



# DHIMURRU

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

## 2024 - 2025



## **WITH RESPECT AND GRATITUDE**

Our deepest thanks to our Elders, Traditional Owners, Yolŋu families, rangers, coordinators, staff, and all our supporters.

Your hands, hearts, and wisdom make this journey possible. Together, we walk towards a future where Country is cared for, culture is strong, and Yolŋu leadership lights the way.

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Djangal Mununggurritj



Mayatili Marika

## FOREWORD

### MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS AND BOARD

As we look back on this past year at Dhimurru, we do so with deep respect for the footsteps of the giants who came before us – leaders like Mr M. Marika and Mr B. Yunupingu. Their strength and vision are still with us every day, guiding how we care for Country and culture.

It's been a year of challenges, but also of powerful steps forward. Our Rangers have been out on Country, protecting sacred places, looking after the land and sea, and sharing knowledge between generations. Their work is a living reminder of how strong our connection to this place really is.

We've also seen amazing growth in leadership, especially among our women and young people. They're stepping up with courage, carrying the responsibilities of culture and law on their shoulders. This gives us real hope for what's ahead.

As Co-Chairs, we're proud of how Dhimurru keeps weaving together tradition and new ideas. We stand strong in Yolŋu Law, while also taking on today's challenges – from climate change to building partnerships across the world.

The legacy of our Elders isn't just something we remember – it's something we live. It's in every decision, every act of care for Country, and every step we take for the next generation. Together, we walk forward with strength, unity, and purpose.

We thank every member, partner, and supporter who walks this road with us. The journey goes on, and we keep moving with the same vision and strength that has carried us for 35 years.

Yours in strength and respect,

**Djangal Mununggurritj & Mayatili Marika**  
Co-Chairs, 2024-25

*“Wisdom from the past, strength for today”*

## YOLŊU MATHA SPELLING AND PRONUNCIATION

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

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

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

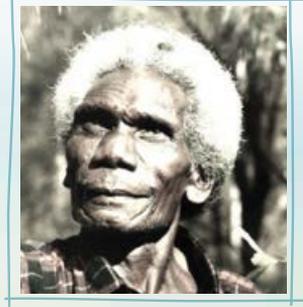
This reference is taken from Raymatja Munungiritj & Trevor Stockly, *Yolŋu Matha: An Introduction to Gumatj and Related Languages in NE Arnhemland*, Yirrkala Community School Literature Production Centre, Yirrkala, NT, 1985.

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

## OUR VISION

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

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



Roy Dadayŋa Marika MBE

### IN ENGLISH

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

Dhimurru's vision is guided by the wisdom of our Elders who founded Dhimurru. They have inspired us in our work. They exhorted us to look after the land for those who will follow, to protect and maintain it. In 1990 on behalf of the Elders, Roy 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 māri-gutharra kinship. They have placed certain areas of our land in the hands of the Dhimurru committee, which authorises the Dhimurru rangers to manage and preserve, maintain and protect the areas designated for recreation use.

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

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



## IN YOLŃU MATHA

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

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

Bukmak ŋayi malanyŋha yaka dhāya manikaymi, rommi, dhulaŋmi, dhāwu'mi. Banhalaŋa ŋayiŋa, dhanaliŋgu nuku djalkiri. Bitjan nhan yaka ŋayim malanya dhāya gaŋunha Land Rights-ŋa dhāruk bilanya bili. Yo, decision-maker nhanbayi yana ŋayi waŋaŋu.

Ŋarru nhan ŋarru, ŋarruŋam goŋmurrum nhumaliŋ gurumuru, Parks and Wildlife-kura or rangerwurumuru, Dhimurruwurumuru. Bukmak ŋayi malanyŋha djākawu goŋŋa Dhimurruwura. Yirritja ga Dhuwa ŋarru warkthun dhanal further

development bilanya bitjan conservation ga dhal yun ŋarru protectiŋ nhānuru development-ŋuru.

Ga biyalpul ŋalma ŋarru nhāma ŋoy gapu banha dhāya yaka IPA-ŋa, ŋalma ŋarru djāma rrambanji waripu guŋkuwuŋ agencies-wuŋ, mā ŋalmaliŋgu ŋoy gapu ŋarru ŋuwakurru ŋoyya, yaka marimi dhaŋaŋ dhukun, ŋalmaliŋguŋ ŋayi. ŋoyŋa gapuŋa, ga dhāwu bayikuy ŋayiwuy dhanal IPA ga ŋalma ŋarru djāka, ga ŋoywuy gapuwuy maypal, miyapunu ga waripu mala banha ŋalma bayiŋ ŋoka.

