



PLANTING THE SEED



ANNUAL

2023



REPORT



OUR VISION

PEOPLE, COUNTRY *and* CULTURE

People on their country with families, living on outstations and working to take care of country. Rangers supporting and working with outstation people and other landowners. Strong community relationships where we have good access to country, jobs and the right services and facilities.

Country is clean and safe, springs and creeks flow strong and clean, and there is plenty of bush tucker. In the right season, we find plants and animals that have always been there.

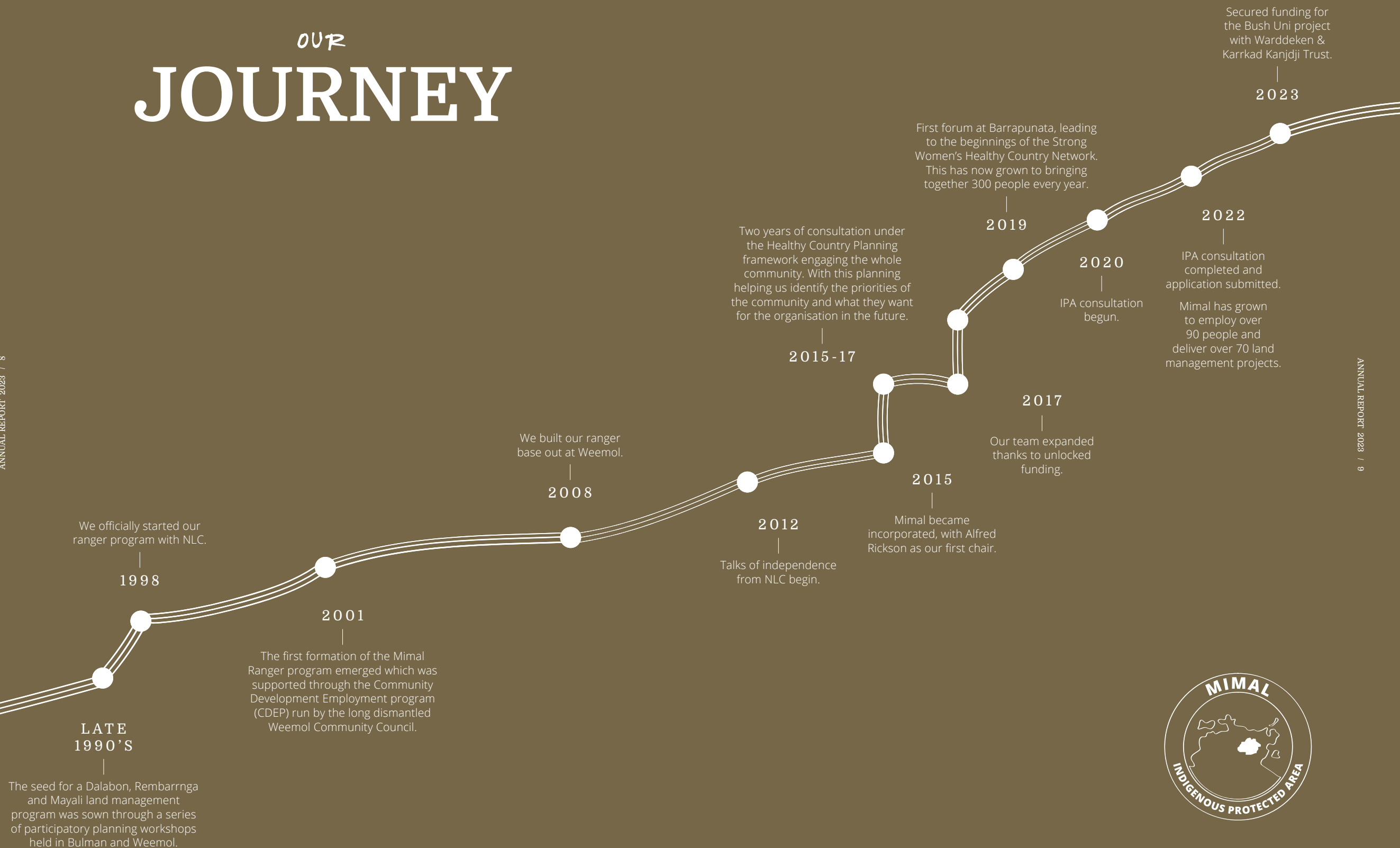
We have strong ceremony, language, dance and song connecting families, country and culture. Our families are happy again and people are sharing knowledge with younger generations who have two-way education about culture and country. Our rock art and cultural places are protected and we're looking after the resting places of our ancestors.

