KARAJARRI HEALTHY COUNTRY PLAN 2013 - 2023 Palanapayana Tukjana Ngurra

'Everybody looking after country properly'



February 2014

KARAJARRI TRADITIONAL LANDS ASSOCIATION

Funded by

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC), the PEW Environmental Trust and The Nature Conservancy













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All duty of care was taken to truly represent the views and desires of Karajarri people throughout this plan.

WARNING

This plan contains images, names and references to deceased Aboriginal people

COVER PHOTO IMAGE: Nangkurna, near Bidyadanga.



The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Australian Government or the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

Contents

Karajarri Dedication5
Acknowledgements6
How to Use this plan7
Overview of Karajarri Land and Sea Country 10
Jurarr (coastal areas), Malampurr (Eighty Mile Beach) and Walyarta (Salt Creek)12
Pirra (inland areas)12
Kurriji pa Yajula (Dragon Tree Soak)12
Karajarri People14
Karajarri Governance16
History of Karajarri Land and Sea Management18
IPA Consultation20
Proposed Karajarri IPA: Stage 121
Proposed IUCN Listing
The Staged IPA Approach24
Karajarri Targets, Objectives And Strategies 26
Target 1: Karajarri Cultural Knowledge and
Practice26
Objectives26
Strategies
Target 2: Karajarri Cultural and Heritage Places. 30
Objective30
Strategies30

Target 3: Livelihoods on and from country32
Objectives32
Strategies34
Target 4: Wetlands and springs36
Objectives36
Strategies36
Target 5: Terrestrial food resources38
Objectives38
Strategies38
Target 6: Kari (Saltwater) Habitat40
Objectives40
Strategies40
Target 7: Saltwater Resources42
Objectives42
Strategies42
Threats Across Targets44
Threat 1: Climate Change44
Threat 2: Lack of accessibility to country by Karajarri people44
Threat 3: Lack of cultural knowledge transmission44
Threat 4: Commercial fishing46
Threat 5: Irrigated Agriculture46

Threat 6: Insufficient resources for managing country	46
Threat 7: Capacity of Karajarri Rangers	46
Threat 8: Lack of recognition of Karajarri jurisdiction	46
Threat 9: Unsustainable Indigenous Harvest	48
Threat 10: Pest Animals	48
Threat 11: Weeds	48
Threat 12: Recreational fishing	48
Threat 13: Mining and exploration	50
Threat 14: Unmanaged visitors	50
Threat 15: Alcohol and Drugs	.52
Threat 16: Lack of Cultural Programs in Mainstream Education	.52
Threat 17: Inappropriate Fire Regimes	.52
Threat: 18 Pastoral lease changes in 2015	54
Governance of Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area and Ranger Program	55
Monitoring and Evaluation	56
The Next 10 Years	56
ANNEXURE A	.57

KARAJARRI DEDICATION

Nganga muwarr yakani nganjurrka tukujalkunya nugurra. Janjanka ngurra

jinalkuyangarla palalkunyangarla kulurrangu.

"These words are about Looking After Country, a responsibility our old people left for us. In this time and era we will follow in their footsteps."

We dedicate this plan to our elders who have passed away, and led us in the fight for our Native Title: Jack Mulardy, Joseph Wandi, John Dudu, Norman Munro, Mervyn Mulardy Snr, Alec Mackay, Stephen Possum, John Hopiga, Edna Hopiga Wabijawa, Cissy Everett Miaka, Elsie White Kamaga, Dora Possum and Flora Possum.



Right: Ancient footprints on Karajarri coastal country

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Our Vision

"Karajarri is unique: our country, people, language, and culture. Karajarri carry the responsibility to keep our country good for our future generations. This is recognised from Pukarrikarra and in our native title rights. Under our law it is our responsibility to look after our traditional lands, our country. Our vision is to look after our country, as we have done for thousands of years."



Overview of Karajarri Land and Sea Country

Karajarri people are the traditional owners of the land and intertidal zone along the southwest Kimberley coast, from Thangoo pastoral lease in the north to Malamburr Well on the northern end of Eighty-mile beach, adjoining Anna Plains lease to the south. Karajarri country extends several hundred kilometres eastwards to the Great Sandy Desert.

Karajarri country is rich in biodiversity values. The coastal region contains beaches, tidal creeks, bays, reefs and sea-grass beds. These areas are breeding and feeding grounds for threatened and migratory sea turtle species such as the Olive Ridley, Hawksbill Turtle, Loggerhead Turtle and Green Turtle. Dugongs and Snubfin Dolphin inhabit the near-shore areas. The eastern desert country is home to many rare animal species such as the nationally endangered Gouldian Finch, Marsupial Mole, Northern Quoll and the vulnerable Princess Parrot and Greater Bilby. In total there are five bird species, six mammal species, nine reptile species and four fish species listed as endangered or vulnerable under the Commonwealth EPBC Act that occur within Karajarri country. Over 30 migratory species listed in international treaties occur in Karajarri country.

There are significant cultural sites in coastal and inland areas that are regularly used and maintained by Karajarri people. These sites include fish traps, Ceremonial Increase sites, ceremonial areas and Pulany (mythical Serpent) sites. Other important places on country are freshwater spring systems, historical sites such as the La Grange mission, burial sites, pearling camps and the old ration depot. Archaeological sites contain fossils and extensive middens, burial sites and Aboriginal rock art.

In 2002 and 2004 Karajarri people were recognised as the Native Title Holders for most of their traditional lands, including the coastal land of the Frazier Downs lease. Through their Registered Native Title Body Corporate (RNTBC) the Karajarri Traditional Lands Association (KTLA) carries out the cultural responsibility for the management Karajarri country.

In 2008 the KTLA received funding from the Federal government's Indigenous Protected Area and Working on Country (WoC) program, which is administered through the Kimberley Land Council (KLC) for the Karajarri IPA consultation project. This Healthy Country plan is the result of that funding.



Karajarri Ranger with a skink, Ctenotus helenae



Biodiversity surveys at Mankuna (Corkbark)



Overview of Karajarri Land and Sea Country

Jurarr (coastal areas), Malampurr (Eighty Mile Beach) and Walyarta (Salt Creek)

Karajarri coastal land is bound by Malampurr (Eighty-Mile Beach) to the south and Roebuck Bay to the north, both which have both been designated as "Wetlands of International Importance" under the Ramsar Convention. The Karajarri intertidal mudflats are feeding grounds for internationally protected migratory shore birds. The Ramsar listed wetlands at Eighty Mile Beach to the south of Karajarri country and Roebuck Bay to the north are recognised as biodiversity hot spots. Karajarri wetland systems are fed by groundwater and provide an important dry season refuge and breeding area for many migratory birds.

Walyarta (Salt Creek) is a diverse inland wetland system listed under Ramsar. It lies at the western edge of the Great Sandy Desert bioregion and adjoins Anna Plains pastoral lease. This area is of high biological and cultural importance.

Pirra (inland areas)

Pirra (the inland) is a vast area of arid country stretching from the coastal country east into the Great Sandy Desert. Pirra is sparsely vegetated and extends into the red desert dunes on the eastern edge of Karajarri country. Karajarri Pirra contains wetlands high in species richness, particularly in breeding bird species. Inland wetlands are 'living water' sites that refer to permanent or everlasting Kunangkul water sources, a refuge during the hot, dry season. These water sources are fed by groundwater. Most inland Karajarri water sources and wetlands could be classified as Aboriginal heritage sites as they have been used for generations.