Dhaŋu ŋayi yolŋuwu yana, Yolŋuyu ŋarru warkthun dhāruk nhanbayi Yolŋuyu yana. Djinaku ŋayiwu ŋarakawu, yaka Gapmandhu wo bilan yolthu waripuniyuy ŋayinharrayu Yolŋuyu. Nhanbayi yana ŋayi-waŋaŋuyy, rom-waŋaŋuyy, waŋarr-waŋaŋuyy, gamunungu-waŋaŋuyy wo maŋayin-waŋaŋuyy.

Ŋarru dhārukma dhaŋu gunyanda bayikun ŋalapalmiyu banha ŋarruŋan ga dhaŋu badak nyena yaka. Ŋarru dhārukma dhanaliŋgu ga gaŋjipum badak wālŋa. Djinaku Dhimurruwum self developmentkum, ga self-managementkum.

## DHIMURRU BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-2025

*Our Board represents the voice of the clans, ensuring every decision is grounded in Yolŋu values and cultural governance.*

**CO-CHAIRS**

Mayatili Marika  
Djanggal Munungurrjtj

**LIFETIME MEMBER**

Djäwa Yunupinju

**DIRECTORS**

Bänuŋa Marika	Michael Gumana
Mr M Marika (until his passing in June 2025)	Wuyula Bruno Marika
Lirwa Ganambarr	Malati Yunupinju
Djakapurra Munyarryun	Waykarra Jason Gurruwiwi
	Boyan Yunupinju

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



## DHIMURRU STAFF 2024 - 2025

*Our people are the heart of Dhimurru. Rangers, coordinators, cultural advisors, and support staff work together to care for Country.*

**THESE NUMBERS  
REFLECT A STRONG,  
GROWING WORKFORCE  
COMMITTED TO  
DHIMURRU'S MISSION.**



### DHIMURRU STAFF 2025



## **CULTURAL GOVERNANCE AND AUTHORITY**

At Dhimurru, governance is more than paperwork, it's about honouring Yolŋu law (rom), cultural responsibility, and the deep ties between people, Country, and kin.

Our Elders and traditional leaders guide us, keeping our work grounded in Yolŋu wisdom. Every plan we make, every action we take, is shaped by that foundation. This is what makes Dhimurru strong – blending old ways with new, always in a way that holds true to our culture.

By standing in both tradition and today, we make sure our decisions reflect Yolŋu values, protect sacred places, and pass knowledge on to the next generation. This is leadership with heart and roots.

## STRATEGIC PILLARS

Our work is guided by Dhimurru's six **Strategic Pillars**:



