



DHIMURRU

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

2022 – 2023





DHIMURRU ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

PO Box 1551

Nhulunbuy NT 0881

Ph: 08 8939 2700

Email: permits@dhimurru.com.au

Web: www.dhimurru.com.au


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Compiled by Dhimurru Staff

Design and layout by Rachel Ehrat

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FOREWORD

Yali Kevin Mununggurr
CHAIR 2022–2023

As always, this year has been a busy year. Dhimurru has looked to our Elders for guidance and inspiration to help us plan for the future. We have nearly completed our work on the Yolŋu Knowledge Framework and have strengthened our partnership with Yirralka Rangers whilst developing our management plans. The Board is focusing on setting up a sustainable future where our knowledge and connection to country is key in the work we do and the information we pass on to the next generation.

This year has seen many Yolŋu pass away (both young and old). We are honouring the legacy of those who have come before us. Elders from both Yirritja and Dhuwa have provided us with their vision and strength to follow in their footsteps.

Some of the highlights of the year have been re-engaging with the broader community through Conferences and workshops. Our Rangers participated on-mass at the Territory Natural Resources Management Conference in Darwin in November. They made presentations about the marine debris program and the work that was done in partnership with AIMS under a Marine Parks grant. It was good for our Rangers to reconnect with other Ranger groups and catch up on the great work that has been happening.

In addition, Board member, Banula Marika and Executive Officer Christine Burke presented at the IMPAC05 Conference in Canada earlier this year. Locally the Dhimurru Board and Yirralka Ward Mala have come together to work on the development of regional strategies to build on the connections of the existing Memorandum of Understanding between the two groups.

I take this opportunity to thank staff for their contribution to Dhimurru over the last twelve months. We have a strong, committed team of both dirramu (men) and miyalk (women) and it is their efforts that keep Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation sustainable and strong.

Finally I would like, once again, to thank the program supporters such as NIAA who provide funding for the Rangers and the IPA amongst other programs; the NT Ranger grants have supported Dhimurru for many years and continue to provide program funding for key projects. Not-for-Profit partners such as Cotton On Foundation and Country Needs People have also provided support and guidance. All our partners make invaluable contributions to our work.

Yali Kevin Mununggurr
Chairman

YOLŲU MATHA SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION

YolŲu Matha translates literally as 'the tongue of the YolŲu people'. It is a generic term describing the sixteen mutually intelligible clan languages of the Laynhapuy region of northeast Arnhem Land.

The characters used to write YolŲu Matha differ from those used for English since many of the sounds found in YolŲu Matha are not found in English. In pronouncing words in YolŲu Matha the emphasis is always on the first syllable. The following sounds are represented by letters in YolŲu Matha.

VOWEL SOUNDS	
a – as in mud	i – as in tin
ä – as in far	o – as in pore
e – as in feet	u – as in put
CONSONANT SOUNDS	
b – as in boy	nh – 'n' with tongue between teeth
d – as in dog	ny – 'n' with tongue curled behind lower teeth
<u>d</u> – retroflexed: retroflexed sounds are pronounced while the tip of the tongue curls back to roof of mouth	ŋ – as in singing
dh – pronounced with the tip of the tongue between the teeth	p – as in rapid
dj – pronounced with tip of tongue curled behind lower teeth and top of tongue touching palate	r – as in the American pronunciation of car with tongue retroflexed
g – as in ragged	rr – rolled sound common in Scottish pronunciation
k – as in bucket	t – as in tar
l – as in lump	ṭ – retroflexed
! – retroflexed	th – 't' with tip of tongue between teeth
m – as in man	tj – 't' with tip of tongue curled around behind lower teeth
n – as in net	w – as in way
<u>n</u> – retroflexed	y – as in yellow
	' – apostrophe: indicates a stop in a word

This reference is taken from Raymatja Munungiritj & Trevor Stockly, *YolŲu Matha: An Introduction to Gumatj and Related Languages in NE Arnhemland*, Yirrkala Community School Literature Production Centre, Yirrkala, NT, 1985.

Other words and meanings are taken from R. David Zorc, *YolŲu-Matha Dictionary*, re-printed by Education and Technology Unit Batchelor College June 1996.

OUR VISION

Dhimurru's vision statement honours the memory and wisdom of those Elders who inspired and founded Dhimurru.

Dhimurru continues to be motivated by the commitment and passion of its leaders and Elders.



Roy Dabayna Marika MBE

IN ENGLISH

(Adapted in 2013 after extensive sea country estates were included in the Dhimurru IPA)

Dhimurru's vision is guided by the wisdom of our Elders who founded Dhimurru. They have inspired us in our work. They exhorted us to look after the land for those who will follow, to protect and maintain it. In 1990 on behalf of the Elders, Roy Dabayna Marika said:

"Be firm and strong for the land, and the strength of your solidarity will sustain you in your cause.

Our country (land and sea) will exist forever. It must be protected so that it will remain the same, so that it can be seen in the same way that the elders saw it in the past. Our vision and hope is that Yolŋu will continue to use our country for all the generations to come."

The Elders said:

"We the old people hope that Dhuwa and Yirritja country will continue to be looked after through the connection of yothu yindi.

All our country is Yirritja and Dhuwa. Our songs, our law, our sacred art, our stories are embedded in our country, which is the foundation of our knowledge. That's how we see our country; that is what our Land Rights Act says.

The decision-makers are the landowners, the clans that are connected through yothu yindi and māri-gutharra kinship. They have placed certain areas of our land in the hands of the Dhimurru committee, which authorises the Dhimurru rangers to manage and preserve, maintain and protect the areas designated for recreation use.

The landowners put the Recreation Areas in Dhimurru's hands to manage. They envisage one committee, one voice, and one body under one umbrella, Dhimurru. Only Yolŋu will make decisions for this land, not government officials or any other person who is not a landowner.

We envisage working together with the Parks and Wildlife Commission and other IPA collaborators; we need their help in making our vision a reality. With respect to the sea country in the IPA, we are committed to working together with all relevant agencies to ensure that our sea country remains healthy, our sites and their stories are protected, and our marine resources are used sustainably. But the only people who make decisions about the land are those who own the law, the people who own the creation stories, the people whose lives are governed by Yolŋu law and belief."

IN YOLŃU MATHA

*(As expressed by the late Roy Dądayŋa Marika MBE,
with additions translated by Rarriwuy Marika)*

From dhawuru dhanu ŋaya yaka wāŋa ga hundred or more than one hundred years dhanu dhāruk ŋarru dhāya wekarram. Mā nhān yaka ŋarru yolŋuyu bāki, banhaya ŋayi generation ga generation ga generation. ŋayi yaka ŋarru dhāya, mā dhanal ŋarru nhāma banhaya ŋayi, banha yakan nhālpiyan dhanal nyenan ŋātjil dilak. Ga nhālpiyan dhanal yakan gatju'yuwan ŋātjil dilak. Yo—Dhuwa Yirritja, Yothu ga Yindi.

Bukmak ŋayi malanyinha yaka dhāya manikaymi, rommi, dhulanmi, dhāwu'mi. Banhalanā ŋayina, dhanalingu nuku djalkiri. Bitjan nhan yaka ŋayim malanya dhāya gaŋunha Land Rights-ŋa dhāruk bilanya bili. Yo, decision-maker nhanbayi yana ŋayi waŋanju.

Ŋarru nhan ŋarru, ŋarrunjam goŋmurrum nhumaliŋ gurumurru, Parks and Wildlife-kura or rangerwurumurru, Dhimurruwurumurru. Bukmak ŋayi malanyinha djākawu goŋŋa Dhimurruwura. Yirritja ga Dhuwa ŋarru warkthun dhanal further development bilanya bitjan conservation ga dhal yun ŋarru protecting nhānuru development-ŋuru.

