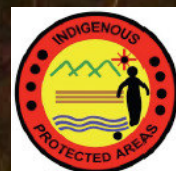

Nyangumarta Warrarn

Indigenous Protected Area

Plan of Management, 2015 to 2020

Nyangumarta Warrarn Aboriginal Corporation & Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation



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v2	13/08/2014	Tamara Murdock	Formatting, changing of photographs & addition of captions
V3	10/01/2015	José Kalpers Rainer Mathews	Text amendments recommended by the IPA Program, formatting, changing of photographs and editing

Warning: *this document may contain pictures or names of people who have since passed away.*



Yamatji Marlpa
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
Knowledge Partnerships



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Bush tomato

List of Acronyms used in this plan

CAMBA	China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
DPaW	Department of Parks and Wildlife Western Australia
GSD	Great Sandy Desert
IBRA	Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
JAMBA	Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement
MERI	Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, Improving
NRS	National Reserve System
NWAC	Nyangumarta Warrarn Aboriginal Corporation
PNTS	Pilbara Native Title Service
YMAC	Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation



Rangers learning how to undertake a flora survey

Nyangumarta Orthography

The following orthography for writing and pronunciation of Nyangumarta language is used throughout this report (Geytenbeek unpub. man.).

VOWELS

- a** As in 'putt'.
- aa** As in 'part'; twice as long as 'a'.
- i** As in 'pit'.
- ii** As in 'peat'; twice as long as 'i'.
- u** As in 'put' ; never ever like 'oo' in 'coo' or 'boot'.
- uu** As in 'put' but twice as long; not common in English.

CONSONANTS

- j** Akin to the d in 'dew' or 'due'; it is not like j as in 'Jew'. Made with the tongue flat and the tip touching the back of the top teeth
- k** At the beginning of words is like the k in 'skid'. Note that it has no puff of air after it. Elsewhere in words it can sound either that way or like a g.
- l** As in English.
- ly** Like the l in 'million', but with the tongue flat and the tip touching the back of the top teeth.
- m** As in English.
- n** As in English.
- ng** As in English.
- ny** Like the n in 'new', but with the tongue flat and the tip touching the back of the top teeth.
- p** At the beginning of words is like the p in 'spin'. Note that it has no puff of air after it. Elsewhere in words it can sound either that way or like a b.



Lirta, a type of native Gardenia with edible fruit

Jordan and Charmaine Wright listen to stories told by elders Susie Gilbert and Martina Badal



Nyangumarta statements on the Indigenous Protected Area

“The good side of this project is getting back and restoring all our significant sites. This makes our feelings and health and wellbeing for us, when we go to the country, the spirit gets inside of our body and we can feel it and we change, we know we are back home. Once we hit the boundary our nana starts singing as she gets the feeling and the spirit comes and she sings the stories of our grandfather”.

Nyaparu Rose

“All our values are on that land be it medicine, bush tucker, making boomerangs with the young fellas. The main thing is by going back there with the project; it is to do with our wellbeing. There is a program where they take the young fellas out on country”.

Diane Stewart

“We want this project to teach our young people and for the old people to pass this education down. ... we do not want mining in our country. Since our determination the government will be watching our country and wanting to know what we are doing with the country. ...This has come from the people here and therefore they came up with the process themselves. We watch our waterways to ensure they don't fill up with weeds. We go and help the pastoralists maintain the areas where we have people buried”.

Charlie Wright

The purpose of this plan

This document explains how Nyangumarta people want to manage the Nyangumarta Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) for the period 2015-2020. An IPA is a way for *marrngu* (Nyangumarta term for Aboriginal people/person) to continue to look after their country with recognition and support from the Australian Government and in accordance with International guidelines. An IPA is defined by the Australian government as an area of land and/or sea over which the Indigenous traditional owners or custodians have entered into a voluntary agreement with the Australian Government for the purposes of promoting biodiversity and cultural resource conservation.

All IPAs form a part of Australia's National Reserve System. Government conservation agencies provide technical and financial support to *marrngu* to help them manage these areas. IPAs are intended to be beneficial to the country and to the community.

This plan is a working document; it is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather indicative and strategic. This plan is based on a limited number of workshops and one fieldtrip. As such, it is anticipated that this plan will be added to and amended as Nyangumarta people further develop and refine their aspirations for their country and their future collectively. This plan forms the basis for the development of annual operational plans. Finally, this management plan does not stand alone; it should be read in conjunction with the Nyangumarta Warrarn IPA Program Logic and the Nyangumarta Warrarn IPA MERI Plan.

How this plan came together

This plan was developed with funding from the Australian Government's Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) Program and with the support and assistance of Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC). It involved a number of consultations beginning in October 2010 as well as a field trip.

Consultation activities included:

- Nyangumarta Warrarn Directors meeting, Bidyadanga, October 2010.
- Nyangumarta Warrarn Directors meeting and Advisory Group meeting, DEC offices, Broome November 2011.
- Nyangumarta Warrarn Directors meeting, Bidyadanga, June 2012.
- Trip on country, Kidson Track, Great Sandy Desert, with Nyangumarta family groups including young adults, April 2013.
- Nyangumarta Warrarn Directors meeting, Bidyadanga, June 2013.

Nyangumarta values for management

Nyangumarta values, practices and beliefs are the basis of this management plan. It is important to Nyangumarta people to protect and maintain these. The success of the IPA management effort will also rely on the protection and practice of these values. The native title holders have a holistic approach to land management. The landscape, plants and animals within Nyangumarta country have been inseparable from Nyangumarta law, culture, language and traditional knowledge since creation-time. Nyangumarta people see maintenance and protection of the law, culture, language and traditional knowledge as integral

with the maintenance and protection of the natural environment.

The native title holders collectively hold an extensive body of ecological/cultural knowledge concerning the bio-physical environment. This extensive knowledge of sites and resources within Nyangumarta country is coupled with a deep spiritual attachment. Nyangumarta ecological knowledge is inseparable from the knowledge of the supernatural events and forces that shape the Nyangumarta lifeworld. For example, many of the names of flora and fauna as well as rules about how to prepare and cook them or when to pick them have been "given" to Nyangumarta in The Dreaming. Seasonal hunting and gathering patterns are maintained; many of the native title holders regularly travel to Nyangumarta country to hunt, fish, and gather. However, they all share a concern that the knowledge of the old people needs to be passed on to young people. Typically the passing on of this knowledge happens on country, but as access to the desert country in particular is limited the native title holders see the passing on of this knowledge as central to their aims to manage the IPA.

The traditional owners of the designated IPA self-identify as, and are identified by other Pilbara Aboriginal people as Nyangumarta people. Nyangumarta people have agreed to proceed to a declaration of an IPA in Nyangumarta country. Nyangumarta people are the native title holders of the land and waters. As outlined above their relationship to their country is rich and complex, and it is Nyangumarta people who know the cultural significance (including the songs, stories and dances) of Nyangumarta country. This knowledge comes with rights and responsibilities. The native title holders intend

to protect Nyangumarta country in accordance with IUCN Category 6 to promote biodiversity and to promote and protect our cultural values, beliefs and practices.

As Nyangumarta people we see aspects of Nyangumarta culture as cyclical. Law, language, country and kin are fundamentally related to the ancestral past, deceased Nyangumarta persons and transmission to future generations. The foundation for all of the above is 'laid down' in the ancestral past known to Nyangumarta people as *Pukarrikarra* (commonly known as The Dreaming).

The basis of contemporary Nyangumarta life lies in and is derived from The Dreaming. The native title holders hold that Ancestral Beings travelled across the nascent earth "laying down" the social and cultural norms and making these norms binding to all subsequent generations of Nyangumarta people. The Dreaming is a charter or a blueprint, a moral code that details the proper conduct of human life. An essential part of this proper conduct is ensuring that the Law is maintained and transmitted. One aspect of this Law is the proper conduct of Nyangumarta persons in relation to Nyangumarta country. The Ancestral Beings that travelled across the Nyangumarta land and seascape are eternal; their power is both benign and malevolent. The native title holders believe this power is everlasting and resides in sacred objects, in songs and dances and in sites dotted across Nyangumarta country. The country is a mythopoeic landscape/seascape populated by songs, narratives, rituals, deceased persons and Ancestral Beings. In particular Nyangumarta language is inscribed upon Nyangumarta country. A supernatural essence dwells in and radiates from particular places in Nyangumarta country where Ancestral Beings "came up"

and/or "went in", bestowed names upon, or transformed themselves into features of the contemporary cultural/natural land/seascape. These places are highly significant to Nyangumarta people.

Nyangumarta Warrarn IPA Management area

Nyangumarta traditional owners plan to declare the Nyangumarta Warrarn IPA in 2015. The areas identified for management are shown in the maps in Appendix 2.

The Nyangumarta Warrarn IPA is comprised of four areas totalling approximately 28,675 km²:

- the exclusive possession Native Title Determination area (Great Sandy Desert), covering about 26,561 km²;
- the exclusive and non-exclusive Native Title determination areas that cover the conservation estate and proposed conservation estate subject to the Indigenous Land Use Agreement number WI2014/009 (the ILUA), registered in October 2014 and totalling about 2,114 km²:
 - Proposed Walyarta Conservation Reserve
 - Proposed Kujungurru Warrarn Conservation Reserve Area (or Kujungurru Warrarn Conservation Park Area and Kujungurru Warrarn Nature Reserve Area)
 - Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park Intertidal Area



Elders Rosie Munroe and Martina Badal share their knowledge with Ranger Lynette Wilridge

Our Story

The native title holders' decision to pursue a declaration of an IPA in our country is a direct result of their pursuit of the recognition of native title. The body that holds the native title is the Nyangumarta Warrarn Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC. The native title holders have worked closely with Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) for nearly 15 years. YMAC assisted Nyangumarta people with their initial application for funding for the IPA.

Nyangumarta native title holders are the traditional owners for more than 33,843 km² of country in northwestern Western Australia extending from approximately 110 kms of coastline along the Eighty Mile Beach in the west to the Great Sandy Desert in the east. The native title rights and interests recognised by the Federal Court in majority of the GSD determination area are recognised as exclusive possession native title land. The bulk of the determination area lies in the Shire of East Pilbara while a portion of the northwestern section lies within the Shire of Broome.

The coastal or western section of the area subject to determination is transected by the former Kimberley – De Grey stock route and the Great Northern Highway. Nyangumarta country also encompasses all or part of the following pastoral leases: Wallal Downs, Mandora and Anna Plains.

The native title rights and interests recognised by the Federal Court in the pastoral lease areas of the determination area are non-exclusive. Many of our senior Nyangumarta people share a strong connection to the coastal pastoral lease areas, in part based on our long-term employment on the stations dating back to the 1920s. Many of our old people are buried on Wallal, Mandora, and Anna Plains stations.