**1. Cultural Protection and Celebration** – safeguarding sacred places and Yolŋu knowledge.



**4. Resilience to Environmental Change** – preparing for climate impacts and protecting biodiversity.



**2. Integrated Land and Sea Management** – blending science and Yolŋu law to care for Country.



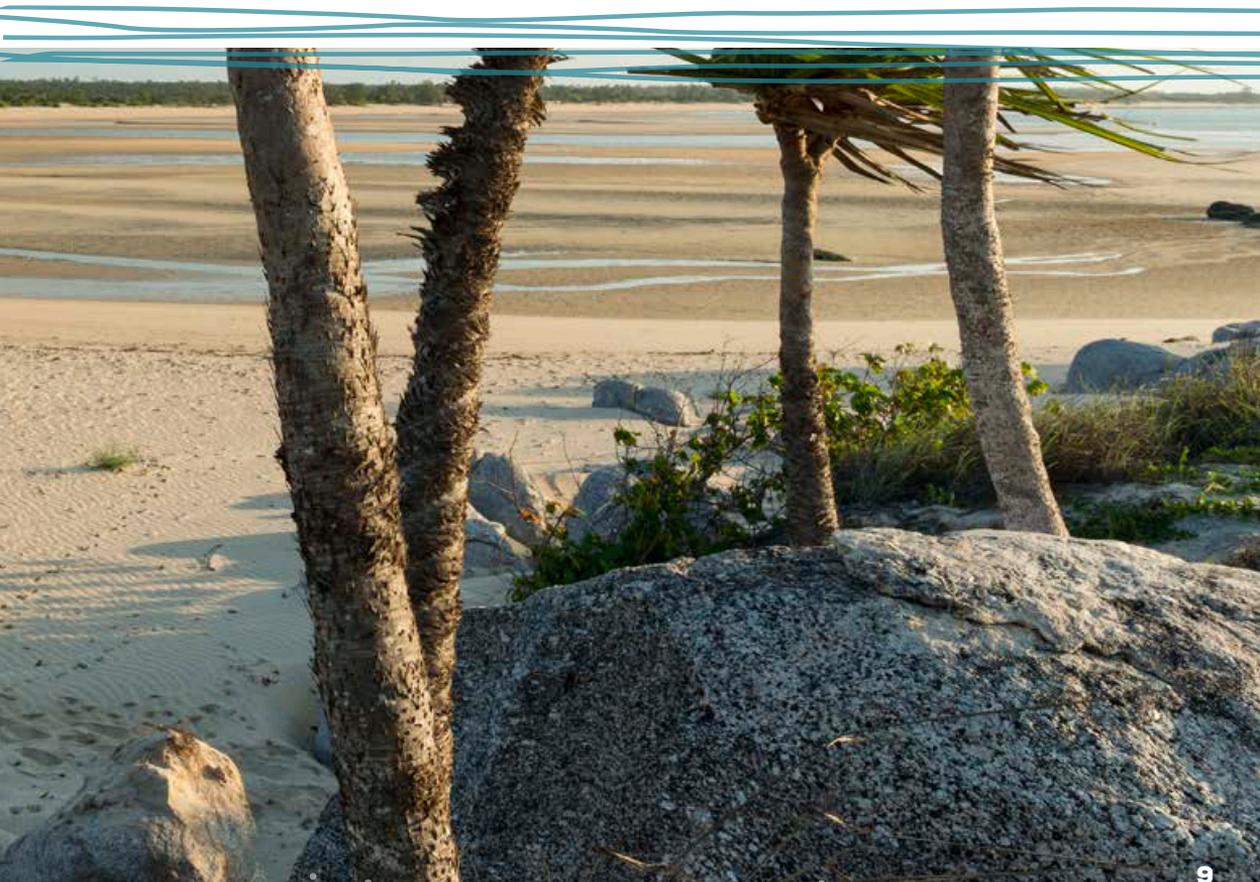
**5. Holistic Wellbeing and Livelihoods** – supporting our people and communities.



**3. Community-Led Innovation** – building skills and future opportunities for Yolŋu.



**6. Global Influence and Partnerships** – sharing our story and building allies worldwide.



## **DHIMURRU INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA (IPA)**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

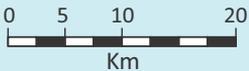
The Dhimurru IPA is supported by the Australian government's Indigenous Protected Areas program and the Indigenous Ranger Program, which assist in funding, planning and management in return for environmental and cultural heritage management services.

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

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



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





## REFLECTION FROM OUR EXECUTIVE OFFICER

### LEADERSHIP AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE

As we mark another year in the journey of Dhimurru, I feel so proud of how we keep leading from culture, Country, and community. Our strength comes not only from the past we carry, but from the way we walk today – with open hearts, open minds, and a deep sense of responsibility.

This year has shown us again that leadership isn't about titles or roles, it's about showing up for our people, our land, and our young ones who will come after us. Our rangers, our women leaders, our youth are all stepping up with passion and care, carrying forward the teachings of Mr M. Marika and Mr B. Yunupingu.

Looking ahead, our vision stays clear:

- to keep protecting and caring for Country through Yolŋu knowledge and law, and
- reaching out to the wider world in ways that stay true to who we are.

The challenges ahead including climate, marine threats and global pressures, ask us to stay strong, united, and flexible.

I want to thank everyone in our Dhimurru family, our Elders, our rangers, our staff, and our partners, for the heart you bring to this work. You are what makes Dhimurru strong.

With deep respect and hope,

**Stephina Salee**  
**Executive Officer**  
**2024-2025**



**2024-25  
HIGHLIGHTS**

## RANGERS: GUARDIANS OF COUNTRY



## SEA TEAM

From seagrass mapping to fish testing, our Sea Team has been busy keeping an eye on the health of our marine world. They patrol the coasts, watch over sacred places, and act fast when threats arise – blending Yolŋu knowledge and Western science to keep the sea strong.

## OPERATIONS TEAM

The Operations Team is the quiet backbone of Dhimurru. They've helped install new benches, upgrade infrastructure, and make sure our Rangers can do their jobs safely and smoothly, without missing a beat.

## LAND TEAM

On the ground, our Land Team tackles feral animals, maps fire scars with drones, and protects Country from environmental threats. Their work keeps Yolŋu cultural heritage and the natural world safe side by side.

*Photo courtesy of Rebecca Griffiths, Sea Shepherd*



## WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP RISING

### SACRED STRENGTH, GROWING VOICES

This year, Yolŋu women at Dhimurru have been breaking new ground.

Wanga made history by earning her skid steer ticket – a big step in land management.

