

Steps for Sustainable Tourism

Purnululu National Park

East Kimberley, Western Australia



Final overview report



Kim Bridge with Nicholas Hall

June 2005

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Steps to Sustainable Tourism was developed by the Heritage and Tourism Section of the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage. The publication was designed by Allison Mortlock, Angel Ink.

Photographs and images

1. Image of painting on cover

Titled: Purnululu – The Future. The artist is Bessie Daylight. Copyright: Western Australia Department of Conservation and Land Management. Bessie says of this painting: "The figures above the hills represent tourists, government workers, and Aboriginal traditional owners. The footprints show all the nationalities walking and working together at Bungle Bungle (Purnululu) National Park, all looking after the land."

2. Photographs in the report

All the photos were taken during the various workshops which forms the foundation of this project.

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Acknowledgements

There are many people to acknowledge for the enabling of *Steps to Sustainable Tourism* and *Stepping Stones for Tourism* to be implemented in Purnululu National Park.

Many thanks to the considerable efforts, inputs and genuine interest by all those who attended the workshops. The information in this report predominantly represents their intellectual knowledge, experience and vision for this unique and ancient icon. Importantly those involved included a mix of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, working together, with a common interest and common vision. The Aboriginal people were principally those associated with the Purnululu Aboriginal Corporation, who are joint management partners of Purnululu National Park and World Heritage Area and the non-Aboriginal people were tour operators, from the broader tourism industry and government agencies. All individuals involved are listed in the attached reports of each workshop.

Thank-you also to the vision and support of the Federal Government Department of Environment and Heritage in the creation of the very practical planning tools in *Steps* and *Stepping Stones*. Particularly thanks to Meg Switzer and her team for their interest and commitment.

Special thanks to The Department of Conservation and Land Management, Western Australia for driving the implementation of the process in Purnululu. Particularly thanks to the efforts of Rod Quartermain, Ben Cross and the CALM West Kimberley office in their assistance in the workshop, their interest, feedback and fine-tuning of all aspects of the activities and final report.

Executive summary

This project is part of a broader program to model a best practice approach for the long term planning of tourism at key heritage places in Australia, particularly those where developing visions with Indigenous communities and joint managers are required.

There is widespread recognition that future planning for tourism and heritage are principal issues to be addressed in the upcoming revision of the plan of management for Purnululu National Park. In responding to future planning issues and integrating tourism and heritage management of Purnululu National Park, the site was selected as a pilot in using the processes formulated in the Tourism and Heritage Assessment Framework (known as *Steps to Sustainable Tourism* 2004).

The Australian and Western Australian Government, specifically, the Department of the Environment and Heritage (DEH) engaged the WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) in conjunction with the Purnululu Aboriginal Corporation (PAC) for the development and implementation of this process. It required taking a range of key regional tourism and park management stakeholders through a series of workshops to develop tourism and heritage management plans.

Steps to Sustainable Tourism (Steps)

Steps is 10 step practical planning process based on established strategic planning principles which are flexible and can be adapted as it is applied.

Steps can be used by a variety of stakeholders ranging from tour operators, park managers, Indigenous people/communities, government agencies, community groups to tourism businesses and organisations to all parties interested in sustainable tourism in their area.

Stepping Stones for Tourism (Stepping Stones)

Stepping Stones for Tourism has been developed as a companion program to *Steps*. It is specifically tailored and presented in a form appropriate to community-based and participatory planning to assist Indigenous communities and individuals explore ideas for tourism involvement in their areas and introduces steps for sound tourism development planning. The process builds capacity for Indigenous communities and individuals to more effectively engage with tourism issues. It is especially designed to get a good balance between looking after country, family and community and doing good commercial businesses.

The program is one of the practical initiatives recommended in 2003 by the National Tourism and Heritage Taskforce of the Environment Protection and Heritage Ministers Council.

The workshop program

A series of five workshops were held during the period July 2004 and February 2005 on the development of tourism and heritage in Purnululu National Park. There were a number of objectives for each of the workshops, most significantly, the workshops created a forum for Indigenous and non-Indigenous views and interest in the area to be expressed. They enabled relationships to be established and fostered a collaborative approach in obtaining vital ingredients for planning the future of tourism management in the area, encompassing natural, cultural and heritage aspects.

Workshop 1 involved the 'Stepping Stones for Tourism' process and took place in Purnululu National Park.

Workshop 2 held in Kununurra predominantly comprised a group of people described as 'tourism industry stakeholders' with representatives from existing tour operators, government agencies and non-government agencies.

Workshop 3 occurred at Warmun was a combination of Aboriginal and Industry people. It was the first to bring the two groups together to 'eye-ball each other', share, discuss and debate important issues and outcomes of tourism and heritage management.

Workshop 4 was held in Warmun with Indigenous stakeholders which enabled the conclusion of the Stepping Stones Plan from Workshop 1 and it focused on developing and working-up identified action plans. Workshop 5, the final in the series, took place in Kununurra and its focus was on the development and workings of future action plans and the confirmation of joint understandings.

The action plans

There were 18 action plans developed in detail during the STEPS to Sustainable Tourism process. These include;

1. Welcome to country
2. Air routes and aerial photography
3. Visitor centre services
4. Names for places within the Park
5. Signage and interpretation strategy
6. 'Mag' paper
7. Slide show
8. Establishing a Aboriginal business entity and trust fund
9. Multi-function facility at turnoff
10. Up-market safari camp
11. Longer backpack walks
12. Short guided walks
13. Protocols for tour operators and visitors
14. Tour operator training
15. Indigenous training
16. Study tour to view tourism approaches at other places
17. Long-term strategic planning for access and infrastructure
18. Actioning and sustaining this work

Statement of joint understanding

All stakeholders participating in the Steps and Stepping Stones to Tourism Planning process in conclusion agreed to the following statement of joint understanding.

For tour operators, CALM and the Aboriginal community to work together for the future of Purnululu.

Together we recognise that:

- ◆ the fundamental structure for managing the park is through a joint management partnership between the government and traditional owners as represented by the Purnululu Aboriginal Corporation;
- ◆ the tourism industry and the operators working in the Park are essential partners in managing and presenting the park experience and values to visitors;
- ◆ the appropriate presentation of the values of the park requires control, guidance and partnership from traditional owners;
- ◆ Aboriginal involvement in the Park, its presentation to visitors and tourism generally will take time, support and acknowledgment of complex and developing relationships;
- ◆ presentation of the Park requires appropriate emphasis on the Aboriginal cultural significance of the place and that this can only be achieved through a partnership of Aboriginal community, the government and tourism interests working to agreed common protocols, principles and objectives;
- ◆ a healthy regional tourism industry can contribute to social, cultural, economic and environmental outcomes for everyone, including local and regional Aboriginal people, as long as the means for Aboriginal people to participate in the industry is encouraged and supported; and
- ◆ the government, the Aboriginal community and the tourism industry all want to see Purnululu protected and looked after for future generations. We must show the way and work hard together.