Prior to colonisation Nyangumarta people walked all over the country and beyond, then when the pastoralists came they gradually began to settle down on the stations. When award wages were introduced in the late 1960s an unfortunate consequence was that many Nyangumarta people were moved off the stations. Nyangumarta people are spread

across the Kimberley and Pilbara region; many now reside in Bidyadanga, others in Broome and Port Hedland. The native title holders recognise that one of the challenges they face is that they currently do not have a community in their country and that they do not permanently reside in Nyangumarta country.

Climate and Geography

The majority of Nyangumarta country is located within the Great Sandy Desert and Dampierland Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia (IBRA) sub-regions both of which are under-represented in the National Reserve System (NRS).

The Northwest Pilbara region is arid-tropical semi-desert with an annual rainfall varying from 180 to 300mm per annum. Rainfall is unreliable, however unusually high rainfall resulting from tropical cyclones can occur in the summer months. Tropical cyclones typically form at sea between northern Australia and the Indonesian Islands and travel in a south-westerly direction parallel to the coast, before turning inland. Most cyclones on record have crossed the coast

between latitudes 17° and 22° which makes the Pilbara especially vulnerable to cyclone damage. Summer daytime temperatures often reach 45° C+ (Beard 1975). The Pilbara climate has a bearing on the capacity to conduct field research; for health and safety reasons on country work should be undertaken from April to November.

The Pilbara and west Kimberley coast is predominantly low-lying, consisting of mudflats, coastal dunes and limestone ridges punctuated by mangrove-lined tidal creeks. Open grassland plains form corridors that border the coastal dune systems that dominate the Eighty Mile Beach. The Great Sandy Desert portion of the proposed IPA consists of vast dune complexes broken occasionally by rocky outcrops and open expanses or dune swales. Mound springs (*jila* or *jaramarra*) feature prominently in the landscape east of Anna Plains Station homestead. Adjacent to these springs is an extensive marsh system called the Mandora Marsh (*Nyamaringu*). This area is subject to spectacular flooding following rainfall associated with cyclonic activity.



Jalla Jalla Spring

How will this plan be implemented?

Nyangumarta native title holders will make this plan happen over the course of years to come. They will move to declare an IPA on the understanding that the Commonwealth and other stakeholders agree to support the declaration by funding and in-kind assistance.

Foundations for decision making

Nyangumarta decision-making and the distribution of knowledge within the group are in accordance with broadly gerontocratic principles. A Nyangumarta individual's authority is based on extensive knowledge of country, of cultural traditions, of religious rites and practices etc. As such knowledge is not equally spread across the entire Nyangumarta group. In Aboriginal society in general it is customary for such knowledge to be acquired over the course of many years. Hence, the most senior claimants (both male and female) generally hold the bulk of this kind of knowledge (of country, of cultural traditions, of religious rites and practices etc.) and subsequently have the greatest authority. We also have forms of gender-restricted knowledge, both male and female. Furthermore, a senior claimant's knowledge and authority is validated by virtue of the fact that both knowledge and authority are derived from past generations. As stated above, it is customary in Aboriginal societies generally for certain forms of knowledge to be acquired over the course of many years. In such instances the elders of the group educate younger members in accordance with our way of passing on knowledge.

Nyangumarta people also acknowledge that their future and that of the IPA rests with young people. It is very important that old peoples'

knowledge is used to guide the activities of the younger generation as outlined in this plan of management.

Nyangumarta Warrarn Aboriginal Corporation

Nyangumarta Warrarn Aboriginal Corporation (NWAC) is a registered Native Title Body Corporate established in 2009. The members of NWAC are persons who are descendants of Nyangumarta ancestors, are Aboriginal persons who self-identify as Nyangumarta, and are generally accepted by members of the Nyangumarta community as Nyangumarta in accordance with traditional laws and customs. Directors are elected by NWAC members. The Board meets regularly to make operational and administrative decisions on behalf of members.

NWAC achievements to date

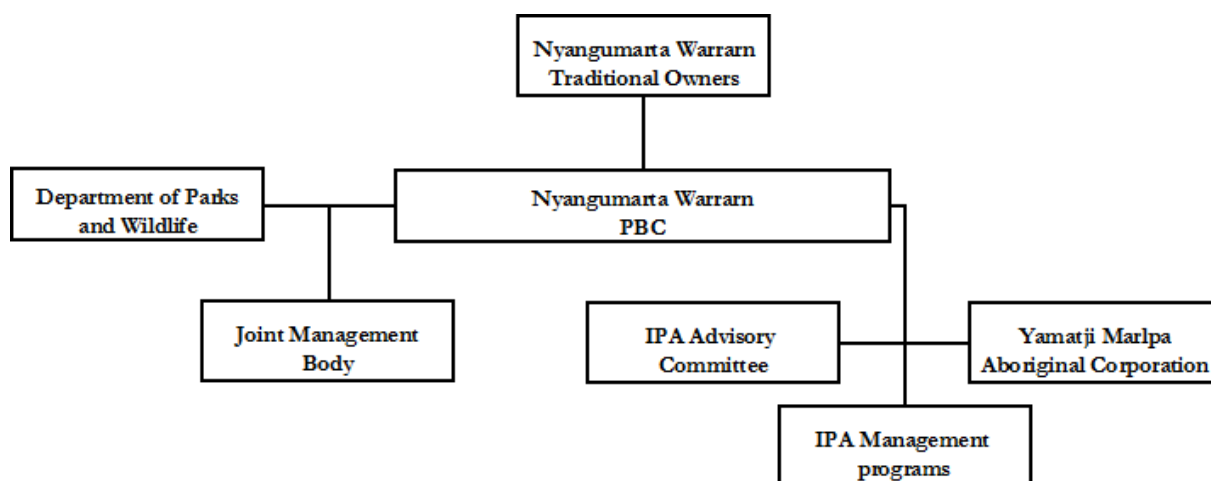
While it is a relatively new organisation NWAC have been steadily growing and increasing its capacity since 2009 as detailed below. NWAC has:

- Established an Advisory Group for the IPA project.
- Engaged consultants to undertake scoping research to determine the economic viability of establishing a Nyangumarta Warrarn cultural centre on our block at Eighty Mile Beach.
- Established relationships with pastoral leaseholders/managers on Wallal, Mandora and Anna Plains.
- Established relationships with managers of Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park.
- Conducted a field trip with a consultant and Four Wheel Drive Australia to establish a permit system for tourists to enjoy access to Kidson Track (renamed now the Nyangumarta Highway). A booklet and permit will be available

- from Four Wheel Drive Australia on behalf of the Nyangumarta by early 2015.
- With assistance from BHP Billiton, with Greening Australia and DPaW commenced a Nyangumarta ranger training program based at Bidyadanga.
- Negotiated the ILUA, and associated management plan and joint management arrangement with WA Department of Parks & Wildlife for the Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park;
- Negotiated the ILUA providing for the creation of the proposed Kujungurru Nature Reserve, and proposed Walyarta Conservation Reserve.
- Engaged the services of a botanist and a zoologist to undertake an initial flora and fauna survey in GSD.
- Established relationship with La Trobe University (anthropology & zoology) to develop a fire management strategy in GSD.

Governance/Management Structure of the IPA

The following diagram shows the main components of the governance structure of the IPA.



Governance structure of the IPA

The Joint Management Agreements (Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park and future conservation reserves in the Kujungurru and Walyarta areas) will be implemented by the Joint Management Body which is separate from the IPA structure. NWAC will ensure proper coordination between the two initiatives.

NWAC will oversee the implementation of the plan. Until NWAC decides otherwise, YMAC will assist with the plan and its activities by:

- Preparing and applying for funding to implement this plan
- Engaging and working with partners or other stakeholders that want to assist in the implementation of this plan
- Administering the finances

- Reporting back to NWAC on progress and finances

Advisory Committee

The Nyangumarta IPA Advisory Committee (or Advisory Group) provides advice on programs and ensures that the plan stays on track. It is comprised of members of: NWAC; IPA Program Commonwealth; Greening Australia; Rangelands NRM WA; YMAC; Department of Fisheries, WA; Department of Parks and Wildlife; one representative from the pastoral stations. The Advisory Committee can also be consulted for issues relating to collaborative arrangements.

The Advisory Committee will meet at least once a year, preferably on Nyangumarta country. Additional meetings may be by phone link up. Recommendations from meetings will be forwarded to NWAC and incorporated in the decision-making process.

Our Partners

NWAC has been building partnerships in the course of the journey to a successful native title determination and beyond. Nyangumarta people understand that increasing collaboration will ultimately lead to better outcomes for our people and our country. Current partners include the following (in alphabetical order):

- BHP Billiton
- Department of Parks & Wildlife WA
- Greening Australia
- La Trobe University, Melbourne

- New Standard Energy
- Rangelands NRM WA
- Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC)

Our Neighbours

NWAC is also enjoying friendly and constructive relationships with their direct neighbours:

- The three pastoral leases which are located between the two sections of the proposed IPA
- The Eighty-Mile Beach Caravan Park
- The Karajarri IPA, directly north of Nyangumarta Warrarn
- The Ngarla People, to the west
- The Martu People, to the south and who are also in the process of establishing their own IPA

Funding

All of the proposed activities in this plan of management are dependent upon securing ongoing sustainable levels of funding. There are four potential sources of funding: government (i.e. Working on Country and IPA Program); partnerships (i.e. with DPaW and with New Standard); fee for service work (potentially with DPaW); and possible business enterprise such as carbon farming. To date NWAC has secured funding from a range of sources, but further work is required to ensure that money is acquired to implement this plan.



Ranger tends to seedlings

What Nyangumarta people want for their country

Generally speaking, Nyangumarta people want to manage their country for conservation and community benefits. The Nyangumarta expression *ngalypa warrarn; ngalypa marrngu* (healthy country; healthy people) sums up this approach. Nyangumarta people want their values, beliefs and practices to be a part of this plan of action to care for country and for people. Nyangumarta native title holders agreed on and drew up the following list as a guide to managing their country:

1. *Nyangumarta muwarr* – language;
2. *marrngumili* - business, Law, culture and rules;
3. *ngarlu jalypa talakarra* - health and wellbeing; strong;
4. *nganarna warrarn Nyangumartamili* – connection to country;
5. *mirarngujinarku kurlkapilijinarku* - education and awareness;
6. *minyinyipirnak muwarr warrarnku* - transfer of knowledge about country;
7. *Nyangumarta parnturr nganyjurrumulaku warrarnku* - independence;
8. *turkujinarku pirnakarrinyaku mirtanya mirtanya jalypajinarku* – listen and respect for elders (men and women).

