Dhimurru

Yolŋuwu Mo<u>n</u>uk Gapu Wäŋa IPA Sea Country Management Plan 2013-2015

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Suggested citation
Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation 2013.
Dhimurru IPA Sea Country Management Plan 2013 to 2015. Published by Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation, Nhulunbuy, Northern Territory.

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Preface

In 2006 we launched the Yolŋuwu Mo<u>n</u>uk Gapu Wäŋa Sea Country Plan. It is a visionary plan which aims to clearly express our aspiration to achieve better engagement in the management of sea country and the ways in which collaborative organisations can help to achieve this goal. The plan has been widely accepted and has been instrumental in guiding our management of sea country for the past seven years. Since 2009 we have been working towards incorporating our sea country into the Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) to facilitate integrated management of our land and sea, consistent with Traditional Owners' holistic vision of country outlined in the Yolŋuwu Mo<u>n</u>uk Gapu Wäŋa Sea Country Plan. Through extensive consultations with Traditional Owners and collaboration with government agencies and marine resource users we have now prepared this Dhimurru IPA Sea Country Management Plan.

In April 2013, we were very proud and excited to dedicate an extension to our IPA to include a further 450,000ha of sea country, as well as some additional land area. This dedication was made at the memorial service of one of our founding members, past Senior Cultural Advisor and very good friend Mr Dj Yunupiŋu. It was fitting that his service was considered an appropriate platform at which Mr Wurrulŋa Marika, Dhimurru's Managing Director said:

> "*We have great pleasure in honouring our old friend, mentor, leader, and founding member Mr Yunupiŋu. On this important and solemn occasion we are dedicating our manbuyŋa ga rulyapa, our sea country, as part of the Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area. This announcement honours the old man's vision of a unified land and sea protected area. It is hoped that ultimately these initiatives will help all of us to look after sea country sustainably. Dhimurru's founders' vision is to ensure that the IPA will be managed such that Yolŋu and Ḏapaki will be able to enjoy and use their country in the future just as they do today.*"

As always, we are very humbled by the support, patience and advice of our collaborators, advisors and friends. All of the collaborating organisations have whole heartedly supported the concept of a multi-stakeholder governance framework through which we can all care for sea country. The Waŋa Wataŋu (Senior Traditional Owners and Custodians) are our ultimate guide, they are the ones who set our strategic direction and ensure we are travelling on the right path. Other non-Yolŋu contributors, experts and advisors who have had critical input include Dr Dermot Smyth the author of this plan, Dr Kiki Dethmers, Prof Nancy Williams, Mr Daniel Leo and Mr Greg Wearne, and among the Dhimurru staff Ms Vanessa Drysdale who has managed this project, Mr Steve Roeger, Mr Wurrulŋa Marika and Ms Lisa Roeger.

We look forward to working bukmak (together) to däkami (care for) our sea country, to nurture and support the rich cultural landscape and ensure its health and resilience is maintained into the future so our children can continue to gain physical and spiritual nourishment from the country in the same way we have done forever.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFMA	Australian Fisheries Management Authority
ALR(NT) Act	Aboriginal Land Right (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth)
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
Cth	Commonwealth
DLRM	Northern Territory Department of Land Resource Management
EPBC Act	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth)
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
JCU	James Cook University
NPF	Northern Prawn Fishery
NT	Northern Territory
SEWPaC	Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

Notes on Yolŋu Orthography

The Plan of Management seeks to conform with the current Yolŋu (Aboriginal) orthography. Yolŋu words contain a number of letters and combinations that will be unfamiliar to many people reading this document. The following notes are intended to assist newcomers in the correct pronunciation of these words.

ŋ	pronounced like the 'ng' in ring
ng	pronounce the 'n' and the 'g' separately
th, nh, dh	don't pronounce the 'h' but place the tip of the tongue between the front teeth to pronounce the 'd', 't' or 'n'
r, d, n, l, t	pronounced with the tip of the tongue backwards toward the roof of the mouth
rr	pronounced by rolling the 'r' or allowing the tongue to flap during pronunciation
ny	don't pronounce the 'y', but place the tip of the tongue behind the bottom teeth to pronounce the 'n'
dj, tj	don't pronounce the 'j', and pronounce the 'd' or 't' with the tongue in the same position as for 'ny' above
ä (long)	pronounced like the 'a' in father
a (short)	pronounced like the 'o' in mother
e (long)	pronounced like the 'ee' in meet
i (short)	pronounced like the 'i' in hit
o (long)	pronounced like the “aw' in dawn
u (short)	pronounced like the 'u' in put

Dhimurru Vision Statement

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 Dadayŋa 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 Märi-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 work 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.”

The vision statement has been adapted from the Vision Statement in the Dhimurru IPA Plan of Management 2008-2015

Guiding Principles for Dhimurru IPA Management

Through the wisdom of our Elders, the direction set by the Dhimurru Board and Executive and through the planning and management of our Rangers in collaboration with relevant agencies we are committed to the following principles in managing the sea country component of Dhimurru IPA:

- Yolŋu control and empowerment – Yolŋu make management decisions, and activities should maximise opportunities for Yolŋu as active participants in the management of their country in the IPA;
- Respect for Yolŋu values – there are extensive and all-embracing values of all sites in the IPA for Yolŋu and the preservation of these sites is a primary focus of management;
- Conservation and enhancement of 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;
- Both-ways management – maximising opportunities for Yolŋu to devise strategies through a mutual investigation of Ɔapaki and Yolŋu systems of knowledge;
- Continued development of collaborative relationships in programs and research to support sustainable use and management of Yolŋu land and seas. Cooperative and respectful partnerships with government and independent agencies will be sought by Dhimurru;
- Ɔapaki recreation values – the goal of visitor management will be to encourage an appreciation of the cultural and natural values of the IPA by Ɔapaki, to promote an enjoyable experience and to ensure minimal environmental impact;
- Caring for Dhuwa and Yirritja clan estates holistically in Dhimurru land and sea country consistent with our cultural values, rights, practices, and obligations;
- Protecting marine sacred sites and song cycles that contain our creation stories and which link our land and sea environments together;
- Maintaining healthy marine ecosystems in which all species and associated cultural values can thrive;
- Ensuring that dugong, turtles, fish, and other culturally and economically important species are harvested sustainably for the generations to come;
- Ensuring that Yolŋu rights, interests and responsibilities in sea country are recognised and respected, together with the rights and responsibilities of other groups and organisations with a legitimate interest in our sea country and its resources;
- Ensuring that Yolŋu knowledge and practices are maintained and transmitted from one generation to the next;
- Applying Yolŋu knowledge and practices to the management of our sea country;
- Developing strong relationships with government agencies, research organisations and resource users to our mutual benefit; and
- Ensuring best practice management of our sea country long into the future.

Purpose of this Management Plan

The purpose of this Management Plan is to:

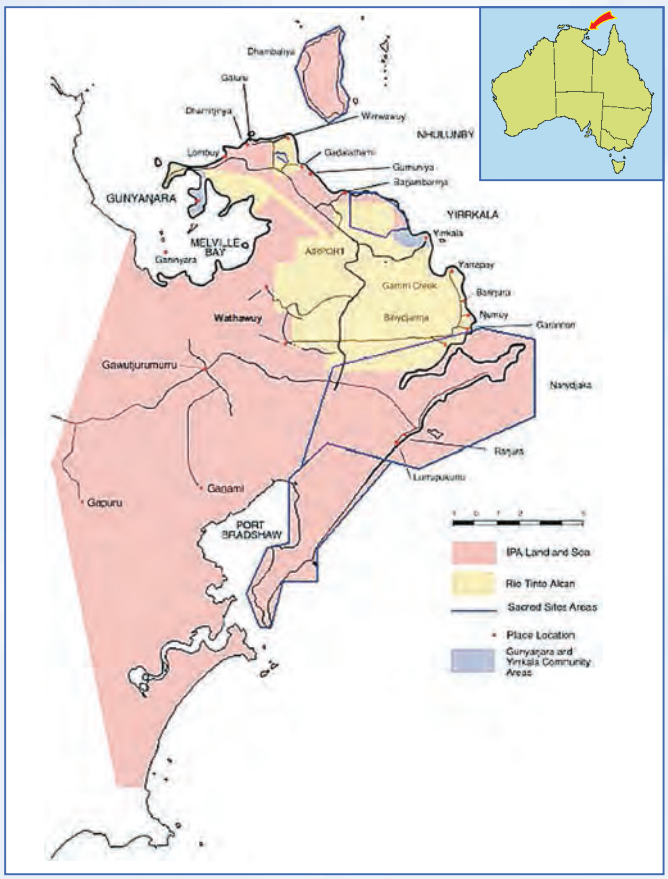
- Explain why and how additional Yolŋu sea country has been added to the Dhimurru IPA;
- Outline the collaborative governance and management arrangements for the expanded IPA;
- Summarise the cultural and natural values of sea country within the IPA;
- Set out management priorities for the next three years until an integrated land and sea IPA Management Plan is developed in 2015 following the expiry of the current IPA Plan of Management (2008-2015)[1].

[1] http://www.dhimurru.com.au/management-plans.html

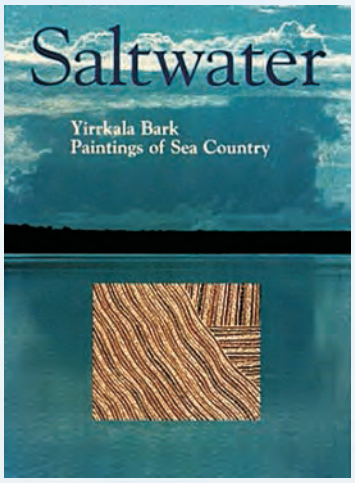
Part 1 – Introduction

Background

When Dhimurru IPA was declared in 2000 it comprised an area of approximately 101,000 ha surrounding Nhulunbuy in north-east Arnhem Land, including 9,000 ha of sea country – the first land/sea IPA in Australia. The adjacent map shows the area of land and sea included in the 2000 IPA declaration, with areas registered as marine sacred sites through the *Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989* (NT) shown in blue outline.



Yolŋu Traditional Owners have always regarded the marine environments off northeast Arnhem Land as part of our customary estates. For many years Dhimurru Rangers have engaged in extensive sea country management beyond the areas registered as sacred sites including through removal of ghost nets and other marine debris, marine turtle research, and regular sea country patrols.



In the late 1990s Yolŋu artists created a collection of paintings to communicate the cultural, spiritual, and economic importance of sea country to the wider Australian public. The collection was taken on a national tour to galleries in Canberra, Perth, Sydney, Melbourne, and Alice Springs and the paintings were made available in book form as *Saltwater – Yirrkala Bark Paintings of Sea Country*[2]. The sea country art works (see two examples next page) were created and exhibited as a statement of Yolŋu rights to the sea, in response to increasing use of their sea country and marine resources by commercial and recreational fishers without any Traditional Owner formal involvement in sea country management at that time.

The paintings depict the saltwater country of the Yolŋu. They reveal saltwater in many states, showing qualities of depth, surface and the mix which shroud their secrets: the sacred and often dangerous land just below the surface, the totemic life forms that inhabit these waters and the profound fonts in the deepest waters. The surface depicts the Ancestral Beings – instigators and adventurers in canoes. Their presence and their deeds are also shown as icons which float from estate to estate, thus connecting the people in organised systems of ownership and rite to the country. When this connection is established, the giant clouds on the horizon take up the water, to return as fresh water (rain) over the sea, over the coast, over the land, into the rivers which run to meet the coast, to wash in the tides before mixing with the currents to complete the cycle. All this water – both fresh and salt, both in the land and saltwater country – is sacred. The movement of these waters is enacted in ritual dance and narrated in the sacred song cycles. The life force for the Yolŋu, the essence of the Yolŋu and Ancestors themselves, is carried in these waters and held in reservoirs at special locations in clan estates[3].

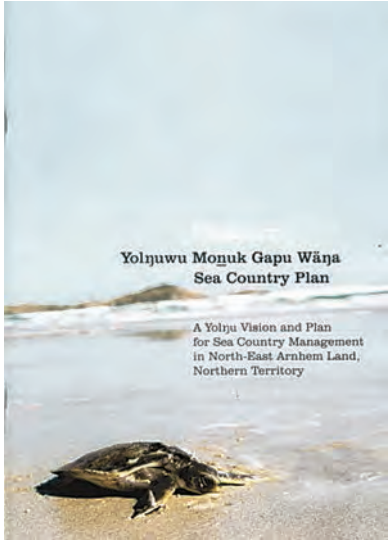
[2] Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre 1999. *Saltwater – Yirrkala Bark Paintings of Sea Country*. Jennifer Isaacs Publishing, Sydney.

[3] Andrew Blake, Art Coordinator, Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre – preface to *Saltwater – Yirrkala Bark Paintings of Sea Country*.

'Lamamirri Monuk' by Deturru Yunupiŋu

'Rirratjiŋu Dawu' by Banduk Marika

In 2006 Dhimurru released *Yolŋuwu Monuk Gapu Wäŋa Plan of Management*[4], which outlines Traditional Owners' cultural connections and obligations to sea country in marine and coastal areas adjacent to the Dhimurru IPA. The purpose of this document was to translate Yolŋu sea rights, which had been explained previously through the art collection, into a manifesto for Yolŋu engagement in managing sea country – through asserting and applying Yolŋu knowledge and practices and through collaboration with government agencies and others with an interest in Yolŋu sea country.



The following extracts from *Yolŋuwu Monuk Gapu Plan of Management* shows its importance as the foundational document for managing the sea country component of the expanded Dhimurru IPA.