This report is only the beginning to an important planning process to tourism and heritage development and management in Purnululu National Park. The process requires genuine interest and commitment of all stakeholders to drive and make work. This ancient and iconic jewel of country demands the upmost care and planning to ensure the presentation and maintenance of its natural and cultural significance.

Background to the project

The origins of this project is part of a broader program to model a best practice approach for the long term planning of tourism at key heritage places in Australia, particularly those where developing visions with Indigenous communities and joint managers are required. The Australian Government in responding to future issues of the management of Purnululu to the World Heritage Centre indicated that Purnululu National Park be used as a pilot for integrating tourism and heritage management in a planning framework. The Tourism and Heritage Assessment Framework (now published as *Steps to Sustainable Tourism*) was the tool used as the basis of the planning process.

As part of a commitment to the World Heritage Centre, the Australian Government, and the Western Australian Government developed the project. The project is based on bring together a range of key regional tourism and park management stakeholders and taking them through a series of workshops which considers issues and to develop tourism and heritage management plans for the Purnululu National Park. This was to occur using the structure and format of *Steps to Sustainable Tourism*.

Specifically, the Department of the Environment and Heritage (DEH) engaged the WA Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) in conjunction with the Purnululu Aboriginal Corporation (PAC) for the development and implementation of Steps process.



Location of Purnululu National Park, World Heritage Area



*Purnululu
(Bungle Bungles)
National Park and World Heritage
Area, Western Australia.*

The context for tourism at Purnululu

There is widespread recognition that future planning for both tourism and heritage are going to be principal issues considered and addressed in the upcoming revision of the plan of management for Purnululu National Park. This *Steps to Sustainable Tourism* process is working ahead to ensure that for the tourism components of the plan there is high quality input and engagement on these issues from both the Aboriginal joint management partners and the tourism industry.

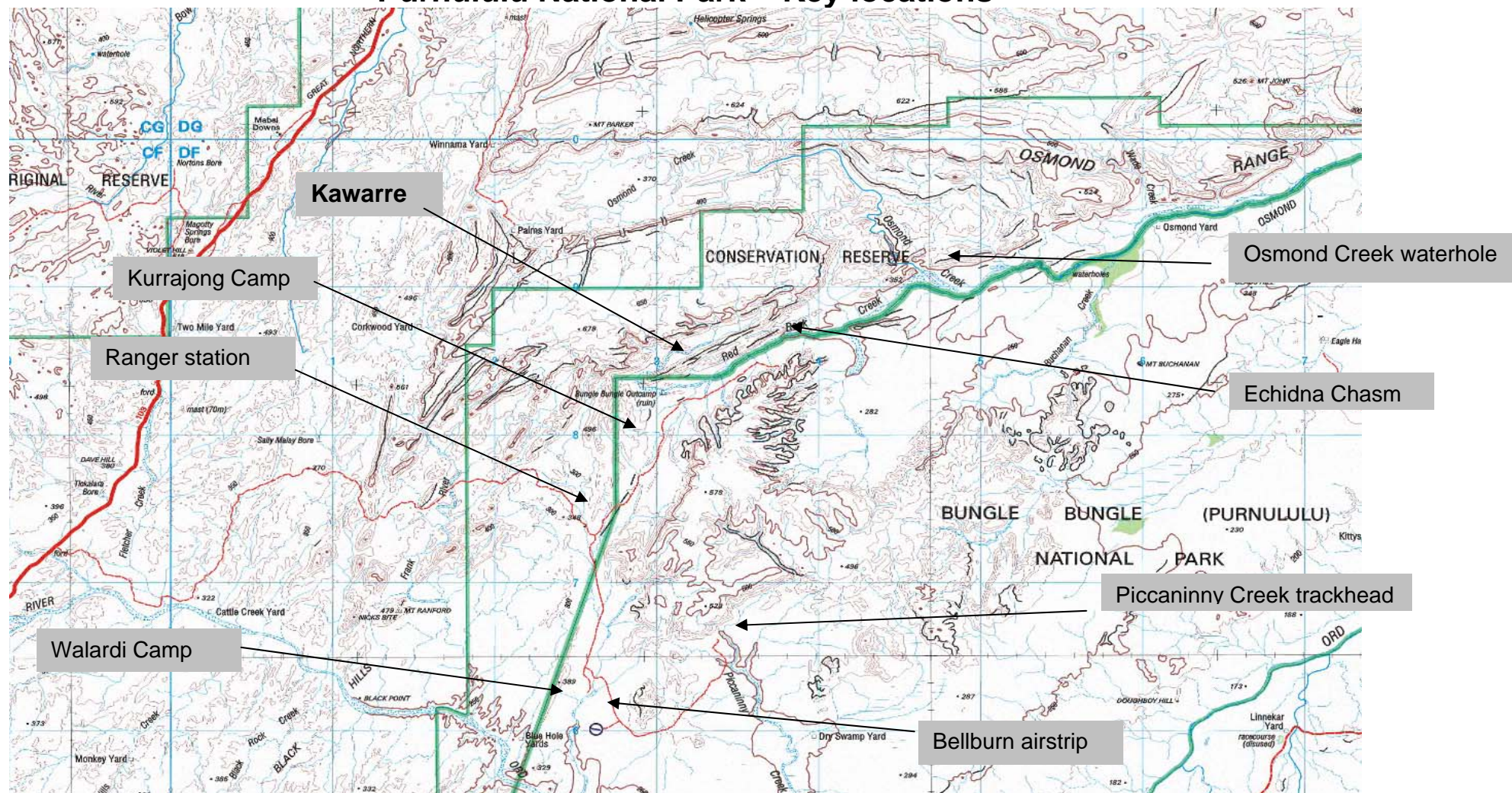
Recent issues in Kakadu National Park and the divergence in visions over time between the joint management partners and the tourism industry indicate that constant attention needs to be given to due process that enable key stakeholders, for high profile heritage assets, to engage over tourism issues. These visions need to be formed, and reformed, refined and revised through well-planned and strategic processes that bring everyone along, and acknowledge the needs and issues of all. In particular Aboriginal joint management partners have not always in the past been resourced to build their capacity to deal with the often complex tourism issues in these areas, or supported to seize the opportunities for Aboriginal economic development that are there.