More specifically Nyangumarta native title holders have drawn up the following **list of priorities** in relation to what they want for their country:

- (1) **Our country is healthy and natural resources are used sustainably;**
- (2) **meaningful work and other benefits based on country;**
- (3) **care and protection of our *yinta* (sites);**
- (4) **regular visits to our country;**
- (5) **young people continue to learn about country from old people;**
- (6) **flexible work practices and supportive training for our Rangers;**
- (7) **tourists' understanding and respect for our culture and for our rights.**

What Nyangumarta value and their priorities for the IPA:

More specifically Nyangumarta native title holders have	Our country is healthy and natural resources are used sustainably	meaningful work and other benefits based on country	care and protection of our <i>yinta</i> (sites)	regular visits to our country	young people continue to learn about country from old people	flexible work practices and supportive training for our Rangers	tourist understanding and respect for our culture and for our rights
Nyangumarta values							
Language			•	•	•		
Law, culture and rules	•		•	•	•	•	•
Health and wellbeing	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Connection to country	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Education and awareness	•		•	•	•	•	•
Transfer of knowledge about country	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Independence		•	•	•	•	•	
Respect for elders	•	•	•	•	•	•	

What Nyangumarta people are concerned about

The seven priorities in the list above can also be called “values” or “assets”. What Nyangumarta people worry about can also be called “threats” to these “assets”. What follows is an **outline of these threats** across the entire IPA and then a list of threats in the three main areas of the proposed IPA, namely in the Great Sandy Desert; Eighty-Mile Beach; and *Walyarta* areas. The plan then looks at what other people value and are concerned about and how Nyangumarta people intend managing them.

Passing on knowledge from old people to young people

Generally, Nyangumarta people worry about their limited opportunities to pass on knowledge of country from elders (*mirtanya* and *mirtawarri*) to young people. Both young and old share the concern that many old people, the holders of the knowledge, have passed away. Being on country is the best place to pass on this knowledge. So passing on knowledge of country is difficult because Nyangumarta people do not live on their country and cannot easily get out onto country, and because it is far from where they now live (and because of the costs involved; fuel etc).

Difficulties in accessing country

Related to the issue of knowledge transmission are the difficulties that Nyangumarta people face in getting out on country. There is no community or infrastructure to support a community of Nyangumarta people in their country. They reside mainly in Bidyadanga, Port Hedland and Broome. Being on country is the best place for old people to pass on this knowledge to the younger generation. So

passing on knowledge of country is difficult because Nyangumarta people do not live on their country, do not own motor vehicles capable of such journeys and because it is far from where they now live (and because of the costs involved; fuel etc). Getting people out on country involves substantial costs, planning, and coordination and raises a number of health and safety issues, particularly for the elderly.

Access to good water

Visiting the Great Sandy Desert area would be made easier if Nyangumarta people had access to a good water source along the Kidson Track. New Standard and other mining exploration ventures have sunk bores in this area, but pumps have been subsequently removed. For both Nyangumarta people’s and tourists’ safety installing a pump along the Kidson track would facilitate safer travel through the area.

Tourists’ safety/accessing “culture places”

Tourists driving on Nyangumarta country are of great concern to the native title holders. Firstly because of concerns about tourists going to “culture places” (*yinta*) where restricted access rules apply according to *marrngumili* (Nyangumarta Law); secondly because Nyangumarta people feel responsible and worry for the safety of tourists who may not understand how dangerous travel in the desert can be. The native title holders are concerned that tourists are camping at *Jakalala*, a site on the Kidson track of special significance to Nyangumarta people.

It is also of major concern that tourists visiting the area should have some understanding of, and respect for Nyangumarta values.

Nyangumarta people feel that tourists should know that much of the IPA is in country in which

Nyangumarta native title holders have been recognised as having exclusive possession.

Feral camels damaging springs

Keeping country healthy and strong is very important to Nyangumarta people. At many IPA consultation meetings Nyangumarta people stressed that they want to be able to care for and protect special places (yinta) especially water sources, and places where old people used to live. The native title holders say that feral camels are damaging fences in the Walyarta area and that they are causing damage to the springs in the area. Nyangumarta people worry about camels trampling these sites; feral camels have been reported getting bogged in the soft peat soils that surround the springs and fouling the water. Camels also eat bush foods, so there are less of these available for people to eat. This is of concern from both a natural and cultural heritage perspective. Water sources, such as rockholes, soaks and springs

are of special cultural significance to Nyangumarta people. Maintaining and protecting these water sources is particularly important. The Mandora Marsh is one of 18 environmental sites across Australia that were identified for protection from unacceptable levels of feral camel damage under the Australian Feral Camel Management Project (AFCMP Final Report 2013:07). The same report identifies that there is very little data on feral camels available for the Pilbara area generally.

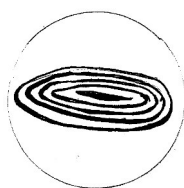
Summer wildfires “too hot”

Hot summer fires in the Great Sandy Desert area are also worrying, because native title holders see certain kinds of plants and animals disappearing as a result. Summer lightning strikes ignite fires that burn “too hot” and out of control, primarily because Nyangumarta people are not there reducing the fuel load by burning in the “cool time”.



Unburnt (left) and result of hot dry season wildfire (right)

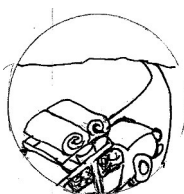
What Nyangumarta people are concerned about:



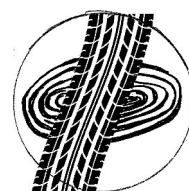
Access to good water



Tourists' safety



Difficult to access country



Tourists accessing "danger places"



Old people's knowledge passing



Feral camels damaging country



Wildfires in desert too hot

Nyangumarta values and what Nyangumarta people are concerned about:

Nyangumarta concerns (threats)	Care & protection of our <i>yinta</i>	Difficult to access country	Old peoples' knowledge passing with them	Summer wildfires too hot	Tourists' safety	Tourists' accessing "danger places"	Feral camels damaging country
Nyangumarta values							
language	•		•				
Law, culture and rules	•	•	•		•	•	•
health and wellbeing	•	•	•	•	•		•
connection to country	•	•	•	•			
education and awareness	•	•			•	•	•
transfer of knowledge about country	•	•	•	•			•
independence		•	•				
respect for elders	•	•	•			•	

What other people value and are concerned about

Nyangumarta native title holders have for some years been meeting with other stakeholders who have interests in the natural and cultural heritage values of Nyangumarta country.

While the Australian Government has invested funding through NRM into environmental services by Aboriginal people in the broader Kimberley and Pilbara regions to date the inaccessibility and remoteness of the Great

Sandy Desert area has meant that the GSD has received relatively little attention. Nyangumarta people are keen to play a greater role in improving biodiversity in the IPA by increasing the habitats of threatened species and by promoting and increasing their engagement in current and future natural and cultural resource management.

Ecological values

Of special significance in the proposed IPA are:

- The complex wetland system associated with Mandora Marsh known to Nyangumarta people as *Nyamaringu*.
- *Walyarta* (or Salt Creek) within the Mandora Marsh area holds the most inland distribution of mangroves (*Avicennia marina*) in Australia. *Walyarta* is also significant for its microbiolite community.
- Mound springs associated with the Mandora Marsh area such as *Yalayala* (Eil Eil) with its distinctive tall paperbarks (*Melaleuca leucandra*); also recognised as being important bird nesting sites.

Apart from some specific survey work there has been no systemic review of biodiversity in the GSD (Graham 2001); as a consequence there is very little data available for the area of the proposed IPA. Therefore the following list of threatened species is indicative rather than comprehensive.

Key threatened or vulnerable fauna species listed as occurring in the Nyangumarta determined native title area include:

- Greater bilby
- Australian bustard
- Northern marsupial mole
- Flatback turtle

Flora species listed as being threatened:

- *Olax spartea*

The Broome Regional Office of DPaW plan to establish a variety of conservation reserves in the Dampierland and GSD Bioregions; these include:

- Kujungurru Warrarn Conservation Reserve
- Walyarta Conservation Reserve
- Kujungurru Warrarn Nature Reserve

NWAC has entered into the ILUA which provides for creation of these reserves. The reserves will be created following excision of land from the Wallal, Mandora and Anna Plains pastoral leases in 2015 (in accordance with the State's Pastoral Lease Renewal project). Creation under the ILUA of the Walyarta Conservation Reserve, and parts of the Kujungurru Warrarn reserves, is subject to a withdraw of consent by NWAC exercisable until June 2015. During this time NWAC is in negotiation with DPaW in relation to the terms of management plans and joint management agreements in these conservation reserves.

Eighty-mile Beach is one of the ten most populous sites for migratory birds in the Asian-Australasian Flyway (Wade 2004). This status is recognized internationally by RAMSAR convention that covers a 220km+ strip of the Eighty-Mile Beach and the Mandora Marsh (see map below).



RAMSAR area Eighty Mile Beach and Mandora Marsh

Parts of the Eighty Mile Beach are also protected under the Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park.

The Broome Regional Office of DPaW also has broad conservation interests and legislative responsibilities in both Dampierland and GSD Bioregions including: threatened species, invasive flora and fauna, and water quality. Nyangumarta Warrarn have been working closely with DPaW and building a strong relationship. DPaW is providing training and resources and/or support for ranger training, turtle monitoring and fencing programs to restrict cattle and feral camel incursion.

Tourism

Tourists also share interests in the natural and cultural heritage values of the area. In particular

Eighty-mile Beach Caravan Park is a commercial caravan park, with powered sites and water, operating on an 11 ha special lease near Wallal homestead. Recreational fishing is a popular recreational activity on Eighty-mile Beach. Anecdotal evidence suggests tourists are increasingly interested in Aboriginal cultural heritage values of the area.

The Kidson Track (WAPET Road) is a popular four-wheel-drive route. Although little data is available concerning numbers of vehicles using the track anecdotal evidence suggests tourists traversing the iconic Canning Stock Route use the Kidson track to access the Eighty-Mile Beach/Great Northern Highway and Broome region generally.

Development

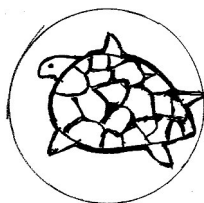
Mining, gas and petroleum exploration is ongoing in the determined native title area. Most recently New Standard Energy has undertaken significant work at the Nicolay site some 290 km east of the Great Northern Hwy. As part of these works New Standard has

significantly upgraded the Kidson Track. There is the potential for mining to adversely affect natural and cultural heritage values. Fortescue Mining Group (FMG) plans to extract water from the Mandora aquifer. Future groundwater extraction may adversely affect the hydrology of the area.

