



# Technical Report on the Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework

*Documentation and analysis of engagement processes and outcomes for joint park planning*

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Prepared for:  
Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation  
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## Acronyms

CALM	Western Australia Department of Environment and Conservation
CCWA	Conservation Commission of Western Australia
CPF	Cultural Planning Framework
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DEC	Department of Environment and Conservation
KLC	Kimberley Land Council
MGCPF	Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework
MG	Miriuwung, Gajerrong
NGO	Non Government Organisation
OFA	Ord Final Agreement
TO	Traditional Owner
WAGPG	Western Australian Government Planning Guidelines
WWF	World-Wide Fund for Nature
YDRPC	Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework (MGCPF, Hill et al. 2008a) presents MG peoples' law, values, visions and policy directions for the six new jointly managed parks arising out of the Ord Final Agreement (OFA). The preparation of the MGCPF marks a new approach to planning for joint management of the conservation estate between Traditional Owners and the Western Australian Government.

The MGCPF was prepared during 2007, following initial scoping of the idea by CSIRO on behalf of the MG Corporation in late 2006. Participatory planning and research activities to prepare the CPF included: bush trips to talk on country about issues and directions; documentary analysis; photographic and audio recording of important people and place connections; analysis of interviews and notes to identify key themes; review and revision of drafts of policies with separate Dawang; and combined Dawang workshop to review and revise the draft CPF utilising posters with photos and text from the draft document.

By the beginning of 2008, key practitioners<sup>1</sup> associated with the MGCPF felt a significant shift had occurred towards a more positive participatory relationship that engaged Traditional Owners, the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and the Conservation Commission of Western Australia (CCWA) more effectively in joint park planning. It was agreed to produce a Technical Report that established the "how and why" of the MGCPF. This Technical Report therefore aims to:

- document the process used to develop the MGCPF;
- establish how well preparation of the MGCPF achieved the desired outcome in relation to capacity building;
- identify factors that contributed to the success or otherwise of the MGCPF; and
- identify relevant lessons for other places where Traditional Owners and governments are coming together to work on sharing management of the conservation estate.

This Technical Report will be most useful if read in conjunction with the MGCPF (Hill et al. 2008) which provides useful contextual information, such as the history and culture of Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, relevant native title and other outcomes associated with the Ord Final Agreement (OFA) and a glossary of Miriuwung words.

An action research methodology was used to identify an initial set of practitioner-identified factors relevant to the project's desired outcome of capacity building. These initial factors formed a guide for interviews conducted with a number of MG people and government staff involved in the CPF. These interviews were analysed to identify additional themes and factors of relevance to the "how and why" of the MGCPF.

The research established that both MG peoples' capacity for park planning and the government agencies' capacity to engage with MG people have improved through the MGCPF, demonstrated by two important outcomes:

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<sup>1</sup> The "practitioners" referred to here include staff of the MG Corporation, Dawang representatives on the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council, and staff of DEC, CCWA and CSIRO who are involved with the new joint-managed conservation parks.

- An overall strong sense of ownership by the MG people of the CPF, reflecting both commitment of Dawang to the process and the enduring quality of their knowledge of law, culture and country; and
- A developing shared vision and sense of joint approach to decision making between MG people and the State agencies.

The most important reason that the Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework was a strong process is because MG law, culture and knowledge of country are strong. The sense of ownership that MG people have of the CPF is due in part to the fact that the idea (which MG took up following discussions facilitated by their organisation MG Corp) came from them to government, not from government to them. MG people are very pleased that CCWA and DEC supported them—but they still see it as their initiative, something that they put to government and they did themselves with support.

The achievement of capacity building and of these two important outcomes was underpinned by three enabling factors, each with a number of important components, as presented in Figure 1.

The factors identified in Figure 1 were compared with standards and criteria emerging in the broader international literature for best-practice in joint park planning and management. The majority of the factors identified through these previous works have also been identified in this analysis of the MGC PF. Notable omissions include: conflict management; balanced community development approach; and training for all involved. These factors may need to be given more attention as the joint management process develops. One additional factor was identified as important in the analysis of the MGC PF: “recognition of legacy issues and the broader reconciliation context”. This comparison suggests the factors identified through this research are robust when considered in the light of international experience, and can contribute to the development of standards and criteria for best-practice in joint park management with Indigenous peoples globally.

Supporting and strengthening MG law, culture and knowledge to ensure MG people drive the joint management is key to continuing the successful partnership built through the Cultural Planning Framework. The current conceptual model of the “Joint Planning Guidelines” driving the Management Plan fails to recognise this need for ongoing support for strengthening of MG law, culture and tradition through the joint management process. Figure 2 presents a revised model to take account of this requirement.

Four recommendations are made that aim to ensure the good partnerships emerging through the MGC PF continue, and to disseminate the lessons more broadly.

**Recommendation one**—Provide ongoing resources to strengthen and support MG people’s law, culture and traditions: bush trips, cultural recording and education, language support, and availability to MG of ongoing independent expertise.

**Recommendation two**—Strengthen the foundation platform by:

- Ensuring the government commitments to the OFA are completed, including tenure finalisation and amendments of the CALM Act where necessary to support joint planning; and
- Finalising the management agreement about the parks.

**Recommendation three**—Strengthen the key MG organisations by:



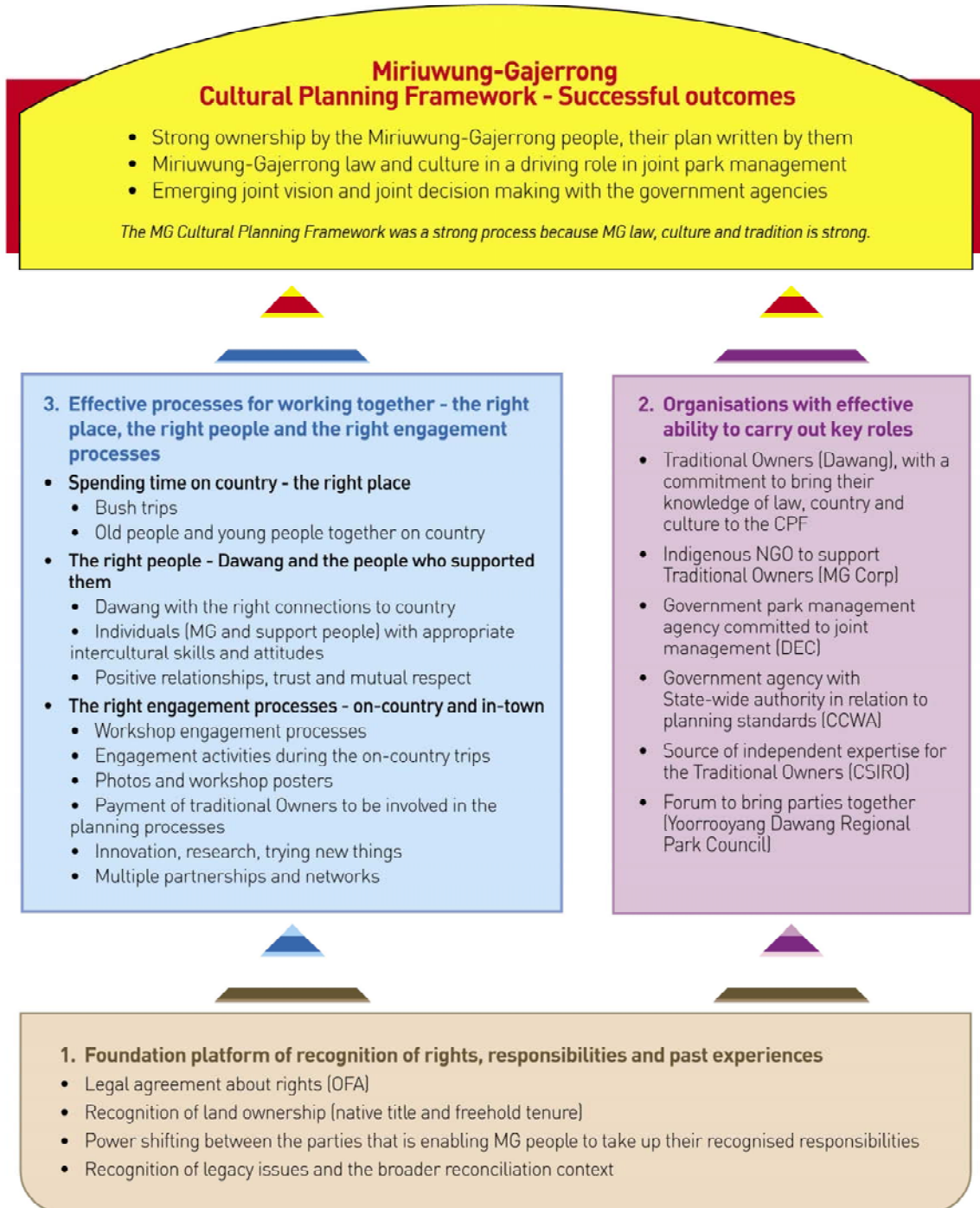
- Ensuring Dawang roles are properly supported, including ongoing capacity for Dawang meetings and discussions;
- Ensuring resources are available to support an ongoing capacity within the MG Corporation—give consideration to government support for a joint management park management position within the MG Corp, similar to the positions that are supported inside the Northern Land Council; and
- Ensuring support is available for MG to be able to meet together before the Park Council meetings, to table and discuss their issues together, and to organise which need to be brought into the meeting for discussion.

**Recommendation four**—assist other Traditional Owners and regional offices to learn from the outcomes of the CPF by:

- Bringing together a joint management practitioners<sup>2</sup> workshop within the State, to share success stories and stories of problems, including stories from the CPF;
- Ensuring that dissemination of the lessons from the CPF is undertaken through processes that engage the MG people, as they are the primary authors and drivers of the CPF;
- Supporting development in other regions of all the enabling factors identified in Figure 1; and
- Encouraging the provision of opportunities for other Traditional Owners to be supported through a process of independent discussion between themselves, accessing expert advice, to come up with their own ideas about planning.

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<sup>2</sup> Practitioners in joint management include the Traditional Owners, DEC staff, staff of Indigenous NGOs (e.g. Kimberley Land Council), advisors, consultants, researchers and any other relevant parties.



**Figure 1:** The Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework—Outcomes and Enabling Factors

# Joint Park Planning

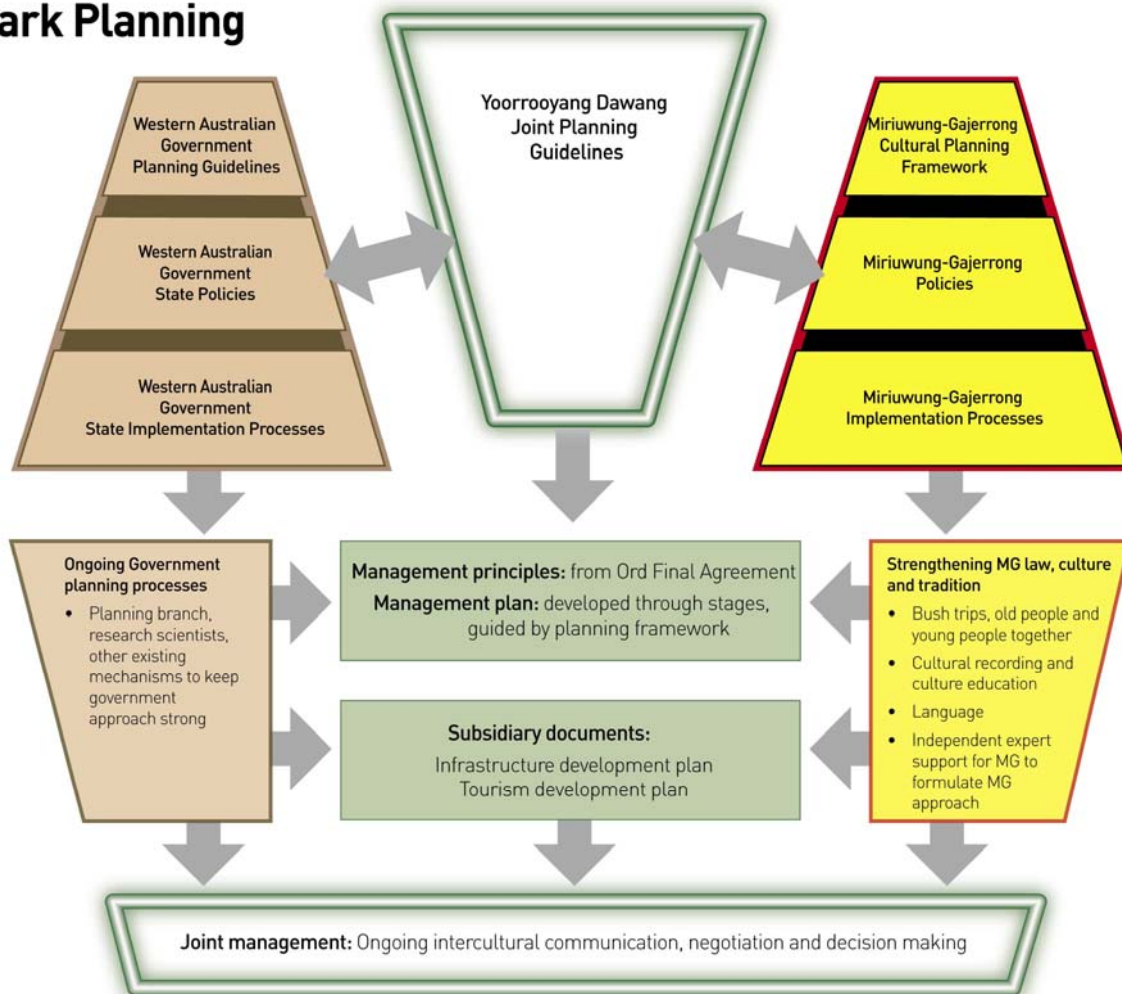


Figure 2: Revised conceptual model of joint park planning and management

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## **1.1 Background and Aims of the Technical Report on the Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework**

The Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework (MGCPF, Hill et al. 2008a) documents the laws, customs and cultural requirements of the MG People in relation to the management of six new Aboriginal-owned, jointly managed conservation parks in the East Kimberley. The preparation of the MGCPF marks a new approach to planning for joint management of the conservation estate between Traditional Owners and the Western Australian Government.

The preparation of the MGCPF was supported by a research collaboration agreement between the Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation (the MG Corp), the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC), the Conservation Commission of WA (CCWA) and CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems. The outcome sought from the research collaboration was:

*Enhanced capacity of MG people in relation to participation in Park planning; enhanced capacity for DEC and the Conservation Commission in relation to engagement with Traditional Owners in park planning.*

The MGCPF was presented by the Miriuwung-Gajerrong People to the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council in 2007, and endorsed by the Council as the basis to start moving towards development of joint management plans for six new conservation parks in the East Kimberley.

In early 2008, the four partner organisations involved in supporting the development of the MGCPF decided it would be useful to write a Technical Report (this report) about its preparation.

This Technical Report aims to:

- document the process used to develop the MGCPF;
- establish how well preparation of the MGCPF achieved the desired outcome noted above in relation to capacity building;
- identify factors that contributed to the success or otherwise of the MGCPF; and
- identify relevant lessons for other places where Traditional Owners and governments are coming together to work on sharing management of the conservation estate.

The report makes a number of recommendations for future actions. This Technical Report will be most useful if read in conjunction with the MGCPF (Hill et al. 2008) which provides useful contextual information, such as the history and culture of Miriuwung and Gajerrong peoples, relevant native title and other outcomes associated with the Ord Final Agreement (OFA) and a glossary of Miriuwung words.

## **1.2 Background to the new conservation parks in the East Kimberley**

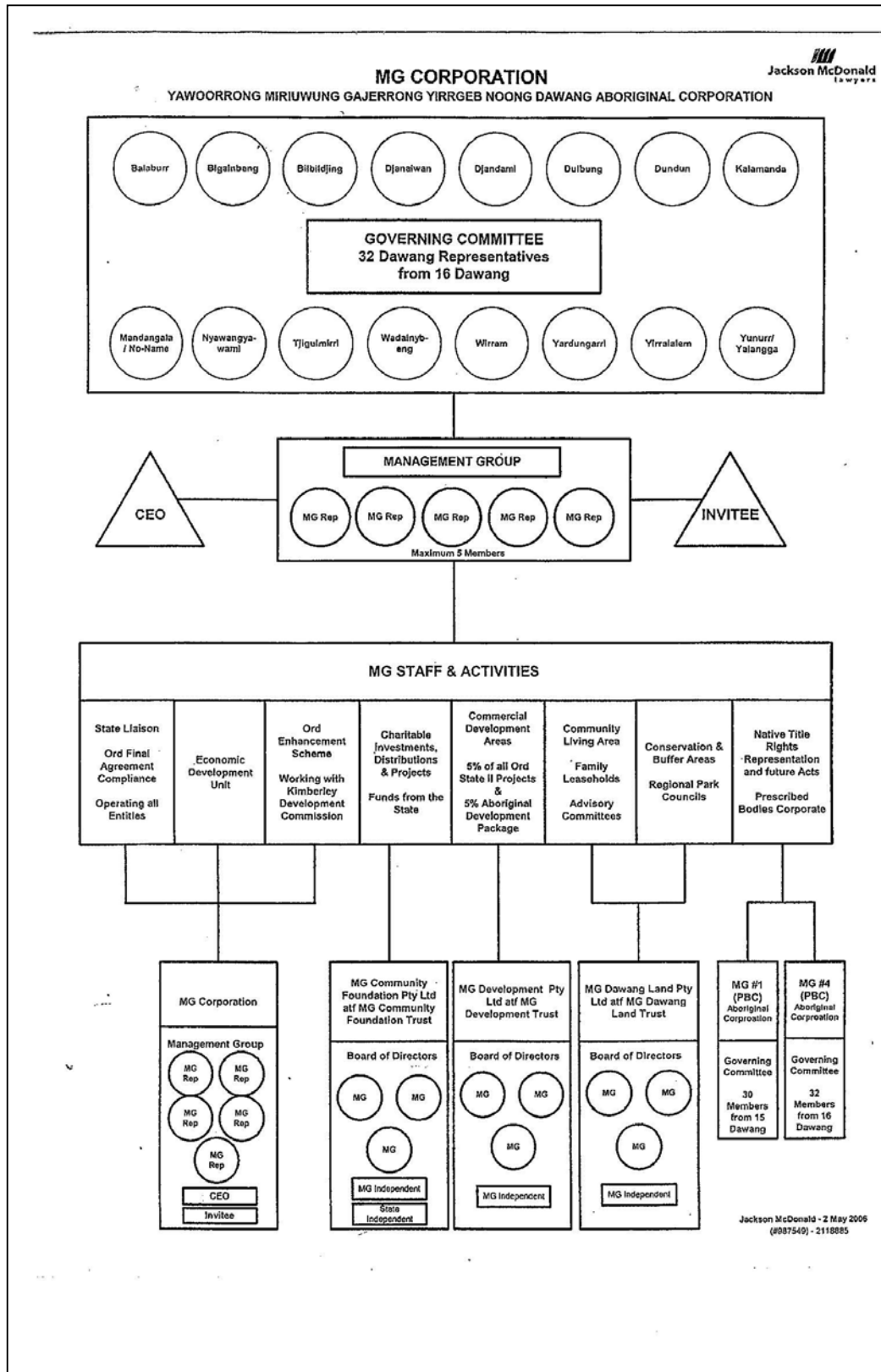
These six new conservation parks in the East Kimberley were created under the Ord Final Agreement (OFA) to be held under freehold title by the Miriuwung-Gajerrong Trustees Pty Ltd and leased to the State to be jointly managed as a conservation park by the MG Corporation and the Executive Director of CALM (now the Department of Environment and Conservation, DEC). The leasing arrangements provide substantial control to the Aboriginal land owners in relation to proposed developments in the Parks (Hill et al. 2008a provides an overview of the OFA and associated native title, tenure and other arrangements).

These conservation parks are the first Aboriginal-owned jointly managed conservation parks in WA, and as such represent an important milestone in policy innovations that are leading to greater recognition of Indigenous peoples' rights and interests in conservation lands in the State. Demonstration (Indigenous) Park Councils are currently providing a joint management/partnership approach in other places including Karijini, Purnululu, Millstream-Chichester, Cape-Range Ningaloo, Gibson Desert, under arrangements detailed in "A Regional Framework for Joint Management of Conservation Reserves". Aboriginal ownership arrangements have been foreshadowed at Burrup Peninsula.

