

Yalata Indigenous Protected Area

Draft MERI Plan - Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, Improvement (2011-2016)

This plan is part of a package and goes hand in hand with four other documents. They are the:

- Yalata Healthy Country Management Plan (2011-2016)
- The Yalata Healthy Country Short Yarn (Poster)
- Yalata Healthy Country Information Kit (this pulls together bits and pieces from lots of other planning work and information)
- Yalata Land Management team (YLM) annual works plan



Draft 2, December 2010

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For Yalata Land Management and Yalata Community Incorporated

Our Vision

Through this monitoring plan, we want to find out if what we are doing on country is helping us achieve our vision. Connecting our children to our country and with our Elders is the most important thing that we can do through this plan. This means, our children:

- Know our stories, the songs of our country, the songlines
- Live the new way while also knowing and using the old ways
- Care for country, our water, rock holes, animals, plants

This plan is for the next five years. If our vision for this plan comes true, we would see:

Our children want to go out on country, outside of Yalata community. They know our song lines, they know the old ways. They know the stories and why it matters to care for our waterholes, special places and animals. They like the bush as much as the sea and know how to read the country like a book. They like taking the older folk out to dance, sing and listen to their stories. They know who the Rangers are (Yalata Land Management) and many children get to go out with and work alongside the Rangers. We care for Country to keep it healthy, and this keeps us healthy too.

Learning from our Work

The YLM team, with our partners, will be looking at the effectiveness of the work that is being done on our country. In government speak this is called a 'MERI' plan - *Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, Improvement*. This simply means that we say what we are going to do, then observe what happens once we've done it, have a look at what worked and what didn't, share this information, and then from this make improvement to whatever it is that we are doing.

Even simpler – we learn from what we do and adapt.

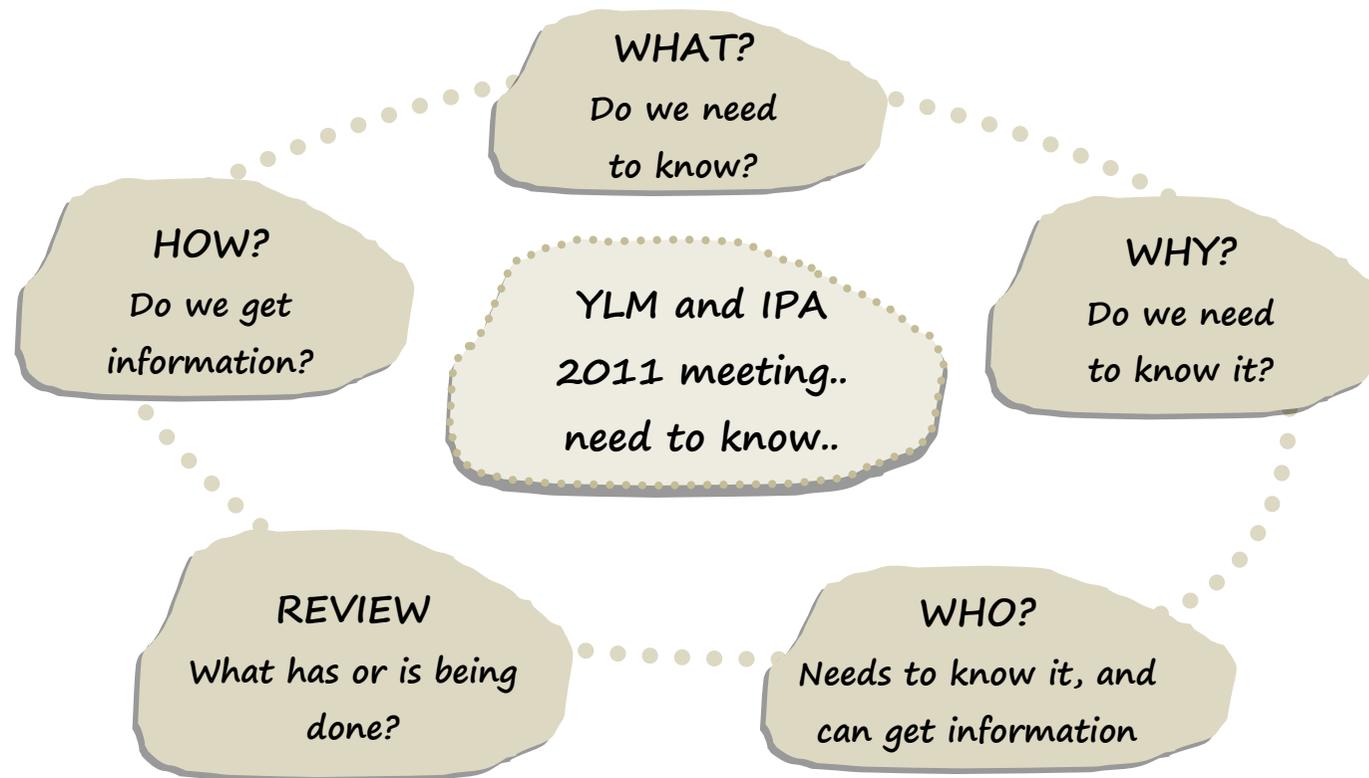
This will help all of us, the *Anangu* and Yalata community and traditional owners, the YLM team and IPA managers, know how well our management plan and actions are helping us achieve our vision. We have picked out the top priorities and actions from our country management plan. We have done this by asking which actions will have the biggest impact in achieving our vision.