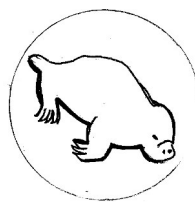


Flora and Fauna of Nyangumarta Country

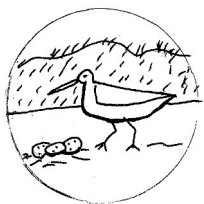
What other people value and are concerned about:



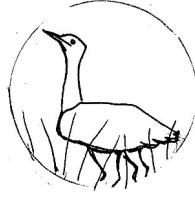
Marine turtles



Marsupial mole



Migratory shorebirds



Australian bustard



Greater bilby



Development



Feral animals & plants



Outback experience

The following section of this report details the areas of special significance to Nyangumarta native title holders and lists the various values and threats of each of the 3 sub areas of the IPA, namely:

- (a) Mandora Marsh area (*Walyarta*, *Nyamaringu* and associated mound springs);
- (b) Eighty-Mile Beach area;
- (c) Great Sandy Desert area

Walyarta: Mandora Marsh area

Walyarta is an inland salt water creek and is associated with a series of freshwater springs. It is a site of high cultural and ceremonial significance to Nyangumarta people, and a key location in the central creation song or myth cycle which travels through Nyangumarta country and beyond. It is known amongst Aboriginal communities across the Pilbara, Kimberley and Western Desert as a major Dreaming place.

Nyamaringu is the name Nyangumarta people use to describe the expansive salt marsh associated with the *Walyarta* area.

Mythologically, *Walyarta*, *Nyamaringu* and a small coastal creek known as *Pilyarlkarra* are considered related by the native title holders.

Walyarta is a place of high ecological value:

- It is part of the Mandora Marsh complex which is listed on the Register of the National Estate for its environmental and cultural values. It is located within the area of a Proposed Nature Reserve (the proposed Walyarta Conservation Reserve)
- It forms part of the Eighty Mile Beach wetland which is listed under the Ramsar convention as a wetland of international significance.

- Mandora Salt Marsh is listed as nationally important wetland in WA Wetland type B1, B8, B12, B15, B17 criteria for inclusion 1.3.6. (Environment Australia 2001: 111).
- It is recognised by the Western Australian Environmental Protection Authority as an area of high environmental value.
- The mound springs associated with the *Walyarta* area have been endorsed by the Western Australian Director of Nature Conservation as a Threatened Ecological Community.
- *Walyarta* is one of only two known inland mangrove communities in Australia. The mangroves which line the creek which runs through *Walyarta* have been endorsed as a Priority One Ecological Community.
- Mandora Marsh contains an unusually rich and diverse number of wetland types of both saline and freshwater origin, including ephemeral saline lakes and marshes, permanent saline streams, freshwater springs and freshwater peatlands.
- Mandora Marsh is important for the maintenance of populations of birds in the area. Of the approximately 140 species of birds found at Mandora Marsh, 27 are listed on the JAMBA and CAMBA treaties, four on CAMBA only and two on JAMBA only. The Marsh periodically supports a large number of waterbirds, usually after major flooding resulting from strong monsoonal activity or cyclones.
- When in flood, the area is suitable as a stop-over for migratory shorebirds preparing to depart Australia in autumn. The place is an important breeding area for 22 species of birds including the Australian pelican and black swan (*Cygnus atratus*).
- The area contains populations of several threatened plants and animals including a species of bush tobacco (*Nicotinia heterantha*), and the bilby (*Macrotis lagotis*)

- The raised peat bog and mound spring of *Yalayala* (Eil Eil Springs) is a unique geomorphic formation wetland ecosystem.

It is intended that part of the Walyarta area be reserved as the Walyarta Conservation Reserve (or Conservation Park) and jointly managed with NWAC pursuant to the ILUA. However the ILUA also acknowledges NWAC's long term aspiration for the area that it be solely managed and controlled by NWAC for the purposes of conservation.

NWAC is currently negotiating management options for the proposed reserve with the State. If NWAC is not happy with progress of these negotiations then the ILUA provides for NWAC to withdraw its consent to the creation of the reserve prior to July 2015.

Threats to Walyarta area

- Potential unrestricted visitor access to sites of significance (particularly those with gender/age restrictions).
- Old peoples' knowledge of the area will pass away with them.
- Some parts of the wetlands have been accessed by cattle for the past 100 years; this has impacted some areas of grassland and wetland.
- Kapok Bush (*Aerva javanica*) an invasive weed is evident in the area; the introduced buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*) has replaced much of the native grassland.
- Feral animals such as cats, foxes, camels and donkeys are present. The Mandora Marsh is one of 18 environmental sites across Australia that were identified for protection from unacceptable levels of feral camel damage under the Australian Feral Camel Management Project (AFCMP Final Report 2013:07).

- The wetlands are particularly susceptible to damage by predicted future establishment of cane toad (*Bufo marinus*) populations in the area.
- Future potential groundwater extraction may adversely affect the hydrology of the area. Plans are being put into place to extract substantial quantities of groundwater from the area. In August 2014 the State Minister for Water announced that up to 100GL/yr may be extracted from the West Canning Basin which is the aquifer that is believed to support at least some of the wetlands in the *Walyarta* area (Davies 2014).
- Potential for mineral, gas and petroleum exploration and/or extraction operations to adversely affect natural and cultural heritage values. The area is considered prospective for mineral sands and unconventional gas.
- Adverse environmental impact on the area due to climate change.

The native title holders want to maintain and protect this area of immense cultural and ecological significance. They wish to focus some of the work of the Nyangumarta rangers on the *Walyarta* area so that they can combine their obligations as traditional owners and as environmental stewards. Some fencing of environmentally sensitive areas to prevent damage from cattle and feral animals has already been conducted by DPaW, however siting of the fencing occurred without appropriate consultation with the native title holders. The plains are also scarred by numerous cleared mineral and petroleum survey lines.

There are particular sites within the *Walyarta* area that are restricted in accordance with Nyangumarta Law. Some of these sites are also

considered “danger places” that can cause the unwary visitor to become ill. In such cases when approaching these sites Nyangumarta people must follow particular protocols such as calling out or singing to the Ancestral spirits to ensure that no harm comes to the visitors. The scope of future public access will need to be resolved for such sites.

Mining and other extractive activities pose a conundrum for some Nyangumarta people. On

the one hand it presents them with one of the few the opportunities for social and economic development of their community, but on the other hand it inevitably damages natural and cultural heritage.

The following table outlines what Nyangumarta people want and plan to do for Walyarta.

Activity in order of priority	Description
1	Focus components of ranger training activity on <i>Walyarta</i> and ensure that older Nyangumarta people accompany the rangers to pass on knowledge and stories of the area and to act as guides to ensure adherence to proper access protocols.
2	NWAC to work with DPaW to develop a management plan and joint management agreement for the proposed Walyarta Conservation Reserve.
3	Develop and implement a fire management strategy for the area working cooperatively with researchers and DPaW.
4	Continue working cooperatively with DPaW to install cattle-proof fencing.
5	Undertake trips to the area to record stories and songs and to record and document sites, particularly groundwater dependent sites.
6	Build further partnerships with researchers to assist in monitoring and developing management strategies for feral animals and invasive weeds.

Eighty-Mile Beach area

Nyangumarta people share a strong connection to the coastal pastoral lease areas, in part based on long-term employment on the stations dating back to the 1920s. Many Nyangumarta people were born on and have been buried on Wallal, Mandora, and Anna Plains stations. There are several ceremonial areas within the Wallal, Mandora and Anna Plains pastoral leases; these are of particular significance to Nyangumarta people. The coastline too is

dotted with sites of special significance; several of these sites are associated with the Dreaming. Of special concern are the gravesites on the pastoral stations where many *marrngu* (Nyangumarta and their kin) are buried. Most of these gravesites are unfenced and the native title holders want to fence these graves and stop damage caused by cattle to these areas.

At this stage the IPA will not include the following non-exclusive possession native title areas, namely:

- (a) Wallal pastoral lease;
- (b) Mandora pastoral lease;
- (c) Anna Plains pastoral lease (part thereof).

To date there have been limited discussions with leaseholders regarding the declaration of an IPA on the station country. However, pending further negotiations with leaseholders this situation may change in the future.

As discussed above one of the challenges that Nyangumarta people face in implementing this management plan is the fact that they reside at least one day's drive away from their country. Nyangumarta people have for many years discussed their intentions to reside on the coast. There are a number of Crown Reserves on Wallal Station including: R11784; R1532 & R21750. The latter reserve (an area of approximately 8 hectares located about 3 km south of the caravan park) was created in 1937 and is vested with the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority with the purpose of "Use and Benefit of Aboriginal Inhabitants". Nyangumarta people have for many years used the reserve they know as *Nyiyamarri Pukurl* as camping area. They hold a 99 year lease (registered lease I797820) over the reserve through the Nyiyamarri Pukurl Aboriginal Corporation, which is a corporation wholly owned and controlled by Nyangumarta people. A study was undertaken by Resolve Global (2011) to assess the feasibility of establishing a cultural and environmental interpretation centre adjacent to the Eighty-Mile Beach Caravan Park. Recommendations of the report are that the centre "should be a Nyangumarta led venture that will display Nyangumarta culture, train and employ Nyangumarta people, and be managed and operated by Nyangumarta people in partnership with other stakeholders."

(Resolve Global 2011: 54). And further: "The Interpretation Centre has the potential to be a place of enduring significance for the Nyangumarta people and an icon for the EMB region, as well as a base for 'caring for country'. It will be a facility that is highly sought out by visitors and the broader tourism industry, and is likely to increase other investment in tourism facilities in that locality" (Resolve Global 2011: 54).

The native title holders continue to lobby for funding to realise this project.

Specific ecological issues to address in the coastal area are turtle monitoring and habitat management along with cattle incursion and management. Flatback turtles (*Natator depressus*) are particularly significant as Northern Australia is home to the only nesting population in the world (DEC, Marine Parks & Reserves Authority 2011: 42). Flatback turtles are known to nest on Eighty Mile Beach from November to December and hatch from February to March. The native title holders have had several meetings to date with DPaW regarding Nyangumarta people's participation in Flatback turtle monitoring. Some fencing has already been undertaken to restrict cattle access to the beach zone.

The Eighty Mile Beach area includes the Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park, and the Proposed Nature Reserves: Kujungurru Warrarn Conservation Reserve and Kujungurru Warrarn Nature Reserve.

The Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park is managed in accordance with the *Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park Management Plan*. The development of the plan took place over a number of years and involved extensive consultation with Nyangumarta people,

including multiple on country consultations. Nyangumarta people's concerns and aspirations are incorporated throughout the plan. At its highest level, the plan requires that the park be managed in partnership with traditional owners under the guidance of joint management bodies. The Nyangumarta portion of the park is to be jointly managed in accordance with a joint management agreement established under s56A of the Conservation and Land Management Act and approved under the existing management plan.

Threats to Eighty-Mile Beach area

Threats to the Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park are identified in detail in the *Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park Management Plan*, which was developed in consultation with Nyangumarta people.

Threats of particular concern to Nyangumarta people in the area include:

- Unregulated access to sites of significance to Nyangumarta people.
- Old peoples' knowledge of the area passing away with them.
- Visitors over-exploiting marine resources on Eighty-Mile Beach.
- Motor vehicle traffic on the beach impacting on water bird and turtle nesting sites and turtle hatchlings.
- Cattle impacting on water bird and turtle nesting sites.

The Nyangumarta people will jointly manage the Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park in accordance with the joint management agreement approved under the *Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park Management Plan*. The following table outlines what Nyangumarta people want and plan to do for Eighty-Mile Beach.

Activity in order of priority	Description
1	Focus components of ranger training activity on Eighty-Mile Beach and ensure that older Nyangumarta people accompany the rangers to pass on knowledge and stories of the area.
2	NWAC to work with DPaW to develop a management plan and joint management agreement for the proposed Kujungurru Warrarn Conservation Reserve and Kujungurru Warrarn Conservation Park.
3	Nyangumarta rangers with DPaW to undertake turtle monitoring and habitat management.
4	Continue working cooperatively with DPaW to install cattle-proof fencing to protect turtle and bird nesting sites.
5	Undertake trips to the area to record stories and songs and to record and document sites.
6	Build further partnerships with researchers and DPaW to assist in monitoring and developing management strategies for feral animals and invasive weeds.
7	Continue to investigate and build capacity for cultural tourism
8	Continue to investigate and seek funding for construction of <i>Nyiyamarri Pukurl</i> Interpretation Centre
9	Fence gravesites on Wallal and Mandora station.

Great Sandy Desert area

Nyangumarta people have an extensive knowledge of and connection with the Great Sandy Desert area. Several of the senior women walked out of the area as young women. Access to the area is limited, in the north a track runs east- west from Walyarta continuing roughly adjacent to the Karajarri – Nyangumarta native title determination boundary. From the south a very rough track (the old Telegraph line track) enters the southwestern part of the claim area via Callawa. The Kidson Track (WAPET Road) runs approximately southeast-northwest beginning at the Great Northern Highway almost directly opposite the access road to the Eighty-Mile Beach Caravan park. As a result very little of the cultural heritage values of the area have been documented. In April 2013 as part of the IPA consultation 16 Nyangumarta people (young and old) undertook a field trip into the GSD along the recently upgraded Kidson Track. The main purpose of the trip was to assist the native title holders to identify specific issues in the area that they wished to address in the management of the IPA. The trip was also an opportunity for younger members of the group to learn about their country from the old people. More recently in June 2014 a flora survey took place.

Threats to Great Sandy Desert area

- Unregulated visitor access to sites of significance to Nyangumarta people.
- Old people's knowledge of the area passing with them.
- Uncontrolled hot summer wildfires resulting in loss of biodiversity.
- Tourists camping in proximity to *Jakalala* and unregulated access to other restricted sites of significance.

- Feral camels eating bush foods.
- Potential for mineral, gas and petroleum exploration and/or extraction operations to adversely affect natural and cultural heritage values.
- Continued spread of medium sized patch of buffel grass located on the Kidson Track.
- Extraction of groundwater affecting groundwater dependent cultural sites and ecosystems.
- Adverse environmental impact on the area due to climate change.

The following table outlines what Nyangumarta people want and plan to do for the Great Sandy Desert area.

Activity in order of priority	Description
1	Focus components of ranger training activity on GSD area and ensure that older Nyangumarta people accompany the rangers to pass on knowledge and stories of the area and to act as guides to ensure adherence to proper access protocols.
2	With assistance from Four Wheel Drive Australia implement Kidson Track permit system. Use this data to assist in monitoring visitors to the area and to develop a tourism strategy.
3	Working with New Standard, realign the Kidson Track away from <i>Jakalala</i> .
4	Install interpretative signage at entry and exit points of Kidson Track.
5	Undertake trips to the area to record stories and songs in Nyangumarta and to record and document sites.
6	Continue to seek funding for cultural heritage management plan
7	Along with researchers from La Trobe University develop and implement a fire management strategy for the area working cooperatively with DPaW
8	Build further partnerships with researchers to assist in monitoring and developing management strategies for feral animals and invasive weeds.
9	Continue to investigate and build capacity for cultural tourism
10	Continue to record baseline ecological data including the location and distribution of flora and fauna and associated traditional ecological knowledge.



Lindsay and Ian Hunter with a katakata (Senna notabilis) bush and the pina (edible grub) found inside

How will we know if what we do is successful?

Nyangumarta values	Nyangumarta priorities	What success looks like
Business, Law, culture and rules; health and wellbeing; strong; connection to country; education and awareness; transfer of knowledge about country; independence; listen and respect for elders.	Country is healthy and natural resources are used sustainably	Feral animals and plants decreasing and threatened species increasing; we have a fire management strategy in place; springs, rockholes, soaks are healthy; there is plenty of bush tucker and bush medicine around.
Health and wellbeing; strong; connection to country; transfer of knowledge about country; independence; listen and respect for elders.	Meaningful work and other benefits based on country	Our rangers continue their training and become qualified. How many Nyangumarta have work on country? How much work and how much pay? Old peoples' knowledge is included in ranger training.
Business, Law, culture and rules; health and wellbeing; strong; connection to country; education and awareness; transfer of knowledge about country; independence; listen and respect for elders.	Flexible work practices and supportive training for our Rangers	Old people go on trips with rangers on country. Our partners continue to work with us and respect the value of Nyangumarta culture.
Language; business, Law, culture and rules; health and wellbeing; strong; connection to country; education and awareness; transfer of knowledge about country; independence; listen and respect for elders.	Regular visits to our country	How many Nyangumarta have been out on country? For how long? How many sites have been visited?
Language; business, Law, culture and rules; health and wellbeing; strong; connection to country; education and awareness; transfer of knowledge about country; independence; listen and respect for elders.	Young people continue to learn about country from old people	How many trips on country with old and young people? How many times have old people talked to young ones at Bidyadanga and Port Hedland school? How many stories and songs recorded? Young peoples' knowledge of our country is increasing.
Language; business, Law, culture and rules; health and wellbeing; strong; connection to country; education and awareness; transfer of knowledge about country; independence; listen and respect for elders.	Care and protection of our <i>yinta</i> (sites)	How many trips on country to record sites? How many new sites recorded? How many stories and songs about sites recorded?
Law, culture and rules; health and wellbeing; strong; education and awareness; transfer of knowledge about country; independence; listen and respect for elders.	Tourists' understanding and respect for our culture and for our rights	Permit system in place; interpretive signage at 80-Mile Beach and entry/exit points of Kidson Track. How many publications about aspects of Nyangumarta culture?

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Appendix 1 : IUCN Protected Area Category

Category VI: **Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources**

Category VI protected areas conserve ecosystems and habitats, together with associated cultural values and traditional natural resource management systems. They are generally large, with most of the area in a natural condition, where a proportion is under sustainable natural resource management and where low-level non-industrial use of natural resources compatible with nature conservation is seen as one of the main aims of the area.

Primary objective

To protect natural ecosystems and use natural resources sustainably, when conservation and sustainable use can be mutually beneficial.

Other objectives

To promote sustainable use of natural resources, considering ecological, economic and social dimensions;

To promote social and economic benefits to local communities where relevant;

To facilitate inter-generational security for local communities' livelihoods – therefore ensuring that such livelihoods are sustainable;

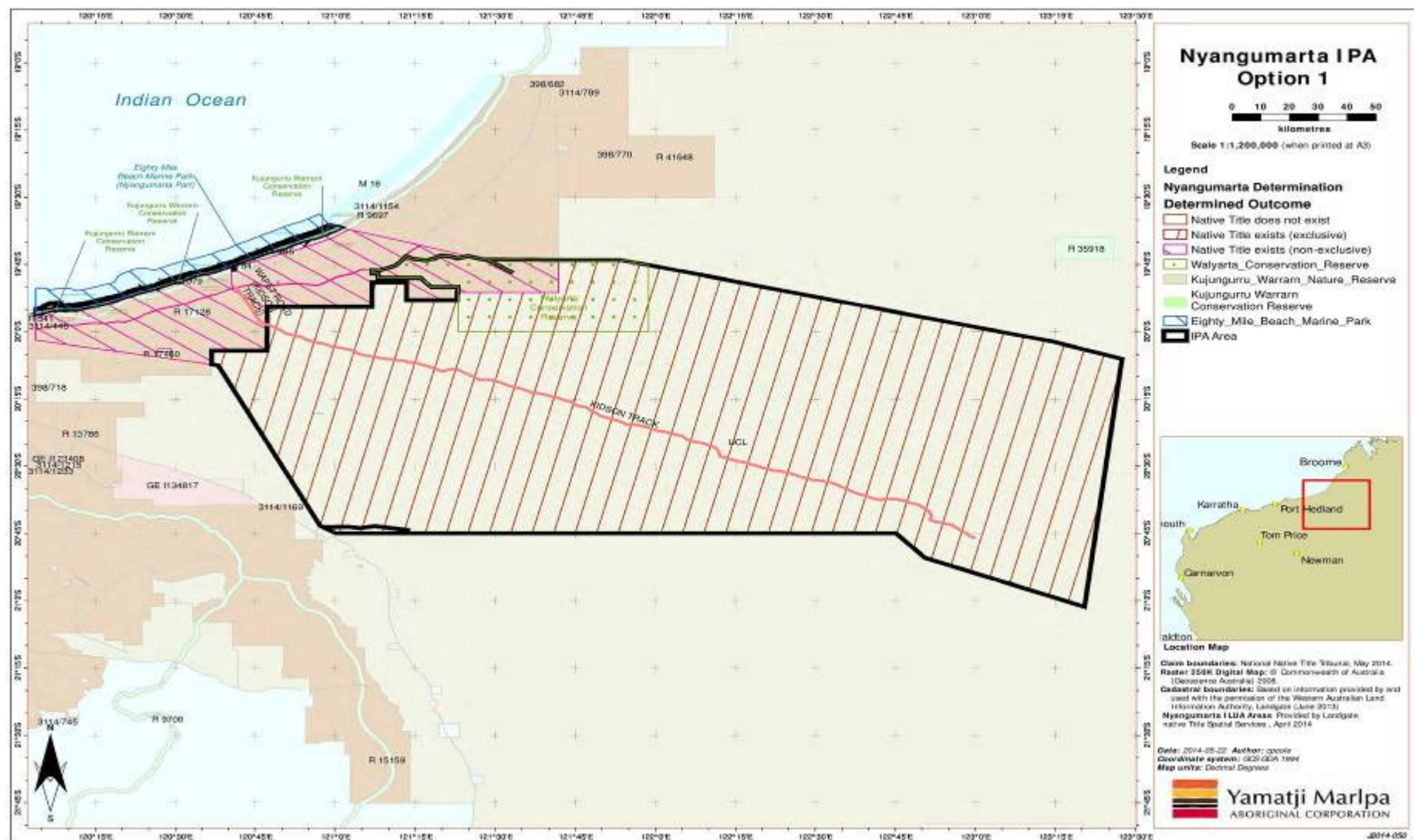
To integrate other cultural approaches, belief systems and world-views within a range of social and economic approaches to nature conservation;