Implementing the *Steps* and *Stepping Stones* process at Purnululu in its East Kimberley regional context is important not only for the future of Purnululu, but as a key demonstration project at the state, national and international level. The Northern Territory government is particularly interested in the *Stepping Stones* process in relation to the capacity building programs for all the protected areas in the Territory subject to the current Joint Management negotiations. International players in sustainable tourism and the management of tourism at world heritage sites areas are also interested in the application of the *Steps* process as a possible approach for use elsewhere internationally.

On the following page is a map of Purnululu National Park and specific locations. The Park is some 52 kilometres east of the Great Northern Highway. The turnoff into the park is approximately 100 kilometres north of Hall's Creek in the East Kimberley. The recent years visitation are some 22,000 people per annum. Visitors are broadly described as free and independent travellers and those on tour packages. The modes of transport are road, 4WD from Great Northern Highway turnoff, and air.

The current facilities in the park are six public camping grounds, four privately licenced accommodation areas, air and helicopters services and CALM's ranger facilities. There are also a number of Indigenous living leases in the area, not yet open for public visitations.

Purnululu National Park – Key locations



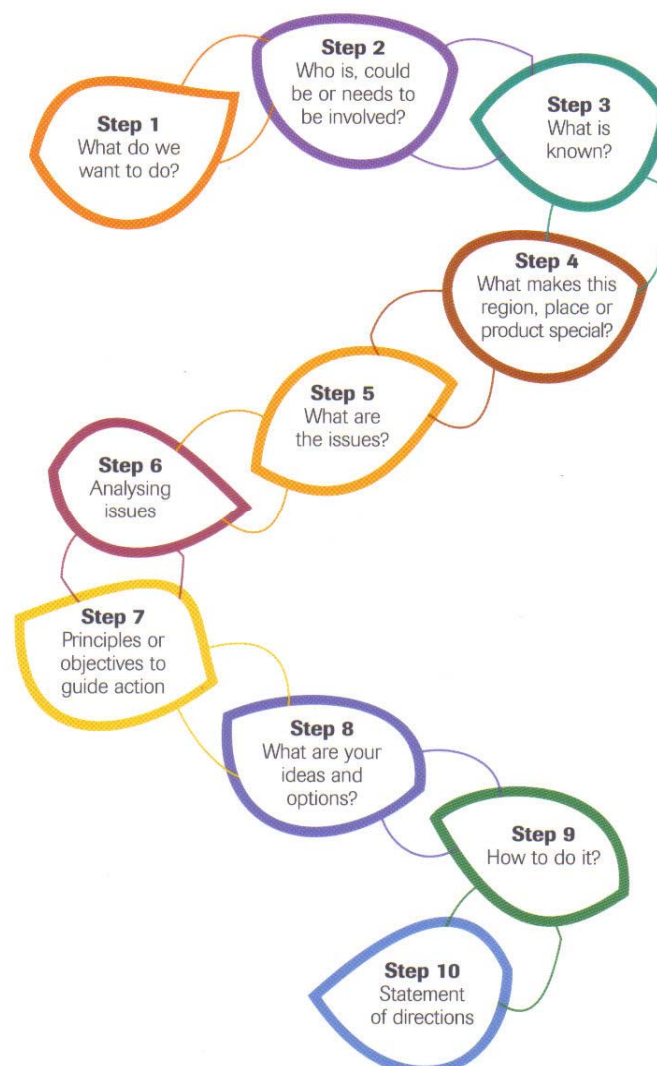
Background to *Steps to Sustainable Tourism (Steps)*

Steps has been skilfully designed as a 10 step practical planning process based on established strategic planning principles. The underlying principle of this guide is to recognise and protect the values of our special natural and cultural places in order to enhance tourism product development and the management of places in the long term. The approach is intended to be flexible and can be adapted as it is applied.

The steps guide can be used by a variety of stakeholders ranging from tour operators, park managers, Indigenous people/communities, government agencies, community groups to tourism businesses and organisations to all parties interested in sustainable tourism in their area.

The diagram below profiles the 10 Steps

The 10 steps to sustainable tourism...



Background to *Stepping Stones for Tourism (Stepping Stones)*

Stepping Stones for Tourism is a program which builds capacity for Indigenous communities and individuals to more effectively engage with tourism issues. The program has been developed as a companion program to *Steps to Sustainable Tourism: planning a sustainable future for tourism, heritage and the environment* (Australian Government Department of Environment and Heritage 2004).

Stepping Stones for Tourism helps Indigenous communities and individuals explore ideas for tourism involvement in their areas and introduces steps for sound tourism development planning. The program is seen as having particular utility for use on Aboriginal lands, for community planning, for use with Indigenous communities associated with protected areas and for more detailed concept development of emerging Indigenous tourism product.

It is a strategic planning process carefully designed to align to the planning needs for tourism, land management and business. They are presented in a form appropriate to community-based and participatory planning, and have been tested in a range of Aboriginal community contexts.

The *Stepping Stones for Tourism* program is one of the practical initiatives recommended in 2003 by the National Tourism and Heritage Taskforce of the Environment Protection and Heritage Ministers Council. The development of the program has been supported by The Australian Government Department of Environment and Heritage, with the Commonwealth of Australia holding copyright for the program materials.