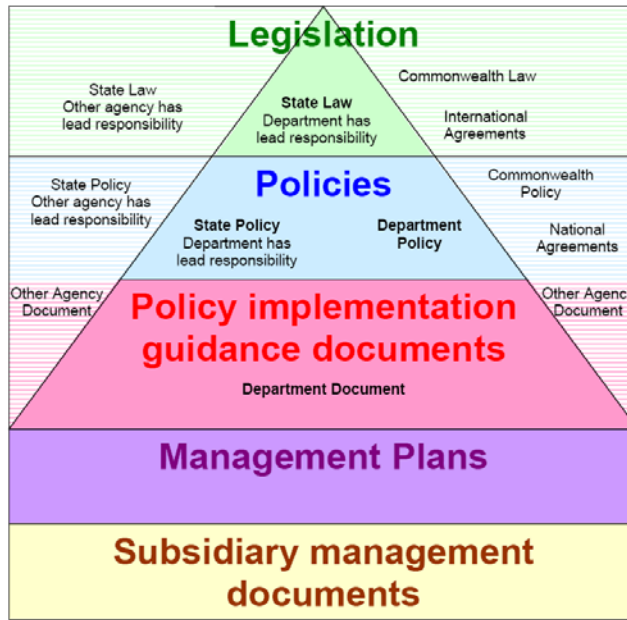
Under the OFA, the Executive Director of DEC and the MG Corporation (Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation) supported by the Conservation Commission together are responsible for ensuring the development of a Management Plan in respect of all of the land, and for administering the management through the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council (YDRPC). MG Corporation has established a sophisticated governance structure through which the sixteen Dawang groups with customary-law responsibility oversee all operations (Figure 3). Eight of these Dawang groups are also represented on the YDRPC. The Park Sub-Councils, which include the Dawang members (Dawawang) together with DEC representatives, are responsible for development and review of a Management Sub-Plan for each respective conservation park. These arrangements ensure that the traditional rights over country at the Dawang level are recognised and supported, whilst being nested within an overall accountability back to all the sixteen Dawang groups together in the broader Miriuwung-Gajerrong governance.

## **1.3 Planning arrangements for the new conservation parks**

The CCWA (2006) has produced Interim Guidelines for the Preparation of Management Plans for Terrestrial Conservation Reserves (referred to as the WA Government Planning Guidelines, WAGPG, Figure 4) which provides clear instructions to the DEC planning staff about policies and implementation processes. The MG people's approach to park planning is based on culture and customary law. Although the WAGPG are very comprehensive from the State perspective, they do not take account of Miriuwung Gajerrong peoples' traditional laws and customs. Miriuwung-Gajerrong people felt that if these guidelines were used, their traditional laws and customs would not get equal treatment in the management planning process.

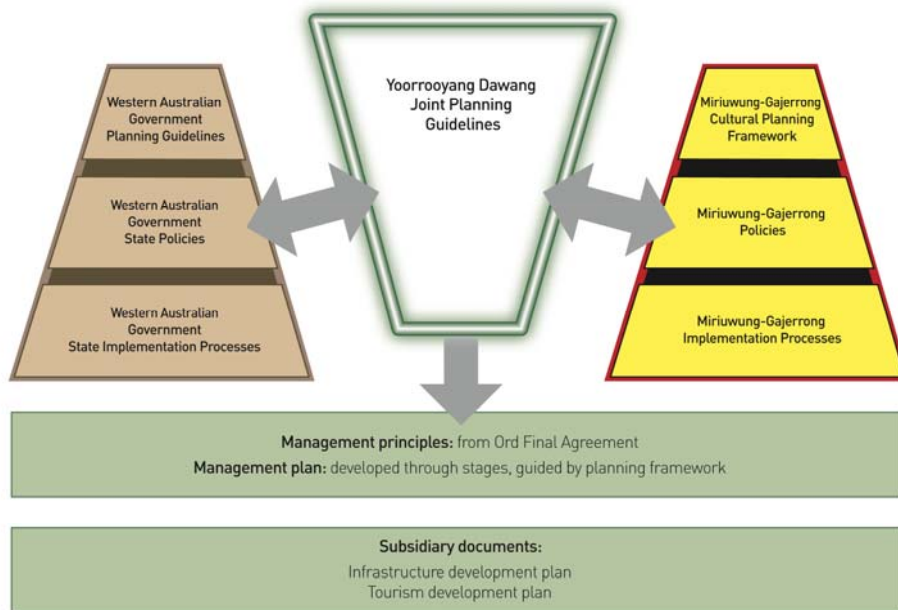


**Figure 3: MG Corp governance structure**



**Figure 4:** Western Australian Government Planning Guidelines

### Joint Park Planning



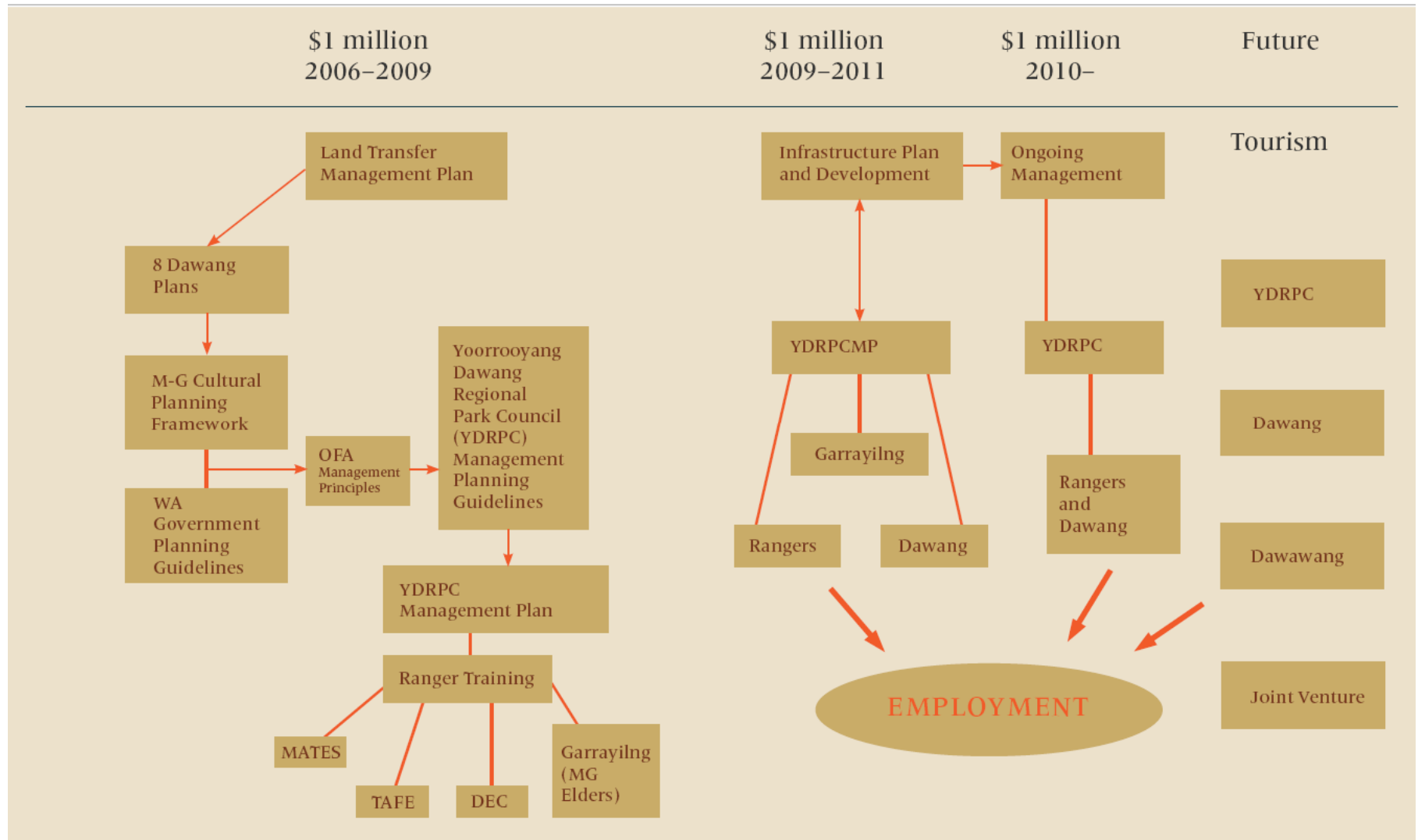
**Figure 5:** Conceptual model of joint park planning and management utilising the MG Cultural Planning Framework and Yoorrooyang Dawang Joint Planning Guidelines

After some discussions, an agreement was made between DEC, MG Corp, CCWA and the CSIRO to work together on an innovative approach to developing the management plan through a staged process including:

- Stage One—development of a Miriuwung Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework which documents MG peoples' approaches; and consideration of how the WAGPG can be articulated with the Miriuwung Gajerrong approach;
- Stage Two—development of a Joint MG-DEC Planning framework (Figure 5) that brings the two approaches together, taking into account the Management Principles as stipulated in the Ord Final Agreement. Once adopted by the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council (YDRPC) and the Conservation Commission of Western Australia, the Joint Framework will be known as the Yoorrooyang Dawang Joint Planning Guidelines, YDJPG.
- Stage Three—using the YDJPG to guide the development of the Management Plan and the Sub-Plans (Figure 2, a recently revised version of Figure 5).

Stage One, the MG Cultural Planning Framework was completed in 2007. Further work on Stages Two and Three, will be undertaken during 2008 and 2009. Figure 6 presents a conceptual layout of how the management planning work will flow over time and coordinate with the development of infrastructure, and the realisation of tourism and employment outcomes from the parks, based on funding agreed through the OFA.





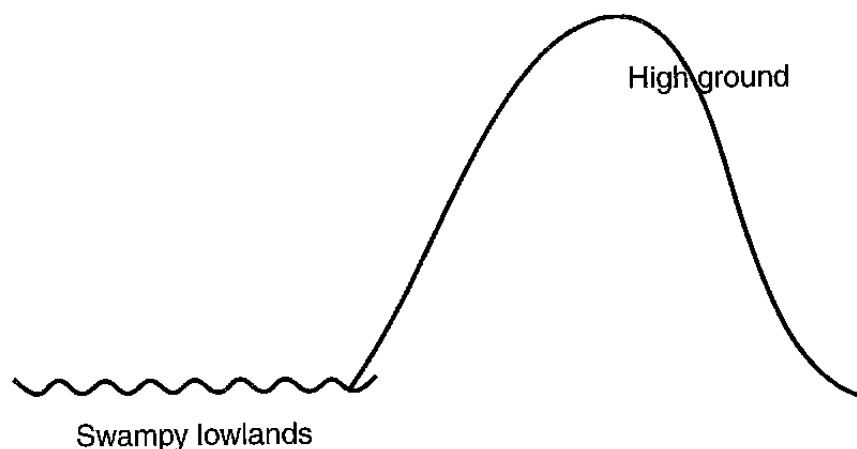
**Figure 6:** Management planning, infrastructure development, and the realisation of tourism and employment outcomes from the parks

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Action co-research model

An action co-research model underpins the approach to this Technical Report (McNiff and Whitehead 2006). Action research recognises that practitioners (such as those engaged in park planning) can create new knowledge (“action science”) by subjecting their emergent personal theories to testing and critique (Kemmis and McTaggart 2003). Schön (1995) produced a key metaphor for social science with his diagram of the typology of professional landscapes, with a high ground that is occupied by academics (official researchers) who produce universal theories, and a swampy lowlands occupied by practitioners, who create practical knowledge (Figure 7). The irony is that the knowledge produced in the swampy lowland is of most benefit to ordinary people, while theories produced in the high ground are often far removed from the practicalities of every day life in the relevant professional sphere (McNiff and Whitehead 2006). Action research overcomes this problem by enabling practitioners themselves to produce and test theories out of their practice, often leading to the creation of a “community of practice” or “communicative space” (Kemmis 2006). Co-research adds the dimension of bringing academics and practitioners together in an equitable working relationship in the co-generation of new knowledge through working together on innovations in a particular field of practice, in this case park planning (Greenwood and Levin 2007).

Action co-research, while clearly unique in some respects, has many features in common with all research methods: clear aims; research design; data-gathering; establishment of criteria and standards of judgement; generation of evidence from the data; making a claim to knowledge; submitting this claim to critique; explaining the significance of the work; disseminating the findings; and linking new knowledge with existing knowledge (McNiff and Whitehead 2006).



**Figure 7:** Schön's (1995) model of the gap between practitioners (swampy lowlands) and official researchers (high ground) in social science

## **2.2 Action co-research and the MGCPF Technical Report**

By the beginning of 2008, key practitioners<sup>3</sup> associated with the MGCPF felt a significant shift had occurred towards a more positive participatory relationship that engaged Traditional Owners, DEC and CCWA more effectively in joint park planning. All agreed that the Technical Report should attempt to establish “how and why” MGCPF had achieved the desired outcome of:

*Enhanced capacity of MG people in relation to participation in Park planning;  
enhanced capacity for DEC and the Conservation Commission in relation to  
engagement with Traditional Owners in park planning.*

The action co-research approach adopted as the basis of preparing the Technical Report set out to document, test and critique the new knowledge generated through the process of the MGCPF by undertaking the following steps:

- Documentation of the practical steps taken to prepare the MGCPF;
- Identification by practitioners of their emergent personal theories regarding the effectiveness of the MGCPF from critical reflection, and inclusion of these into a semi-structured interview guide;
- In-depth interviews to further explore these emergent personal theories, and other relevant aspects of the process and outcomes, with key participants from organisations involved in the joint management and planning project;
- Analysis of the interviews in relation to identify themes and draw out key factors relevant to the effectiveness of the MGCPF in achieving the desired outcome;
- Identification from the literature of criteria and standards to judge effective joint park planning between Traditional Owners and governments;
- Consideration of the themes and factors from the practitioners in relation to the criteria and standards from the literature;
- Synthesis of the key new knowledge generated by the practitioners and this project;
- Production of a draft report for circulation, review and critique among personnel from the four agencies involved; and
- Discussion of a summary of the draft report at a meeting of the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council.

Five interviews were conducted with individuals from DEC, CCWA, MG Corp and the YDRPC, selected through a purposive sampling approach directed towards ensuring individuals with direct and relevant participatory experience (Hay 2000). Given the small sample size, the interviewees are not identified. Interviews were semi-structured, and in-depth, each interview taking approximately between one and one and a half hours (Liamputtong and Ezzy 2005).

The interviewer and author of this Technical Report is also recognised as the senior author of the MGCPF, in acknowledgement of her contribution of transforming the oral account provided by MG people into a written document. Some exploration of her role was undertaken through the interviews, and some conclusions are drawn about this role. Potential conflicts of interest were managed by ensuring a range of

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<sup>3</sup> The practitioners referred to here include staff of the MG Corporation, Dawang representatives on the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council, and staff of DEC, CCWA and CSIRO who are involved with the new joint-managed conservation parks.

interviewees were able to comment, and to review the way their comments had been interpreted in a draft document. The technique of critical reflexivity was also employed (Kemmis and McTaggart 2003). While an external evaluation by a disinterested party would provide a more robust analysis in some respects, the action research approach recognises that a greater richness of understanding can be captured through the voices and experiences of those involved, notwithstanding the risk of bias. However, both research approaches are important for different reasons, and consideration should be given to an external evaluation of the MG joint park planning at an appropriate time (Kumar 2005).

### ***2.3 Practitioners' emergent personal theories and interview guide***

As noted above, discussions among practitioners involved in the MGCPF in early 2008 identified a common view that the process had achieved a significant shift towards a more positive participatory, relationship that engaged Traditional Owners, DEC and (perhaps to a lesser extent) CCWA effectively in joint park planning. These informal discussions also canvassed a large number of emergent personal theories (cf Kemmis 2006) regarding the reasons the process had been successful in building greater capacity for joint park planning. The following initial factors were identified by the practitioners as worthy of further exploring through the interviews:

- Ord Final Agreement, Native title determinations and Global Negotiation process;
- Power sharing and shifting;
- Tenure arrangements—MG ownerships of the parks;
- Governance of the project;
- Role/commitment of the organisations: MG (Indigenous organisation), CSIRO (independent advice), DEC, CCWA;
- Role/commitment of the people who did most of the work: Dawawang, Park Council, Scott, Ro, Des, Darryl;
- Organisational factors: payment for TOs, food, accommodation, going out on country;
- Relationships—trust, communication;
- The participatory processes—talking, butcher's paper, looking at drafts, taking photos, workshop posters, having facilitators, getting direct quotes from people;
- Innovation, research, trying new things;
- Information and knowledge brought into the projects; and
- Networks.

The interview guide incorporated questions in relation to these factors, as well as a number of more open-ended questions, and questions related to the desired outcomes (Appendix 1).

### ***2.4 Data analysis and synthesis***

Interviews were transcribed and categories abstracted according to both frequency of occurrence and relevance to the aims of the report. A working model was constructed during the categorisation (Figure 1), which led to the development and application of new categories to the data (Robinson 1998). In addition, a conceptual model developed for the Cultural Planning Framework (Figure 4) was revised in light of the new data (Figure 2). The final working model

(Figure 1) contains a description of the successful outcomes from the MGCPF, together with three categories of “enabling factors” that explain the effectiveness of the MGCPF in achieving these outcomes.

The literature review in section five concludes that standards and criteria for best practice in joint park planning and management are not yet available in the international literature. However, a set of “principles for effective Indigenous co-governance”, and related success factors, and a second set of “arenas for engagement” and related success factors, are identified (Tables 3 and 4). A gap analysis was undertaken between the enabling factors identified through this study, and the factors drawn from the literature.

Conclusions and recommendations were drawn from this data analysis, literature review, and gap analysis, within the framework provided by the conceptual model (Figures 1 and 2).

## 3 PREPARATION OF THE CULTURAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 *Initial scoping*

The idea of providing an opportunity for MG people to record their approach to managing their country in the parks first arose in discussions between Mr Desmond Hill of the MG Corp and Dr Rosemary Hill of CSIRO when working together on an investigation of a "cultural and conservation economy" concept in northern Australia (Hill et al. 2008b). Initial scoping of the idea of an "Aboriginal Management Plan" was undertaken by Dr Hill at the invitation of the MG Corp in September 2006. The scoping exercise included a meeting convened by MG Corp of the Dawang members on the YDRPC, trips onto the Ngamoowalem and Goomyig proposed parks and discussions with relevant Dawang (Jigoomirri, Galamanda, Yirralalem, Balaboorr, Wardanybeng, Bigainbang and Wiram), and a meeting with the then DEC Regional Director, Ms Gae Mackay. Copies of a cross-cultural planning book and planning documents prepared by Aboriginal people were circulated and discussed, including a Sea Country Plan, a Cultural and Natural Resource Management Plan, and the Wuthathi Land and Sea Management Framework (Carpentaria Land Council Aboriginal Corporation 2006, Walsh and Mitchell 2002, Wet Tropics Aboriginal Plan Project Team 2005, Wuthathi Land Trust 2004).

Dr Hill made a powerpoint presentation and a formal proposal to develop a "Miriuwung Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework" to the YDRPC at a meeting in November 2006. Senior representatives of DEC and CCWA, Mr Peter Sharp and Associate Professor John Bailey, also attended the meeting. At that point, it was suggested that the content of the MGCPF might be:

- Up to MG peoples;
- Based on customary Law/lore and culture;
- MG history and geography;
- MG peoples values and vision;
- Issues of concern;
- Partnerships and implementation strategies;
- Planning steps and principles MG peoples would like to see; and
- Similar to other Traditional Owner Planning Frameworks.

Issues identified in the scoping exercise included:

- Access;
- Cultural recording and cultural education;
- Tourism safety and management;
- Erosion;
- Feral cattle, horses and donkeys;
- Oral history (contact and traditional) and language;
- Wetland management;
- Employment of Rangers with understudies in each Park; and
- Employment of Trainee Rangers.

The proposed approach presented to the YDRPC included:

- Country visits with the family groups;

- Interviews and discussions;
- Making maps and drawings; and
- Writing our ideas down, checking them out with everyone.

The YDRPC accepted the proposal and asked that MG Corp, DEC, CCWA and CSIRO prepare an agreement based on the proposal.

### ***3.2 Project coordination and supervision***

The project partners recognised that processes for development of the MG Cultural Planning Framework must reflect the customary law and cultural basis of MG peoples' responsibility to country. Agreement was reached that development of the MG Cultural Planning Framework would be directed by the MG Corporation, with the eight Dawang relevant to the new conservation areas, based on a Project Plan approved and administered by the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council (YDRPC). The Project Plan was approved in February 2007, and is described below. The CSIRO researcher reported to the MG people through the MG Corporation, and was clearly viewed by MG people as working for and being supervised by them, not for and by DEC or the joint management parties together. These arrangements effectively gave MG people a source of independent advice and information about park management issues.