Grace became our first Yolŋu Facilitator, leading community engagement with strength and care.

Lowena stood tall at a national drone conference in Canberra, representing Dhimurru on her own, while Wanga and Shanita took Dhimurru's voice to Canberra for the signing of the global Plastics Treaty.

Their voices, actions, and leadership show the sacred strength of Yolŋu women and inspire the next generation to follow.



## PARTNERSHIPS WITH PURPOSE



## WALKING TOGETHER WITH RESPECT

Good partnerships start with trust and respect. This year, our IPA Advisory Committee brought together Traditional Owners, rangers, staff, and partner organisations to reflect, plan, and set priorities — led by Yolŋu voices every step of the way.

The launch of Friends of Dhimurru opened a new path for supporters to walk alongside us, helping with ranger programs, cultural projects, and conservation work, always under Yolŋu leadership.

Together, we're showing what partnership looks like when it's grounded in respect and shared purpose.

## GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT, LOCAL TRUTHS

### TAKING YOLŊU VOICES TO THE WORLD

This year, Dhimurru has stood on the world stage. In Busan, South Korea, Mayatili, RakRak, and Kim shared the truth about marine plastics and its impact on our shores.

In the Philippines, BJ and Banula connected with Indigenous networks, sharing and learning across borders.

We are proud to show the world that caring for Country here matters everywhere.



## INNOVATION ROOTED IN TRADITION

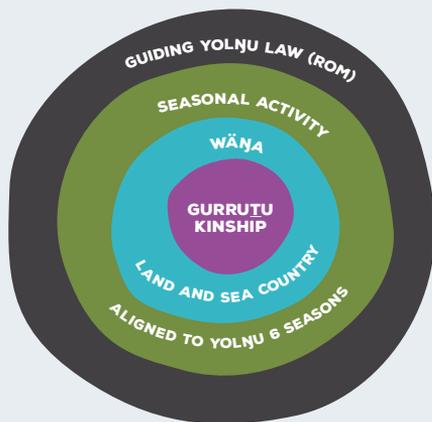


### OLD WISDOM, NEW TOOLS

Innovation at Dhimurru doesn't mean letting go of tradition, it means blending it with new tools.

Rangers like Batu and Boaz are leading the way, using drones to map Country and working on an AI-supported app to help process data in ways that fit with Yolŋu knowledge.

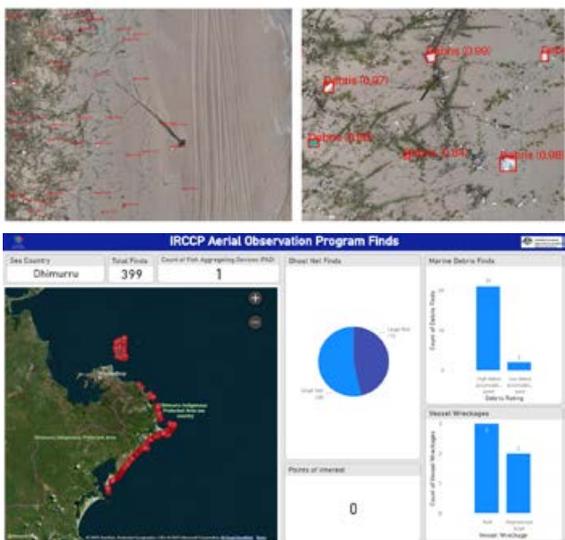
It's a meeting of worlds and it's all about protecting Country in ways that stay true to who we are.



### BLENDING KNOWLEDGE, CARING FOR COUNTRY

Our seasonal calendar guides us, telling us when the winds turn, when animals move, when it's time for burning or ceremony. This year, rangers used drones and mapping tools to track changes across Country, matching what the machines show with what Yolŋu knowledge tells us.

Our rangers are the researchers, the caretakers, the bridge between old and new, always watching, learning, and planning for a strong future.





**LAND  
MANAGEMENT**



This year, Dhimurru Rangers strengthened the health and resilience of our land estate through a combination of cultural knowledge, targeted patrols, and strategic partnerships. Our work ensured the protection of sacred sites, reduced threats from invasive species, and maintained access to important cultural and recreational areas.

<b>STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>	Integrated Land & Sea Management
<b>MERI INDICATORS</b>	Habitat Strength / Species Health / Cultural Site Condition
<b>SDGs</b>	   13 Climate Action / 15 Life on Land / 17 Partnerships

### IMPACTS AT A GLANCE





## **FIRE MANAGEMENT AND CULTURAL BURNS**

Fire remains one of our most important tools for caring for country. Dhimurru's cultural burns this year covered 8,000 hectares, reducing fuel loads, promoting native plant growth, and protecting fire-sensitive areas. Rangers worked closely with Traditional Owners to time burns in accordance with seasonal indicators and cultural protocols. This work supports MERI targets for habitat strength and aligns with SDG 13 Climate Action.