Yolŋu sea country management aims

1. *Have our ownership, rights and responsibilities respected, with recognition of the contribution our people have made in the past and continue to make to the custody, stewardship, and management of sea country - acknowledging it is not our customary use of sea country that threatens the well-being and sustainability of marine resources.*
2. *Continue to make sure we can exercise our customary care and management over our sea country by continuing to support the management activities already undertaken by Dhimurru.*
3. *Engage in a constructive way with government and stakeholders to increase recognition of our customary management systems through reform to policy and legislation, including an exploration of appropriate zoning arrangements which combines the best of Yolŋu and non-Yolŋu sustainable sea country management practices.*
4. *Together with our IPA partners, develop sound regulations and protocols for use of our sea country that assist visitors and other users to do so safely and sustainably within a combined framework of Yolŋu and non-Indigenous management and governance arrangements.*
5. *Extend and develop our role as real partners in monitoring and research on marine creatures and their habitats. This includes both customary and contemporary scientific knowledge and involves careful cooperative management planning at subregional, regional and state levels.*
6. *Establish Dhimurru as real partners in monitoring, surveillance and enforcement concerning illegal fishing, illegal entry, breaches of Quarantine and Customs laws, and the protection of sacred sites.*
7. *Build Dhimurru's capacity to work on our sea country by having well trained, well-resourced Sea Rangers. This is how we can play our part in bringing customary Yolŋu knowledge and skills together with contemporary knowledge and skills in the management of our sea country.*
8. *Help ensure the environmental impacts from bauxite mining, refining, shipping, aquaculture, commercial and recreational fishing, tourism and other development activities are environmentally sustainable and the social impacts on our people are considered.*
9. *Investigate ongoing support and recurrent, stable funding from government agencies, including exploration of 'whole of government' models which would simplify the current agency by agency and program based arrangements.*

[4]Available at
http://www.dhimurru.com.au/management-plans.html

Understanding Yolŋu Sea Country

Ancestral Spirit Beings of the Dhuwa and Yirritja clans created us and the known world – the celestial bodies, land, sea, living plants and animals. The journeys of these ancestral creators crisscrossed the sea and the land shaping the land and seascape and breathing life into the living things that inhabit it. The origins of these ancestral beings, their behaviour as they crossed the landscape, their meetings with other ancestral beings and their resting places have marked our sea and landscape with sites of great significance to us. From these ancestral journeys and the network of important sites created across the land and sea, we gain our names, our identity and our way of life.

We call up the names we have for important places in our sea country for different reasons and purposes – some are deep and secret. We celebrate and respect these creation journeys with their network of important sites in everyday life and in more serious ceremonial rituals. They link us to each other and to our world, they connect us to our sea country and everything within it. Our stories do not work alone; we are endowed with art, dance, song, and deep logics of kinship. We weave together the narratives of ancestral beings, important and sacred sites and creation activities across the lands of inter-related estate owning and language groups. All this gives us a tradition of politics, history, science, and guidance on how to live in harmony with our land and sea. Warramiri and Golumala clan leaders describe our special connection to sea country this way:

Manbuynga ga Rulyapa are two currents that come together to form the seas off our homelands. In the course of their journey through and under the water they separate and then come together again. Within these waters are our sacred totems, song cycles, ceremonies and the pathways of creation beings. Responsibility for them is apportioned throughout our community.

The Arafura Sea, or as Yolŋu call it, Manbuynga ga Rulyapa, dominates our lives. More of our totems come from the sea than from the land; sacred sites, although they have been underwater for thousands of years now, are still sung about; our ceremonial dances are about the sea and many of our creation spirits began in the sea. And as most of our food traditionally comes from the sea, both spiritually and physically the well-being of the sea has always been and remains crucial to our wellbeing.

To gain a better understanding of Yolŋu cultural beliefs, knowledge, rights, practices, and obligations about sea country, readers of this IPA Sea Country Management Plan are strongly encouraged to also read *Saltwater – Yirrkala Bark Paintings of Sea Country* and *Yolŋuwu Monuk Gapu Plan of Management.*

In 2009 Dhimurru released the *Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area Cultural Heritage Management Plan 2009-2015*[5], which focuses on the identification, conservation and sustainable management of the Indigenous cultural heritage resources in the Gove Peninsula region with specific focus on the Dhimurru IPA The Cultural Heritage Management Plan aims to significantly reduce the risk of harm to Indigenous cultural heritage places in the Dhimurru IPA through a range of conservation and management practices.

The Cultural Heritage Management Plan takes a cultural landscape approach to Indigenous cultural heritage, recognising that each heritage site is linked to people, country and culture across land and sea. This is an important companion document to the Dhimurru IPA Sea Country Management Plan with respect to management of cultural sites and other cultural values in the sea and their connections to land and people through song cycles, stories, ceremonies, and other cultural practices.

Developing the IPA extension proposal

Dhimurru has undertaken extensive consultations with Traditional Owners about the management of their sea country and in 2010 commissioned research about the cultural and natural values, including the location of sea country clan estates. A key research tool in this project was the Marxan[6] conservation planning program to assist in processing the large amount of spatial and other data.

A key outcome of these consultations and research was confirmation by Traditional Owners that they wanted additional sea country included in Dhimurru IPA. This is both an expression of confidence in the IPA as a mechanism to discharge their responsibility to care for their sea country estates, and an affirmation of the obligation to manage their land and sea together – consistent with their holistic view of country.

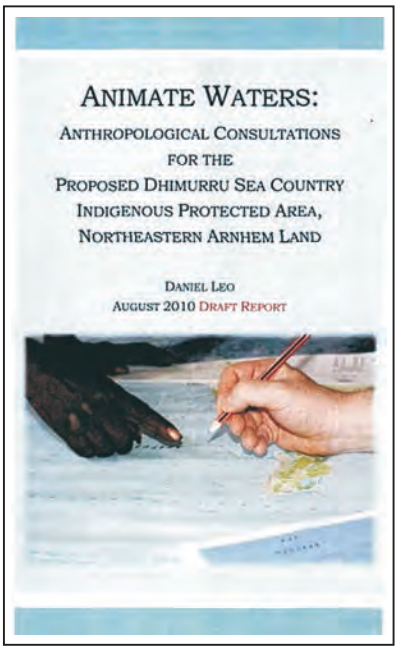
Traditional Owners also expressed their views about how much sea country should be incorporated into the IPA and concluded that the new seaward boundary of the IPA should be located 40km from the coast. This boundary is regarded as containing many of the marine areas of significance to Yolŋu while also being within the capacity of Dhimurru Rangers, in collaboration with their collaborating agencies, to effectively monitor and manage. Traditional Owners stressed, however, that the new IPA boundary does not represent the total extent of their sea country interests, which extend much further out to sea.

Traditional Owners also recommended that the landward boundary of the IPA be extended inland to include complete river catchments, enabling whole of catchment management within the IPA.

Consultations on the expanded IPA boundaries also included neighbouring Traditional Owner groups to the north and south of Dhimurru IPA, who as a result expressed their support for the new IPA boundaries.

The outcome of research and consultations described above were reported in:

Animate Waters: Anthropological Consultations for the proposed Dhimurru Sea Country Indigenous Protected Area, Northeastern Arnhem Land by Daniel Leo.



[5]Available at http://www.dhimurru.com.au/management-plans.html
[6]http://www.uq.edu.au/marxan/

Consultations with government agencies and other interested parties

Through the planning processes and publications referred previously, government agencies and other interested parties have long been aware of Yolŋu aspirations to incorporate additional sea country into Dhimurru IPA. In 2012 separate consultations were held with each of the following agencies and organisations to set out the rationale and timeline for achieving the expanded IPA and to extend an invitation for these agencies and organisations to participate in the planning process:

Australian Government

- Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
- Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Agriculture
- Australian Fisheries Management Authority
- Australian Customs and Border Security Service
- Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO)

Northern Territory Government

- Department of Land Resource Management
- Parks and Wildlife Commission of the Northern Territory
- Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries

Other relevant organisations

- Northern Land Council
- Northern Territory Seafood Council[7]
- Amateur Fishermen's Association of the NT (AFANT)
- NPF Industry Pty Ltd[8]
- Nhulunbuy Regional Sport Fishing Club

The one-on-one consultations, followed by a Planning Forum at Nhulunbuy in March 2013 to which all the above organisations where invited, provided opportunities to discuss a range of issues relating to the proposal to include additional sea country into Dhimurru IPA, including:

- Traditional Owners' aspirations for the expanded IPA;
- Implications for commercial and recreational fishers;
- Implications for government environmental and resource agencies;
- Collaborative governance and management arrangements;
- Funding and resourcing; and
- Recognition of the expanded IPA.

Comments and suggestions from the individual consultations, the Planning Forum, and feedback on the Draft Dhimurru IPA Sea Country Management Plan have been taken into account in the development of this document.

[7]Representative organisation for NT seafood businesses (including wild harvest fishers, aquaculture and trader/processors)

[8]Representative organisations for the Northern Prawn Fishery licence-holders

Current Dhimurru Sea Country Management and Research Capacity

From the establishment of the IPA in 2000, Dhimurru has steadily developed its sea country management, monitoring, and research capacity to the point that the organisation now has the skills and resources, in collaboration with collaborating agencies, to implement the Dhimurru IPA Sea Country Management Plan. A summary of Dhimurru's sea country capacity and activities is provided below.

Dhimurru Sea Rangers Capacity

Vehicles:

- Fleet of well serviced Toyota 4wds
- Isuzu truck
- Forklift
- Tractor

Vessels:

- 7.5m Ocean Cylinder vessel "Sea Ranger 1" in 2C survey
- 3m inflatable Zodiac with 15hp outboard.
- Various small tinnies.

Infrastructure:

- Undercover storage facilities for vessels and vehicles.
- Office complex including board room, training room, shed, and short stay accommodation.

Rangers/staff:

- Three fully qualified Coxswains
- Three restricted Coxswains
- Three Rangers with Certificate II Fisheries Compliance
- All Rangers conversant with CyberTracker technology
- Suite of Rangers with first aid certification and skilled to act as deck-hands on vessels.
- Facilitator dedicated to Sea Country project co-ordination.

Sea Country Activities

Fisheries:

- Compliance patrols
- Snapper research

Ghost Nets:

- Marine Debris clean-ups
- Collection of data
- Media and other PR

Biodiversity research:

- Dolphins (JCU)
- Seagrass (in development)
- Habitat mapping (DLRM)
- Clams (DLRM)
- Turtles (DLRM)

Sacred sites and heritage:

- Install buoyage at sacred sites in the sea.

Training:

- Coxswain
- First Aid
- Fisheries Compliance
- Conservation Land Management
- Radio telephony

Other:

- Sea patrols
- Vessel maintenance
- In house training
- School talks/education
- Media
- Host Ranger exchanges
- Attend conferences and workshops

