

For Country, culture and community



We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across this vast continent and their enduring commitment to caring for land, water and sky. We pay our respects to ancestors who came before, and Elders guiding the way today.



Above: Florence Birridjala,
ASRAC ranger, conducting
early burning
Photo by Stacey Irving

Cover: Marcia Malibirr,
ASRAC ranger, conducting
early burning
Photo by Stacey Irving

The Karrkad Kanjdji Trust (KKT) is a philanthropic trust that was established in 2010 by Traditional Owners of the Warddeken and Djelk Indigenous Protected Areas, to support their vision for healthy Country. As custodians of much of West and Central Arnhem Land—one of the largest Indigenous estates in Australia—they innovatively recognised the potential strength and increased freedom and flexibility of alternative funding sources.

Today, KKT is a shared resource to eight First Nations community-controlled organisations in Arnhem Land, supporting the preservation and revitalisation of culture, and the conservation of over 50,000 square kilometres of land and sea Country.



Karrkad ('gada-gut')
refers to Arnhem Land's
Stone Country highlands.

And Kanjdji ('guny-jee')
refers to Arnhem Land's
savanna lowlands.

These are the ecosystems the Karrkad
Kanjdi Trust was established to support.

Photo by David Hancock

Photo by x

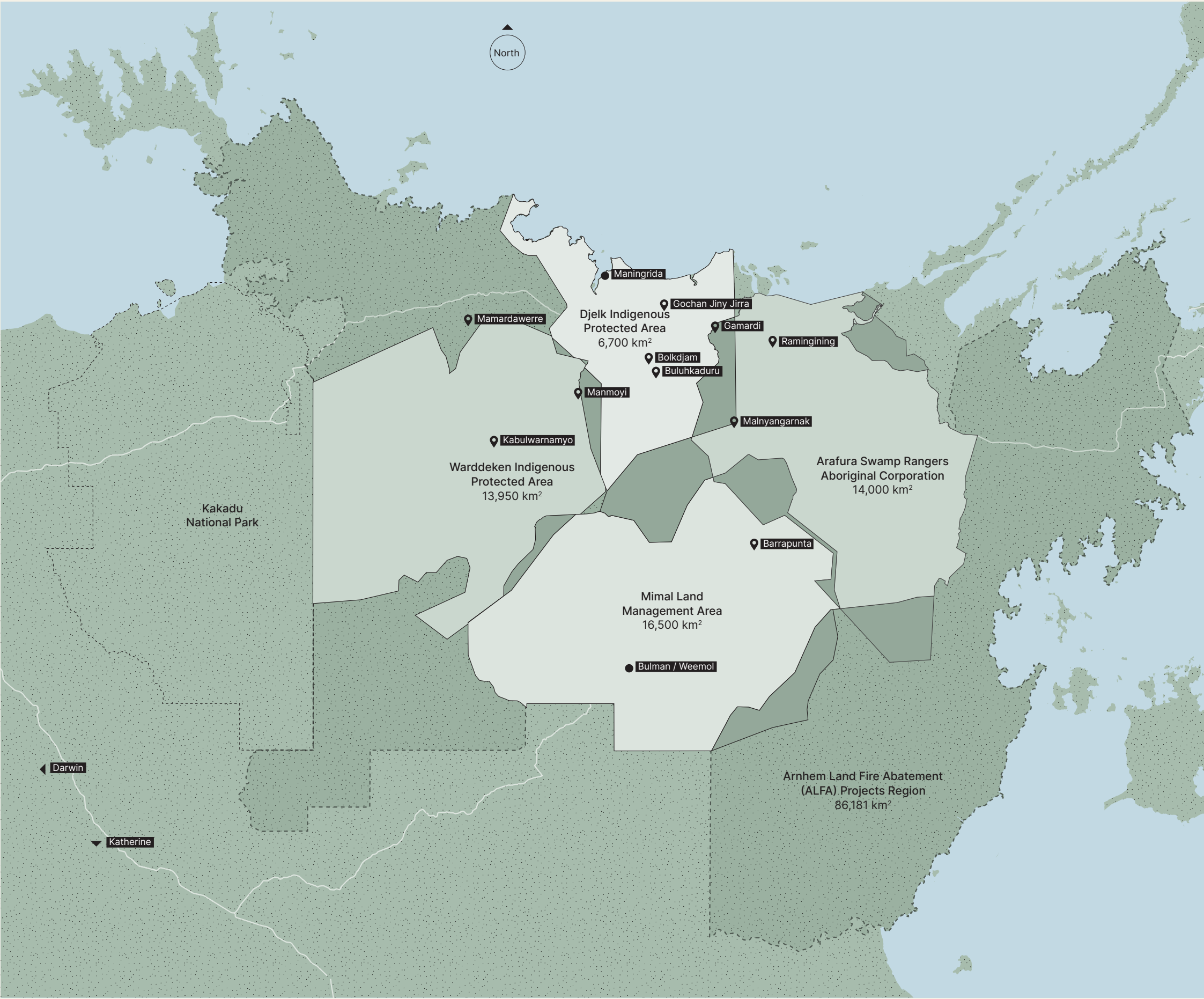
West and Central Arnhem Land

Extent indicator



Key

- Town
- 📍 Remote community
- ◀ Nearby locations
- Main road
- Shared management zone
- ALFA Projects Region
- Indigenous Protected Area boundaries





Above: Anthea Lawrence and Shauna
Campion, Mimal women rangers
Photo by Warren Lee

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Context

Stretching from the East Alligator River to the Gulf of Carpentaria, Arnhem Land covers over 95,000 square kilometres of very remote and biodiverse Country in the Top End of Australia. Since time immemorial, it has been home to Bininj and Yolngu peoples, who possess unique languages, laws, stories and cultural practices that are intrinsically connected to the health of land, sea and sky.

From about 1600, the Macassans of Sulawesi (now Indonesia) seasonally visited the Arnhem Land coast to trade with Bininj and Yolngu peoples. However, despite this legacy of cross-cultural exchange, the Arnhem Land region remained isolated from British colonisation for many decades, making it one of the last corners of Australia to be impacted by frontier violence and settlement. By the 1920s, the overwhelming majority of colonial pastoralists had abandoned their efforts to forcibly settle across Arnhem Land, in large part because of the ferocity of the monsoon, remoteness from markets and the ruggedness of the region.

Shortly after though, Christian missionaries moved into the region, establishing a number of coastal mission settlements. This development brought significant change to traditional lifestyles, with missionaries bringing tobacco and other commodities to persuade local people to settle permanently. In the early years of the missions, the paternalistic notion of ‘protection and preservation’ was the prevailing ethos. Later, it was replaced by ‘assimilation’.

In 1931, the Commonwealth Government gazetted the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Reserve. Under the reserve system, visitors were forbidden access unless they had a permit and resource extraction was limited—the latter inadvertently afforded the region a level of environmental protection. Despite this, the influence of the missions remained strong for many years, leading to widespread discouragement of traditional knowledge and ceremonial practices. As the last groups living traditional lifestyles ‘came in’ to the missions to settle, people became acutely aware of their separation from Country. Without transport that could get them to distant clan estates, living ‘off-Country’ became increasingly common.

Alongside the sadness of separation from ancestral lands, the environment was also suffering. There was no one to burn Country or in other ways manage biodiversity; no one to call out to the spirits of the ancestors; no one to perform the ceremonies and the rituals essential to the health of those landscapes. These uninhabited estates came to be thought of as ‘lonely’ or ‘orphan Country’.

The 1960s heralded a more proactive engagement in Aboriginal affairs on the part of the Commonwealth Government and the process of ‘de-missionisation’ (or ‘decolonisation’) began: the government took over service-provision roles and mission sites morphed into secular settlements and towns. Then, in 1976, the federal *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act* was passed, granting proprietary recognition to the Traditional Owners of Arnhem Land. The Act stipulated that land in the Northern Territory which had been previously designated an Aboriginal Reserve would convert to a unique system of Aboriginal land ownership: inalienable freehold title vested in trusts.

This era of land rights and self-determination policy afforded enhanced support for what became known as the ‘Homelands Movement’, which saw Traditional Owners gradually return to Country, with their families, to reassert their rights and responsibilities to their traditional lands. Subsequently, during the 1970s and 1980s, homelands received some government funding for housing and basic infrastructure.

However, in the decades that have followed, this support has waned, with successive governments instead prioritising recentralisation into larger settlements sometimes referred to as growth towns. This policy shift has left very remote homelands, with enormous potential to deliver positive outcomes for both people and the environment, with inadequate access to both on-Country infrastructure and essential services, including health and education. This is some of the context that saw the need for the establishment and growth of the Karrkad Kanjdji Trust.