Ga biyalpul ŋalma ŋarru nhāma ŋoy gapu banha dhāya yaka IPA-ŋa, ŋalma ŋarru djāma rrambanji waripu guŋkuwun agencies-wun, mā ŋalmanjingu ŋoy gapu ŋarru ŋuwakurru ŋoyya, yaka marimi dhanan dhukun, ŋalmalingun ŋayi. ŋoyŋa gapuŋa, ga dhāwu bayikuy ŋayiwuy dhanal IPA ga ŋalma ŋarru djāka, ga ŋoywuy gapuwuy maypal, miyapunu ga waripu mala banha ŋalma bayin ŋoka.

Dhanu ŋayi yolŋuwu yana, Yolŋuyu ŋarru warkthun dhāruk nhanbayi Yolŋuyu yana. Djinaŋu ŋayiwu ŋarakawu, yaka Gapmandhu wo bilan yolthu waripunuyu ŋayinharrayū Yolŋuyu. Nhanbayi yana ŋayi-waŋanuyu, rom-waŋanuyu, waŋarr-waŋanuyu, gamunungu-waŋanuyu wo maŋayin-waŋanuyu.

Ŋarru dhārukma dhanu gunyanda bayikun ŋalapalmiyu banha ŋarrunjan ga dhanu badak nyena yaka. Ŋarru dhārukma dhanalingu ga gatjpum badak wālŋa. Djinaŋu Dhimurruwum self developmentkum, ga self-managementkum.

DHIMURRU BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2022-2023

Seventeen clans from the region are represented in the membership of Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation. Dhimurru is governed by an elected Board of up to 12 Directors drawn from the Wāṇa Waṭaṇu Yolṇu (Traditional Owners) from these clans. The Board meets bimonthly to make operational and administrative decisions on behalf of the members. They set the priorities of management for the region in accordance with Dhimurru's approved plans of management. Dhimurru refers directly to the Wāṇa Waṭaṇu regarding all decisions which may have a direct or lasting impact on their estates.

CHAIRPERSON

Yali Kevin Munungurr

DEPUTY CHAIR

Mayatili Marika

LIFETIME MEMBER

Djāwa Yunupirṇu

DIRECTORS

Bānuḷa Marika

Mandaka Marika

Boyan Yunupirṇu

Djaṅgal Munungurritj

Lirwa Ganambarr

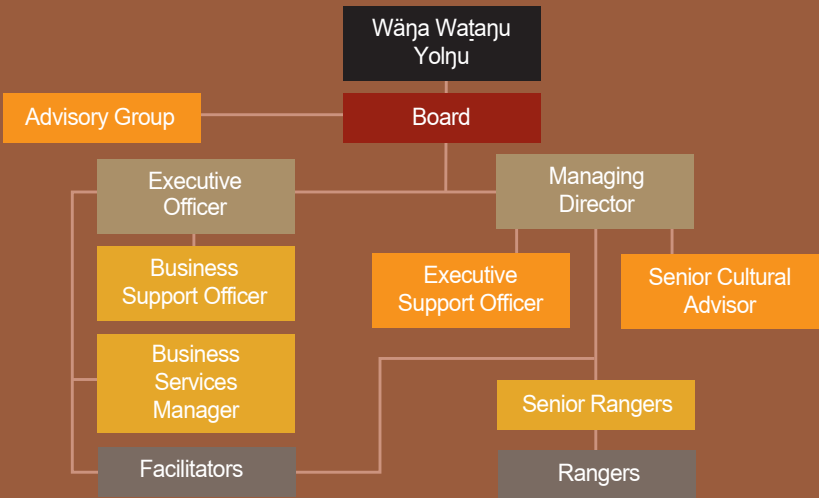
Djakapurra Munyarryun

Buwatbuy Michael Gumana

Mukadpuy Bruno Marika

Malati Yunupirṇu

**FIGURE 1. ORGANISATIONAL
STRUCTURE OF DHIMURRU ABORIGINAL
CORPORATION**



DHIMURRU STAFF 2022 - 2023

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Djäwa Il (Timmy) Burarrwaja

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Christine Burke

SENIOR CULTURAL ADVISOR

Rrawun Maymuru

BUSINESS SERVICES MANAGER

Maureen Neil

BUSINESS SUPPORT OFFICERS

Mahaliah Wangurra-James

(until 11/11/2022)

Sarah Constable

Roshana Khatiwada

FACILITATORS

Paul Augustin - Projects

Jessica Puntoriero - Sea Country
(until 14/04/2023)

Grace Wunungmurra – Rangers

Paul Ellis – Ghost Nets and Marine

Debris Coordinator

Mawalan Marika - Rom'gu Djäkami

Samantha Muller – Facilitator

LEARNING ON COUNTRY COORDINATOR

Daniel McLaren

SENIOR RANGERS

Micah Pascoe

Wangawuy Munungirritj

RANGERS

Bawuli Yibarabuk (until 19/06/2023)

Benson Wunungmurra

Boaz Wanambi

Butjari Gondarra

Djiwuruku Yunupinju

Gawaratj Munungurr

Gayana Marika (until 28/02/2023)

Hamish Gondara (until 06/01/2023)

Maxine Wulpundu Gumbula

Moses Wanambi

Murray M Munungurritj (until
10/03/2023)

Nuwaniny Burarrwaja

Wulwat Marika (until 19/08/2022)

SCHOOL-BASED TRAINEE RANGER

Djamut Brian Tyrell



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Through the wisdom of our Elders, the direction set by the Dhimurru board and executive and the planning and management of our rangers in collaboration with relevant agencies, we are committed to the following principles in managing our land and sea country within the Dhimurru IPA.



Yolŋu control and empowerment

Yolŋu make decisions for their own country. Activities should maximise opportunities for Yolŋu as active participants in the management of their country in the IPA.

Respect Yolŋu values

There are extensive and all-embracing values of all sites in the IPA for Yolŋu, and preserving these sites is a primary focus.

Conserve and enhance natural and cultural values of the IPA

The use and management of the IPA must be sustainable and must protect the ecological and heritage values that are the result of generations of Yolŋu management.

Manage both-ways

We maximise opportunities for Yolŋu to devise strategies through a mutual investigation of ŋäpaki (mainstream) and Yolŋu systems of knowledge.

Collaborative relationships

We continue to develop collaborative relationships with government agencies and other organisations in programs and research to support sustainable use and management of Yolŋu land and seas.

Ŋäpaki recreation values

The goal of our visitor management is to encourage an appreciation of the cultural and natural values of the IPA for ŋäpaki to promote an enjoyable experience and to ensure minimal environmental impact.

Care for Dhuwa and Yirritja clan estates

We care for Dhimurru land and sea country holistically, in accordance with our cultural values, rights, practices and obligations.

Protect sacred sites

We protect sacred sites and song cycles that contain our creation stories and link our land and sea environments together.



Maintain healthy ecosystems

We maintain healthy terrestrial and marine ecosystems in which all species and associated cultural values can thrive.

Harvest sustainably

We ensure that dugong, turtle, fish and other culturally and economically important species are harvested sustainably for the generations to come.

Recognise Yolŋu rights, interests and responsibilities

We ensure that Yolŋu rights, interests and responsibilities in land and sea country are recognised and respected, together with the rights and responsibilities of other groups and organisations with a legitimate interest in our land and sea country and its resources.

Maintain Yolŋu knowledge

We ensure that Yolŋu knowledge and practices are maintained and transmitted from one generation to the next.

Apply Yolŋu knowledge and practices

We apply Yolŋu knowledge and practices to the management of our land and sea country.

Use best practices

We ensure best-practice management of our land and sea country long into the future.

Develop Yolŋu enterprises

We support environmentally and culturally sustainable enterprises.

DHIMURRU INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA (IPA)

An Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) is an area of land and/or sea country voluntarily dedicated by Yolŋu landowners as a non-legislated protected area. The terrestrial component of an IPA is recognised by the Australian government as being part of the National Reserve System of Protected Areas (NRSPA).