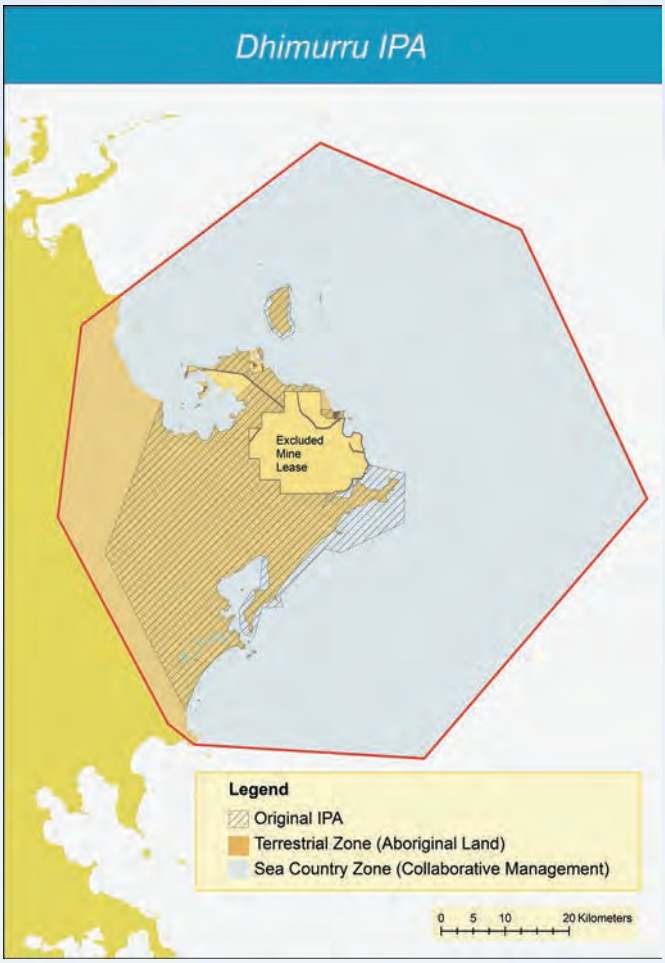
Part 2 – The Expanded Dhimurru IPA

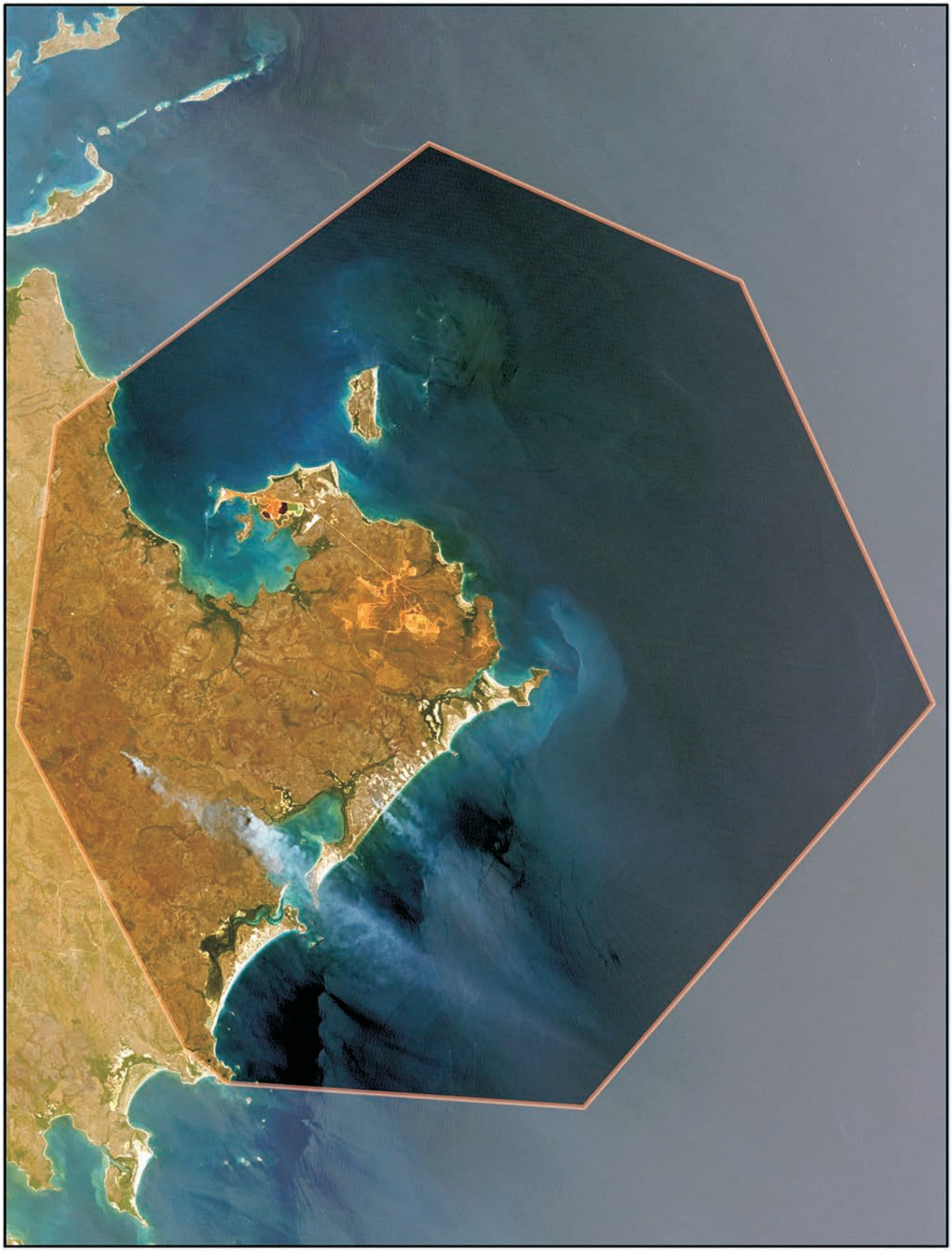
Yolŋu Traditional Owners established the expanded Dhimurru IPA in April 2013 in a dedication announcement at a Memorial honouring one of Dhimurru's founding members. Representatives of the Commonwealth and Northern Territory Governments were invited to formally recognise these additional land and sea areas as part of Dhimurru IPA at a ceremony to launch this Plan of Management during the World Indigenous Network Conference in Darwin on 26 May 2013.

The new boundaries of the expanded Dhimurru IPA are shown in the adjacent map. As the map indicates, the expanded Dhimurru IPA is divided into two management zones:

- The Terrestrial Zone, comprising Aboriginal Land where Yolŋu Traditional Owners have sole responsibility for management; and
- The Sea Country Zone, which will be managed through collaboration of Dhimurru, government agencies, and marine resource users.

An aerial photo view of the expanded Dhimurru IPA is shown on the next page.





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Dhimurru Proposed

1:700,000

0 2.5 5 10 Km

Map Grid of Australia Zone 53 (GDA94)

N

2013-284

Satellite view of expanded Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area

What the expanded IPA means

The inclusion of additional marine areas in Dhimurru IPA is consistent with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) definition of a protected area, which states that a protected area is:

> "*A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through* ***legal or other effective means,*** *to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values".*

In September 2012 the IUCN released new guidelines for the establishment of protected areas in the sea in which Dhimurru IPA is listed as an example of how the term "legal and other effective means" can be applied to a protected area in the sea established by an Indigenous group. A more detailed explanation of how the proposed expanded Dhimurru IPA complies with the IUCN protected area definition is provided in Appendix 1.

IUCN Protected Area Category V (Protected Landscape/Seascape)

The IUCN Protected Area Guidelines provide for each protected area to be allocated to one or more of six categories. All categories meet the IUCN protected area definition and any category can exist under any governance type and vice versa. IPAs in Australia are typically allocated to either Category V (Protected Landscape/Seascape) or Category VI (Sustainable Use of Natural Resources).

When Dhimurru IPA was declared in 2000 it was allocated to Category V and the expanded IPA will remain in this Category. A detailed explanation of how IUCN protected area Category V applies to the expanded Dhimurru IPA is provided in Appendix 2.

Impact on government agencies and others with interests in this sea country

Dedication of additional sea country as part of Dhimurru IPA means a continuation of the IPA arrangements over land and sea that have worked well since 2000, over an expanded area of sea country with a more inclusive collaborative governance and management framework. It means that Traditional Owners are recognised as custodians of sea country and are committed to protecting, caring for, and sustainably using their land and sea country through:

- Traditional law and practices;
- Sea country patrols, research and monitoring;
- Negotiation and collaboration with government agencies; and
- Negotiation and collaboration with commercial and recreational fishers.

Dedication of the additional area of sea country as part of Dhimurru IPA is a non-legal process. It does not impact on any current authorities, licences, access rights, or use rights. The IPA does not give Traditional Owners authority to restrict access to sea country, close fishing grounds, change bag limits, change commercial fishing boundaries/seasons or limit tourism operations. Any changes to current arrangements would occur in the future only through negotiation and agreement using existing legislation and interested parties' participation processes. The collaborative governance and management arrangements associated with the expanded IPA complement and enhance these existing arrangements by providing a forum for communication and collaboration between Traditional Owners, government agencies, and relevant others in the management of sea country where no such forum previously existed.

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[9] Dudley, N. (ed.) 2008. *Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland.*

[10] Day J., Dudley N., Hockings M., Holmes G., Laffoley D., Stolton S. & S. Wells 2012. *Guidelines for applying the IUCN Protected Area Management Categories to Marine Protected Areas.* Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No.19 Guidelines. IUCN Gland, Switzerland.

Governance and Management

Dhimurru seeks to develop open, transparent, and effective collaborative governance of sea country through the IPA Advisory Group. Membership of the IPA Advisory Group will be open to all key government agencies and representative organisations with an interest in Dhimurru IPA; membership may change over time in response to emerging issues and priorities.

Each organisation brings to the IPA governance table their own "backpack" containing their unique combination of commitment, authority, responsibility, and capacity to contribute to achieving the goals of the IPA. The combined contents of the respective governance "backpacks" comprise the package of "legal and other effective means" that have been brought together to achieve effective governance and management of the expanded Dhimurru IPA. The contents of this governance package is summarised in Appendix 3.

The proposed governance arrangement is an expanded version of the existing IPA Advisory Group that has contributed effectively to the management of Dhimurru IPA since its inception in 2000. It is intended to convene meetings of the IPA Advisory Group at least twice a year, recognising that not all Advisory Group members will necessarily participate in every meeting, depending on agenda priorities, competing demands and funding constraints.

With respect to management of the Sea Country Zone, the role of the Advisory Group is to provide a forum for advice, concerns, and information to be shared among all Advisory Group members to achieve the IPA goals and objectives through collaborative and individual efforts. Management of the Terrestrial Zone of the IPA will continue to be the sole responsibility of Traditional Owners, supported by Dhimurru Rangers, with input from the Advisory Group as appropriate.

Sea Country Goals

The goals for the sea country component of the extended Dhimurru IPA outlined below reflect the outcomes of discussions during the planning process – especially the Planning Forum held in March 2013. Though these goals focus specifically on sea country, they are clearly linked to the management of the terrestrial component of the IPA. These linkages will be further developed when the integrated, whole-of-IPA Management Plan is prepared in 2015.

Sea Country Goal 1:
Conservation of natural and cultural values of Dhimurru IPA

Sea Country Goal 2:
Sustainable Indigenous, commercial, and recreational use of Dhimurru IPA

Objectives and Actions/Targets to achieve these goals are outlined in Part 3 of this Management Plan.

Collaboration with the Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve

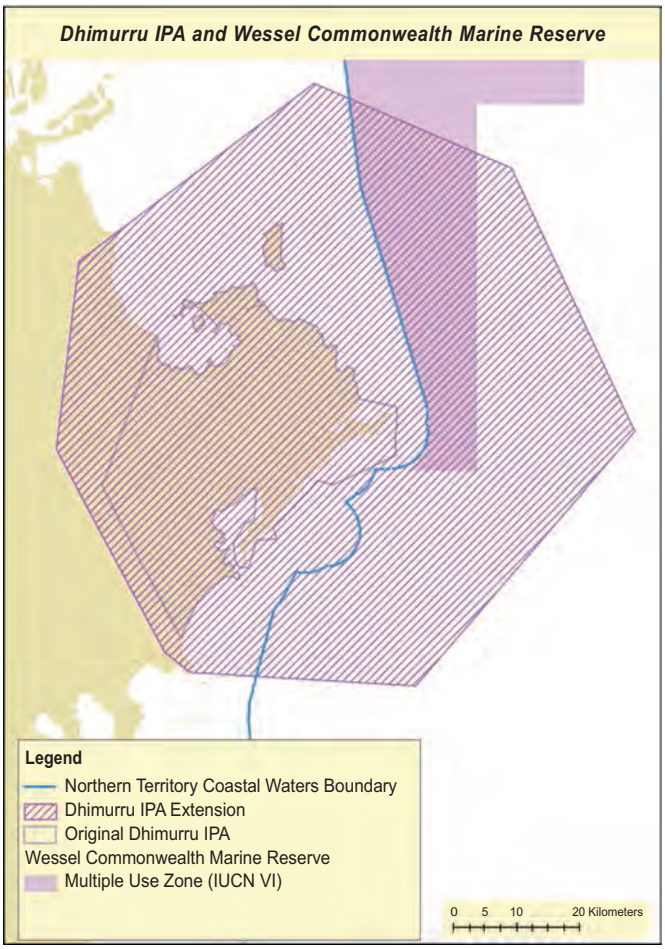
The Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve is situated to the east of Wessel Islands and extends south to offshore from Cape Arnhem overlapping with the expanded Dhimurru IPA (see map below). The 5,908 km^2 Marine Reserve has been divided into two zones, each with their separate IUCN protected area category:

- Marine National Park Zone - 1632 km^2 (IUCN Category II);
- Multiple use Zone - 4276 km^2 (IUCN Category VI)

The major conservation values of the Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve are:

- Important resting area for turtles between egg laying (inter-nesting area), for the following threatened species:
  - flatback turtle
  - green turtle
  - hawksbill turtle
  - olive ridley turtle
- Important foraging habitat for breeding aggregations of the:
  - migratory common noddy
  - migratory roseate tern
  - listed marine crested tern
- Examples of the ecosystems of the Northern Shelf Province (including the Arafura, Arnhem–Wessel, and Carpentaria meso-scale bioregions)
- Includes one key ecological feature:
  - Gulf of Carpentaria basin (biodiversity; aggregations of marine life).

The overlap of the southern portion of the Multiple Use Zone with the extended Dhimurru IPA provides opportunities for collaboration between Dhimurru and government agencies in the management of both the IPA and the Commonwealth Marine Reserve.



In the area of overlap of the Dhimurru IPA sea country extension and the Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve (see adjacent map) there are two complementary IUCN protected area designations:

- ***Dhimurru IPA***:
  Category V
  (Protected Landscape/Seascape);
- ***Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve***:
  Category VI
  (Sustainable Use of Natural Resources).

The primary objective of an IUCN Category VI protected area is:

> *To protect natural ecosystems and use natural resources sustainably, when conservation and sustainable use can be mutually beneficial.*[11]

While this designation is compatible with the goals of Dhimurru IPA, Traditional Owners are committed to retaining the Category V designation for the entire IPA, including the area of overlap with the Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve in order to respect their holistic view of land and sea country and to highlight the interdependence of people, culture and environment that is central to the Category V designation. There will be an opportunity to review the designation of the Commonwealth Marine Reserve and potentially re-assign the area of overlap with the IPA to Category V. There is scope for this to be achieved under provisions of section 367 (2) of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* 1999 (Cth) which states:

> *A management plan for a reserve may divide the reserve into zones and assign each zone to an IUCN category (whether or not a Proclamation has assigned the reserve or each zone of the reserve to that IUCN category). The category to which a zone is assigned may differ from the category to which the reserve is assigned.*[12]

The Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve is part of the North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network comprising eight Marine Reserves in Commonwealth waters across northern Australia (see map next page) which were proclaimed as part of a national network of Commonwealth Marine Reserves in November 2012. The final management plan for the North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network was approved by the Minister in March 2013 and will come into effect in July 2014. The North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network Management Plan 2014-24 is a strategic document that identifies core values across the network as well as key strategies that will be developed to meet the conservation and sustainable use goals of each Reserve.

Strategy 6 of the North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network Management Plan focuses on support for the involvement of Indigenous people in the management of Commonwealth Marine Reserves. This Strategy acknowledges that Indigenous peoples of northern Australia:

- Have been sustainably using and managing their sea country, including areas now included within Commonwealth Marine Reserves, for thousands of years;
- Recognise and maintain links to cultural places on islands or that are now submerged often long distances out to sea;
- Continue to rely on coastal and marine environments and resources for cultural identity, health and wellbeing, and economic activities;
- Belong to discrete clan estates and language groups that occupy, or traditionally occupied, discrete areas, including sea country; and
- Have established Indigenous Ranger Services that play a significant role in the management of coastal and marine resources, including monitoring of the coastline for illegal fishing, protection of native flora and fauna, quarantine surveillance, cleaning up of marine debris (including ghost nets) from beaches, and research into and protection of key species such as dugongs and marine turtles.