What actions will connect our children to our country and with our Elders, helping to pass the knowledge on?

In this plan, we suggest a way for getting together each year to all agree on what we are going to monitor, starting with early 2011. **'We' in this plan includes the Yalata Community, YLM, Government and other funders.** Each year, we want IPA managers (YLM, Rangers, IPA Steering Committee), some folk from the Yalata Community Incorporated, and a few other *Anangu* to sit down and explore together:

- What do we need to know?
- Why do we need to know it and how urgent is it?

- Who needs to know?
- Is someone already finding out this information, or could easily do it?
- How can we get the information?



We then think that the YLM can pick out three to five main areas and monitoring actions for each year. Once we are doing this well, then each year we can add a few more. In early 2012, we want to have another gathering in which we explore the same questions and in which we also look at how well we did in 2011. Simply, in looking at the previous year, we might explore and ask each other something like:

- What actions and work did we do?
- What things did we do that you are most happy with?
- What/where would you like to do more, or see more done?
- Did we do the monitoring (that we said we would) and what does this tell us?
- What things (from the management plan) could we do in the next year that could make you happier with the way we are caring for country?

In this plan, as a starting point and to review in our meeting in 2011, we have outlined the main things that we propose to monitor in 2011 (Table 1). Once we have our meeting and find out more about what our partners are doing and can help us with, we might add some more. We have also included some things that we can monitor in the following years (2012-16), which is shown in Table 2. This second list is a bit like a shopping list or menu from which our team and partners can get ideas and select what we think is the most relevant and useful.

What would the Australian Government like to know?

The Australian Government gives us money to manage the land for conservation and cultural maintenance, so we need and want to consider what Government wants. Fortunately what we, the Yalata community want, is often much the same as what Government wants. The Government needs are identified in the 'Caring for Country (CfoC)' 5 year outcomes and include reducing impacts of weeds and feral animals, restoring traditional fire regimes, looking after important wetlands, and ensuring continued use of traditional ecological knowledge and traditional land management practices.

Table 1: Our Proposed Monitoring Actions for 2011

Please note that these are our top 10 priorities. We have numbered them 1 to 10 for ease of reference only, that is, they are not ranked (number 10 could be as equally important as number 1).