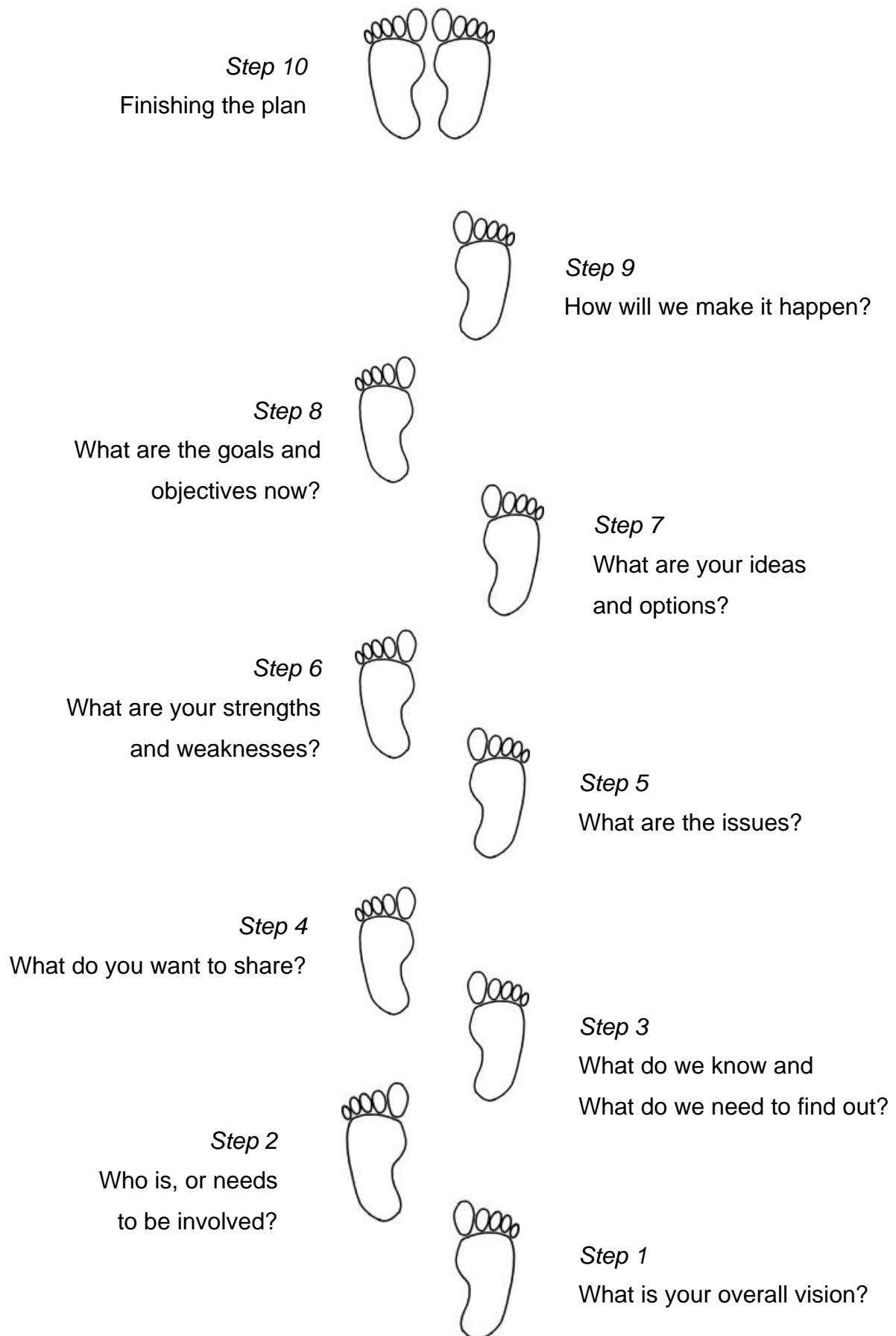
What are the stepping stones?

The stepping stones are the actual steps Indigenous communities can take to think through the issues involved in tourism and more realistically look at ideas for specific tourism ideas and opportunities. Thinking about each step means that communities and individuals can better evaluate ideas, explain their ideas to people and help win support for their development.

The steps can also be used to look at a particular area to work out what is the best way to manage tourism at a place. As such, the steps are a useful tool to assist in land management planning with communities. The steps provide the basic building blocks or foundations required for considering tourism issues in a management plan for an area. In addition, as the process is also related to strategic planning for business concepts, the steps also provide some of the basic building blocks required for a business plan for a business idea.

The *Stepping Stones* are especially designed to get a good balance between looking after country, looking after family and community concerns and making good businesses.

The Stepping Stones



Design of workshop program

A series of five workshops were held during the period July 2004 and February 2005 and there were a number of objectives for each. A primary objective of the workshops was to create a forum for Indigenous and non-Indigenous views and interest in the area to be expressed. It enabled relationships to be established and fostered a collaborative approach in obtaining vital ingredients for planning the future of tourism management in the area, encompassing natural, cultural and heritage aspects. The comprehensive reports on the workshop are attached as Appendix B to G.

The workshops – in brief

Workshop 1 - The initial workshop involving the 'Stepping Stones for Tourism' process took place in Purnululu National Park. This process is designed to better engage with Indigenous stakeholders from which the information will form their tourism plan for the area and will be integrated into the broader 'Steps for Sustainable Tourism' plan.

Appropriately, the *Stepping Stones* workshop was the first in the series of workshops, thus beginning by strongly involving and engaging the Aboriginal joint management partners in the planning of tourism and heritage issues.

Workshop 2 - This workshop held in Kununurra predominantly comprised a group of people described as 'tourism industry stakeholders' with representatives from existing tour operators, government agencies and non-government agencies who have an interest in tourism activities in Purnululu. This workshop considered a range of issues and identified, opportunities and goals for the area.

Workshop 3 - This workshop occurred at the Mirrilingki Centre in Warmun. The attendees were a combination of Aboriginal and Industry people who were participants in the prior two workshops.

The workshop was the first to bring the two groups together. It allowed the important opportunity for individuals to 'eye-ball each other', share, discuss and debate the important key issues and outcomes of tourism and heritage management in Purnululu National Park. It allowed relationships to build.

Workshop 4 - The workshop was held at the Mirrilingki Centre in Warmun with Indigenous stakeholders. This workshop enabled the refinement of the objectives, vision to conclude the Stepping Stones Plan. Output also was developing selected action plans and creating position of joint understanding.

Workshop 5 - The fifth and final in the series to plan the development of tourism in Purnululu National Park occurred in Kununurra. The focus was on the development and workings of future action plans and the confirmation of joint understandings.

The following information in this section provides sections of the comprehensive reports and provides a description of key issues and outcomes.

Workshop No. 1 – ‘Stepping Stones to Tourism’

The first workshop was conducted within Purnululu National Park with local Indigenous people. Its purpose was to provide those individuals with the opportunity to articulate their visions, focus, views and aspirations on the development of tourism in Purnululu through a specifically designed planning approach. The details of the overview and outcomes of this workshop can be found in the attached report titled ‘Stepping Stones for Tourism Workshop – Purnululu, 20 – 23 July 2004’, August 2004. Accompanying that report is a virtually-based report, called the ‘Workshop Story’ also describing what was covered in the workshop. The workshop took a broad approach to tourism, considering industry needs, economic activities and opportunities, visitor interpretation and education needs and Aboriginal participation.

Below photos – top is group at Piccanniny carpark, below is a Kwarre community.



Examples of activities during the workshop at Kwarre



Workshop overview

The context

This workshop was for Aboriginal people associated with Purnululu, who are joint management partners of Purnululu National Park and World Heritage Area. The Aboriginal workshop participants were generally those associated with the Kija language group. It was established in the opening session, that activities such as this workshop do not preclude other parties from joining in or contributing to outcomes at a later date.

The intention of this workshop was to be a start of discussions regarding tourism and the Park. All efforts will be made to ensure that there is suitable opportunity for all people with an interest in the park to attend and contribute to discussions as they develop.