In 2000, Yolŋu landowners made a voluntary IPA declaration over approximately 101,000 hectares of their traditional country. This included 92,000 hectares of their land and about 9000 hectares of their sea country, incorporating previously registered marine sacred sites. This declaration established the first IPA in the Northern Territory and the first IPA in Australia to include both terrestrial and marine areas.

At a memorial ceremony in Arnhem Land in April 2013, Yolŋu Wānga Waṯaṯu (landowners) formally dedicated additional areas of their land and sea country to the Dhimurru IPA. This increased Dhimurru's IPA to approximately 550,000 hectares and extended the IPA's sea country boundary a further forty kilometres from the coastline.

Each IPA is managed by Indigenous Rangers and partner organisations according to protected area guidelines set by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Dhimurru's vision statement sets out Dhimurru's commitment to:

- support Yolŋu landowners in managing their land and sea country
- manage Recreation Areas designated for visitor use.




In collaboration with partner agencies, our Rangers are responsible for the day-to-day management of the IPA, supported by the continued hands-on involvement of the Yolŋu community taking care of their traditional country. Traditional resource management practices such as the use of fire are critical to maintaining natural and cultural values of the IPA.

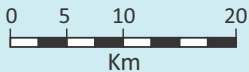
The Dhimurru IPA is supported by the Australian government's Indigenous Protected Areas program and the Indigenous Ranger Program, which assist in funding, planning and management in return for environmental and cultural heritage management services.

Many other government and non-government partners share their expertise and resources to help us achieve the conservation and sustainability goals of the IPA.

Our IPA is one of 83 across Australia. Together they contribute about 50% of the total area of the NRSPA, which also includes all of Australia's national parks and conservation reserves.



-  Original IPA
-  Terrestrial Zone (Aboriginal Land)
-  Sea Country Zone (Collaborative Management)





Bānuḷa Marika and Christine Burke speaking at the IMPAC 5 Congress.

IMPAC 5 CONGRESS

The International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC) 5 Congress was held in Vancouver, Canada in February 2023. The conference facilitated the world's leading professionals to discuss how to protect 30% of the global ocean by 2030. The global community shared knowledge, ideas and experiences to help meet these targets.

Australia was generally well represented at the Congress with a number of groups presenting. It gave everyone the opportunity to share common experiences and exchange ideas from a more local perspective, as well as experiencing the global perspective.

Country Needs People, a not-for-profit organisation, supported the participation of several Ranger groups from around Australia to present at the Congress. This provided the groups with an opportunity to meet with First Nations from other countries and discuss their own experiences, challenges and opportunities.

The group of seven from Western Australia, Victoria and the Northern Territory presented a panel session on Sea Country Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA). The development of the IPAs in Australia has been instrumental in the conservation of country with First



Nations and many people were interested in the concept.

The group provided information on the history of the development of the IPAs on their country and talked about current operations, opportunities and challenges that each of the groups has experienced in managing sea country.

Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation was represented by Bānuḷa Marika, Board member and former employee as well as Executive Officer Christine Burke.

YOLŲU KNOWLEDGE FRAMEWORK

The YolŲu Knowledge Framework is a collaboration between the Dhimurru and Yirralka Rangers to prioritise YolŲu approaches to managing Country in their Indigenous Protected Areas in North East Arnhem Land. The project allows traditional knowledge to be recognised as the basis for local and regional management approaches. From this basis, western frameworks, tools and strategies can then be considered to complement and support the management approach.

PROGRESS

Throughout the last year more than 40 interviews have been conducted with senior knowledge holders in the region to gather their aspirations, concerns and insights into what it means to manage country as YolŲu.

Members from 14 different clan groups have been interviewed. These interviews offer integral guidance and direction to Dhimurru and Yirralka about future directions for land and sea management and will form the basis of a short documentary about the 'Voices of the Elders'.

A series of 10 key focus 'chapters' have been developed using the insights from interviews with the Elders. These chapters offer new directions for Dhimurru that draw from past traditions, practices and

activities that have always continued, but are now able to be celebrated as the foundation of what it is to care for Country.

These new directions include changing the name of 'ranger' to a YolŲu name to better reflect the roles and responsibilities of YolŲu Rangers, which is different from mainstream rangers. And from that basis it is necessary for YolŲu Rangers to learn about song cycles, participate in ceremonies and undertake hunting in the right Country at the right time as part of monitoring processes.

These chapters will be presented as a series of short documentaries that supplement the "Voices of the Elders" and explain the ways in which the Elders' insights support new approaches. These are based on ancient philosophies and practices, to planning and management at Dhimurru.

Jawun provided the expertise to develop the structure and framework for a new website that shares the work of the Dhimurru and Yirralka YolŲu Knowledge Framework. All the documentary videos will be available, along with a seasonal calendar, on the website later in 2023.

A regional plan that outlines the key priorities and collaborations for Dhimurru and Yirralka will also be formulated.

Rrawun Maymuru, Djäwa Burarrwaja, Greg Wearne, Mawalan Il Marika and Sam Muller



LAND MANAGEMENT



MAINTAINING RECREATION AREAS

WANUWUY ESCARPMENT TRACK MAINTENANCE

Wanuwuy is a registered Sacred Site and has great significance to Yolŋu regarding ceremony and cultural activities. Therefore, getting approval to maintain the escarpment track was not instantaneous due to this significance.

To meet grant requirements and before commencing works, approvals had to be obtained from the Traditional Owners as well as the Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA) and Gulkula Mining. The project was bought together by Facilitator, Paul Augustin who has invested a lot of time over the past two years to complete the project. Overall, it has taken almost 10 years to source funding for this major project.

The core purpose of the grant was to maintain seven kilometres of the Wanuwuy escarpment track. This enables Dhimurru staff to access the area to complete their programs such as the weed and fire management, allowing for safer practices. It also enables the organisation to undertake heritage protection and facilitates critical land and sea management activities.

Dhimurru Rangers will now be able to manage routine maintenance and monitoring requirements in line with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) guidelines more efficiently.

An added advantage of the upgrade is the access to Wanuwuy for visitors to the region. With the

road becoming increasingly more dangerous each year, visitors and Dhimurru staff can now benefit from reduced potential damage to vehicles as well as reduced travel time for Rangers when maintaining campsites.

Wanuwuy escarpment track now takes 10 minutes to reach Datjula lookout after the large potholes were filled, drainage improved, and some trees removed to better protect vehicles. Trees that have fallen will no longer affect access and Rangers can spend more productive time in the field.

Dhimurru acknowledges the support of the National Indigenous Australians Agency through the Remote Strategies grant and Rio Tinto Gove Operations for their contribution to this project.



VISITORS TO THE REGION



Permit Officer Sarah Constable with Rangers Boaz Wanambi and Benson Wunungmurra

TOURISM CONTINUES TO EVOLVE

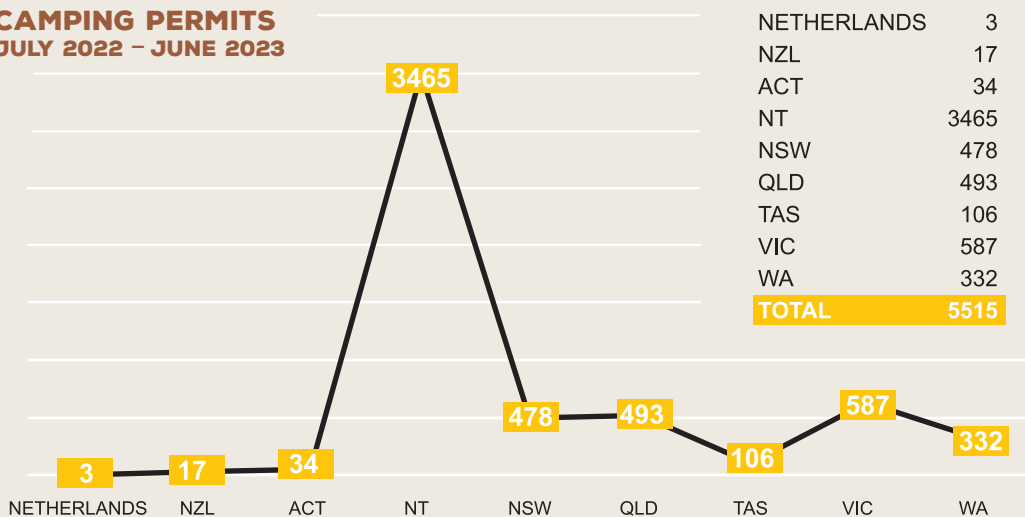
Dhimurru's Permit and Front Office is managed by Business Services Officer, Sarah Constable. Sarah is supported by Roshana Khatiwada whose primary role is finance.