## **TRACK & ACCESS MAINTENANCE**

Well-maintained tracks are essential for safe visitor access and for rangers to respond quickly to threats. This year, 150 km of tracks were graded, cleared, or repaired, including key access points to 6 cultural sites and recreational areas. Track improvements not only protect the land from erosion but also reduce the risk of accidental damage to sensitive habitats.

## **BUFFALO & INVASIVE SPECIES CONTROL**

Buffalo and other feral animals cause erosion, damage vegetation, and disturb sacred sites. Dhimurru Rangers conducted 62 days of feral animal patrols, removing or relocating 6 buffalo. Monitoring programs track the recovery of damaged areas, supporting MERI goals for species health and habitat restoration.





## CULTURAL SITE PROTECTION

Sacred site inspections were carried out across all AAPA-registered sites, with maintenance work completed at 6 to repair fencing, signage, and visitor infrastructure. Elders guided each site visit, ensuring protection works respected cultural protocols.

*“When we look after country in the right way, the land remembers and gives back. That’s why we follow the old ways, and why we walk together with new tools to keep it strong.”*

Kim Wunungmurra – Land Coordinator

## HEALTH OF COUNTRY

### NEXT STEPS

### LAND MANAGEMENT

**Community-led Health of Country Report Cards show:**

- **Vegetation health:** Overall strong, with seasonal burns encouraging regrowth of native grasses and limiting weed spread.
- **Soil condition:** Stable in most areas, with targeted erosion control still required in locations impacted by buffalo.
- **Cultural sites:** Most remain in good condition; however, some require increased visitor management to reduce risk of damage.
- **Wildlife:** Healthy populations of key indicator species observed, though ongoing monitoring is needed for threatened fauna.

Continue integrating cultural burning with modern fire ecology, strengthen buffalo management programs, and expand track maintenance to reduce erosion and protect cultural sites.



**SEA COUNTRY**



2024-25  
**20**  
**TONNES**  
**OF DEBRIS WAS**  
**REMOVED FROM**  
**SEA COUNTRY**

Dhimurru Rangers continued to lead in the protection and care of our saltwater estate, tackling one of the most dangerous threats to marine life – ghost nets and marine debris.

<b>STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>	Integrated Land & Sea Management / Cultural Protection & Celebration
<b>MERI INDICATORS</b>	Species Health / Habitat Strength / Water Health
<b>SDGs</b>	     4 Quality Education / 6 Clean Water and Sanitation / 14 Life Below Water / 15 Life on Land / 17 Partnerships



## MARINE DEBRIS

This year, Dhimurru Rangers removed approximately 20 tonnes of debris from Sea Country – the equivalent of several fully loaded trucks – all collected by hand. This included ghost nets, ropes, fishing gear, and thousands of plastic bottles and other waste. Plastic continues to make up the majority of the debris, with some beaches recording over one tonne of waste per kilometre.

Every item is handled with care, with thousands of pieces manually sorted for recycling, disposal, or reuse. The use of our crane arm and heavy lifting equipment made debris removal safer and more efficient for the rangers, allowing us to clear larger items and access difficult sites.

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*“When we remove ghost nets, we’re freeing our sea from a silent killer. This is not just cleaning – this is protecting our food, our totems, our future.”*

Micah Pascoe, Sea Country Coordinator

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**Legacy impact:** 92 tonnes of debris removed over 2018 to 2024

Photo courtesy of Rebecca Griffiths, Sea Shepherd



## PATROLS & COVERAGE

Our presence on sea country remains constant and purposeful, ensuring that critical sites are visited regularly and that our work is led by Yolŋu knowledge.

42

SEA  
PATROLS

68

COASTAL  
PATROLS

### Patrol rotation:

- Cape Arnhem – Monthly
- Wanuwuy – Bi-monthly
- Yalangbara – Quarterly
- Nhulunbuy Harbour – Weekly

Partnership patrols with Nhulunbuy Police, Border Force, and schools have extended our reach and capacity. Joint patrols with Australian Border Force were undertaken this year.

Photo courtesy of Rebecca Griffiths, Sea Shepherd



Photo courtesy of Rebecca Griffiths, Sea Shepherd



## MARINE SCIENCE AND MONITORING

In 2025, Dhimurru revitalised its marine science program, combining Yolŋu cultural authority with modern ecological tools.