Businesses on country are successful, sustainable, and providing jobs for our people. Visitors and business partners respect traditional owners and our rules protecting culture and country.

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OUR JOURNEY





In looking back at 2023, it's clear that Mimal Land Management has made significant progress since the previous year. Our journey has been marked by

GROWTH, LEARNING & A DEEPER UNDER- STANDING *of our roles & responsibilities.*

CHAIR'S REPORT: JOHN DALYWATER

Through initiatives such as the APO NT Governance training and their support to develop the Mimal Money Story, we have strengthened our board governance processes and financial understanding. I thank the efforts of APO NT for truly listening to our needs and tailoring the training to suit our requirements. Integration of new staff members has presented some minor challenges, but with the assistance of key individuals like Tim O'Brien from Job Skills Network, we have navigated these hurdles with more confidence in our recruitment processes.

Despite our progress, we acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead. Understanding new staff roles continues to be a hurdle, and while interviews have been streamlined, there's a constant need to ensure we find the right fit for each position. Additionally, infrastructure challenges, particularly the urgent need to source funding to support the redevelopment of our ranger base demands our attention. The redevelopment of this base will support our growth and provide local opportunities.

Looking forward, there are numerous opportunities for collaboration and growth. I am mindful of the need to mentor a future chair and for board members to encourage community members to want to be a part of Mimal's governance team to ensure our sustainability. More joint board meetings with other ranger groups should be planned to share our learning and collaborate on projects.

While empowering the board to have a greater voice, to share our stories and to assert control over processes and meetings,

with the support of those who listen to us, will only enhance our decision-making processes. Training also remains a priority, with opportunities to provide more training sessions across Mimal Land Management.

As we move into 2024 and beyond, our aspirations remain centered on creating Bininj leadership opportunities within our organisation. This involves not only providing leadership training but also creating opportunities for Bininj to assume management roles. The development of a train-the-trainer program will be pivotal in fostering knowledge sharing and supporting Bininj to take on greater responsibilities.

"Ultimately, our aim is to achieve Indigenous control at an operational level, ensuring Mimal Land Management's continued prosperity and effective service to its community."

Furthermore, the funding secured via Karrkad Kanjdji Trust for the Warddeken Land Management and Mimal Land Management joint project, "Bidwern Butj Uni," is a promising development. This initiative aims to facilitate accessible on-country learning, thereby fostering capacity-building and creating opportunities for rangers, as well as pathways for young people and community members.



CEO'S REPORT:
DOMINIC NICHOLLS

As I pause and reflect on 2023 I am amazed at how much Mimal has achieved and excited at the foundations we have laid for 2024 and beyond. 2023 was another year of growth and was packed with on country camps and activities. There was some planting of seeds for the future and harvesting of others that were planted some time ago!

The securing of funding for the Bush university by Karrkad Kanjdji Trust is the culmination of many years of work and the combined vision of Mimal and our neighbours at Warddeken to have training and development that truly serves the needs of rangers.

Education of young people is strong through our Learning on Country program, the culture camps and fire walks. This transfer of generational knowledge is exciting to see in action and central to the long-term management of land.

The Space Cows project is a great example of Mimal working on the cutting edge of technology, applying innovative approaches to land management challenges. This project, working with CSIRO and NAILSMA, involved tagging 400 feral buffalo with specially designed ear tags that can be tracked by satellite. This enables Mimal to understand how these animals are moving through the landscape and partnered with aerial surveys, on ground monitoring and landholders' observations we can better plan for the management of feral animals.

We were excited to host some international opportunities with researchers from Sweden's Lund University visiting for six weeks to study the unique behaviour of Arnhem birds

around fire. Affectionately nicknamed The Bird Detectives, they photographed and captured hundreds of hours of footage of birds and fire, which they will bring together in a number of research papers to build on our understanding of how Karrkanj (fire bird) uses fire to hunt.