Regular meetings, including by telephone, were also conducted to ensure ongoing liaison between DEC (through the MG Coordinator Mr Scott Goodson appointed in early 2007, and the Regional Manager, Mr Daryl Moncrieff), the MG Corporation (though the MG Implementation Officer, Mr Des Hill), CCWA (through the Chair, Associate Professor John Bailey), and CSIRO (through the researcher Dr Rosemary Hill) and other relevant staff. Written reports on progress were provided to each meeting of the Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council by Dr Hill.

### ***3.3 Project plan***

The Project Plan as approved by the YDRPC included the following steps:

1. Project commencement: Meeting with Park Council to consider and approve a draft project plan and draft budget, and give directions to DEC, MG Corporation and CSIRO about finalising contract arrangements (February 8 2007).
2. Preparatory information gathering: literature review, documentary analysis; collection of information on MG history, geography, ethnography, and information about their country, previous studies into MG views on natural resource management issues; provision of available relevant information from DEC to MG Corporation and CSIRO; MG Corporation facilitation of Dawang to select Traditional Owner consultants (February-April 2007).
3. Collaboration development: development and implementation by Dr Hill of reporting and ongoing liaising arrangements with YDRPC members, MG Corporation, DEC regional and planning staff, particularly MG Coordinator (hosted by DEC), and MG Implementation Officer (employed by MG Corporation); co-development of approach to field work, including development of interview and workshop guides and processes (visits during April-May 2007).
4. Field work: interviews and workshops conducted by Dr Hill and MG Traditional Owner consultants with MG Dawang in each area to identify

- issues, planning steps and principles, desired strategies and actions, partnerships and implementation approaches (visits May to August 2007).
5. Analysis: analysis of data from interviews and workshops into themes and sections for report (ongoing July to September 2007).
  6. Report preparation and review: draft report on the MG Cultural Planning Framework incorporating material from each of the Dawang relevant to their areas and a consolidated version, review and revision by Dawang (September-October 2007).
  7. Presentation revision: presentation of draft Framework to YDRPC; review and revision as required (October-November 2007).
  8. Report finalisation: Preparation and printing of MG Cultural Planning Framework (Final Report, December 2007).
  9. Presentation by the Conservation Commission of their Plain English Version of the Management Plan Guidelines.
  10. Collaborative review of outcomes and plans for next stage, including bringing together of the MG Cultural Planning Framework and the CC Management Plan Guidelines, at Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council meeting.

### **3.4 Project delivery—country trips, workshop**

The project was essentially delivered according to the project plan, with a number of amendments and developments. A Plain English Version of the CCWA Management Planning Guidelines was not prepared. The process now underway for preparation of the Joint Planning Guidelines includes re-structuring the Management Planning Guidelines to fit the format of the MGCPF, which appears to be a more effective approach. The review processes in steps 6 and 7 included the hosting of a workshop. The MGCPF was endorsed at a Park Council meeting in December 2007, and some amendments and additions made (with approval of the YDRPC) prior to publication scheduled for late 2008.

The OFA requires that there be separate management plans for each of the six parks, as well as an overall management plan. The MGCPF reflects this approach, with a section that includes statements from the relevant Dawang about their parks, and another section which presents combined policy statements for example in relation to fire management, visitor management, and cultural recording.

The country trips were conducted in five groups:

- Jigoomirri and Galamanda Dawang: trips to Ngamoowalem Conservation Park and Parry's Lagoon Nature Reserve over two days (June)
- Yirralalem and Balaboorr Dawang: trips to Wawoollem and Darram Conservation Parks over two days (June)
- Wardanybeng Dawang: trips to Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim Conservation Parks over three days (July)
- Bigainbang Dawang: trip to Goomiyig Conservation Park over two days (August)
- Wiram Dawang: trips to Barrberm Conservation Park over one day (August).



A meeting of the Dawawang with CSIRO/DEC staff occurred prior to leaving on the country trips, to finalise details of payment and attendees. One or two of the Dawawang were selected to undertake food shopping with Dr Hill, and the menu for the trips generally developed while shopping. The MG Coordinator employed by DEC, Mr Scott Goodson, assisted with organising logistics for the country trips, including making sure there were sufficient tents, and other equipment. Dawang generally also brought their own swags, and sometimes tents and other equipment. Several children accompanied their parents and relatives on the trips. Two very senior elders came on the trip to Barrberrm.

Men and women travelled in separate vehicles. The general format of the country trips were:

- Day one—looking around on-country, talking about country, using an unstructured, unscripted approach, setting up camp, making lunch/dinner, recording conversations using a digital recorder, taking notes.
- End of day one—identifying a set of issues for further discussion, and writing up a set of headings on butcher's paper.
- Day two—continuation of discussions, but including a more structured session, talking through the issues under the set of headings, and writing notes on butcher's paper where all could see.

Lots of photographs of country and people on country were taken during the trips. After the trips, the tapes were transcribed and field notes typed. This material was analysed to identify themes and issues relevant to Miriuwung-Gajerrong people's approach to managing country, and a draft of the text for the CPF was developed. Advice was provided by the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre staff about appropriate spelling for Miriuwung words. These drafts of the text and photographs for the MGCPF document were discussed with the Dawang after each trip, and amendments and corrections made. Albums with prints of photos from the trips and copies of the drafts were left with the Dawang and the MG Corp.

The workshop was conducted over two days in October (see program in Appendix Two). The MG Corp Implementation Officer, Mr Des Hill, provided clear MG Corp leadership to the workshop process and also worked as a small-group facilitator. Four external facilitators were brought in to assist with the workshop, including staff of the Kimberley Land Council (KLC) and the World-Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) as well as two consultants. The facilitators' role was to ensure good flow of discussions, and to record the revisions and amendments to the document. DEC staff also attended as observers, and supported the facilitators where necessary. The workshop program ensured that the Dawang were able to separately review the plans for their parks on the first day, and then come together to review the combined policy statements.

Ten posters were produced for the workshop, which included the majority of the material in the draft MGCPF (see Appendix Three). These posters were used as the basis of discussions, and to capture desired amendments in a way that everyone could see. Input from the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring Language and Culture Centre at the beginning of the first day focused on the adoption of common spelling conventions for the Miriuwung language words used in the MGCPF.

At the beginning of the second day, Mr Des Hill from the MG Corp presented a framework (Figure 6) explaining how the MGCPF would be taken forward to form the basis of future activities in the parks, including tourism and other economic development.

All the revisions and additions from the workshop were included into a Final Draft MGCPF which was reviewed by the MG Corp. An additional policy on boundaries and linkages was added to the MGCPF as a result of the workshop, and much greater attention given to water quality issues. The final version was presented to the YDRPC in December, together with a powerpoint summarising all the changes that had been made, and final version was endorsed by the Council.

## 4 SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES FOR JOINT PARK PLANNING AND ENABLING FACTORS IN THE MGCPF PROCESS

### ***4.1 Overview of the successful outcomes for joint park planning and the identified enabling factors in the MGCPF process***

The MGCPF is based on the Dawang culture, law and traditions associated with country. The MGCPF is able to exist because Dawang have kept their cultural knowledge and traditions alive and strong, despite a history of frontier violence, dispossession and marginalisation through inappropriate development (Kimberley Land Council 2004). All other factors identified in this analysis sit under this essential feature—MG law, culture and traditions demarcate and explain the contribution of the CPF process to improving joint park management. The MG CPF was a strong process because MG law, culture and knowledge of country are strong.

All practitioners agreed that the desired capacity building had occurred through the CPF, with two important outcomes that characterise the process as a success in terms of capacity building:

- An overall strong sense of ownership by the MG people of the CPF, reflecting both commitment of Dawang to the process and the enduring quality of their knowledge of law, culture and country;
- A developing shared vision and sense of joint approach to decision making between MG people and the State agencies.

The overall strong sense of ownership that MG people have of the CPF is due in part to the fact that the idea to put it together came from them (through discussions organised by their organisation the MG Corp), not from the government. MG people are very pleased that CCWA and DEC supported them to the MGCPF together—but they still see it as their initiative, something that they put to government.

The achievement of capacity building and of these two important outcomes was underpinned by the following three enabling factors.

1. A foundation platform of recognition of rights, responsibilities and past experiences:
  - Legal agreement about rights (OFA);
  - Recognition of land ownership (native title and freehold tenure);
  - Power shifting between the parties that is enabling MG people to take up their recognised responsibilities; and
  - Recognition of legacy issues and the broader reconciliation context.
2. A set of organisations with effective ability to carry out key roles:
  - Traditional Owners (Dawang), with a commitment to bring their knowledge of law, country and culture to the CPF;
  - Indigenous NGO to support Traditional Owners (MG Corp);
  - Government park management agency committed to joint management (DEC);

- Government agency with State-wide authority in relation to planning standards (CCWA);
  - Source of independent expertise for the Traditional Owners (CSIRO); and
  - Forum to bring parties together (Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council).
3. Effective processes for working together—the right place, the right people and the right engagement processes:
- Spending time on country—the right place:
    - Bush trips;
    - Old people and young people together on country;
  - The right people—Dawang and the people who supported them:
    - Dawang with the right connections to country;
    - Individuals (MG and support people) with appropriate intercultural skills and attitudes;
    - Positive relationships, trust and mutual respect;
  - The right engagement processes—on-country and in-town:
    - Workshop engagement processes;
    - Engagement activities during the on-country trips;
    - Photos and workshop posters;
    - Payment of traditional Owners to be involved in the planning processes;
    - Innovation, research, trying new things; and
    - Multiple partnerships and networks.

## **4.2 Key outcomes that characterise the process as a success**

### **4.2.1 Capacity building**

All interviewees agreed that significant capacity building had occurred for all parties involved in the CPF process.

DEC saw a significant shift in its own approach, towards a greater emphasis on the *process* of planning rather than just the *content* of the plan, but also recognised a need to continue to foster and grow this shift in the organisation. While there is recognition that the real gain in capacity has been driven by the requirement to appoint new staff, it was also identified that DEC staff in the regional office, including the administrative, wildlife, and operational staff have played a supportive role and that their capacity to engage positively with Traditional Owners was increasing.

The need for DEC to undertake more cross cultural training was identified:

*The government department that work with us got to learn our way, and this cultural framework doesn't cut that...DEC needs cross-culture training, they got a lot to learn, they still live that government thing<sup>4</sup>.*

CCWA also recognised that the CPF had greatly enhanced their capacity in relation to joint management:

*we were privately struggling with what we would need to do that would be different in the case of these parks with so little background in joint management, we really were starting from standing still, and the cultural planning framework has opened up our experience enormously, not just for those parks, but for elsewhere too.*

<sup>4</sup> All direct quotations from the interviews are italicised and indented.

For MG people, the capacity building has been primarily about building confidence that their traditional approach to looking after country is understood by government and can now be applied in the contemporary intercultural situation:

*the majority of MG people actually live on the country that we're talking about. So it wasn't actually really something new to us, except that we're working with government now. We looked after the country before that, the way we've always done. And that's reflected in the cultural plan framework. We still want to do things in the country the way we've always done it without the government coming in and changing things. So far through the cultural planning framework, the government side of the agreement and the management plan are actually starting to see what the MG people are talking about.*

Nevertheless, MG people's understanding of the government approach to running country has increased, particularly since DEC and MG started working together on the Joint Planning Guidelines:

*since we've started to talk about the way DEC's done thing previously, I think there's certainly been an increase in understanding of what planning is about.*

As well as DEC and MG both increasing their capacity to understand one another's approach, there has also been an increased capacity to understand what joint planning and management might mean:

*there's been an increase in understanding of what joint planning should be about...we throw the words joint planning and joint management around a lot without actually ever thinking about what they might mean.*

The practitioners also highlighted a need to develop a broader understanding throughout DEC of the new insights into the nature of joint planning, and to recognise that there might still be substantial opposition to doing things differently:

*there is a real need to sell this through the Department, to say this is the way things should be done in the future...the important part is how you get to that point (of having a plan), how decisions are made, rather than what it (the plan) physically looks like.*

*the management planning staff have a model that they follow, and we're asking them to change that model in different parts of the State, it's going to be hard for them to change, they're used to doing things another way.*

#### **4.2.2 Overall sense of ownership by MG People**

In terms of outcomes, there was an overwhelming sense that the single most important outcome was the high level of ownership the MG people have over the CPF. The Dawang made a strong commitment to bringing their knowledge and expertise into the document. The fact that Dawang were able to use the process to capture their approach on paper through this report is a very strong testament to the enduring quality of MG law, culture and world view, given the difficulties of the last century (Kimberley Land Council 2004).

From the Dawang point of view, the CPF is simply about their law and culture running country:

*Being traditional Aboriginal, it's a traditional custom to just do things on your country in a certain way, and that should continue. Any people who come*

*and work on the country have got to respect that and work according to what your laws are...especially Rangers or DEC from elsewhere, if they want to go on a certain area they may have to go back and look at the Dawang plan and protocols.*

*That cultural framework highlights how passionate Aboriginal people feel for our country and that we can manage it. We've been looking after it. Our ancestors could look after it. We can look after it.*

The government parties also recognised it as demonstrating Traditional Owner capacity:

*Here's a prime example of what Indigenous people can do. They will influence the future. They will influence what happens. They have ownership. It's ours. It's MG's. The Cultural Planning Framework is simply that: this is our view of the world in regards to this park, and this will set us up for the future.*

*It's clear that there is ownership of the Cultural Planning Framework from the Dawang.*

The MGCPF is seen to put Dawang much more in the driving seat of managing their country according to their own law and culture than with previous park exercises:

*There's other joint management plans in WA and elsewhere, but nothing where it's actually being led, and pushed, and driven by the people who are on the country.*

*The cultural planning framework has been brilliant, it's really given traditional Owners an opportunity, from the State government's point of view we can see what people want, now we need to be able to facilitate that, and it's the most important step in joint management, real joint management.*

The way the CPF document is presented is central to making this ownership by MG people really clear and up-front:

*The most remarkable thing about the CPF is that it's in their words, just as spoken, that made it as close as it could be to hearing it directly from MG people.*

While the *process* of the CPF has clearly led to the strong sense of ownership, the document itself is vital to encapsulating this and providing a means of moving to the next stages;

*The CPF is where we're starting from. So it's an essential pillar for what's going to come next. If it vanished we'd be back at the beginning again. The management planning is a document-driven process. So the MG aspirations have to eventually be given a documentary form to influence the management plan. The CPF is converting things that are normally perhaps only spoken into a form that can influence a final document.*

The initial idea of doing a CPF came from interaction between the CSIRO researcher and the MG people that occurred in association with a project to investigate a cultural and conservation economy for northern Australia (see Hill et al. 2008b). MG feel the idea belongs to them because they put the idea to government, and saw the researcher working for them, not for DEC:

*Initially MG people actually had no idea, this is the first time we've gone into this sort of project, joint management planning. The idea of doing a cultural planning framework prior to doing the management plan was brought up*

*when we were on the Canada trip...you came across under your own steam to put the whole idea to the MG people, who actually put it to DEC.*

*I never saw you working for DEC, I thought that you came to work with us, for us.*

In addition, the MGCPF itself is seen as belonging to the MG people, not the researcher involved, because it is written in MG people's own words, which have not been changed by the researcher:

*That document is theirs. They've done it. You didn't write it, they did. And they own it. That's their thing. They're telling people, this is our country and this is the way we want to do it. You can't change their statements. It came from them and how they say it is how you say it (in the document).*

#### **4.2.3 Shared vision and joint decision making**

Documenting the CPF has also allowed a greater sense to emerge of both a shared goal between DEC and MG, and also of how the joint management arrangements can support each other's slightly differing priorities:

*DEC and MG have got the same vision for country, protecting. One is obligated through the legislation, and one is obligated through the traditional culture. That's what we're doing with the cultural planning framework and the management plan, bringing those two obligations together to work as one...before it never came from Aboriginal people, it came from the State to the table with the State's planning guidelines or plans, and that's the way it ran.*

*For MG, it's all built around maintenance and management of culture...there's not many places left where there's a real opportunity to do that, for the department, parks is about visitor's enjoyment and that type of thinking, and potentially we'll see a whole new and different type of visitor experience.*

An important shift has been recognition that joint management is about joint decision making:

*the actual approach to what joint management should be, and that means joint decision making, in the past I don't think that's actually been the case, we've just tried to modify an existing system.*

This joint decision making approach was contrasted with other places where the "joint" part has been much more constrained:

*traditionally there's a collection of scientific information about the way things were, then we'd involve the traditional owners in sort of fine tuning the policies the Department already had in place, to accommodate some of their thinking....we've turned that around 180 degrees and started off from the other perspective.*

*their level of input is about car park design and site clearances, and things like that, which is a real disappointment.*

*this was the first serious joint management proposal in the State really.*

### **4.3 A foundation platform of recognition of rights**

#### **4.3.1 Legal agreement about rights through the Ord Final Agreement and native title determinations**

The Ord Final Agreement and the Miriuwung-Gajerrong #1 and #4 determinations together set out a clear framework for recognising and respecting the rights and interests of Miriuwung-Gajerrong people as Traditional Owners, and the rights of the State of Western Australia. This clear framework is the foundation which made MG want to engage seriously:

*The OFA gave the MG people a very secure starting point, legal security, it's clear what their rights are, and what the State's rights are, and the nature of the agreement...without that Indigenous people may not be fully embracing of a process where they weren't sure where it was going to go. In this case, they could be quite confident it was going somewhere.*

*Aboriginal people have authority in their own ways over the years, it's always been there, but now it's being recognised by the gardiya law....having native title, we get recognition, rights as being the traditional owners of that country.*

*because there was a real legal imperative for this to be done in a particular way, that gave us an ability to think outside the box.*

The benefits of being able to work in a framework of agreements where rights and interests were settled were contrasted with the frustration and stagnation that occurs when this is not the case;

*we constantly need to go through a third party to get things done, it's not the Traditional Owners and the Department doing business, it's the Department and the KLC and the traditional owners....it stagnates park management, to be able to come to an agreement up front on this...you've basically got the framework for how things should be done, from our perspective and the traditional owner perspective.*

The Traditional Owners interviewed expressed the view that declaration of protected areas without prior and informed consent interferes in a negative way with their relationship to their traditional country:

*Before the State Government go making places like national parks and nature reserves, they should talk to the traditional owners of the country.....Aboriginal people think that not allowed to go there, it's a nature reserve.*

However, it is also recognised that the State's interest in expansion of irrigated agriculture gave the MG leverage to bring an agreement together:

*the fact that there was a need for development gave the KLC and the MG mob a really good bargaining chip....but so many other mobs in the Kimberley aren't going to have that.*

Although all parties are very positive about the overall foundation provided through the OFA, a lot of concerns were also voiced, particularly by the MG interviewees, about hold-ups in delivery of some of the commitments made by the WA Government under the OFA:

*it's a good thing (the OFA), but there's holes that need to be fixed....our organisations are still being proactive, we put the cultural framework*



*agreement, we put rangers in place, we've employed the coordinator....but on the government's side, they never hand the land back yet.*

*if you look on the other side of what the commitment from the state is supposed to have been, or what they were supposed to have done and haven't, it's not so good.*

Concerns are also expressed that future changes to government policy could occur: *a lot of the work the Park Council is doing, even through it's framed by the OFA, it's not fully empowered by the OFA. So if the government changes, we need to wait and see what level of support there would be.*

One suggestion was that the unfinished business of developing a management agreement could bring more confidence and clarity of policy settings from the State: *MG Corp, DEC and the Commission agreed through the OFA to finalise separate management agreements, but we never did—the schedules in the OFA are draft, we should finalise these.*

Recent legal analysis has identified that CCWA cannot have a joint management relationship with freehold owners, and considerable frustration was expressed by interviewees that this problem was identified during the negotiation, and was not fixed. The problem does seem to have significance to desired outcomes: *the land does need to be vested in the Commission for CCWA to have roles with respect to management planning and performance assessment...the land can still be held as freehold, but we need a legal recognition that the land will be deemed to be vested in the Commission for the purpose of those functions...that's the way to do it, if there's a policy decision to involve the Commission. There are one or two points where it might matter— if the management plan wants to create some temporary exclusions for purposes like ceremony, then we can't use the CALM Act to do that other than for land vested in the Commission. Similar problems for awarding licences in the parks. An amendment to the CALM Act could be considered to address this difficulty—such an amendment could deem that Indigenous freehold land managed for conservation purposes could be deemed to be vested in the CCWA for management planning purposes, while still remaining freehold.*

