MAYALA COUNTRY PLAN
Arrinyijarda loo amboon amboon amboon angarriya

Coming together as one
Acknowledgements

We acknowledge our apical ancestors who fought hard for recognition of Mayala Country, and those families who took over from them and supported them, and our Elders who were passionate about passing on knowledge for caring for Country. We honour all their memories through this plan.

From a history of missions and colonisation many Mayala people grew up speaking Bardi, which Mayala people have adopted. We acknowledge the Bardi language and pay our respects to the Bardi people.

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Disclaimer: Whilst every effort has been made to reflect accurate information, nothing in this document should be construed as legal advice.

Warning: This plan contains names and images of deceased Aboriginal people.

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Contents

Part 1: Introduction  
8 A message from Mayala representatives  
11 Culture - what does it mean?  
12 Milonjoon agal joodinygor  
14 Mayala language  
17 Purpose of our Country Plan  
17 How was the Country Plan developed?

Part 2: Mayala: Our Country and our People  
20 Mayala Baaliboore: Mayala Country  
21 Anggi gaarra? What tide is it?  
22 Aalinggoon  
24 Mayalayoon ambooriny: Mayala People  
25 Seasonal calendar

Part 3: Looking after Mayala Baaliboore  
32 Our vision  
33 Relationships to Country  
34 Biocultural values of Mayala Country  
42 Concerns for our Country

Part 4: Joordingyoor (Implementation)  
49 Managing our Mayala Baaliboore  
49 Our goals and actions  
53 Protected Areas on Mayala Country  
54 Governance  
54 Partnerships and collaboration  
56 Communication  
56 How do we know we have been successful?
Dedication

We dedicate this plan to our ancestors from milonjoom.
"To look after Mayala Country as our old people have asked us to."
A message from Mayala representatives

The Mayala Country Plan encompasses all of Mayala Baaliboor - Mayala Country, which comprises all the islands, the sea, submerged lands, seabeds and saltwater. Mayala Baaliboor is our continuous cultural land- and sea-scape, where our cultural, social, political and ecological relationships on Country interconnect. This undivided nature of Country is reflected in our intent for our Country Plan.

Mayala People carry the responsibilities of our ancestors to manage our Country as they did, so that it always remains alive, healthy and rich. This is based in our unique cultural knowledge of Country, especially the complex tides and currents - the loo and noomoorr.

Our Country Plan sets our strategic approach and priorities for Country: to look after, enjoy and use our Country sustainably for future generations. Through this Country Plan we are exercising our rights as Traditional Owners and custodians to determine our future and that of our Country. This Country Plan leads all other planning processes on our Country, and we invite potential partners - whether they be state government, scientists or businesses - to recognise and support our plan, not create their own.

Achieving the goals of this Country Plan has benefits beyond Mayala people, as custodians of highly biodiverse and rich Country.

We will invite partners to work with us and invest in our priorities and actions to achieve Mayala’s vision for Country.

"That’s what this plan is about, everyone getting together and working together as Mayala people."
Culture – what does it mean?

“Culture is belonging to this place. It’s doing things like our ancestors did and remembering the way our ancestors lived.”

Culture is a big word and can mean different things to different people.

For Mayala it means carrying on what our old people taught us and sharing this with our generations to come so that Mayala people remain strong with gorna liyan and the Country remains healthy.

Culture means belonging to and caring for our Country and continuing to live by our cultural protocols handed down from milonjoon (from long, long ago) still just as relevant in today’s world.

Culture comes in packages. Some of the packages that make up this big word ‘culture’ are wiini – respect, nimalji – caring and sharing, Barrgiban – cultural respect that guides behaviour (e.g. between brother/sister) and rinyriny – common sense, knowledge and wisdom all in one. Culture is like a toolbox with all these little bits and pieces available to help govern people, keep people in a straight line.

Culture is with you from the start, when you’re a small child. It grows with you; it’s a lived practice. Listening respectfully to your old people and learning from them, especially on Country, is the way to keep growing culture.

Culture is changing a lot now. As future keepers of Country, Elders wish to teach our young people about culture alongside modern ways of learning and caring for Country.

“Like a ajibankoor (willy-willy), it [culture] picks everything up and brings it together and leaves the path clear.”
Milonjoon agal joodinygor (from long ago and always forever)

We have included these protocols so that Mayala people understand their responsibilities and all people understand how to behave on Mayala Country.

Mayala people make decisions for Mayala Country. Mayala, as Traditional Owners with responsibilities for Country, are the decision makers for Country. Our Lore has kept our Country and our people alive since milonjoon (from long ago) and we are here because of our ancestors and their care for Mayala Country. We follow our own cultural governance structures and kinship systems.

Certain family groups have cultural authority to speak for different areas. This is documented through the Native Title process and will form part of the Cultural Policy of the Mayala Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC). The PBC is the first point of contact, and the PBC will follow cultural governance structures to obtain any permissions.

Ask first to come onto Country is a basic principle of respect. It’s about wiini (respect) for others’ rights, for your own Lore and culture, and also for safety. Permission includes access by tourists, locals, fishing clubs, researchers, government and businesses. Activities on some islands can harm individuals even if they are a long way away – ask first so there is no harm to Country or people. This includes charter boats and planes visiting our Country or landing on our islands, other Aboriginal people, for example wishing to hunt or fish in Mayala Country, and activities such as burning.

All Mayala custodians have a responsibility to keep an eye on Country, on behalf of everyone else. Although there are family groups connected to some islands, everyone is responsible for keeping watch over all Mayala Country.

“Every island is important to us.” ~ Aubrey Tigan

Aarnja (giving) – Supporting others, caring and sharing, teaching our young people, sharing cultural knowledge and exchanging stories.

Promoting Mayala language – The older generations alive today were the last ones to hear Oowini spoken, the language of Mayala island Country. We also acknowledge the Oomiida language through one of our apical ancestors. Honouring traditional language through naming places or facilities.

Hunting – Right way, not too much, “just enough” and share it through cultural protocols. For example, the jawaloo (tribal son) hunts and is obliged to give their catch to their jawaloo-njarr (godparent), who decides how to share the catch. We hunt for family, not filling up freezers, so that the Country remains healthy for the future. Hunting by season: know the indicators. Don’t waste food, feed animals any leftovers.

Cultural connections with coastal areas – There are some mainland coastal areas where Mayala families have always accessed for resources and continue to have a connection, for example, Yaloon, Gooban, Gamoogoorr, Jojogarr and Graveyard. We want to work with our neighbours to maintain our cultural connections and responsibilities for these areas.
Introduction to Country - For Mayala people, introduce yourself and any visitor to Country when visiting Country.

Sandy Isaac:
Nye-yoo mayalaboor jiba ambooriny nganungaliid anyjiilulumorr gala.
Me, Mayala man I bring these people/strangers here look after them.

Alma Ejai:
Jiiba darr-arangarr baanagarr Mayalayoon ambooriny goorr-joogarra baalibooroo arralalamood.
We come today, people of this place (Mayala), look after us.

Lorna Hudson:
Today, I come here to Mayala Country, look after us and these other people who are with us. Make this place good for us.

Once when I was little, I became very sick because the wrong person was burning my Country. I was really sick, burning up myself, even though I was a long way from Country. We need to burn the right way, and take care of special places the correct way so people aren’t hurt and for banmaninboor (beings in sacred places).

Sandy Isaac
Mayala Language

Sitting at the intersection of Nyulnyulan and Worrorran family groups of languages, it was crucial for Mayala survival to be able to communicate and maintain good relations with people from these groups. Oowini, Jawi, Bardi, Oomiida and Oongarong were spoken in the region within and around Mayala. Oowini is the traditional language of Mayala island Country, and through Native Title we have connections through one of our apical ancestors to Oomiida language which we also acknowledge. Oowini originated from the islands where as Oongarong and Oomiida were identified as coastal languages. From a history of missions and displacement from Country, the old people today were the last to hear Oowini spoken. Most Mayala people today have grown up speaking Bardi, and Mayala have adopted Bardi language and therefore Bardi is used in this plan. Mayala are committed to waking up and reviving the languages of Mayala Country.
Purpose of our Country Plan

The Mayala Country Plan provides a framework for our people to plan for and manage Country. This Plan lays out steps to achieve Mayala People’s priorities, governance and management for all of Mayala Country.