France 24 came to record the work rangers do to contribute to the global challenge of climate adaptation, as part of a series on the vital work of Indigenous communities across the globe. This is a testament to the positive work rangers are doing locally and globally.

There are so many highlights in the work that Mimal is doing and the aspirations we have to do more, these are counted by the scale of some of the challenges and accessing the resources to complete our work.

The organisation has grown exponentially over the last few years, with this growth superseding the expansion of our facilities. Some four years ago we started the process of a base masterplan to accommodate all the rangers, staff, partner organisations and community. The challenge is finding the \$16,000,000 we need to build it. Karrkad Kanjdji Trust has given us the first start and Mimal have contributed over \$1,000,000 of fire resources. The key challenge is convincing the government and other funders that this key investment is worth it alongside running into issues of not being a big enough community.

We believe that the investment in a facility that will service the whole area and contribute to the region is well worth it. The benefits we see in doing a really good job of this and delivering for the community will best set us up for success.

WE ARE IN A RACE AGAINST TIME

*to provide spaces that can
support the transfer of
intergenerational knowledge.*

Feral animals are by far and away one of the biggest challenges we face. The immediate and long term impact on country is devastating. The solutions are varied and we face the dual challenge of ensuring that the economic opportunities associated with ferals are ameliorated and the costs to reduce the ferals and properly monitor the impacts are covered. We have a number of innovative solutions in the pipeline with a lack of resources being the only thing preventing us from implementing them.

Sadly we also lost some very special people, the heart of our garden and the loss will leave huge holes in our hearts and in the knowledge they have taken with them. This reminds us all that we are in a race against time to provide spaces that can support the transfer

of intergenerational knowledge. On country camps, songlines and language projects are vital to the preservation of knowledge and culture and remain a priority for Mimal.

We had a very exciting end to the year though. with the Territory Natural Resources Management awards where our Deputy Chair, Annette Murray received a Lifetime Achievement Award for her contribution to the sector, in particular her work towards the Strong Women's Healthy Country Network. The Mimal and Bulman school also won the Next Generation award for their Learning on Country program. We are excited about the future and thank all our partners and supporters for whom this all would not be able to come to fruition.



RANGERS

igniting

EXCELLENCE

FIRE MANAGEMENT LEWELLYN MOULIN & SAM LAWRENCE

Lewellyn Moulin: From August 2023 I replaced Rob Bakes as the lead coordinator on fire. What an exhilarating yet daunting challenge it was! I learnt firefighting techniques from the best in the business - Mimal Rangers!

I'm proud to say all our rangers showed resilience, adaptability, physical fitness, teamwork, communication skills, situational awareness, decision-making ability and leadership qualities during the fire season in 2023.

Sam Lawrence: I started in mid October and dropped straight into a busy fire season and was immediately impressed with the strength, capability, leadership and ingenuity of the rangers. It's been a pleasure to get to know and work with everyone and be welcomed as part of the team.

"We came up against a big obstacle this firefighting season in the weather conditions. Strong gusty winds spread fire quickly and reduced the time we had to prepare and extinguish the fire." - Lewellyn Moulin

Lewellyn Moulin: The ability for Mimal to ensure minimal late season hot fires is influenced by several factors such as early season burning, deliberately lit late season

fires, weather conditions, and effectiveness of firefighting efforts. Unfortunately, this year many of these factors aligned and Mimal had a large portion of the area burn in late season wildfires.

Furthermore, as we know, people's health plays a huge role in any physical work, and firefighting is no different. Ensuring our firefighters have easy access to affordable and nutritious food is an ongoing barrier.

Sam Lawrence: In 2024, I would love to see more independent work being carried out by rangers from their respective outstations and continue to deliver on our IPA plan.

Lewellyn Moulin: As Sam mentioned, I'd love to see the rangers take more ownership with APB - ground burning and firefighting is Mimal's 'dream'. In 2024 I hope to support both the women and men rangers to develop the confidence to really take the lead with the fire program. We will also work towards developing a strategy for community education to prevent burning after July 31st. It will see Mimal's Rangers, Learning on Country Elders and children, Roper Gulf Council, Bulman School and Bulman Clinic join forces. We hope to involve, encourage and support more TO's and landowners to burn their country alongside rangers.