Manmoyi outstation
Photo by Skylar Warren-Blake

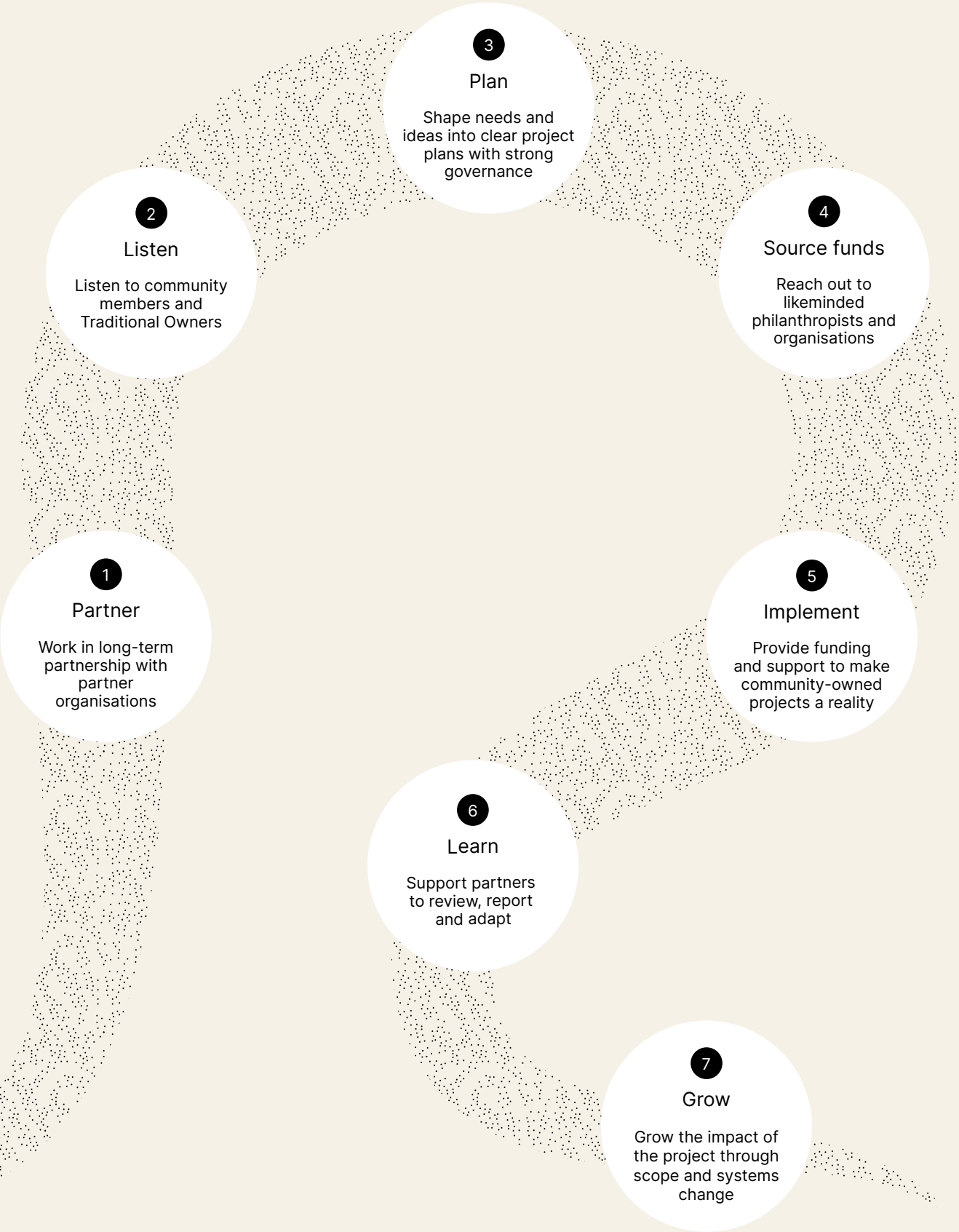
How we work

KKT was created by Traditional Owners and innovative leaders representing Aboriginal community-controlled organisations from West and Central Arnhem Land.

As the initiative has grown, the founding partners have invited Aboriginal community-controlled organisations across the region to join. Collectively, we govern KKT by nominating members to the KKT board and working alongside the other experts we bring in to walk beside us.



Dean Yibarbuk
(Co-Chair)



Partners

Our partners are all Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, ensuring funding is supporting the self-determination of First Nations peoples.



Warddeken Land Management Limited
Founding partner

Manages the Warddeken IPA: 14,000 square kilometres

The Traditional Owners of the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area formed Warddeken Land Management in 2007. Warddeken is an Aboriginal-owned, not-for-profit company that combines traditional ecological knowledge with Western science to manage and protect one of Australia's most unique environments. Each year, Warddeken employs over 250 rangers across fire management and carbon abatement, weed and feral animal control, education and cultural heritage protection.



Bawinanga Rangers
Founding partner

Manages the Djelk IPA: 6,700 square kilometres

The Bawinanga Rangers is a pioneering Indigenous land management program. Formed by Traditional Owners of the Djelk Indigenous Protected Area, this strategic, community-owned initiative has been operating for more than 20 years to mitigate growing environmental concerns. The Bawinanga Rangers keep Country healthy by tackling the threats of changing fire regimes, the decline of native animal species and the spread of invasive weeds and feral animals.



Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation (ASRAC)

Manages the ASRAC IPA: 14,000 square kilometres

The Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation (ASRAC) is an independent, not-for-profit Aboriginal organisation based in north-east Arnhem Land. ASRAC was established in 2013 to support and administer a catchment-based network of eight ranger groups. They are responsible for looking after Country for Bi and Yolngu people from 46 different clan groups.



Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Northern Territory (ALFA NT)

Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (ALFA) is an Aboriginal-owned not-for-profit organisation supporting sustainable fire management and carbon abatement activities across Arnhem Land. Established by Traditional Owners and ranger groups to enable participation in the carbon industry, ALFA now works with 11 ranger groups to manage six offset projects spanning 86,000 square kilometres. ALFA generates carbon abated through strategic burning and sells it as Australian Carbon Credit Units, returning profits to partners to fund land management and charitable outcomes on Country.



Bininj Kunwok Regional Language and Culture Centre

The Bininj Kunwok Regional Language and Culture Centre is an Aboriginal-owned organisation that was established in 2007 to promote and maintain the languages and cultures of Kakadu and West and Central Arnhem Land. The organisation employs a team of language and cultural heritage professionals to respond to translation and archival requests, enabling communities and other Aboriginal organisations to apply language and culture in a wide range of programs and projects.



Homeland School Company

Homeland School Company (HSC) was established by Traditional Owners of the Djelk IPA to deliver full-time two-way education to children and young people living on homelands. Currently, these communities only have access to inconsistent, fly-in-fly-out state education. The HSC is addressing this inequity by following the successful blueprint of the Nawarddeken Academy and initially opening bi-cultural primary schools at three outstations.



Mimal Land Management Aboriginal Corporation

Manages the Mimal IPA: 16,500 square kilometres

Mimal Land Management Aboriginal Corporation is an Indigenous-owned organisation, focused on bringing benefits to Country and culture for Dalabon, Rembarrnga and Mayali peoples of south-central Arnhem Land. Their vision is Traditional Owners living on outstations with their families and taking care of Country. Mimal's priorities include fire management, managing invasive species and protecting native animals, maintaining strong culture and fostering sustainable partnerships.

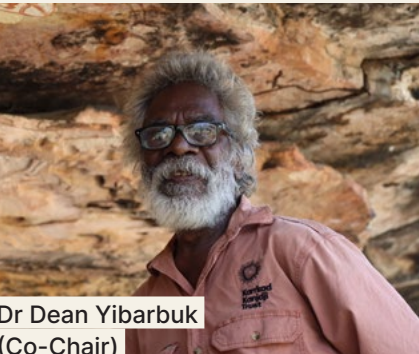


Nawarddeken Academy

The Nawarddeken Academy is a First Nations-owned organisation, established in 2015 by Traditional Owners and Elders of the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area who had long dreamed of their children receiving full-time education on their homelands. The Nawarddeken Academy now successfully delivers a unique model of bi-cultural on-Country K-12 education and early learning to three very remote First Nations communities in West Arnhem Land.

Board of Directors

Every project that our board elects to fund is designed, owned and led by communities.



Dr Dean Yibarbuk
(Co-Chair)

Dean is a Traditional Owner of Djinkarr and is also currently serving as Co-Chair of the Indigenous Carbon Industry Network. Dean is a qualified researcher and Aboriginal ecologist with a wealth of experience in complex community-based projects. He has been involved with KKT since its inception.



Justin Punch
(Co-Chair)

Justin is an experienced environmental investor focused on climate change and the energy transition. He is the Chair of the Australian Renewable Energy Agency, a co-founder of Assembly Climate Capital and a member of the advisory board of the UNSW Institute for Climate Risk & Response.



Cindy Jinmarabynana
(Director)

Cindy is a Traditional Owner of Ji-bena. She is also the Co-Chair of Learning on Country and has had an extensive career in education, recently retiring as a classroom teacher of Maningrida College. She is an Alternate Director of Homeland School Company and is dedicated to sharing her knowledge of culture with the next generation.



Margie Moroney
(Director)

Margie has been with KKT since the Nawarddeken Academy's establishment, of which she also is a Director. Her background is in finance, establishing and funding agribusiness projects. She has advised Statutory Marketing Authorities, as well as CSIRO. Margie holds commerce and arts degrees from the University of Melbourne.



Dr Otto Campion
(Director)

Otto is a Traditional Owner of Malnyangarnak. He is an educator, senior ranger and a Director of both Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation (ASRAC) and Arnhem Land Fire Abatement. He is also a Founder and Director of Aboriginal Research Practitioners' Network (ARPNNet).



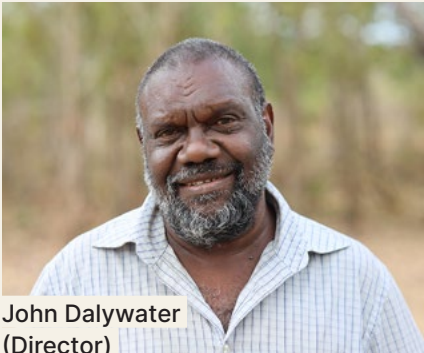
Teya Dusseldorp
(Director)

Teya is the Executive Director of Dusseldorp Forum, an independent foundation with a 35-year history of increasing the life opportunities of children and young people. Before this, she worked as a human rights lawyer and documentary filmmaker.



Frederick Hunter
(Director)

Fred is a Traditional Owner of the upper regions of the East Alligator River and a long-term park ranger at Kakadu National Park. In 2020, he became the first Aboriginal person to be appointed Chief Ranger. He is also a Director of Warddeken Land Management after previously serving as Chair.



John Dalywater
(Director)

John is a Traditional Owner of Namarr Kaworowk. He is also the Chair of Mimal Land Management Aboriginal Corporation, a Councillor for Roper Gulf Regional Council and an executive member for the Northern Land Council. John has a long history in community development and health and wellbeing, working as a liaison for communities and government departments.



Emeritus Professor Jon Altman AM
(Director)

Jon is a global leader among scholars exploring alternative economic futures for Indigenous peoples using their land and natural resources; he has undertaken research in West Arnhem Land since 1979. He was Director of the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research at the Australian National University, where he is an Emeritus Professor at the School of Regulation and Global Governance.