Kurriji pa Yajula (Dragon Tree Soak)

The remote Kurriji pa Yajula (Dragon Tree Soak Nature Reserve) was gazetted in 1979 and is a Class "A" Crown Reserve containing 17,729 ha. Karajarri Native Title rights have since been granted in Determination "B" (2004) for the northern part of Kurriji pa Yajula. Native Title rights for the southern portion of the Reserve have been extinguished.



Karajarri People

"Everything, all the animals, birds, people and seasonal changes, comes from the country, and the country is Pukarrikarrajangka. Ngurra Yalawarra. Everything sits in the belly of the country. We stand here as Karajarri, from Pukarrikarra. Wildlife, the Whiteman calls it, but it's from Pukarrikarra. Like the water, it's our life. We want to look after that country for our young people. We belong to that country."

- Donald Grey Wuntupu 1999

Karajarri people believe all forms of life and ecological processes, including the landscape, people, language and customs are connected to Pukarrikarrajangka (the Dreamtime). Set down from Pukarrikarrajangka, Karajarri country is the source of spirit, culture and language and is the country where Karajarri people's spirits return. From Pukarrikarra, it is Karajarri people's responsibility to look after country and to ensure that traditions are passed on to future generations. All important sites have Rayi, a spiritual essence. Karajarri people traditionally live by the seasons, reading the signs to know when and where they should go to harvest the resources on country.

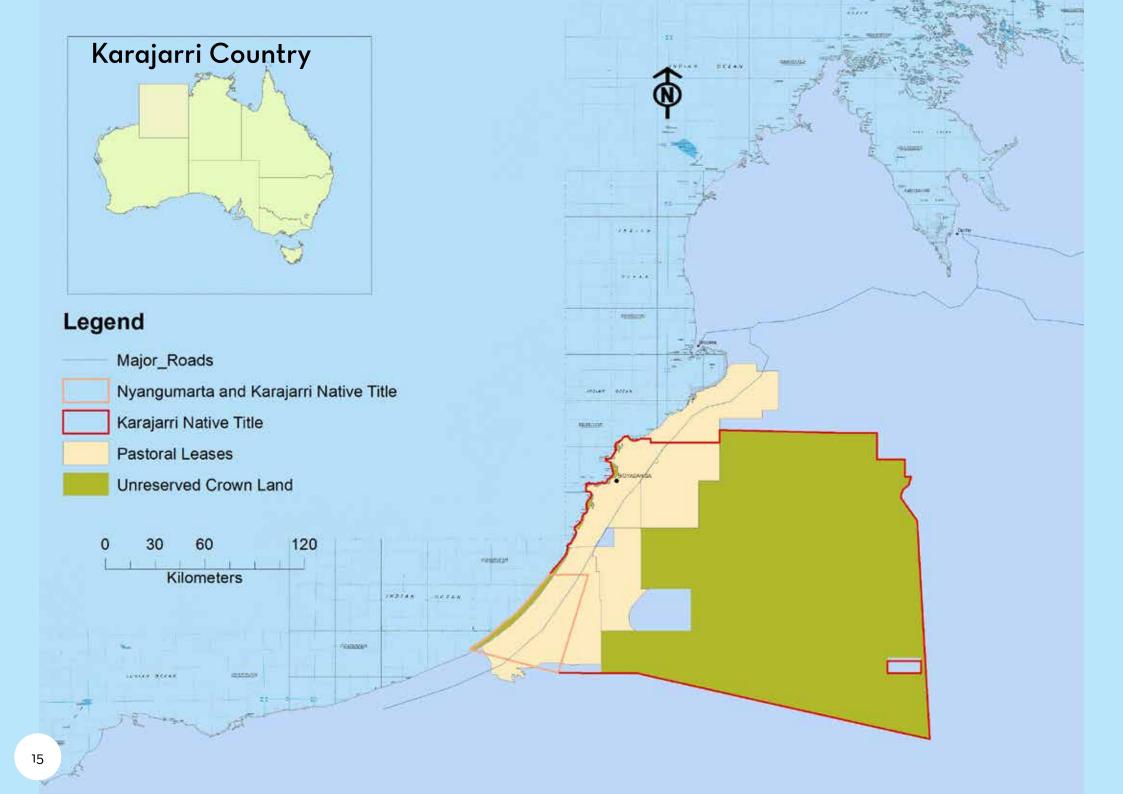
For Karajarri people the country, plants, animals and the water are Wankayi (alive). Karajarri people consider it their responsibility to keep the country Wankayi and view their environmental responsibilities as Palanapayana Tukjana Ngurra -'everybody looking after country properly'. Arising from their spiritual conception, referred to as Yartangkal, Karajarri people are born with a binding and inviolable responsibility to care for country.

For many thousands of years Karajarri people have lived in their country that stretches from the Indian Ocean east to the Great Sandy Desert. Karajarri people are the traditional owners and share cultural traditions with their neighbours. To the north of Karajarri are the Yawuru people to the northeast are Nyikina and Mangala, and to the south are the Ngarla and Nyangumarta people.

Karajarri language, which was given to Karajarri people from Pukarrikarra contains three dialects; Naja Naja, Nawurtu and Nangu, relating broadly to geographic coastal, inland and desert areas. Although differentiated by language the Karajarri and their neighbours share many cultural traditions and protocols, but are careful to not talk for another's country. Marriage across groups is common and many people share names, referred to as Kumbali, which are given during a ritual known as Kunjurung. In this ceremony a younger person is given the same name as an older person, placing them in a lifelong relationship of mutual obligation.

After the first Europeans arrived on the west Kimberley coast in 1881, Karajarri people remained on their country following cultural traditions. In the face of a European legislative regime that took their land and affected all aspects of living on country, Karajarri people fought to stay on their country and strove for recognition of their traditional ownership, which eventually culminated in Native Title determination.







Karajarri Governance

In 2002 and 2004 Native Title was awarded to the Karajarri people by the Federal Court of Australia. The majority of Karajarri land is held under exclusive Native Title and the remainder is non-exclusive Native Title. These are concepts the Western Law created; for Karajarri people, it has been always their country.

The total area of Karajarri Native Title land is 3,020,300 hectares, which on the western side of the claim goes to the lowest low water tide mark or the lowest astronomical tide. In 2012 Karajarri rights were recognised in a third Native Title claim on Anna Plains over an area called Yawinya that is shared between Karajarri and Nyangumarta station.

Following the first determination of Native Title the Karajarri Traditional Lands Association (KTLA) was established as the Prescribed Body Corporate to manage Native Title lands. Karajarri people's Native Title includes rights:

- To possess, occupy, use and enjoy the land and waters to the exclusion of all others.
- To use and enjoy flowing and subterranean waters.





History of Karajarri Land and Sea Management

In 2004 the Karajarri Traditional Lands Association (KTLA) successfully applied for their first grant for land management planning on Karajarri traditional lands. They received a small grant through the Coastal Management Plan Assistance Program (CMPAP) from the Western Australian Planning Commission for developing a plan of management for Jurarr (Karajarri coastal country).