Between Sarah and Roshana, new residents to the area, visitors and prospective visitors are assisted by providing information and some direction on the planned trip within the IPA.

Sarah finds herself answering many queries ranging from information about the drive into Nhulunbuy, tourism ventures available once visitors arrive or the Alcohol Permit system. It is not unusual for her to find messages on the answering machine on a Monday morning where visitors have been bogged at Wanuwuy or a b̄aru has been sighted at the beach or river where they have been camped.

The graph below shows the number Camping Permits issued.

CAMPING PERMITS
JULY 2022 – JUNE 2023



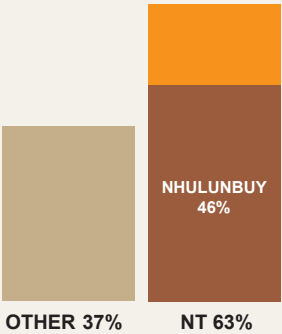
Patrols and permit checks are conducted on weekdays while Rangers are working in the field as well as dedicated patrols on weekends. Dhimurru has been working with key partners, such as NT Parks and Department of Fisheries to do joint patrols over the dry season, aimed at building confidence and to support formal compliance training activities. Later in 2023 Rangers will undertake formal training in Certificate II, a step closer to gaining powers under the Territory Parks and Wildlife Act.

As part of the lead into the formal training, NT Parks staff teamed up with Dhimurru Rangers to do a joint patrol to introduce Rangers to some of the key elements that will be covered in the training and to give them an opportunity to determine if they are suited to the activity. Building compliance capacity amongst the Rangers is a key objective of the Board.

Visitor numbers continue to rise with various permit options to meet visitor requirements. Commercial Tour Operators are also more visible in the region contributing 4,659 days over this financial year. There were also 13,263 camping nights across the 43 camp sites for the 2022/2023 financial year.

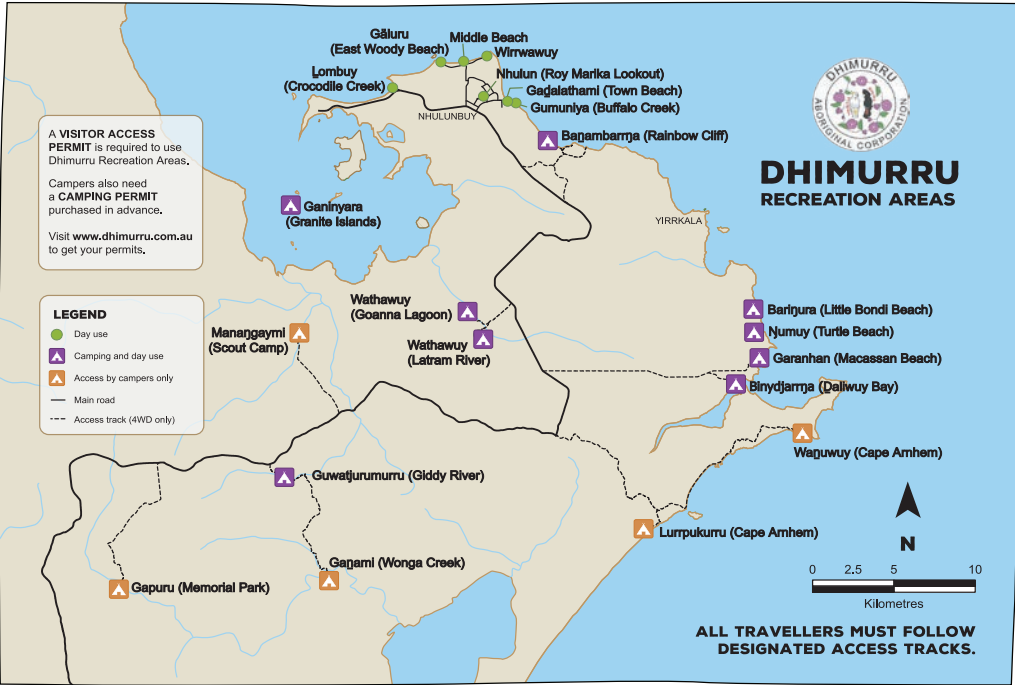
The online system collects a range of data that can assist us to better understand where people come from when they visit the recreation areas. Almost half of the camping permits booked this financial year

The graph below compares the percentage of Camping Permits issued.



were made by residents of Nhulunbuy and surrounds, combined with the rest of the Northern Territory it made up around 63% of total camping bookings. Ten percent of tourists came from the other states, such as NSW, Victoria and Queensland and there were a small number of international tourists from New Zealand and the Netherlands.

With these increasing numbers, Dhimurru continues to monitor and plan for future growth as well as search for funding to manage the infrastructure.



**MAINTENANCE, UPGRADES
AND NEW INFRASTRUCTURE**



REPAIRS TO THE TRACKS

Upgrades to the vehicle access tracks associated with Designated Recreation Areas (DRA) have been undertaken this year. Track maintenance included the coastal tracks from Daliwuy through to Barijura as well as the Numuy track. The Numuy track sustained major damage due to a 300mm rain event in May. Although this necessitated the track being closed for a few months, most tracks are now passable.

Ongoing maintenance is required for the Guwatjulumurru (Giddies), Wathawuy, Banambarrna and Lombuy tracks as funds become available.

TOILET INSTALLATION

Funding was also received to assist Dhimurru with the upgrade, and installation of new toilet blocks. With the influx of visitors over the past few years, it has been necessary for Dhimurru to install toilets that are environmentally friendly, hygienic, durable and blend in with the surrounds.

Two toilets were constructed, one at Barijura and one at Garanhan, to replace the rusted buildings that have provided the public with

amenities over the past 10 years. Another toilet will be constructed at Campsite 1 at the Giddies in the coming months. There are now 14 toilets in the DRAs.

Dhimurru acknowledges the support of Rio Tinto Gove Operations for their contribution to road maintenance in the IPA and the Northern Territory Government through the Department of Tourism, Industry and Trade, who assisted with funding for the toilet replacements.





PLANNED BURNS

Infrastructure protection burns and Country burns continue to be conducted with approvals from Traditional Owners. This year, due to the Ganami (Wonga Creek) being impassable the area was burned via helicopter with the assistance of Yirralka Rangers as part of their Carbon Abatement Program. Visitors to the DRAs are advised via social media when, why, and what to expect when these burns are conducted.

ROCKET RETRIEVAL

Following on from the successful launch and recovery of rockets from the Arnhem Space Centre at Gulkula in late June 2022, Equatorial Launch Australia (ELA), launched another two rockets in early July 2022.

Dhimurru Rangers were involved in the recovery of the first section of the rocket that is released when the rocket is launched. Dhimurru Rangers, Boaz Wanambi and Micah Pascoe worked with NASA launch recovery team to retrieve the second two rockets.

ELA continues to liaise with key stakeholders such as Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation to provide information about future activities in the IPA.