Annette Miller
(Alternate for Mimal)

Annette is a Traditional Owner of Bigedi and has been a Director of Mimal Land Management Aboriginal Corporation since 2017. She has spent her working life as an educator and was the Deputy Principal of Gulin Gulin (Bulman) School. She was also a founding advocate for the Strong Women for Healthy Country Network.



Conrad Maralngurra
(Alternate for Warddeken)

Conrad is a Traditional Owner of Kudjekbinj and a senior caretaker for the Mamardawerre outstation. He is also the Chair of the Nawarddeken Academy and a Director of both Warddeken Land Management and Arnhem Land Fire Abatement. In all of his roles he is passionate about passing on his depth of traditional knowledge to the next generation.



Terrah Guymala
(Alternate for Warddeken)

Terrah is a Traditional Owner of the Ngorlkwarre estate within the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area. He has worked as a ranger for Warddeken Land Management since 2007, and was recently appointed as Chair. He is also a Director of Arnhem Land Fire Abatement.

From the KKT Co-Chair

Dean Yibarbuk



Mahni Mandjewk ngalengarre kunwern ngarrikurduyimi kore KKT. Ngad ngandidjawam bu ngarriwam kore Mongolia bu ngarribennang birribuyiuka bininj kore Wayfinders Circle. Ngad birrinang kunwale ngadberre kore baleh ngarrikurduyime kore bedda. Ngad dja bedda wanjh ngarridjarrkwokdanginj birribuyika nawu birrikang kumekke.

Ngad ngarribidyikarrme Nawarddeken Academy bu kabirrimang mandulmuk ngalengarre kunredken, kuhni wanjh kayimerran kore wurdurd bedberre Warddeken IPA. Ngadberre wurdurd kabirridjaldi kore kunred ngadberre ba bu ngarribendjalnahnann. Korroko manwern kabirriborlbme, kore kabindibekkan nawu dabborabbolk bu kabindimarneyolyolme mak rangers kabindikan kabindibukkan manwurrk, mayh dja kunwarddebim. Nganjilngmak bu ngabennan kabirridjarrkre. Bu kunbidkukudji mandjewk yimerranj wanjh ngad Bininj ngarridjarrkmarnbom: KKT, Warddeken, Nawarddeken.

Wanjh bolkkime ngarikarrme Bidwern Butj Uni, ngandibidyikarrme ba birriwern kabindimang yawkyawk dja yawurrinj bu kabirriborlbme wanjh kabirriyimerran director, yika senior ranger, yika archaeologist dja njalehnjale kabirridjare. Yiman yawkyawk dja yawurrinj kabirridjarrkborlbme kore yiman kunwarddebim, mayhken dja mayhmayhken, kabirrire kore CDU dja ranger exchanges. Kamak rowk.

Colonisation kahdjaldi, wanjh ngad ngarridjare nawern ngarrinan bu kayimerran. Minj ngarribawoyi manbu mayh-ceremony ngadberre. Nawu governments dja conservationists minj kabirriwernburrbun kunmayali dja kunwale ngadberre ngad bininj. Mahni minj

kakurren mayh-ceremony, dja mahni manwoybuk duninj mak nganbidyikarrme ngadberre bu kore kunbolk ngarrihni. Manbu mayh-ceremony kunwale ngadberre, ngarriborlbme dja mak ngarribenbukkan wurdurd ba kabirribolknahnann yerrikah. Mahni yiman kayime key ngadberre bu kunred ngarrinahnan bu kabolkmakmen. KKT mayh-ceremony kanbidyikarrme kore Warddeken Kunmayali Project ngalengarre, Mimal Mibbar Songline Project ngalengarre, wanjh ngad ngarridjare ngarridjawayhme ba ngarrimang kunwardde ba ngarridedjingmang. Dja bu mayh-ceremony kangurdmerran wanjh kunukka kakarrerayekmen ngadberre. Ngaye wanjh 70 ngayimerranj bu ngahkohbanjmen, kunwern manbu kahyo bu kore ngarridurrkmirriken, ngadjare ngarriwokdi nawu donors bu mahni mankarreken.

KKT kamak rowk manbu ngad ngarrimarnbom. Birriwern kabirrihmayahme bu njaleken Warddeken dje Djelk kabirrikarrme philanthropic organisation? Ngad Bininj kunmayali ngarikurrme ba ngarridjare ngarrinan kore ngad ngadberre communities. Nganjilngmak bu ngabennan ngardduk colleagues nawu kabirridurrrkmirri. Ngarribebbedurrrkmirri, nawu yiman kore Arnhem land ngarrihni yika kore city kubolkkihkimuk kabirrihni ngarridjarrkkurduyime bu ngarrihbidyikarrmerren. Ngarribenbukkan Australia dja mak kubolkbubyika rowk kuhni bu kunbuyika. Kuhni minj moneyken, dja kuhni kunredken dja kunmayaliken bu kunkareken thousands of years.

Dr Dean Yibarbuk
Co-Chair
September 2025

‘We’re showing Australia and the rest of the world that this is something different. It’s not about money, it’s about livelihoods for our people and for our culture that’s been happening for thousands of years.’

It has been a very busy year for KKT. We were invited to go to Mongolia and connect with other Indigenous peoples through the Wayfinders Circle. That was amazing, seeing the footsteps of our organisations travel internationally to deliver those stories. It gave us a voice and a space to share our challenges with other Indigenous peoples across the world.

We also supported the Nawarddeken Academy to achieve high school education on Country, which means for the first time, kids in the Warddeken IPA have access to lifelong learning on homelands. Our children can now stay on the landscape where school is a quiet place and we can keep an eye on them. And they’re already learning a lot, they’re listening to Elders tell stories and going out with the rangers to do fire work, monitoring or rock art surveys. It’s quite exciting when I see them all out bush. We made this all happen in ten short years through Bininj-owned organisations: KKT, Warddeken and Nawarddeken Academy.

And there is the Bidwern Butj Uni now, too, which is helping to bring more young people to sit at our table. To learn to become a director, a senior ranger, an archaeologist or anything they want. The young people are doing it and they’re learning, through rock art, through biodiversity management, visits to CDU and ranger exchanges. It’s really brilliant.

But colonisation remains a big threat, and there is still so much more we need to see happen. We cannot abandon ceremony. This is a gap in governments’ and many conservationists’ understanding. It is not a gimmick; it is a real thing that helps us protect

important places. Our ceremonies are our practices, our education, our lifestyle. They are the key to good management and healthy Country. KKT is supporting ceremony through Warddeken’s Kunmayali Project and Mimal’s Mibbar Songline Project, but we need to find more funding for this work because it is urgent. If ceremony lines close, it will be very sad for us and hard to fight on. Even though I’m in my 70s now and my bones are getting old, there’s still a lot of work to be done, so I look forward to talking to more donors about these concerns.

I’m so impressed by KKT, this organisation we have created. People are sometimes shocked by it, you know, how come Warddeken and Djelk set up their own philanthropic organisation? But it’s about Bininj ownership and investing in our own ideas, what we want for our own communities. And I’m really proud of our staff, too. We are all doing separate things, some of us are in Arnhem Land, some of us are in the city, making it happen for our organisation and for our partners. We’re showing Australia and the rest of the world that this is something different. It’s not about money, it’s about livelihoods for our people and for our culture that’s been happening for thousands of years.

No matter what, we will continue to work slowly... Make things happen in the way our people dreamed, so we can live in harmony, be strong and go forward.

Dr Dean Yibarbuk
Co-Chair
September 2025

From the KKT Co-Chair
Justin Punch



This year was one of the most testing in KKT's history. Fundraising, always a demanding task, has grown harder as our scale increases and the absolute numbers required to support our partners rise accordingly. In 2025 however, the election of Donald Trump and, more particularly, the Liberation Day tariff announcements on 2 April sent shockwaves through the philanthropic sector just as annual commitments were being finalised. For KKT, this was the most disruptive external event since COVID, and in some respects, its impact has been even greater.

Despite this difficult backdrop, we raised an impressive \$7.8 million for our partners' work on the ground in Arnhem Land—a figure that would have been unimaginable only a few years ago, though it was inevitably compared against the record success of the prior year. More importantly, we deployed a record \$7.4 million directly to partner organisations. This is an extraordinary achievement, and I thank our supporters who stood with us through these unsettling events. Philanthropic support of course remains essential as ranger resourcing continues to fall short of requirements given the vast tasks at hand, persistent ecological threats, deep educational gaps and ongoing risks to cultural practices and knowledge. We are still at the beginning of proving what a truly impactful and sustained level of support across our six pillars of work, and across the region, looks like.

This year reinforced a principle we have long understood: building Indigenous-led institutions creates lasting resilience. As Dean describes in his letter, the achievement of full high school registration

for the Nawardeken Academy represents educational transformation and self-determination. When young people can complete their entire education on Country, learning from Elders while engaging with contemporary curricula, we are building the foundation for generations of Indigenous leadership. Similarly, the establishment of the Bidjerna Butj Uni represents a collaboration that will nurture the next generation of leaders, rangers and knowledge holders. Our support of ceremony through projects such as Warddeken's Kunmayali Project and Mimal's Mibbarr Songline Project underscores our commitment to strengthening culture alongside conservation.

Our endowment fund reached \$2.5 million this year, including a transformational \$900,000 commitment that demonstrates our supporters' confidence in KKT's long-term viability. This growing reserve represents our commitment to being here for as long as our partners need us. Beyond these highlights, we also welcomed four excellent new staff members, further strengthening our capacity to deliver for our partners.

None of this would be possible without the extraordinary people who make KKT what it is. My deepest thanks go to our CEO, Stacey Irving, for her ongoing leadership, to the entire KKT team for their dedication, and to my fellow board members for their wisdom, guidance and commitment. It is a privilege to walk alongside you all in this important work.

Justin Punch
Co-Chair
September 2025

From the KKT CEO
Stacey Irving



This year, KKT granted \$7.4 million to our partner organisations in West and Central Arnhem Land. This support reflects the scale and national and global importance of Indigenous stewardship.