#### **4.3.2 Recognition of land ownership**

The tenure arrangements to recognise MG ownership of the land are viewed as the basis for the authority to establish the CPF:

*Because it's our country, it's our Dawang, it's ours, just ours. It's always been ours.*

*as far as the MG people are concerned, they've always owned the land – now it ensures that they can go onto country, and anyone else who wants to go on it has to come to them, it's a role reversal.*

*it's very important, the tenure issue, if you own land, you'd like to have a say on what's going to happen there whether you're leasing it or not – because in the long term, after the lease you still own the land. In the meantime you should be involved with it.*

*The fact that MG have got freehold, they've got exclusive native title rights, that's pretty important, it empowers people—even though it's leased back to the State, at the end of the day it's their land.*

*These people have taken the lead right from the start, now I think they're never going to let go of that lead—and an important factor in that is being able to say that we own it, this is our country, and now we can demonstrate that we actually own it.*

The fact that MG people have ownership in freehold tenure terms is viewed as very important in the power-shift that has occurred (discussed further below):

*joint management previously in this state, the mob hasn't had tenure, at the end of the day if falls back on the department, they have ownership, so they have the upper hand—you can't really have true joint management when Aboriginal people don't have ownership, in this case MG have ownership, they have the upper hand, so it's a really big shift for the department.*

However, there was also a view that true joint management could occur in the absence of tenure, provided there was the intent for joint decision making:

*tenure...it'll become less important as time goes by, it's more about intent...even though the tenure itself might still be vested in the Conservation Commission, real engagement and decision making could obviate the need for a tenure change. It could—not would, but it could...now that we've gone through this process you can apply it anywhere, irrespective of vesting.*

#### **4.3.3 Power sharing and shifting of responsibility**

A sense of power-shifting was clearly articulated both by MG people and the government parties. MG people felt they had stepped up and taken the opportunity provided through recognition of their rights, and the government parties recognised the MG peoples efforts:

*it gives a sense of identity, power, it opens doors for Aboriginal people...to actually work with the government to manage your own country is a big step.*

*We need DEC, but they can sort of come behind us. Not in front.*

*What I think MG see is that joint management gives the opportunity to set up things that they wanted to do for the long-term for their mob for their land.*

The government parties also recognised that they had deliberately stepped back, despite some discomfort, and that this allowed MG to take more power and responsibility, leading to a good outcome:

*there was discomfort at the start, but being able to sit back from that a little bit, and let things run their course...its been a really good example of letting go of the reigns and having a good outcome at the end.*

*CCWA was asked to go slow on the management planning until they'd finished the CPF, and it was good that we were able to stop, that created the right impression that okay, we're not going to bulldoze, we're just going to wait till you're ready.*

#### ***4.3.4 Recognition of legacy issues and the broader context of reconciliation***

The CPF includes some criticism of DEC's role, and also recognises the occurrence of massacre sites on the parks. MG people's perspectives on these issues have been presented in their own words. DEC's positive approach to support the criticisms of them being made public was very important, because it allows those issues to be clearly acknowledged, and opens the way for the issues to be addressed:

*We said, cop the criticism, it's positive criticism, this is what the people said, and the best thing is we're already starting to address some of this stuff, we're talking about it, it's all part of developing a robust relationship, for some of the harder and more difficult things to come out.*

The willingness to acknowledge the past (both recent and more distant) and recognise the suffering of the MG people since European occupation, was reciprocated by MG people with a willingness to move into a new relationship:

*people have been through this native title process, to hell and back basically, and 100 years ago we were riding through the bush killing their people on horseback, and here we are today...yet they're willing to open up and work with people that are the same, the government....like there's no real grudge there, that sort of amazes me.*

*we'll go out on country and talk about the shooting times...then they'll say isn't it nice that we're all sitting here together now talking about this stuff, black fella and white fella....very forgiving, they are very willing to help us get through this...when Alice said that with a smile on her face, I was just so blown away, that was the most moving moment.*

This recognition of the deeper issues at stake has led to an understanding of the broader opportunity through the joint management to address issues that are amongst the most important of our time:

*This isn't just about this MG project, this is about our community and how we work and function.*

#### ***4.4 A set of organisations with effective ability to carry out key roles***

##### **4.4.1.1 Dawang—"organisations" based on customary law affiliation to land**

The Dawang whose law and principles about country are documented in the MGCPF are clearly the most important factor in the MGCPF. The Dawang are the most important grouping in relation to management of country under MG law, and although not really "organisations" in the usual sense of the word, are undoubtedly the critical entities that underpin the success of the MGCPF. The Dawang have kept their relationships, knowledge and connections to country alive through very difficult circumstances over the last century (Kimberley Land Council 2004). Their ability and commitment to document their approach is a testimony to the endurance of Miriuwung-Gajerrong culture and connections to country under customary law. Nevertheless, the level of resources available to Dawang to keep their knowledge

and practices strong, and therefore their ability to participate in ongoing park joint management, is very poor indeed.

The Dawang ensured that appropriate individuals with authority under customary law were involved in the park planning. These people frequently had a large number of other duties and responsibilities to family, other organisations and roles (for example the arts centre) but still made a priority of committing their time and expertise to the process.

MG Corp worked with the Dawang to make sure the right people were involved in the Park Council from the outset:

*it was put on the corporation to actually find out who the right people are and get them involved.*

Dawang directed that the process of engagement clearly recognised the complexity of Dawang affiliation to country, and used separate planning processes first before bringing people together. Such an approach could be useful in other situations where conflict is preventing progress in joint management:

*If it could work for the MG. that's got six different huge areas as well as having eight different family groups involved, I'm pretty sure it would work in the Bungle Bungles, cause there's only two main groups to talk to.*

The good governance structure of the MG Corporation, with its strong foundation in customary law (Figure 3), is also viewed as a critical factor in underpinning the ability of the Dawang to make sure the right people are in place and contributing to the CPF:

*without having that governance structure solid and in place, then I think you're destined for failure.*

#### **4.4.2 MG Corporation role—Indigenous NGO to support the Traditional Owners**

The role of the MG Corporation is viewed as critical to ensuring that MG people have influence and can drive the process:

*If the corporation wasn't here, it would be just the State's planning guidelines put in place...if there wasn't a corporation, an agreement, these parks would still go ahead, just the government way.*

In addition, the professionalism of MG Corporation, and its well-developed governance structure are seen as very significant positive factors:

*they're definitely the most professional bunch of traditional owners that I've ever dealt with...they had a constitution and they set up the rules for engagement and the way they do business, and they really stuck to that...they're really about future generations, not just looking after yourself or sitting fees.*

*you would find it difficult not having an overarching organisation that is providing clear direction with a really clear governing structure...you would struggle without that overarching support mechanism and good governance structure.*

MG Corporation carries out a lot of logistics to support Dawang involvement in the parks business, getting notices out to members, organising Dawang to nominate representatives to the YDRPC when people resign, and ensuring the representatives

get involved in the business of the meetings. However, it is also recognised that the resources of the MG Corp are very limited:

*they do such an incredible job for the limited staff they have...they're on the limit, they really are, we know that.*

Some frustration also exists that the role of MG Corporation as defined under the OFA isn't fully understood and always supported properly by the government parties:

*Anything on those areas has to come back to the corporation, because we've got an interest in what's happening there from the corporation's perspective.*

*My role for the Corporation with regards to the park is keeping them in line with what's in the agreement...and giving us clear, precise expenditure is one of those things they have to do.*

The role of the MG Corp is still very important in helping develop the capacity of MG people to engage at the Regional Park Council forums:

*a lot of the decisions that are made at that table, our mob aren't happy with, and they actually bring it back to the MG Corporation...keep telling them, you've got to put it on the table more.*

*there needs to be an institutional structure for the MG people to be supported by their own people when attending Park Council meetings.*

#### **4.4.3 DEC role—government park management agency committed to joint management**

DEC did not have a big role in the preparation of the MGCPF—the whole purpose was to enable MG people to run the CPF process themselves. Nevertheless, they provided important logistic support, positioning themselves very much as helping the process of putting the CPF together, without influencing its content:

*I saw myself very clearly as just on the ground support role, it was understood that they wanted this to be theirs and to be owned by them.*

Both MG and DEC/CCWA interviewees recognised that the logistics support could have been provided from elsewhere. However, having that involvement from DEC in an appropriate way made it much easier to build the next stage:

*The department involvement in that process, while not having any influence, but rather participating in a support role, has had a big influence on where we are now in terms of how things have grown from the Cultural Planning Framework.*

*DEC having to listen rather than provide direction, has helped people actually grow.*

The supportive role of the senior leadership of both DEC and CCWA is highly appreciated, and recognised as being very important to enabling the MG people to step forward through the CPF process:

*The Conservation Commission, from the initial meeting we invited John Bailey, have supported what MG is trying to do through the framework....and the same with the DEC boss, Peter Sharp, he's starting to really understand what we're putting together.*

*John Bailey and Peter Sharp, they're open to these new ways and new concepts.*

*the fact that Peter lets us run with things, and also the trust that he had in the process delivering something tangible, was really good.*

It is also recognised that the WA Government through the parliament has a commitment to engaging Aboriginal people, which despite earlier resistance, is now gaining acceptance through the Department:

*The current government came in with a platform of engaging Aboriginal people....and it's becoming accepted through the Department that we will engage Aboriginal people.*

*The Department does have a commitment to joint management; we have some real champions....but I don't think we've worked out what that might mean in each instance.*

Nevertheless, DEC did have some difficulty with accepting that they were not centrally involved, but were paying the bills:

*we are signing a contract with CSIRO and MG Corp and we're really a bit player...it took a while to understand that, I didn't have the background to it, but it worked...as time went by it became less and less important.*

As noted above, while MG people are very positive about the CPF, and recognise the DEC enabled them to put this document together, there is still a view that this is just the beginning of the process of DEC learning about MG people:

*The government department that work with us got to learn our way, and this cultural framework doesn't cut that...DEC needs cross-culture training, they got a lot to learn, they still live that government thing.*

#### **4.4.4 CCWA role—Government agency with State-wide authority in relation to planning standards**

The WA arrangements through which responsibility for establishing planning standards and evaluating progress lies outside the Department (with CCWA) are somewhat unusual in Australia. However, this additional partnership has been a very positive contributory factor that allowed an innovation in planning to occur as CCWA is very supportive of innovations in planning more broadly:

*Our management planning is fairly old-fashioned, at the moment there's a raft of attempts at doing things differently, so in a State-wide sense the CPF is one of a handful of experiments, a very important part of those experiments.*

CCWA is also recognised as a senior partner with some State-level influence, although it had remained somewhat distant to the process at the regional level:

*from a regional perspective, the involvement of CCWA is neither here nor there, but when you put it in a State-wide context, it's really important, because they see it as a good process, that will assist the Department in changing the way they do business.*

*we recommended that the Commission observe Regional Park Council meetings.*

Both the CCWA and other interviewees recommended a greater role for CCWA in on-country work:

*I would like to see someone (from CCWA) sitting in and being involved in some of these on-country trips...they can have a big influence in the future, so it's really important to keep them involved.*

*I should have been more forthcoming in asking to be invited on country...you need to be with people on country, and suddenly everything makes sense.*

#### **4.4.5 Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council—forum to bring parties together**

The role of the Park Council as the forum where people from DEC, the Dawang, MG Corporation came together is also seen as vital to the CPF:

*what it has perhaps demonstrated is that the decisions you make today aren't set in concrete, that through the Park Council, there's still things we can go back and do between us, to say we think we might need to change this a little bit.*

However, as noted above, many members of the Park Council are still not entirely comfortable and able to speak out at the meetings. Nevertheless, Dawang are clearly stepping forward more and more into the YDRPC in response to being given greater opportunity to really take responsibility:

*it is clear that individuals around the table (at the Park Council meeting) have grown enormously in their capacity to engage with what the government's on about in relation to parks.*

#### **4.4.6 CSIRO role—source of independent expertise for the Traditional Owners**

MG people themselves expressed a view that their relative lack of resources meant it was critical to have outside help:

*MG Corp is understaffed and under-resourced, to having someone come in with experience to help us put it together, we wouldn't have been able to do it without you.*

In addition, MG saw it as very important that the person be clearly seen as working for them, and not for DEC who they saw as a partner, rather than as someone under their direction:

*I never saw you working for DEC, I thought that you came to work with us, for us....someone working for DEC could not do that, because we're partners.*

*If it wasn't independent of DEC, it would just be another Purnululu ....the department will always ensure that whoever comes in follows the public service guidelines (MG)...as far as the old people say they want you (independent advisor) there until the end.*

DEC and CCWA interviewees also recognised the importance of this:

*One of the key factors is that investment in a person to work closely with the MG people to develop the CPF very independent from the department.*

*it's absolutely essential for MG people to be able to have access to independent advice...we need to know the advice being provided to the Indigenous people is fully under their control and is not being second guessed by some departmental structure and filter in the middle.*

An alternative view was also expressed that when a greater level of trust was developed with the Department, an independent advisor to assist TOs might not be necessary:

*the reason (CSIRO) was engaged at the request of the MG Corp is because there was a fair bit of distrust, distrust that the Department would do the right thing....if you just look at the process as traditional owners having a first cut at what are their expectations, where the DEC staff get involved in that can fit anywhere on a spectrum....it all depends on the level of trust or acceptance the Department might have with the traditional owners.*

CSIRO as an institution was relatively invisible in the process, and there was not a sense that CSIRO was seen as having track record, other than through Dr Hill's involvement:

*it's invisible for me, I see CSIRO, I see Dr Hill.*

Nevertheless, CSIRO itself having a commitment to what is required for appropriate Indigenous engagement, and therefore supporting the involvement of Dr Hill in the process was recognised as very important:

*CSIRO support is absolutely essentially, but it doesn't matter whether it's CSIRO or whoever, as long as that organisation is supporting you to be able to carry out the work.*

From the MG perspective, there was also a sense of confidence that the expertise of an individual who worked with CSIRO could be relied on:

*we did risk analysis training—within the corporation, we just haven't got all the expertise we need, we got to bring an expert in to facilitate this. You know, we're going to bring in experts, they're experts in their field, they can bring their expertise to the table. So someone from CSIRO we know is an expert in their field.*

*the fact of CSIRO being a respected organisation gave MG a bit of confidence.*

However, there was also recognition that the organisation was not as important as the skills of the individual:

*it's the person that matters, there's lots of situations where you can have a good person doing good work, irrespective of the institution, it didn't have to be CSIRO, it could be a university or even some consultants.*

## **4.5 Effective working together—the right place, the right people, the right engagement processes**

### **4.5.1 Spending time on country—the right place**

#### **4.5.1.1 Bush trips**

Several of the interviewees noted that going out onto country to discuss ideas and capture them in the CPF was vitally important:

*How can you talk about country in a document without actually being on the country to talk about it.*



In Miriwung-Gajerrong culture and world view, a lot of issues can really only be discussed when on country. People opened up a lot more on country, and were able to think and talk about a much greater range of issues in greater depth:

*The country trips were obviously a critical factor, because that's where a lot of talk happens, once you get them out on country, they're very relaxed, they love being out there, and everything just starts flowing.*

Being on country also comes back to the core reason that the CPF was able to be written—which is the strength of MG people's knowledge of country and culture. Trips out into country provide ongoing opportunity to strengthen MG culture—which has been clearly documented in the CPF. Trips on country are viewed as the central activity of park management by MG people.

It's also recognised that many people face very challenging circumstances in their lives while in town, and may be focused on immediate and urgent concerns, such as organising food and shelter for themselves or other family members. Going onto country relieves people of these more immediate responsibilities. Making a bigger investment in getting time out on country with people was viewed as very important by all parties.

#### 4.5.1.2 Old people and young people together on country

Country trips that involve children also enable MG people to fulfil their obligations for passing on knowledge to the next generation:

*When you took the people out on country, and you brought the kids, and it was a real family thing, then you could see that really strong connection, and get the stuff that you would never get sitting in an office environment....once they got out on country, they started talking, the kids were there listening, picking up on all that stuff, they were teaching their kids, for example, we had a big war here.*

A big effort was made to involve the older people in the trips onto country, not only for the CPF but for bush trips in 2008 associated with development of the Joint Planning Guidelines. In one case, this involved arranging for a carer to accompany two older women. The DEC staff member involved explained the importance of this, and why he put so much work into making sure the older people could attend and be comfortable:

*there is so much respect for the older people within the MG group...you can see for those old people and young people together, for example the rangers, how much it meant to them, seeing those old people back out there...it's respect, there's a lot of respect for them (amongst the MG), so that respect is absolutely important, making them cups of tea, making them comfortable.*

The importance of ensuring the comfort of people was also recognised by others:  
*it's actually pretty important that you look after people when you go out on country, perhaps more important than we thought...if those two old ladies didn't come, it wouldn't have been nearly as successful, you've got to build that into the way you do things.*

## 4.5.2 *The right people*

### 4.5.2.1 Dawang with the right connections to country

Clearly the most important people involved in the CPF are the MG people themselves and the Dawang who have taken the opportunity, and committed their skills, knowledge and ideas in a fulsome manner to the process. Many of the Dawang who participated are highly skilled individuals both in terms of their knowledge of MG language, law and culture, and in working in the broader Australian society.

The Dawang ensured that appropriate individuals with authority under customary law to speak for and about their country were involved in the park planning. The broad acceptance and endorsement of the CPF by MG people shows clearly that people with appropriate knowledge and skills participated, and brought forward many important issues in a manner that reflects MG law and culture.

### 4.5.2.2 Individuals (MG and support people) with appropriate intercultural skills and attitudes

The skills, commitment and attitude of the MG people, and the individuals who supported them is recognised as a key factor in the success of the CPF:

*Much of the success probably had a lot to do with the people involved...and that means the next time we do it, if we don't have the right mix of people involved, it might not actually work as well.*

*the commitment's been there, we've had the right mix of people and everyone's been dedicated to the cause.*

*it's the quality of the people and their capacity to listen and be sensitive, and to really listen and really be sensitive.*

Transparency and openness were identified as the key skills that were required to allow the individuals to build the right sort of relationships:

*it goes to obvious things of people being open and comfortable, not holding things back because they don't think it's appropriate to say things...people need to be open, it's pretty easy to tell if someone's being cagey with you and not necessarily telling you everything. You've got to be able to ignore the normal strictures and put everything on the table, so you've got to be able to have someone who is comfortable and courageous enough to do that.*

*it's honesty, in their hearts, what makes them more to trust people is if they can judge if that person is genuine, you know. Concerned.*

The centre of intercultural skills for non-Indigenous people is in demonstrating an understanding, primarily through actions, of important values of MG society:

*it's more about showing you understand how MG society works, which is often pretty subtle, some of it is who you show respect to, who you spend time with, how you work with people, how you dress, how you approach gender issues for example.*

It was also recognised that the task may have to be shaped to the availability of individuals, especially given the strong skills shortage in the north:  
*you've got to make the best of the people around you, we've got so much going on for example national and potential world heritage listing of the north Kimberley, it's going to be hard to attract and retain good staff, even for our partners like KLC...good people here are very thin on the ground, you can barely manage to do your business...even decent infrastructure like schools and health, people leave because they can't give their kids a good education.*

#### 4.5.2.3 Positive relationships, trust and mutual respect

From the MG perspective, a trusting relationship with the person tasked with developing the CPF was vital:

*You've got to have that relationship with someone that's approachable, someone that you feel comfortable with, somebody you can work with, otherwise Aboriginal people, they clam up....people connect to you (the interviewer), I think first time a lot of people thought you're an Aboriginal you know, because you explained your role so well, people knew what you were there to do.*

However, CPF has undoubtedly strengthened the relationships and trust between all the parties:

*It was a hard process getting them (government) to come around to our (MG) way of thinking...now we're all looking at the bigger picture, the MG mob are starting to understand the government's style of management, even though it's different from how they've understood management of the country which they've been doing for years, it's starting to come together, and they both respect each others' side.*

*I'm really impressed by the change. I think it has helped grow and strengthen the relationship between the government agency and the mob, there's a real strong relationship there, and goodwill and trust.*

Spending time together on country is viewed as the most important way to build that trust:

*When you are out on country with people, they can judge if that person is genuine, you know if it's there.*

*Getting people out on country is a new way of doing business, a very good way of doing business for us and the mob, it builds relationships, maintains relationships.*

DEC recognise the need to invest in positive working relationships and in demonstrating good faith towards MG people:

*(we want) MG people to see that DEC are fair dinkum about working with this mob; it's not just tokenism, they're fair dinkum, they're going out of their way to help people, having barbeques for example, and inviting the Park Council along.*

*relationships are critical, it takes time, and you've got to give it the time, and you've got to have the right sort of people involved.*

MG people recognise and respect the knowledge, skills and roles that DEC bring to the park management:

*We need DEC to train our rangers, we can teach them on the ground how to look after country, but there's other things, certificates, handling snakes, recording the wildlife, identifying species that are endangered, that's where DEC comes in.*

The uplifting of respect between MG people and DEC that is occurring through the CPF and the joint management process is also viewed as filtering into the broader community in Kununurra:

*don't underestimate how things are changing in this community, and people's respect for each other, through this process....I think relationships within the whole community have significantly shifted.*

### **4.5.3 The right engagement processes—on-country and in-town**

#### **4.5.3.1 Workshop engagement processes**

The workshop was universally seen as centrally important to the whole process, because it allowed the MG people to interact together and confirm with one another their understanding and commitment, to learn from each other, and to build their own capacity:

*people were able to work in little groups....because we hardly see each other, but we get together, you put us in a room, and do a workshop on culture, people think how they feel for their country, they know their responsibility in a cultural way, they know their traditional life.*

*they demonstrated to each other their level of involvement, and passion, and participation and what it meant for people.*

*Aboriginal people, to really participate, you need a workshop, where you do things on butcher's paper, and you put it on the white board, they get active, they get engaged, and participate, you know. It builds our confidence.*

The MG Corp officer Mr Hill's leaderships at the workshop as a Miriuwung Traditional Owner was really appreciated by the MG people:

*Having an Aboriginal person up front, sort of draws responses from the rest of the Committee, he really showed good leadership.*

Although the MG people clearly needed space to drive the Cultural Planning Framework process themselves with DEC involvement, DEC's participation in the workshop of the draft was viewed as critical to eliciting for DEC an understanding of importance of the CPF:

*That workshop last year with the posters was something that everyone should do because it really put in their (DEC) faces what people wanted, you'd have to be very blind not to see what people wanted....if we had just done it ourselves and taken it to the state, they would have had a different reaction.*

*it also demonstrated to the department how serious this mob were, and how passionate.*

However, it was also noted that the workshop was a relatively expensive exercise, including for example payment for facilitators for all the small groups and perhaps could have been effective in a less costly way:

*if we didn't have facilitators and just sat around and talked in groups it might have worked just as well, but I don't really know.*

The difficulty of running the workshop without facilitators would have been in capturing the changes into the CPF document – assigning an MG person to that role in each group would have limited their ability to participate.