SEA COUNTRY



GHOST NET AND MARINE DEBRIS PILOT

The Australian Government has allocated \$14.8 million dollars over four years to the program, funding a range of projects and programs across the Gulf of Carpentaria. Dhimurru was one of the Gulf of Carpentaria Ranger groups who successfully applied to be involved in a Ghost Net and Marine Debris pilot project.

The Dhimurru pilot aimed at employing a Ghost Net and Marine Debris Coordinator who was responsible for managing the coordination of the marine debris program across the 70 kilometres of coastline in the Dhimurru IPA. The coordinator also collaborates with key partners from adjacent Ranger groups and supporters such as Sea Shepherd.

With a coordinator on board, it was a massive year for marine debris collection with approximately 32 tonnes of debris being collected across the twelve-month period. Around 217 people were involved in clean-up operations.

The pilot was successfully completed and Dhimurru has been awarded funding for another 12 months to build on the program and support other Ghost Net and Marine Debris programs in the region.





AERIAL SURVEY FOR GHOST NETS

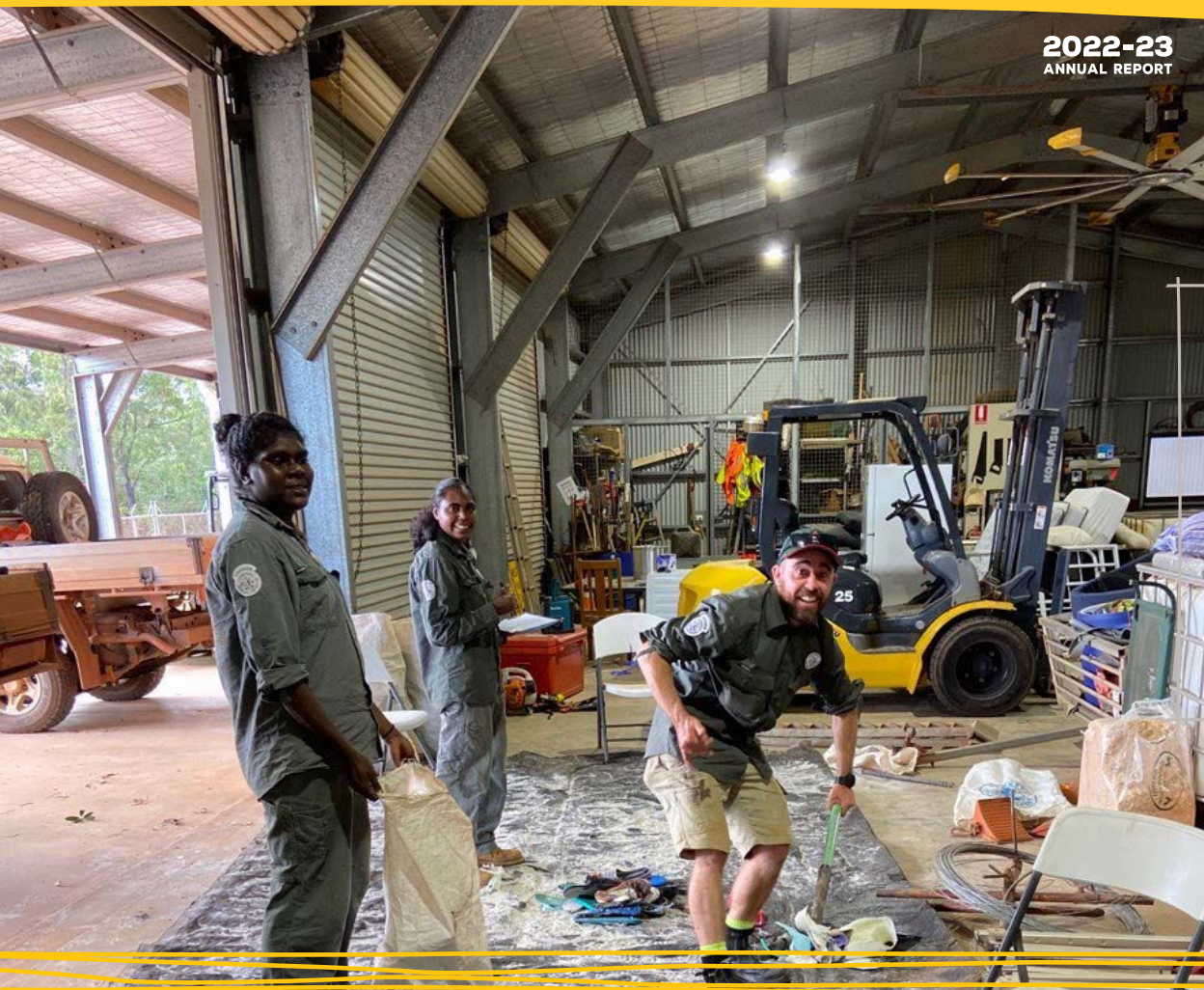
In March 2023 Dhimurru Rangers, Benson Wunurumurra and Micah Pascoe, working with Dale Morris from the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF), undertook an important aerial observational helicopter flight to survey the majority of the coastline of Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). Under the Ghost Net and Marine Debris funding, this survey forms part of a wider data collection project across the Gulf of Carpentaria to highlight hotspots.

The primary objective was to identify and document the locations where ghost nets and marine debris had accumulated. Three hundred and ninety-nine pieces of ghost net were recorded

across the flight path. Rangers, in conjunction with the Ghost Net and Marine Debris Coordinator Paul Ellis, will work to identify which ones to retrieve.

The success of this endeavour relied heavily on the Rangers' unparalleled knowledge of the region and their commitment to honouring cultural sensitivities. Additionally, the activity presented an opportunity for the Rangers to enhance their skills in aerial operations and data capture techniques.

The information gathered during the flight will be invaluable for efficiently planning and implementing future clean-up operations.



TRANSECT SURVEY WITH DAFF

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry's (DAFF) Dale Moris, Senior Project Officer – Ghost Nets visited Dhimurru in May.

During his visit, Dale provided valuable guidance to the Rangers on conducting a transect survey, a crucial technique now used for assessing and monitoring marine debris.

Dale explained the methodologies involved in conducting a transect survey, ensuring that the Rangers were equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills.

To put theory into practice, a specific section of the southern beach at Wanuwuy, spanning a length of 200 metres, was chosen as the survey site. The location was carefully selected to capture a

representative sample of the marine debris present in the area. The Rangers surveyed the designated transect, documenting their findings using the Biosecurity TOPWATCH App.

After completing the survey, the collected debris was transported back to the Dhimurru workshop. There, they engaged in a systematic process of sorting and cataloguing debris. This approach ensured that each item of debris was properly identified and recorded, facilitating future analysis and interpretation of the data.

The efforts of the Rangers and the valuable guidance provided by Dale fostered a deeper understanding of marine debris in the area and laid a solid foundation for continued monitoring and management.

HELPING HANDS



ACCU CONTINUES CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

Dhimurru has maintained an ongoing collaboration with the community-based Arnhem Coast Clean-Up (ACCU) team to conduct regular clean-up operations along the Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) coastline.

The ACCU team, primarily organised by Rhys and Raelene Yerbury have organised up to 80 people for monthly clean-ups between April and September and cleared the Wanuwuy beach of more than five and a half tonnes of debris in the past year.

The ACCU team have consistently demonstrated dedication and hard work during these monthly clean ups. Their commitment in assisting Dhimurru Rangers in preserving Sea Country and safeguarding marine life has been commendable.

Dhimurru would like to express their gratitude to the ACCU team for their ongoing effort.



HELPING HANDS



Photo courtesy of Sea Shepherd

SEA SHEPHERD COLLABORATION

Sea Shepherd volunteers and Dhimurru united their efforts to conduct a remote beach clean-up at Djulpan, a 14 kilometre stretch of beach approximately two and half hours south of Nhulunbuy. This will be the third year that Sea Shepherd have cleaned the beach at this location.