In 2006 with assistance from the Kimberley Land Council (KLC) Land and Sea Management Unit (LSMU) the Karajarri Ranger Program was established. This came with integral partnership support, negotiated by the KLC, from the Kularri Regional CDEP Incorporated (KRCI) and the West Kimberley Kularri Employment Services.

In 2008 the KTLA obtained funding to develop an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) on their traditional lands, and in 2009 the KTLA was granted Working on Country (WoC) funding for the Karajarri Ranger Program which now employs six Rangers and a Ranger Coordinator. The Rangers deliver land and sea management outcomes on Karajarri country. Both the IPA and WoC programs are administered through the KLC, however, it is hoped that the KTLA will administer these and other programs in the future.

The Ranger program includes weed management, pest animal management, fire management, biodiversity



Karajarri Rangers Preston Wright, Gerard Bennett and Kevin Hopiga at 80 Mile Beach

surveys, cultural heritage site protection, education about traditional ecological knowledge, visitor management, regular coastal patrols and biosecurity work with the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Services (AQIS). Rangers are working with the KLC in the delivery of a regional land management regime that incorporates best practice according to traditional and western ways. The Karajarri Rangers

study conservation and land management with the Kimberley Training Institute in Broome.

Together with the Karajarri Rangers, Karajarri people wish to continue to build on their vision to manage their country to ensure a healthy landscape, preservation of cultural knowledge and practices whilst also considering sustainable economic development.





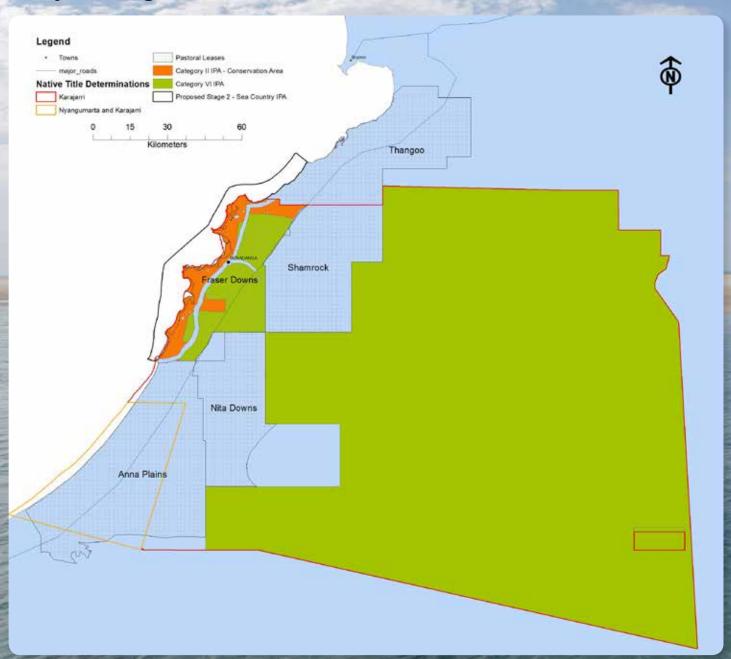
IPA Consultation

The Karajarri IPA consultation project has delivered funding for caring for country and culture. The aims of IPA management are outlined within the objectives and strategies contained in this Healthy Country Plan. Priorities of IPA management are:

- Natural and cultural values are protected including important sites, species and their habitats;
- · Governance is continuously strengthened;
- Traditional Knowledge is mapped and recorded; and
- Threatening ecological processes are managed and mitigated.

In addition to "caring for country", Karajarri people have an overriding concern that when senior people in the community pass away knowledge is lost. Therefore it is important to record, preserve and pass on their cultural knowledge to future generations and make cultural knowledge available using modern technology.

Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area



Proposed IUCN Listing

Because coastal country harbours many sites Karajarri people want to protect, it is anticipated that this country will be listed as a Category 2 protected area as outlined in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) See map overpage. Declaring the coastal Karajarri lands as Category 2 will allow the area to become part of an integrated and coherent system of protected areas to the south (80 Mile Beach) and north (Roebuck Bay) of the Karajarri IPA.

This will enable a broader scale landscape approach in managing fragile ecosystems. Some of the key management features of an IUCN Category 2 area are to:

• Take into account the needs of indigenous people and local communities, including subsistence

resource use, in so far as these will not adversely affect the primary management objective;

- Contribute to local economies through tourism;
- Manage visitor use for inspirational, educational, cultural and recreational purposes at a level which will not cause significant biological or ecological degradation to the natural resources; and
- Contribute in particular to conservation of wideranging species, regional ecological processes and migration routes

The Pirra (inland area) of the proposed IPA will fall under a Category 6 listing. Category 6 protected areas conserve ecosystems and habitats together with cultural values and traditional natural resource.

management systems. Category 6 protected areas are generally large, with most of the area in a natural condition, and a proportion used for low-level non-industrial purposes compatible with nature conservation. On the Frazier Downs part of the IPA this category 6 zone will allow for sustainable cattle operations restricted to appropriate paddocks and rotational grazing. The large Pirra area with exclusive possession native title will allow the Karajarri to maintain cultural practice and manage this vast arid area.





The Staged IPA Approach

Karajarri want an Indigenous Protected Area over their country in order to manage their country in accordance with this Healthy Country Plan. They propose a staged IPA approach:

Stage One of the IPA will cover the large tract of unallocated crown land inland to the east out as past Kurriji pa Yajula (Dragon Tree Soak Nature Reserve). The majority of this area has been determined as Karajarri exclusive possession native title. The IPA will not prevent pastoral activities on Frazier Downs but it will identify how the pastoral activities should run and minimise impacts on the important cultural and environmental corridor on the coastline. The IPA on Frazier Downs will foster management of important wetlands and springs in that area. The Department of Regional Lands and Pastoral Lands Board will provide support to allow the IPA to coexist under the planned zoning scheme or provide the necessary approvals to adjust lease conditions of Frazier Downs to allow for cultural heritage and conservation work. Currently the Karajarri Rangers are undertaking a majority of their work on the Frazier Downs pastoral lease and support for an IPA would be recognition of work taking place and balance land uses.

• Stage Two is establishment of a sea country IPA over the water adjacent to Karajarri Native Title determined lands. This requires increased management capacity on the water and support from the state agencies managing marine parks i.e. Department of Fisheries and the Department of Parks and Wildlife. The most likely area for Stage Two is the part of Karajarri Country where the Eighty Mile Beach Marine Park is proposed. A Sea Country IPA would be recognition of Karajarri people's aspirations to manage their sea and collaborative management partnerships would be fostered.



Karaiarri Dancers



Preston Wright and Martuyu Wolrigher at Walyarta

KARAJARRI TARGETS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Target 1: Karajarri Cultural Knowledge and Practice

Traditional cultural and ecological knowledge is held by the elders of the Karajarri community. This knowledge is passed down through story and song to younger generations. The next generation then carries the cultural responsibility to pass knowledge on to future generations. Karajarri people want to make sure that this knowledge is not lost and ceremonies and connection to country are maintained.