The Plan communicates how we want to continue to enjoy, use and manage our Country and cultural heritage, and to provide sustainable livelihoods with economic opportunities for our future generations. The Plan builds on the Saltwater Country Project 2004-2006 and 2008 to promote the diverse cultural and biological values of Country and continuing Mayala connection to Country.

Mayala people make decisions for Mayala Country. We have developed this Country Plan as a strategic, big picture guide on how Mayala will manage Country, our priorities and our aspirations.

How was the Country Plan developed?

This Country Plan covers all of Mayala Country – that recognised through the Native Title consent determinations on 4th October 2018 for the islands and sea Country of the Buccaneer Archipelago, the eastern side of the King Sound and to the coast of the Yampi Peninsula, West Kimberley.

Following Native Title consent determination, the Mayala Working Group was established to develop a strategic approach to Country management and developed this Country Plan. Mayala people have supported this process through the Working Group, meetings and field trips on-Country (see Appendix 1). Our Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) was established on 24th May 2019 and will oversee implementation.

July 2018
Direction set from, Mayala Traditional Owners at Native Title Claim Group Meeting

August 2018
First meeting, Mayala Working Group

24-25th October 2018
Country Planning Workshop, Broome

19th March 2019
Country Planning Workshop, Broome

23-26th April 2019
Mayala Country field trip, south

20-24th May 2019
Mayala Country field trip, north

October 2018 - March 2019
Research and information collection

12-13th June 2019
Country Planning Workshop, Broome

April - June 2019
Preparation of the Draft Country Plan

30th June 2019
Checking language and milonjoon stories with Elders

1st July 2019
Presentation and review of Draft Plan, One Arm Point

30th July 2019
Review of the Draft Plan by Mayala Working Group

7th-8th October 2019
Review of the Final Plan by Mayala Working Group

15th October 2019
Endorsement by Mayala Inninalung Aboriginal Corporation

24th October 2019
Launch of the Plan at the Implementation Workshop

“Garnduwarr garnduwarr... As we approach Country its like the islands are coming out to greet us, because they’re happy. Country is happy to receive us.”

Mayala Country Plan 2019-2029 | 17
PART 2

Mayala: Our Country and our People

“We are island people: we live from the sea.”

Aubrey Tigan
Mayala Baaliboor: Mayala Country

Our Country is rich, alive and healthy.

The power and creative energy of ancestral beings shaped our Country and they continue to reside within special places, along with the stories and evidence of their deeds and the spirits of their unborn children. Country is alive and Mayala maintain reciprocal and respectful relationships with Country.

Our Country is an extensive network of hundreds of islands, interconnecting sea, reefs, submerged lands, sandbars, seabeds and saltwater in the Buccaneer Archipelago and King Sound off the West Kimberley coast: an area recognised as being biologically diverse and culturally significant.

All parts of Country - whether it be reef, seabed, water, tides, plants, freshwater or animals, along with Mayalayoon (Mayala Peoples), are undivided. We have sacred sites and stories on land and in the sea that is evidence of our long association with Country through the rise and fall of sea levels over tens of thousands of years.

All of Mayala Country holds meaning. There are special places for ceremony, traditional burial sites, graveyards, places of historic remembrances or sites for stone tools, middens, ochres and clays used for ceremonial purposes, engravings, stone arrangements, fish traps, Lore sites with restricted access, story lines connecting clan estates, events, seasonal camping areas and trading routes. Traditional language names reflect these associations, loodin (songs) and ilma (ceremonial performances), strengthen them and make our liyan gorna (feel good).

Saltwater is a powerful living force. The huge tides and complex currents created between the islands and in Sunday Strait are exceptional and the region is regarded as one of the most difficult marine areas to navigate. The large semi-diurnal tides range up to 11 metres and as the water moves between the narrow passages of the islands it can create powerful tidal streams of up to 10 knots, back water currents, dangerous whirlpools and tidal overfalls. The whirlpools in Sunday Strait are renowned as treacherous, only to be traversed with the right knowledge and, when using small boats or dinghies, during the right tidal conditions. Our people know the complex tides and travel on the noomoorr which is like a road, a saltwater highway.

Loo (tidal currents) connects Country and links together Mayala people and Country. Tidal streams that flow between the islands are named, and some people have personal connection to some loo, as part of their sea Country and there are corresponding rights of use. These tidal streams between the islands vary in power depending on diurnal, monthly and seasonal cycles.

The two tides in Sunday Strait divides the inalaboor being the traditional Jawi and Mayalaboor. One tide from Sunday Island side and one from Mayala Country run into the other, with the Mayala tide coming in first.
Anggi gaarra
What tide is it?

Nalan - Spring Tide
After new moon there is a small Ayala before building up into Boor-nga tide, before further building up to Nalan (Boordiig Gooiid – Full moon).

Ganyginy - Neap Tide
Tides don’t go all the way out, just half way. It just sits still (dead neap).

Outgoing tides
Bola – Morning - 10am start to come in.
Goorlornoo – lazy outgoing tide descending towards Ganyginy.

Incoming tides
Ayala – very small tide in morning, big tide at night building up towards Nalan.
Bornan – small building up morning tide between Ganyginy and Nalan.

Iwooloongan — Tide coming in
Imbooloong — Tide is in
Boorrnginyjin — Tide is settled (high tide)
Lyooridin — Tide is going out
Inyjoordij — Tide is already out
Boorrngoon — Equinox/open ocean
Joombalngoorr — Tide way out-whole reef showing
Aalinggoon, he came down here into Strickland Bay from the mainland, down.
He came into the bay and lives beneath the sea.
He comes out every full moon, when it’s a big tide.
As he floats on his back, as he drifts, the scales fall off his back, and turned into goowarn as they drifted down to the seabed below.
The tides came and chucked them everywhere, on the reefs, all around the islands.
This way he always gives us more shells.
This is a power.
This is part of our ceremony.
- Aubrey Tigan Galawa
Mayala names for islands include reefs and land under the sea, which joins islands together as one. For example, Bathurst and Irvine are joined by a reef platform and have one Mayala name. Sometimes a name is given to a cluster of islands, like a suburb or region, such as Boordij Ngaja and Moorroolloo Ngaja. Names can also reflect events and stories from the past.

A man called Lirribi took a biyal-biyal to Bilanyoo to get a cockatoo feather. He climbed the island, found the feathers, and slid the bottom tips of the feathers through the top of each ear as a traditional head dress called Joorla. The ancient Whale took offence as Lirribi was not allowed to wear any Joorla and was not given the right by his Jawaloo to do what he did. Lirribi could hear that the whale was not happy when it began to approach the island. He ran but the whale jumped breaking one side of the island, going around breaking another side until the island got smaller and was broken up. He collected his raft and fled paddling fast, a long way out. The whale jumped on top of the man and smashed the raft. After that, the whale swam into Strickland Bay where it turned into rocks near the mouth of the Graveyard. Those islands that the Whale broke into pieces can be seen today as Koolan, Cockatoo, Irvine and Bathurst Islands. Cockatoo Island still carries its traditional name Bilanyoo.
Mayalayoon ambooriny: Mayala people

Mayala are true saltwater people.

We have a unique island culture and deep knowledge of the complex currents and tides to navigate between our islands and across our sea Country.

This knowledge comes from our long association and living relationship with Country as it has changed over thousands of years, including adapting to the rising sea that began about 19,000 years ago and flooded extensive areas of Mayala Country (and vast areas elsewhere around the Australian coast). This significant global event is recorded through our stories, the way some of our islands are named, and in our historical, cultural and sacred sites of submerged lands and in the sea.

Our name comes from the spinifex grass that grows on the islands - we used this on top of our ngirray (shelters) to protect us from the rain and keep us warm. We burn mayala gooljoo with driftwood to make smoke that keeps mosquitoes away. This technique is also used for smoke signalling and used to strengthen babies’ feet and knees for walking.

Historically we have close family and kinship ties to the Bardi and Jawi people to the west, the Oongarong and Oomiida peoples of the Yampi Peninsula to the East, and Arrawanyin and Yawi-jabayi peoples between Koolan and Montgomery Islands to the north.

Living on small islands with little game and few large mammals or freshwater sources, our people lived primarily off the sea, adapting tools and technology to harvesting sea resources for survival, using the currents, tides and stars to navigate through Country. Knowing the Country and observing the changes through the seasonal and daily cycles is critical knowledge and skill for survival.