For the first two weeks of October 2022, the dedicated teams tirelessly worked together along the shoreline of the beach, removing debris from a stretch of four and a half kilometres.

Their collective dedication yielded outstanding results removing a staggering 10.4 tonnes of rubbish. This consisted of approximately 9.3 tonnes of consumer plastic and waste and 1.1 tonnes of discarded fishing nets.

The weight removed over the four and half kilometres of beach exceeded what had been collected in 2018 over the same distance by 30%.

All the debris collected in 2022 was weighed onsite and transferred to the Dhimurru truck which was transported to the landfill in Nhulunbuy. For such a remote site, the logistics of collecting and removing large amounts of rubbish were enormous and took cooperation, communication and hard work by both parties.

This extraordinary endeavour showcases the power of collaboration and the positive result it produces. Dhimurru thanks Sea Shepherd for their ongoing support.

**LEARNING
BOTH WAYS**



LEARNING ON COUNTRY

This year the local Learning on Country program, with support from the Cotton On Foundation, has expanded to include all year levels at Yirrkala School. All students from Pre-school to Year 12 have numerous opportunities to learn from Elders and Rangers about country, culture and the work of Rangers.

These learning activities range from school based activities, day trips on Country or extended camps on country with various focuses ranging from VET training camps, cultural bushwalks, re-engagement camps, Galtha Rom Workshops and other cultural camps.

Highlights of the Learning on Country program include boat trips to Pobasso and Truant Islands as well as around Melville Bay. The Melville Bay trips were to visit Macassan occupation sites, learn about the history of the trade between the Macassans and Yolŋu and the transfer of cultural knowledge about these areas.

Year 8 to 12 students engaged in Conservation and Eco System Management Certificates II and III. This involved weekly activities and block

training to complete the units. These units range from animal trapping to providing visitor information, undertaking prescribed burning, weeds and chemicals training, small motors information and maintaining cultural places.

The senior students also participated in a cultural bushwalk from Daliwuy Bay to Yirrkala. Students, Rangers and Elders undertook this three day hike in which they carried their own gear and cooked for themselves. Along the way students learned stories about Country, significant sites and place names from Elders and Rangers.

A school and community Cultural Day celebration of learning through 'Learning on Country' was held at Yirrkala School. The school community, families, Rangers and other community members came together to see what the students had learnt. There was also the opportunity for everyone to participate in weaving, spear making, traditional cooking and bush medicine workshops followed by a school bungul (dancing) and a bush foods feast.



LUNGURRMA GALTHA

One Galtha Rom Workshop was held at Gurrumuru Homeland this year. This Galtha focussed on the Lungurrma (North) Wind and was a joint camp between Yirrkal School, Laynhapuy Homelands School, Gapuwiyak School, Dhimurru and Yirralka Rangers.

Students learned about the Lungurrma wind and its manikay (songlines). They visited important and sacred sites around Gurrumuru, learned stories about these sites and Lungurrma and mapped place names.

Students also harvested pandanas and spear shafts with Rangers and Elders and learned about the impacts of feral animals and salinity on people and Country.





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This year Dhimurru Rangers re-engaged with other organisations at the Territory Natural Resource Management Conference. Additional support from Parks Australia, Marine Parks and Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries meant that Dhimurru could send eight Rangers/Facilitators to the Conference.

At the Conference, the Wessel Marine Park project funded through an Our Marine Parks grant was showcased. A partnership between AIMS (Australian Institute of Marine Science) and Dhimurru. The project provided an opportunity for participation by Yirralka and Gumurr Mathakal Rangers and combined knowledge exchange between science and Yolŋu knowledge holders. The video will be published later in the year.

Dhimurru, with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, also presented on the Ghost Net and Marine Debris pilot program to highlight the problems caused through ghost nets and marine debris and the work being done to

combat it. A Gulf wide program, Rangers had the chance to exchange ideas with others dealing with similar challenges.

Dhimurru staff attended a NAILSMA (North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance) small business opportunity workshop on Groote Eylandt to develop economic frameworks and pathways for organisations to create new investments that lead to employment opportunities in remote Indigenous communities. Elders and Rangers from the Anindilyakwa Land and Sea Rangers group took the Rangers for a tour of their country showing them the country they manage and their rock art.

Attending relevant conferences allows Rangers to gain insight into industry trends, their successes, and failures. It also allows staff to network and improve their knowledge and skill base.



IMPROVING SKILLS AND SAFETY

Ten Rangers studied for their Certificate II Conservation and Ecosystem Management over the last twelve months, while two more Rangers studied for their Certificate III. Batchelor Institute, through an on-site trainer, has provided training with learning conducted in the classroom and on Country. Not only does this increase the overall skill's base of the organisation but is also credited towards the completion of Rangers' individual study outcomes.

Training focus has ranged from ensuring Rangers are safe on Country by providing four wheel drive,

first aid and CPR training. On-the-job skill's training has included weed management, burning, all terrain vehicles, coxswains, firearms, skidsteer, forklift and driver's licencing.

Other more specialised training has also been provided by some of Dhimurru's research or contract partners, such as the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry who provided training that enabled Rangers to participate in biodiversity surveys being undertaken in the area.

DHIMURRU PARTNERSHIPS

DHIMURRU'S PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS

Dhimurru has developed and sustained partnerships with a wide variety of organisations over the years. Dhimurru works together with Yolŋu organisations, government agencies, educational institutions, researchers, non-government organisations (NGO) and corporate businesses on a range of programs, sharing knowledge, expertise and resources, investing in activities, and providing training. By extending and strengthening these partnerships Dhimurru seeks to develop mutual understanding and commitment in looking after Country; *ŋilimurru bukmak djäka wäŋawu*—all of us together looking after Country. This is often referred to as Dhimurru's 'both-ways' approach where contemporary ŋäpaki expertise is sought to help inform Yolŋu decision-making.

DURING 2022–23 DHIMURRU'S PARTNERS AND COLLABORATORS INCLUDED THE ORGANISATIONS LISTED BELOW:

Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority (AAPA)
Arnhem Coast Clean-Up Community Group
Arnhem Land Progress Association (ALPA)
Australian Border Force (ABF)
Australian Defense Force — Norforce
Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA)
Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)
Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS)
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE)
BirdLife Australia
Buku Larrŋgay Mulka Art and Multimedia Centre
Cotton On Foundation
Country Needs People
Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries – Biosecurity
Department of Education, Skills and Employment
Developing East Arnhem Limited (DEAL)
Djalkiri Aboriginal Corporation
East Arnhem Land Tourist Association (EALTA)
East Arnhem Regional Council (EASC)
Equitorial Launch Australia (ELA)
Gumatj Aboriginal Corporation (GAC)
Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation (ILSC)
Jawun Corporate Partnerships
Laynhapuy Homelands Aboriginal Corporation
Marine and Coastal Community Network (NT)
Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation
National Indigenous Australians Agency:
• Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA)
• Indigenous Ranger Program (IRP)
• Learning on Country (LOC)
• Remote Strategies

Nhulunbuy Corporation Limited (NCL)
Nhulunbuy Regional Sports Fishing Association
North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA)
North East Arnhem Land Aboriginal Corporation (NEAL)
Northern Land Council (NLC)
NT Department of the Attorney-General and Justice – Correctional Services – Datjala Work Camp
NT Department of Education through the LoC program
NT Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security – Parks and Wildlife
NT Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics
NT Department of Tourism, Sports and Culture
• Fisheries
• Tourism NT
NT Police and Marine and Fisheries Enforcement Unit
NT Seafood Council
Parks Australia – Marine Parks
Regional Ranger Groups
Rio Tinto Gove Operations (RTGO)
Rirratjirŋu Aboriginal Corporation and Bunuwal Investments (RAC)
Sea Shepherd Australia
Tangaroa Blue Foundation
Territory Natural Resource Management (TNRM)
University of Melbourne
University of New South Wales (UNSW)
Wearne Advisors
Yirkala School
Yothu Yindi Foundation (YYF)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN DHIMURRU AND YIRRALKA RANGERS (LHAC)

This year Dhimurru and Yirralka Rangers have brought the essence of the Memorandum that both organisations signed in 2016 to life.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is aimed at providing a framework for working together across areas of shared management between the respective Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA). The shared management areas (SMA) are created by the overlapping areas of the two IPAs.