The objectives

The principal objective of this workshop was to commence activities associated with tourism planning for Purnululu National Park as part of the broader process described in the background section above.

The context of this process is that it would contribute to future management planning for the park; and that there is a high level of interest in the outcomes of the process and other claims and interest from regional tourism stakeholders. It was important that the workshop produced outcomes and that it formed an important base for ongoing work.

The outcomes of this workshop are the product of, and represent the engagement of the stakeholders that were present. The outcomes of this workshop are merely one part of a much longer process and road. What is important is that this journey had commenced.

The *Stepping Stones* workshop took a broad approach to tourism, being interested in the presentation of the park generally to visitors (interpretation and education outcomes), tourism industry needs (economic development outcomes) and Indigenous enterprise and social development (Aboriginal community development outcomes).

How the workshop went

It was stated that the program and outcomes had exceeded expectations. When answering the question on what was the best part of the workshop a response was *“the whole lot”*.

For those who hadn't seen the *Stepping Stones* in action, the general response was that the steps were *“simple, logical, sequential and effective”* and a *“straightforward approach and a sound tool for planning”*. It was stated that the steps are not necessarily new, but just reformat known planning steps using participatory planning approaches that makes them more palatable and digestible. It was noted that the whole *Stepping Stones* facilitated process manages well the complex information coming out.

There was recognition that the key to these workshops is in the facilitation (*“There needs to be a very good and skilled facilitation”*). The primary facilitator does need to have a good balanced knowledge of tourism, business and land management issues, or at least a sensitivity to their balance. To some extent, tourism expertise can be imported into these workshops by inviting agency and local ‘stakeholders’ who can provide hard tourism input, but the facilitator still needs to know how and when to best use such human resources and their knowledge in relation to the process.

Other issues

It is important that the significance of the engagement for participating in this sort of activity is not diminished by outstanding issues facing park management, in particular native titles issues and disputes between parties claiming rights to speak for country. Issues such as this are neither unusual nor impossible to work through in park management contexts, and it is important that events such as this workshop proceed with due and honest reference to the other outstanding issues.

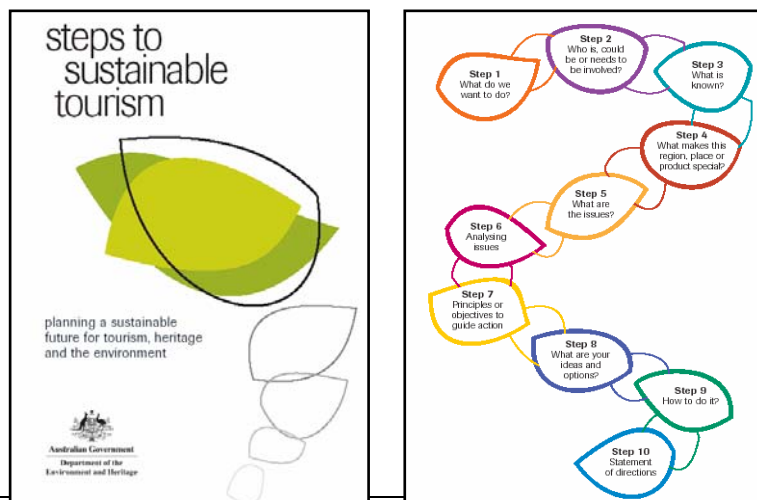
Workshop outcomes

Overall, the main outcomes from the workshop can be summarised as:

1. **Awareness of process** - Raising awareness of planning process for tourism which integrate with land management issues.



It is important to reiterate that the steps used in *Stepping Stones* are designed intentionally to have a strong and direct relationship not only to those in *Steps to Sustainable Tourism*:



But also those in the *Protecting Heritage Places Kit*:



These are the 10 steps that were included in the Draft Plan of Action that were stated to the World Heritage Centre would provide the basis for the planning foundation for managing cultural values in the Park.

2. Awareness of tourism issues facing Purnululu – Basic familiarisation to tourism issues and consideration of specific issues related to Purnululu.

- The integration of the site visits with the stepping stones was a very important part of the educational design of the Stepping Stones as a capacity building program. Areas visited in the park provided a unique opportunity to talk about immediate issues facing the Park Council, such as the allocation of commercial licenses, changes to campsite designs and the upgrade of the Bellburn airstrip. We were able to observe and talk about these issues in place, and incorporate the experience into the content of the workshop itself.



3. Structured consideration of ideas for tourism – Format for generating and considering ideas for tourism which has a strong level of ownership in the local community - **the Kaware Stepping Stones Plan**

- Principally, the workshop was an introduction to planning for tourism and its relationship to Park management planning, however the workshop also produced specific outcomes and ideas.

4. Relationship building – Relationship building between key stakeholders in the joint management process and those associated with tourism.

- One of the most important associated aims of the exercise was to develop relationships, rapport and trust between key members of the Purnululu Aboriginal Corporation, and representatives of the other joint management partner (CALM), the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Heritage and the regional manager from Tourism WA.
- In essence, this was to be one of the first real joint management activities focussing on a key management issue. As Joint management is more than just board or council meetings, the building of these relationships is an essential part of the broader management approach and program.

Future actions

Other ideas discussed during the workshop included;

- Study tour and World Heritage site exchange
- Study Tour to look at tourism and interpretation options
- World Heritage site managers exchange looking at cultural heritage management programs
- Regular *Stepping Stones* meetings
- Priority changes to interpretation
 - Communicating a clear and firm stance on the preferred location and Park name
 - In-park slide shows
 - Fly-over interpretation
 - Old and faded signage
- Aboriginal representation on regional tourism body
- Training

Workshop No. 2 - Tourism Industry Workshop

The second workshop on the development of tourism in Purnululu National Park predominantly comprised a group of people described as 'tourism industry stakeholders' with representatives from existing tour operators, government agencies and non-government agencies who have an interest in tourism activities in Purnululu. It was held in Kununurra over one and a half days commencing on the morning of Tuesday the 7th September and concluding at midday Wednesday 8th September 2004.

The objectives

There were a number of objectives for this workshop, the primary ones being;

- To improve awareness of the current and future developments for Purnululu National Park.
- To seek views on the future development of Purnululu National Park.
- To gain an understanding of the attendees views towards Aboriginal participation in the Park and engagement in enterprise opportunities.
- To determine whether or not there were similar aspirations to those provided by the Aboriginal group in workshop 1.
- To enhance the attendees understanding of World Heritage listing

The workshop in summary

The following information provides a summary of the workshop sessions, its content and output. There were a number of presentation and workshop activities.

The Presentations

1. Developments in the Park

This was on planned and prospective future developments in the Park. Particular reference was made regarding the current Park Council role and the pending review of the management plan, and how each may impact on the management of the Park in general and more particularly on tourism activities.