Seasonal indicators tell us when to hunt for different species and visit different areas. Indicators cross over between land and sea Country and are embedded in our cultural stories, practices and Lore. Understanding the landmarks are vital for navigation. For example, when miiniimbi (humpback whales) are crashing, this drives dugong away.

Noomoorr

Noomoorr are the traffic lights of the ocean - the signs of tidal movements and changes that indicate where to go and when to go.

Mayala continue to use their intimate knowledge of the environment, seasons, currents and tidal movements and noomoorr to navigate safely through Country, hunt and harvest marine resources and gather tools, bait, materials and medicine.

Timing is crucial. People must know how to hunt and when to go. Getting it wrong could cost your life.

The different phases during each tidal cycle are useful for different activities, including when and where to hunt or harvest shellfish, fish, dugong, turtle, bush fruits, yams, medicine and tools. There are many words associated with the tides that reflect the detailed and complex knowledge of water movement and living sustainably within our marine environment. A strong spring tide (goorlornoo) can be dangerous for boating activity because the whirlpools (jiidid) in the open ocean, strong currents (jarrany and loo) and waves (alalgoord) can carry boats into the ocean, making boats difficult to move, tipping them over or pushing them against rocks.
We say, ah no, dugong all gone now when we hear that crashing (breaching whales).

Alma Ejai

We live from the sea. Everyone must know the sea by heart. How to travel, where to go to get dugong or turtle, shellfish, oysters and fish. And we must know when to go.

Aubrey Tigan

**Mayala Seasonal Calendar**

**Wet**

- **Lalin**
  - Married turtle season.
  - *Oondoord* (Green turtles) are summer nesters. *Marool* fruit trees are ready to eat (Dec), and *goorralgar* with the white fruit are ready a bit later (Dec-Feb).

- **Jalalay**
  - *Miinimb* (Humpback Whales) arriving, driving dugong away. Baawanjoon married turtles lays eggs in winter (winter nesters), June-Aug. *Birriny* (Seven Sisters constellation) are low in the sky and indicate good fishing.

- **Mangala**
  - Monsoons.
  - Not much fruit around.

- **Ngaladan**
  - Storm birds – Frigate birds – indicate storms coming, usually Jan-Feb but depends on monsoon. “When storm is there, they get happy, fly everywhere, big mobs flying”.

- **Irralboo**
  - *Joongoon* fruit ready to eat, *iilarr*, *marool* fruit trees are flowering and will be ready to eat around Dec. *Odorr* (Dugong) arrive. King tides.

- **Barrgana**
  - Hunting for many different kinds of fish – *gambarl* (Surgeon fish), *jiyimarramarra* and *barrbala* (Spinefoot spp.). *Joorloo* (Spanish Flag) is fat now, when they are running you can catch them one after another. *Goorrul* (Queenfish), *jirral* (Trevally) and *biidib* (Estuary Cod) also fat now.

**Dry**

- **Baraloo**
  - *Marool* fruit trees are ready to eat in winter (winter nesters), June-Aug. *Birriny* (Seven Sisters constellation) are low in the sky and indicate good fishing.

- **Ngaladan**
  - Storm birds – Frigate birds – indicate storms coming, usually Jan-Feb but depends on monsoon. “When storm is there, they get happy, fly everywhere, big mobs flying”.

- **Irralboo**
  - *Joongoon* fruit ready to eat, *iilarr*, *marool* fruit trees are flowering and will be ready to eat around Dec. *Odorr* (Dugong) arrive. King tides.

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Information provided by Lorna Hudson, Janella Isaac, Alma Ejai, Violet Carter and Biddy Morris.
Biyl-biyal (mangrove double log raft, also called gaalwa) are a unique and highly efficient way to cover large distances with minimum effort developed by Mayalayoon. Biyl-biyal are very stable, made from a particular species of mangrove wood and suited to the particular conditions of Mayala Baaliboor and the needs of Mayalayoon. There are not many boat craft in Australia, and the biyl-biyal are unique only to Mayala. The simplicity of the technology and design along with the detailed knowledge of the environment gives it international significance: the maritime knowledge associated with the biyl-biyal/gaalwa raft and noomorr of Mayala and Bardi is recognised as intangible cultural heritage of the National Heritage listing of the Kimberley.

Navigation by biyl-biyal allowed Mayala to ride the incoming or outgoing tides and currents day or night to travel between the islands and to hunt or harvest marine resources, and could also be used for longer expeditions deep within Talbot Bay and as far as Moonjanid jina baaliboor (Brue Reef), a 13km wide reef that rises from the sea only at low tide approximately 20 nautical miles off the coast.  

Biyal-biyal generally carried one to two people with belongings, including one or two dogs on smaller rafts, and up to four people and belongings on larger rafts. Gaalwa are used by Bardi/Jawi and Worrora people in this part of the Kimberley.

Goobala (stars)

There are lots of names for stars, Jorla are the two big stars that are used for navigation.

Following these two stars allows people to navigate through Country at night, even with no moon to guide the way. “We follow one star for a certain distance then at the right point we change and follow another one. It’s like catching a bus.” Sandy Isaac.

“Every young man should be taught this.” Alma Ejai.

Goobala can indicate weather patterns - if goobal are moving about it will be windy the next day.

Birring (Seven sisters constellation) are a significant indicator for the seasons and for fishing, important for navigation and has an important Lore story.

Reading the Country, reading the sea, includes paying attention to the sights, smells and touch - being on Country reinforces our knowledge. The movement of birds, the smells of exposed rocks on the low tide, seabed and reefs are indicators, as are the sounds of the currents and tides, the nature of the winds and storms. We know the speed, the sets, associated backwater currents, the timing and other important details of tidal streams between the islands to navigate safely.

People know what time to catch the tide.

Sandy Isaac
Mayala is at the junction of an extensive coastal trading network that reinforces cultural ties and exchange. Trading would take place anytime, travel by *biyal-biyal* to trade with coastal neighbours – Bardi, Jawi, Oomiida and Yawjiibia – for items unavailable on the islands; or within Mayala islands *iinalang* to *iinalang*, and sometimes trading with Macassans who ventured into north Australia for trepang and other marine resources.

Goowarn (pearl shell) is plentiful in Mayala Country and is a significant cultural species which connects through Country in a Mayala creation story, a dreaming story from *raya*, and through Lore. Goowarn has been traded for more than 20,000 years through Indigenous tradeways, and more recently carved and decorated pearl shell with *riiji*, sacred designs. This trade originated from the north-west Kimberley and spread across the Australian continent as far as Yalata in South Australia. Pearl shell trade has been happening long before European pearling masters arrived.

“We feel the sound of the waves and the tide. We don’t have fear of the sea. It is part of our life.”

Aubrey Tigan
Colonisation and settlement

Saltwater people in Australia were the first to experience early exploration and often conflict, given that explorers came by sea. When colonisers first came mapping the Western Seaboard Mayala people were lighting fires all the way, tracking their journey so people ahead knew there were strangers in their Country.

From the 1860s pearlers, who bypassed Broome, began arriving on luggers in search of new areas for pearl shell in the King Sound region. The pearl shell beds in Mayala Country are renowned as some of the best in the world. Although early on there was sometimes conflict, later the pearlers encouraged many Aboriginal people to work on luggers. Aboriginal men worked alongside Malay, Chinese and Japanese crew, and developed close relationships. Initially, shell was collected for buttons then trade moved to pearls. Around the 1900s there were pearling camps all along the coast.

Pictured left: Trochus
Contact with Europeans brought new disease epidemics, such as leprosy and influenza, which was a heavy toll on Aboriginal people across the Kimberley.

Since the 1920s Mayala people were moved off Country to Sunday Island mission where they mixed with Bardi and other Aboriginal groups from around the west Kimberley. The mission was relocated to Wotjulum between 1934-1939 before returning to Sunday Island. One Elder describes this era as being “Mustered like bulliman”. Children and adults were put to work - rearing goats, tending gardens and general maintenance and upkeep of the mission. In this era, people worked for rations such as flour, tea, sugar, blankets and mission garments. Trepang was a delicacy that people harvested and sold to Asian markets to make ends meet during the early Australian pearling era.