LEARNING

ON

COUNTRY

A NOTE OF THANKS
FROM DEPARTING LEARNING
ON COUNTRY COORDINATOR
EMMA LUPIN



What a year to finish up as Learning on Country coordinator after 2 and a half years. I am so thankful to the community for the time we have spent together on country. We have shared so many adventures and incredible experiences together.

I have made endless connections that will last a lifetime and could write a whole love letter to this country and its people, who are now family. We have built the LOC program together and filled it with so much meaning. I am so happy to see it grow into the future with such support. It's not boba forever as I will continue to work with this community on special projects and still be in the NT and continue to work in the space of education and cultural knowledge exchange. A huge thank you to all the elders and rangers and assistant teachers whose knowledge and support underpins the program.

A special and huge thank you is reserved for A. Kennedy, a significant elder who was such a huge part of the program in its recent budding years, who loved sharing his cultural and botanical knowledge with the young people with kindness and joy, he had amazing enthusiasm for song and dance and shared his passion with everyone. We send so much love to the family and will miss him.



LEARNING ON COUNTRY EMMA LUPIN & SUSIE STOCKWELL



“There were so many highlights, but certainly being out on country on all day trips and the camps and exchanges were the most memorable and meaningful for all involved. A focus for the program continues to be getting out on country in Mimal’s management area and using and visiting outstations, with the leadership of traditional owners, visiting as many clan areas as possible and involving all the family groups equally. This true connection to country has been highlighted as the most important to all of those involved.”

There were over 90 LOC student days in 2023 and the majority of these were out on country, visiting and connecting with over 20 locations within the Mimal area and many more locations and trips outside of this.

Five multi-day LOC camps and excursions were planned and carried out in collaboration with other organisations in 2023. These included a weaving camp at Djiplin arts and in Beswick, a trip in collaboration with Nawarddeken academy at Kabulwarnamyo focusing on Dalabon language, a multi day hike over Marrku and Dakkal country with school students from Nhulunbuy High School. There was also an exchange back for students to see their family members at Nhulunbuy High and take part in boating and other work experience. A small group of students also took part in excursions in the Darwin region as the program was entered into the Territory NRM awards as a finalist. To top the year off and really underpin the great work we have been doing, we won in the Next Generation category!

At the end of the year another strong point was initiating a community evaluation to

really give community ownership of the program as it develops into the future.

Throughout the year the LOC activity program had wonderful highlights in its theme of water, fire, earth and sky. Activities included cutting, making and playing didgeridoos/bambu, weaving and making colour, collecting plants and seeds, growing them in the nursery and planting and tending plants in a revegetation area at the spring and learning about weed management. Students even got to dress up in full weed spraying outfits and practice with water.

The fire theme grew in content, lead by feedback from rangers and elders and 7 of the oldest students attended the ALFA pre season fire forum at Barrapunta alongside 80 rangers from all over Arnhem land and learnt how to use the Raindance machine. Students continued to learn from rangers about fire management, fire mapping and even fire fighting. R. Redford and his sons showed students how to select the right plants to make fire sticks and start fire with friction and much to everyone’s excitement this was achieved! The collaboration with EON foundation continued and traditional ground ovens were on the menu, even cooking a crocodile, lead but Anthony Kenned. Other sessions were held with fire cooking and making fire sticks. The balance of traditional knowledge and modern land management skills being shared together throughout the program to fulfill 2 way learning.

Work experience for older students still in Bulman continued whenever possible with students working alongside rangers, taking part in monitoring, checking fires and 3 students even completing their Care flight first aid course. It is hoped that other young people between school and working age can be engaged in a future program.





COMMUNITY EVALUATION

Towards the end of the year Susie, our new coordinator, started and a long handover allowed many aspects of the program and wishes of the community to be passed on. Throughout this transition it seemed a perfect time to check in and start a community evaluation of the program. This was done to get feedback for the future, reflect on the program and build on the framework. It also allowed us to agree on shared outcomes, how we achieve them and the activities carried out to do this.

Sadly, throughout the year we lost an important LOC elder to ill health and other key knowledge holders are unwell. This really highlights the importance of the program and

the urgency for intergenerational knowledge transfer, of which the program is a key component. This pushes us to do this with the best guidance and strategy we can deliver.

Key findings and feedback from the community were:

- The community is happy with the varied activities.
- Elders would like more focus on language. There is a wish to revive these and for them to have more presence in the program.