These funds help ensure Traditional Owners, Elders, and rangers can continue caring for Country, sustaining biodiversity, and safeguarding Indigenous knowledge systems for generations to come. Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) make up nearly half of Australia's National Reserve System yet receive only a fraction of the national conservation budget. Philanthropic partnership remains essential in backing the work that communities are leading on the ground.

A highlight for me was supporting the consultation process for Arnhem Land Fire Abatement's (ALFA's) Section 19 Land Use Agreements. These agreements are an expression of Traditional Owners' free, prior, and informed consent, confirming unanimous support for ALFA to operate on their lands for the next 11 years. This renewal gives ranger groups the certainty to plan long-term, maintain employment on Country, and invest in community priorities. It also secures ongoing access to the carbon market through savanna burning, bringing reliable, untied income that underpins fire management, strengthens livelihoods, and sustains broader cultural and environmental work chosen by communities.

We also marked the Nawarddeken Academy's progress into formal secondary education, enabling young people in the Warddeken IPA to complete schooling on Country in two-way learning environments and grow into future leaders.

KKT supported partners to share their leadership and knowledge internationally, too. I was honoured to accompany Conrad Maralngurra and Rosemary Nabalud at New York Climate Week in September 2024, where Indigenous knowledge was recognised as central to climate and biodiversity solutions. At the Skoll World Forum in Oxford in April 2025, I travelled with Lynda Lechleitner and Margie O'Brien to elevate the Strong Women for Healthy Country Network and build new international relationships.

Seeing what partners are achieving on Country continues to be the deeply powerful reminder of why KKT exists. KKT itself continues to strengthen in service of these partnerships. We welcomed new staff members to deepen donor engagement and keep the bridge between philanthropy and remote First Nations communities strong. Our events this year created opportunities for supporters to listen, learn, and be guided by Indigenous voices.

As we enter the third year of our five-year strategy, two-way philanthropy remains our foundation. It is not just a funding model, but a relationship of respect, reciprocity, and shared vision, ensuring Indigenous organisations are resourced to thrive on their own terms.

To our supporters, thank you. By standing alongside First Nations communities in Arnhem Land, you are helping make our partners' work possible. Together, we are protecting landscapes while nurturing knowledge systems, and a legacy that will endure.

Stacey Irving
CEO
September 2025

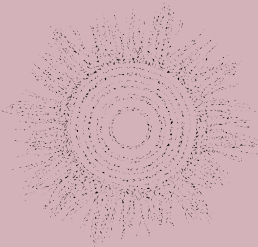
Celebrating our impact

KKT’s purpose is to connect partner organisations with likeminded supporters to strengthen the Indigenous ranger and land management movement.

These are some of the ways we realised this purpose over the past 12 months.



Partnerships



8

remote Aboriginal community-controlled organisations resourced

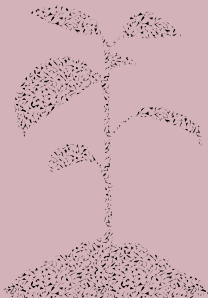


50,000+

km² of Country managed by partners across West and Central Arnhem Land

25

community-owned projects funded



6

new community-owned projects approved for funding by KKT's board

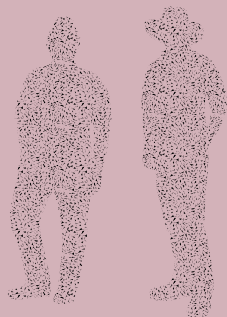


Above: Dr Dean Yibarbuk, Co-Chair of KKT
Photo by Stacey Irving

Fundraising

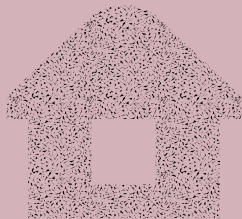
187

donors supported remote Aboriginal community-controlled organisations



17

businesses and corporations contributed through their Reconciliation Action Plans and Corporate Social Responsibility Strategies



28%

increase to endowment fund

20

successful formal philanthropic grant applications

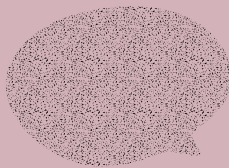
65+ project impact reports written

7,000+ hours of fundraising delivered for partner organisations by staff

\$7.4m

distributed across West and Central Arnhem Land, up by 16.6% on prev. year

Wider engagement



12

donors engaged with partners on Country and connected with Traditional Owner-led projects

- Participated in 3 panel discussions at Climate Week in New York and connected with 60+ people at American Australian Association and Nia Tero events
- Supported Traditional Owners from Warddeken to attend the 2nd global Indigenous Wayfinders Circle in Mongolia, where they shared Bininj stories and knowledge about fire management

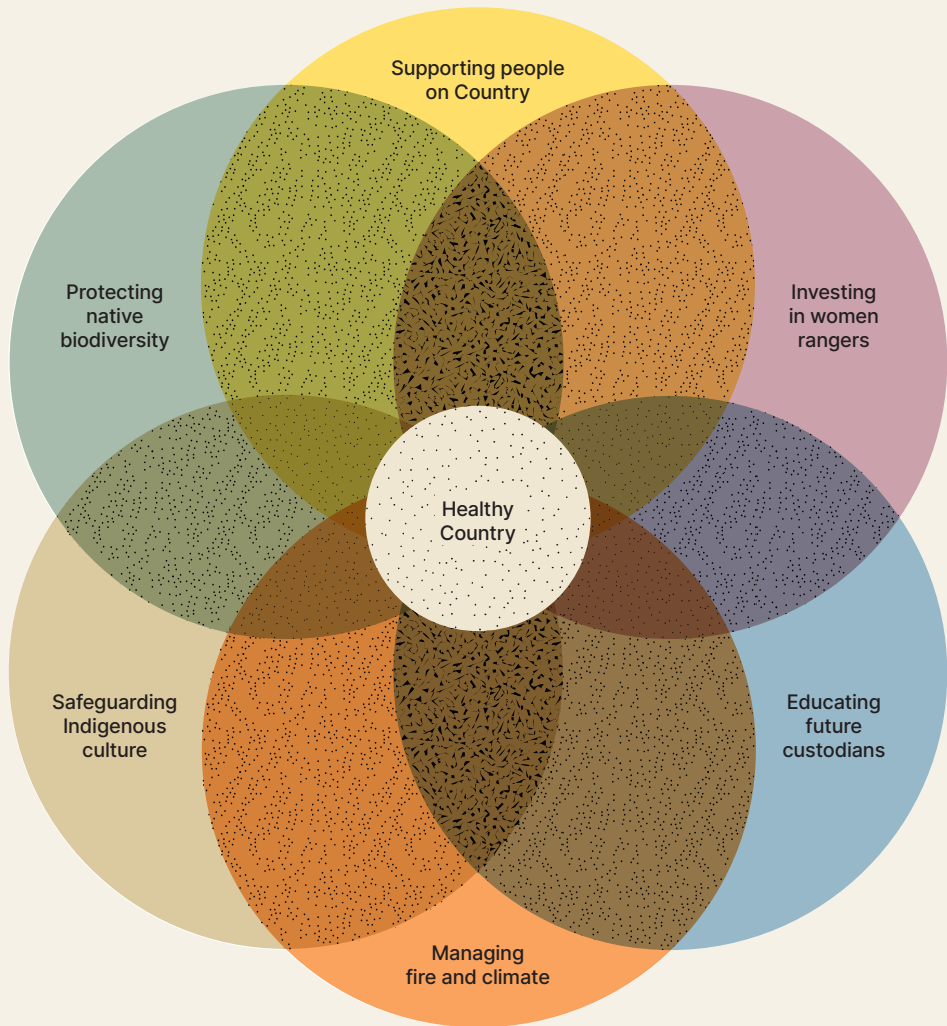
- Supported representatives from the Strong Women for Healthy Country Network to participate in the Skoll World Forum in Oxford, where they also presented at a side event facilitated by the Judith Neilson Foundation
- Shared the story of KKT at Barunga Festival and created greater awareness of KKT's work across the wider region

184

attendees at KKT events



Our pillars



A First Nations-led approach to safeguarding vital ecosystems for future generations

Pillar snapshot

Protecting native biodiversity Partners blended Indigenous ecological knowledge and Western science to control threats and help native species recover.	Managing fire and climate Partners sustained customary fire practices and secured access to ongoing sustainable income.	Investing in women rangers Partners grew women’s ranger programs and frameworks that bolster the regional women’s ranger movement.
226 at-risk plant and animal species supported across the IPAs	40 communities across Arnhem Land engaged in consultations	400+ First Nations women and girls supported to engage in caring for Country activities
32 invasive plant and animal species managed across the IPAs	3 Land Use Agreements executed, enabling future participation in the carbon market	52 professional development opportunities provided to First Nations women
Safeguarding Indigenous culture Partners preserved Indigenous cultural heritage and passed down ecological and landscape knowledge to future custodians.	Supporting people on Country Partners delivered greater on-Country adult learning opportunities and resourced more remote outstations to operate safely and effectively.	Educating future custodians Partners expanded bi-cultural, on-Country education that raises the next generation to walk in both worlds.
20 on-Country events supported the transfer and documentation of knowledge	72 professional development opportunities provided to rangers	4 independent schools resourced and sustained
30+ Traditional Owners, Elders and cultural custodians involved	10 pieces of vital community infrastructure completed	120+ children and young people accessed education opportunities

Protecting native biodiversity



Arnhem Land is one of the most biodiverse regions in Australia. Through ranger programs and targeted locally-led conservation actions, First Nations peoples here are able to actively combat the risks that threaten the survival of vital native ecosystems.

Biodiversity is utterly essential to human health and wellbeing, climate goals and sustainable development, without it we are at risk of widespread ecocollapse. Across the world, the leading cause of biodiversity loss is land clearing, occurring primarily in urban and agricultural areas. However, in Australia, contemporary declines in biodiversity are now occurring in very remote places too, far from large towns and cities. Since these areas are often afforded better protection from deforestation, fracking and other exploits through legislation like the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1976*, biodiversity loss is instead led by the incursion of invasive plants and feral animals; unmanaged wildfires; and interrupted traditional land management.