In later years people began shelling - collecting trochus shell to sell to make buttons as a way for people to earn an income when living at the mission. People would get four pounds for two heavy bags of tightly packed raw trochus shell weighing around 70kg. Shelling was hard work but people enjoyed camping and being on Country. Some of the main camping areas for shelling are on Jidalany (Gibbings Island) and Boordiji Ngaja (Fraser Island). People would go around this area to Noomoonjoo (Caffarelli Island) and back to Malgi (Gagg Island Group) and Garranard (Bedford Island) which is a good camping place with lots of bush fruits.

During World War II, Japanese bombers came close to Sunday Island, which was a frightening time. We would hide in the rocks if we saw them. Around this time people were relocated from Sunday Island to Kooljaman until the war was over.

After the missions closed in the 1950s, most people continued to live in or near Ardyaloon (One Arm Point), Djarindjin-Lombadina or lived among other tribes on the outskirts of Derby, Broome and Port Hedland. Government at the time did not acknowledge Mayala and classed us all as either Bardi or Worrorra. The first thing that Bardi, Jawi and Mayala people did when they got their first welfare payment after the 1966 referendum was to pool their money and buy boats to get back to Country.

Maintaining this close connection to Country throughout difficult times of disruption and change, Mayala carry a depth of knowledge from their own experiences and that of generations before, that is carried through culture, Lore and by living the cycle of the seasons.

Some Mayala People remained in Derby, others moved to townships near and far or relocated as close as possible to Mayala Country. With the help of people like Dave Drysdale and Brian Carter, along with other senior leaders and local Bardi, Jawi and Mayala People, One Arm Point Community was established. We wanted our kids to live near school and not have to risk travelling by sea to get there. Dave Drysdale, Brian Carter and his wife local Bardi and Mayala woman Violet Carter helped establish the initial schoolhouse at Middle Beach. Their support enabled Mayala, Bardi and Jawi to strive as culturally strong people today.
PART 3

Looking after Mayala Baaliboor

“You can get food anywhere if you know what you are looking for.”
Our vision

Our vision captures the strength of culture and the aspirations of unity, collaboration and continuing care and protection of Mayala Country by Mayala people:

Mayala people working together with gorna liyan, in harmony with neighbouring groups and together sharing responsibilities for our future generations. To have the same experience as our Elders before us in being able to enjoy the peace and serenity of our Country that is always alive, healthy and rich. Carrying our culture forward to ensure the safety of our traditional Country, language, Lore and people.
Relationships to Country

Along with our cultural protocols, the foundational values of relationships and interconnectivity guide this plan and any future activities or management on Country.

Relationship between people and Country
The interconnectivity of Mayala people and Country, and of all things on Mayala Country – plants, animals, Lore, ceremony, places, people, time, are undivided. It includes everything and ‘across time’. One part of Country cannot be separated out from another, or one species from another, or people from Country or species. For example, the internationally recognised value of biyal-biyal and noomoorr depends on the knowledge and the activity of reading the Country. Most significantly, it connects up the activities of people on Country: noomoorr is not only the currents and tides, but the relationship of what to do, how to do it, when to do it, including the equipment needed. Our relationship with Country is how we make sense of our world, how we understand it, and that it is interconnected.

Similarly, when we talk of management it is not just managing a particular value but also its relationship with Mayala. For example, monitoring of turtles cannot be undertaken without aamba (men), without consideration of the health of the reef and seagrass and the customary practices to maintain the health of these species. Collecting mangrove wood for rafts must be done in the right way - the wood will be hard for the wrong person but soft for the right person.

We want everyone who reads this plan to understand this: it is about the relationship, not the value by itself.

This relationship is supported by the following principles:

- **Country is alive**
  The living force of Country has existed forever and we are part of the living cultural landscape. Respectful behaviour on Country and Mayala responsibilities to Country maintain these values. It is important for Mayala people to visit Country regularly and perform the right practices and speak to Country.

- **Traditional knowledge and practice**
  Our traditional knowledge and management practices are empirical, reliable and valuable, but endangered. Continuing Mayala traditional knowledge and management of Country alongside contemporary tools, knowledge and science, should not be an afterthought or a token gesture; traditional knowledge and management is a valid form of knowing the world. Any future working partnership must genuinely respect this.

- **Mayala have rights to practice and maintain culture**
  Being on Country to reinforce and continue the relationship to Country, for culture, family, hunting, livelihoods, passing on traditional knowledge and caring for Country, including the cultural significance of biological resources (reefs, turtles, dugong, plants, animals, water, loo etc).

- **Looking after Mayala Country is the responsibility of Mayala people**
  Maintaining Country, restoring Mayala cultural governance and decision making and building understanding and respect for Mayala’s cultural responsibilities for Country.

Mayala wish to enhance and protect their relationship to Country through any future planning or management processes and ensure governance and management of Mayala Country is consistent with these principles. One way to do this is to ensure these principles form Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in any future planning or management processes.
Biocultural values of Mayala Country

Looking after our living cultural land and seascape includes the islands, reefs, saltwater, loo, springs, cultural and historical sites, baarngaboor (seasonal camping areas), language, medicine, food and other resources in reciprocal and spiritual relationships with Country, based in a complex clan or family kinship system.

Known for its high biodiversity values and intact ecosystems Mayala Country is unique and highly valued by many visitors, tourists, scientists, conservationists, businesses and locals for its biological richness. Our islands are free from feral animals, have very few weeds, fewer destructive fires and are a safe haven for many species at risk on the mainland and a buffer against climate change. Mayala Country contains biodiversity reservoirs and ecological processes of global significance, across the different parts of Country.
linalang (Islands and reefs)
Oola (Wetlands and springs)
Mayiboorda (monsoonal vine thicket)
Gaarra (Saltwater)
Gaanyga (Mainland coast)
Most islands are surrounded by extensive reef platforms exposed during low tides. We consider islands connected by these reef platforms as one island and they are named in this way. For example, Diiji is the name for Pascoe and Hazel Islands and the interconnecting reef platform. Islands are also linked by the currents that flow past them or through cultural stories and sites. Many small islands belong to each other, like a suburb or region and we name them as a group, like Garranarr (Bedford Island group).

Taking a biyal-biyal to Moonjaning iinalang (Brue Reef)
Mayala people would travel to Moonjaning iinalang to collect trochus and fish. They would stop on Noomoonjoo (Caffarelli Island) on their way and wait for the right tide to take them in their biyal-biyal. People would launch on the right tide and go with the seabirds in the direction of the reef. It would take a few hours but eventually you could see the birds flying around the reef and see waves crashing, then you know you are there.

This story of Moonjaniid jiina baaliboor was told by Sandy Isaac
An old man named Joorloo lived on Brue Reef with his children, back when it was an island. They were not good people, they were cannibals. One day a man was swept out there after losing his raft when hunting for turtle. The children were out and Joorloo hid the man in a nirayi and told him not to come out when the children got home. When his children came home he told them to dance for him around the fire. After dancing the children were so tired they fell straight to sleep. The next day Joorloo told his children to go really early to the other side of the island to fish. While they were away Joorloo gave the man one of his imboogoon (canoes) and told him to go quickly. He pushed him with all his force off the island. When his children came home and learned about the visitor they were angry. A big flood came and covered up the island but you can still see the huts under the water, turned to stone now.

linalang (Islands and reefs)
Our islands are generally small and rocky and although vegetation is sparse, many of the islands have important fruits, yams and other bush tucker and medicine or plants used for materials or tools. Only some islands have freshwater, which is a scarce and a significant resource for survival.

Islands have a wide variety of edible plants and there are certain areas rich in bush fruits. These resources are managed through fire, replanting or deliberate spreading of seeds. goolngarriny, the long yam (Dioscorea transversa) is an important starch staple, and some islands like Oolala (High Island) are visited especially to harvest this yam, which is carefully managed. Other important bush foods and medicines include: irrilm (Glycine sp.), goorrall (Buchanania obovata), joogoon (Mimosops elengi), goorrir (Ficus virens), niyalboon (Cyperus bulbosus), ranjji (fruit tree), moonga (Sugarbag) and mangrove trees for making biyal-biyal. Madoorr and goorrir figs could be dried and stored in special places for later use when fruits were scarce.

People would travel to certain islands to collect important or rare resources such as galarriin (Acacia sp.); its strong wood is used to make nails to join rafts and its leaves are burnt to relieve asthma.

Fire is managed through traditional practices which include protecting significant areas and having the right person doing the burning. For example, we don’t burn on Hidden or Long islands because of the rock wallabies.