2. World heritage

A presentation describing a variety of key implications of the current World Heritage listing based on the 'natural attributes' of Purnululu. These ranged from legislative and legal frameworks to management requirements this status creates. A description of the current process to gain world heritage listing on cultural grounds also occurred.

3. Doing business with Aboriginal people

Involved insight into the establishment and implementation of business working agreements in Cape York Peninsula between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal parties. Information on the history and reasons for the formation of these agreements. This example provided a good case study on what was needed to establish business working relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. A clear message received was 'doing business with Aboriginal people, was good business'.

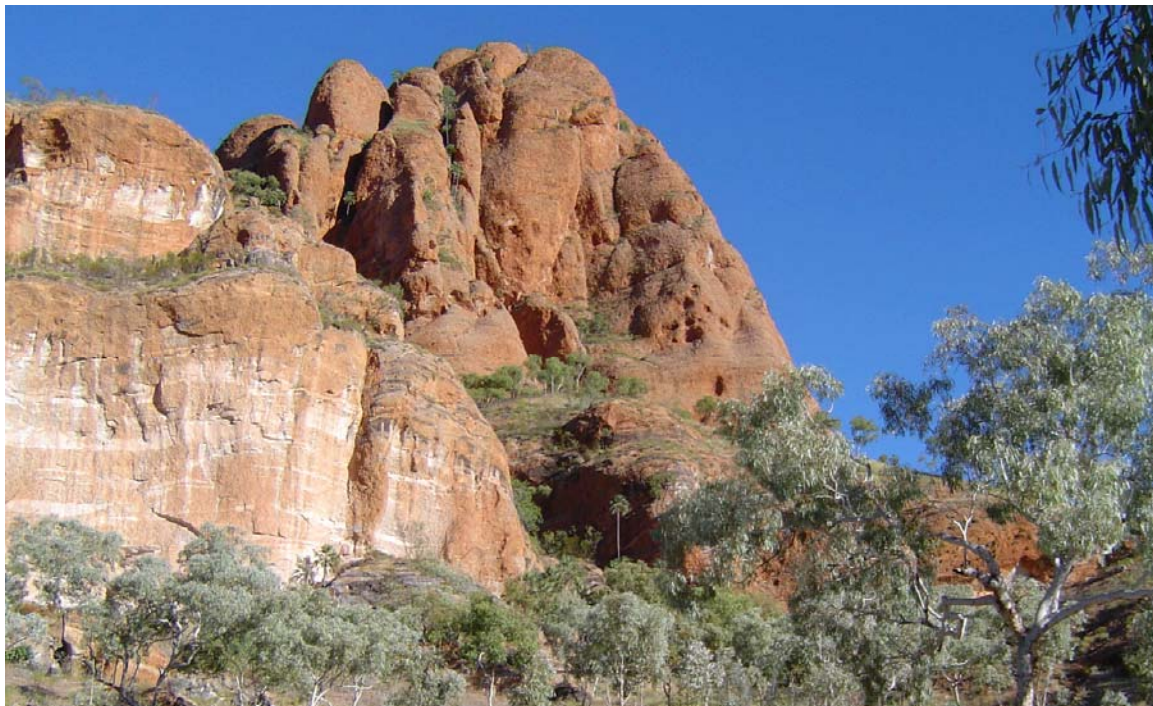
4. ‘Workshop Story’ from workshop 1

A presentation of the virtually-based report, called the ‘Workshop Story’ which provided a snapshot of the process, not the detail, of the Stepping Stones workshop (workshop No. 1).

The Workshops

Workshop session was held to:

- Identify key issues and questions from each of the presentations.
- Build a vision for Purnululu National Park’.
- To determine what was most valuable to them about Purnululu.
- What business activities they saw the Aboriginal people engaging in.



Workshop No.3 – The Combined Workshop

The third workshop in the series of five was held at the Mirringlki Centre in Warmun on the 15th and 16th November 2004. The attendees were a combination of Aboriginal and Industry people who were participants in the prior two workshops.

This workshop was the first to bring the two groups together in this process. It allowed the important opportunity for individuals to ‘eye-ball each other’, share, discuss and debate the important key issues and outcomes of tourism and heritage management in Purnululu National Park.

The objectives

The objectives of this workshop were:

- to identify areas of shared interest and to consolidate a shared vision to provide a foundation for the future of tourism and presentation of the Park;
- to provide an opportunity for personal relationship building between tour operators and Aboriginal joint management partners; and
- to identify short, medium and long-term priorities for initiatives, opportunities and ongoing processes for planning and managing tourism in the Park; and
- if possible, agree on a general strategic development process as a guide for future joint planning for tourism and the Park.



The workshop in summary

A number of key issues and principles

to guide future development of tourism and presentation of the park were determined and discussed. Two guiding principles determined were that the process and outcome must be ***genuine*** and of ***high quality***.

Some core foundations for future tourism development and presentation of the Park were also constructed. A collective list of twenty-three (23) potential actionable ideas were identified at this workshop. It was acknowledged that all were important, however, to ensure the implementation of action the ideas were put into an order of greatest to least priority.

The level of engagement and responsiveness by attendees was strong enabling the workshop to achieve its objectives. It concluded with strong interest for the impetus to be maintained and for action plans to be implemented and business potentials to be explored.

Some of the concluding comments from participants were:

“We were challenged on a range of issues, this needed to happen, now we must set things up through improved activities in the Park”

“We have a greater realisation of the distance between the two mobs”

“Its great – everyone in this room is talking to each other”



Workshop No. 4 - Indigenous Stakeholder Workshop

The fourth in the series was held at the Mirrilingki Centre in Warmun on the 21st and 22nd February 2005. This was the second workshop engaging predominately with the Aboriginal stakeholders. It was to consolidate their position and objectives. It also allowed the opportunity for others not been previously involved to participate and have their views considered.

The objectives

The objectives of this workshop were:

- to get a clear picture of where this project is up to;
- to revisit and complete Stepping Stones Plan from Workshop 1;
- to conclude the development of the work that had commenced on the action plans in Workshop 3; and
- to confirm overall goals, objectives and vision for presentation of the Park.

Stepping Stones to Tourism

Conclusion of the *Stepping Stones Plan* occurred with the completion of Step 1, Step 6 and Step 8 of the plan. This did not occur in workshop 1 due to an early conclusion creating time constraints.

Action Plans

The previous collective of potentially actionable items totalled 23. Through a prioritising vote the group determined 18 to focus on. The group then went about developing and detailing the tasks to achieve the desired outcome.