In 2021, 533 animal species and 1,385 plant species were considered threatened in Australia, with 53% of these listed as Endangered or Critically Endangered. Devastatingly, these figures have continued to rise every year since. These trends are affecting this vast continent in varied ways. Northern Australia is home to the majority of Australia's savanna woodlands, which are among the least altered and unpolluted in the world. These large, intact ecosystems were once considered a vital safe haven for many mammal species that have suffered severe post-colonisation declines elsewhere. However, the 20 mammal species most at risk from extinction in the next two decades mostly occur in northern Australia, indicating that even the most biodiverse regions of Australia are now under serious threat.

KKT supports community-owned and led conservation projects that have been purposefully designed to support First Nations land management; restore traditional ecological knowledge; and protect and regenerate native biodiversity across West and Central Arnhem Land.

Left: Intermediate egret in Gurruwiling (Arafura Swamp), Central Arnhem Land
Photo by Stacey Irving

This year, the projects we have supported in this pillar include:

Mayh (Species) Recovery Program

page 20

Feral Herbivore Strategy

page 22

Anbinik Protection Program

page 23

Monitoring native animal populations

Partner: Warddeken
Spotlight project: Mayh (Species) Recovery Program

The Mayh Recovery Program has been a permanent fixture in Warddeken’s land management strategy since 2016. It operates year-round to protect and restore native animal biodiversity within the Warddeken IPA in West Arnhem Land: a highly significant ecological region that continues to support threatened populations of small mammals and birds.

This unique Bininj-led program blends traditional ecological knowledge with Western science to enable Warddeken rangers to collect, care for and translate ecological data. This data supports Traditional Owners to understand Country in new ways and informs important decision making about species and places.

This year, the endangered Arnhem Land Gorges Skink was detected in the Warddeken IPA. This species is one of the rarest reptiles in Australia and was once thought restricted to a limited number of sites in southern Kakadu, so it was a very exciting and promising insight for Warddeken and their partner in this work, Territory Resource Natural Management (TNRM).

Warddeken rangers also deployed a further 220 monitoring cameras. The rangers will later collect these cameras and the gathered data to further enrich Warddeken’s knowledge of the population distribution of priority native species. Meanwhile, a group of bininj (male) rangers built their skills and confidence in drone operation through on-Country training facilitated by the Mayh Recovery Program and the Bidwern Butj Uni. Now armed with their commercial drone licenses, these rangers will oversee and deliver the program’s drone operations, using the technology to monitor waterhole health and to assess the impact of fine-scale fuel-reduction burning around the habitats of fire-sensitive species like the endemic yirlinkirrkirr (white-throated grasswren).



Left: Warddeken bininj rangers learning to use drones for biodiversity monitoring
Photo courtesy of Warddeken



Alongside monitoring, the Mayh Recovery Program trials management methods for invasive species that either prey upon or outcompete at-risk native animals. Over the past 12 months, core program staff focused on developing a feral pig strategy. The program’s Feral Mayh Officer Arijay Nabarlambarl led much of this work: conducting consultations with Traditional Owners; identifying priority areas; and coordinating the installation of pig traps with rangers. Arijay, alongside Warddeken ranger Arthur Marlangurra, later shared this important work with other Indigenous land management organisations at the 2025 National Feral Pig Conference in Queensland.

Daluk (women) rangers travelled to share stories from the Mayh Recovery Program, too. In June, Suzannah Nabalwad, Tahnee Nabalwad and Damazine Alangale attended the International Consortium of Conservation Biology in Meanjin/Brisbane, where they gave a presentation on the evolution of Warddeken’s efforts to conserve yirlinkirrkirr populations. This was shortly after rangers from Manmoyi and Mamardawerre undertook patchy burns around long, unburnt spinifex Country (essential habitat for the shy, ground-dwelling bird). These actions significantly reduce the risk of wildfire reaching vulnerable ecosystems, ensuring the yirlinkirrkirr has ample cover from the predation of feral cats.

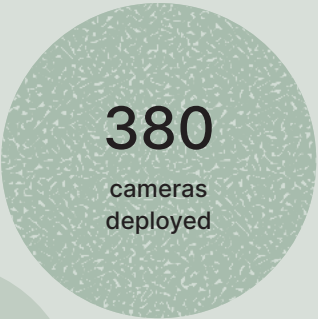
KKT is extremely proud to have been a co-funder of this exceptional program since its inception. This work is not only at the forefront of Indigenous-led conservation, but is also crucial to both the professional progression of rangers and the intergenerational transfer of Bininj knowledge.

‘We believe Country looks after us and we look after Country. It’s really important to bring people back, so every year we go talk to the right people, bring them back right time, our burning right time, our walking... We believe that Country will listen to us.’

Terrah Guymala, Traditional Owner of Ngolkwarre, Chair of Warddeken and Director of KKT



Above: Alexandria Nabalwad and Sylvia Baddari, Warddeken daluk rangers, setting camera trap
Photo courtesy of Warddeken



Restoring vital wetlands

Partner: ASRAC
Spotlight project: Feral Herbivore Strategy

Gurruwiling, also known as the Arafura Swamp, is one of northern Australia’s largest freshwater ecosystems, spanning approximately 700 square kilometres across East and Central Arnhem Land. As the largest paperbark swamp in Australia, it is a haven for biodiversity, a vital cultural landscape for Traditional Owners, and the pulsing heart of the region.

However, escalating numbers of introduced herbivores now threaten the swamp’s delicate balance, endangering its environmental and cultural significance. Across the Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation (ASRAC) IPA, there are currently an estimated 17,000 feral water buffalo, a population that has almost doubled since 2013.

Through their grazing these animals denude and trample vegetation, destabilise soil, and create deep channels that alter hydrology and introduce saltwater intrusion. This degradation further destroys critical habitats and food sources for native fauna, accelerates the spread of invasive weeds, reduces bush tucker availability, contaminates fresh drinking water, and broadly impacts an array of traditional cultural practices. If left unchecked, their existing numbers could rise to over 25,000, causing irreversible damage to Gurruwiling.

At the beginning of 2025, ASRAC rangers performed an emergency cull of 3,000 feral water buffalo, reducing population numbers in an ecologically and culturally critical area of the swamp’s southern region. This was an essential short-term action that ASRAC plans to repeat at the beginning of 2026.

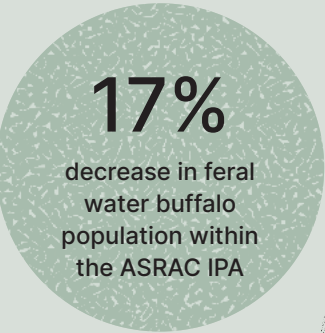
At the same time, ASRAC is also exploring long-term approaches to sustain the management of introduced herbivores. ASRAC intends to collect a comprehensive dataset using population surveys and remote sensing to establish the scale of buffalo impact and set a benchmark for monitoring progress, highlighting vegetation loss, habitat degradation and hydrological changes.

After this, the organisation will identify a market-based solution that aligns with Traditional Owners’ cultural and environmental aspirations. This will likely involve the development of a methodology for biodiversity markets that recognises the economic value of regenerating freshwater ecosystems, guaranteeing rangers a yearly income stream that will sustain the management and health of Gurruwiling into the future.

‘Buffalo are damaging Country. We want good drinking water, we want bush tucker for our grandchildren. We need healthy Country to transfer culture, we need back up.’

Dr Otto Campion, Traditional Owner of Malnyangarnak,
Director of ASRAC and KKT

KKT has provided funding for ASRAC’s management of feral herbivores since 2023. This is urgent and necessary work that is returning balance to Country and safeguarding the futures of traditional Bi and Yolngu cultural practices associated with Gurruwiling.



Below: Feral water buffalo
Photo by Stacey Irving



Caring for ancient rainforests

Partner: Warddeken
Spotlight project: Anbinik Protection Program

The Anbinik tree (*Allosyncarpia ternata*) is endemic to the Western Arnhem Plateau, meaning it does not exist anywhere else in the world. It is a large evergreen tree that grows in dense, monsoon rainforest communities, supporting populations of native animals like the white-lined honeyeater. For Bininj Nawarddeken, Anbinik hold immense cultural value. Their broad canopies provide shade and shelter for Bininj in the hottest times of the year, and their sap possesses medicinal properties and is harvested as an effective antiseptic. This living cultural connection is further evident in the many kuwarddebim (rock art) galleries and historical occupation sites found within Anbinik pockets.

Critically, two thirds of Anbinik rainforests exist within the Warddeken IPA, which makes their health and future an ongoing priority for Warddeken. To protect the slow-growing, fire-sensitive tree, Bininj Nawarddeken have created firebreaks around the perimeters of Anbinik rainforests for millennia. Anbinik patches at most risk of wildfire are those that exist as dense, cool oases in the midst of savanna woodlands, as opposed to the populations growing in the deep, protected rocky gorges of the Arnhem Plateau. Today, Warddeken rangers continue to maintain the practice of fire protection of the priority Anbinik patches, as identified by Traditional Owners. This vital work occurs each year in the dry, cooler seasons of bangkerreng and yekke through Warddeken’s Anbinik Protection Program: a cornerstone of Warddeken’s land management strategy.

This year, Warddeken rangers actively safeguarded 17 individual Anbinik rainforest patches through fine-scale, on-ground burning and the installation of mineral earth breaks. This was achieved through two major camps. The first saw a collaboration with the Kuwarddebim Project team that led to the documentation of major kuwarddebim galleries and rare petroglyph engravings. The second involved six Kakadu National Park rangers who joined the effort to learn from Warddeken’s experienced team. This partnership reflects growing recognition of Warddeken’s leadership in both ecological and cultural management of Anbinik rainforests.

Rangers also focused on reopening more bush tracks, enabling greater vehicle access across the IPA. This involves repairing river crossings and clearing fallen trees so that the path is safe and visible. By opening and maintaining these roads, this work is significantly less reliant on costly helicopters. As a result of this improved access, this year Warddeken halved the amount spent on helicopters compared to 2024.