[11] *Guidelines for Applying the IUCN Protected Area Management Categories to Marine Protected Areas,* (p.23)

[12] http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/epabca1999588/s367.html

Strategy 6 of the North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network Management Plan proposes the following Actions to support Indigenous involvement in the management of the North Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network:

Action 1:

Drawing on the significant body of knowledge built as part of sea country planning and similar initiatives across Australia, and in consultation with relevant representative organisations, consolidate and communicate information about cultural values protected in the North Commonwealth marine reserves.

Action 2:

Identify, and where feasible support, opportunities for Indigenous people to engage in the management of sea country in Commonwealth marine reserves, for example through the delivery of critical management services, such as monitoring surveillance, compliance and research.

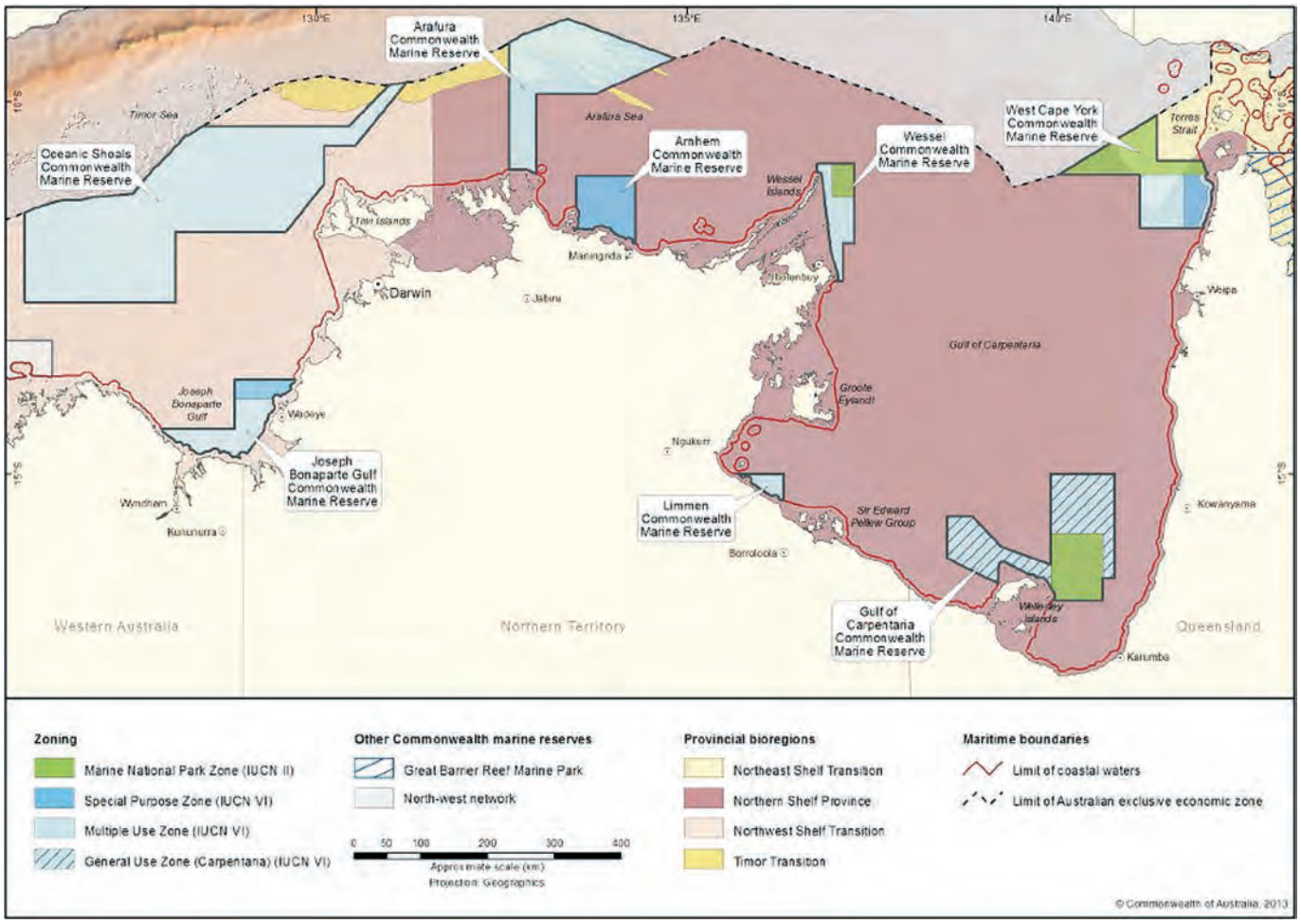
Action 3:

Build effective partnerships with Indigenous communities and organisations that have an interest in the Marine Reserves Network.

Action 4:

Comply with the requirements of the Native Title Act 1993.

The collaborative governance arrangements established to manage the expanded Dhimurru IPA, together with the capacity and resources of Dhimurru Rangers, provide the mechanisms to implement Strategy 6 with respect to the Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve – not only for the area of overlap with Dhimurru IPA but potentially also in other areas of the Marine Reserve. The complete text of Strategy 6 of the North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network Management Plan is provided in Appendix 4.



Map of North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network

Part 3 – Sea Country Values and Management Objectives

For Yolŋu Traditional Owners the overriding value of the Sea Country Zone of the IPA is as a cultural seascape in which terrestrial and marine components, cultural beliefs, practices and obligations as well as animals, plants, ecosystems, and ecological services are integrated in a holistic world view of "Country". For the purposes of this Management Plan, and to assist in addressing management issues and strategies, the following components of Dhimurru IPA cultural seascape are considered separately:

- Cultural values
- Natural values
- Commercial values
- Recreational values

Cultural Values[13]

Cultural values of the Dhimurru IPA seascape are held by Yolŋu Traditional Owners and have been transmitted through oral tradition, art, story-telling, music, dance, and ceremony from generation to generation over thousands of years. We choose to share some of these cultural values with our IPA collaborators and the wider Australian society through this Management Plan, the use of signage, and other interpretive information. Some of our sacred information, knowledge, and practices we choose to keep private in accordance with our cultural protocols about appropriate access to cultural knowledge both by Yolŋu people and by others. We are proud to share the following cultural information to assist our IPA collaborators and the wider community to better understand our relationship and obligation to our sea country and to better support our efforts to care for our sea country environments and resources that are important to us and to all Australians. The concepts and metaphors we share here are only indicative; it is beyond the scope of this document to explore the detail needed to fully understand or appreciate our relationships and obligations.

Yolŋu Rom[14]

Underlying all cultural values of the IPA are the five dimensions of Yolŋu Rom (law) depicted in the adjacent diagram. Our spirit ancestors created Yolŋu Rom as they sang, danced, talked, and left their tracks as they shaped our land and sea country. These Ancestral Beings changed their language as they arrived at each new territory, and named groups of land-affiliated Yolŋu, related to others along the same track. These ancestors belonged to clans of either the Dhuwa or the Yirritja moiety (see next page).

Yolŋu can tell from each other's language, art, song, and dance which land they belong to. Each has a history encoded in stories and songs in the language that belongs to that place. They link the land and people to totemic species - plants, animals, and physical phenomena. The ancestors also passed down sacred designs, some of which are secret, or have secret meanings. These designs have been painted on people's bodies, carved and painted on sacred objects, moulded into the earth, and more recently painted with ochres and acrylics on barks and canvases. The stories, songs, and art all specify both the differences and the connections among groups.

By dedicating and managing our sea country as part of the IPA we are committed to respecting, maintaining, and strengthening Yolŋu Rom through all the work we do on country, through our research and management collaboration and through the involvement of our young people in the important work of caring for country – land and sea together.

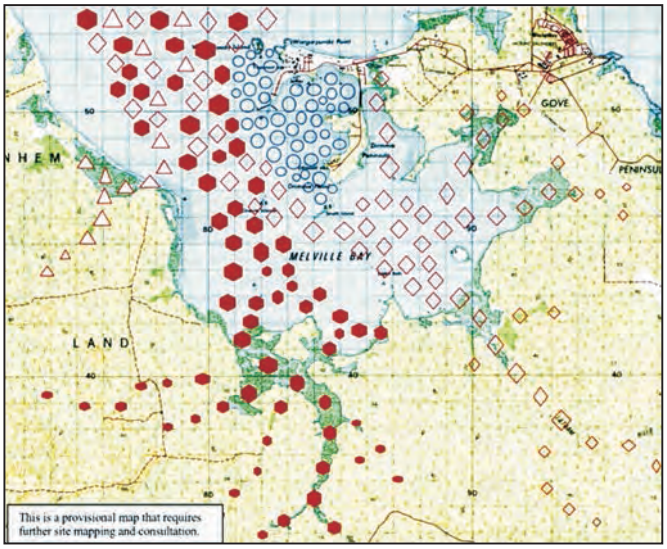
[13] For further information on Yolŋu cultural values please refer to publication listed under 'Further Reading' in the reference list on page 35.

[14] This summary of Yolŋu Rom is adapted from http://old-content.mulka.org/yidaki/dhawu/19rom.html

Dhuwa and Yirritja moieties

The entire Yolŋu social and physical world is composed of complementary opposites: the Dhuwa and Yirritja moieties[15] define relationships between individuals, clan estates, fauna, flora, land, and sea. A schematic and provisional view of moiety areas within the Dhimurru IPA is shown in the map on the right.

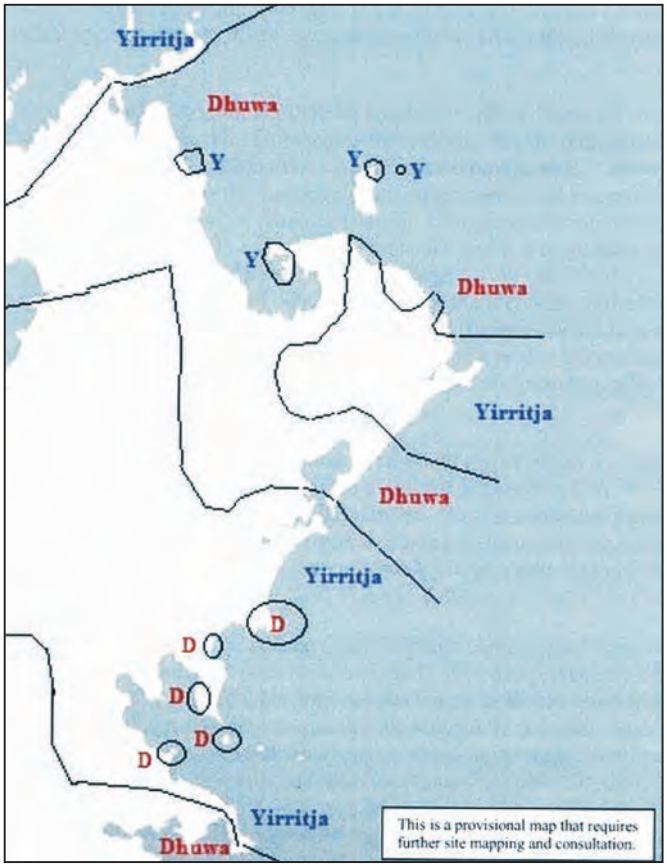
Similarly indicative, freshwater flowing from the land to the sea may also be seen as related to the moiety of the clan estate from which it flows (see map below). Further relationships are expressed through generational attachment and responsibility among others and cannot be portrayed in a two dimensional diagram.



Indicative map showing moieties associated With freshwater flows from clan estates

Yolŋu clan estates

All Yolŋu country is made up of clan estates which are either Dhuwa or Yirritja and are the particular responsibility of clan members who have inherited rights and obligations to that country. Coastal estates include areas of land and sea that are owned, used, and managed as a single cultural and geographic unit (see map below). Yolŋu people from neighbouring clans or elsewhere may have customary rights to access and use the resources of estates of other clans through protocols and agreements that link our people and country across the entire Yolŋu domain of north-east Arnhem Land.