What do we need to know?	How we will know?	What does success look like? (immediate)
Relevant Priority 1: We do things to help our children feel connected with country and with our Elders.		
Have we created ways to bring together our children, Elders and YLM team, to share knowledge?	Number of culture camps	2 culture camps
	Number of children and Elders who participated	At least twenty children, 3 representatives of Yalata Council, and 3 Elders.
	Number of our partners that participated	All partners (Tullawon, the school, AW NRM and DENR) participating in one camp.
	Number of YLM team and rangers who participated	All of YLM team including rangers participating in both camps.
	Elders are happy with camps and/or opportunity to camp	Rating by YCI, including at least 3 Elders (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)
	The number of trips by the YLM team on which an Elder has joined.	At least three trips a year, some of which may be with school children.
What activities and how often has our YLM team worked with the school and children to help with the sharing of knowledge, between the YLM team and our Elders?	Elders are happy with their relationship with the YLM team and opportunities to get out on Country with them.	Rating by YCI, including at least 3 Elders (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)
	Number of visits and activities of the YLM team with the school.	At least one activity and/or visit a month. A regular way/program set up for doing this. That all rangers have participated in this program.
	Number of trips on country with YLM team,	At least three trips each year, which are in

What do we need to know?	How we will know?	What does success look like? (immediate)
	children and Elders.	addition to the culture camps.
	That some of the school program is about the importance of country and activities of the YLM team.	That there is a regular program for the YLM team and rangers to visit the school.
	School faculty are happy with relationship with YLM, and activities initiated by the YLM.	Rating by School Principal and at least two teachers (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)
Have we recorded and properly stored as much knowledge as we can (on paper and through sound recordings) including cultural sites, our stories and elders' cultural knowledge?	The number of sites and stories recorded and documented.	At least three additional sites recorded and documented and three stories/interviews with our Elders (recording and transcript).
<p>Relevant Priority in Plan: (2) We care for and protect our sacred sites, especially our rock holes (<i>Tjukula</i>), and share with our children the stories and importance of <i>Tjukula</i> and <i>Kapi</i>.</p>		
Are we sharing with our children the stories and importance of <i>Tjukula</i> and <i>Kapi</i> ?	The number of visits each year to a rockhole with the schools and community.	At least one visit each year with opportunity for Elders' to share stories about the rockhole and how to care for it.
<p>Relevant Priority in Plan: (6) Our country will still be healthy with no plants, animals, fish or birds or their habitats that are here today, being lost.</p>		
With our AW NRM partners, do we continue to manage and protect threatened species, habitats and threatening processes, weeds and feral animals, and monitor and mitigate climate change impacts?	With AW NRM, specific monitoring and indicators for abundance and distribution of African boxthorn, Ward's Weed, Sea Spurge, rabbits, cats, foxes, and camel. Also any initiatives that we have assisted in with monitoring and mitigating impacts of climate change.	Indicators demonstrate that abundance and distribution of ferals and pests decreasing and of threatened species increasing.

What do we need to know?	How we will know?	What does success look like? (immediate)
Have we continued to take part in survey and research work?	Number of research programs that we have participated in and that the results of this research is returned to the Yalata community and YLM team.	Effective survey and research the results of which are helping us to better care for country.
Relevant Priority in Plan: (9) We want to continue to work with our partners and neighbours, like the AW NRM, as a team, given that we all want to look after this country and our community.		
Are we working with all of our partners, and regularly meeting to get better coordination among funding bodies?	The number and effectiveness of meetings with partners, especially IPA coordination team, and involvement of all relevant partners in that.	Rating of IPA coordination team of satisfaction with frequency and effectiveness of meetings and partnerships. That all important partners attend most meetings, and at minimum the annual planning meeting.