#### 4.5.3.2 Engagement activities during the on-country trips

The informal discussion processes used during the on-country (see 3.4) clearly succeeded in engaging MG people:

*the way you went about developing the framework by sitting down with people in places of their choosing and using their words is probably a big part of the package.*

During 2008 field trips to work on the joint planning guidelines, a “ground mapping” exercise was used, as a means of encouraging DEC and MG people to jointly create a visual understanding of the park (ref). There were mixed views about how successful this was:

*even that last trip we did, you could see how engaged they were in what we were doing, making an agreement with the rocks and sticks and thing, they got me down on the ground, even that old lady, she was just about to get out of her walking frame a couple of times, that's real engagement, that was really good to see.*

*it started off as being an idea that came out of book, and whether it was going to work or not almost didn't matter.....I think people did engage in the end, but it took a long time, and I was thinking this isn't working, there's no engagement there.*

#### 4.5.3.3 Photos and workshop posters

The visual record of people on country was seen as very positive, just generally because people enjoy seeing them, but also because of the importance of connection to country under customary law:

*Some of them love their photo taken. Because it's in the book, it's there for ever.*

*Nothing better than a blackfella seeing himself in a book....but seriously, being on country and recording it in pictures, the great grandchildren of those old ladies, when they've passed on, the young people who own the country, they'll look and still see these old people there, through that photo, that's proof of their connection to that country.*

The set of posters prepared to aid the discussions at the workshop were universally seen as a very powerful tool—because they had photos of the country, and the right Dawang on that country, MG people were able to point and various features during their small group discussions:

*the workshop posters were a real winner, people having pictures of themselves, and a winner for everybody not just the mob, that really allowed us to take the whole process to a lot of other people, saying look at this, this has worked really well.*

Supporting MG people (Ranger and other staff) to put such materials together themselves could make the posters even more effective:

*Getting them to sit down at the computer a couple of days a week and start developing their own presentations.*

#### 4.5.3.4 Payment of Traditional Owners to be involved in the planning processes

A lot of discussion had occurred during the process of the CPF about who should be paid, and how much, and generally there was consensus that payment was important, although concern about raising expectations for payments at other times:

*we need to recognise people's value to the process, they are almost acting as a consultant, so I think that's recognition of their value in this whole process.*

The approach taken by both MG Corp and DEC working together to come to agreement over the payment issues was recognised as important;

*that's been a rocky, rough ride...but I think actually having an agreement between us and MG Corp has been really important...it's not supposed to be a source of income, it's payment for time and expertise.*

#### 4.5.3.5 Innovation, research, trying new things

The individuals who were involved in the CPF process from the various organisations were viewed as being open to innovation, which was important throughout the process:

*the ability of those people to think around all of those ideas, and discuss, debate, argue, whatever it might be, and come up with a way forward is something pretty special.*

Some of the interviewees recognised the benefits the involvement of a research organisation with a strong focus on innovation:

*You need someone who has got that research experience to come and put this sort of stuff on the table.....like the Indigenous Water Policy group also has CSIRO assistance.*

DEC views itself as a very innovative organisation:

*CALM always had an agenda of looking at innovative ways of doing things.*

However, MG people tend to see DEC as relatively bureaucratic organisation that doesn't have a good ability to innovate:

*DEC still don't think outside the box, they really government department people, we're not in the box, we look at the big picture, think outside the box.*

Going out onto country together was seen as the best way to get people thinking outside the box, being prepared to open up to new ideas. Other suggestions included bringing more anthropologists, planners and social scientists in to the scientific division of the Department, which would also save money:

*every year we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars for engagement of consultants, anthropologists, why don't we have someone in house that provides advice on that sort of stuff, hopefully that will come out of the joint practitioner's workshop we might have later on.*

As noted above, at the State-wide level, CCWA is very supportive of encouraging innovations in planning more broadly. The factors that lead to innovation are recognised as being multiple:

*there needs to be a reason for innovation, there needs to be something wrong with what you're doing, there needs to be a critical mass of people willing to*

*try something new, and new information, new understanding and new values are also important drivers.*

Several interviewees identified their experiences of the debates around whether the MG Rangers should be enrolled in the MATES (Mentored Aboriginal Training and Employment Scheme) as examples where openness to new ideas had led to a beneficial outcome. The MGCPF identifies that Rangers must be from the Dawang with connections to the country, and therefore a minimum of eight Rangers are required. Although the disagreements were difficult at first, all agreed that the solution that had been arrived at—essentially local training by TAFE, allowing for one Ranger from each Dawang—met the local needs much better:

*we've come up with a completely different process for the (Ranger) traineeships, and we've convinced the training centre that this is a much better model...we may end up with 32 Rangers (as desired by MG), who knows.*

#### 4.5.3.6 Multiple partnerships and networks

The multiple partnerships involved in the CPF—Dawang, MG Corp, DEC, CSIRO, CCWA—was viewed by several interviewees as very beneficial. These partnerships gave the ability to access information from an array of resources because the individuals involved came from a range of different organisations, and each had their own networks:

*it's pretty important being able to talk with people well outside the process, and have an understanding, so those networks have been absolutely important.*

On the other hand, there was also the recognition that the Department was more focused on having the internal resources to meet its needs, and that the concept of a multiple-partnership approach is an evolving approach that is still somewhat difficult:

*from our Department's perspectives networks haven't been incredibly important, I'm comfortable within the Department.....I reckon it's going to become much more important as we go forward from here.*

*the biggest struggle is going to be the extent to which they fully embrace the idea of partnerships, it's not something any agency does easily...there's a lot of potential partnerships on the table, the step from the experience that regional staff have with Indigenous people to shared management planning is a big step.*

*DEC sees themselves as holders of the knowledge and expertise, there's a risk they'll think we've got the expertise now, we don't need partners in the future.*

MG people and the MG Corp place a strong emphasis on accessing appropriate expertise, and therefore a range of partnerships because of their need to work across multiple spheres, including agriculture, real estate, aquaculture, health, housing and many more.

#### **4.6 Next stages: perceptions relevant to the Joint Planning Guidelines**

Overall the interviews indicated a very positive attitude a commitment from MG people, DEC and CCWA in moving forward to the next stage, and continuing to try out new ideas, particularly in putting the management plan together:

*we need to keep trying new things...like the idea of the management plan actually being a spoken document of a video tape of someone actually saying what we're going to do.*

Some concerns also emerged about how the next stages, both in relation to the State meeting its commitments under the OFA, and also of DEC effectively bringing their ideas and approaches forward into the Joint Planning Guidelines:

*If they just want to put theirs (planning guidelines) in without explaining them, it's going to be bullshit. There will be an argument at the end of the process saying hang on, we haven't agreed with that.*

*To make their bit fit into ours, it's going to be very difficult.*

There is considerable concern that the existence of a whole set of government policies and regulations is going to be a significant barrier to DEC really supporting MG leadership and roles:

*They won't go out and say, we've come here to talk about burning on your country—how do you want to do it?*

There was also concern that DEC were taking ownership over the CPF process in terms of sharing the experience with other groups, and not supporting and enabling MG people to explain to other Traditional Owners why it was important:

*the Yawuru mob, they're getting the picture, but they're getting it from DEC's side.*

There is some concern that DEC still haven't quite understood the park management for MG people is primarily about strengthening MG law and culture, which hasn't really begun yet—all the CPF has done is expressed what strengthening law and culture means for planning. MG people see the CPF as about the process of bringing their law and culture into the management, which is necessarily an ongoing process:

*the Cultural Planning Framework, it's just the start, there's a lot more to happen.*

DEC on the other hand, is also not convinced of the need to go through the process of documenting the Joint Planning Guidelines, and doubted the need for MG to have ongoing access to independent advice in the planning process:

*the real value was the cultural planning framework, the second part I'm still struggling with.*

Clearly the Joint Planning Guidelines provide an important opportunity for both MG and DEC to continue to develop their shared vision, and this process needs to be handled sensitively in order to build on the good relationships developed through the CPF.



#### **4.7 Perceptions about lessons for other Traditional Owner joint park management processes**

Both MG, DEC and CCWA interviewees felt that the CPF process had the potential to improve relationships between the State agencies and Traditional Owners if applied elsewhere, and lead to a more equitable engagement and decision-making process:

*Any areas where we're talking about joint management, we need to go down the path of getting traditional owners' thoughts on park management before we try and put it all in a box.*

*If it could work for the MG, that's got six different huge areas as well as having eight different family groups involved, I'm pretty sure it would work in the Bungle Bungles, cause there's only two main groups to talk to.*

*if we took this process to another place where we've got some disgruntled traditional owners, and went through this process and built upon their ideas, I think it might actually make a difference to the way they view park management, and the view themselves as well.*

*at the end of the day we want engagement, we want joint decision-making.*

The CPF process also encapsulates a new way of thinking about planning, which is viewed as potentially very valuable in other places:

*The whole way of going about planning has been turned on its head a little bit, that's really valuable lesson, I hope that people outside the process can take that on board.*

However, practitioners also recognised that the enabling factors identified in the previous sections may be critical to achieving any future success from the CPF approach:

*the fact that MG documented their aspirations in such a fulsome way through the CPF is because there were some preconditions in place, such as the OFA, and you might find where those preconditions are not in place, attention will have to be addressed to develop agreements and land tenure recognition.*

In addition, as noted previously, the high degree of ownership that MG people have over the MGCPF has arisen in part because they see it as an idea that they put to government, not something that was put to them by government. The implication is that the key to improving relationships with other Traditional Owners may be in supporting that process of independent discussion between themselves, accessing expert advice, to come up with their own ideas about planning—rather than attempting to replicate the Cultural Planning Framework with other groups.

## 5 Literature review of standards and criteria for best-practice joint park planning and management

### 5.1 *Criteria and standards for best-practice in joint park planning and management*

Criteria and standards by which to evaluate the effectiveness of joint park management with Indigenous peoples are very poorly developed (Hill 2006). While IUCN and other organisations have been very active in producing guidelines on Indigenous peoples' involvement in protected areas, little evaluation has occurred of whether these guidelines have been put into practice, or succeeded (Nepal 2002).

IUCN's "Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines", includes three that are directly relevant to the roles of Indigenous peoples:

- Indigenous and Traditional Peoples and Protected Areas: Principles, Guidelines and Case studies (Beltran 2000);
- Indigenous and Local Communities and Protected Areas: Towards Equity and Enhanced Conservation (Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2004); and
- Sacred Natural Sites, Guidelines for Protected Area Managers (Wild and McLeod 2008).

The IUCN Guidelines are developed primarily by practitioners, and tend to be very action-oriented. The *Indigenous and Local Communities and Protected Areas Guidelines* identifies "common features" and "options for action and advice" as the guidelines rather than standards and criteria. The four features they identify as common to all co-management arrangements that involve Indigenous and local peoples include:

- Co-management is an arena of social engagement, encounter and experimentation.
- Co-management capitalizes on multiplicity and diversity. Co-management is usually a multi-party but also a multi-level and multi-disciplinary endeavour.
- Co-management is based upon a negotiated, joint decision-making approach and some degree of power-sharing, sharing of responsibilities, and distribution of benefits among all institutional actors.
- Co-management is more of a flexible process than a stable and definitive end point. Its most important result is not a management plan but a management partnership, capable of responding to varying circumstances and needs. And co-management agreements and organizations have a healthy tendency to evolve.

Their "options for actions" focus on four dimensions:

1. Share information, advice and conservation benefits with the concerned communities.
2. Empower indigenous peoples and local and mobile communities to participate in protected area management.

3. Engage the concerned communities in negotiation processes and management institutions.
4. Promote learning at various levels.

*Sacred Natural Sites, Guidelines for Protected Area Managers* (Wild and McLeod 2008) presents a set of 6 principles (each with a subsidiary set of guidelines):

1. Recognise sacred natural sites already located in protected areas.
2. Integrate sacred natural sites located in protected areas into planning processes and management programmes.
3. Promote stakeholder consent, participation, inclusion and collaboration.
4. Encourage improved knowledge and understanding of sacred natural sites.
5. Protect sacred natural sites while providing appropriate management access and use.
6. Respect the rights of sacred natural site custodians within an appropriate framework of national policy.

This approach adheres more closely to a set of standards and some are very appropriate to some of our initial concepts about the effectiveness of the MGCPF—for example, principle 3 above has five guidelines: prior consent; voluntary participation; inclusion; legitimacy; conflict management. However, other initial concepts about the effectiveness of MGCPF such as “relationships of trust” are not addressed. Overall, their focus on sacred natural areas is too narrow to provide standards and criteria for our research.

IUCN’s protected area’s work has shifted over the last decade from a focus on management to a focus on governance, partly in response to Indigenous peoples views and visions about protected areas (Brosius 2004). Borrini-Feyerabend *et al.* (2004) introduced the concept of governance categories in protected areas (Table 1). The new IUCN Guidelines on Protected Area Management Categories (IUCN 2008) now includes a chapter on Governance. A broad set of principles is identified for good governance which includes:

- ✓ **Legitimacy and voice** – social dialogue and collective agreements on protected area management objectives and strategies on the basis of freedom of association and speech with no discrimination related to gender, ethnicity or other characteristics (e.g., mobility);
- ✓ **Subsidiarity** – attributing management authority and responsibility to the institutions closest to the resources at stake;
- ✓ **Fairness** – sharing equitably the costs and benefits of establishing and managing protected areas and providing a recourse to impartial judgement in case of related conflict;
- ✓ **Do no harm!** – making sure that the costs of establishing and managing protected areas are not “dumped” on weak social actors without any form of compensation;
- ✓ **“Direction”** – fostering and maintaining an inspiring and consistent long-term vision for the protected area and its conservation objectives;
- ✓ **Performance** – effectively conserving biodiversity whilst responding to the concerns of stakeholders and making a wise use of resources;
- ✓ **Accountability** – having clearly demarcated lines of responsibility and ensuring a transparent flow of information about institutions, processes and decisions;
- ✓ **Transparency** – ensuring that all relevant information is available to all stakeholders;
- ✓ **Human rights** – underlying all of the above, conservation should respect human rights including the rights of future generations.

Table 1: “The IUCN protected area matrix”: a classification system for protected areas comprising both management category and governance type

Governance types  Protected area categories	A. Governance by government			B. Shared governance			C. Private governance			D. Governance by indigenous peoples & local communities	
	Federal or national ministry or agency in charge	Sub-national ministry or agency in charge	Government-delegated management (e.g., to an NGO)	Transboundary management	Collaborative management (various forms of pluralist influence)	Joint management (pluralist management board)	Declared and run by individual land-owner	...by non-profit organizations (e.g., NGOs, universities, co-operatives)	...by for profit organizations (e.g., individual or corporate land-owners)	Indigenous peoples' conserved areas and territories – established and run by indigenous peoples	Community conserved areas -- declared and run by local communities
I a. Strict Nature Reserve											
Ib. Wilderness Area											
II. National Park											
III. Natural Monument											
IV. Habitat/ Species Management											
V. Protected Landscape/ Seascape											
VI. Managed Resource Protected Area											

In addition, IUCN (2008) applies the following principles of good governance as they relate to protected areas overlapping with Indigenous peoples' traditional lands waters and resources:

- Protected areas established on Indigenous lands, territories and resources should respect the rights of traditional owners, custodians, or users to such lands, territories and resources;
- Protected area management should also respect Indigenous peoples' institutions and customary laws; and
- Therefore protected areas should recognise Indigenous owners or custodians as holders of statutory powers in their areas, and therefore respect and strengthen indigenous peoples' exercising of authority and control of such areas.

These three principles may form appropriate standards for consideration of good governance in joint management with Indigenous peoples.

As noted above, little critical evaluation has been undertaken by IUCN in relation to the application or success of their guidelines. The academic literature includes some studies of protected area co-management with a more critical approach, that highlight the continued marginalization of people who protected area managers propose to integrate as key actors (Brosius 2004, Muller 2003, Nygren 2004, Riseth 2007).

For example, Coombes and Hill (2005) found that community diversity may be an obstacle to the establishment of co-management regimes with Indigenous peoples in New Zealand. Three complications to the foundation of co-management were identified: (1) colonial legacies and the associated deep sense of mistrust; (2) problems about imposing obligations on Indigenous peoples without resources; (3) community seen as homogenous with models that by-pass tribal and sub-tribal politics and thereby enhance community conflict. Strelein (1993) argued that basing joint management arrangements on Western land tenure systems, rather than customary law/title arrangements has been a major deficiency.

Baumann and Smyth (2007) researched three cases of Indigenous partnerships in protected area management in Australia: Nitmiluk National Park, Booderee National Park, and Dhimurru Indigenous Protected Area. From these case studies, they identified fifteen “critical success factors”, including recognition of Indigenous land ownership as the critical foundation, the requirement for commitment of all parties, recognition of the diversity of partnerships, the need for participatory community development approaches, and other factors. They also made a number of recommendations about Indigenous partnerships, including for example the recognition that free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous traditional owners is a requirement for the development of mutually respectful, beneficial and productive protected area management partnerships.

In summary, standards and criteria to make judgements about effectiveness of co-management arrangements with Indigenous people are not yet available. However, the emerging literature both within the field of professional practice, and in the academic literature, has identified two separate aspects:

- A platform of good co-governance, for which preliminary standards are now available (IUCN 2008); and
- A set of enabling mechanisms for good co-management, appearing variously as “options for action”, “success factors” and “principles and guidelines” (Baumann and Smyth 2007, Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2004, Wild and McLeod 2008).

It is beyond the scope of this Technical Report to produce a complete set of standards and criteria on which to judge the effectiveness of the MGCPF. However, Tables 2 and 3 set out the principles and arenas of engagement from the IUCN Guidelines, together with the success factors identified in Baumann and Smyth (2007).