Indicative map of some Yolŋu clan estates

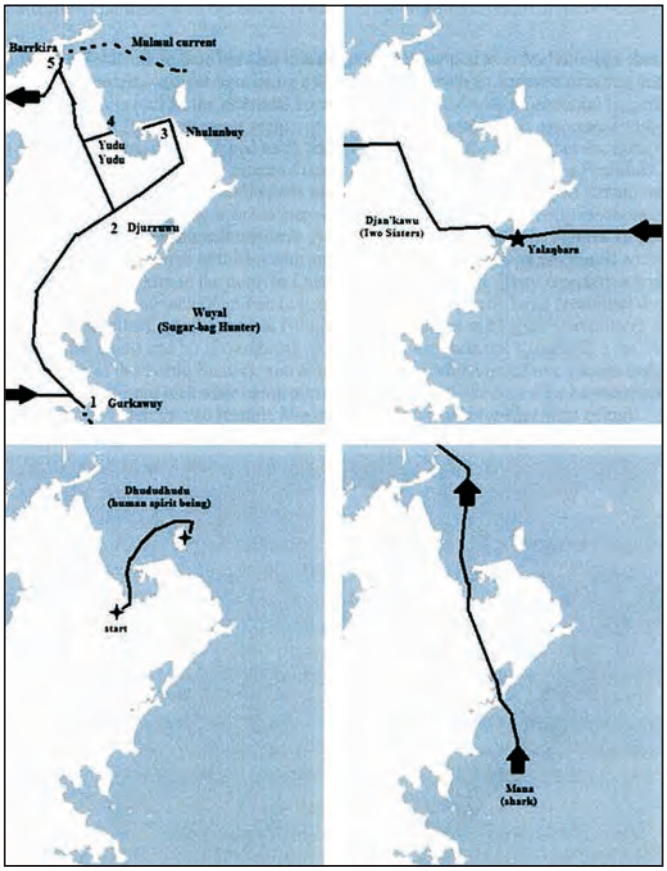
[15] ***Moiety*** means a division into two halves (from the French word ***moitié***, half)

Sacred sites and named places

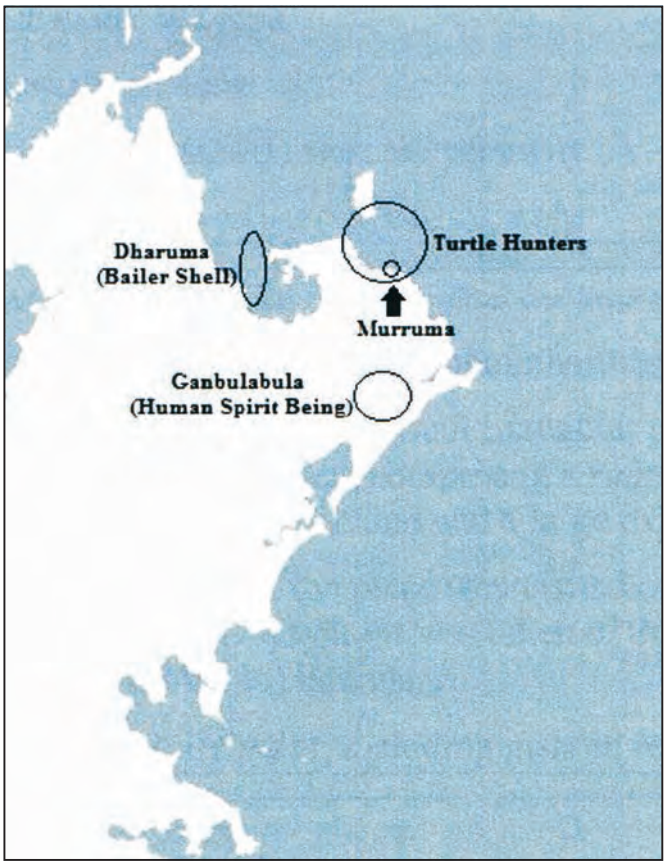
Yolŋu land and sea country is a rich mosaic of named places, many of which are sacred in Yolŋu culture, and some of which have been formally registered as sacred sites under the *Northern Territory Sacred Sites Act 1989* (NT). Many of these places have cultural associations relating to important events in the distant past when the landscape and seascape were shaped through the journeys and activities of Ancestral Beings, while others may be associated with more recent camping sites, hunting and gathering places, or ceremonial grounds. While discrete sites are named, the cultural significance of land and sea country is not limited to these places. Management of the Yolŋu cultural seascape needs to take sacred and other named places into account but should not be limited to those areas.

The indicative maps below point to the approximate location of sacred and other named places associated with four Ancestral or Spirit Beings in human form and others in the form of marine species.

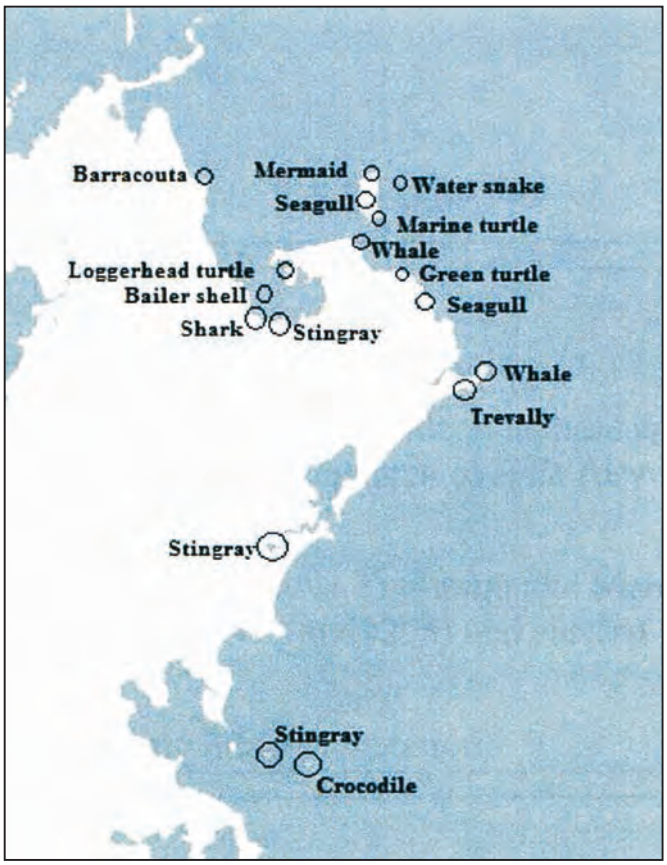
The paths taken by Ancestral or Spirit Beings on their creation journeys are recorded in a network of Tracks that lie across our country, joining land and sea and linking clans to their neighbours and to distant peoples.



Dreaming Tracks of four Ancestral and Spirit Beings: Wuyal, Djang'kawu, Dhododhudu, and Mäna



Areas associated with four Ancestral Beings



Array of sacred sites associated with Spirit Beings in the form of marine species

Culturally significant species

The marine and coastal environments contain many significant species whose cultural significance is additional to any biodiversity or ecological values they may have. These species are culturally significant for their association with creation stories, sacred sites, and ceremony; they are also significant as food sources, together with the cultural knowledge and practices associated with harvesting, sharing, preparing, and consuming the food.

Culturally significant marine species include, but are not limited to:

- flatback turtle
- green turtle
- hawksbill turtle
- olive ridley turtle
- dugong
- fish (many species)

Managing cultural values

For Yolŋu Traditional Owners, cultural values are key drivers for the management of the IPA. Because they are so intimately connected to the biodiversity and ecosystems of the IPA, caring for the Yolŋu cultural values complements the management of the natural values.

Objectives and Actions/Targets for managing the sea country cultural values of the IPA are set out in the table below. They will be progressed during the period 2013-2015, and then incorporated into the holistic land and sea IPA Management Plan from 2015 as appropriate.

Management Objectives	Actions/Targets	Priority
Better understand and conserve cultural values of sea country	• Continue to map and monitor sea country cultural sites; • Collaborate with Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority in registration of additional sacred site areas under Northern Territory Sacred Sites Act 1989 (NT), as directed by Yolŋu Traditional Owners; • Continue to collect and manage information on cultural values and apply this information to IPA management as appropriate.	Medium High High
Communicate sea country cultural values to IPA collaborators and the wider community	• Develop interpretive material to communicate Yolŋu sea country cultural values to IPA collaborators and the wider community as well as for educational materials and activities in schools and cultural camps. • Participate in the development of Codes of Conduct with professional and recreational fishers.	High High
Sustainably manage culturally significant species and places	• Consult with Traditional Owners on appropriate mechanisms to ensure sustainability of species utilised for traditional food sources and the conservation of culturally significant places.	Medium

Natural Values

Some information relevant to the IPA has been compiled during the bioregional marine planning processes undertaken by the Commonwealth Government in preparation for the establishment of the North Network of Commonwealth Marine Reserves, including the Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve which overlaps with the extended Dhimurru IPA, as discussed previously.

Sea country in Dhimurru IPA is known to support populations of the threatened hawksbill, olive ridley, green and flatback marine turtles which nest on the adjacent coast, as well as populations of dugong feeding on inshore seagrass meadows. These waters are also important foraging habitat for breeding aggregations of migratory sea birds such as the common noddy, roseate tern, the listed marine crested tern, black-naped tern, Caspian tern, brown booby and lesser frigate birds.

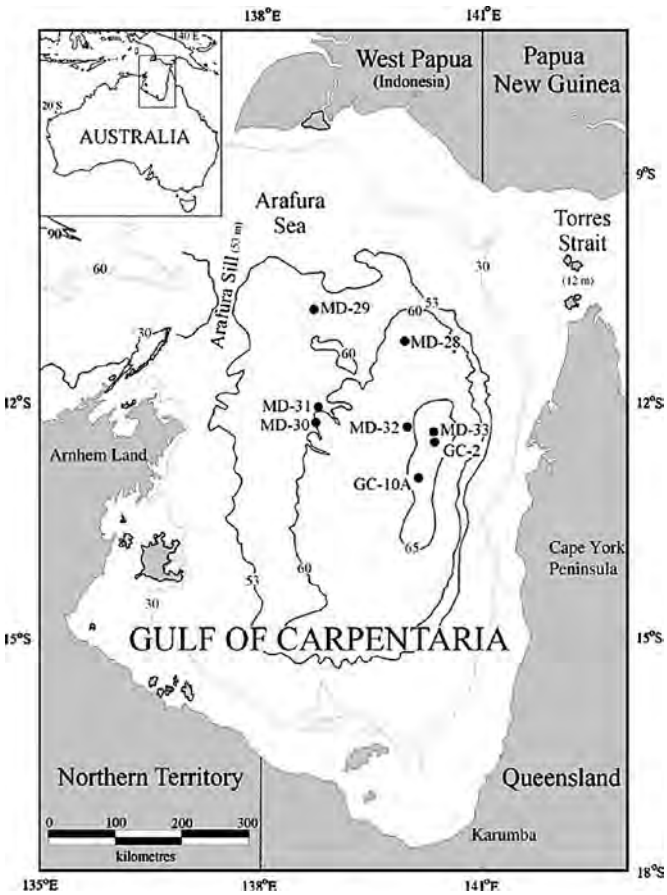
It is also likely that Dhimurru IPA supports other "flagship" species identified during the northern bioregional planning process, including Australian snubfin dolphin (one of the rarest mammals on earth), narrow sawfish and heart urchin (abundant on the seafloor and important for nutrient cycling).

The Gulf of Carpentaria is believed to support at least 19 and possibly up to 26 of the 35 species of seasnakes, including elegant seasnake, ornate seasnake, olive-headed seasnake and Stokes' seasnake. Seasnakes have been recorded in large groups on the water surface of in Blue Mud Bay, just to the south of the Dhimurru IPA.

However, most marine research and biodiversity sampling in waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria has focused on fisheries-related activities in waters greater than a depth of 20 metres. As a consequence, there is little information available on benthic sub-tidal habitats from the coastline out to a depth of 20 metres – which can extend out to 20 km from the coast in many areas. One inshore benthic study associated with the development of a barge loading facility in the Gulf to the south of Dhimurru IPA found 452 species – suggesting the benthic marine environments of the IPA are also highly likely to be rich in biodiversity.

The seabed of the IPA forms part of the shallow Arafura Sill, which continues northward into the Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve and separates the deeper water of the Arafura Sea from the basin of the Gulf of Carpentaria – forming a distinct biogeographical transition area for sessile invertebrates (e.g., sponges and corals) and fish species.

Because of the limited current state of knowledge about the biodiversity and ecosystems of this region, the extended Dhimurru IPA is well positioned at the junction of the Arafura Sea and the Gulf of Carpentaria to contribute to further research and better management of this area. Overlapping with the Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve, the Dhimurru IPA also provides an uninterrupted corridor from the landscapes of northeast Arnhem Land, through the intertidal zone to the deeper offshore waters.



Benthic map of Gulf of Carpentaria showing Arafura Sill off north-east Arnhem Land

Managing natural values

The priority for managing the natural sea country values of the Dhimurru IPA is to work with collaborating agencies and organisations to acquire as much information as possible about these values. This collaboration can occur through coordination of the capacities, authorities, and responsibilities of each agency to build up baseline data, determine appropriate indicator species and establish monitoring sites and methodologies.

The governance arrangements for Dhimurru IPA provide the opportunity to establish reliable data sets for the IPA and the Commonwealth Marine Reserve that can inform conservation and sustainable use practices over time.

Objectives and Actions/Targets for managing the sea country natural values of the IPA set out in the table below will be progressed during the period 2013-2015 and incorporated into the integrated land and sea IPA Management Plan from 2015 as appropriate.

Management Objectives	Actions/Targets	Priority
Better understand the natural sea country values of the IPA	• Establish a data base from published and unpublished sources on the natural sea country values of the IPA; • Develop research strategies and actions to fill data gaps over time.	High Medium
Monitor sea country values to enhance management	• Establish sites and methods to monitor key indicator species and habitats; • Continue to build capacity of Dhimurru Rangers to monitor and manage sea country.	Medium High
Eliminate or reduce threats to natural sea country values	• Prepare threat/risk assessment statements and response strategies for key natural values; • Maintain and enhance direct management methods to conserve natural values, including removal of ghost nets.	High High
Communicate natural sea country values to IPA collaborators and the wider community	• Develop interpretive material to communicate natural sea country values to IPA collaborators and the wider community, as well as for educational purposes in schools and cultural camps.	Medium
Minimise impacts on natural values from Indigenous, commercial, and recreational resource use	• Build on the monitoring initiatives already in place, develop and implement appropriate monitoring techniques to ensure sustainability of all species targeted by Indigenous commercial and recreational resource users; • Maintain good communication between all resource use sectors, including data sharing from biodiversity and habitat monitoring to inform resource use decision.	Medium High
Consider potential impacts of climate change on natural values of IPA sea country	• Take climate change impacts into account in developing monitoring, research and management initiatives with respect to all natural values.	High

Commercial Values

We recognise that the sea country within the expanded Dhimurru IPA has commercial value to several important industries in the local economy, including tourism, shipping and the seafood industry. We expect and invite these industries and the people associated with them to collaborate with Dhimurru in the management of the IPA.

Tourism

Yolŋu see both threats and opportunities from tourism and expect our relationship with the Northern Territory tourism industry to develop in the future.

The number of tourists using our sea country is increasing all the time including touring yachts visiting our waters and coast. Often these travellers receive no advice or guidance regarding their presence in our sea country because they are not required to seek a permit unless they wish to come ashore on our coastline.