Our team has big goals for
Learning on Country in 2024.

looking AHEAD

We aim to deliver a full Learning on Country program in 2024 with 2 sessions a week – 1 with the high school (kangaroo) class and 1 with either the Wamarra (turtle) or Korlomomo (crocodile) class. We have also introduced weekly LOC sessions with the pre-school which have received extremely positive feedback. We aim to nurture the expertise within the team and share that knowledge with the students and community.



Aside from delivering our regular program, our aims include:

- Planning and delivering camps and walks across both the Mimal IPA as well as the broader Arnhem Land region.
- Increasing collaboration with the Mimal ranger activities to increase intergenerational engagement and cultural knowledge transfer as part of the regular work plan
- Re-visiting important projects in the Mimal IPA plan that Senior Cultural Advisors feel passionately about including language, rock art and place names.
- Looking to opportunities for Senior Cultural Advisors to work independently on important projects for Mimal and the LOC program
- Increasing our engagement with the community around the LOC program:
 - Engaging with Roper Gulf (school holiday programs)
 - Information for community at the shop
- Quarterly engagement opportunities with community in partnership with the Bulman School – this could be in the form of some community nights.
- Facilitating regular meetings and activities for women in community
- Pending approval from the animal ethics committee, doing the bird monitoring project with Mimal rangers
- Connecting with other Learning on Country programs across Arnhem Land and offering exchange opportunities for high school students from Bulman School.

We are very open to your feedback and preferences for the direction and focus of Learning on Country throughout the year!



BUSH

OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH
WARDDEKEN & KARRKAD KANJDJI TRUST

UNI

BUSH UNI: OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH WARDDEKEN & KARRKAD KANJDJI TRUST

The program undertook the recruitment in October 2023 of a dedicated Program Manager, Michelle Dunscombe, and a skilled Program Coordinator, Mitch Carey. Their combined expertise and commitment laid a strong foundation for the effective execution of the “Bush Uni” initiative.

“Mimal and Warddeken Board Members came together for a pivotal meeting to share the history of the “Bush Uni” program and why it is important to Elders and each organisation.”

The meeting explored a Steering Committee model into the core values and aspirations of the program, ensuring alignment with the community's vision and needs.

Recognising the importance of inclusive collaboration, an ongoing process of stakeholder mapping has also been initiated. This effort seeks to identify and engage with key individuals and organisations that can contribute to and benefit from the “Bush Uni” program. By fostering diverse partnerships, the program aims to maximise its impact and support.

A crucial ongoing initiative within the program is the Ranger Learning Assessment. This process involves evaluating the existing skills and knowledge base of the Bininj Rangers.

Through this assessment, the program aims to tailor educational interventions that are responsive to the unique needs and strengths of the community.

Complementing the learning assessment, the “Bush Uni” program has been actively developing a Ranger Learning Profile framework. This framework aims to capture the diverse skills, experiences, and aspirations of the Bininj Rangers. It will serve as a dynamic tool for personalised learning and development plans, ensuring that the program is both community-led and strengths-based.

The program has methodically mapped its objectives against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Notably, it strongly contributes to several SDGs as outlined in the following pages of this report.

In 2024, a program steering committee will be formed to guide the project. In the first year the program will co-design and pilot the program within Mimal and Warddeken, identifying what will be taught and the right way to teach it – and then trialling and testing different approaches. We aim to consolidate the accredited training for the ranger groups to enable completion and graduation of up to 20 rangers across the two ranger groups.





MIBBARR

NATALIE CAREY

SONGLINE

MIBBARR SONGLINE PROJECT NATALIE CAREY

2023 was a productive and exciting year where we continued our commitment to self-determined cultural heritage outcomes as directed by the Mimal Board and membership. Proudly, we continued to provide meaningful capacity around time critical invigoration, recording and preservation of the

LANGUAGES *and* CULTURE *of our region*

Leading on from the Dry Season/Living Culture Project, where the Mimal membership identified urgent archival priorities, we recorded a series of in-depth consultations with key custodians re-addressing the ongoing cultural heritage project goals as set out in 2022.