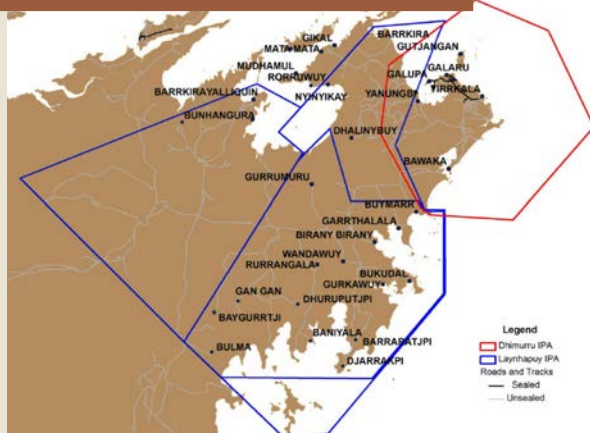
The underpinning principle of the MOU is to ensure the parties agree to collaborate with each other in developing plans, protocols, and agreements to facilitate agreed operations in the SMA. This year Dhimurru and Yirralka Rangers have worked closely together on a number of projects including the Yolŋu Knowledge Framework, development of joint data management system and related “Apps”, weeds in the shared zone, shared fire information and training programs, and even, on occasion have shared assets to ensure that both parties have been able to deliver outcomes when resources have been limited due to unforeseen circumstances.

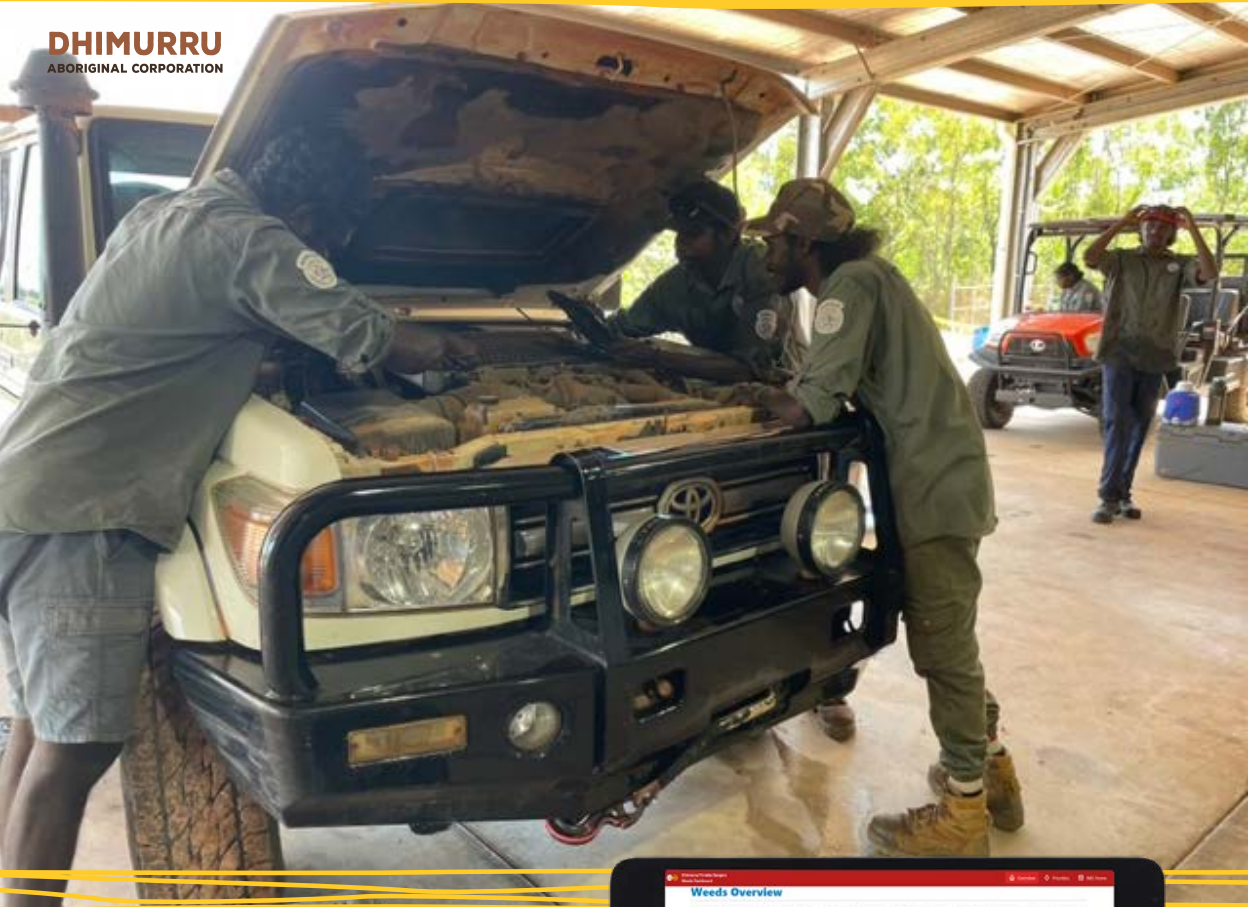
Using the MOU as the anchor point, regular meetings between the two groups have led to a greater understanding of shared challenges and identified ways of managing them. Unauthorised access, illegal hunting, and failure to meet access permit conditions are just some of the recognised shared challenges. Both groups have been working with Police, NT Parks, NT Fisheries, Border Force, and the

Northern Land Council to establish ways that together there is enhanced management and recognition of these issues across all sectors.

The review will strengthen the links in the MOU to recognise that Traditional Owners’ and Custodian’s gurrutu (kinship) connections are not defined by the boundaries of their respective IPAs, and that the cultural connections between the two groups and across Country are embedded in the MOU. It is expected that this will enhance program delivery and keep the working relationships between the two groups strong despite challenges that may be faced in the rapidly changing economic landscape of the region as mining ceases and other economies are built.

LAYNHAPUY AND DHIMURRU IPA BOUNDARIES



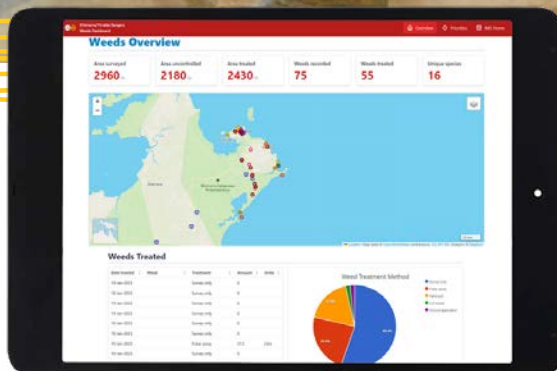


MANAGING DATA IN THE IPA

In 2021, Dhimurru and Yirralka secured a collaborative NT Government Ranger Grant to develop a new Cultural and Environmental Information System. The system enables the organisations to develop a series of Apps that can be used by Rangers to record information in the field and upload it to create reports.

These Apps will enable the two Ranger groups to capture data from their work, make maps and share data more easily, particularly with the groups capturing similar information.

To date Apps have been developed for weed management, fire management, daily work activities, feral animals, monitoring stations, vehicle checks, inspection Apps for new work in recreation areas, place names, cultural sites, compliance, and seasonal plant observations.



Each App can produce maps and reports to share information with landowners about their Country, with the Boards, the broader community, government, and other stakeholders.