As always, the Anbinik Protection Program brought together rangers from all three of Warddeken’s permanent bases and ensured the involvement of the appropriate Traditional Owners at all times. Consequently, many of the most vulnerable Anbinik rainforest patches within the Warddeken IPA are now well protected for another year through traditional fire practices that sustain these fragile and unique ecosystems.

KKT has provided annual funding for the Anbinik Protection Program since 2016. Anbinik trees are at the heart of the Kuwarddewardde (Stone Country) and are critical to the region’s biodiversity levels, therefore this remains core, essential work that KKT is honoured to support.



Managing fire and climate



First Nations peoples of Australia have wielded fire as an extraordinarily effective land management tool for over 65,000 years. This practice lives on today through Indigenous ranger programs and support for fine-scale, cultural burning.

Cool, controlled burning not only reduces on-ground fuel and therefore the risk of wildfires, it also clears plains for traditional hunting, supports the regeneration of vegetation and maintains ideal habitat composition for native animals. A key part of this practice, passed down by First Nations peoples for millennia, is knowing which parts of Country were burned in previous years and understanding the appropriate intervals required for each landscape. Today, this is often referred to as mosaic burning.

The widespread interruption to cultural burning is one of the countless destructive outcomes of colonisation, and alongside rising global temperatures, has directly resulted in the outbreak of wildfires. By 2007, late dry-season fires accounted for 48% of the Northern Territory's greenhouse gas emissions. Fortunately, around the same time, some of the Top End's first ranger programs were forming and contributing to the gradual reintroduction of fine-scale burning, led by First Nations peoples.

As the ranger movement has continued to grow, so too has the resurgence of cool burning. Managed, early season burning reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 52%. Fires burn at a cooler temperature when there is a higher water content in the fuel load. By shifting when the burning takes place, the intensity of the fires is reduced, which limits the amount of greenhouse gases released.

For over a decade now, Traditional Owner groups have also been recording the consequent reduction in emissions through the Climate Solutions Fund. This is facilitated by Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (ALFA), which was established to support the engagement of Traditional Owners in the carbon industry. The financial return from selling carbon credits provides an independent source of income for ranger groups, enabling them to sustain fire management practices.

KKT is immensely proud to provide additional support for individual ranger groups and ALFA, particularly towards the high upfront costs associated with project establishment, registration and renewal, training and capacity-building.

Left: Terrah Guymala, Warddeken Chair and senior ranger, conducting fine-scale burning
Photo by Kane Chenoweth

This year, the projects we have supported in this pillar include:

Section 19
Land Use
Agreements
page 26

Securing community access to carbon markets

Partner: Arnhem Land Fire Abatement NT (ALFA NT)
Project: Section 19 Land Use Agreements

Arnhem Land Fire Abatement (ALFA) is an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation working in partnership with 11 ranger groups across six registered fire project areas in the Top End. Through planned early dry season burning, these groups prevent destructive late-season wildfires and abate more than 500,000 tonnes of carbon emissions each year across 86,000 square kilometres. This is the equivalent of taking around 140,000 cars off the road.

When the carbon farming legislation was introduced in 2011, ALFA secured three 14-year Section 19 Land Use Agreements for the West, Central and South-East Arnhem Land fire project areas. Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976*, Section 19 agreements are required for any organisation operating on Aboriginal Land, and are only granted once the Northern Land Council (NLC) confirms that Traditional Owners have been properly consulted and have freely given consent. These agreements give Traditional Owners the authority to consider proposals, shape terms and conditions, and to approve or decline activities on their Country.

Between 2011–2024, the original Land Use Agreements enabled ALFA to register savanna burning projects in Arnhem Land and generate Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) through ranger-led fire management, with carbon income returning directly to ranger groups. With the agreements due to expire at the end of 2024, ALFA has spent four years working with Traditional Owners to support the renewal of the agreements for a further 11-year period.



Left: Planned fine-scale burning in the Mimal IPA
Photo by Stacey Irving

The pre-consultation phase began in 2022, with ALFA meeting nearly 2,000 Traditional Owners across more than 40 communities for both small, family-based and one-on-one conversations. These discussions created space to ask questions and share views before the formal NLC process began. Feedback was overwhelmingly supportive, with many requesting increased ranger presence and more opportunities to spend time on Country during fire operations.

In 2023, the NLC commenced the statutory consultation process, and in December 2024 confirmed unanimous consent from Traditional Owners for ALFA to continue operating across the three project areas. The renewed agreements were formalised during the 2025 dry season, ensuring ALFA continues to support the fire management ambitions of Traditional Owners across Arnhem Land.

This essential, multi-year process was co-funded by KKT and ALFA. Our philanthropic investment, made possible through the belief of likeminded donors, ensured the carbon income from ALFA's ACCU sales continues to return to the remote communities undertaking this critical carbon abatement work.



'Our rangers are learning how to do research and use computers today to recognise the areas which were burned in the early years and then they can look at our future fires... We are also looking at the global changes of when and where and how we can best record the changes of the weather and look globally at what that's doing to our fire management.'

Annette Miller, Director of Mimal and Alternate Director of KKT

Left: Jamie Yibarbuk and Terrah Guymala, ALFA directors, with executed Section 19 Land Use Agreement
Photo courtesy of ALFA



Planned fine-scale
burning in the ASRAC IPA
Photo by Stacey Irving

Investing in women rangers



First Nations women have always played a vital role in land and sea management. Their presence is essential to balanced care for Country. Women rangers are continuing this long tradition and passing it onto the next generation in a modern setting.

25% of Australia is under some form of Indigenous land management, with the majority of this occurring through ranger programs that blend precise Indigenous ecological knowledge with cutting-edge technology. Prior to the past decade, First Nations women were sorely underrepresented within the ranger workforce. Since then, many Indigenous land management groups have designed their own women's ranger programs that recognise and value the specific ecological knowledge that many First Nations women hold, as well as their exclusive cultural access to certain sites and stories.

Across West and Central Arnhem Land, women's ranger programs exist both to ensure Country is managed in a balanced way, and to address the complex barriers that First Nations women living in very remote communities can encounter when it comes to accessing meaningful local employment. This often involves the employment of a female ranger coordinator and access to dedicated fixed assets, like women's vehicles and offices. Together, these facets create a work environment that better reflects the distinct knowledge systems and roles belonging to men and women.

In addition to this, women's ranger programs facilitate the provision of on-Country professional development opportunities, enabling career progression in a culturally-informed setting and without compromising other important cultural and kinship responsibilities. They also guarantee that younger women and girls can identify strong female role models within their communities, and safeguard the invaluable knowledge and practices of Elders and senior rangers.

While there has been a recent increase in federal support for the Indigenous Ranger Program, it is generally contained to wages and does not cover the other necessary components for women's equitable engagement in the sector. This is why KKT supports core and additional costs associated with our partners' women's programs, as well as the operational costs of the Strong Women for Healthy Country Network that is working to grow the movement.

Left: Shauna Campion, Mimal ranger
Photo by Warren Lee

This year, the projects we have supported in this pillar include:

Strong Women for Healthy Country Network
page 33

Women's Ranger Program
page 34

Daluk Ranger Program
page 35

Investing in a support framework for First Nations women

Partner: Mimal
Spotlight project: Strong Women for Healthy Country Network (SWHCN)

The Strong Women for Healthy Country Network (SWHCN) is an initiative that was established in 2019 by a group of senior Rembarrnga, Mayili and Dalabon women of West and Central Arnhem Land, all associated with Mimal Land Management Aboriginal Corporation. These Elders wanted to find a way for First Nations women caring for Country across the Northern Territory to come together and share their respective insights and challenges working within the land management sector.

Since then, the SWHCN has hosted annual, on-Country forums every year (with the exception of 2020) at different locations within the Northern Territory, giving more language groups the opportunity to host the event on their Country. In 2024, the Forum was held at Crab Claw Island, nestled on the water's edge of Bynoe Harbour, approximately 110 kilometres south-west of Darwin on Larrakia Country. Over 250 women and girls attended the Forum and participated in a wide range of activities aimed at fostering a sense of togetherness, including weaving circles, bush medicine making and screen printing—and lots of dancing in the evenings. In addition to these activities, there were also different sessions held on biodiversity monitoring for the many women working as rangers.

However, the defining element of this year's Forum was the realisation of an ambition long-held by many of the women: for the SWHCN to become an independent entity. Since its inception, the SWHCN has been auspiced by Mimal. Over the past couple of years, there have been many long, thoughtful discussions about the need for the Network to become a registered Aboriginal corporation, both to alleviate the burden on Mimal, but also to ensure that the Network's future is directed solely by First Nations women.

After a considered process of communicating the details of the proposed Rule Book (similar to a constitution)—including the vision and goals of the corporation; the role of the Board of Directors; and the member's rights—the eligible women in attendance were invited to sign up to become a member of the Strong Women for Healthy Country Aboriginal Corporation. Of those that chose to become members, 75% or more also had to endorse the Rule Book, a number that was comfortably achieved when more than 130 women elected to endorse it—meaning the Strong Women for Healthy Country Aboriginal Corporation had finally become a reality.

‘We want to become an independent organisation and become an incorporated body so that we can continue what we’re doing—supporting women and community.’

Sheila White, Director of the Strong Women for Healthy Country Aboriginal Corporation



Since then, the inaugural Board of Directors has met five times, laying strong foundations for the new organisation. In addition to good governance, there has also been a great focus on the SWHCN Best-Practice Principles. Members of the Network shared the resource on more than six different occasions, including at Northern Land Council women's employment strategy workshop, promoting safer and more culturally appropriate workplaces for more First Nations women across 13 different ranger groups.

This spirit of collaboration is further evident in the SWHCN's numerous engagements at various events across the Northern Territory, including the Savanna Fire Forum in Darwin and Barunga Festival. Thanks to the Judith Neilson Foundation, the SWHCN was even able to send two representatives to share stories at the Skoll World Forum in Oxford.

Overall, through investment in organisational stability, strong governance and members' needs, the SWHCN has made significant headway in realising its goals of collaborating, communicating and advocating as a Network.