Of concern to us is the lack of understanding and respect that tourism interests sometimes show for our culture and our country. Too often our culture and our country are seen as products to be packaged, marketed and sold. It is largely our sea country and culture that makes north-east Arnhem Land such a desired tourist destination. Dhimurru's strong, active Ranger service is as essential to the regional tourism infrastructure as the roads, hotels, and signage.

Our people already have interests in sustainable eco and cultural tourism ventures and seek to develop more opportunities in these areas. Yolŋu tourism interests are managed through Yolŋu organisations and associations. Our role at Dhimurru is to:

- make sure environmental and cultural impacts are adequately and thoroughly assessed;
- provide interpretive information and promote Yolŋu knowledge and expertise;
- arrange permits and licences by agreement with the Northern Land Council and traditional owners;
- supervise and monitor the permit system and occasionally contract Ranger and guide services within our capacity to do so.

Implementation of this IPA Sea Country Management Plan represents an opportunity to build better relationships with the tourism industry and with tourists using our sea country. In particularly we are keen to communicate the important cultural and natural values of the IPA to all users and visitors so that they can appreciate the importance of our management role and their potential for collaborating with us in achieving the goals of the IPA.

Management Objectives	Actions/Targets	Priority
Better communicate the cultural and natural sea country values of the IPA to the tourism industry, visitors and yachties	• Develop a tourism communication package to explain the cultural and natural values of sea country targeting each sector of the industry; • Seek feedback from tourists and other sea country visitors regarding their understanding of Yolŋu sea country values.	High
Develop opportunities for tourism sector to contribute to management and monitoring of sea country in the IPA	• Consult with tourism sector regarding willingness and capacity to contribute to achieving IPA goals and objectives, e.g., through a structured system of reporting animal sightings, ghost nets, or other incidents on sea country.	Medium

Bauxite mining, treatment and shipping

Pacific Aluminium, operators of the bauxite mine and refinery on the Gove Peninsula, is an important Dhimurru IPA neighbour and collaborator, and we acknowledge and appreciate the ongoing assistance that Pacific Aluminium provides Dhimurru as part of their environmental and social commitments.

We have, however, a number of concerns regarding the potential impact of Pacific Aluminium's operations on our sea country. We need to be particularly careful about metal contamination, especially of seafoods, and the environmental impacts on Melville Bay and surrounds from discharges, spills, and loading operations at the Pacific Aluminium refinery. We would also like to see the impact on Yolŋu values and way of life considered in any marine monitoring plans that Pacific Aluminium implements. The cultural and the natural values of our sea country are inseparable.

While Dhimurru has no aspirations to take on the responsibility of directly monitoring the impacts of bauxite mining, treatment and associated shipping activities on marine ecosystems, we are keen to have access to monitoring data in order to contribute to the management of the IPA. We therefore want to strengthen our information-sharing collaboration with Pacific Aluminium and with the Northern Land Council with regard to the monitoring activities already in place.

Management Objectives	Actions/Targets	Priority
Timely and transparent access to information derived from monitoring impacts of bauxite mining, treatment, and shipping	• Strengthen two-way information-sharing arrangements between Dhimurru, Pacific Aluminium and Northern Land Council to enable all IPA collaborators to better understand potential or actual impacts on the values of the IPA sea country; • Explore options for independent advice on adequacy of, and response options to, marine monitoring data.	High
Maximise opportunities for mining, treatment, and shipping activities to contribute to achieving Dhimurru IPA sea country goals and objectives	• Consult with mining, treatment, and shipping operators regarding willingness and capacity to contribute to achieving IPA goals and objectives, e.g., through a structured system of reporting animal sightings, ghost nets, spills, or other incidents on sea country.	Medium

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing has been a significant resource use since the arrival of Macassan trepang fishers at least 300 years ago. We recognise the right of licenced commercial fishers to continue to access our sea country and share our sea country resources. In the past, damage has been caused to our sacred sites through the actions of some commercial fishers – often through lack of awareness of the significance of these places or the cultural protocols regarding access.

Through the implementation of this IPA Sea Country Management Plan we aim to collaborate with the commercial fishing sector and to improve mutual understanding of our respective rights, interests and values. Through better awareness of these issues we seek to strengthen our relationships with the commercial fishing sector as a valuable IPA collaborator.

The table on the following page summarises the commercial fisheries (managed by the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries) that potentially operate within Dhimurru IPA, as well as an indication of actual commercial fishing currently taking place in the IPA.

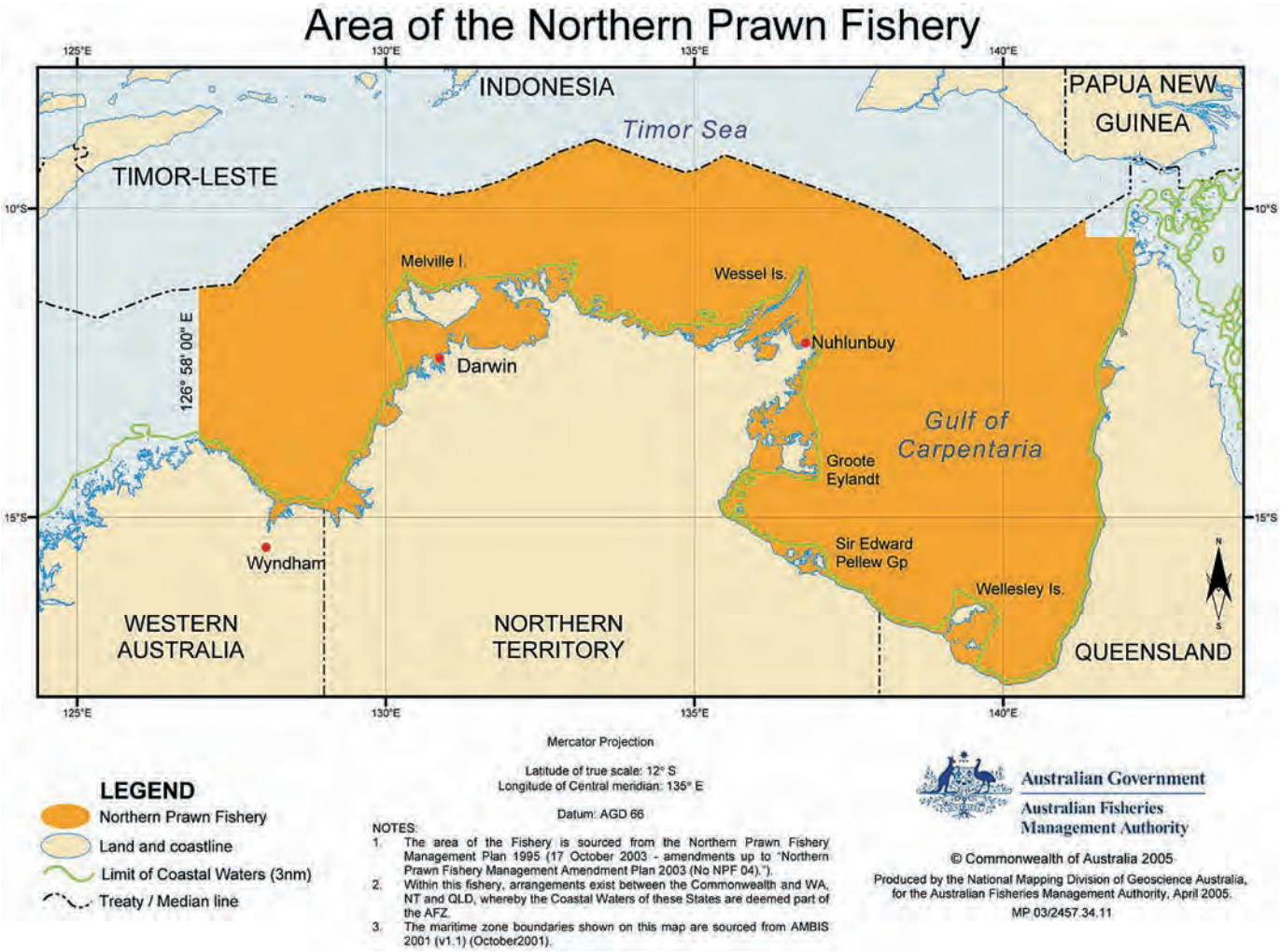
Fishery	Target Species	Fishing Area[1]	Management Instrument	Sustainability[2]	Current Fishing in IPA
Barramundi	Barramundi[3] *Lates calcarifer* King Threadfin *Polydactylus macrochir*	High Water Mark to 3 nautical miles except for closed areas	*NT Fisheries Act* Barramundi Fishery Management Plan	Determined sustainable by NT Fisheries following reduction in licences to 20 & area closures	3 licences operating in the IPA in Jan 2013
Mud Crab	Giant Mub Crab *Scylla serrata* Orange Mud Crab *Scylla olivacea*	Tidal mud flats – mostly in Gulf of Carpentaria	*NT Fisheries Act* Fishing method and size limits regulated	Assessed by SEWPaC as sustainable under EPBC Act	
Off-shore Net & Line	Black-tipped Sharks[7] and Grey Mackerel *S. semifasciatus*	HWM to limit of AFZ	*NT Fisheries Act* Operational Plan for the Sustainable Use of Nth Australian Shark Resources.	Assessed by SEWPaC as sustainable under EPBC Act	
Finfish Trawl	Red Snappers *Lutjanus malabaricus and L. erythopterus*	Offshore waters east of Darwin	*NT Fisheries Act* Managed by NT Joint Fisheries Authority	Assessed by SEWPaC as sustainable under EPBC Act	
Fishing Tour Operators			*NT Fisheries Act*		
Trepang	Sandfish *Holothuria scabra*	NT coastal waters to 3 nautical miles	*NT Fisheries Act*	Assessed by SEWPaC as sustainable under EPBC Act	
Demersal	Gold-band and Red Snappers[8]	15 nautical miles from NT coast to limit of AFZ	*NT Fisheries Act* and Demersal Fishery Operational Decision Rules	Assessed by SEWPaC as sustainable under EPBC Act	
Coastal Line	Mainly Black Jewfish *L. Jonii* and Black Jewfish *Protoninbea diacathanus*	Nearshore NT waters	*NT Fisheries Act*	Fishery currently under review to ensure sustainability	
Coastal Net	Multi-species especially Mullet, Blue Threadfin, Shark & Queenfish	High Water Mark to 3 n. miles from Low Water Mark	*NT Fisheries Act*	Licence numbers have been reduced to ensure sustainability	
Bait Net			*NT Fisheries Act*		
Mollusc	Molluscs other than cephalopods and bivalves		*NT Fisheries Act*		
Aquarium	Multi-species	Freshwater, coastal & oceanic to limit of AFZ	*NT Fisheries Act*		

[1]More detailed information on fishing areas are provided at: http://www.nt.gov.au/d/Fisheries/index.cfm?header=Commercial%20Fishing
[2]Information derived from Commonwealth and NT government websites
[3]Main target species
[4]99% of catch
[5]The assessment "demonstrated that the fishery was managed in a manner that did not lead to over-fishing and that fishing operations had minimal impact on the structure, productivity, function and biological diversity of the ecosystem".
[6]AFZ (Australian Fishing Zone) extents to 200 nautical miles from the Australian coastline – the same extent as Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)
[7]Black-tipped sharks include *Carcharhinus tilstoni*, *C. limbatus* and *C. sorrah*
[8]Gold-band Snappers (*Pritipomoides multidens*, *P. Typus* and *P. Filamentosus*)

Northern Prawn Fishery

The Northern Prawn Fishery (NPF) extends across coastal and offshore waters across northern Australia (see map below), over a total area of 771,000 square kilometres off Australia's northern coast.

The NPF is a significant component of the north Australian economy and is managed by the Commonwealth Government's Australian Fisheries Management Authority under an agreement with the Queensland, Northern Territory, and Western Australian Governments.



Permanent and temporary closures are in place across the north to protect prawn nursery areas and other significant marine habitats and closures are communicated annually to trawler skippers in AFMA's publication *Northern Prawn Fishery Operational Information*. One permanent prawn trawl closure has been established in Arnhem Bay (see adjacent map).