Cultural knowledge is transferred through many different ceremonies and through everyday life. Wampurrkujarra (Karajarri Law) is a critical element of passing on Pukarrikarra (Dreamtime) knowledge to young generations and in progressing young boys into manhood. Wampurrkujarra requires the whole community to be involved in various ceremonies with law bosses and family members carrying out duties depending on their relationships.

Karajarri people engage with their culture by being on country. This engagement is through storytelling, making Yiwa (spears) fishing, hunting, collecting Parakuli (bush fruits) and many other ways. Knowing when different plant or animal species are in season is an important part of maintaining good health and getting the best nutrition out of the country.

The Karajarri language contains knowledge within its words and expressions about how Karajarri people see their country from Pukarrikarra. Karajarri are concerned about the loss of their language and seek to keep it alive through media, recording language and getting their children speaking it more.

Karajarri want their protocols on country followed by visitors so that their laws and customs are respected. Without respecting what Karajarri want on their country visitors are believed to be putting their own health and that of traditional owners at risk. For example, the Kuwaiyinpijala ritual involves spraying spring water from the mouth to cautiously introduce oneself to the Pulany (mythical watersnakes) which reside in springs and Jilas. When deemed necessary, Pirrka (Lawmen) or Yiliwirri (rainmakers) are able to interact with Pulany, some of which are considered 'cheeky' or dangerous, particularly to children, and unpredictable.

Objectives

By 2015 Karajarri traditional owners can access cultural and traditional ecological knowledge about plants, animals, country and culture held by senior traditional owners

By 2017 Karajarri Law and culture is kept strong through an ongoing cultural educational program.



Strategies

- Develop and implement a cultural awareness package for tourists and service providers visiting and working on Karajarri country.
- Grow administration capabilities to adequately manage on-country programs associated with KTLA.
- Establish a safe keeping place and develop protocols for storing information collected during Native Title negotiations and other research.
- Conduct at least two on-country trips per year with young and old people transmitting traditional knowledge and maintaining Jila sites.
- Develop materials on Pukarrikarra stories and traditional Karajarri life and culture (cooking, bush medicine, tools) to transmit knowledge to younger generations.
- Continue and expand cultural and language projects with La Grange community school.
- Expand and digitise the Karajarri dictionary.
- Record traditional songs, dances and stories about plants, animals, culture and country and teach them to younger generations.



- Seek the repatriation of Karajarri artefacts and remains to keep Karajarri culture strong.
- Develop and implement an ongoing monitoring and evaluation program to measure effectiveness of strategies.
- Expand and manage Karajarri database with natural and cultural traditional knowledge about plants, animals, country and culture.

everybody looking after country properly

Kurrjungu (stone fish traps) at Ngangkuna

Target 2: Karajarri Cultural and Heritage Places

Karajarri people view their environmental responsibilities as Palanapayana Tukjana Ngurra meaning "everybody looking after country properly" and that this obligation is from Yatangal (spiritual conception). Karajarri believe they are born with a binding responsibility to care for their country. Karajarri want to make sure that areas of cultural and natural significance are looked after in the right way according to their own protocols and treated with respect by Walypila (visitors).

Many areas of cultural significance are related to Pukarrikarra and are sacred places that can only be accessed at certain times or by people who have cultural authority. Some other places are the sites of Karajarri creation stories or figures and beings in their creation stories; stories about these sites explain the landscape. Through Karajarri people looking after these places they are preserving their own law and culture and keeping their people and other visitors safe on country.

Karajarri people are buried in many areas on Karajarri country but some of these areas are not formally recognized as Jungari or Ngurrarrana (gravesites or cemeteries). Karajarri want to make sure their old people's final resting places are respected and that these areas are not subject to disturbance and inappropriate visitation.

Some important Karajarri places are not considered sacred but are regularly used by Karajarri to utilize the resources of the land. Places such as Warlpi (camping sites), fishing spots or Kurrjungu (stone fish traps) are important for Karajarri and are used by people to maintain their connection to their country and harvest resources from the land and sea. These places are important for teaching younger Karajarri people about their own history and the cultural activities they can conduct in different locations. They are potentially important sites to record stories of Karajarri culture. Other places indicate locations and boundaries for people as they travel through country, such as Niyamarri (hills) and other landmarks.

Objective

By 2022 Karajarri cultural and heritage places will be managed and protected according to approved Karajarri protocols.

Strategies

- Develop detailed site management plans for high visitor use areas including Whistle Creek, Port Smith area, Pirtingapa and Mirntanymartaji (Gourdon Bay).
- Undertake at least one seasonal fieldtrip per year to coastal areas to assess use, threats and identify values.
- Undertake regular Ranger patrols to monitor and maintain cultural and heritage places.
- Develop signage policy and interpretation policy for heritage and cultural places.
- Install fences/signs for the preservation of significant cultural sites.
- Undertake a burial site restoration project to acknowledge old people.



Karajarri Rangers mentoring students from Bidyadanga School on a Back to Country Trip

Target 3: Livelihoods on and from Country

Karajarri people want to keep their culture strong. A key aspect of doing this is staying and living on their traditional lands. At the same time as living on country and carrying out obligations caring for country, Karajarri want to participate in the modern economy and maintain a sustainable livelihood.

Indigenous Land and Sea Management is a growth area in northern Australia and provides environmental, cultural, social and economic benefits to individuals and communities. Karajarri have a designated Ranger team and it is important that this group remains as an area of employment. The Karajarri Rangers fulfill a cultural obligation to care for country within the well-supported Kimberley Ranger Program.

Many Karajarri people have had to look for employment that takes them away from traditional lands. The employment sector in the local community of Bidyadanga revolves largely around service provision such as the municipal, education, administration and community store areas.

Future employment on Karajarri lands relies on the creation of industries that manage natural and cultural resources appropriately and sustainably. There is sustainable agricultural potential on Kuwiyimpirna/ (Frazier Downs pastoral lease) which Karajarri own and good scope for cultural and eco-tourism on Karajarri land.

In recent times the mining industry has been exploring leases on Karajarri land and engaging traditional owners to provide heritage clearances for mining exploration. If the leases go into production Karajarri could be major benefactors from agreements which have the potential to provide jobs, training and royalties. There is a risk to natural and cultural heritage values that is inherent in mining sector activities on Karajarri country that needs to be properly, independently assessed.

The need for Karajarri to become self-governing is important to create livelihoods on country, as self-governance can bring greater control and input into Karajarri matters and, potentially, more opportunities for Karajarri people.

Objectives

By 2022 increase the number of Karajarri families gaining a sustainable livelihood on and from country

By 2015 a sustainable grazing proposal will be developed over the Frazier Downs Pastoral Lease to ensure that important habitats, cultural and heritage places are managed and protected

By 2013 Karajarri Traditional owners are respected and engaged with as the primary managers for healthy country

By 2016 ten full time Karajarri Rangers will have the capacity and resources to manage Karajarri country using traditional and scientific knowledge



Strategies

- Complete a staged IPA declaration over an agreed part of Karajarri Country.
- Develop a training program and mentor Karajarri Rangers through training up to Certificate Three level in Conservation and Land Management.
- Establish appropriate administration facilities to adequately manage on-country programs associated with KTLA.
- Develop tourism strategies for Karajarri country.
- Develop an external communication strategy to inform stakeholders and the wider community about the aspirations of Karajarri to manage their country according to this Healthy Country Plan.
- Develop and implement an ongoing monitoring and evaluation program to measure effectiveness of strategies.
- Karajarri will develop a policy to support families who want to live and gain a sustainable livelihood back on country.
- Investigate and foster opportunities for enterprise development around wetlands and springs.