Statement of Joint Understanding

A statement of joint understanding was created and endorsed by participants as final item on the agenda.

Workshop No.5 - Industry Stakeholder Workshop

The fifth and final in the series of workshops was held in Kununurra on the 23rd February 2005.

The objectives

The objectives of this workshop were:

- to get a clear picture of where this project is up to;
- to report on workshop 4;
- to consider and work on the action plans from Workshop 3; and
- to confirm overall objectives and vision for presentation of the Park.

Primary activity

The primary activity of the day focussed on detailing the tasks of the action plans. This led to exploring in more depth the ideas and actions that had been discussed to date. It also allowed another opportunity for others not been previously involved to participate and have their views considered.

Action plans

The group examined the list of priority action plans from the previous workshop, 18 in total and further workshoped the ones requiring their input. From the initial collective list of 23 potentially actionable items (see workshop 3), participants at this workshop focused on the following.

1. Welcome to Country ideas
2. Improvement of tourism industry knowledge in Aboriginal community
3. Establishment of visitor Protocols
4. Air operators – awareness of sensitive areas during flight path
5. Establish principals/codes of conduct for operators and Aboriginal people
6. Decide on base level of Aboriginal information to be made available to visitors
7. Improve delivery of interpretation in the Park
8. Training for tour operators
9. Maintaining communication and actions

Statement of joint understanding

The statement of joint understanding was presented to participants as the final item on the agenda and was endorsed by all. This statement is described in a following section.

Steps to Sustainable Tourism Program for Purnululu

Purnululu has an opportunity, unlike many other areas in Australia to model how joint management partners can be resourced from the outset to more fully participate in the management decisions required in the future. This is with reference to a key new set of tools that can strengthen the communication and planning processes involved in joint management.

The context in Purnululu is different to previous applications in scale (relating to a whole National Park, Conservation Reserve and World Heritage Area); by the fact that it was a part of a process which could contribute to future management planning for the park; and that there is a high level of interest in the outcomes of the process related to outstanding Native Title and other claims and interest from regional tourism stakeholders.



Key Issues from workshops

The following describes the variety of issues raised and considered.

Management

- Overall Joint Management of the Park – composition of group
- Ways of working together – Traditional owners, government and industry
- The naming of places
- The provision of information i.e. telling of stories
- Control over access to areas, water holes, objects
- Park fees – entry, camping

Training

- Training for Aboriginal guides
- Training for non-Aboriginal guides
- Sharing of cultural information and stories
- Training in interpersonal skills

Support & Resources

- Level of expertise and competency
- Day-to-day management
- Funding and other resources

Traditional Owners

- Who can speak for country/places
- Understanding connections

Infrastructure

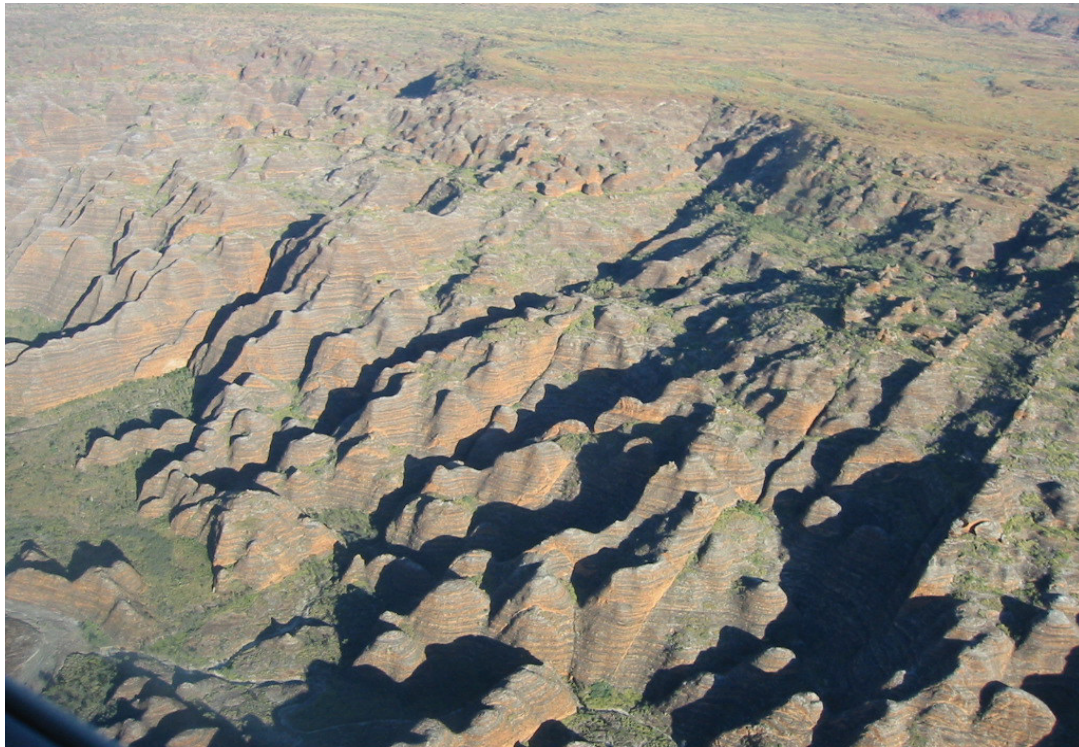
- Infrastructure for living
- Communication

Tour Operators

- Presentation of information
- Accreditation
- Knowing and enforcing protocols of the country
 - Men & women places of importance
 - Taking photos
 - Collecting memorabilia



A vision for tourism and presentation of Purnululu National Park



This step involves identifying the big picture for tourism in the area.

As one Kija elders stated ***“Being in the dark is in past”***, the future is the light.

It is important to note, that the discussions and outcomes arising from this step are works in progress. They are inputs that can be used for future discussions and work on defining a vision for tourism and Aboriginal involvement in tourism in the Park.

Vision Statements from *Stepping Stones to Tourism Plan* (workshop 1) – An Indigenous perspective

The Stepping Stone workshop enabled the reflection of the Aboriginal perspective and following statements described the visions of the Aboriginal attendees.

‘Purnululu recognized as a world-class cultural and environmental place/country and experience’

‘Kija people owning and managing sustainable enterprises.’

‘A place where visitors are welcomed to interact with Aboriginal people to raise awareness and knowledge, to build respect and relationships.’

‘A place where people come together to enjoy, appreciate and respect Purnululu.’

‘A natural and cultural world heritage area managed by traditional owners, with enterprises owned by traditional owners.’