In the absence of sufficient government funding, KKT connects the SWHCN with independent, values-aligned funders. These relationships are founded on the shared understanding that communities hold the expertise to design and determine their own solutions, utilising culture and Country as foundational tools.

Below: Message Sticks members at 2024 SWHC Forum
Photo by Milly Hooper



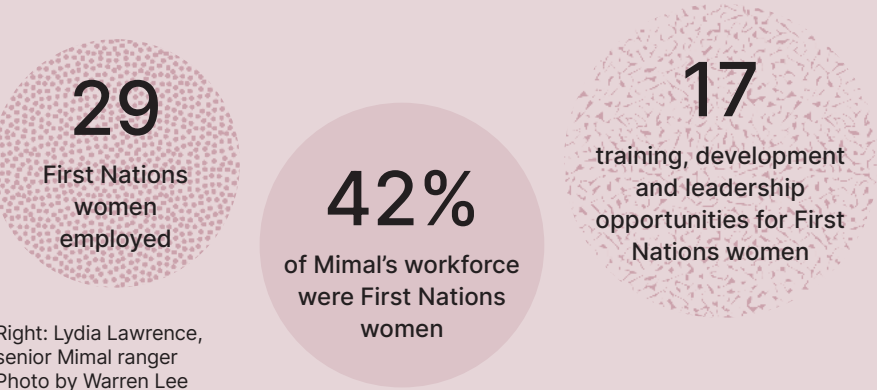
Managing landscapes of Central Arnhem Land

Partner: Mimal
Spotlight project: Women's Ranger Program

For many years, the small group of women working as rangers within the Mimal IPA were often forced to compromise their cultural protocols in order to participate in meaningful employment. However, this changed in 2018 when Mimal Land Management established its dedicated Women's Ranger Program, creating a safe, professional environment for First Nations women that was more informed by the local kinship system, and that better enabled the intergenerational transfer of both women's and men's knowledge. Since then, the Women's Ranger Program has continued to grow and thrive, becoming a cornerstone of Mimal's operations.

This year, a total of 29 women were engaged in either part-time or full-time on-Country work, representing 42% of Mimal's ranger workforce. During the wet season, the women rangers actively targeted invasive weeds throughout the IPA, a proactive approach that protects key assets and promotes the regeneration of native grasses. This effort was complemented when representatives attended both a Gamba Grass workshop at the North Australia Savanna Fire Forum and the inaugural Gamba Eradication and Biodiversity Conservation Forum. The emphasis on invasive weeds culminated at the close of the dry season, when women rangers were involved with the identification and treatment of three different occurrences of Gamba Grass within the Mimal IPA.

The women rangers were also heavily involved in Mimal's annual early burning. They meaningfully contributed to the development of the 2025 Fire Plan, participating in discussions and planning different activities such as camps and walks. In total, they visited eight different communities to consult Traditional Owners ahead of any burning. Meanwhile, their actual on-ground efforts focused on safeguarding Bulman and Weemol communities, as well as smaller outstations, cemeteries and sacred sites. Through controlled burns and the creation of fire breaks, they reduced the risk of wildfires and protected both vital infrastructure and cultural heritage, supporting community safety and the health of Country.



Right: Lydia Lawrence, senior Mimal ranger
Photo by Warren Lee

Since 2018, KKT has passionately supported the Mimal Women's Ranger Program, providing critical funding for ranger coordinators, professional development opportunities and dedicated vehicles—additional expenses that government grants continue to fall short of covering, but actually encapsulate the true cost of these essential programs that support both people and Country.

'It gives me pride knowing that I am able to look after my Country and that there are so many people out here willing to work with us and learn about our culture and land.'

Kenita Bush, Mimal ranger



Stewarding the Stone Country of West Arnhem Land

Partner: Warddeken
Spotlight project: Daluk Ranger Program

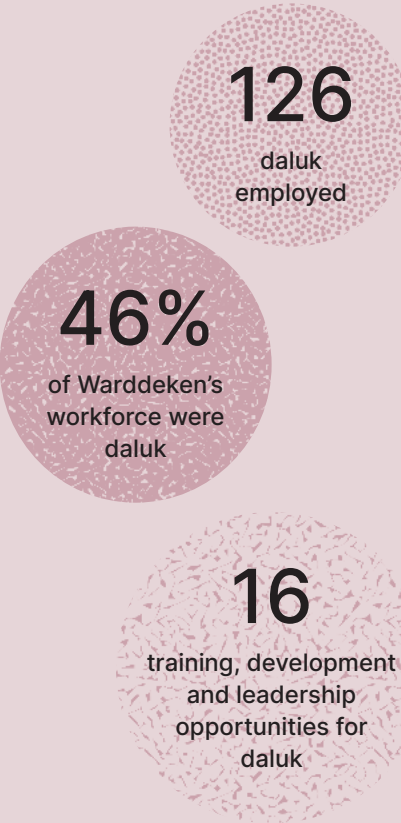
The Warddeken Daluk (Women's) Ranger Program was developed in response to a community-wide desire for a workplace environment that supported daluk to safely and wholly participate in the growing ranger workforce. This ambition was especially apparent after the establishment of the Nawarddeken Academy, which guaranteed children access to full-time, bi-cultural education, and therefore afforded mothers and other women involved with childcare the opportunity to pursue local employment opportunities. Since its inception in 2016, the Daluk Ranger Program has gone from strength to strength and is now a core part of Warddeken's identity.

Over the past 12 months, a total of 126 daluk engaged in part-time or casual work through the Daluk Ranger Program, representing 46% of Warddeken's ranger workforce. This is an incredible achievement of which Warddeken is deeply proud. Though the number of employees is at parity, the hours worked by daluk has grown to just over half of that of the bininj (men) rangers.

A significant and growing portion of daluk ranger engagement occurs during the dry season, when rangers conduct both on-ground and aerial prescribed burning. This year, daluk rangers contributed to Warddeken's fire work by facilitating essential consultations with Traditional Owners and drawing proposed aerial protection burn lines utilising satellite imagery and spatial data. They then later performed fine-scale, perimeter burning around key community infrastructure; known, at-risk native habitat; and culturally important sites.

Both daluk and bininj rangers were also able to further their involvement and knowledge of aerial prescribed burning through on-Country bombardier training across two events, one delivered by North Australian Bushfires Solutions and the other by Arnhem Land Fire Abatement NT. This opportunity supported rangers to develop and build their skills and confidence in operating aerial incendiary devices (known as raindance machines). Among those who attended the training were two daluk rangers from Kabulwarnamyo who were entirely new to bombardier work. After successfully completing the training, they felt eager and ready to participate in future aerial prescribed burning routes across the Warddeken IPA.

Since 2016, KKT has consistently provided additional funding for the Warddeken Daluk Ranger Program, ensuring this essential, locally-driven work can continue at its fullest capacity and wholly realise the aspirations of Traditional Owners, Elders and communities. This support covers core costs that remain unaccounted for by government funding, including the salaries of ranger coordinators, on-Country training and fixed assets that facilitate a work environment that understands and respects men's and women's business.





Warddeken daluk rangers
Tinnesha Nabulwad, Suzannah
Nabulwad, Lorina Maralngurra
and Rosemary Nabulwad
Photo by Rebecca Parker

Safeguarding Indigenous culture



Many First Nations groups across Australia are leading powerful cultural and linguistic revitalisation efforts. In Arnhem Land, it is a race against time to document and pass on an immense body of traditional knowledge and culture while it still exists in living memory.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are as rich and old as they are diverse. Different mobs have different languages, laws, stories and practices that are embedded in the intrinsic relationship between First Nations peoples and land, sea and sky. The depth and fortitude of connection remains strong across the continent today.

The varied pace of colonisation across Australia meant some peoples and cultures were impacted before others. Arnhem Land was one of the last regions in Australia to be colonised on account of its remote, rugged terrain and tropical climate. As a result, First Nations peoples here have maintained much of their distinct norms, values and belief systems. This is evident in the contemporary robustness of languages, ecological knowledge and ceremonies. Their distinct cultural heritage is evident in a regional kinship system, shared Dreaming tracks, Songlines, and creation stories that are often performed in ceremonies.

The physical presence of this cultural heritage can be found in a network of sacred sites and in the extraordinary rock art galleries spread across the landscape. The custodians of these places ascribe great spiritual significance to them and the stories they hold, but they are at serious risk of being lost as support for homeland communities wanes and Traditional Owners struggle to physically access their Country to provide the necessary customary care. Indigenous languages of Arnhem Land are also increasingly vulnerable as fluent speakers grow older. This urgency is made more pronounced as each dry season is punctuated by more funerals and sorry business.

KKT supports vital, community-led projects that work to preserve both tangible and intangible cultural heritage and ensure the safe, intergenerational transfer of Indigenous languages and ecological knowledge.

Left: Richard's hand stencil
near Kabulwarnamyo
Photo by Sam Harriss

This year, the projects we have supported in this pillar include:

Kunmayali Project

page 40

Operational support

page 41

Kuwarddebim Project

page 42

Documenting intergenerational cultural knowledge

Partner: Warddeken
Spotlight project: Kunmayali Project

Warddeken's Kunmayali (Knowledge) Project emerged in 2023 as a way to protect and restore the Bininj knowledge that was not being captured through the existing cultural heritage work occurring in the Warddeken IPA, largely because it belonged to specific ceremonies and Songlines, and therefore relied on the right people being together on Country.

Over the past year, the Kunmayali Project maintained a strong focus on revitalising a Songline that begins at the top of Croker Island, travels down through the Djelk and Warddeken IPAs and into Central Arnhem Land. Elders from Warddeken met with Elders from Croker Island, Ramingining, Maningrida and other parts of the Songline on three occasions. A major outcome from these meetings was the decision to form a Steering Committee made up of the most senior men across the region (as this Songline holds important men's ceremonies). Already this Steering Committee is considering how to record, store and safeguard living ceremonial knowledge, ensuring it is protected and accessible to future custodians.