Table 2: Potential Monitoring Actions for 2012-16

What do we need to know?	How we will know?	What does success look like? (intermediate and longer term)
Relevant Priority in Plan (1): We do things to help our children feel connected with country and with our Elders.		
Is there an 'On-Country' classroom for people to yarn, share stories and camp?	The number of 'On-Country' Classrooms established	At least one established close to and outside of the Yalata community
	Adequate facilities at the Classroom	At least a bench seat and fire pit.
	Community are happy with camps and/or opportunity to camp	Rating by YCI, including at least 3 Elders (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)
Have our rangers set up ways of keeping the wider community involved and informed about their work?	There is a regular way of rangers sharing information with the community to update them on their work.	At least three shared communication/updates (poster, newsletter, whatever is most effective) each year.
	Community are happy with information about YLM team.	Rating by YCI, including at least 3 Elders (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)
	The number of people in community (outside of YCI and services) who know who the YLM and the rangers are, and what they do.	That at least 5 of 10 people in the Yalata community asked randomly to name one ranger and one thing that the YLM does, can do so.
Relevant Priority in Plan: (2) We care for and protect our sacred sites, especially our rock holes (<i>Tjukula</i>), and share with our children the stories and importance of <i>Tjukula</i> and <i>Kapi</i>.		
Are we looking after and protecting our sites the	That YLM team and rangers feel confident	Rating by YLM team (confident, not sure, not

What do we need to know?	How we will know?	What does success look like? (intermediate and longer term)
right way, according to Law?	that when looking after sites, they are doing so in a way that respects Law.	confident)
	That Elders and the community know that important sites are being looked after the right way, respecting Law.	Rating by YCI, including at least 3 Elders (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)
	A short guide/information on what it means to look after our cultural sites according to Law in a practical way	Relevant, practical short guide prepared.
	The number of sites that are being looked after in the right way	At least 3 sites visited and maintained according to Law and short guide.
Relevant Priority in Plan: (3) We want to make sure that our meat food is healthy so we can continue our traditional hunting practices.		
Is our meat food, especially those that there are some concerns about like Red Kangaroo, Australian Bustard and Sand Goanna, healthy?	Amount of fat in right places of large meat foods and taste of animal.	Our meat and bush foods are healthy and tasty.
	Availability of and effort used to get, hunt or collect animals and plants.	We do not have to travel far to collect our traditional meat and bush foods.
Do we hunt in the way of our Law, only taking what we need?	When most people understand and practice hunting and bush food collection in a way that respects our Law.	All <i>Anangu</i> people who hunt and collect bush food do so in a way that shows understanding and respect of our Law.
Do we share and increase knowledge of hunting, meat and bush food?	We have a seasonal calendar showing important meat and bush foods, and plants of which many people in the community have helped create.	Updated seasonal calendar available and displayed in community and at school.
Relevant Priority in Plan: (4) To share the knowledge of the bush and have our children reading our country like <i>Walypala</i> (whiteman) read books.		
Is there a way for rangers to share their stories of working on country with the community?	Increasing understanding of who the YLM team and rangers are, and their stories of working on country.	Most people in community know who the YLM team are, what they do and the importance of what they do.

What do we need to know?	How we will know?	What does success look like? (intermediate and longer term)
Relevant Priority in Plan: (5) Allow visitors to share our Country, in a way that respects our culture, our Law. When a visitor leaves, we want them to take away a much greater understanding of our culture and Law, what is so special about country and how they can help look after it.		
Do we have an effective camping permit system that increases knowledge and understanding of our culture?	We have a system that requires that visitors understand and agree to respect country before we issue a permit and that increases visitor knowledge on how they can visit our land respectfully.	System in place. Random interviews of visitors with permits indicates that most know how to and do visit our country respectfully.
Do we, with our AW NRM partners, manage visitor impacts so they are acceptable?	Inspections of visitor sites and on-going monitoring to assess on-going impacts and acceptability. Site works like track rationalisation, fencing, site rehabilitation, signage and interpretation programs to manage impacts.	Impacts are acceptable at all nominated visitor areas.
Do we have a clear plan of action that identifies visitor opportunities, management issues and facilities needed to support this?	Development of a visitor management plan.	A good system for visitors that provides suitable opportunities and facilities.
Relevant Priority in Plan: (7) We have flexible work practices and supportive training and mentoring that helps our Rangers and YLM team to work at their best.		
Do we have flexible work practices and supportive training and mentoring that helps our Rangers and YLM team to work at their best, look after our country using traditional and Walypala knowledge, while still being able to honour and respect their family and cultural obligations?	Preparation of a YLM team work development plan, that identifies roles of each job, new skills and resources required, current talents and interests and how these can be developed.	Plan prepared with YLM team and rangers
	Career pathway for the current team identified.	That a way of having a Yalata person in the co-ordinator position in the mid to long term (5 to 10 years or so) is identified.
	YLM team satisfaction with ways of working	Rating by YLM team (highly satisfied, partly