Iidoorl by Herbert Marshall
The islands are connected under the water and our Lore and cultural knowledge identifies sacred sites in the sea: islands that are now reefs, evidence of camps under the water and pathways connected and celebrated. Isolated from the mainland by rising sea levels up to 19,000 years ago, our islands are a microcosm of ecosystems on the adjacent mainland. Ancient reefs of black limestone rise up in places from when the Devonian reef skirted the Kimberley about 350 million years ago.

Although all islands are important to us, there are seasonal camping areas and special places like Moonjaniid jina baaliboor (Brue Reef), Wanganiny (Irvine/Bathurst Island), Gararr (Mermaid Island), Diiji (Herbert Islands Group) and Ngalangalangarr (Silica Beach) straight across from Malgi, which hold sacred meaning. Ngalangalangarr is a rare geological feature: it is thought this is one of only two beaches in the world like this.

The few scientific surveys undertaken on our islands confirm that they have high conservation value protecting populations of species threatened on the mainland, such as Nabarlek and Northern Quoll, guarding them against advancing mainland threats such as cane toads. These islands may also offer future translocation sites for species at risk on the adjacent mainland. Scientists suggest there are likely to be more nationally-threatened animals on our islands than have so far been recorded.

There are important animals on some islands, including many species nationally threatened or are listed under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC):
Protecting the pearl shell beds in Graveyard is important for its environmental values, historic and Lore significance (Arligyoon story site). As filter feeders, pearl oysters are an indicator for water quality and reef health, needing the currents and clean water of a healthy marine system.

Goowarn is threatened by climate change (water temperature, algae, change in currents etc), and by an increase in boating, tourism, fishing, as well as oil and gas extraction. We have noticed the reefs are not as healthy as in the past. They have fewer octopus, blue crab and trochus, and are threatened by coral bleaching through climate change. When people walked across the reefs, they would walk in a way that would not damage the reef, in single file. Alngir (Trochus hanleyanus) extends throughout the northern waters of King Sound. Trochus are collected from inter-tidal reef platforms by hand at low tide. Long journeys were made by biyal-biyal to Noomoonjoo (Caffarelli Island) and later by motor boat to collect Trochus and other resources as far as Brue Reef.

Reefing activities, to collect goowarn or alngir are favoured during Iirralboo and Jalalayi when the low tides expose large reef areas and the winds are generally favourable for small boats. Alngir plays an important role in keeping the reef in balance. Much Alngir has been removed in the past and we are concerned about sustainability.
Oola (Freshwater wetlands and springs)

Oola (springs), oongoor (rockholes) and oomban (intertidal seepages), are rare and only occur on some islands. Animals like Nabarlek on Oonggaliyan are dependent on freshwater. Knowledge of these water places, and how to look after them is an important responsibility. Some freshwater springs are in the intertidal areas and exposed when tides are low. Rock wallabies, woodland birds and other animals come down and drink on the sand when the tide is out.

Important water places include:
- Jalgararr on Oonggaliyan
- Joordolon on Gararr
- Jirriwilliny on Oolala

Some need to be maintained by removing mangroves, vegetation and digging sand or sediment out to restore their flow. Cleaning them out is an important activity for survival of people and animals that depend on these rare sources of water. If we don’t visit the Country, the water will dry up. This needs to be a regular part of future ranger work, but all Mayala people should also do this when visiting Country.

Freshwater places house raya. When we approach, we speak to Country and although the raya can’t be seen they are always there, and move out of the way for us. Visitors need to be welcomed to the Country in the right way or else the water might dry up or other bad things might happen.

Freshwater wetlands have many useful food, tool, materials and medicinal resources, including barr (paperbark), iidoon (pandanus), goolngarr (big yam) and many bush fruits.

Mayiboorda (monsoon vine thickets)

Monsoon vine thickets provide small areas rich in plant and animal diversity and protected from harsh fires. Important plants are collected from these areas for food, medicine and materials. Some islands are known or visited for these resources, such as those on Moorrooloongarr Ngaja. These are often close to seasonal camping areas for easy access to bush fruits which could be eaten straight away or dried and stored for later use.

Aarla mayi generally means fruit or vegetable food source. They can be important seasonal indicators with certain fruits indicating seasonal changes for aarli barnangg (shellfish, crabs, oysters and fish) and arli goolil (meat from the sea). For example, Lalin season has plentiful bush fruits and some indicate the right time to hunt for stingrays and married turtles, or that moonga (bush honey) is ready for eating.
**Gaarr (Saltwater)**

The sea Country includes all the saltwater and submerged lands (both permanently submerged and tidally): gaarr-gaarr (ripples), loo (tidal streams or currents), galoor (foam), jardagarr (sandbars), niimir (drop offs or deep holes in the sea), jiidid (whirlpools), ooloowa (spouts). Some sandbanks are sacred and significant and there are other sacred places in the sea.

There are diverse and biologically important areas within our sea Country. This includes large coral reef systems with a unique coral province that are important transition zones between Bardi and Kimberley populations. Scientists think this unique zone is crucial for coral reef gene flow that will help sustain populations through climate change. The reefs along with seagrass and nesting beaches support five species of sea turtle. Large estuaries and mangrove communities are important nursery habitat and upwelling provides rich marine life. Continental shelf and sheltered bays support migratory pathways, calving and nursing habitat for humpback whales and migratory pathways for pygmy blue whales.

The large tides and currents, deep water areas and Indonesian flow-through has created unique marine and coastal ecosystems supporting many protected and EPBC species listed as threatened, migratory, marine or cetacean.

Our staple foods include saltwater fish, turtles and turtle eggs, dugong, crabs and oysters which feed our liyan. Turtle and dugong are important cultural and economic foods. We hunt Green turtles and harvest Green and Flatback eggs on nesting beaches throughout Mayala Country.

Five species of sea turtle - Green, Leatherback, Olive Ridley, Hawksbill, Loggerhead. Older people used to eat Hawksbill; they would stuff it first before cooking, and it was also traded.

Dugong - Dugong is an important gooril (meat of the sea). When the easterly wind blows dugong are fat and we eat it with joongoon.

**Miinimbi** (humpback whales) - come through during Lalin, hot weather time. The presence of the miinimbi tell us to get ready for Married (mating) turtle time. Mothers and babies stay in sheltered waters, the fathers are out in deeper water keeping tigersharks away. The mothers breach with babies to show them off to the fathers way out in deeper water, introducing them, showing them.
Our sea Country provides us with aarli barnangg – food of the sea. Healthy reefs and seagrass provide important food and resources, such as marrarn (mangrove jack), barrbal (golden lined spinefoot), jiyimarramarr (spinefoot), gambarl (Surgeonfish), aalngir (trochus), clam shell, ngoolnga (Trumpet shell), aamboorl (Baler shell) and oyster. There are healthy populations of fish of all kinds hunted on the reefs or by using mayoorr (fish traps).

Seasonal indicators tell us when to fish: Jooloo (Spanish Flag) has orange fat in May/June, the Cod is also fat around this time and that we mix with meat and stingray. When the miinimbi come through we know the dugong have gone and it’s time to get ready for turtles.

There are healthy populations of top predators such as sailfish, sharks including tigersharks and garnamarrd (hammerhead), many kids of seabirds and migratory shorebirds.

Loolool (Whale sharks) are the guardians of the sea. Whale sharks rescued anyone who drifted out into the ocean or got lost. We don’t see them very often but if you are in trouble you can call out to them in language and ask them to take them home. They would even take someone with their raft and turtle from hunting and take them to safety.

Loolool

Whale sharks are the protector, guardian of the sea.

It is an important animal. We call it iwala, old uncle. When people were chasing turtle, they could dive down and talk in language to loolool. There are many stories about loolool rescuing or helping people.

One time, some men were hunting turtle and lost their raft, the loolool came up and took them with their turtle to beach. When it dropped them on the beach the men put balalagood (Acacia sp.) and a pearl shell on top of the head of the whale shark, which was a customary thank you for loolool. Then it swam away.

“If you’re in trouble you sing out, “Iwala!” And he’ll come and get you.”