Dhimurru acknowledges the support from Jawun for supplying secondees for the development of the App and Country Needs People for supporting with technical expertise.

**STAFF
PROFILES**

STAFF PROFILE

PURSUING A PASSION



Djwuruku Yunupingu Ranger

Djwuruku Yunupingu is one of Dhimurru's younger Rangers joining the organisation at the end of 2021. She joined the Dhimurru team when she finished Year 12 at Yirrkala School.

Her homeland is Garriyak, a small community near Mapuru. Djwuruku gets to visit Garriyak as often as possible but usually for cultural reasons. What she really loves about returning to her homeland is the plentiful supply of bush natha, collecting maypal and fishing. When asked about her immediate family Djwuruku smiles and says she is married to her job but enjoys time with family.

Djwuruku's success at Dhimurru is a testament to her participation in the Learning on Country program. She said she enjoyed the program, learning about Dhuwa and Yirritja, the two halves of Yolngu holistic world view, about the land and the sea.

What drew Djwuruku to becoming a Ranger was her grandfather, Professor Djalalinba Yunupingu, Dhimurru's first Senior Cultural Advisor. He was not only a mentor and role model to Dhimurru staff but to Djwuruku as a small child. She remembers him working at Dhimurru.

Djwuruku loves being on Country, protecting the IPA and making sure it is manymak for future generations. Being on patrol as a Ranger she likes to talk to visitors in the IPA. They often ask many questions about the permits and culture. Djwuruku especially enjoys passing on cultural information to help visitors understand Yolngu culture and to respect important sacred areas.

Coming to work every day and doing djama on Country with miyalk and dirramu who share her interest makes her feel good especially when they are helping each other. Her passion is to see the marine debris cleared. "It makes the land look bad, cleaning up is hot, the days can be long, but it's manymak," she said. In the future Djwuruku would like to be a Senior Ranger and then Facilitator, "like Wang and Grace."

When at Dhimurru, Djwuruku has the opportunity to return to Yirrkala School and assist with the Learning on Country program. She says it was good for her and she likes to help the younger students learn. She has also attained her drivers and coxswains licences since commencing with Dhimurru.

STAFF PROFILE

CELEBRATING
YEARS OF
SERVICEPaul Augustin
Facilitator

Dhimurru's longest serving employee is Facilitator Paul Augustin who has been with the organisation for 14 years. When Paul commenced with Dhimurru, the Shortstay facility was used as the office. It was on the site of the current office building. In late 2010 Dhimurru's new office building was opened, followed by the Workshop complex across the road a few years later. This is an indication of Dhimurru's growth, and the milestones Paul has seen over the past 14 years.

Paul's time at Dhimurru has seen many changes including improvements and challenges. He has seen the evolution of the Permit System and was instrumental in the establishment of the Designated Recreation Area (DRA) facilities. Initially, there was no signage, fencing or toilets in the DRAs and after consultation with Traditional Owners he assisted in establishing the current sites.

Two projects that Paul is proud of are the Wathawuy Merge Project between Goanna and Latram River, where the outcome of the project was visitor use and campsites facilities as they appear today. A more recent project involved a significant maintenance project associated with the Wanuwuy access track. Paul oversees the maintenance of the track network ensuring Rangers can safely access work areas in addition to providing access for residents and visitors.

Another milestone was in 2016 when Paul and the Rangers were involved with the re-mapping and heritage conservation work on the Wurrwurray Stone Arrangement at Garanhan. The site was documented

by archeologists Professor Campbell Macknight and Bill Gray in 1967 and is on the Australian National Heritage List.

One of many highlights during his time includes accompanying the previous Managing Director, Mandaka Marika, Paul's bāpa (father) on Nhulun where Mandaka shared his views with the then Prince Charles during his 2018 visit.

Paul also took over the management of crocodiles and feral animals when Parks NT withdrew from Nhulunbuy. He manages the organisation's radio communication network, vehicles and has been Dhimurru's health and safety officer for over 10 years.

Paul believes he has built strong relationships with stakeholders and local businesses that support Dhimurru to function and achieve its management plan goals and objectives.

"I hope I have contributed to Dhimurru's success as a natural and cultural resource management organisation that protects its IPA (Indigenous Protected Area) from harm and degradation in accordance with the original vision of past Elders," he said.

Paul is currently studying for his Master of Environmental Management to further assist in his role at Dhimurru. Paul and his family love living in East Arnhem Land and have been adopted by the Marika family. They love the lifestyle and are grateful for their acceptance within the Dhimurru and Yolŋu family culture.

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

With the scheduled completion of the Yolŋu Knowledge Framework and Plan of Management later in 2023, Dhimurru will commence implementation in 2024. This new way of working will require planning and revision of some of our ways of operating, with ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure we can continuously adapt and improve on the work we do.

Dhimurru will continue with its Ghost Net and Marine Debris project this year, engaging with adjacent Ranger groups, Arnhem Coast Clean-Up and other organisations that have been funded to find innovative solutions to the challenge of ghost nets and marine debris management. Overall, the objective is to reduce the impact of ghost nets and marine debris in our oceans and on our coasts through collection and management such as recycling.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS SUMMARY

DHIMURRU ABORIGINAL CORPORATION INCOME 2022-2023

INCOME SOURCE	PROJECT	AMOUNT
National Indigenous Australians Agency	Indigenous Ranger Program	\$1,092,452.00
	Indigenous Protected Area program	\$360,724.00
	Learning on Country	\$64,270.36
	Remote Strategies - Capital Works	\$270,000.00
Northern Territory Government:		
Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade	Ablution Project	\$150,000.00
Department of Environment, Parks and Water Security	Yolngu Knowledge Foundation	\$291,054.00
Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment	Pilot Indigenous Ranger Coastal Clean-Up Project	\$164,993.00
Landowners Sea Country Management Contribution	Sea Ranger Program	\$220,239.94
Rio Tinto Gove Operations	Dhimurru Partnering Agreement	\$100,000.00
Cotton On Foundation	Learning on Country	\$70,000.00
TOTAL		\$2,783,733.30

YOLŲU MATHA – ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

YOLŲU MATHA	ENGLISH
bäru	crocodile
bukmak	everyone
buŋgul	dance
dhäwu	story
dhimurru	east wind
dirramu	men
djäma	work
galtha rom	both-ways learning workshop
manikay	songs
merri	string
miyalk	women
ŋäpaki	people other than YolŲu
ŋatha	food
ŋilimurru bukmak djäka wäŋawu	all of us together looking after Country
rom	law and/or belief
wäŋa waŋaŋu	landowners
yapa	sister
wäwa	brother

DESIGNATED RECREATION AREAS AND PLACE NAMES

Baŋambarrŋa	Rainbow Cliff	Maŋaŋgaymi	Scout Camp
Bariŋura	Little Bondi	Nhulun	Mount Saunders
Binydjarrŋa	Daliwuy Bay	Dumuy	Turtle Beach
Dhamitjinya	East Woody Island	Waŋuwuy	Cape Arnhem
Dharrpamiwuy	Middle Beach	– Ränjura	– Caves Beach
Gaḡalathami	Town Beach	– Gayŋaḡa	– Twin Eagles
Gälaru	East Woody Beach	– Łurrukurru	– Oyster Beach
Gaŋami	Wonga Creek	Wathawuy	Latram River and Goanna Lagoon
Ganinyara	Granite Islands	Wirrwawuy	Cape Wirrwawuy
Gapuru	Memorial Park		
Garanhan	Macassan Beach		
Gumuniya	Buffalo Creek		
Guwatjurumurru	Giddy River		
Łombuy	Crocodile Creek		





DHIMURRU

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

PO Box 1551
Nhulunbuy NT 0881

Ph: 08 8987 2700
Fax: 08 8987 3224
Email: permits@dhimurru.com.au
Web: www.dhimurru.com.au