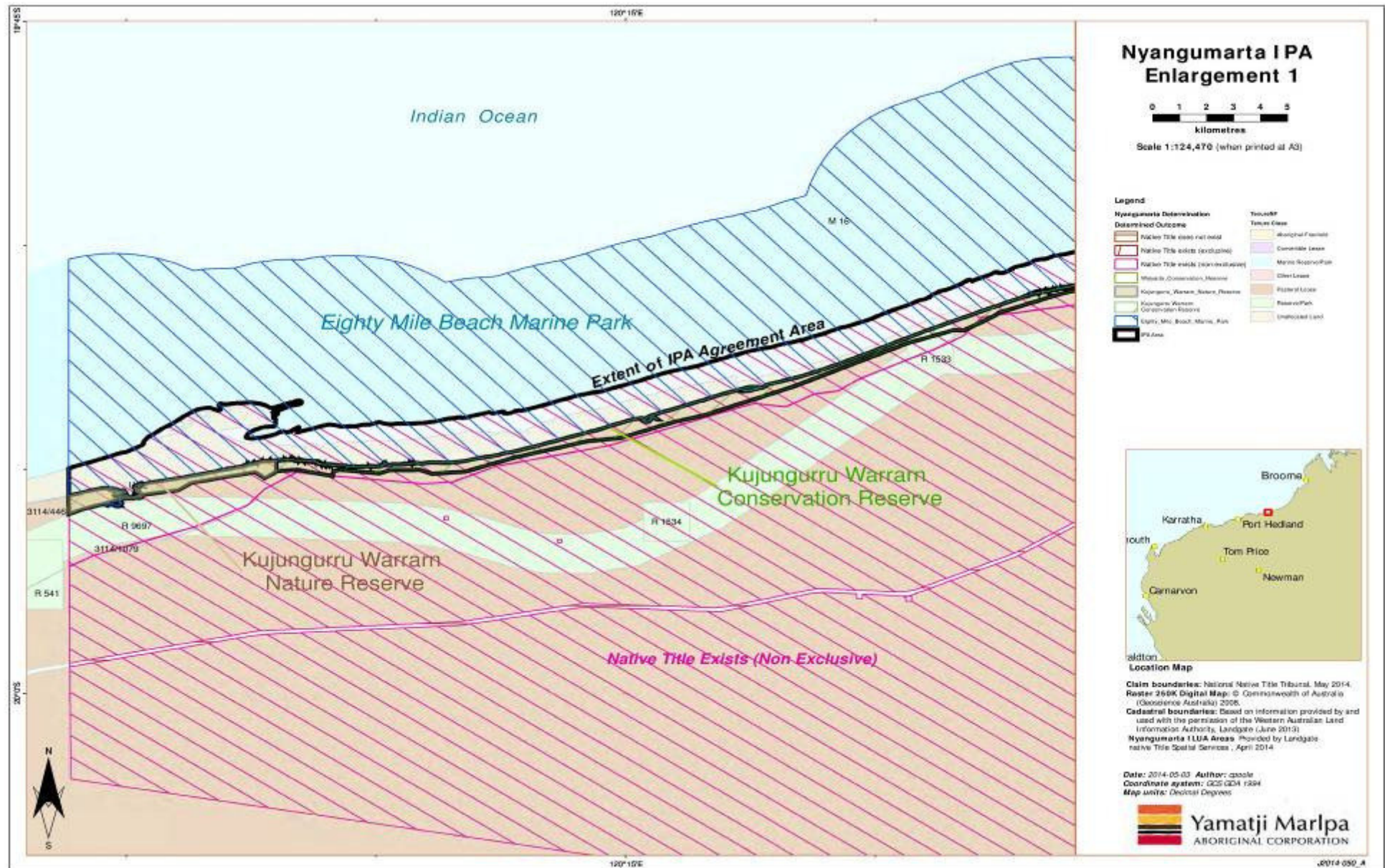
To contribute to developing and/or maintaining a more balanced relationship between humans and the rest of nature;

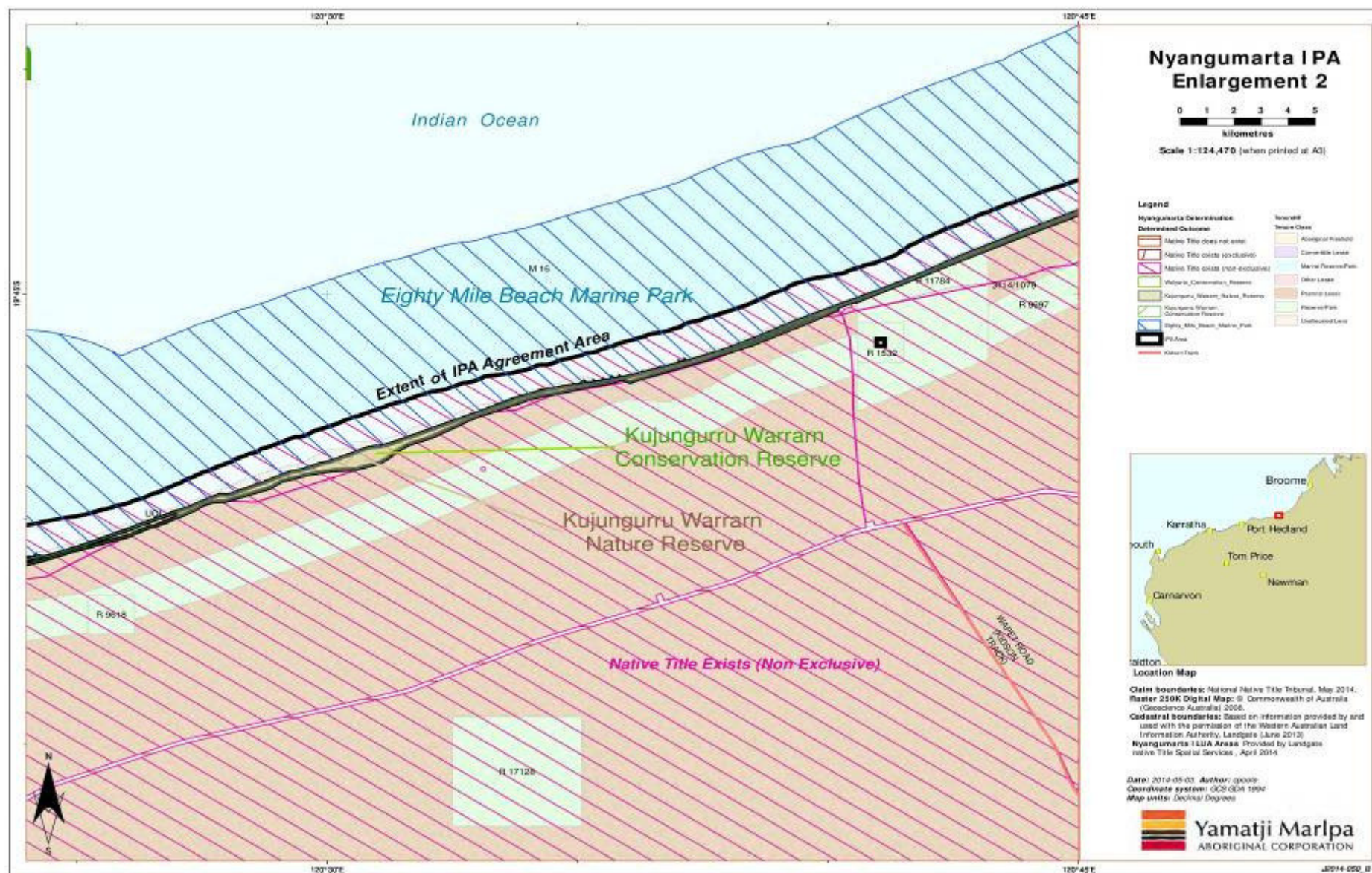
To contribute to sustainable development at national, regional and local level (in the last case mainly to local communities and/or indigenous peoples depending on the protected natural resources);