## ***5.2 Comparison of the MGCPF analysis with emerging standards and criteria for best-practice joint park planning and management***

Tables 2 and 3 also present a simple comparison of the enabling factors identified through this analysis of the MGCPF in relation to the principles, arenas of engagement, and success factors from the IUCN Guidelines and Baumann and Smyth (2007). The majority of the factors identified through these previous works have also been identified in this analysis of the MGCPF. Notable omissions include: conflict management; balanced community development approach; and training for all involved (although the need for more training of DEC staff in relation to cross-cultural skills was identified). These factors may need to be given more attention as the joint management process develops.

One additional factor was identified as important in the analysis of the MGCPF, that is “recognition of legacy issues and the broader reconciliation context”. Global attention has been drawn to this factor previously through a resolution passed at the World Parks Congress in 2003 calling for the establishment of a “Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Protected Areas” to deal with the issues of protected areas being established without consent, and with associated forced removals of people (Hill 2004).

This comparison suggests the factors identified by the practitioners as important to the success of the MGCPF are robust when considered in the light of international experience.

**Table 2**

Principles and success factors for effective Indigenous co-governance, and the MGCPF analysis

Principle <sup>5</sup>	Success factors <sup>6</sup>	MGCPF Analysis <sup>7</sup>
respect the rights of traditional owners, custodians, or users to such lands, territories and resources	Indigenous land ownership	✓
	Free, prior and informed consent of the Traditional Owners as a requirement for mutually respectful partnerships	✓
	Legal protection for rights and interests of parties	✓
	Bipartisan political approach	✓
respect and strengthen Indigenous peoples' institutions and customary laws	Coherent and effective Indigenous representative party with legitimacy	✓
	Sufficient resources to enable Indigenous participation	✓
	Conflict management	✗
Respect and strengthen indigenous peoples' exercising of authority and control of such areas.	Commitment of Indigenous people to take up the opportunities	✓
	Appropriate technical and other advice	✓
	Clear understanding of Indigenous ideas about success	~
	Traditional Owners in driving role	✓

<sup>5</sup> IUCN (2008) Draft IUCN Guidelines on Protected Area Management Categories Chapter on Governance.

<sup>6</sup> Bauman, T., and D.M. Smyth. 2007. *Indigenous Partnerships in Protected Area Management in Australia: Three case studies*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

<sup>7</sup> ✓ = addressed in MGCPF; ✗ = not addressed in MGCPF; ~ = partly addressed in MGCPF

**Table 3**  
Arenas of engagement and success factors, and the MGCPF analysis

Arena <sup>8</sup>	Key enabling mechanism	MG CPF analysis
arena of social engagement, encounter and experimentation	Productive working relationships	✓
	Balanced community development approach	✗
	Participatory approach, including on-country work	✓
	Sophisticated intercultural engagement	✓
	Training for all involved	✗
	Innovation and research	✓
	Emphasis on role of youth	~
multi-party but also a multi-level and multi-disciplinary endeavour	Commitment of all parties	✓
	High level leadership	✓
	Diversity of partnerships including with neighbours	~
	Clearly defined responsibilities	~
negotiated, joint decision-making approach and some degree of power-sharing, sharing of responsibilities, and distribution of benefits among all institutional actors	Sense of power-sharing	✓
	Secure funding	✓
	Competent and effective governance	✓
flexible process than a stable and definitive end point	Progressive and incremental approach to capacity building of all parties	~
	Flexibility	✓

<sup>8</sup> Borrini-Feyerabend, G., A. Kothari, and G. Oviedo. 2004. *Indigenous and Local Communities and Protected Areas: Towards Equity and Enhanced Conservation*. Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK: IUCN. World Commission on Protected Areas. Best Practice Protected Area Guideline Series No. 11.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 *Synthesis of findings*

This Technical Report set out to:

- document the process used to develop the MGCPF;
- establish how well preparation of the MGCPF achieved the desired outcome noted above in relation to capacity building;
- identify factors that contributed to the success or otherwise of the MGCPF; and
- identify relevant lessons for other places where Traditional Owners and governments are coming together to work on sharing management of the conservation estate.

We conclude that the MGCPF was highly successful in achieving the desired outcomes of:

*Enhanced capacity of MG people in relation to participation in Park planning; enhanced capacity for DEC and the Conservation Commission in relation to engagement with Traditional Owners in park planning.*

The two outcomes that characterise the process as a success in terms of capacity building are:

- An overall strong sense of ownership by the MG people of the CPF, reflecting both commitment of Dawang to the process and the enduring quality of their knowledge of law, culture and country; and
- A developing shared vision and sense of joint approach to decision making between MG people and the State agencies.

Three key enabling factors contributed to the achievement of these outcomes:

1. A foundation platform of recognition of rights, responsibilities and past experiences;
2. A set of organisations with effective ability to carry out key roles; and
3. Effective processes for working together—the right place, the right people and the right engagement processes.

Despite these enabling factors, it must be noted that the MGCPF was a strong process because MG law, culture and knowledge of country are strong. All other factors identified in this analysis sit under that one essential feature—MG law, culture and traditions define and explain the contribution of the CPF process to improving joint park management.

In addition, the overall strong sense of ownership that MG people have of the CPF is due in part to the fact that the idea to put it together came from them (through discussions organised by their organisation the MG Corp), not from the government. MG people are very pleased that CCWA and DEC supported them to the MGCPF together—but they still see it as their initiative, something that they put to government and they did themselves with support.

Figure 1 draws these factors together into a visual presentation.



## **6.2 Implications and recommendations relevant to the MG parks**

As noted above, MG CPF was a strong process because MG law, culture and knowledge of country are strong. Supporting and strengthening MG law, culture and knowledge to ensure MG people drive the joint management is key to continuing the successful partnership built through the Cultural Planning Framework. The conceptual model of the “Joint Planning Guidelines” driving the Management Plan fails to recognise this need for ongoing support for strengthening of MG law, culture and tradition through joint management process. Figure 2 presents a revised model to take account of this need, and the first recommendation aims to ensure that resources are available to support this process. Bush trips with old people and young people together, and cultural education and recording projects, are good methods of strengthening MG law and culture in parallel with joint planning and management activities. MG people will also benefit from ongoing access to independent expert advice, so that they can continue to discuss and develop their ideas and put them forward to government.

All the enabling factors recognised in Figure 1 are important to the successful partnership that is emerging, and require ongoing support. The remaining recommendations two to three therefore focus on areas where some weaknesses are evident.

### **Recommendation one:**

- Provide ongoing resources to strengthen and support MG people’s law, culture and traditions: bush trips, cultural recording and education, language support, and availability to MG of ongoing independent expertise.

### **Recommendation two—strengthen the foundation platform by:**

- Ensuring the government commitments to the OFA are completed, including tenure finalisation and amendments of the CALM Act where necessary to support joint planning; and
- Finalising the management agreement about the parks.

### **Recommendation three—strengthen the key MG organisations by:**

- Ensuring Dawang roles are properly supported, including ongoing capacity for Dawang meetings and discussions;
- Ensuring resources are available to support an ongoing capacity within the MG Corporation—give consideration to government support for a joint management park management position within the MG Corp, similar to the positions that are supported inside the Northern Land Council; and
- Ensuring support is available for MG to be able to meet together before the Park Council meetings, to table and discuss their issues together, and to organise which need to be brought into the meeting for discussion.

### **6.3 Recommendations for other places where Traditional Owners and governments are sharing management**

Both MG, DEC and CCWA interviewees felt that the CPF process had the potential to improve relationships between the State agencies and Traditional Owners if applied elsewhere. However, practitioners also recognised that the enabling factors identified in the previous sections may be critical to achieving any future success from the CPF approach. In addition, the key to government improving relationships with other Traditional Owners may be in supporting a process of independent discussion between themselves, accessing expert advice, to come up with their own ideas about planning—rather than attempting to replicate the Cultural Planning Framework with other groups.

**Recommendation four**—assist other Traditional Owners and regional offices to learn from the outcomes of the CPF by:

- Bringing together a joint management practitioners<sup>9</sup> workshop within the State, to share success stories and stories of problems, including stories from the CPF;
- Ensuring that dissemination of the lessons from the CPF is undertaken through processes that engage the MG people, as they are the primary authors and drivers of the CPF;
- Supporting development in other regions of all the enabling factors identified in Figure 1; and
- Encouraging the provision of opportunities for other Traditional Owners to be supported through a process of independent discussion between themselves, accessing expert advice, to come up with their own ideas about planning

### **6.4 Conclusion**

The role of Indigenous peoples has become central to both the global and Australian agenda for parks and protected areas. In Western Australia, the Parks and Protected Areas Forum held in 2007 produced a 10 point Agenda for Action (Parks and Protected Area Forum 2008), which included as point 3:

*The rights, needs and aspirations of Indigenous peoples as they relate to access to land for conservation, tourism and community benefits should be reflected in legislation relating to parks and protected areas and biodiversity conservation, with greater effort being made to increase community appreciation and understanding of these aspirations. Funding should be made available for the participation of Indigenous people in the planning and management of parks and protected areas.”*

The Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework has undoubtedly been a positive step in implementing this part of the Agenda for Action.

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<sup>9</sup> Practitioners in joint management include the Traditional Owners, DEC staff, staff of Indigenous NGOs (e.g. Kimberley Land Council), advisors, consultants, researchers and any other relevant parties.

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## APPENDIX ONE: INTERVIEW GUIDE

### **Miriuwung Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework**

#### **Purpose of the interview:**

The main outcome sought from the development of the Miriuwung-Gajerrong Cultural Planning Framework was:

Enhanced capacity of MG people in relation to participation in Park planning;  
enhanced capacity for DEC and the Conservation Commission in relation to  
engagement with Traditional Owners in park planning

I am writing a report on how well we achieved that outcome through doing the  
Cultural Planning Framework and why.

We also want to identify what the strengths and weaknesses of the process and what  
could be learnt for other places where Traditional Owners and governments are  
coming together to work on conservation parks.

#### **Theme list**

Your involvement in the development of the CPF

The capacity of MG people in relation to Park planning –

- Did the capacity of MG people increase
- If so how and why
- What were the most important factors\strengths
- What could be done better\weaknesses

The capacity of DEC in relation to engagement with Traditional Owners

- Did it increase
- If so how and why
- What were the most important factors\strengths
- What could be done better\weaknesses

The capacity of CCWA in relation to engagement with Traditional Owners

- Did it increase
- If so how and why
- What were the most important factors\strengths
- What could be done better\weaknesses

Lessons for other places where Traditional Owners and governments are coming  
together to work on conservation parks – for example at Purnululu

Comments on some specifics:

- Ord Final Agreement, Native title determinations and Global Negotiation  
process
- Power sharing and shifting
- Tenure arrangements – MG ownerships of the parks
- Governance of the project
- Role\commitment of the organisations: MG (Indigenous organisation), CSIRO  
(independent advice) DEC, CCWA

- Role\commitment of the people who did most of the work: Dawawang, Park Council, Scott, Ro, Des, Darryl
- Organisational factors: payment for TOs, food, accommodation, going out on country
- Relationships – trust, communication
- The participatory processes – talking, butcher's paper, looking at drafts, taking photos, workshop posters, having facilitators, getting direct quotes from people
- Innovation, research, trying new things
- Information and knowledge brought into the projects
- Networks

Your experiences and the way that the Cultural Planning Framework has affected you.

What you think is the most important thing to say about the cultural planning framework.

APPENDIX TWO—WORKSHOP PROGRAM



**Yoorrooyang Dawang Regional Park Council  
Cultural Planning Framework, Workshop Program 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> October 2007**

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Session</b>
<b>DAY - 1</b> Wed 17 <sup>th</sup> Oct 9:00am, before smoko	Welcomes by Senior TOs, introductions by DEC/MG Corporation senior staff, purpose of workshop (Ro Hill), Introduction to MG spelling conventions
Morning 17th, after smoko	Concurrent sessions for first parks, including presentations and discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Goomiyig and Barrberrm– supported by Kate Golson and Des Hill</li> <li>○ Wawoolem and Darram - supported by Scott Goodson and Tanya Vernes</li> <li>○ Ngamoowalem – discussion of south supported by David Newry, Anna Price</li> <li>○ Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim, including links to Point Springs – supported by Jane Blackwood</li> </ul>
<b>12:00 Lunch</b>	
Afternoon , before smoko	Concurrent sessions for remaining parks, including presentations and discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Goomiyig and Barrberrm - supported by Kate Golson, continued from morning</li> <li>○ Ngamoowalem – discussion of north supported by Des Hill and Anna Price</li> <li>○ Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim, including links to Point Springs – supported by Jane Blackwood, continued from morning</li> <li>○ Other park discussions continuing if necessary</li> </ul>
After smoko	Report back from each group facilitator
<b>DAY – 2</b> Thur 18 <sup>th</sup> Oct Morning before smoko	Combined presentations/discussions of each of four main themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tourism and visitation: presented by Tanya Vernes</li> <li>○ Natural and cultural resources: presented by Jane Blackwood</li> <li>○ On-Country management: presented by Scott Goodson/Des Hill</li> <li>○ Working Together (protocols etc): presented by Kate Golson</li> </ul>
Morning, after smoko	Concurrent workshop to discuss issues in each of the four main theme areas.
<b>12:00 Lunch</b>	



<p>Afternoon, before smoko</p>	<p>Facilitators to present back from groups.          Prioritisation of areas for action.          Other issues: process for comments on other parts of the document.</p>
<p>Afternoon, after smoko</p>	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Finalising the Cultural Planning Framework document</li> <li>○ bringing Cultural Planning Framework forward into the management planning process with DEC</li> </ul> <p>Concluding statements by Senior TOs and others. Next steps</p>


# APPENDIX THREE—WORKSHOP POSTERS

*Sheba has grown trees, been grown. All the trees have grown. I look at them now.*  
Sheba Dignin, Barrberrm, August 2007

## Barrberrm Park Dawawang Vision

(Zimmerman Range)



**Our vision for the park**  
Our goals for Barrberrm are to:

- look after our country
- take visitors there and show them the country, the stories, how our people are connected to the area and lived there in the past
- build up tourism businesses based in the park
- involve our young people in managing the area and understanding their roles and responsibilities.


**Our cultural values and responsibilities for park planning**  
Barrberrm is a really important story place for sugabog and lomogoo (to be long as lizard) dreaming. We need to visit our country to keep our stories strong and to keep in touch with our old people in that country. Barrberrm country has grown over with trees, shrubs and grass. We want to burn the grass so we can see our country clearly. Fire management is an important issue. We want to spend time out on our country holding bush camps for connecting with our stories and old people on Barrberrm.

We'd like the park management to work in with our community at Kumbanumba (Goorbooms). We'd like to build up tourism businesses in the park. We have ideas for a museum and cultural centre on country where we can take tourists and help them understand how people lived in the past. Other issues that need work are Rangers, cattle, weeds and pests, cultural recording and education, language, and oral history.


Our park links up with the Keep River National Park in the Territory. We'd like to talk about how we might be able to work together across the border.

**Our priorities**  
We'd like to get our Rangers in place, and start holding bush camps out in country with our old people. We'd also like to develop plans for how we can build tourism businesses in the park. We need better access for both those priorities.

**Steps and resources**  
We need more discussions amongst the Dawawang about how to start building up our Rangers and tourist businesses, and how to link in with Goomiyig Park, the Kumbanumba community (Goorbooms) and the Keep River National Park.



*Sugabog story here, sugar bog on the ground, under the ground, under the o-bubble over. After some of you touch the sugar bog, or dig it up, it will replace by water. After to touch it will bring thunder and lightning very loud. Then.*  
Juju Wilson, Kumbanumba, August 20 2007





### Barrberrm Park Policy Details


**Policies**  
Working Together  
Protocols and Meetings  
Research Protocols  
**On-Country Management**  
Access  
Living Areas  
Bush Camps and Trips  
Fire Management  
Rangers  
Weeds and Pests  
**Tourism and Visitation**  
Visitor Management  
Tourism Business Development  
**Natural and Cultural Resources**  
Cultural recording and education  
Natural and cultural resources management  
Cultural site management


**Goomiyig and Barrberrm Access Issues**  
Our key access issues are:

- The Goomiyig Park needs roads right around that hill and into the park that can be used by Rangers and Dawawang for management. We would like this road to be exclusively for park management and Dawawang use. At the moment it is really difficult to get into this park.
- We would like to discuss with the station manager use of their roads.
- Some areas of Goomiyig might not be suitable for roads. In that case we'd like to consider a walking trail.
- The road through to Kumbanumba community (Goorbooms) is very rough. We'd like a better access road that is more suitable for tourism.
- At the moment, there is doesn't seem to be any road that goes within the park boundary. We need a road going into the park for park management and Dawawang use.

**Goomiyig and Barrberrm Visitor Management—Cave Springs Range/Pincombe Ranger and Zimmerman Range**  
Cave Springs is the main site experiencing a lot of visitation. We need facilities here for the tourists for day trips and for camping—tables, showers, chairs, tables, BBQ, ablutions block, water tank so we don't need to draw water from the springs. We would also like to have a separate camping area for the Dawawang.

At Barrberrm, we'd like to have a museum or interpretive centre, with old photographs and artefacts, so people can understand how Aboriginal people lived here before, how they managed to get their food and what it was like here. We can take people there before they go on a chopper ride over the range. At the moment, we just take them to the billabong and tell stories.  
Juju Wilson, 21 August 2007





**Goomiyig and Barrberrm Rangers**  
We need two men and two women Rangers who could work across both Goomiyig and Barrberrm.  
We want the Rangers to look after our country, and to take Dawawang around on country. We particularly want the Rangers to be working with our old people, Blanche, Sheba and Maggie, organizing bush trips and camps to teach the young rangers.  
We think the Aboriginal Rangers need an experienced Goomiyig Ranger to work with them, training them up.

**Tourism Business Development: Goomiyig and Barrberrm**  
A tourist business could be developed based around Cave Springs, but more discussions are needed between the Goomiyig Dawawang. Juju Wilson running some tourism business into Barrberrm. This business would be helped by the development of a museum and interpretive centre.

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Seeing back on country is our main goal, getting connected back.  
Stephane Boombi, Cave Springs, August 30 2007

## Goomiyig Park Dawawang Vision (Pincombe and Cave Springs Ranges)



Alice Boombi, Stephane Boombi and Jimmy Reddy, Cave Springs, September 2006



They were shooting then, all the shooting time was through here. Bushy Spring Falls Hole. They were here all the time in the cave. They got picked up in the 60s and 70s, mission work. Spirits in around tonight, but hard not to hear not go out tonight.

Toby Brown, Nilgim, 28 August 2007



All the young boys, some want to be Rangers, some don't have much, need training. Alice Boombi at Goomiyig, 28 August 2007

Sophie Gordon, Alice Boombi, Coby Ward and Gilbert Riley at Cave Springs, 20 August 2007

### Our vision for the park

Our goals for Goomiyig are:

- to have all the Dawawang strongly connected to their traditional country
- for visitors to come and enjoy our country.
- to have our Rangers looking after our country.

Getting connected back to our country is really important, so that our young people can know their culture, language and country.

### Our cultural values and responsibilities for park planning

Cultural knowledge and information about Goomiyig is mainly held by our older people. We have a strong responsibility to learn as much as we can about Goomiyig from them now. Bush camps and day trips on country are the best way to do this.

We need to look at the issue of the Goomiyig park boundary very carefully. The boundary seems to be too close to the hill, not leaving any flat land or springs where we can hold our bush camps and conduct our cultural business. The Martin Bluff hills to the south of Martin's Gap have many paintings in them, and should be part of the park, so that visitor access and tourist businesses in this area can be properly managed. On the Northern Territory side, they talk about extending the Keep River Park as far as Nilgim lagoon. We'd like to discuss that, as Nilgim is a really important place for us.

Other issues that we need to address are about visitor facilities (Cave Springs), tourism businesses, access roads into the park, fire management, cattle, weeds and pests, cultural recording and education, Rangers, language, art and oral history. Near to Goomiyig are places where a lot of our people were killed in the "shooting times". We need to be respectful of the spirit of our country when we visit Goomiyig.

### Our priorities

Our highest priority is running bush camps and bush trips taking our older people out on country to teach others. We need to have some simple facilities so people can be comfortable—though dead, toilet, some graded paths, Maggie Johns, Sheba Dignari and Blawche Flyingfox are three of the most important people for us to spend time with on country. We need our Rangers in place to be part of these trips.

Access roads are needed that we can use to travel into the park for our cultural camps. We also need to work on all the issues above like fire management and weeds. Some of our country is so grown over with bush that we can't recognise it.

### Steps and resources

For Goomiyig we need some on-the-ground surveys to consider access and boundary issues. We need some advice and discussions with government agencies about the options for addressing access and boundary issues. We also need resources for the Goomiyig Dawawang and DEC to start our bush camps and trips onto country.