- Develop and implement a cultural awareness package for tourists and service providers visiting and working on Karajarri Country.
- Karajarri participate in relevant forums that promote their interests and raise awareness of the wider public of their issues.
- Karajarri are acknowledged and participate as key decision makers in water allocation in the La Grange Sub Basin.
- Develop a sustainable grazing plan for Frazier
 Downs incorporating a comprehensive
 monitoring, evaluation and reporting program
 to insure that important habitats, cultural and
 heritage places are managed and protected.



Target 4: Wetlands and Springs

Karajarri country is largely arid landscape therefore wetlands and springs hold great significance for biodiversity, spirituality and culture. Water plays a key role in cultural practices and stories as well as key element of survival on country.

The importance of different water resources to Karajarri is reflected by the recognition of different types of water resources within Karajarri language. Karajarri describe surface waters and subterranean (living) waters. Living waters carry the most significance as they relate to Pulany or metaphysical snake beings that live in the subterranean waters. Living waters produce water all year round and create permanent surface water sources such as Jilas and Lirri. Jilas always have water on the surface while Lirri (or soaks) are seasonal. Jilas are places which need to be respected and Karajarri people make sure that Pulany is approached in the right way so as not to make him angry and cause destruction. Pajalpi (spring country) is another form of permanent water and provides important places for animals to rest and drink away from the harsh heat on the surrounding salt or desert flat.

Objectives

By 2021 wetlands and springs important to Karajarri are ecologically healthy and their cultural significance is maintained.

By 2022 Karajarri Country will be healthy, no plants and animals will be at risk of local extinction and habitats will be actively managed to mitigate threatening processes.

- Complete a staged IPA declaration over of Karajarri Country.
- By 2015 establish a program to assess status of wetlands and springs to establish baseline data for monitoring.
- Rangers continue to undertake biodiversity monitoring on monitoring plots at Munroe Springs, Mangkuna (Corkbark) and Pajalpi.
- Karajarri are acknowledged and participate as key decision makers in water allocation in the La Grange sub-basin by 2015.

- Prevent further degradation of wetlands and springs from pest animals and weeds.
- Undertake on-country trips to maintain Jila sites with young and old Karajarri people to keep Pulany alive.
- Develop and implement an ongoing monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) program to measure effectiveness of strategies.
- Investigate and foster opportunities for enterprise development around wetlands and springs.
- Exclude significant wetlands and springs from pastoral leases by 2015.
- Expand, populate and manage Karajarri database with natural and cultural traditional knowledge on plants, animals, country and culture.
- By 2015 establish an operative workplan, including maps of target areas, for pest animal and weed management targeting species impacting on habitats of culturally important species.



Jessie Bangku harvesting Kumpaja and Mirntirrjina fruits

Target 5: Terrestrial Food Resources

Karajarri see that the Kuwi (meat), Mayi (vegetables) and Parakuli (bush fruit) resources need to be looked after and the knowledge about their use and harvest maintained. These resources sustained Karajarri old people on the land and provided them with the nutrients and natural medicines to keep them healthy.

Kuwi includes favoured food animals such as Mitimarlu (Kangaroo), Pijarta (emu), Jalangarti (goanna) and Parrkara (Australian Bustard). Some of these animals continue to be used by Karajarri in good numbers however the Pijarta and Parrkara have been described by some Karajarri as less numerous as what they once were.

Karajarri want to make sure that the plants that produce foods are available and in healthy numbers. Bush fruits are important sources of vitamins and become available at different times of the year with a great abundance during and after the wet season. Popular Parakuli bush fruit include Jamparr (bush orange), Kumpaja (bush walnut) and the Makapala (bush banana).

A concern for Karajarri is that there is too much Yurrar (distant smoke), signifying incorrect fire regimes, at the wrong time of year. Late dry-season, hot fires are potentially impacting on important bush fruits. The impacts of different fire regimes need to be looked at more carefully. The aim is to ensure Jalalu (burning

country) is conducted at the right time as directed by traditional and contemporary ecological knowledge in a manner that promotes resource availability and biodiversity.

Objectives

By 2015 fire on Karajarri country is directed and managed by Karajarri traditional owners to look after natural and cultural values and mitigate widespread, hot fires.

By 2022 Karajarri Country will be healthy, no plants and animals will be at risk of local extinction and habitats will be actively managed to mitigate threatening processes.



Jalalu - burning country the right way

- Karajarri traditional owners / Rangers have operational capacity to undertake controlled burning operations across Karajarri Country.
- Integrate traditional fire knowledge into annual fire operations plan to protect cultural sites, cultural important species, threatened species and ecological communities.
- Develop and implement an ongoing monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) program to measure effectiveness of strategies.
- By 2013 Rangers are trained and qualified to undertake fire operations including aerial burning, protection of assets, cultural sites and threatened species.
- Within one year establish and a run reference group to coordinate fire management on Karajarri country with outstations, communities and neighbours.
- Rangers continue to undertake biodiversity monitoring on monitoring plots at Munroe Springs, Mangkuna (Corkbark) and Pajalpi.
- Prevent further degradation of wetlands and springs from pest animals and weeds.



Target 6: Kari (Saltwater) Habitat

The majority Karajarri people that live on country live on the coastal areas within close proximity to Bidyadanga Community. Karajarri saltwater habitats include Wintirri (sandy beaches, dunes and cliffs), Wangku (rocky headlands), Puntu (intertidal mudflats/freshwater seepages), Parnany (reefs) and Wankurru (deep sea). All of these areas are valuable to Karajarri people because of the resources they provide and their cultural importance.

Karajarri want to manage access to coastal areas to prevent degradation to landscapes, cultural sites and biodiversity values. There is also a desire to educate visitors and inform them of the importance of coastal areas to Karajarri people. A concentration of significant cultural sites lies along the Karajarri coastline and these sites need careful management.

Karajarri want saltwater habitats protected into the future. Internationally important migratory species use the intertidal zone and beaches for resting, feeding and laying eggs. Minimising disturbance to the beaches and intertidal habitats is essential to prevent impacts on these migratory species. The Wirntirri (sea grass beds) and beaches are important for Wilarr (particularly Flatback and Green Turtles) and need protection from disturbance by vehicles and tourists.

Areas of Parnany (reef), Wirntirri (sea grass) and Wurrja (seaweed) along the Karajarri coastline provide important habitats for fish and other marine species that contribute to the diet of Karajarri people.

Objectives

By 2022 Karajarri Country will be healthy, no plants and animals will be at risk of local extinction and habitats will be actively managed to mitigate threatening processes.

By 2016 ten full time Karajarri Rangers will have the capacity and resources to manage Karajarri country using traditional and scientific knowledge.

By 2022 Karajarri cultural heritage places will be managed and protected according to approved Karajarri Protocols.