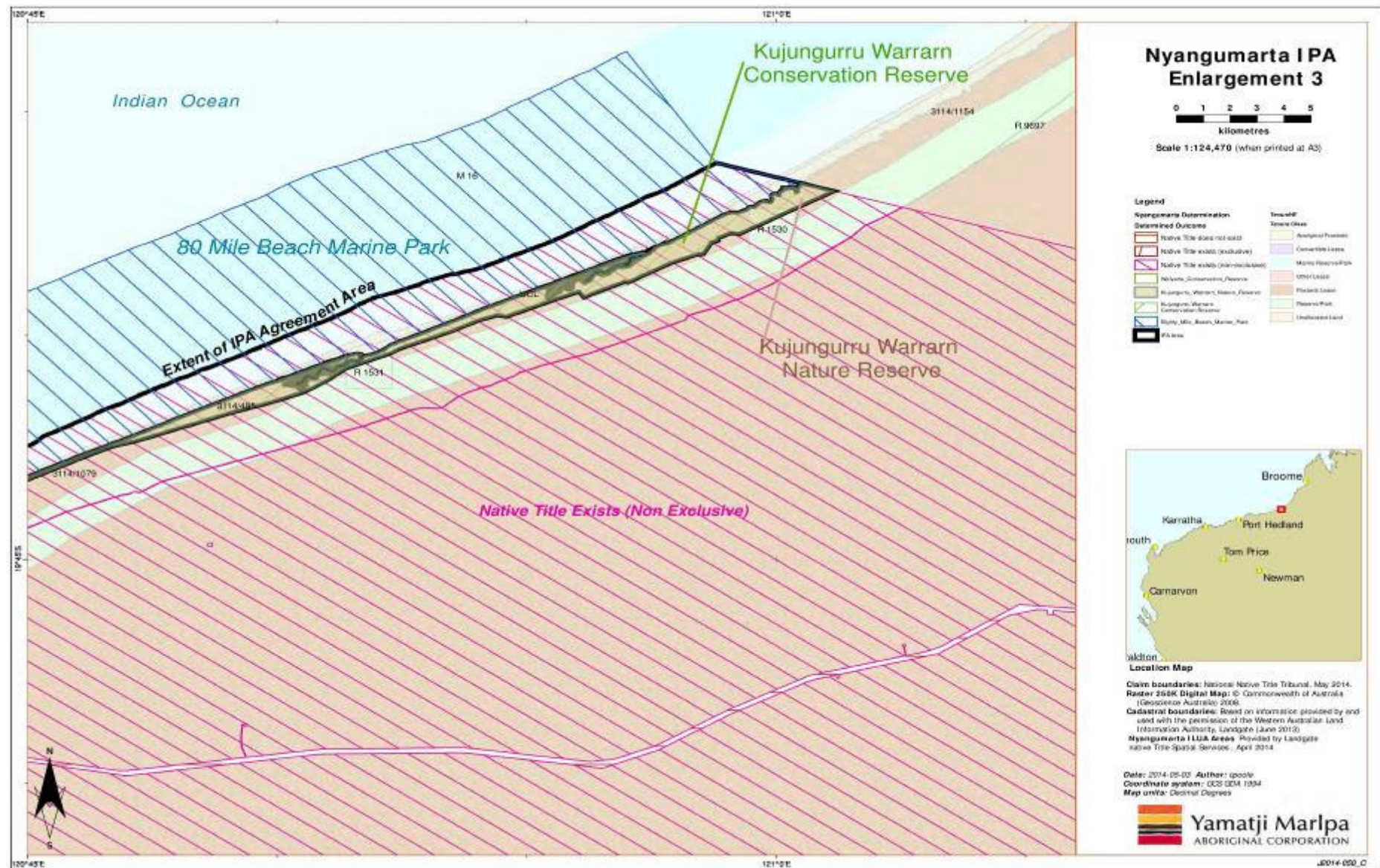
To facilitate scientific research and environmental monitoring, mainly related to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources;

Appendix 2 : Maps of proposed IPA









Appendix 3 : Nyangumarta people on country



2013 & 2014 Kidson Track fieldtrips – Susie Gilbert, Martina Badal, Diane Stewart, Lynette Wilridge, Roberta Hunter, Charmaine Wright, Andrew Minyarti, Jordan Wright, Darcy Hunter, Selwyn Hunter, Nathan Hunter, Ian Hunter, Teddy Hunter, Joseph Hunter, Augustine Badal, Vallerina Aspro, Winnie Coppin, Kerri Hunter, Lindsay Hunter, Rosie Munroe, Aquinas Nardi and Nyaparu Rose



Appendix 4

Vision

Values

Longer-term
outcomes 20+
years

Longer-term
outcomes 15-20
years

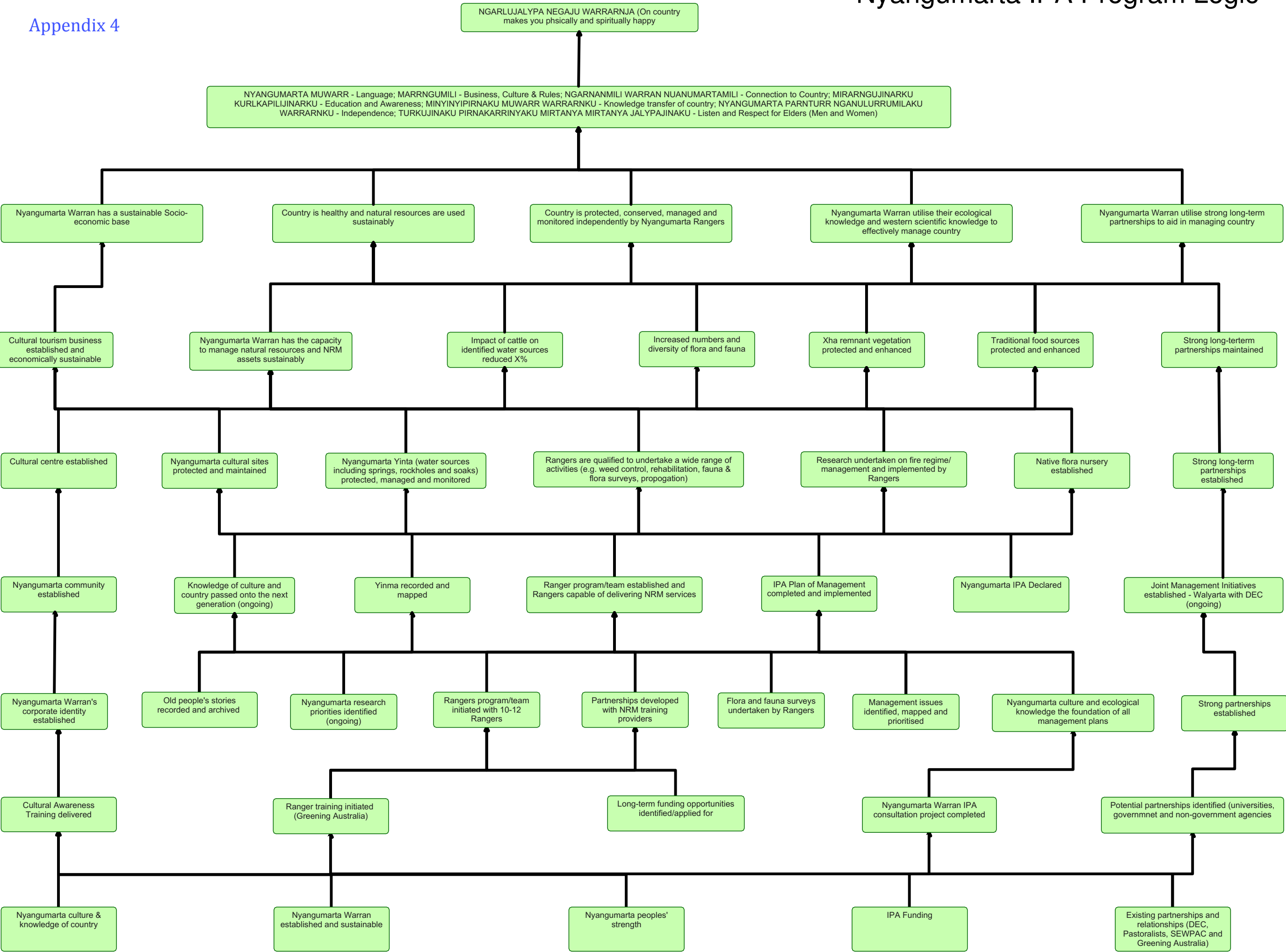
Intermediate
outcomes 10-15
years

Intermediate
outcomes 5-10
years

Immediate
outcomes 1-5
years

Foundational
outcomes 6-12
months

Inputs and
Resources



Nyangumarta Warrarn Indigenous Protected Area

MERI Plan – Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, Improvement (2015 – 2020)



Desert to the Sea

Our Vision

This is a monitoring plan for the Nyangumarta Warrarn Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). Through this plan we want to be able to find out if what we are doing on country is helping us achieve our vision. Being on Nyangumarta country “makes you feel physically and spiritually happy” (*ngarlu nyalpa*); it is important to pass on this feeling from the *mirtanya* and *mirtawari* (elder men and women) to young people just as it is important to pass on the knowledge of our country. This plan is for the next five years (2015-2020) and if our vision works out then we should be able to see:

Nyangumarta country is healthy and we are managing it sustainably using our traditional knowledge combined with *walypala* “scientific” knowledge. Our *yinta* are protected and Rangers are working to care for the country and keep it healthy. In this way we too will be healthy (*ngarlu nyalpa*).

Learning from what we do on Country

Nyangumarta Warrarn Aboriginal Corporation (NWAC) along with our partners will be looking at the effectiveness of the work that we do on our country. *Walypala* in Canberra call this a MERI plan – meaning Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improving. In basic terms this means that we say here in this *milimili* what are going to do, then we observe what happens after we have done it, then we look at what worked and what didn’t, share this information and then based on this, make some improvement to whatever it is that we are doing to achieve a better outcome.

MERI = MONITORING: collecting information and data.

EVALUATION: looking at the monitoring data and working out what it means. Then based on this we assess whether what we did was a success, and what we could do to improve next time.

REPORTING: telling others about what we have found out, through monitoring and evaluating; sharing information including information about what we have achieved (our successes) and how we could improve.

IMPROVEMENT: using this information to do things better.

This will assist all of us Nyangumarta traditional owners (native title holders) and our partners to understand how well our management plan and actions are helping us achieve our vision. We have selected the top priorities and actions from our program logic and indicated how they fit with our strategic vision. We have come up with this list of priorities and actions in our workshop discussions and during our on-country trips.

Why is the MERI Plan important for the Australian Government?

The Australian Government gives us money to manage our land for conservation and for keeping our culture strong, so we need to understand what they expect from us. This plan is a way that we can let the Government know about the work that we are doing on our country and what sort of progress we are making in managing our country *marrngu*-way. One of the strengths of the IPA program is that what *marrngu* want and what the Government wants is much the same. The Government wants such things as reducing the impact of weeds and feral animals, restoring traditional fire regimes, looking after the important marsh country (*Nyamaringu*) and the springs country (*jila*) and making sure that we continue using our traditional ecological knowledge and our traditional land management practices (as laid out in the “Caring for Country” 5 year outcomes).

What activities will enable us to spend more time on Nyangumarta country with the *mirtanya* and *mirtawari* (elder men and women) passing on the knowledge of our country to the young people?

In this plan we put forward a way that we might get together each year to agree on what we are going to monitor, starting with year 2015. “We” in this plan includes the NWAC, as well as government and other funders. Each year we want IPA managers (NWAC & the IPA Advisory Committee) to sit down and work out:

What we need to know?

Why is this knowledge important?

Who needs to know?

Is this information/knowledge already out there?

How can we get this information?