Garngaa (mainland coast)

Mayala people’s survival depended on the use of resources in coastal areas within our Country, such as:

- Yaloon (region) includes Oobiyal (region south of Cone Bay) and Maanangoo – goolngarriny (long yam), aangi (oysters), oola - big water place on top, and seasonal camping area, and two hills that are the place of Goolaman story
- Gooban to get mangroves to make biyal-biyal/gaalwa, important, still go there
- Near Dugong Bay to harvest Maanjilal for biyal-biyal/gaalwa
- Gamarrgoorr – location in graveyard for spears, jiinaal for bamboo spears
- Jojogarr is the place to get goodigoodi (cypress pine to make paddles)
- Graveyard – pearl shell beds and story

Jojogarr is an important place Mayala men get goodigoodi for paddles on the mainland. At the right tide the men can walk across from Jojogarr to the mainland.
Concerns for our Country

Although Mayala Country is valued for its high biodiversity and as refuge for many species, threats are increasing as human activity increases along the Kimberley coastline - tourism, commercial and recreational fishing, mineral exploration/extraction, climate change and the environmental consequences of moving people off Country.

Connection to Country

Loss of traditional knowledge from Elders passing away and inability to access Country is a great risk to cultural values. Being on Country feeds our spirit, our liyan, and enables us to care for Country, teach our children to hunt and be safe in the big tides and dangerous currents between the islands. Knowledge of tides is crucial for safe access and to maintain cultural connections, language, livelihoods and for future socio-economic opportunities. Our knowledge of the complex tides is translated through words, sounds, touch and sight. Without being taught on Country kids won’t know the right sounds of the water or other indicators that tell when to depart to reach a certain island; getting it wrong could cost lives. It is important for us to visit Country regularly or else it gets lonely and freshwater places, caves and shelters hide themselves.

Culture is changing a lot now. We used to get our cultural education from our old people by mixing together, but now, with our families spread out, it is more from immediate families. Strengthening culture will help to look after Country.

Unmanaged tourism

Unmanaged tourism is our biggest concern. The cruise boat industry accessing land and Aboriginal cultural sites without consent is of particular concern to us. Sealing the Dampier Peninsula road in the next two years is expected to greatly increase the number of boats and people accessing our Country. There are five sea turtle species living in the same waters, and with dugong they are threatened by increasing boat traffic (boat strike) and disturbance to nesting beaches. Disposal of bilge water could impact on water quality and reef health. Traditionally, seasonal camping areas were a sustainable practice to let the land rejuvenate. Tourists camping in areas they’re not supposed to has flow on impacts such as introducing weeds or feral animals, walking on and damaging reefs, lighting fires, damaging cultural sites and leaving rubbish.

Illegal fishing

The Buccaneer Archipelago is a hotspot for illegal foreign fishing vessels taking trochus, sharks, fish and reef shelling and a high
quarantine risk of pests/diseases into the area. Indonesian fishers have been caught in Mayala Country collecting trochus.

**Overfishing**
Overfishing by recreational and commercial fishers who access areas without permissions or concern for impacts. Commercial fishers using large nets impact on many more species than those they target and we have noticed a decline in fish stocks over the past decades. Lots of boats now are filling up with lots of fish to take back to town, and there are areas that are a sanctuary for whales and dolphins where fishing may be impacting on these and other species.

"We don’t know how many people fishing, how many licenses."

**Introduced species**
There are currently no feral animals on Mayala Country. There are some weeds, such as *Passiflora foetida* on Jidalan and some other places, but not many. Weeds, cane toads, rats, feral cats and marine species that may be transported by visitors or vessels (e.g. bilge water or from aquaculture) are a significant threat that would change the biodiversity values and reduce the significant role our islands play as a refuge, also highlighting the importance of quarantine measures to prevent introductions of pest species. People frequently land on our islands without permission or care for quarantine, increasing the chances of threats to our small island ecosystems.

**Climate change**
Climate change impacts on freshwater springs, tides, places, plants and animals and how people relate to Country. Many of our springs occur on or near the beaches with some only appearing at low tide, such as the spring on Oongaliyan. Rising sea levels will damage sensitive springs/areas and the many dependent plants and animals, including EPBC listed threatened species such as Nabarlek that rely on freshwater.

Algal blooms in seagrass threaten turtle and dugong. Climate change is already changing the flowering and fruiting seasons of some of our important bush fruits. We are concerned for reef health, turtle eggs (temperature dictates gender), nesting beaches and water places along the coastal areas which will be greatly impacted. Mayala people have experienced climate change in milonjooon times: we lived through significant events of sea level rise and other effects of climate change with our Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), our own Indigenous science: this should be taken seriously by mainstream Australia when addressing climate change concerns.
Wrong way fire
Fire damages plants and animals if not done the right way. Increasing human activity in the area is likely to lead to more fire, threatening fire-sensitive plants on the islands, such as monsoon vine thickets, and obligate seed species Callitris columellaris.

Pollution
We are very concerned about the threat of pollution and contamination from potential oil spills from increasing ship traffic along the Kimberley coast, and mining impacts. There are also some places where people have set up camps without permission and put signs (e.g. Jidalan memorial and sign Buccaneer Beach) which has lots of old junk like a BBQ, old tent, metal pipes, glass bottles, and cans left on the beach. We are concerned about mining on land outside of Mayala Country that could impact it, for example by pesticides and chemicals washing down the Fitzroy River and into King Sound, and the Jowleanga Mine spillway dam overflows. The potential for pollution and pest species being brought into near shore areas through the Indonesian flow through requires constant monitoring.

Safety
We are concerned about the safety of all people, especially tourists. Yoorroon (Whirlpool pass) is dangerous and our old people witnessed Indonesian boats being dragged down into the centre, never to be seen again. This and other places can only be crossed on the right tide and with the right knowledge of how to cross them. All aamba should know this and listen to their Elders to stay safe on Country. For tourists and visitors, we will develop a visitor management system to keep people safe and as a way to educate visitors about our Country and cultural protocols.

No-go Zones
A number of areas are restricted access or are no-go areas to tourists and visitors for various reasons including safety, important areas for Mayala people's enjoyment and Lore grounds and other significant cultural areas. These areas include:

- Wanganiny (Bathurst and Irvine Islands) is a no-go zone;
- Some sandbars e.g. back of Oongaliyan (Long Island), is banmangibooroo (mustn’t go there);
- Place on Oolala (High Island);
- Mangolman – restricted areas
- Jooloogi restricted activities to protect this significant area with large numbers of cockatoo nesting, connected to a significant cultural story and site
- Dugong Bay is important nursery area for whales. Restricting activities and managing as a whale and dolphin sanctuary zone.

“Mother whales go right inside Dugong Bay to Namayi with small ones to keep them safe.”

Before Native Title legislation existed or our Native Title was recognised, government decisions were made to use some parts of our Country for other purposes, without our consultation or consent. These include:

- Tanner Island dedicated as a Nature Reserve vested in Conservation Commission of Western Australia
- Port waters near Irvine Island on the north-eastern boundary, Port Authority
- DBCA tenure on Noomoonjoo (Caffarelli Island) – navigation beacon with tenure vested in Conservation Commission of Western Australia
- Yampi Sound Defence area, Australian Government – coastal section near Lachlan Island
- Kimberley Marine Park, Australian Government – north-west corner of the Mayala native title determination
- Lalang-garram/Camden Sound Marine Park, Western Australia government – a very small section of approximately 2600ha (0.4%) of sea Country in the south-west corner of the marine park

We want to work with governments to redress these issues.
Carrying our culture forward to ensure the safety of our traditional Country, language, Lore and people.
Managing our Mayala Baaliboor

Mayala’s strong connection to Country, cultural knowledge and practices will guide ongoing management.

Knowledge is only part of the story: it is also the interaction of people with Country. Managing our Mayala Baaliboor through the foundational values outlined in Part 3 means that the quality of the relationship between Mayala people and a living Country will form KPIs in any future management, and include the use of traditional ecological knowledge, use and enjoyment of Country, and responsibilities and decision making.

Any future Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) needs to be consistent with these foundational values.

Our goals and actions

Mayala have identified five goals to continue to look after, use and enjoy Country:

- Care for Country, keep it healthy and look after it the way our old people always have.
- Manage access to Mayala Country and use of Mayala resources by outsiders.
- Genuine research partnerships are benefiting Mayala people and Country into the future.
- Our knowledge remains strong and our cultural rights are protected.
- Achieve economic benefit for Mayala recognising that any business on Mayala Country is Mayala business.

The Action Plan provides a range of priority strategies and actions to achieve the goals.
**Goal**

Care for Country, keep it healthy and look after it the way our old people always have.