- Rangers continue to undertake biodiversity monitoring on monitoring plots in coastal areas.
- By 2013 (and ongoing) traditional ecological knowledge of senior Karajarri traditional owners is recorded and added to a database.
- Develop and implement an ongoing monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) program to measure effectiveness of strategies.
- Develop detailed site management plans for high use areas including Whistle Creek, Port Smith area, Pirtingapa and Mirntanymartaji (Gourdon Bay).
- Develop an external communication strategy to inform stakeholders and the wider community about aspirations of Karajarri to manage their country according to their plan of management.



Saltwater resources on Karajarri country

Target 7: Saltwater Resources

Karajarri saltwater systems provide important food resources for the Karajarri people. An integral part of keeping people healthy on country and maintaining elements of traditional lifestyle is the sustainable harvesting of food resources from Jurrar (coastal country). Fishtraps and middens along the Karajarri coast show the historic cultural importance of saltwater resources. Fishtraps are still in use today and require ongoing maintenance.

Use of saltwater resources varies across seasons. During the cooler months Pangunu (Blue-nosed Salmon) and Pirrala (Threadfin Salmon) are targeted by Karajarri people. Other people (tourists and recreational fishermen) who visit Karajarri country also target these species and overexploitation of saltwater resources is of concern to Karajarri people. Pangunu are an important part of Karajarri diet and many traditional owners eagerly anticipate salmon season every year. Other seasonally important saltwater resources are Ulu (Bluebone Groper), Yilany (Mangrove Jack), Wangkaja (Mudcrab), Janga (Oyster) and Riji (Pearl Shell) which also has important cultural and ceremonial value. Karajarri coastal waters contain great numbers of wild pearl shell. Rijii or Jakuli (Pearl Shell) is important to the regional economy as well as of great cultural significance to the people of the Kimberley.

Objectives

Saltwater resources and marine environments are managed sustainably to provide ongoing value to Karajarri people.

- By 2013 (and ongoing) record the traditional ecological knowledge of senior Karajarri traditional owners about plants, animals, country and culture.
- Rangers continue to undertake biodiversity monitoring of saltwater resources.
- Develop and implement an ongoing monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) program to measure effectiveness of strategies.
- Develop an external communication strategy to inform stakeholders and the wider community about aspirations of Karajarri to manage their country according to this Healthy Country Plan.





Threats Across Targets

Threat 1: Climate Change

Karajarri people use seasonal indicators to harvest particular resources; traditional ecological knowledge informs Karajarri people when to hunt and for what species. For example when certain Acacia species flower they signal to Karajarri people that Pintany (Stingray) are ready for harvesting. This knowledge has been passed down for thousands of years. Climate change may affect seasonal patterns in resource availability, rending some traditional knowledge inaccurate. For example, when Wilarr (turtles) lay their eggs into sand that is too hot there are fewer male turtle hatchlings and a potential imbalance in the turtle population (due to the temperaturedependence of sea turtle sex determination). A rise in sea level and an increase in temperature attributed to climate change can affect the health and distribution of coral reefs, fish populations and potentially a loss of sea grass meadows and many other impacts both in the sea and on land.

Threat 2: Lack of accessibility to country by Karajarri people

Access to Karajarri country is of increasing concern and is managed to some extent through community expectations and communication. Most of the outstation roads contain "no access" signs but this is also mixed with unofficial signage guiding tourists to enter places where cultural tourism and camping is allowed. It is expected that with greater planning for Karajarri country an integrated access management system can be developed to benefit traditional owners, communities and visitors.

Community offices should be the first places for tourists to obtain information on what protocols need to be followed and where visitation is permitted. Signage in different areas is a direction from the community council or the traditional owners and should be respected. For visits other than tourism or service provision such as research then the Karajarri Traditional Lands Association should be consulted. Access to islands and bays from boats is also becoming a greater problem and the same protocols should be adhered to. Many culturally significant places occur on islands and bays.

Threat 3: Lack of cultural knowledge transmission

Karajarri country, people and culture arise from Pukarrikarra and are bound to Karajarri law. Under Karajarri law it is a responsibility that everyone keeps law and culture strong for future generations.

One of the biggest threats to the health of Karajarri country and people is lack of transfer of cultural knowledge to the next generation. It has been difficult to pass on language in schools that do not teach Karajarri language and there are few people speaking Karajarri language. It has been difficult to teach Karajarri children about the country when Karajarri people cannot travel through the country. Karajarri children are distracted by modern influences such as television, digital media and other non-traditional culture.

Karajarri teenagers are sometimes exposed to drugs and alcohol at an early age. This can affect Karajarri children who lose respect for themselves and their families. It is vital that Karajarri stories and language are recorded for the benefit of the next generation and that Karajarri children visit country and cultural sites as often as possible.



Karajarri Rangers Phillip Matsumoto, Frankie Bellon, Owen Bangu and Thomas King with an interpretive sign

Threat 4: Commercial fishing

Commercial fishers operate adjacent to Karajarri country. This is of concern to Karajarri people because commercial fishers have been sighted in the larger tidal creek systems during the 'salmon season'. Karajarri are concerned that if commercial fishing is unchecked the stock of salmon will be affected and Karajarri people will not be able to harvest these fish that a major part of the community's diet.

Threat 5: Irrigated Agriculture

For over ten years there has been concern that Munro Springs (formerly known as Shamrock) and Nita Downs pastoral leases will be used for broad-scale irrigated agriculture, potentially for cotton production and cattle feed lots. Karajarri people strongly oppose this development due to the potential threat to groundwater systems and the natural environment of the region. The Department of Water has now released a water allocation plan for the La Grange Basin. Consequently smaller agriculture projects such as development of cattle feed lots are being proposed by most of the pastoral lessees in the area. These projects will require consistent and detailed monitoring of their impacts on the water table and flows to ensure that the spring country adjacent to the Karajarri coast is protected.

Threat 6: Insufficient resources for managing country

Karajarri traditional country extends from the west coast inland approximately 300 km, and much of Karajarri inland country is inaccessible by road. The Karajarri Traditional Lands Association does not have the resources to fully manage this whole area. In the past Karajarri land did not face the same pressures and threatening processes that it does today. Previously there were not so many people wanting to use Karajarri country for mining exploration, tourism and agriculture. Karajarri require a sound resource base in order to be able to properly manage their land.

Threat 7: Capacity of Karajarri Rangers

The Karajarri IPA is large and the ranger program is limited in its capacity to manage the whole area. Capacity is about training, resources and money and the Karajarri rangers need more training, equipment and funds to help them do their work. Through partnerships, sufficient core funding from "Working On Country" and the "Indigenous Protected Area" programs as well as other key stakeholders it is envisaged the Karajarri rangers will continually develop to strategically manage their key cultural and environmental targets.

Threat 8: Lack of recognition of Karajarri jurisdiction

Karajarri people have worked hard to gain their Native Title rights. As traditional owners they welcome others into the country. Karajarri have had a long tradition of welcoming other indigenous groups who came into their country, such as the Mangala, Nyangumarta, Juwaliny and Yulparija peoples. Together with Karajarri people these indigenous groups form Bidyadanga community. Others visit from neighbouring towns such as Broome, Derby and Port Hedland. Karajarri continue to welcome those who have come to live on Karajarri lands and they ask that they be acknowledged as the traditional owners of their lands and that their protocols and management regimes be respected.