Project lead cultural specialist, Victor Rostron and I traveled across Arnhem Land with filmmaker Cian McCue to nine locations where we met with thirty-eight key knowledge holders connected to the Mibbarr Songline. Incredibly, these meetings captured representation from thirteen clan groups and at least seven languages and included powerful insights from some of the region's most respected senior knowledge keepers. These consultations are transcribed in Kune, Dalabon and English and laid the foundation for the project moving forward.



The resounding voice is that people want to do three key things:



Reconnect with
'empty country'



Film and record the
stories of sacred sites
along the threatened
Mibbarr Songline



Sing the endangered
songs again

This project focuses on documentation of the songline's histories, flora, fauna, culture and languages thus supporting a revival of intergenerational/inter-clan knowledge transfer working across multiple areas connected through the songline's

intersectional geography, spirituality, linguistic, cultural and artistic affiliation.

This project directly addresses targets set out in Mimal's 'Indicators of Healthy People and Culture' that include an increase in languages being spoken, children learning their cultural identity and gaining cultural knowledge of places, plants and animals, reconnection to country and more ceremonies being held.

Tragically, we have since lost some of our dearly respected leaders who spent their lives working hard to teach and maintain the strongholds of culture. With their passing, we are fortified in our dedication and deepened sense of purpose to continue to listen and respond to the voices of those calling for more opportunity to record history, language and culture. The importance of bringing people together as often as possible in support of vital cultural exchange, safe-keeping and celebration can not be overstated and we are proud to contribute to the ongoing growth of Mimal's vital cultural heritage program.



**Koltjaduninj nganimarnbun nawu
rili korroko wawam nayuhyungki wayihwayini wam.**

*We'll make and perform proper culture, how it was truly done
in the past. How the first ancestors went around singing.*

**Wayini wam. Namekke ngadjare yidurndiwemen
yawurrinj ngungke wurduhwurdurd ngdjare
ngamirndenana kure nane darrme.**

*The songline. What I want is for you to bring back your young boys
and kids and I want to see a group of them together at this spot.*

**Kure kunborrk darrme. Kure nadjamun darrme.
Ngarrku nawu ngarrwayini ... en kawayini.**

*At the dancing spot. At the sacred place. Ours, which
we will sing ... and they will sing.*

**Ngarriwayini en kunborrk ngarrimarnbun own.
En ngarridjare ngurrbindurndiwemen wudurd
ngurrbinkurrme kure koltja ngarrbinnan.**

*We'll all sing and we'll make our own dance. And we all want you to
return the kids; we'll look after them by putting them into culture".*

Jack Nawilil translation from
Mibbarr Project Consultations.



STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	restated* 2022 \$
Revenue	4	9,455,195	4,156,557
Accounting and audit		106,718	40,375
Aministration and project support		167,661	181,605
Bad and doubtful debts		10,010	226,914
Communications and IT		103,215	5,016
Consulting and legal fees		634,997	497,212
Depreciation and amortisation		135,883	186,628
Directors' fees		27,800	-
Employee expenses		2,201,603	1,817,340
Helicopter hire and avgas		230,250	285,913
Lease interest expense		411	2,836
Operational		437,763	302,174
Other		31,782	9,617
Repairs and maintenance		64,504	68,306
Training		20,821	-
Travel		421,756	188,424
Vehicle expenses		348,756	242,467
Surplus / (deficit) for the year		4,511,263	101,729
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income		4,511,263	101,729

*As a result of the prior year errors.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As at 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	restated* 2022 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	6,673,222	1,175,166
Trade and other receivables	7	808,904	1,669,245
Other assets	8	180,617	-
Total Current Assets		7,662,743	2,844,411
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	9	1,029,668	881,663
Right-of-use assets	10	6,935	8,669
Total Non-Current Assets		1,036,603	890,332
Total Assets		8,699,346	3,734,743
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	11	880,464	503,965
Lease liabilities	10	2,108	2,031
Contract liabilities	12	164,634	132,085
Employee benefits	13	105,564	62,920
Total Current Liabilities		1,152,770	701,001
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	10	6,809	8,916
Employee benefits	13	67,325	47,125
Loans		-	16,520
Total Non-Current Liabilities		74,133	72,561
Total Liabilities		1,226,903	773,563
Net Assets		7,472,443	2,961,180
EQUITY			
Accumulated surplus		7,472,443	2,961,180
Total Equity		7,472,443	2,961,180

*As a result of the prior year errors.