**Strategy**

- Mayala Ranger Group undertaking management on Country.
- Work towards Protected Areas on Country through an IPA and traditional owner led management.
- Junior Ranger and diversionary program engage both troubled youth and successful young leaders to build self-esteem and connection to Country.
- Mayala Rangers in partnership with key stakeholders and programs looking after special places on Country including springs, rock wallaby habitats, reefs and cultural places.

**Priority Action**

- Secure funding and resources to establish the Mayala Ranger Program – including survey vessel, Ranger base and sub-bases, employment, training and funding for projects on Country.
- Secure IPA funding to plan for and establish an IPA.
- Establish Protected Area Management Committee to ensure TO-led PA governance and management.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>A visitor access management system in place. Education and awareness raising in the community and with key stakeholders for Mayala management of Country. Regulation of commercial and recreational activities.</td>
<td>Undertake research through partnerships that respect cultural protocols and use two-way learning and research. Genuine partnerships address Mayala research priorities.</td>
<td>Educating our young people through documenting and sharing cultural knowledge. Practicing culture and exercising our cultural rights by visiting and being on Country. Wake up Mayala languages through a dedicated language program.</td>
<td>Creating an economic future for our people through opportunities consistent with our Country Plan.</td>
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<td>Develop a visitor permit system to manage visitors, engage and educate them about cultural protocols which may be implemented through interpretive signs, information sheets and media to increase awareness, safety and protection of Mayala Country. Establish relationships and future agreements with regulators to provide information and seek Mayala endorsement on commercial and recreational activities and licenses.</td>
<td>Develop Mayala research priorities for the next five years, inclusive of key stakeholders for success.</td>
<td>Secure funding for a cultural program that includes resourcing of activities and coordination.</td>
<td>Create an Economic Development and Employment Plan for existing and new businesses on Country and to support Mayala businesses on Country.</td>
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Our children and their children need to see what we’re seeing now."
Indigenous Protected Areas

An Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) is an area of land and/or sea that has been dedicated by Traditional Owners and recognised by all levels of government and internationally as a protected area. IPAs are similar to other protected areas except that they are established under the cultural authority of Traditional Owners rather than the legislative authority of government. IPAs are established to protect and manage the area’s natural and cultural values and to sustainably use resources within the area.

IPAs are managed by “legal and other effective means” allowing for collaboration through a MoU or agreement for areas that Traditional Owners do not hold tenure or native title. IPAs can coexist with government protected areas, such as national parks and marine parks, and there are many examples where co-development of a management plan over land and/or sea has created benefits for both Traditional Owners and government or other partners. The contribution of IPAs is counted as part of the protected area estate of Australia’s National Reserve System (NRS).

Mayala’s approach is to dedicate both land and sea as an IPA and manage this as one protected area, consistent with our cultural concept of Country. This is a long-held goal by Mayala, identified by Elders in our 2008 strategic plan for Country. With our Native Title Consent Determination, we are now ready to pursue our long-held aspiration of an IPA over all our Country.

Protected Areas on Mayala Country

Establishing a protected areas governance arrangement will ensure all protected areas on Country, whether Indigenous Protect Area (IPA), state or commonwealth parks, will be complimentary and support Mayala-led governance and management.

To look after our Country so that future generations can experience Country as we and our ancestors have. We are planning for protected areas over our islands and sea Country together, through an Indigenous Protected Area. The existing Kimberley Marine Park (Commonwealth) and the proposed Buccaneer Archipelago Marine Park (WA) have the potential to complement and contribute to the holistic land and sea IPA. We have the support of DBCA and Parks Australia for this approach.

We envisage all protected areas are complimentary and support Mayala-led governance and management.

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Governance

Our Lore has sustained the Country and People since time began. With our Native Title consent determination and PBC now established from July 2019, the PBC will be the first point of contact. Developing the Protected Areas Management Committee and the Mayala Ranger Program are cornerstones for successful implementation of the Country Plan, governed by the PBC.

Any other protected areas must support Traditional Owner-led governance and management, and bring social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits to Mayala people. The core values for any existing and future protected areas will become KPIs (or similar) in other protected areas planning, monitoring and management processes.

Partnerships and collaboration

We and our Elders before us have worked hard to gain Native Title recognition for our responsibilities, rights and interests in our Country and our next step is to invite partners to work with us.

Cultural competency is important to develop a non-Indigenous persons understanding about Mayala culture. You cannot become culturally competent by attending a cultural awareness workshop – it can only be gained by living and experiencing the core values of Mayala People’s culture.

We welcome partners, including the Western Australian government, who will respect our authority for our Country, be ready to learn about and support Mayala culture and work alongside us to achieve our aspirations.

With our partners we will explore new and existing opportunities to leverage resources and build capacity for shared goals. Below are some of the ways stakeholders can support Mayala. More opportunities will be explored through implementation workshops and ongoing engagement.
| Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) | Kimberley Marine Tourism Association can support a visitor management system for charter boats, and respect and support our protocols by educating tour operators and tourists. |
| Parks Australia | Kimberley Development Commission - respecting our protocols and collaborating with us for employment and enterprise development. |
| National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) | Lotteries West - support the establishment of Mayala Rangers through infrastructure, equipment and cultural projects to enable Rangers to work on Country (e.g. boat, recording projects). |
| Department of Fisheries | Environmental NGOs collaborate to build the capacity of Mayala Rangers to undertake environmental research and management of special places/species. |
| Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) | Aarli Mayi provides an important aquaculture business opportunity in collaboration with Mayala, and opportunity to raise awareness of Aboriginal brand, employment and economic development. |
| Western Australian Marine Science Institution (WAMSI), Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) | Businesses such as Maxima, Barramundi Asia, Paspaley and CMC Barging could collaborate with us for employment and enterprise development. |
| Bardji Jawi and Dambimangari Traditional Owners | Cygnet Bay – continue to maintain our relationship with the Brown family and seek expert advice and assistance to maintain environmental health, sustainability and clean waters. |
| Kimberley Ranger Network and Land and Sea Management Unit | Department of Justice (and related youth NGOs) - can support youth diversionary programs and Junior Rangers. |
| Shire of Broome and Shire of Derby-West Kimberley | Local schools in Derby, Broome, Ardyaloon, Djarindjin and Beagle Bay can develop education and language programs to support cultural learning and capacity building for future pathways. |
| Kooljaman, can help educate visitors who enter Mayala Country through Kooljaman. | Recreational fishing clubs can engage with Mayala to develop agreements for fishing competitions and build opportunities for two-way learning. |

Mayala Country Plan 2019-2029 | Local Indigenous community develop solutions for key concerns such as access and harvesting of resources e.g. fish, turtle eggs, by engaging with local communities to developing solutions together. |
Communication

Communication has always been an important skill for Mayalayoon to survive, being at the intersection of two families of languages. Launching the Country Plan provides an opportunity to communicate our priorities, develop momentum, partnerships and investment to achieve the strategies and actions outline in this plan.

As Mayala continues to grow our capacity and resources, we will continue to share our plan and build support.

How do we know we have been successful?

Oombaloombal, little by little, upholding our principles and with support and strong partnerships, we will achieve our aspirations. Many things can change in the future and the pathway to our goals may look different. To ensure we are on the right path the Mayala PBC will review the Country Plan in five years.

Goolaman

This is a story about the importance of communication as a key survival tool: the fate of not being able to communicate was serious.

Two men meet by chance across a chasm. One man, Goolinan, was from Oongaliyan and shouted a question in Oowini across the gap. The other man was Ngarinyin and doesn’t answer, because he doesn’t speak that language. He yells back something in Ngarinyin, which the Oowini man doesn’t understand. Then they both turn into two hills, which are still there today.
Mayala Connection Report – through Native Title, important resource for Mayala People.

Mayala Looking after Country Plan 2008 – provides strategies for looking after Country and is the guiding document developed with our Elders, many of whom have since passed away. The Plan identifies three broad management zones to focus on-ground work: Oonggaliyan (Long Island) and nearby Diiji (Herbert Group); Gararr (Mermaid Island and reef) and Oolala (High Island). Exploring the option of an IPA is listed as an action.

The Diiji Site Plan and the Oonggaliyan Site Plan – provide priorities and actions for management of these two priority areas closest to Derby and One Arm Point.