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	and opportunities for training and development.	satisfied, not satisfied)
Do we explore and provide flexible ways of working and training?	YLM team level of satisfaction with training opportunities.	Rating by YLM team (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)
Do we have adequate resources so that our rangers can increase patrols and have adequate powers when managing visitors?	Number of patrols. Reports of incidents with visitors and ability to manage.	Rating by YLM team (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)
Have we reviewed the campsite booking method and permit system to make sure it is as efficient as possible?	Review of campsite booking and permit system.	Rating by visitors of permit system (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)
Have we explored opportunities to use cyber tracker technology to help with monitoring?	Analysis of potential use of cybertracker technology undertaken.	All relevant and available tools that help with monitoring used.
Are rangers and other community members and other people coming to Yalata to work safe and aware of their OH&S responsibilities?	Days lost to workplace injury and sickness. Other incidents.	Reduced and minimal number of incidents.
Do we have good systems for making decisions and continued good management of contracts and money?	IPA accountability and reporting. YLM team rating of ease of use and relevance of this plan and the draft Country Management plan.	Effective management of money and contracts with all reporting and financial acquittals completed. Clear decision making process, understood by all of YLM team. The YLM team finds this plan the plan of management a relevant and useful guide.
Relevant Priority in Plan: (8) We want to understand and get back to our traditional way of keeping country healthy through fire and patch burning.		
Are we involved in fire planning and management?	Level of involvement and understanding of YLM team in AW NRM fire management planning and burns.	YLM team and rangers properly trained and involved in managing country with fire in the next five years.
Relevant Priority in Plan: (9) We want to continue to work with our partners and neighbours, like the AW NRM, as a team, given that we all want to look after this country and our community.		

What do we need to know?	How we will know?	What does success look like? (intermediate and longer term)
Are we engaged with the AW NRM Board's broader natural resources management programs for caring for country, threatening processes, threatened species and fire?	Number of AW NRM programs that YLM team and rangers involved in.	Involvement of all of YLM team and rangers in a range of AW NRM programs, with the skills and training required.
Have we done all we can to establish a junior ranger program in the school?	A junior ranger program or suitable alternative established.	School children understand and are keen to get involved in the work of the YLM team.
Do the women's and men's centre connect with country and the activities of the YLM team?	Activities that celebrate the connection with country such as through artworks, artefacts, song and dance.	The strong connection between our community and country is celebrated.
Do we have activities with Tullawon , looking at health of country and our community and how connected the two are?	Activities that increase understanding of the connection between health of country and health of our community.	The strong connection between the health of our community and country is understood by many in our community.
Do we have appropriate research protocols that give tangible benefits to <i>Anangu</i> and will consider carbon/biodiversity trading opportunities?	Someone has written up and shared the right ways of going about research on our Country.	Respectful and appropriate research that benefits <i>Anangu</i> and caring for country.
Relevant Priority in Plan: (10) We have real and practical ways for our community to have meaningful work and other benefits on and relating to our country.		
Are we involved in tourism at the Head of the Bight, and other activities such as guided walks and other cultural experiences?	This might include using the HoB Whale Centre as a potential location to provide additional information, interpretation to visitors about YLM activities and community affiliation with country.	Any research gives direct benefit to <i>Anangu</i> and the way that we look after Country.
Do we have suitable opportunities to sell our art and artefacts?	The amount and location of where art and artefacts sold.	Community and <i>Anangu</i> satisfied with opportunities to sell art and artefacts.
Do we have opportunities for meaningful work on our lands?	The amount and type of work offered and participation of <i>Anangu</i> in these.	Meaningful opportunities for work on Country for most of our community.



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