. Cairns: Australian Conservation Foundation.

### Court cases

*Attorney General of the Northern Territory versus Ward & Others, Federal Court of Australia 2003, FCAFC 283.*

*Ben Ward & Others versus State of Western Australia & Others, Federal Court of Australia 1998, WAG 6001 OF 1995*

*Ben Ward & Others versus State of Western Australia & Others, Federal Court of Australia 2006, FCA 1848.*

*Submissions on Behalf of the Applicant in Support of the Proposed Consent Determination and the Nomination of the Miriuwung and Gajerrong #4 (Native Title Prescribed Body Corporate) Aboriginal Corporation in Ben Ward & Others versus State of Western Australia & Others, Federal Court of Australia 2004, WAD 124.*



### Newsletters

Kimberley Land Council Newsletters Number 1 2004, Number 2 2005, Number 4 2005, and Number 12 2006.

### Glossary of Miriwoong (Miriuwung) words

Note on spelling: Spelling is based on the advice of Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre except where alternative spelling has been adopted in Corporation names and names for Community Living Areas (including the words Miriuwung and Gajerrong). Also note that the spelling agreed for the new conservation parks at Goomiyig and Barrberm in the Ord Final Agreement is Goomig and Barrbem respectively.

Badadang	Red soil plan
Bading	Edible root, <i>Brachystema glabiforum</i>
Balaboorr	Hill in Carrboyd Range, traditional owner group associated with Darram Conservation Park
Bandaba	Place name, Valentine Springs
Barndinyirriny	Dry season
Barrberm (Barrbem)	Place near Zimmerman Range. Also the name of the new conservation park in that area.
Bilbiljing	Grasshopper
Boodbarang	Conkerberry, <i>Carissa lanceolata</i>
Boolgoomirri	House Roof Hill
Boonang	Ash for chewing tobacco
Daloong	Green plum
Darram	Place name, Bandicoot Bar. Also the name of the new conservation park at Packsaddle Swamp.
Dawang	Particular tract of traditional country and the traditional owners who are connected to it
Dawawang	People who are traditional owners of a particular tract of country
Dimalan	River gum
Diwanang	Wedge tail eagle
Doolboong	Traditional owner group
Doondoos	Traditional owner group, part of the Gija
Gajirrabeng	Gajerrong
Ganngooning	Red water lily
Gardiya	European people
Garn-Garnbe	Place name, Barbeque Hill
Gerdan	Frippy lizard

Galamanda	Area name, Goose Hill station and surrounding area including Parry's Creek. Also name of the Dawang group associated with this country. Also name of a particular hill in this area.
Galjiba	Place name, Molly Springs
Garrayilng	Elders
Gerdewoon	Boab tree
Gerloong	Big storm, water
Gija	Group to the south of Miriuwung-Gajerrong
Googbeng	Forbidden by Law
Goolalawa	Name for the Incorporated Goose Hill Community, and also the name for a place on the Ord River near Galamanda
Goonjang	Kapok tree, <i>Cochlospermum fraseri</i>
Goomiyig (Goomig)	Cave Springs. Also the name of the new conservation park in that area
Goonggaleng	Fire sticks, <i>Clerodendrum floribunda</i>
Goonoonoorrang	Kununurra
Goorrboome	Kumbarumba outstation
Goorrgorrjing	Tawny frog-mouth owl
Jalaloong	Corkwood tree
Jalareng	Egret
Jaliwang	Barramundi
Jambeng	Leichhardt tree
Janawen	Ancestral being from the Dreaming, something that walked through
Jaiying	Place name, Bubble Springs
Jawin	Boils
Jawinkam	Black soil plain
Jemandi-Winingim	Weaber Range. Also the name for the new conservation park in that area.
Jendooboojgeng	Wallaby-rat
Jibgang	Jungle, scrub
Jibijgoong	Small black bird
Jigoomirri	False House Roof Hill
Jimbilang	Stone spear head
Jimblem	Place where stone spear heads are found (near Yirralalem). Also the name of the community living area at that place.
Jiyilng	Spring
Jilinybeng	Bush cucumber
Joogoorroong	Bush orange, <i>Capparis umberata</i>
Lemoogeng	Blue tongue lizard
Majang	Boss
Malyab	To wet something or somebody with water

Mandiwa	Dance
Mantha	Water to protect visitors
Mayiba	Place name, Middle Springs
Mejerren	Black plum, <i>Vitex glabrata</i>
Merndang	Paperbark tree
Mijad	Hairy yam, <i>Dioscorea bulibifera</i>
Mijing	Limestone. Also the name for Ningbing Range and the new conservation park in that area.
Moolali	Ancestral Dreaming figure
Moonamang	Goose
Namij-namij	Black headed python
Ngamoowalem	Place name for Livistona Range; also <i>Cycas spp.</i> Also the name of the new Conservation Park in that area.
Ngarranggarni	Dreaming
Niligem	Milligan's Lagoon
Ribinyeng	Community
Thegooyeng	Place name, Black Rock Fall
Thelagoorroong	Blue wing kookaburra
Thelawoong	Long yam, <i>Dioscorea transversa</i>
Therrin-gin	Place name
Walarring	Ghost gum
Wan-gang	Cold weather
Wanyarring	Bauhenia tree
Wardanybeng	Traditional owner group associated with Mijing Conservation Park
Wawoolem	Place name, Packsaddle Creek. Also the name of the new conservation park in that area.
Wiram	Traditional owner group associated with Barrberm (Barrbem) Conservation Park
Wirnan	Ceremonial exchange and trade system
Wirndoong	Curlew
Wirrijilwarim	Name of community living area near Molly Springs
Wirrjininy	Sand country
Worrawoorrem	Community near Packsaddle
Yardungarl, Yardangarlng	Dingo, first spelling is from the corporation name
Ying-geng	Wet season
Yirralalem	Place name, Packsaddle Springs. Also the name of the nearby community living area.
Yirralaleng	Type of gum tree, possibly <i>Eucalyptus miniata</i>