The natural and Indigenous cultural values of the islands have been recognised on the West Kimberley National Heritage List including:

- The double log raft (Kalwa) maritime tradition of Mayala People
- Interactions with Makassan traders over hundreds of years
- Pearl stories and resources used in traditional trade through the wunan cultural trade and exchange.

Kimberley Islands Biodiversity Survey undertaken in 2012-2014 identified Kimberley islands as having high conservation value, many endemic and threatened species protected from mainland threats.

Australian Marine Parks Scientific Atlas – collation of scientific knowledge within the north-west marine reserve.
Appendix 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aamba</th>
<th>man</th>
<th>Loo</th>
<th>tidal currents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambool</td>
<td>baler shell</td>
<td>Loolool</td>
<td>whale shark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alngir</td>
<td>trochus</td>
<td>Mayalayoon ambooriny</td>
<td>Mayala people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayiborda</td>
<td>vine thickets</td>
<td>Milonjoon</td>
<td>from long, long ago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baaliboor</td>
<td>where you camp, where you stay</td>
<td>Miinimbi</td>
<td>humpback whales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bardi</td>
<td>language</td>
<td>Ngoolnga</td>
<td>trumpet shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biyal-biyal</td>
<td>mangrove double log raft, also known as Gaalwa</td>
<td>Noomoorr</td>
<td>saltwater highway, traveling routes on the tides and currents, including timing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaarra</td>
<td>saltwater, sea</td>
<td>Oongarong</td>
<td>neighbouring language group to Mayala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaalwa</td>
<td>mangrove double log raft</td>
<td>Oola</td>
<td>freshwater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goobala</td>
<td>stars</td>
<td>Oomiida</td>
<td>neighbouring language group to Mayala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iinalang</td>
<td>islands including surrounding reefs</td>
<td>Oowini</td>
<td>language of Mayala island people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jawi</td>
<td>language</td>
<td>Raya</td>
<td>spiritual beings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joorla</td>
<td>traditional head dress significant to Mayala and Bardi people for ceremony</td>
<td>Riiji</td>
<td>sacred or special designs carved into pearl shell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lalin</td>
<td>married turtle season, hot and humid build up time to the wet</td>
<td>Wiini</td>
<td>respect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liyan gorna/ gorna liyan</td>
<td>spirit, feeling good and strong in yourself</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 2

### Care for Country, keep it healthy and look after it the way our old people always have.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Action</th>
<th>Supporting Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secure funding and resources to establish the Mayala Ranger Program - including survey vessel, Ranger base and sub-bases, employment, training and funding for projects on Country.</td>
<td>Establish an MoU with Bardi Jawi to mentor and assist two Mayala aamba train to be Rangers. Establish a Ranger base at Derby and a sub-base at Ardyaloon with two outposts to support on Country work in the north at Jidalany (Gibbing Island) and south at Lachlan or Barnacot Islands. Commence development of marine training competencies for Rangers. Develop ‘Circle of Elders’ Ranger advisory group. Regain management of DBCA tenure on Noomoonjoo (Caffarelli Island) and joint management of Tanner Island. Negotiate for marine park/joint management that reinforces Traditional Owner-led governance and management and brings additional benefits to the IPA. Establish zoning that includes no-go areas for any activities in or around these areas. Secure funding and resources to establish a Junior Ranger Program that engages youth showing leadership and those disengaged or at risk. Engage young people in tasks on Country to build confidence and experiential learning e.g. create and put up signs; accompany Rangers on field trip, help build Ranger bases. Oola - visit and clean out springs and waterholes to keep Country healthy. Monitor and protect rock wallaby populations/habitat on Banggoon (Hidden), Oonggaliyan (Long), Ooloogiigi (Lachlan) Islands. Visit and undertake two-way monitoring of reef health at Brue Reef and other high priority sites. Visit and maintain cultural use in the special places including coastal mainland areas. Establish partner projects to undertake priority Country management activities for rock wallaby monitoring, reef monitoring, maintaining Oola, seasonal camping areas and special places. Visit and monitor important gathering places and seasonal camping areas e.g. Bedford Island.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish Protected Area Management Committee to ensure TO-led PA governance and management.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Manage access to Mayala Country and use of Mayala resources by outsiders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Action</th>
<th>Supporting Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a visitor permit system to manage visitors, engage and educate them about cultural protocols which may be implemented through interpretive signs, information sheets and recordings to increase awareness, safety and protection of Mayala Country.</td>
<td>Develop a visitor permit system to manage visitors and as an opportunity to engage and educate them about cultural protocols and looking after Mayala Country, and safety of visitors. Collect data to know who is on Country. Engagement with the Dampier Peninsula Working Groups to influence opportunities and manage impacts to Mayala Country. Investigate the Uunguu Visitor Pass as a potential model for Mayala. Engage with key stakeholders to support Mayala’s visitor education and awareness raising. Develop interpretive signs (for example at Derby Jetty, OAP, Koolljaman, Goolan and Bilanyoo and on some islands identified for tourist use) and information sheets to increase awareness of Mayala Country and protocols. Develop a video recording of Elders to educate tour operators and their guests and reinforce cultural protocols. Engage with local fishing clubs to increases cultural awareness and manage local fishing competitions. Dept Fisheries support to identify Commercial fishing operators and assist Mayala to establish relationships with them - fin-fish, crab license, oyster license aquaculture. Dept. Fisheries supply catch data for planning, monitoring and engage Mayala for monitoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secure IPA funding to plan for and establish an IPA.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish Protected Area Management Committee to ensure TO-led PA governance and management.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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60 | Mayala Country Plan 2019-2029
Genuine research partnerships are benefiting Mayala people and Country into the future.

**Priority Action**
Develop Mayala research priorities for the next five years, inclusive of key stakeholders for success.

**Supporting Actions**
- Mayala representation on ISWAG for regional partnerships, research and discussion.
- Cultural heritage research and support.
- Adopt research partnership protocols and other resources developed by the Kimberley Saltwater Traditional Owners through ISWAG.
- Develop a regional turtle management plan for all five sea turtle species that includes climate change impacts, hunting protocols, monitoring and possible closures (season/places).
- Investigate research opportunities for economic development e.g. blue carbon via ISWAG.

Achieve economic benefit for Mayala recognising that any business on Mayala Country is Mayala business.

**Priority Action**
Create an Economic Development and Employment Plan for existing and new businesses on Country and to support Mayala businesses on Country.

**Supporting Actions**
- Negotiate agreements between PBC and existing businesses on Mayala Country (tourism, charter boats, commercial fishing, etc).
- Scope and develop Mayala tourism products e.g. Ranger tours, tag along tours, aquaculture tours, fishing camps, designated camping sites for fees on islands.
- Develop a commercial entity for Mayala PBC to manage economic activities e.g. permits, camping, Arli Mayi partnership.
- PBC to create an Economic Development and Employment Plan across Mayala businesses - scope opportunities and succession planning.
- Engage a business planning consultant to scope business opportunities and partnerships that align with the Country Plan.
- Develop and promote Mayala cultural awareness training for businesses/government operating on Mayala Country to reinforce our cultural Protocols.
- Support Mayala people to develop business opportunities on Country.

Our knowledge remains strong and our cultural rights are protected.

**Priority Action**
Secure funding for a cultural program that includes resourcing of activities and coordination.

**Supporting Actions**
- Develop a seasonal and bush foods calendar as an educational resource for Mayala people and for use in schools.
- Develop story books for Mayala children and young adults to help reinforce cultural protocols.
- Engage with schools in Ardyaloon and Derby to increase awareness of Mayala history, presence and connection.
- Ethnoecology project to record traditional knowledge with science.
- Reinforce hunting protocols for all Aboriginal people through educational talks in schools, signage and rangers.
- On Country field trips with elders and young people to teach knowledge and know the special places.
- Establish baali at agreed places, led by families with Ranger assistance.
- Biyal-biyal - noomoorr revival project with young people on Country (build and launch a biyal-biyal).
- Reinstate Oowiini languages for place names, and for naming Mayala programs, facilities and assets.
- Engage with a language specialist and leading Aboriginal language programs to develop a pathway to Oowiini language revival.
- Elders trip to AIATSIS to collect language resources - review, store and make available to Mayala people.
Financial and in-kind supporters

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Parks Australia

Australian Parks

Australian Marine Parks

Kimberley Land Council

Government of Western Australia

Country Needs People
Gala imbanyij