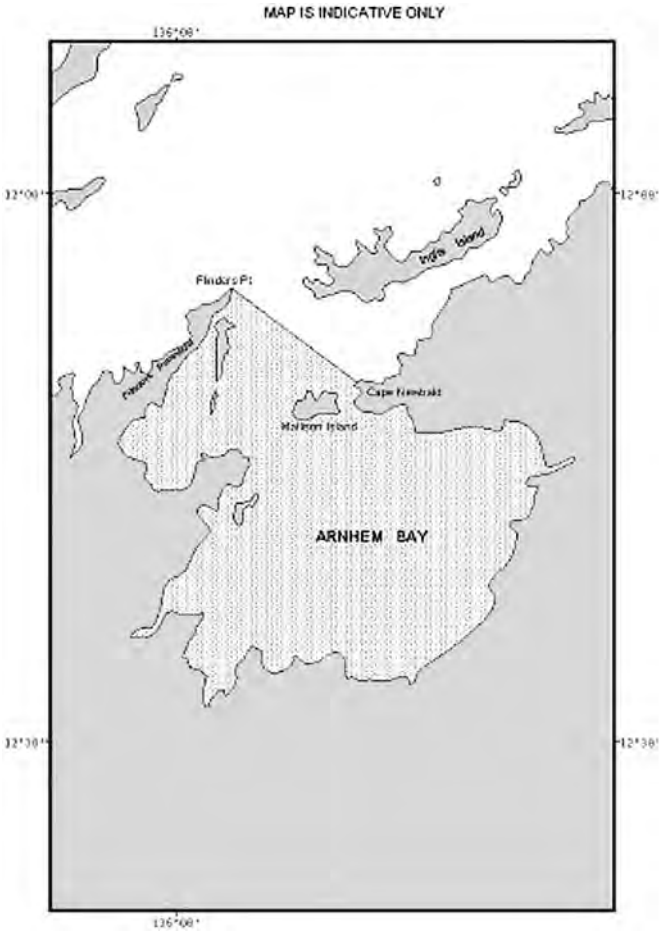
AFMA also provides the following information to skippers regarding access to Aboriginal land across the north:

> *Large areas of coastal lands and islands adjacent to the NPF area in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, the Northern Territory and northern Queensland are owned and managed by Aboriginal people. Like all other privately owned land in Australia, permission is required to enter Aboriginal owned land. It is the responsibility of NPF skippers and crew to ensure that permission has been granted to them before they go ashore on Aboriginal land. A genuine emergency at sea would be regarded as a legitimate exception to the rule. If you do have an emergency you must still notify the appropriate Aboriginal authorities as soon as possible after coming ashore. Advice on how to obtain permission to enter Aboriginal owned land can be obtained from the appropriate Aboriginal Land Council in each jurisdiction.*

With respect to anchorages access to land in the Gove Peninsula, AFMA provides the following advice:

> *The Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation has advised AFMA that NPF trawlers may anchor their vessels in Melville Bay in the area north of Lombuy Creek and will be able to come ashore on the eastern end of Wallaby Beach. Taxis can be ordered from this location.*

Every individual going ashore will be required to carry a current Dhimurru permit to enter traditional Aboriginal land. Permits can be obtained from Dhimurru's office in Nhulunbuy and Dhimurru can be contacted on fax (08) 8987 3224 or permits@dhimurru.com.au



Arnhem Bay permanent Prawn trawl closure area

AFMA also provides the following advice with respect to Aboriginal sacred sites in Northern Territory waters:

> *In the Northern Territory, all places, which are sacred or otherwise of significance according to Aboriginal tradition, are protected under the Commonwealth Land Rights Act 1983 and the Northern Territory Sacred Sites Act 1989 (the Sacred Sites Act). This means that sacred sites are protected whether or not they have been 'Declared', 'Registered' or otherwise brought to official attention.*

Target Species	Fishing Area[1]	Management Instrument	Sustainability[2]	Current Fishing in IPA
9 prawn species: White Banana *Fenneropenaeus merguiensis* Red-legged Banana *F. Indicus* Brown Tiger *Penaeus esculentus* Grooved Tiger *P. Semisulcatus* Blue Endeavour *Metapenaeus endeavouri* & Red Endeavour *M. Ensis* Scampi, squid, scallops and bugs are also taken	Northern coastal waters from the low water mark to limit of Australian Fishing Zone in between Cape York Peninsula in Queensland and Cape Londonderry in Western Australia	*Fisheries Management Act 1991* (Cth) Northern Prawn Fishery Management Plan 1995 Draft Northern Prawn Fishery Management Plan 2012 Northern Prawn Fishery By-catch and Discarding Work Plan 2012 - 2014 Northern prawn Fishery Operational Information 2012	Management Plan accredited by SEWPaC under EPBC Act, acknowledging that the fishery's actions will not have unacceptable or unsustainable impacts on the environment. Current status[2]: • Banana Prawns: not overfished • Brown Tiger Prawns: not overfished • Grooved Tiger Prawns not overfished • Blue Endeavour Prawn not overfished • Red Endeavour Prawn uncertain	To be advised

[1]More detailed information on fishing areas are provided at:
http://www.nt.gov.au/d/Fisheries/index.cfm?header=Commercial%20Fishing
[2]http://www.afma.gov.au/managing-our-fisheries/fisheries-a-to-z-index/northern-prawn-fishery/at-a-glance/

Recreational Fishing

Recreational fishing within Dhimurru IPA is an important aspect of the lifestyle enjoyed by many residents of Nhulunbuy as well as visiting tourists and sailors transiting our waters on yachts and other private vessels. This sector includes big game fishing on light line tackle using high powered deep sea vessels, as well as individual and family casual anglers using smaller vessels inshore. This sector is represented by the Territory-wide Amateur Fishermen's Association of the Northern Territory (AFANT), as well as the Nhulunbuy Regional Sports Fishing Club locally (though not all recreational fishers are members of these organisations). We welcome recreational fishers to share the resources of the IPA and to collaborate with us to ensure that all values of the IPA are managed sustainably into the future.

Managing Commercial and Recreational Values

The priority for managing the commercial and recreational sea country values of the Dhimurru IPA is to work with collaborating agencies and organisations to ensure the fisheries continue to be managed sustainably and that the commercial and recreational sectors do not impact adversely on the natural, cultural, and recreational values of the IPA. As active users of our sea country, the commercial and recreational sectors are valued for their capacity to contribute to the better understanding and management of all IPA values.

Objectives and Actions/Targets for managing the sea country commercial and recreational fishing values of the IPA set out in the table below will be progressed during the period 2013-2015, and incorporated into the integrated land and sea IPA Management Plan from 2015 as appropriate.

Management Objectives	Actions/Targets	Priority
Ensure ecological, cultural and economic sustainability of commercial and recreational fisheries within the IPA	• Contribute to all fisheries management planning and consultative opportunities to address potential impacts on IPA values; • Share new research data with fisheries managers and fishers to enable adjustments to be made to fisheries arrangement by agreement where appropriate; • Work with collaborating agencies to ensure that, over time, all fisheries within the IPA maintain the standards of sustainability equivalent to accreditation obtained through the Strategic Assessment process under the EPBC Act for export fisheries.	High High High
Ensure commercial and recreational resource users are well informed about all IPA values	• Maintain good communication between resource use sectors and the IPA through Advisory group forums and other mechanisms – e.g. Communication Strategy; • Develop formal and informal mechanisms for enhanced understanding and cross cultural awareness between the resource use sectors and Traditional Owners.	High Medium
Ensure opportunities are maintained for local Indigenous commercial operations to be developed	• Collaborate with Traditional Owners and NT Fisheries to support sustainable Indigenous commercial fishing enterprises as initiatives and opportunities arise.	Medium
Ensure that sustainable fisheries management in the Dhimurru IPA sea country is informed by Yolŋu knowledge and appropriate scientific research	• Develop partnerships with research institutions to guide appropriate research to inform fisheries management.	High

Part 4 – Implementation

Implementation of this Management Plan will commence in July 2013. The Plan will remain in force until replaced by the whole-of-IPA (land and sea) Management Plan due to take effect in 2015.

Key implementation steps will include:

- Convene at least two meetings of the expanded IPA Advisory Group per year to explore collaborative opportunities to meet agreed goals and objectives;
- Develop an annual sea country work program to schedule:
  - Priority actions identified in this Management Plan;
  - Management actions to meet commitments made in funding agreements;
- Develop and implement a communication strategy to keep Traditional Owners, IPA collaborators, funders and relevant others informed about implementation of the Plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Management Plan

The Annual Report of Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation will record:

- Overall progress and challenges to achieving goals and objectives of the Management Plan;
- Progress in implementing each Action/Target;
- Resources, partnerships and capacity required to fully implement each objective and Action/Target;
- Review of strategies and timelines to achieve objectives, with revisions where appropriate;
- Review of the operations and effectiveness of the Advisory Group, including recommendations for improvements to the governance and management of the IPA where appropriate;
- Summary of any actions taken to further support implementation of the Plan.

References

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Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre 1999. *Saltwater – Yirrkala Bark Paintings of Sea Country*. Jennifer Isaacs Publishing, Sydney;

Day J., Dudley N., Hockings M., Holmes G., Laffoley D., Stolton S. & S. Wells 2012, *Guidelines for applying the IUCN Protected Area Management Categories to Marine Protected Areas*. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No.19 Guidelines. IUCN Gland, Switzerland;

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Further Reading

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Williams, Nancy 1986. *The Yolngu and Their Land; a System of Land Tenure and the Fight for its Recognition*, Stanford University Press;

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Appendix 1: Applying the IUCN protected area definition to the expanded Dhimurru IPA

The table below is a modified version of the table provided on pages 12 to 14 of the Guidelines for Applying the IUCN Protected Area Management Categories to Marine Protected Areas (available at http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_categoriesmpa_eng.pdf). The table explains how each component of the IUCN protected area definition is applied to the expanded Dhimurru IPA.

Phrase	How this phrase applies to the expanded Dhimurru IPA
Clearly defined	• The expanded Dhimurru IPA has clearly delineated boundaries on land and sea, as shown on the accompanying map; • The landward boundary incorporates, wherever possible, the entire catchment of streams running across the terrestrial component of the IPA into the Gulf of Carpentaria; • The marine boundary extends approximately 40kms offshore, incorporating an area of Traditional Owners' marine estates which can be effectively managed by Dhimurru Rangers, in collaboration with the IPA collaborators - though these marine estates may extend beyond the IPA boundary.
Geographical space	• The Traditional Owners of the expanded Dhimurru IPA seek to protect all the significant natural and cultural values on the land, subsurface, air above, water column and seabed within the boundaries shown on the map on page 2.
Recognised	• Following the negotiation of management goals and collaborative management arrangements with Dhimurru's collaborating agencies and organisations, the Australian and Northern Territory governments have formally recognised the expanded IPA as part of Australia's National Reserve System and on the World Database on Protected Areas.
Dedicated	• The proposed expanded IPA will be dedicated (or declared) under customary law by the Aboriginal Traditional Owners who have the cultural responsibility and authority for the land and sea clan estates located within the IPA; • The dedication process will include a public ceremony led by Traditional Owners at which representatives of government agencies and other IPA collaborators will be invited to formally recognise the IPA; • The IPA Management Plan will include a statement to the effect that the IPA dedication (or declaration) is a non-legal process that does not impact on any current authorities, licences, access rights or use rights. Any changes to current arrangements would occur only through negotiation and agreement.
Managed	Management of the terrestrial and marine components of the proposed expanded IPA will include: • Patrolling on land and sea by Dhimurru Rangers; • Undertaking direct management actions, such as feral animal, weed and fire management on land, and removal of ghost nets and other marine debris at sea; • Sharing information and resources with IPA collaborating agencies to ensure that all management actions (e.g., by NT Fisheries patrols, biosecurity activities through the North Australian Quarantine Strategy, collaboration with the Australian Government in the management of the proposed Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve, etc.) contribute to the management of the IPA; • Management will be informed by ongoing research and monitoring on land and sea by Dhimurru in collaboration with IPA collaborating agencies.
Legal or other effective means	The expanded Dhimurru IPA will be managed through a package of legal and other effective means, including: ***Legal means:*** • Aboriginal ownership of the terrestrial areas and the intertidal zone within the IPA under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth);

Phrase	How this phrase applies to the expanded Dhimurru IPA
Legal or other effective means (continued)	• Recreation Permits for public access to Aboriginal-owned areas of the IPA issued by Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth); • Registration and management of culturally significant sites on land and sea under the Northern Territory Aboriginal Sacred Sites Act 1989 (NT); • Exercise of customary rights to use and manage land and sea areas and natural and cultural resources within the IPA under provisions of the Native Title Act 1993 (Cth); • Collaborative management, training and resource-sharing arrangements under formal agreements with IPA collaborating agencies, such as agreement under section 73 of the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1977 (NT); • Recognition of Aboriginal resource use rights in other Northern Territory and Commonwealth legislation, such as the Fisheries Act (NT) and the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (Cth); • Exercise of statutory authority of Northern Territory and Commonwealth agencies under their respective legislation to contribute to the agreed goals of the IPA; ***Other effective means:*** • Ranger patrols; • Removal of ghost nets and other marine debris; • Fire, weed and feral animal management; • Application of Indigenous knowledge; • Visitor use management through education, signage, etc.; • Research and monitoring on land and sea; • Recording of sacred sites and other cultural knowledge.
....to achieve	The goals and objectives of the expanded IPA will be achieved through development, implementation, and monitoring of a management plan delivered through effective working relationships with collaborating agencies led by Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation. A governance framework will be established to ensure effective collaboration and to oversee monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.
Long term	• Dedication of additional land and sea country as part of the IPA reflects the customary obligation of Traditional Owners from time immemorial to protect their land and sea country for all natural and cultural values, including sustainable use of customary resources, for present and future generations.
Conservation	• The primary goal of the IPA is to maintain terrestrial and marine ecosystems in their current healthy condition into the future. The expansion of the IPA to include additional sea country recognises the interdependence of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, natural values, and cultural values, and hence the need to manage land and sea environments within a single collaborative protected area framework; • The need for integrated land and sea management is particularly acute in the context of climate change, which is causing sea level rise, coastal erosion, and saltwater intrusion into freshwater wetlands; • Currently there are no mining exploration leases or mining activities within the geographical space of the expanded IPA and there is currently an NT government-imposed moratorium on seabed exploration and mining in the Northern Territory. Recognition as a protected area, identification of the natural and cultural values, further research, and collaborative management will assist in ensuring that if a mining proposal emerges in the future it will be addressed in a manner compatible with maintaining the integrity of the IPA.
Nature	• The conservation goals of the IPA include the conservation of biodiversity at population, species and ecosystem level, as well as broader natural values which are inextricably linked to Traditional Owners' culture, identity, and way of life.

Phrase	How this phrase applies to the expanded Dhimurru IPA
Associated ecosystem services	Traditional Owners are committed to maintaining the ecosystem services currently provided within the land and sea environments of the expanded IPA. These include: • Provision of food, including Indigenous customary food through hunting and gathering, as well as recreational and commercial fishing through sustainable management of these activities; • Provision of clean fresh water to Traditional Owners living on country, as well as townships and other settlements dependent on water supplies from streams and ground water within the IPA; • Provision of a wide range of cultural, recreational, spiritual, and religious services through maintaining healthy environments and abundant natural and cultural resources; • Provision of fundamental ecological services, including nutrient cycling, to enable the proper functioning of terrestrial and marine ecosystems.
Cultural values	Cultural values associated with the IPA, which are inextricably linked to the IPA's natural values, include: • The sacred currents including Manbuynga ga Rulyapa that come together to form the seas off our homelands; • Clan estates of the Dhuwa and Yirritja moieties on land and sea; • Sacred sites on land and sea; • Ancestral Tracks that trace the mythological journeys of creation ancestors and which link land and sea environments; • Indigenous knowledge, ceremonies, stories, and cultural practices that will be strengthened and transmitted across generations through the integrated management of land and sea environments within the IPA collaborative framework.