Table 1 Proposed Monitoring Actions for 2015-2020

What do we need to know?	How will we know?	What does success look like?
<p>Monitoring Action 1</p> <p>We do activities that continue to pass on the knowledge of our country from the <i>mirtanya</i> and <i>mirtawari</i> (elder men and women) to our young people.</p> <p>Relevant aspect of our Vision: MIRARNGUJINARKU KURLKAPILIJINARKU- <i>Education and Awareness</i></p> <p>MINYINYIPIRNAKU MUWARR WARRARNKU - <i>Knowledge transfer of country</i></p> <p>TURKUJINAKU PIRNAKARRINYAKU MIRTANYA MIRTANYA JALYPAJINAKU – <i>Listen and Respect for Elders (Men and Women)</i></p>		
Have we created ways to bring together our young people and <i>mirtanya</i> and <i>mirtawari</i> to share knowledge?	Trips on country	2 trips on country
	Number of children and elders participating	At least 10 children, 5 Elders
	Number of our trainee Rangers that participated	10 trainee Rangers
	Elders are happy with our trips on country	Rating by at least 5 Elders
	Elders are happy with the relationship between our partners and opportunities to get out on country with trainee Rangers.	Rating by Elders
	Number of our partners that participated (Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC); Department of Parks & Wildlife (DPaW); Greening Australia; Rangelands NRM)	Continue building existing relationships and develop new ones
What kind of activities and how often have we worked with school and the children to help with the sharing of knowledge?	Number of visits and activities of the IPA team, including the trainee Rangers with school in Bidyadanga and/or Port Hedland?	At least one activity and/or visit to schools in a year
Have we recorded and stored as much knowledge as we can including our <i>yinta</i> , stories and <i>yinma</i> ?	The number of stories, songs and sites recorded and documented.	At least three additional sites, associated songs and stories recorded and documented.

What do we need to know?	How will we know?	What does success look like?
<p>Monitoring Action 2</p> <p>We begin the process of implementing traditional fire management practices and reducing the incidence of summer wildfire in the Great Sandy Desert area of our country.</p> <p>Relevant aspect of our Vision: NGARNANAMILI WARRARN NYANGUMARTAMILI – <i>Connection to Country</i></p> <p>MIRARNGUJINARKU KURLKAPILIJINARKU- <i>Education and Awareness</i></p> <p>MINYINYIPIRNAKU MUWARR WARRARNKU - <i>Knowledge transfer of country</i></p>		
Have we recorded knowledge of traditional fire management from our elders?	Knowledge is recorded and documented.	Knowledge is recorded and documented from at least 5 Elders. (Over the next three years.)
Have we brought on some specialists to help us to develop a fire regime/management strategy?	Specialists are working with us.	Specialists working with our Elders have assisted us to develop a fire management strategy that includes both <i>marrngu</i> and <i>walypala</i> knowledge and practice. (Over the next three years.)
Are our Rangers trained up and involved in implementing our fire management strategy?	Rangers trained in conservation and land management practices including fire management techniques.	Rangers properly trained and involved in managing country with fire in the next five years.
Do we have appropriate research protocols in place that give tangible benefits to <i>marrngu</i> ?	Someone has written up and shared the protocols (the proper way of doing things) for researchers working with <i>marrngu</i> on our country.	Respectful and appropriate research that benefits <i>marrngu</i> and assists us in caring for our country.

What do we need to know?	How will we know?	What does success look like?
<p>Monitoring Action 3</p> <p>Allowing visitors to share our country in a way that respects our culture, our Law and our native title rights. We want to ensure visitors are aware of the risks (health and safety concerns) when travelling in our country. When a visitor leaves our country we want them to take away a greater understanding of our culture, our Law and how we are caring for it and how they can help look after it.</p> <p>Relevant aspect of our Vision: MARRNGUMILI - Business, Law, Culture and Rules NGARLU JALYPA TALAKARRA - Health and Wellbeing and Strong; NGARNANAMILI WARRARN NYANGUMARTAMILI – Connection to Country; MIRARNGUJINARKU KURLKAPILIJINARKU- Education and Awareness; MINYINYIPIRNAKU MUWARR WARRARNKU - Knowledge transfer of country; NYANGUMARTA PARNTURR NGANYJURRUMILAKU WARRARNKU – Independence; TURKUJINAKU PIRNAKARRINYAKU MIRTANYA MIRTANYA JALYPAJINAKU – Listen and Respect for Elders (Men and Women)</p>		
Do we have an effective permit system in place that increases knowledge and understanding of our culture?	We have an effective permit system in place with the assistance of Australian 4WD Club so that visitors are issued a permit on the understanding that they agree to respect our country.	System in place. Rangers interview a sample of visitors with permits indicating that most know how to respect our country.
Do we have a system to monitor and then manage visitor impacts?	Monitoring and inspection of visitor sites and on-going monitoring to assess on-going impacts. Site works such as the realignment of the Kidson track in the vicinity of <i>Jakalala</i> , interpretive signage, fencing, carried out and in place to manage impacts.	Impacts are minimised and acceptable in areas of tourist visitation. In three years we have interpretive boards in place at entry/exit points to Kidson track and at 80 Mile Beach Caravan park. Kidson track realignment in vicinity of <i>Jakalala</i> complete.
Do we have a plan of action that identifies visitor opportunities, management issues and facilities needed to support this?	Based on monitoring through the permit system we develop a visitor management plan.	A system for tourists that provides information about the appropriate way to conduct themselves and knowledge to assist them in appreciating Nyangumarta culture and the work we are doing.

What do we need to know?	How will we know?	What does success look like?
<p>Monitoring Action 4</p> <p>We continue to care for and protect our <i>yinta</i>, especially our water sources (<i>jila</i>, etc) and places where our old people used to live. We continue to share with our young people the meaning and importance of such places.</p> <p>Relevant aspect of our Vision: MARRNGUMILI - Business, Law, Culture and Rules</p> <p>NGARLU JALYPA TALAKARRA - Health and Wellbeing and Strong</p> <p>NGARNANAMILI WARRARN NYANGUMARTAMILI – Connection to Country</p> <p>MIRARNGUJINARKU KURLKAPILIJINARKU- Education and Awareness</p> <p>MINYINYIPIRNAKU MUWARR WARRARNKU - Knowledge transfer of country</p> <p>TURKUJINAKU PIRNAKARRINYAKU MIRTANYA MIRTANYA JALYPAJINAKU – Listen and Respect for Elders (Men and Women)</p>		
Are we sharing with our young people the stories about why these <i>yinta</i> and old living areas are important?	The number of on-country trips each year to visit these places with elders and young people.	At least one visit a year for Elders to share stories about these important places and how we care for them.
Have we recorded our important <i>yinta</i> and implemented measures to preserve and protect them?	Heritage specialist engaged to do the work. Rangers and others working with heritage specialist.	We have with the help of heritage specialist developed a cultural heritage management plan that can be easily read and understood by <i>marrngu</i> . Record <i>yinta</i> not currently recorded.

What do we need to know?	How will we know?	What does success look like?
<p>Monitoring Action 5</p> <p>Our country is healthy, plants and animals are healthy and natural resources are used sustainably.</p> <p>Relevant aspect of our Vision: NGALYPA WARRARN; NGALYPA MARRNGU (Healthy country; Healthy people)</p> <p>NYANGUMARTA MUWARR - <i>Language</i></p> <p>MARRNGUMILI - <i>Business, Law, Culture and Rules</i></p> <p>NGARLU JALYPA TALAKARRA - <i>Health and Wellbeing and Strong</i></p> <p>NGARNANAMILI WARRARN NYANGUMARTAMILI – <i>Connection to Country</i></p> <p>MIRARNGUJINARKU KURLKAPILIJINARKU- <i>Education and Awareness</i></p> <p>MINYINYIPIRNAKU MUWARR WARRARNKU - <i>Knowledge transfer of country</i></p> <p>NYANGUMARTA PARNTURR NGANYJURRUMILAKU WARRARNKU - <i>Independence</i></p> <p>TURKUJINAKU PIRNAKARRINYAKU MIRTANYA MIRTANYA JALYPAJINAKU – <i>Listen and Respect for Elders (Men and Women)</i></p>		
Along with our partners, YMAC; DPaW; Greening Australia; Rangelands NRM are we managing and protecting threatened species, habitats, and threatening processes, weeds and feral animals?	Along with YMAC; DPaW; Greening Australia; Rangelands NRM and with assistance from specialists we develop specific monitoring and indicators for abundance and distribution of threatened species, weeds and feral animals such as camels.	Indicators show that abundance and distribution of threatened species is increasing (or stable) and that weeds and feral animals are decreasing.

What do we need to know?	How will we know?	What does success look like?
<p>Monitoring Action 6</p> <p>We have practical ways for Nyangumarta people to have meaningful work and other benefits on and relating to our country.</p> <p>Relevant aspect of our Vision: MARRNGUMILI - <i>Business, Law, Culture and Rules</i>; NGARLU JALYPALAKARRA - <i>Health and Wellbeing and Strong</i> NGARNANAMILI WARRARN NYANGUMARTAMILI – <i>Connection to Country</i>; NYANGUMARTA PARNTURR NGANYJURRUMILAKU WARRARNKU – <i>Independence</i>; MIRARNGUJINARKU KURLKAPILIJINARKU- <i>Education and Awareness</i></p>		
Are we involved in tourism at Eighty-Mile Beach and in the desert such as guided walks and other cultural experiences?	The Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park and or our own block at <i>Nyiyamarri Pukurl</i> as the location to provide information and activities to tourists about Nyangumarta connection to the area.	Social economic indicators show benefits to <i>marrngu</i> and the way we look after our country.
Do we have opportunities for meaningful work on our lands?	The amount and type of work available, and the participation of <i>marrngu</i> in this work.	Meaningful opportunities for work on Country for Nyangumarta people.
Are we involved in seed harvesting, propagation of some plants in our country? Have we established a nursery and/or wholesale/retail outlet at Eighty Mile Beach Caravan Park and or our own block at <i>Nyiyamarri Pukurl</i> for the sale of plants?	The number of <i>marrngu</i> involved, the numbers of plants propagated and the amount returned from sales.	We are seasonally harvesting, propagating plants. We have a wholesale/retail outlet for the sale of these plants.
Do we have flexible work practices and supportive training and mentoring that helps our Rangers to work at their best, care for our country using <i>marrngu</i> and <i>walypala</i> knowledge while still able to honour and respect their family and cultural responsibilities?	Ranger program plan established in consultation with YMAC; DPaW; Greening Australia & Rangelands NRM	Plan prepared with NWAC and Rangers
	Career pathway for Rangers identified in consultation with DPaW & Greening Australia	NWAC individual is in a coordinating position in the mid to long term (5-10 years)
	IPA Board satisfaction with ways we are working	Rating by NWAC (highly satisfied, partly satisfied, not satisfied)



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