Businesses operating in Karajarri country should respect Karajarri traditional ownership and their legal right to manage their country as the recognised Native Title holders and lease holders on Frazier Downs. Karajarri welcome people visiting their country if it is done in a proper way. Karajarri are concerned about the following impacts by visitors:

- Taking too many fish from popular fishing areas such as Whistle Creek;
- · Leaving rubbish at popular fishing sites;
- Going to restricted areas without permission;
- · Ignoring Karajarri signage; and
- · Driving on closed tracks.



Graydon Bangku and Kevin Hopiga identifying a cactus weed at Bidyadanga

Threat 9: Unsustainable Indigenous Harvest

Karajarri people use their land for collecting bush food and materials. The KTLA want to establish rules and regulations regarding hunting and collecting bush food in their country and ensure that resource use is sustainable into the future. Karajarri people deem sharing of resources to be a fundamental element of their culture and it is imperative to teach younger generations to take only what they can use and to never hoard bush foods.

Threat 10: Pest Animals

Pest animals pose a major threat to biodiversity values within Karajarri country. There are 15 species of pest animal that need to be managed on Karajarri lands. The most destructive pest animals are cats, foxes, feral cattle, camels, horses and donkeys. These species threaten biodiversity and cultural values through trampling, causing erosion, introducing weeds and predation and consumption of native species. Unfenced and unmanaged cattle and wild horses are negatively impacting coastal ecosystems, particularly the coastal springs and water sources, which are becoming degraded. The impact of camels on desert water sources such as the culturally important Kurriji pa Yajula (Dragon Tree Soak Nature Reserve) requires ongoing mitigation.



Feral cat trapped on Karajarri country

The Karajarri Rangers are planning and implementing effective pest animal eradication and control programs with neighboring landowners and relevant agencies, such as the Pastoral Board, the Department of Agriculture and Environs Kimberley. The Karajarri Rangers are involved in:

- Regular surveys for pest animals;
- Developing and implementing a management program for the control of pest animals; and
- Engaging planning with neighboring leaseholders, some of who lease

KTLA lands, to improve the management of cattle.

Threat 11: Weeds

Karajarri country is increasingly threatened by weeds that are changing the ecology of the landscape. Established weeds such as Parkinsonia, Calatropis and Buffel Grass require different management programs to eradicate and skilful planning to undertake what can be long-term work programs. Traditional water resources are at risk due to weeds infesting sites, drawing on the water source and causing accessibility issues for traditional owners. The spread of weeds by animals, birds, wind and water is impossible to control but the Karajarri Rangers are implementing the following programs to minimise the establishment and spread of weeds:

- Spraying key species of limited outbreak size;
- Grubbing and burning; and
- Managing people and vehicles and only allowing access on designated roads and tracks which are kept free of weeds.

Threat 12: Recreational fishing

Uncontrolled recreational fishing is having a potential impact on fish stocks in the region and requires monitoring. Beach fishing and associated activities by recreational (and commercial) fishers where access is via the beach and dune systems are having an adverse impact on the coastal environment.



People use protected sites for casual camping while fishing. Camping and driving vehicles through the dunes damages vegetation, destabilises dunes and damages landforms. The dunes contain culturally and environmentally significant features requiring protection from unmanaged access and camping.

Threat 13: Mining and exploration

Currently there are no oil and gas industries close the Kimberley coastline. However, a proposal to extract gas and process on shore from the Browse Basin is being considered. Karajarri people are worried that if this goes ahead it will threaten their coastline and diminish food resources. In 2009 an accident occurred on an oil exploration rig in the Timor Sea, with thousands of barrels of light crude oil and hydrocarbons entering a healthy marine environment causing widespread damage. This accident could not be contained for months. Some of the things that could happen that may affect Karajarri country are:

- Shipping accidents causing oil and fuel spills
- Loss of Sea grass through sedimentation plumes
- Marine pests
- Damage to reefs
- Air pollution
- Increased visitor numbers and associated impacts

- Introduction and spread of weeds
- Negative impacts on biodiversity
- Impacts on water tables and natural spring systems
- Boat strike to turtles and dugong
- · Affecting whales as they travel north

Mirntanymartaji (Gourdon Bay) area was nominated as a possible site for the proposed Kimberley LNG Gas Project Hub. Companies are exploring on-shore for oil and gas. These activities are subject to Work Program Clearances that engage the rangers and TOs, and the companies usually provide some in-kind support for to the KTLA, such as grading tracks to specified areas, employing trainees etc. Attempts to introduce sand mining and exploration in the coastal areas have been opposed by the KTLA.

Threat 14: Unmanaged visitors

Visitors to Karajarri country are people who want to seek adventure, explore pristine environments and experience culture. Land access needs careful management to preserve the environmental and cultural values of Karajarri country. Karajarri law and culture is strong within Karajarri society and visitors need to be careful to respect sites and protocols within communities.

Unmanaged visitation, particularly four-wheel drive

vehicle activity along the coast, is a significant coastal management issue. The majority of four-wheel drive activity occurs in three key areas: Port Smith Lagoon to False Cape Bossut, Whistle Creek and Mangrove Point. A public road allows vehicle access to Port Smith Caravan Park and Port Smith Lagoon. This provides an entry point for tourists to access side-tracks to adjacent coastal areas that are not open to the public and are on Karajarri land.

Whistle Creek area and the tidal creeks near the Ngangkuna fishtraps are some of the most popular salmon fishing sites for the local Broome and Bidyadanga communities. Locals and visitors alike arrive to fish and camp, particularly on the weekends during the cold (parrkana) season. Tourists are accessing coastal areas around Mangrove Point (Jinmankur) via a station road on Anna Plains Pastoral Lease. All access and camping is unregulated in this area. Uncontrolled vehicle activity results in:

- creation of new tracks that damage dunes, rock platforms, cliffs and vegetation;
- vehicles driving through the intertidal zone in Port Smith lagoon creating tracks through mangals and damaging country;
- disturbance to nesting sea turtles and migratory birds;
- damage to indigenous cultural heritage sites and values; and
- the potential to introduce exotic plant and animal species to the country.



The problem of litter at frequently used sites, particularly at popular fishing sites along the coast is on-going. Local residents and visitors are the main contributors to this rubbish. The KTLA are undertaking a community education program to highlight the problems caused by rubbish and to encourage a more responsible approach from community members. The Karajarri rangers regularly patrol and remove rubbish.

The Karajarri Rangers wish to develop tourism ventures and cultural awareness programs aiming to keep visitors and local service providers safe whenever they are on country and respectful of traditional landowners.

Threat 15: Alcohol and Drugs

Like most societies the Karajarri community faces problems with alcohol and drug abuse. These problems may be exacerbated by remoteness, a high cost of living, lack of activities and high unemployment. The gravitation of Karajarri people to towns can lead to situations that put countrymen at risk of harm or punishment under the justice system. Alcohol and drug abuse must be overcome to ensure intergenerational transfer of culture and traditional ecological knowledge.