Boombi shooting here, come through Martin Gap, long in meager, caveing now. Toby Brown, Nilgim, 28 August 2007

On rock, turtle, fernwood, sugar gliders, eucalyptus paintings are all in these caves in the Martin Bluff hills. Jujy Wilson, Kakarua 20 August 2007



Gilbert Riley fishing at Nilgim, August 20 2007



On the ground out from the hill, a couple of men, or something, it's too close to the hill, how are people going to live, hanging on the side of the hill?

- Policies**
- Working Together
- Protocols and Meetings
- Research Protocols
- On-Country Management**
- Access
- Living Areas
- Bush Camps and Trips
- Fine Management
- Rangers
- Weeds and Pests
- Tourism and Visitation**
- Visitor Management
- Tourism Business Development
- Natural and Cultural Resources**
- Cultural recording and education
- Natural and cultural resources management
- Cultural site management

## Goomiyig Park Policy Details

### Goomiyig and Barbarrrm Access Issues

Our key access issues are:

- The Goomiyig Park needs roads right around that hill and into the park that can be used by Rangers and Dawang for management. We would like this road to be exclusively for park management and Dawang use. At the moment it is really difficult to get into this park.
- We would like to discuss with the station manager use of their roads.
- Some areas of Goomiyig might not be suitable for roads. In that case we'll like to consider a walking trail.
- The road through to Kumburamba community (Goorbome) is very rough. We'd like a better access road that is more suitable for tourism.
- At the moment, there is doesn't seem to be any road that goes within the park boundary. We need a road going into the park for park management and Dawang use.



### Goomiyig and Barbarrrm Visitor Management—Cave Springs Range/Pincombe Range and Zimmerman Range

Cave Springs is the main site experiencing a bit of visitation. We need facilities here for the tourists for day trips and for camping—toilets, showers, chairs, tables, BBQ, ablutions block, water tank so we don't need to draw water from the springs. We would also like to have a separate camping area for the Dawang.

At Barbarrrm, we'd like to have a museum or interpretive centre, with old photographs and artefacts, so people can understand how Aboriginal people lived here before, how they managed to get their food and what it was like here. We can have people there before they go on a chopper ride over the range. At the moment, we just take them to the billabong and fisheries. Jujy Wilson, 21 August 2007

### Goomiyig and Barbarrrm Rangers

We need two men and two women Rangers who could work across both Goomiyig and Barbarrrm. We want the Rangers to look after our country, and to take Dawang around on country. We particularly want the Rangers to be working with our old people, Blawche, Sheba and Maggie, organising bush trips and camps to teach the younger ones.

We think the Aboriginal Rangers need an experienced Ganyiya Ranger to work with them, training them up.



Bush, bicker, we can do that bush, bicker and bush medicine book. That's what you're going to have to get the most working in the language case, the yabai with that, we can take them out to the area for language and culture. Stephanie Boombi, at Goomiyig, 20 August 2007

### Tourism Business Development: Goomiyig and Barbarrrm

A tourist business could be developed based around Cave Springs, but more discussions are needed between the Goomiyig Dawang. Jujy Wilson running some tourism business into Barbarrrm. This business would be helped by the development of a museum and interpretive centre.



# Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim Park Dawawang Vision

(Ningbing and Weaber Ranges)



I want to come back here and look after all that country, see. Look after this area and the community. My father got that community. The way he got it was through a mining lease.

Fred Gerrard, 22 July 2007, Ningbing (pictured with son Dean)



Emu story here, emu been run through from that way. From Cape Demit. Thelma Birch, 23 July 2007, Ningbing

## Our vision for the parks

Our goal is to keep the country just leave it as it is. We have to be living on our country to look after it. Our vision for Mijing is to have the Ningbing community up and running again. We need a Ranger station to manage the park and would like to see this station based at the community. We want to establish a living area near Point Springs on Jemandi-Winingim. Our vision for Point Springs is to get the country back to what it was before it became a nature reserve. We want to live close by Point Spring to look after it.

## Our cultural values and responsibilities

Mijing is an important area to us, because several massacres happened in this area in the early days. We don't want people just going into those areas. Many caves and hills on our country are story places.

Point Springs is a big issue to us. Ever since it's been made a nature reserve, the government has never looked after it. The whole area has become overgrown with weeds and bushes. Many animals that used to visit this spring are not there any more because they can't get to the water—ducks, brolgas, cockatoos. We think the fence has caused a lot of problems. Nearby areas that are not fenced, where cattle graze, are still in really good condition.

Issues that need to be addressed in the plan include living areas, rangers, a youth program, research, protocols, tourists, cattle, access/roads, cultural education, cultural recording and working together.

We need to talk more about cattle on our country. Some of our Dawawang think cattle can be good on our conservation lands provided there is no overstocking, while others of us would like to keep the cattle out.

## Our priorities

Our main priority is to get our community at Ningbing up and running again, and to establish a community near Point Springs.

We want to fix up the country at Point Springs, starting by taking the fence down. Another priority for us is running social programs, for example a youth program in our park, to teach our children respect and discipline. A place on country for old people would also be good.

In the future, we'd like to establish a tourist business at Mijing, and to fence off an area for cattle for the community.

## Steps and resources

We want to start getting our Rangers going, and getting trips out onto our country.



Mesquite tree in Ningbing Range



Nearly swamp where cattle are still grazing

## Our concerns about outcomes from CALM management at Point Springs



## Overgrown country at Point Springs which CALM has fenced off



We want to come and live here, we gotta look after this country ourselves, we Aboriginal people. Merle Carter, 24 July 2007, Point Springs, pictured with Emily Hester

- ### Policies
- Working Together
    - Protocols and Meetings
    - Research Protocols
  - On-Country Management
    - Access
    - Living Areas
    - Bush Camps and Trips
    - Fine Management
    - Rangers
    - Weeds and Pests
  - Tourism and Visitation
    - Visitor Management
    - Tourism Business Development
  - Natural and Cultural Resources
    - Cultural recording and education
    - Natural and cultural resources management
    - Cultural site management

## Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim Park Policy Details

### Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim Access Issues

Our key access issues are:

- The road into Mijing needs upgrading so we have all-year round access. We recognise that the cost might be prohibitive, but it could be considered as part of the Aboriginal Development Package for Old Stage 2. An airstrip for the community for emergency access would be useful.
- The road to Jemandi-Winingim also needs better drainage—it would be easier to make this road all-weather. This road might be upgraded for the agricultural expansion.



Large jamper on the gorge on 23 July 2007. This group of four was from the Aboriginal Society, and were exploring caves.



### Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim Visitor Management

Currently the Gorge is attracting a large number of visitors. Facilities are needed here, including parking and camping areas, but further down the track. We need to develop a plan for facilities on our park, not just start building at the Gorge. Our priority is to re-establish our presence on our country. We need people to know that we are the Traditional Owners for the country. We would like to identify the best places for camping in the park. Many people are camping at Cape Demit.

We want to share our country. It's a beautiful country, let them see it, let them see how we look after it. We put a sign here, a little road to here. Might be a camping area here, and from there they can visit. Merle Carter, The Gorge, 22 July 2007

Cape Demit is the main area where facilities are needed. It's on our (native title) land, but it's not on our park. So we'd like to work across both areas. Fred Gerrard, near Cape Demit, 23 July 2007



### Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim Rangers

Our vision is to have our Rangers look after both the country and the people. We would like our Rangers to work across both our park and our native title land up to Cape Demit.

Our Rangers need to control and maintain our parks, keep our springs clean, check the burial grounds, visitors, fishing, coast line, and to monitor wildlife, including endangered species. We want them to monitor and control pests like cane toads, and educate tourists to look after the place, and take away their rubbish.

We need two male Rangers, one for Mijing and one for Jemandi-Winingim. Later on we'd like to look for some girls to be involved.

We would like our Ranger for the Mijing park to be based at Ningbing community—have a workstation there, a shed with necessary tools. The Rangers will need a 4WD with radio and emergency equipment.



### Tourism Business Development: Mijing and Jemandi-Winingim

Our vision on Wardamburg country is to have Ningbing community as the centre of our tourism businesses. Tourism businesses are needed to make our communities viable. We'd like to run fishing expeditions, have guided tours through the gorge, and run camping areas where visitors pay a fee. We'd also like to be able to sell produce from our community (eggs, vegetables) to tourists passing through. We like to be involved in making and selling bush crafts and beads. For anybody going down to Cape Demit, the first point of call would be Ningbing. Merle Carter, 23 July 2007, at Ningbing

In the future, guided fishing expeditions are a good tourism opportunity in the Park—we can take them out on a boat and show them how to fish. Fred Gerrard, 16 August 2007

Some sort of small caravan park there at Point Springs would save people taking their caravans down to the Keep River. They can go fishing for the day, and come back in the evening. Emily Hester, 17 August 2007



# Ngamoowalem Parks Dawawang Vision (Livistona Range)



When you tell people out of their country when they live, still their heart is to their home, they long for their country and still they come to us. My father, Jerry, was voluntary to look after Bulo. When they go back they sing for their country, keep their country alive. Margaret Moore, 7 June 2007, Goose Hill

From left: Sylvia Simon, Ramda Simon, Margaret Moore, Jerry Moore, Lawrence Eams, Bamahara Webster, Scott Goodson discuss park planning, Oct-Nov, 11 June 2007



We used to walk here from our camp, all our kids swimming here in the hot time. Tourists in their car and caravan come, they can come and camp here, they pay to come in, we charge a fee. We need it graded so there's a roundabout to turn around. Bore water, toilet and bathroom. Need composing toilet. Swimming in the hot time, lots of people come here. We want to make it properly for walk through. Some people come here in the cold weather, drinking, smoking, no good. I can't help that now. We want to look after it properly. Pamela Simon, 8 June 2007, at Molly Springs

## Galiba (Molly Springs)

Molly Springs should be developed as a camping and caravan area and provide business opportunities for the Dawawang:

- Caravan turn-around with toilet and bathroom
- Sucker system for phone for safety, also sucker pump, lights
- Safe walking track over the rocks
- Stand for washing clothes, laundry tub
- Environmentally friendly infrastructure, composting toilet



Molly Simon with tourists at Black Rock Fall, September 2006

## Policies

### Working Together

- Protocols and Meetings
- Research Protocols

### On-Country Management

- Access
- Living Areas
- Bush Camps and Trips
- Fire Management
- Rangers
- Weeds and Pests

### Tourism and Visitation

- Visitor Management
- Tourism Business Development

### Natural and Cultural Resources

- Cultural recording and education
- Natural and cultural resources management
- Cultural site management

## Our vision for the park

We want the park at Ngamoowalem to manage the tourists. There are so many people coming here, we need a lot more management. We'd like to run our own tourism businesses here.

We also want to protect Parry's Lagoon; we don't want anything to happen there. We'd like to have a joint partnership at Parry's Lagoon too with DEC, and start a business there.

## Our cultural values and responsibilities

There are dreaming places all through this country that men and women cannot touch—so we have to tell the parks people, DEC, about these places.

Issues that need to be in the plan are about Rangers, access, visitor facilities and management, tourism business, collecting bush tucker and medicine, cultural recording and education, fire management, protecting cultural sites, and acknowledging and keeping people on country.

## Our priorities

Getting management of the visitors and tourism is the most important thing.

The Rangers are really important—they need a vehicle, for checking all the sites down through Ngamoowalem, and for taking old people out onto country.

## Steps and resources

Our first step is to start working with our Dawawang and DEC to plan out the visitor facilities so we can start managing our tourists. We need Rangers for that.

## Ngamoowalem Park Policy Details

### Ngamoowalem Visitor Management

Management infrastructure is needed in Ngamoowalem to reduce impacts and provide business opportunities for Dawawang. The five priority sites are *Galiba* (Molly Springs), *Bandaba* (Valentine Springs), *Jaiying* (Bubble Springs), *Mayiba* (Middle Springs) and *Thegooyeng* (Black Rock Fall). Business opportunities are through running the camping/caravan park at Molly Springs, and guides for visitors at the other sites. The Dawawang need to be strongly involved in planning and building all these facilities.

### Bandaba (Valentine Springs)

Picnic facilities are needed at Valentine Springs, including picnic tables, BBQ, firewood, bins, parking areas and toilets. *Bandaba* used to be the main place for kangaroo and emu in the old days, not there anymore. We used to come here from *Juvahoe* Station, walk, no road in those days. Snake dreaming place here, stories passed down from our grandfather. Wallereng, dman trees on the river here. Pamela Simon, 15 September 2006, at Molly Springs

### Thegooyeng (Black Rock Fall)

Black Rock needs a parking area and picnic facilities too. Black rock hole is a dangerous one for snake dreaming. Molly Simon with tourists at Black Rock Fall, September 2006

### Northern side of Ngamoowalem

On the northern side of Ngamoowalem, we would like to have a long walking trail where visitors can hike and camp out overnight. The trail might go through Tron Burton Gap, along the northern part of the park. It's through Parry's Lagoon to Goose Hill community. We would like to plan out the route, and the camping sites, and develop this trail as a business.



From left: Lawrence Webster, Bamahara Webster, Margaret Moore, Rowald Webster at Middle Springs, June 2007



The country is full of bush tucker, like bush cucumber. *Jaiying*. We make bush bread by tying the bushes together. *Thomo* grass plant. The cabbage tree is for making coolamon out of the branches. Sylvia Simon, 7 June 2007, Ngamoowalem



Sylvia Simon with *Jaiying* (bush cucumber)

**Jaiying (Bubble Spring)**  
Jaiying needs similar facilities to Bandaba. Visitors are damaging the site, washing their dishes in the spring. Many useful trees are found here: fruit trees (*myerren*, black plum) glue tree; ironwood used for shields, boomerang, long spears; *weyeyeng* tree for honey; *Laichard* tree (*jangngi*). Jaiying is also a story place.



**Mayiba (Middle Springs)**  
Molly pointing to where a parking area should be developed, back away from the water. September 2006

Picnic facilities are also needed at Mayiba and a parking area to move people back from the water. A stall here would be good with people selling arts and crafts, showing tourists how to carve boab nuts and do other crafts.  
All the *Gardjys* come and get bogged in the wet season, we pulled out people of people ourselves. Need table and chair here for people to sit down under the trees. They can bring their kids here for swimming. Rangers should be involved, checking them out. Arts and crafts here too, carving boab nuts. Pamela Simon, 8 June 2007, at Middle Springs

**Tourism Business Development: Ngamoowalem**  
The caravan and camping park at Molly Springs will be our main business. We'd like to get the artists working again in our facility at Wijilawroom, and link that into our tourist businesses. We need one of the younger educated Dawawang to run the business side. We'd like our Dawawang taking tours into all the visitor sites.  
People would also like to develop tourism businesses taking people in to look at Goose Hill Swamp. A tourism business can also be developed based on the long walking trail between Button's Gap and Goose Hill.

### Ngamoowalem Rangers

Our Rangers need to be strongly involved in managing the tourism sites in Ngamoowalem park. We want them to be keeping checking all the sites, keeping them clean, and picking up the rubbish. They will need a vehicle.  
Rangers should be taking the old people out on country, to learn about the country and how to manage it.



### Ngamoowalem Access Issues:

- Our key access issues are:
- The road into Molly Springs needs to be upgraded to suit the development of a caravan park and camping ground
  - The Middle Springs bog needs proper drainage
  - Main issue is to stop people getting bogged - need some culverts, better drainage
  - The road to Goose Hill needs to be all-weather for our community and for our tourism businesses there - some road upgrading may happen here as part of farm development.



# Wawoolem and Darram Parks Dawawang Vision (Packsaddle Creek, Springs and Swamp)



We used to fish with our net here at the waterhole on the other side, green thick with pandanus now we carry it on this side, and it breaks, arfish, barracound, River birds nest near here.  
Carol Hapke, 4 June 2007, Yirralalem



## Our vision for the parks

Our goals for these parks are

- to protect the country and manage it
- to recognise our Dawang group for the country
- to recognise our Dawang rules as the main ones for running this country
- to build our capacity for self-management and self-determination in running our own country, and the younger Dawawang's pride and confidence to take over from us.

We want to run a tourism business at Yirralalem, our own business where we can walk through country and talk about country. We would like to take people along Wawoolem, Packsaddle Creek, up to Packsaddle Springs. At Darram, our main goal is protecting the swamp, keeping it as close to nature as possible, and leaving it as a sanctuary for the birds to nest. We'd like another business venture of Darram running our own tours, but it needs board walks, and lots of planning, which will take time. Yirralalem is more straight forward, and more of a priority.

## Our cultural values and responsibilities for park planning

Dawawang must own the park planning, by putting as much into it as possible, and making it to suit the in country. Our goal is running the park as closely as possible to our own rules and our own laws. Issues that need to be in the plan are about tourism businesses, fire management, visitor management and safety, weeds and pests, cultural recording and education, Rangers, protocols, oral history, and cultural sites.

Yirralalem is full of sites—camping places, walking tracks, story places, ceremonies. Yirralalem is also a place where people used to hide out from the police in the early days. People went bush to Yirralalem when told to by the authorities in the Second World War, when they were bombing Wyndham. The history of Yirralalem of that time is important because it shows our connections to our country before gardiya, during first gardiya occupation—and still going on today.

We are concerned that the proposed Wawoolem (Packsaddle Creek) conservation area does not seem to include the Springs—the boundary should be changed to make sure this area is included.

Darram is a big bird sanctuary for swamphens, magpie geese and other water birds. We'd like to really preserve it. There are lots of dreamings in the Carr Boyd Ranges all around us here—lamooing, Blue tongue lizard dreaming, gerdon (Trilly lizard dreaming), bullant dreaming, goorrjorring (Toony Frogmouth) dreaming.

## Our priorities

The sole reason we pushed for the park here is to protect our country and manage it. All the issues mentioned above are important. One of our most important goals is to have resources for bush trips with old people and young people to do cultural recording on country. Tourism is important to us, because the re's not going to be any CDEP soon, so we have to look at ways of making some sort of income. A tourism development officer working in DEC or the IAG Corporation would be good. Rangers are a top priority—we need two, one on the business side and one on the management side.

## Steps and resources

We want to get started on our tourism business and our Rangers, and getting in onto country for cultural recording. We'd like to make sure our training and employment strategy builds up Miriwaung-Gajerrong peoples' for planning and other senior park management roles, not just Rangers—DEC's participation in the National Indigenous Cadetship Program through Department of Employment and Workplace Arrangements may provide opportunities for a Miriwaung-Gajerrong planner to become qualified to work for DEC.



We used to walk from Barbeque and Simonside then on Darram to Argyle. Following the river up. We go fishing at Barbeque, Bush and Argyle. Bush to get kangaroo, red us their medicine. Barbeque from Town Beach. Abney Dizon, 6 June 2007, Darram



- Policies**
- Working Together
- Protocols and Meetings
- Research Protocols
- On-Country Management**
- Access
- Living Areas
- Bush Camps and Trips
- Fire Management
- Rangers
- Weeds and Pests
- Tourism and Visitation**
- Visitor Management
- Tourism Business Development
- Natural and Cultural Resources**
- Cultural recording and education
- Natural and cultural resources management
- Cultural site management

## Wawoolem and Darram Park Policy Details

### Wawoolem, Yirralalem and Darram Access Issues:

- Our key access issues are:
- Road into Yirralalem needs to be all weather—this is being upgraded as a result of the Ord Final Agreement but we are concerned there may not be enough money for proper bridges.
  - Darram access is by boat only.



### Wawoolem and Darram Visitor Management

**Wawoolem**  
In Wawoolem Creek, there is already a walking track up to Packsaddle Spring, which needs improvement. We would also like signage re-established—the sign that was there was pulled out by some locals by chaining it to a 4WD.

We want people to stick to the track when they walk in and out. We want the park to help us make a proper trail here so tourists don't come into the community.  
Warren Gerrard, 4 June 2007, at Yirralalem.

**Barbeque Hill**  
People drive up this hill to watch the sunset, but it looks out over our community and removes our privacy. Under the Ord Final Agreement, the area was supposed to be fenced off so people didn't go there any more.

There is a big cultural site behind BBQ Hill for spear making, which needs protection.  
Carol Hapke, 6 June 2007, near Barbeque Hill

**Darram**  
At Darram, board walks would need to be constructed for visitors, and it could be developed into a bird watching area, with bird hides.



### Wawoolem and Darram Rangers

Our Rangers need to be feeling proud of themselves and what they are doing. We don't want the Rangers to be just picking up rubbish.

One of the Rangers should be working on the tourism side, and one on the management side.