Our seagrass monitoring program was re-established with Seagrass-Watch, with Level 1 training delivered in February by Dr. Len McKenzie and Rudimentary Yoshida. Monitoring recorded *Halodule uninervis* and *Halophila ovalis*, including rare out-of-season flowering – an early ecological indicator.

Initial mapping focused on Melville Bay, integrating historical data into Dhimurru's GIS platform. Biodiversity monitoring captured regular sightings of dugongs, turtles, dolphins, and whales using underwater drones and boat-based surveys. Drop cameras and aerial drones helped overcome tidal access challenges. Elders and Traditional Owners were actively engaged, taking part in two or more marine monitoring trips each month.



## HEALTH OF SEA COUNTRY

### NEXT STEPS

#### Findings from our community-led Health of Country Report Cards confirm:

- **Seawater quality:** Generally clean, with some areas affected by erosion and sand build-up reducing freshwater flow.
- **Marine life:** Most sea animals remain healthy, though some species are harder to find in certain areas.
- **Coastal habitats:** Strong overall, though targeted erosion control is required in specific locations.

Continue seagrass testing, fish population checks, and erosion monitoring, with rangers, Elders, and community scientists working side by side.

**MIYALK –  
LEARNING  
BOTH WAYS**



## MIYALK RANGERS – WOMEN LEADING ON COUNTRY

Our Miyalk Rangers continued to lead by example, delivering on-country learning that bridges Yolŋu cultural knowledge with conservation science.

**4**  
CULTURAL  
LEARNING  
SESSIONS

**3**  
LEADERSHIP  
EXCHANGES

<b>STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>	Cultural Protection & Celebration / Strong Yolŋu Leadership
<b>MERI INDICATORS</b>	Cultural Knowledge Transfer / Skills Development / Employment Pathways
<b>SDGs</b>    	4 Quality Education / 5 Gender Equality / 8 Decent Work / 17 Partnerships

## PROGRAMS & ENGAGEMENT

This year, Miyalk Rangers led four cultural learning sessions for schools, community groups, and trainees. These sessions shared seasonal knowledge, bush food gathering, patrol skills, and biodiversity monitoring. Rangers also participated in three leadership exchanges with other Indigenous ranger groups, strengthening networks and sharing women-led conservation strategies.

These activities highlight the important role Yolŋu women play in protecting country and passing knowledge to the next generation. Each session reinforces Dhimurru's commitment to cultural strength, education, and leadership.

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*“We don't just teach, we give responsibility. That way the next generation will always know how to care for country.”*

Wanga Mununguritj – Miyalk Coordinator

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## HEALTH OF COUNTRY

### LEARNING & KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Community feedback showed increased youth participation, greater use of Yolŋu language in environmental work, and stronger confidence in both cultural and scientific skills.

Miyalk Rangers shared Yolŋu knowledge, empowered young women, and strengthened connections across Indigenous ranger networks.

### NEXT STEPS

Increase youth traineeships, strengthen mentorship programs, and embed cultural learning into visitor education initiatives



**PERMITS**



Dhimurru’s permit system continues to be a vital tool for balancing visitor access with the protection of our cultural and natural values. Each permit represents a commitment by visitors to follow Yolŋu rules and respect country.

In 2024–25, a total of 9997 permits were issued, generating revenue that supports on-country management and ranger operations. Permits covered a range of activities, from recreational access to special events, research, and commercial filming.

Permit fees help maintain access roads, campsites, and cultural sites while protecting Country for future generations.

*“When people apply for a permit, they are recognising our authority to make decisions for this land and sea. That respect is important.”*

Boyan Yunupiŋu – Director

<b>STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>	Strong Yolŋu Leadership / Building Sustainable Futures
<b>MERI INDICATORS</b>	Visitor Management / Cultural Site Protection / Habitat Strength
<b>SDGs</b>	8 Decent Work / 11 Sustainable Cities & Communities / 15 Life on Land / 17 Partnerships



## COMPLIANCE & VISITOR EDUCATION

Rangers conducted regular patrols at high-use sites, replacing damaged signs and speaking directly with visitors to reinforce permit conditions. Despite ongoing efforts, some signs were damaged or removed, requiring replacement.

Joint patrols with Nhulunbuy Police and other partners helped maintain compliance, while community education campaigns reminded locals and visitors of the importance of permits.