Appendix 2: Allocation of Dhimurru IPA to IUCN Protected Area Category V (Protected Landscape/Seascape)

	IUCN Category 5[26]	Dhimurru IPA
Description	*Areas where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value: and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values.*	Dhimurru IPA is a geographical space of land, sea and sky created by the Ancestral Spirit Beings of the Dhuwa and Yirritja moieties. The journeys of these ancestral creators crisscrossed the land and seascape breathing life into the animals and plants inhabiting these environments and creating sacred currents. From these ancestral journeys, and the network of important sites created across the land and sea, we gain our names, our identity and our way of life.
Primary objective	• *To protect and sustain important landscapes /seascapes and the associated nature conservation and other values created by interactions with humans through traditional management practices.*	• To protect and sustain our landscapes /seascapes, including biodiversity, ecosystems and our associated ceremonies, cultural sites, and other cultural values and practices that we have nurtured for thousands of years.
Other objectives	• *To maintain a balanced interaction of nature and culture through the protection of landscape and/or seascape and associated traditional management approaches, societies, cultures and spiritual values;* • *To contribute to broad-scale conservation by maintaining species associated with cultural landscapes and/or by providing conservation opportunities in heavily used landscapes;* • *To provide opportunities for enjoyment, well-being and socioeconomic activity through recreation and tourism;* • *To provide natural products and environmental services;* • *To provide a framework to underpin active involvement by the community in the management of valued landscapes or seascapes and the natural and cultural heritage that they contain;* • *To encourage the conservation of aquatic biodiversity;* • *To act as models of sustainability so that lessons can be learnt for wider application.*	• To maintain a balance between the cultural, economic, and recreational values and the cultural, social and spiritual values associated with Dhimurru IPA; • To ensure ecological sustainability of cultural, economic and recreational use of land and sea resources within the IPA; • To provide opportunities for enjoyment, well-being, and socioeconomic activity through recreation and tourism; • To maintain environmental services provided by land and sea country within the IPA; • To provide a collaborative framework for the governance and management of the IPA that respects the rights and obligations of Traditional Owners, government management agencies, commercial fishers, recreational fishers, tourism operators, and local residents; • To act as a model for Traditional Owner led collaborative management of an integrated land/sea Indigenous Protected Area.

[26]Guidelines for Applying the IUCN Protected Area Management Categories to Marine Protected Areas (page 22)

Appendix 3:
Dhimurru IPA Governance and Management Collaboration
Governance and management contributions from IPA collaborating agencies

	Traditional Owners
Commitment and/or Support	• Commitment to IPA goals.
Authority	• Customary authority over cultural sites, knowledge, and practices under Yolŋu Law; • Ownership of land and intertidal zone under ALR(NT) Act; • Native title rights and interests under Native Title Act 1993 (Cth); • Right to traditional resource use under section 53(1) *Northern Territory Fisheries Act 1998* (NT) and under section 122 of the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act; • Registration and protection of sacred sites under *Northern Territory Sacred Sites Act 1989* (NT); • Traditional use for hunting, food gathering, ceremonial and religious purposes, including in Commonwealth Reserves, recognised under Sections 303BAA and 359A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).
Responsibility	• Care for Country and Culture; • Sustainable use of natural and cultural resources.
Capacity	• Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation – governance, management, infrastructure, and resources; • Rangers, vehicles, boats and other equipment to manage and monitor land and sea country.

	Cth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
Commitment and/or Support	• Support IPA Goals and Objectives through funding arranagements and agreements in line with approvals; • Support Indigenous capacity in natural resource management through Caring for Our Country (including Indigenous Protected Area and Working on Country programs); • Support Indigenous involvement in the management of sea country within Commonwealth marine reserves; • Identify and, where feasible, support opportunities for Indigenous people to engage in the management of sea country in Commonwealth marine reserves, for example, through the delivery of critical management services such as monitoring, surveillance, compliance, and research.

Authority	Under provisions of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cth):
	• Assessment of Commonwealth Managed Fisheries (Sections 147-154);
	• Planning and management of Wessel Commonwealth Marine Reserve, which intersects with the proposed IPA, including:
	  ○ Implementation of Strategy 6 of the North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network Management Plan re support for the involvement of Indigenous people;
	  ○ Collaboration on research, monitoring, information-sharing, and protocols for data management;
	• Consolidate and communicate information about cultural values protected in the North Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network (including Wessel marine reserves);
	• Implementation of Marine Bioregional Plan for North, e.g.,
	  ○ develop targeted collaborative programs to coordinate species recovery and environmental protection efforts across Australian Government, state and territory agencies, and coastal communities with responsibilities for the marine environment - collaborate with the Queensland and Northern Territory governments and coastal

Authority (continued)	communities to develop protection measures to limit disturbances during the nesting season for marine turtles, the breeding season for inshore dolphins, the pupping season for sawfishes and river sharks, and in foraging areas for dugongs, focusing on areas in proximity to inhabited areas or areas where sources of disturbance exist or are emerging (regional priorities 1, 2 and 4—short to medium term; regional priority 3—medium term); ○ increase information on the sources and impacts of marine debris on the region's marine life and ecosystems, including supporting monitoring of marine debris at selected locations in and adjacent to the North Marine Region (regional priority 7—short to medium term); • Recognition of Indigenous rights to hunt, gather, and use traditional resources; • Protection of matters of national environmental significance; • Protection of threatened and endangered species; • Mandate for program support to deliver environmental outcomes.
Responsibility	• Program implementation – IPA, WoC, and other land and sea programs; • Support and advice for Indigenous organisations managing funding agreements; • Communicate program outcomes within and external to government; • Reporting and contributions to Australian Government's Closing the Gap agenda; • Protect the marine environment, especially those aspects of the environment that are matters of national environmental significance (such as the Commonwealth waters and Commonwealth marine reserves), as well as protection and conservation of heritage; • Promote ecologically sustainable use of natural resources; • Promote a co-operative approach to the protection and management of the environment involving governments, the community, Indigenous peoples, and other land-holders; • Assist in the co-operative implementation of Australia's international environmental responsibilities; • Recognise the role of Indigenous people in the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity; • Promote the use of Indigenous peoples' knowledge of biodiversity with the involvement of, and in co-operation with, the owners of the knowledge.
Capacity	• To make available relevant departmental staff for involvement in meetings of the Dhimurru IPA Advisory Group and for site visits within the IPA as may be required from time to time; • To provide program and policy advice to Dhimurru on government processes.
Other	• Networking opportunities – e.g., IPA managers' meetings and international Indigenous Rangers conferences; • Research involvement and linkages – e.g., current Indigenous Land and Sea Management Effectiveness research project.

	NT Department of Primary Industry and Fisheries
Commitment and/or Support	• Implement the Northern Territory Indigenous Fisheries Development Strategy[27] • Increased role for Indigenous engagement in: ○ Fisheries management, monitoring, and compliance; ○ Fisheries research; ○ Fishing businesses.
Authority	Under the authority of the Northern Territory Fisheries Act 1998 (NT): • Manage the aquatic resources of the Territory in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development; • Delegation from Executive Director to provide support and build capacity of Indigenous Sea Country Rangers; • Fishery Management Plans.

[27] http://www.nt.gov.au/d/Fisheries/Content/File/indigenous/Indigenous_Fisheries_Development_Strategy.pdf

Responsibility	• Stewardship of aquatic resources that promotes fairness, equity and access to aquatic resources by all relevant groups, including Indigenous people, commercial operators, aquaculture farmers, amateur fishermen and others; • Take a precautionary approach to the management of aquatic resources and their habitats to promote the optimum utilisation of aquatic resources to the benefit of the community; • Oversee licensing and compliance with rules and regulations; • Collect “catch and effort” data to inform fisheries management.

Capacity	• Fisheries managers, research scientists and technical support, and Indigenous Development Unit;
	• Enforcement officers (Water Police) with vessels and other resources;
	• NT Fisheries policy for Indigenous Marine Rangers to research and monitor sea country
	• Support Indigenous development:
	  ○ Resource management and compliance;
	  ○ Business mentoring support (seafood industry);
	  ○ Governance for Indigenous engagement.

Other	• Involvement in developing 'Blue Mud Bay' agreements[28] relating to access and use of resources in intertidal zone owned by Traditional Owners.

	NT Department of Land Resource Management

Commitment and/or Support	• Provide technical and scientific information, advice and expertise on natural resource management issues and policy, including biodiversity, weeds, and water;
	• Provide access to spatial environmental data layers (including biodiversity data) and GIS capability;
	• Support for increased Indigenous engagement in:
	  ○ biodiversity management, monitoring and compliance;
	  ○ biodiversity monitoring and research;
	  ○ sustainable use of wildlife resources.

Authority	Under the authority of the Territory Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act, and via the Parks and Wildlife Commission NT, the Water Act, and Weeds Management Act: • Protect, conserve and sustainably use the wildlife (biodiversity) of the Territory, excluding aquatic life (as defined under the NT Fisheries Act) but excepting marine mammals and reptiles; • Wildlife Management Plans; • Prevent the spread of weeds, ensure integrated weed management and community responsibility in implementing weed management plans.
Responsibility	• Providing scientific expertise and advice on biodiversity (as defined above), including for wildlife permits; • Managing the sustainable use of wildlife resources; • Providing advice for wildlife permits; • Maintaining and providing appropriate access to the NT-wide flora and fauna databases.
Capacity	• Research scientists and technical support; • Ability to provide biodiversity (including invasive species) information, advice and training.
Other	• Collaborate on specific agreed research projects.

[28]This refers to agreements that may arise from the 'Blue Mud Bay' High Court decision that determined Traditional Owners of coastal land under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* (Cth) have authority to control access to intertidal waters.

	Northern Territory Seafood Council
Commitment and/or Support	• Support IPA goals and objectives through industry developed publications (such as Environmental Management Systems, Codes of Practice, Codes of Conduct).

Authority	• Northern Territory Seafood Council Incorporated constitution objectives and purpose:
	  ○ To promote, encourage and assist the Northern Territory's commercial seafood industry and persons and groups involved in it;
	  ○ To promote, engage in, encourage and assist research, conservation and other activities beneficial to the interests, persons and groups of the Northern Territory commercial seafood industry generally;
	  ○ The promotion of the development of the Northern Territory's fishing and aquaculture resources.

Responsibility	• To provide a representative voice, and a single contact point for the seafood industry, promoting the industry through information sharing and policy development; • To deliver cost effective services and industry-driven research and a framework for the development of a responsible seafood industry.
Capacity	• To make available relevant NTSC staff and/or NTSC Board members for involvement in meetings of the Dhimurru IPA Advisory Group; • To work collaboratively with stakeholders in the development/revision of industry developed publications relating to best practice and conduct.

Appendix 4:
Strategy 6 of North Commonwealth Marine Reserve Network
Support involvement of Indigenous people in management of Commonwealth Marine Reserves

The Indigenous peoples of northern Australia have been sustainably using and managing their sea country, including areas now included within Commonwealth marine reserves, for thousands of years. Many Indigenous people recognise and maintain links to cultural places on islands that are now submerged often long distances out to sea. They continue to rely on coastal and marine environments and resources for cultural identity, health and wellbeing, and economic activities. The saltwater people of the North belong to discrete clan estates and language groups that occupy, or traditionally occupied, discrete areas or country. 'Country' refers to a place of origin – literally, culturally or spiritually and 'sea country' and/or 'saltwater country' are terms that refer to an estate or cultural domain in which no separation between land and sea is made.

In many locations, Indigenous communities have developed Ranger capabilities. Indigenous Rangers play a significant role in the management of coastal and marine resources. Activities undertaken include monitoring of the coastline for illegal fishing, protection of native flora and fauna, quarantine surveillance, cleaning up of marine debris (including ghost nets) from beaches, and research into and protection of key species such as dugongs and marine turtles.

The Australian Government recognises and respects the knowledge Indigenous people have in managing Australia's land, fresh water and sea, and in conserving biodiversity. It recognises Indigenous Australians as key partners in managing Australia's environment and cultural heritage.

Native Title is a term that refers to the recognition in Australian law that some Indigenous people continue to hold rights to their lands and waters that come from their traditional laws and customs. The Native Title Act 1993 provides for the recognition of native title on land and in the sea. Section 8 of the EPBC Act provides that the Act does not affect the operation of the Native Title Act.

Indigenous people can contribute to the management of marine reserves networks through sharing knowledge and understanding of the marine environment and through participation in the management and sustainable use of the resources of these reserves.

Actions

The Director will:

A1 Drawing on the significant body of knowledge built as part of sea country planning and similar initiatives across Australia, and in consultation with relevant representative organisations, consolidate and communicate information about cultural values protected in the North Commonwealth marine reserves;

A2 Identify, and where feasible support, opportunities for Indigenous people to engage in the management of sea country in Commonwealth marine reserves, for example through the delivery of critical management services, such as monitoring surveillance, compliance and research;

A3 Build effective partnerships with Indigenous communities and organisations that have an interest in the Marine Reserves Network;

Comply with the requirements of the Native Title Act 1993.

Outcomes

- Indigenous people and organisations are partners in the management of sea country within Commonwealth marine reserves;
- Management activities within Commonwealth marine reserves acknowledge and respect existing Indigenous governance arrangements, activities and cultural needs;
- Indigenous customs, practices and knowledge inform relevant management planning and activities.

[29] Extract from the North Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network Management Plan 2013 available at http://www.environment.gov.au/marinereserves/north/management.html#plan