### Tourism Business Development: Wawoolem and Darram

**Wawoolem**  
For our tourist venture here, we're looking at doing a joint venture with some partners. We need to get some capital to get the infrastructure established. We'd like to have artists working in the community linked to the business. The main part of our business would be walking through the country with people, and talking about the country.  
Warren Gerrard, 4 June 2007, at Yirralalem

**Darram**  
Tourist businesses here would be based on bird watching.



# Fire Management Dawawang Vision



*When you don't burn, you get scrub, you can't walk, you can't teach, you can't look country, you can't protect that country, you can't do anything on it. I'd like to see country burning after the wet, just before this grass gets really really dry. When it's a cool fire. This time of year is not a good time for lighting fires until all the birds can fly, all the babies, young ones.*

*Now the grass is too long, can't walk about the country. They would have burnt the country by now, but can't (authorities stop them). Back fire makes good ash-when you burn ochre, it goes a deeper, richer colour. Another reason you need fire too, for biomass. When fire goes through naturally and burn the trees and logs and everything properly it makes the biomass.*  
Carol Hapke 6 June 2007, Yarralalm



*You know that place up there, we bin burn there, we see them fire men come up behind us. They say "don't burn the grass". On my country, try to stop me burning. We bin tell them, we can burn here, it's walkaround for hunting.*

*One time you burn the grass, you see all the cattle coming back on, come back on the green grass, turkey, kangaroo. Turkey comes back into the green grass, eats seeds, eats grasshoppers, my insects.*  
Nancy Dijkst 6 June 2007, Yarralalm



*Darram needs fire protection in that area—slabbing it so it doesn't get all burnt out. Swamp needs to be protected from fire, all the combungi goes up, all the bird habitats, lots of quail and ground dwelling birds, they suffer with fire. We do need to burn but not too close to the swamp—fire needs to be really controlled.*

Carol Hapke 6 June 2007, Darram



*When that rain first bin come and go, then after that we burn the country. Because that first rain, he bring everything out of the ground, all the worms, and everything comes out, that's no good for cattle. Then you burn it. You burn the country, it just gets rid of everything. That grass will be little bit green. Then when the rain come, that grass is still green enough, and it holds the, it can stop erosion.*

Merle Carter, Ningbing 23 July 2007 (recently burnt country at Mijng)



*We can't see him too much scrub, we can't know this country.*  
Blanche Flynn fox, Baraberrm, 21 August 2007  
*Grass been grow, trees been grow. All the trees been grow, Baraberrm look different now.*  
Sheba Dignari, Baraberrm, 23 August 2007

## Our vision for fire management

Dawawang should burn their own country. The older people will tell and show the younger people how to burn. Our Rangers will be the right Dawawang for the parks with the right cultural connections for burning.

## Our cultural values and responsibilities

Under our law and culture, only Dawawang can burn their country. According to our culture and law, Government people are not allowed to light fires—only Dawawang for that country can light the fires. We need to burn country for cultural reasons, for law.

Fire is part of our culture. When we don't burn it kills part of our culture. We burn country to get rid of snakes, and for walkabout. The Dawawang have knowledge about the timing of fire, and how to do fires in different parts of the country.

## Fire management issues of concern to us

We are concerned that DEC are lighting too many fires, burning every year and at the wrong time—burning at the cold time when animals are breeding. We are also concerned a lot of places on our country have grown other with shrubs and grasses from not enough fires.

Authorities have brought in big fires to stop us burning our country. When we don't burn our country at the right time when we want to, later on very hot fires come and burn the whole place out.

## Our proposed strategies and actions

We need to burn the country off so our older people can recognise it. We know DEC have their own ideas about burning country. We are also aware of issues around health and safety regulations that affect the Government's approaches to fire management.

We'd like to sit down with DEC and talk about burning country. We will put forward our views about how country should be burnt. DEC should put the ideas forward.

The Dawawang should take DEC people out on country and show them how to burn it according to our law and custom. Hopefully if we talk we can reach agreement.

## Steps and resources

We'd like to start with DEC and ourselves listening to each other's approaches and rules. We need some trips onto country to do fire management together. We want to come up with some agreed approaches. We'd also like to share information about some other ways to bring Indigenous and science-based approaches together:

- Western Arnhem Fire Abatement Project is implementing Traditional Owner run fire management programs based on science.
- Through the Bakawul Traditional Knowledge Revival Pathway, Traditional Owners are implementing their burning practices on Lohfels National Park.
- The Kimberly Regional Fire Project organised Traditional Owner Fire Control teams to conduct burning while it was operating.



*Grass been burn for special reasons. We bin burn up animals and everything can be a bin. Country looking after, birds.*

Thema Dinah, Ningbing, 23 July 2007



*Gulamanda, Geese Hill north of Nganewaldem*

*We've been to it we can't burn at Geese Hill. Fire brigade tell us we can't burn.*  
Margaret Moore, Geese Hill, 8 June 2007

*I burn my place, burn the grass.*  
Jerry Moore, Geese Hill, 8 June 2007

*Snakes and goannas get their eggs new so you have to be careful with fire. Snakes are all right in fires. They know how to get out of the way. We burn to make grass green for kangaroos. We light fires around Worrylam. We make sure we a bin up first around our water plant and house so those things don't catch on fire. Then we burn the grass. Pamela Owen, 8 June 2007, Nganewaldem.*

Fire at Molly Springs, lit from the road, June 2007



*Generally round about March, January, February, March and April. March, April, good green grass, old people old men go hunting. Burn the grass, early part you know. Long grass you burn it May or June, March even. When the dry start, when I was working the station, you see all the cattle, you can't burn. They been change that rule now, that law. Had a big meeting, pastoralist, manager, stop us burning, station mob, he'll us not to burn anymore. Station masters burn it, themselves now helicopter. We never burn it now, just burn our community areas.*

Toby Barmer, at Geemijig, 19 August 2007



*Rangers can burn the park, Dawang can assist. We need to be burning the country off to see where all the old roads are, and so the older people can recognise it, specially the older women when they go back. We need to light fires for hunting goanna, kangaroo, and turkey, they come back for grasshoppers on the new shoots.*  
Stephanie Beembi at Geemijig, 19 August 2007, pictures with Alice Beembi and Scott Goodson





## Natural and Cultural Resources Dawawang Vision

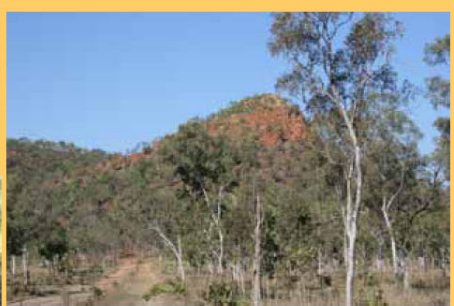


### Cultural recording and education

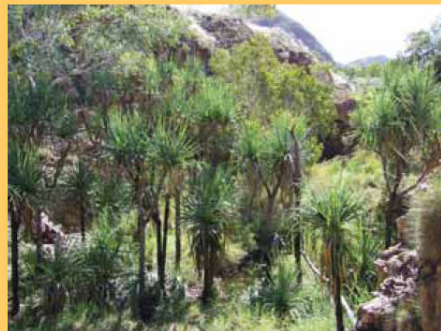


Policy topic	Vision	Values and responsibilities	Issues of concern to us	Our proposed strategies and actions	Steps and resources
<b>Cultural recording and education</b>	All MG children and people to know their own language, their own culture and country, including all the sites, tracks and stories	We have a strong responsibility to keep our knowledge of culture, language and law strong to look after country	Loss of cultural knowledge by the young generations. Cultural recording that is not under our control does not benefit us.	Bush trips, cultural resources like books and videos. Protection of our intellectual property.	Start with a workshop to look at different systems for cultural recording used by Bakanu, NAILSMA, Aboriginal Rainforest Council, Uluru, Jennifer Field, Language and Culture Centre and others.
<b>Natural and cultural resource management</b>	Look after all the bush tucker, bush medicine and all the important places for these	Important bush tucker includes fish, turkey, magpie geese, snake, blue-tongue, crab, bush tomatoes, bush oranges and many others.	Many plants and animals are not as plentiful as they used to be. Examples include emu, kangaroo, magpie geese, flying fox, turkeys, echidna, dingo, pine trees and more.	Restore the country. Collect seeds and replant. Start a botanical garden.	We need more discussion to identify the best ways to start bringing our plants and animals back onto our country.
<b>Cultural site management</b>	All our story places, camping places, cemeteries, walking tracks and other sites recorded by us and the information used by us for management and protection of these sites	Knowledge of story places and sites, and the responsibility for protection and management, comes through your connection to country	Mine built on a stone tool site. Sites of massacres in the shooting times need special recognition.	We need to develop maps for use in park planning with rules for the Rangers to use.	Cultural mapping and recording systems under our control, as discussed above. Through the recording, appropriate management actions will be identified.

### Cultural site management



### Bush tucker and bush medicine





# On-Country Management Dawawang Vision



Access



Bush camps and trips



Rangers



Policy topic	Vision	Values and responsibilities	Issues of concern to us	Our proposed strategies and actions	Steps and resources
<b>Access</b>	All-year around access to our parks, communities, and any tourism businesses we are running on our parks.	We have to visit our country and be on our country to keep it healthy.	We want to be free from arguments with State or pastoralists about access; need good roads so don't get bogged.	All parks need a road and access strategy (see separate posters for each park).	We need to start with an access strategy for all the parks, and then work on priorities for getting resources for the upgrading.
<b>Living areas</b>	All our Dawawang are able to spend time on our country to look after and fulfill our obligations. We need to be able to live nearby to our parks.	Living areas: free from alcohol and drugs; for our young people's future and our own well-being. Many parks have communities nearby (see draft plan) that can work in with park management.	Living area mainly needed for Jemardi-Winning. Need to get Ningbing Community up and running. Bush camps needed at Goomiyig and other parks.	Work with the Corporation and identify possible living areas near Point Springs.	More discussion and planning work needed within Dawawang groups and with DEC about how communities can work in with park management.
<b>Bush camps and trips</b>	Our vision is for bush camps and trips with all our Dawawang to be central in our park management.	We need strong connection with country to look after it properly. Spending time on country is best way to start working with DEC, and educating our children.	Main barriers for us to organise bush camps is lack of resources and lack of access. Old people need some simple facilities.	Keep doing bush camps. Build some facilities including bough sheds, toilets, tanks, paths to make sure our old people are comfortable on bush camps.	Plan out some bush camps and trips for each of our Dawang groups every year.
<b>Rangers</b>	Should be part of the Dawawang for each park. Need to know cultural business as well as gardiya side.	Work on cultural matters, also controlling weeds; monitoring. Rangers also can be involved with managing visitor sites and talking with tourists.	Two-way training, both gardiya and Miriwung-Gjerrong cultural side, on-country as well as in classroom.	See separate posters for Ranger strategies on each park.	An agreed training and employment strategy is needed to get the Rangers going.
<b>Weeds and feral animals</b>	Country free from problems caused by introduced weeds and feral animals.	Control methods that fit our cultural values. Environmentally friendly ways of managing weeds - no more chemical poisoning like what happened with Ngorburr. No unnecessary killing of cattle, horses and donkeys.	Mission grass, mimosa, salvinia, Cane toad, Wild dogs, Donkeys, Cattle, cats.	A weed and feral animal strategy for each park, designed with the Dawawang. Immediate action on park kalar problems.	Develop a strategy for each park, working in with the Natural Resource Management officer based at AWG Corporation, and other relevant government staff.
<b>Fire management</b>	See separate poster	See separate poster	See separate poster	See separate poster	See separate poster

Living areas



Weeds and pests





## Tourism and Visitation Dawawang Vision



### Our vision for visitors

Guests and other visitors are welcome to enjoy our country. Visitors have a responsibility to respect our country and to respect Dawawang and our living areas while they are here. Visitors need to be kept safe while they are on our country.

### Our cultural values and responsibilities for visitors

Dawawang have a responsibility for looking after our country and any people visiting on their country. Under our law, visitors must have malyab or manha, water from Dawawang, for protection. We can't do this for everyone, so there has to be a strong focus on visitor safety. Visitor management and safety need to go hand-in-hand with tourist business development by Dawawang.

Some places can't be shown to visitors. Visitors are allowed to take photos of our country, but not art on rocks which is goobeng, forbidden by law. People need to ask permission before taking photos of rock art. Visitors need permission to paint country.

### Visitor management issues

Many visitors do not respect our country. Damage is caused by people taking sand, taking paperbark from trees, digging up plants, riding motorbikes through creeks, leaving rubbish, getting bogged and mudding up our roads.

Visitors need advice on dangerous animals, and about places where they are supposed to swim and places where they are not supposed to swim. Visitors sometimes go into caves and cultural sites where they are not supposed to be.

Water catchments need to be protected from visitor impact—facilities are needed so visitors are not washing their plates in the rock holes, and polluting them.

### Proposed visitor management strategies and actions

Strategies for visitor management include:

- Facilities—information about tourist destinations shouldn't be distributed without Dawawang permission
- Signage
- Timing of visitors
- Structures—tables, toilets, parking areas to draw cars away from the water
- Education

### Steps and resources

We have documented our main priorities for visitor management. Specific plans for each park and each site, approved by the Dawang, are needed before we start any construction. Participatory planning is really important for all this infrastructure.



Pavela Simon pointing to proposed site for anawan park, Galiba (Molly Springs)



Wolly Simon with tourists at Black Rock Fall, September 2006



### Our vision for tourism

Our vision is for Dawawang to run all the tourism on the parks. Rangers should be part of our tourism businesses. All tourism businesses on our parks need to be managed so that protection of the natural and cultural values of the parks come first.

### Our cultural values and responsibilities for visitors

We value tourism opportunities highly as tourism businesses can be run from our communities and provide us with independence from government support and welfare. Tourism can provide an income as the basis for self-management and self-determination.

### Tourism issues

Aboriginal tour guides should be Dawawang from that country. Currently there are businesses where Aboriginal tour guides are not on their own country.

We need a lot of assistance and resources to build up our tourism businesses. Funding to start tourism businesses is not part of the funding we have for joint management out of the Ord Final Agreement. We need to understand how we can access help for our tourism businesses.

Currently many tourists are coming onto our country without any benefit to us. We need more information about how DEC manages tourism, including how permits are issued and what happens to income from tourism. Tourism arrangements for our parks need to take account of our freehold title under the parks. The roles and responsibilities of the JAG Corporation, our PBCs and our Trusts need to be clearly spelt out.

### Proposed tourism strategies and actions

Getting establishment of the visitor facilities and management outlined in the previous section is really important for our tourism businesses. We need expertise to help us with tourism planning, and with resources to get our businesses going. We are interested in partnerships.

We need tourism business plans—plan for each area, and a big plan to network all the tourist businesses. A planning workshop would be a good way to start, but we need ongoing assistance. We need to understand what role the parks can and cannot play in tourism development, and the roles of all our JAG corporations.

A tourism development officer in the JAG Corporation would be useful. JAG Corporation has started supporting the Yirrkulam Community with planning and business development for their tourism enterprise.

We also need to identify how we are going to make sure all the tourist businesses allowed on the park are not damaging natural and cultural values. We will need a permit system as part of the management plan.

### Steps and resources

We need to start by understanding how DEC usually manages tourism and gives out permits, and what happens to the money from tourism. The roles and responsibilities of the JAG Corporation, our PBCs and our Trusts need to be considered alongside the usual DEC processes. From these first two steps, we can develop our processes, including how Dawawang can get permission to operate tourist businesses on our parks.

A lot of planning and business development work is needed for our own businesses—not just to get us started but to assist us all along as we grow and manage our tourism businesses. We could start by identifying the roles of various organisations to assist us in tourism development. Some useful resources for business development include:

- Stepping Stones for Tourism, a tourism development program for Indigenous communities—holding a workshop for Yirrkulam in October
- Letik Fish, a specialist Aboriginal business development consultancy firm
- Nitmiluk Tours Pty Ltd, the Jowayn owned company which runs all most all the commercial activities in the Nitmiluk park
- Ecotrust, an emerging organisation to assist with environmentally-friendly business development
- Many tourism business development programs in government
- The roles of JAG Corporation and DEC are also important.

More discussion needed of this point

A lot of visitors drive past Mijng Conservation Park to Cape Donnett

Interpretive signage is important for visitor management



### Mayiba (Middle Springs)

Wolly pointing to where a parking area should be developed, back away from the water. September 2006



Large camp at The Derge on 22 July 2007. This group of families was from the Jilawana Speleological Society, and were exploring caves.



## Working Together Dawawang Vision



### Protocols, Roles and Meetings

#### Our vision for protocols

Our vision is to have our protocols, our rules for consultation and decision-making about the parks, clearly laid out and followed by everyone. We would also like to have a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of all the different groups involved in the joint management arrangements—the MG Corporation, our other organisations (like the MG Trustees Pty Ltd which will hold our freehold title), DEC, the Regional Park Council, and the Park Sub-Councils. Our vision is for meetings to be places where our decision making processes and our ways of doing business come to the front.

#### Our values and responsibilities for protocols

All the decisions in the park need our free prior informed consent. Each Dawawang group has slightly different rules for how decisions are made in their group. We need to follow the rules in each group. Sometimes the discussions in our group need to go on for a while before a decision can be made.

The Ord Final Agreement lays out in general terms the roles of MG Corporation, MG Trustees Pty Ltd, DEC, the Regional Park Council and the Park Sub-Councils in our conservation areas. These roles and responsibilities are very important to us because it took a long time for us to reach agreement with the WA Government, and we put a lot of thought into the arrangements.

#### Protocol issues of concern to us

Protocols need to cover processes for letting people know when they want to come onto our country for meetings. We are tired of people just arriving, and trying to get people for the day, interrupting what we are doing.

The protocols also need to cover the roles of the Dawawang, the Park Council, MG Corporation and DEC in decision-making, building on the general agreements laid out in the OFA. Some clear protocols for resolving conflicts within and between all these groups are needed.

We want to make sure that all the agreements made in the Ord Final Agreement about our conservation parks are followed properly. We need to follow agreed processes that we understand. According to the agreement, DEC has to consult with the Regional Park Council about budgets. This consultation needs to be done in a way that we can understand. Sometimes meetings that are run gadjya-style are hard for us to follow—we want meetings that respect our cultural processes.

#### Our proposed strategies and actions

We would like one big protocol to cover all the parks, and a special protocol for each of the parks. We need more discussion how to develop our protocols, and what should be in them. The OFA is an important starting point.

Part of the protocol should be about how to hold Park Council meetings. We'd like to discuss the use of Kriol, Miriwoong and English language at the meetings. Some of the meeting time should be spent in smaller groups.

We like the idea at Nitmiluk where all the Jawoyn people on the Board get together the day before to go through all the issues on the agenda. We need time to think about things before being asked to make a decision on them. We should go out and visit places that we are making decisions about.

We would like to put together a list of names of elders to contact for meetings for DEC business.

#### Steps and resources

The first step will be to agree on a process to develop our protocols, including for conflict resolution, which might include some workshops. Some resources that might help our workshop discussions include:

- Free prior and informed consent processes in parks—Toni Bauman's research from Nitmiluk.
- Nitmiluk Board meeting processes—including pre-meetings, field inspections.



### Research Protocols

#### Our vision for research

Our vision is to have all researchers informing us about the in research, and engaging Traditional Owners in their research as much as possible. We would also like to conduct our own research.

#### Our values and responsibilities for research

We support people coming on to our country to carry out research, but they also need to show respect for Dawawang and for our responsibilities to country.

#### Research issues of concern to us

We are concerned that we don't know about the research being conducted on our country. We are also concerned about people going on to our sacred sites and culturally sensitive places. We are also concerned that researchers don't let us know what they have found out—sometimes information gets passed onto others without us even getting a copy of the report. In the past researchers have taken information from us without returning any benefit to the community. We don't want that to happen again.

Our own priority is for research that strengthens our cultural knowledge, for example our knowledge of bush medicine.

#### Our proposed strategies and actions

We would like researchers to seek our permission before going onto the parks. The MG Corporation should include information on their web-site for researchers letting them know that they need to contact us before starting their research. We would like a copy of all the research reports.

We would like Traditional Owners to be paid to go out onto country to work with researchers. Researchers should include Traditional Owner payments in their budgets when they are applying for research grants. Our young people can learn on the job with researchers in the field.

Research programs addressing bush medicines should be part of our cultural recording program.

#### Steps and resources

We need to develop research protocols for our parks. We could start by collecting other research protocols—for example from the Desert Knowledge CRC, or from other joint-managed parks.