Vision Statements from Tourism Industry (workshop 2) – An Industry perspective

The industry workshop identified the following components to contribute to the overall vision for tourism at Purnululu:

- *Icon status recognised world-wide as world-class.*
- *A place of BALANCE with culture, heritage and nature's beauty.*
- *Welcomed by a traditional Indigenous owner(s).*
- *Held up as a 'best practice' model for successful and integrated Park management on a global perspective.*
- *World's best practice on visitor experience.*
- *Employ integrated traditional and modern management practices.*
- *A healthy balance of industry and land managers working harmoniously.*
- *Wilderness values protected and enhanced.*

Vision Statement created from the workshops:

Two complementary vision statements were created based on the key themes that had been identified in vision sessions over the workshops. Below are the themes and the vision statement associated with them.

Vision 1

- *Welcoming visitors to Purnululu*
- *Visitor behaviour*
- *Interpretation and education*

Purnululu National Park is a place of cultural and natural significance, where visitors are welcomed by traditional owners, and encouraged to explore the Park respectfully, sensibly and safely. Cultural information is shared appropriately with visitors through a world class interpretation and education program.

Vision 2

- *Training and capacity-building*
- *Business and employment*
- *Tour operators and commercial activities*

Purnululu National Park is a place where tourism well managed through strong relationships between traditional owners, the tourism industry and the wider community. The local Aboriginal community is involved in different aspects of sharing the park with visitors and enjoys benefits through business and employment.

Planning the future of tourism and presentation of the Park

The future planning for tourism and heritage is essential and this process is an important precursor to the upcoming development of a new Plan of management for Purnululu.

This process had taken a range of key regional tourism and park management stakeholders through a series of workshops to develop the below actions which are based on items associated with tourism and heritage in the area.

The series of five workshops with its a number of objectives enabled the construction of the plans based on a collaboration approach about the future of tourism management in the area, encompassing natural, cultural and heritage aspects.

Overview of action plans

This section lists the 18 action plans developed in detail during the STEPS to Sustainable Tourism process. These are described in detail as attachment A.

Summary of items in which there were action plans developed included:

1. Welcome to country
2. Air routes and aerial photography
3. Visitor centre services
4. Names for places within the Park
5. Signage and interpretation strategy
6. 'Mag' paper
7. Slide show
8. Establishing an Aboriginal business entity and trust fund
9. Multi-function facility at turnoff
10. Up-market safari camp
11. Longer backpack walks
12. Short guided walks
13. Protocols for tour operators and visitors
14. Tour operator training
15. Indigenous training
16. Study tour to view tourism approaches at other places
17. Long-term strategic planning for access and infrastructure
18. Actioning and sustaining this work

Statement of joint understanding

All stakeholders participating in the Steps and Stepping Stones to Tourism Planning process in conclusion agreed to the following statement of joint understanding.

For tour operators, CALM and the Aboriginal community to work together for the future of Purnululu.



Together we recognise that:

- ◆ the fundamental structure for managing the park is through a joint management partnership between the government and traditional owners as represented by the Purnululu Aboriginal Corporation;
- ◆ the tourism industry and the operators working in the Park are essential partners in managing and presenting the park experience and values to visitors;
- ◆ the appropriate presentation of the values of the park requires control, guidance and partnership from traditional owners;
- ◆ Aboriginal involvement in the Park, its presentation to visitors and tourism generally will take time, support and acknowledgment of complex and developing relationships;
- ◆ presentation of the Park requires appropriate emphasis on the Aboriginal cultural significance of the place and that this can only be achieved through a partnership of Aboriginal community, the government and tourism interests working to agreed common protocols, principles and objectives;
- ◆ a healthy regional tourism industry can contribute to social, cultural, economic and environmental outcomes for everyone, including local and regional Aboriginal people, as long as the means for Aboriginal people to participate in the industry is encouraged and supported; and
- ◆ the government, the Aboriginal community and the tourism industry all want to see Purnululu protected and looked after for future generations. We must show the way and work hard together.

Concluding comments

This report is only the beginning to an important planning process to tourism and heritage development and management in Purnululu National Park. No single stakeholder on their own will make future actions work. The process requires genuine interest and commitment of all stakeholders to drive and make work. This ancient and iconic jewel demands the upmost care and planning to ensure the maintenance of its natural and cultural significance for the benefit of Aboriginal people, visitors and future generations.

Testimonials at the end of the Purnululu Steps process

"I am proud of everything that you mob do that is really good. The last 4 – 5 years we get nothing out of it, but as soon as Stepping Stones came everything works really fast."

Kija participant

"I have found this a forum encouraging uninhibited casual discussion, promoting a common view so the process can succeed. I commend the emphasis on encouragement of Indigenous people without whom we cannot be confident in investing into the future of the Park. Thank you."

Phil Cox

Australian Pacific Touring/Kimberley Wilderness Adventures

"To me it was fun. I enjoyed it – learning about things I haven't done for a long time – I like going to the meeting. I understand a bit of the words that have been said. It was good and I liked it. Hope to see you again at the next meeting place."

Kija participant

"I have found the Purnululu Steps to Sustainable Tourism a heartening, positive and encouraging process which offers great hope, and opens doors to the future. We must now use the opportunity wisely."

Elizabeth Kirkby

Kimberley Development Commission

"A new learning experience."

Kija participant

"These workshops have helped to bring all major stakeholders together and focus our vision to create a common goal. The vision of tourism operators, CALM, local communities and government has proven to be on the same path. Continuing these styles of workshops well into the future will ensure Purnululu becomes a role model for the future."

Warren Goodfield

Australian Adventure Travel

"First there was nothing out there. Now I'm here to look at the future for Purnululu. I am here to look at the bigger picture."

Kija participant

"A coordinated and focused forum to guide the various groups of Purnululu to come together and work towards a common goal."

*Howard James
Heliwork WA*

"Thanks for helping us for our land. It may be good. We'll go back to the community and tell our old folks that you two have done a good meeting with us and we hope to see you sometime."

Kija participant

"I have found my involvement in this 'Steps' process to be most informative to me, a newcomer to the region. A plan for the process is now in place so lets take the next step and push it forward – 'one small step for man, one giant step for mankind'. Honoured to be invited and involved."

*Peter Grigg
Kimberley Tourism Association*

"Job well done! Very educational and fun. It has given us more understanding about business (tourism). It has also given us some hope of going back to country. Thank you guys. Hope to see you two again – Next Stepping Stone!"

Kija participant

"I enjoyed being part of the process. Here's to many years of working TOGETHER."

*Kenton Day
Bungle Bungle Adventures*

"I'm glad that we've done this job to look at our future. We've finished this part for our children."

Kija participant

"A great way to build the trust between all groups so that we can move forward with confidence in each other."

Anonymous participant