Threat 16: Lack of Cultural Programs in Mainstream Education

Karajarri people want to make sure that their culture is taught to their children in schools on Karajarri country. This is especially the case for the La Grange Community School. Along with the requirement of government curriculums there needs to be a focus on respecting traditional owners of the land and making sure cultural programs are integrated into school work. By helping children feel proud as Karajarri or other cultural groups there is likely to be a positive impact in the long term as young people will have a good sense of identity, their country and culture.

Threat 17: Inappropriate Fire Regimes

Uncontrolled wildfires are a major threat to the biodiversity and ecology of Karajarri country. Fire regimes have changed from traditional practice. Traditionally, patchy, small-scale fires were lit at the start of the dry season for hunting, regenerating food and medicinal plants or "cleaning up" country. The present fire regime is dominated by large, hot and uncontrolled fires in the late dry season. Coordinated, low-intensity burns are potentially the most important management tool that can maintain healthy country the way it should be.



Kelly Tumbler igniting a controlled burn, using fire the right way



The traditional burning practices of the Karajarri should be reintroduced in cooperation with contemporary fire ecology science. The KTLA is working with Bidyadanga Shire, DEC, FESA and surrounding landowners to agree to a prescribed burning program which will reduce fire hazard but maintain the environmental and cultural values of the land. The program aims to protect areas of high recreational and conservation value. Initiatives to be included in the fire management plan include:

- providing good access for fire fighting vehicles;
- creating firebreaks and low fuel zones around recreation and activity nodes;
- access to water for fire fighting;
- restricted access to certain areas at high risk times;
- ongoing monitoring of fire hazards; and
- · cooperation with other agencies.

The Karajarri rangers are working with FESA and the Kimberley Land Council in planning, training and implementing fire management and hazard reduction programs. Increased awareness is needed amongst community members of the damage fires cause to country and the danger these fires can pose to outstations and communities. Through community awareness and a better resourced and coordinated fire management approach positive changes can be made to preserve culture and biodiversity on Karajarri country.

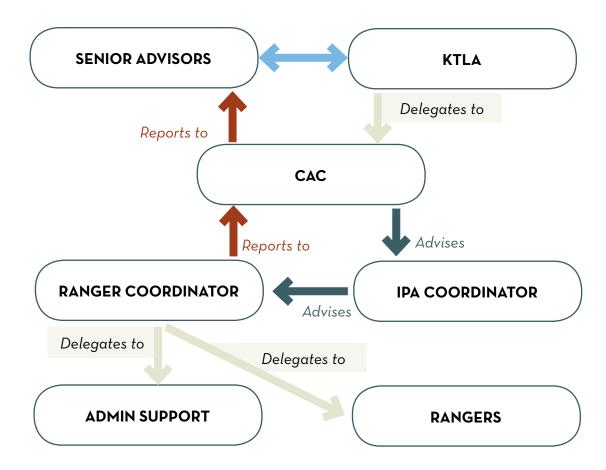
Threat: 18 Pastoral lease changes in 2015

The proposed changes to all pastoral leases in 2015 will provide an opportunity for Karajarri to develop sustainable land use program for Frazier Downs to include the protection of the wetlands and to pursue other land use options. This will also link in with the Department of Agriculture and Food Land and water planning and pre-feasibility assessment (for irrigated agricultural precincts) within the La Grange sub region.

In order to afford IPA status over Frazier Downs grazing will be undertaken using sustainable stocking rates. Grazing will be restricted to a total area of less than 20.000 Ha on Frazier Downs with a fewer than 600 head of cattle over this area. Frazier Downs covers an area of 155,000 Ha. Sustainable stocking rates have been independently determined for the northern (approximately 6000 Ha) and southern (approximately 13,000 Ha) paddocks on Frazier Downs. Sustainable stocking rates for the north and south paddocks of Frazier Downs have been calculated at 316 and 289 cattle units respectively (Annexure A). A Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) program will be created by 2015 to ensure grazing remains sustainable within the IPA and aligned with the requirements of Karajarri people.

Governance of Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area and Ranger Program

It is important that Karajarri Traditional Owners guide the management of the Karajarri IPA. A Cultural Advisory Committee (CAC) has been established for Karajarri Healthy Country Planning. The Cultural Advisory Committee provides advice on Ranger activities, planning and recruitment and supports the Ranger group as community representatives. Decisions made by Karajarri Cultural Advisors will be incorporated into every level of planning and management of the IPA. The CAC will in turn be governed by Senior Advisors who are prominent elders within the Karajarri community. The flow chart below illustrates this governance structure.



Monitoring and Evaluation

This plan has been developed using the Conservation Action Planning (CAP) framework established by The Nature Conservancy. CAP allows land managers to prioritise different management strategies according to budget, timelines and other factors. The Karajarri Indigenous Protected Area will monitor and evaluate its progress towards the targets outlined in this Plan through use of the CAP framework. The Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) program will be implemented to achieve ongoing, adaptive management of Karajarri country and cultural heritage sites.

Karajarri Rangers will undertake the works schedules within this plan to achieve cultural and natural heritage management objectives. This Healthy Country Plan will be implemented and reviewed in an adaptive manner to ensure that any changes in targets, for example new weed incursions, changes in pest animals and fire regimes are appropriately managed. A monitoring and evaluation framework is being developed to provide direction for adaptive management and set indicative performance benchmarks for reviewing management efficacy.



The Next 10 Years

With funding from the IPA and Working on Country program for the Karajarri Rangers and other income Karajarri are committed to planning and managing their IPA according the strategies set out above.

Most of all Karajarri people hope to see their culture promoted and respected, and people working and visiting Karajarri country. Karajarri look forward to working together with stakeholders and partners to achieve their vision for their country: to ensure that KTLA is resourced and functioning so that country, culture and people are healthy and strong.

Kaliya Goodbye



ANNEXURE A: SUSTAINABLE STOCKING RATES FOR FRAZIER DOWNS NORTH AND SOUTH PADDOCKS

PADDOCK NORTH

Land System	Pastoral Potential	Area of Land System within Paddock (Ha)	Stocking Rate (cu)per Ha	Total stocking (cu)
Mannerie Land System	Moderate	332.37	50	6.6
Wanganut Land System	Low	289.74	100	2.9
Wanganut Land System	Low	67.24	100	0.7
Anna Land System	Very high	4006.39	15	267.1
Yeeda Land System	Moderate	1410.02	50	28.2
Roebuck Land System	High	265.33	25	10.6
	TOTAL	6371.09		316.12

PADDOCK SOUTH

Land System	Pastoral Potential	Size Ha	Stocking Rate (cu)per Ha	Total stocking (cu)
Anna Land System	Very high	653.9	15.0	43.6
Wanganut Land System	Low	957.5	100.0	9.6
Mannerie Land System	Moderate	1118.4	50.0	22.4
Yeeda Land System	Moderate	5066.8	50.0	101.3
Nita Land System	Moderate	5119.4	50.0	102.4
Roebuck Land System	High	244.5	25.0	9.8
	TOTAL	13160.5		289.0

Class of stock	Cattle unit (cu)	
ı bull	1.5 cu	
1 COW	1.4 cu (cows in a herd pro	oducing 50% of calves)
1 dry cow or steer	1.0 cu	
1 one year old steer or heifer	0.8 cu	
1 weaner	0.6 cu	