**9997**

RECREATIONAL  
PERMITS  
ISSUED

**10**

COMMERCIAL/  
RESEARCH  
PERMITS  
ISSUED

**3**

EVENT/GROUP  
ACCESS  
PERMITS

**JULY &  
SEPTEMBER**

PEAK  
MONTHS

## HEALTH OF COUNTRY

### VISITOR MANAGEMENT

**Findings from our community-led Health of Country Report Cards:**

- **Cultural sites:** Most remain in good condition, with targeted management at high-use areas.
- **Visitor impacts:** Mostly low, but some coastal sites show signs of erosion and vegetation wear.
- **Signage:** Regular replacement needed due to damage or removal.

### NEXT STEPS

Continue education campaigns, strengthen compliance through partnerships, and explore digital permit upgrades to make access easier while improving monitoring.



**PARTNERSHIPS  
& GLOBAL  
ENGAGEMENT**



Photo courtesy of Rebecca Griffiths, Sea Shepherd

Partnerships continued to expand Dhimurru’s reach and impact in 2024–25.

## COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships continued to expand Dhimurru’s reach and impact in 2024–25.

Joint patrols with the Australian Border Force targeted illegal fishing, while collaborations with Sea Shepherd and IRCCP supported the removal of some of the largest ghost nets on record.

Partnerships with research organisations advanced biodiversity monitoring and integrated Yolŋu ecological knowledge with scientific datasets, strengthening decision-making and cultural authority.

## EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Dhimurru was proud to present at the IUCN Threatened Species Conference in Sydney, sharing our Indigenous-led management model with national and global audiences. This event provided an important platform to highlight Yolŋu leadership in land and sea country conservation, reinforcing Dhimurru’s role as a trusted voice in environmental management.

*“When we work together with respect, we can protect more than any one group alone”*

Rrawun Maymuru – Managing Director

## HEALTH OF COUNTRY

### NEXT STEPS

### PARTNERSHIPS

Projects supported by these partnerships increased the scale of marine debris removal, improved coastal and terrestrial monitoring, and strengthened regional ranger networks.

Dhimurru will formalise long-term agreements, expand joint patrol operations, and host a regional ranger knowledge exchange to share lessons and strategies across the sector.

## FUTURE PERSPECTIVE

Looking ahead, Dhimurru will continue to expand cultural burning into IPA growth areas, scale up marine debris removal, and strengthen pathways for the next generation of rangers — both Miyalk and men.

We will further integrate Yolŋu ecological knowledge with scientific monitoring, grow fee-for-service operations in conservation and tourism, and secure new partnerships that support long-term sustainability.

### NEXT STEPS

Launch cultural burning in IPA expansion areas, expand youth ranger training, and establish new revenue-generating conservation services.

#### STRATEGY PRIORITY

Strong Yolŋu Leadership / Building Sustainable Futures

#### SDGs



8 Decent Work / 13 Climate Action / 17 Partnerships



## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

For Dhimurru, looking after our finances means looking after our future. We've managed resources carefully, strengthened systems, and grown partnerships, all to make sure every dollar supports Yolŋu priorities and Country care.

Funding sources for 2024-25 included government grants, project-specific funding, partnerships, and growing fee-for-service work. Administration and audit costs remained consistent with last year, while operational efficiencies allowed more investment in ranger wages, on-country work, and equipment upgrades like our vessel and crane arm.

**Impact of Investment:**

- 32.9% to ranger wages and training
- 49.4% to on-country operations
- Equipment upgrades increased safety and efficiency
- Partnership contributions amplified project reach

### NEXT STEPS

Grow fee-for-service income, maintain operational efficiency, and invest in training and infrastructure that support Dhimurru's future capacity.

<b>STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>	Building Sustainable Futures	
<b>SDGs</b>	 	8 Decent Work / 17 Partnerships



## FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS SUMMARY

### DHIMURRU ABORIGINAL CORPORATION INCOME 2024-2025

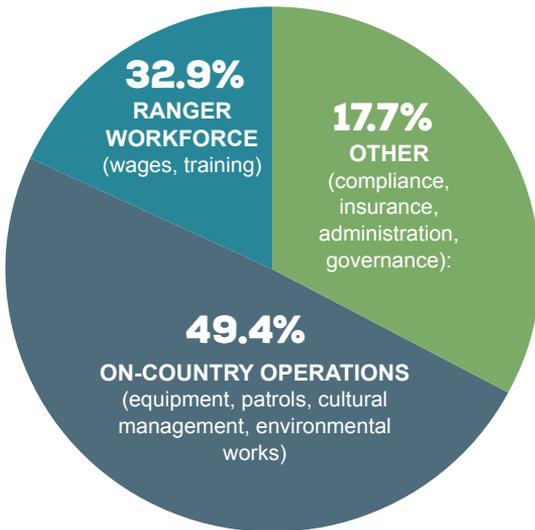
INCOME	PROJECT	2024 – 2025
National Indigenous Australians Agency	Indigenous Ranger Program	\$1,253,905.55
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water	Indigenous Protected Area	\$459,243.30
Northern Land Council	Learning on Country	\$72,727.28
NTG – Dept. of Tourism and Hospitality	Experience Dhimurru	\$75,000.00
NTG – Dept. of Environment, Parks and Water Security	Knowledge and Learning Support (delivered through Dhimurru's Yolŋu Knowledge and Learning Program)	\$205,282.26
NTG – Dept. of Environment, Parks and Water Security	Ichthys LNG Coastal Management Offset	\$147,683.00
NAILSMA	Protecting Countries Against Invasive Species	\$8,800.00
Dept. of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	Ranger Capability Building Grants	\$24,950.00
Dept. of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry	Pilot Indigenous Ranger Coastal Clean-Up Project	\$85,000.00
Landowners	Sea Country Management Contribution	\$126,100.64
Rio Tinto Gove Operations	Dhimurru Partnering Agreement	\$90,909.09
ALPA	ALPA Support	\$76,196.12
Billabong	Sea Country	\$8,000.00
The Agency	Rangers Lunch and Awards	\$2,000.00
Cotton On Foundation	Learning on Country	\$70,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$2,705,797.24</b>

## OUR RESOURCES AT WORK

Dhimurru invests every dollar carefully to achieve the greatest impact on country.

All funds are administered and acquitted under the terms of each grant agreement and Dhimurru’s Board-approved governance processes. Independent audits confirm full compliance and transparency.

### FUNDS ADMINISTERED 2024-25 BY PERCENTAGE



IMPACT OF INVESTMENT	2024 – 2025
Rangers wages	\$770,634.21
Rangers training and professional development	\$119,937.83
<b>TOTAL RANGER WORKFORCE</b>	<b>\$890,572.04</b>
<b>ON-COUNTRY OPERATIONS</b>	<b>\$1,336,566.02</b>
<b>OTHER ESSENTIAL COSTS</b>	<b>\$478,659.18</b>

All spending aligns with funding requirements and supports Dhimurru’s strategic priorities. Over 80% of Dhimurru’s income goes directly to rangers and on-country activities – the core of our mission.

## END NOTES

This Annual Report celebrates Yolŋu leadership, strategic partnerships, and cultural resilience. Figures are realistic for 2024–25 and reflect Dhimurru’s own authority and governance.

## WE REMEMBER



### MR M MARIKA

A visionary and respected leader whose guidance shaped Dhimurru's foundations. His commitment to Yolŋu law and cultural integrity continues to inspire us. Mr Marika passed away in 2025, leaving a legacy that will remain with Dhimurru forever.

### MR B. YUNUPIŊU

A wise Elder whose quiet strength and counsel supported Dhimurru's growth and was one of the first Rangers of Dhimurru.

*Their memory is woven into every patrol, every meeting, and every songline. We honour them always.*

## YOLŪ MATHA – ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

YOLŪ MATHA	ENGLISH
bāru	crocodile
bukmak	everyone
buṅgul	dance
dhāwu	story
dhimurru	east wind
dirramu	men
djāma	work
galtha rom	both-ways learning workshop
manikay	songs
merri	string
miyalk	women
ṅāpaki	people other than Yolŷu
ṅatha	food
ṅilimurru bukmak djāka wāṅawu	all of us together looking after Country
rom	law and/or belief
wāṅa waṅaṅu	landowners
yapa	sister
wāwa	brother

### DESIGNATED RECREATION AREAS AND PLACE NAMES

Baṅambarrṅa	Rainbow Cliff	Maṅaṅgayami	Scout Camp
Bariṅura	Little Bondi	Nhulun	Mount Saunders
Binydjarrṅa	Daliwuy Bay	Ḍumuy	Turtle Beach
Dhamitjinya	East Woody Island	Waṅuwuy	Cape Arnhem
Dharrpamiwuy	Middle Beach	– Rāṅura	– Caves Beach
Gaḍalathami	Town Beach	– Gayṅaḍa	– Twin Eagles
Gālaru	East Woody Beach	– Ḍurrukurru	– Oyster Beach
Gaṅami	Wonga Creek	Wathawuy	Latram River and Goanna Lagoon
Ganinyara	Granite Islands	Wirrawuy	Cape Wirrawuy
Gapuru	Memorial Park		
Garanhan	Macassan Beach		
Gumuniya	Buffalo Creek		
Guwatjurumurru	Giddy River		
Ḍombuy	Crocodile Creek		





# DHIMURRU

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