The Kunmayali Project also facilitated a workshop for senior Warddeken daluk (women) committed to revitalising knowledge systems related to kinship. This theme emerged from longstanding concerns about the decline of Koymud: the original matrilineal moiety system of West Arnhem Land. Despite its continued cultural importance, the meanings and terms associated with Koymud are known now by only a small number of senior custodians. This workshop resulted in the most comprehensive documentation to date of the four Koymud categories, representing a critical step in safeguarding cultural knowledge highly specific to West Arnhem Land.

In addition to the above, the Kunmayali Project supported the annual Bininj Manbolh (bushwalk). This year, 78 Bininj took part in the five-day, 20-kilometre walk that traced an ancestral track within the Warddeken IPA. Along the way, rangers deployed song meters; families documented kuwarddebim (rock art) sites; and Elders led bush food harvesting and preparation. On the final night, there was a performance of kunkurdu (public dance), making it an extraordinary few days of intergenerational knowledge sharing.



KKT has funded the Kunmayali Project since 2023 in recognition of the immense importance of ceremonial and cultural activities associated with healthy Country. Unlike government funding, philanthropic investment has the capacity to take a more flexible and nuanced approach to a planned timeline—something that is often integral to a cultural heritage project's success as it demonstrates a keen appreciation that the right cultural leaders need to be together at the right time and place.



Above: Bininj Manbolh across Warddeken IPA
Photo courtesy of Warddeken

Supporting organisational capacity and growth

Partner: Bininj Kunwok Regional Language and Culture Centre (BKRLCC)
Spotlight project: Operational support

Bininj Kunwok Regional Language and Culture Centre (BKRLCC) is the only regional organisation solely focused on cultural resource management across West and Central Arnhem Land. BKRLCC takes an integrated approach, focusing on language preservation, cultural knowledge transfer, and support for Indigenous land managers; schools; health services and community organisations. This is achieved through responding to requests for resource development, translation, interpretation and documentation.

At the start of 2024, key BKRLCC staff identified the need for greater administrative support, particularly in light of an increased number of fee-for-service requests from other Aboriginal community-controlled organisations. In response, KKT was able to deploy untied funding to support BKRLCC to build further internal capacity and enable linguists and cultural heritage experts to better focus on their core work.

Subsequently, over the past year, BKRLCC employed 48 Bininj language workers through many short-term project engagements. BKRLCC also facilitated the creation of three new multilingual children's books that were translated into eight regional languages and printed for distribution in Maningrida and neighbouring communities. These books will be shared with local schools and libraries across Arnhem Land.

This year also saw BKRLCC expand its fee-for-service work. A new Services Schedule helped articulate this offering to a wide client base, including Kakadu National Park, UNESCO, the Northern Land Council and a growing list of Aboriginal organisations and government agencies. This work generates untied income that BKRLCC can reinvest in its operations and forms a key pillar of the organisation's long-term sustainability strategy.

Reflecting on this year of growth, BKRLCC staff described it as the most significant period of development since the organisation's inception. Going forward, BKRLCC is well-positioned to continue its vital role in protecting at-risk languages, revitalising cultural knowledge and building meaningful Bininj employment pathways for the years ahead.

Right: Seraine Namundja recording Jill Nganjmirra telling the story of Ngalyod dja Namarladj (the rainbow serpent and the orphan)
Photo courtesy of BKRLCC



It was with great excitement that KKT made our first grant to our newest partner, the Bininj Kunwok Regional Language and Culture Centre. With a small but dedicated team now more effectively resourced, the organisation has been able to successfully enter a new and important phase of sustainable growth.



Protecting galleries of rock art

Partner: Warddeken
Spotlight project: Kuwarddebim Project

The Warddeken IPA is home to one of the world’s most extensive and significant rock art collections, with current estimates totalling over 40,000 individual sites. These kuwarddebim (rock art) galleries are the physical legacy of tens of thousands of years of Bininj stewardship of the Kuwarddewardde (Stone Country). They are the libraries of knowledge and law that reflect the belief systems still held and passed on today. However, these sites face significant and ongoing threats. Some of these are tangible, like wildfires and the impact of feral animals and invasive vegetation, whereas others are intangible, like reduced visitation from Traditional Owners and the subsequent loss of associated knowledge.

Warddeken’s Kuwarddebim Project was formally established in 2019 as a strategic response to these threats. The core team has a background in Bininj knowledge, archaeology and anthropology and are supported by rangers who work year-round to mitigate these risks that compromise the future of this invaluable body of cultural heritage. This includes erecting fences that prevent wild pigs, buffalo and cattle from rubbing up against known artworks, as well as conducting perimeter burns to reduce the likelihood of wildfire damaging the paintings. It also involves surveying each clan estate within the IPA to discover, document and reconnect with galleries. Ahead of these trips, the Kuwarddebim Project team always consults with the relevant Traditional Owners to gain both their full consent and guidance. Wherever possible, the Kuwarddebim Project also supports Traditional Owners to attend these survey trips. This provides a precious opportunity for Traditional Owners to reconnect with some of the most remote parts of the Warddeken IPA and to share and protect their invaluable living knowledge associated with kuwarddebim.



Above left: Jayden Wurrkidj, Kuwarddebim Project Officer, Photo courtesy of Warddeken

Above right: Daluk ranger, Lorina Maralngurra, documenting kuwarddebim (rock art) site
Photo by Rebecca Parker

‘Bim gives us knowledge’

Tinnesha Nabalwad, Kuwarddebim Project Officer

6
clan estates surveyed

22
kuwarddebim sites surveyed for the first time

37
kuwarddebim sites actively conserved

Left: Daluk rangers documenting kuwarddebim site
Photo by Rebecca Parker

This year, the Kuwarddebim Project facilitated surveys across six clan estates, resulting in the documentation of 16 new kuwarddebim sites. Following this, the Kuwarddebim Project team performed conservation assessments to determine the necessary future management actions. These assessments are routinely performed for known sites, too. At the start of the 2025 dry season, the Kuwarddebim Project team analysed the growth rate of a termite nest impacting a managed kuwarddebim site. This included measuring the rate of activity and the levels of current and future disturbance. Following a thorough consultation with Traditional Owners and key caretakers, the team decided the best outcome was to remove the termite nest to minimise the risk of any further damage, and to identify a chemical solution for future similar cases.

Other significant conservation actions included the installation of two major fences within the Bolmo clan estate, as well as the management of noxious weeds, including hyptis: a fast-growing weed that contributes to fuel build-up and therefore requires yearly spraying. In addition to this, cool, fine-scale burning was conducted around the perimeters of kuwarddebim sites across six clan estates, offering an important layer of protection against hopping wildfires.

KKT has sourced significant operational funding for the Kuwarddebim Project since it first began in 2019. Despite how essential this frontline conservation project is, particularly as Elders with living cultural knowledge continue to pass away earlier than they should, there are still no adequate, ongoing sources of government funding available to the Kuwarddebim Project. Therefore, the philanthropic funding KKT has and continues to secure is vital to the continued success of this work.

Supporting people on Country



Very remote outstations underpin the Indigenous ranger movement that is building across Australia. For this frontline work to continue, sustainable and equitable on-Country livelihoods are essential.

As the Indigenous ranger movement continues to grow, ranger bases increasingly function as hubs for community services and connection in remote and very remote First Nations communities. In West and Central Arnhem Land, outstations are central to both frontline climate and environmental action and the culture, health and identity of many First Nations peoples.

However, the reality of life in these very remote communities comes with a unique set of challenges that hinder efforts to live and work on Country on a full-time, permanent basis. Generally, infrastructure is limited, energy is variable and water supply can sometimes cut out for multiple weeks. Furthermore, services such as medical care, food stores and postal services are only accessible through expensive charter flights or long drives which rely on regularly serviced private vehicles.

To make matters more complicated, the environmental and climate conditions in this unique part of the world are highly variable: ephemeral rivers rise up and prohibit road access for many months, and even once subsided, roads require significant maintenance before they can be reopened. Meanwhile, the terrain itself is rugged and changeable, with temperatures and humidity becoming more severe and unpredictable with climate change.

For decades, government funding for remote infrastructure and services has been unreliable and dysfunctional, undermining the capacity for people to live and work on homelands. Without additional support, the potential for empty or 'orphaned' Country looms large. For Traditional Owners here, this is considered one of the most significant threats to healthy Country.

KKT provides funding for critical infrastructure, key services and regional workforce development that ensures Traditional Owners and their families are able to live on Country and undertake integral conservation work as safely and effectively as possible.

Left: Community members taking part in Mimal's Mibarr Songline Project
Photo by Renae Saxby

This year, the projects we have supported in this pillar include:

Connecting people to Country
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Tucker Plane
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Bidwern Butj Uni
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Developing remote ranger bases

Partner: Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation (ASRAC)
Spotlight project: Connecting people to Country

When the Arafura Swamp Rangers Aboriginal Corporation (ASRAC) was first established, the overwhelming majority of land management work occurred from the ranger base in Ramingining. This meant that much of the IPA—that stretches across 12,000 square kilometres of Country—was unable to be routinely managed and cared for by Traditional Owners and rangers. As the organisation grew, ASRAC’s membership identified the need to decentralise operations and to further develop the satellite ranger bases, enabling more people to return to live and work across their ancestral homelands. ASRAC’s Connecting people to Country Project is the organisation’s strategic approach to achieving this vision of more families living and working on Country year-round.

For the second year in a row, KKT supported a full-time senior ranger position at Malnyangarnak outstation: a once seasonal and now permanent base located in the west of the ASRAC IPA. This senior ranger now leads a team of casual staff who conduct critical land stewardship across a previously unmanaged region within the IPA, including feral flora and fauna management and planned, cool burning.

Similarly, KKT again supported a part-time, permanent ranger position at Dhupuwamirri outstation: a seasonal base located in the east of the ASRAC IPA. They now work alongside another permanent ranger whose position is funded by the federal government. Together, this combined allocation has facilitated the ongoing dedication of a vehicle that supports on-Country activities and enables families to be based on Country for longer periods of time, where children can grow up healthy and strong.

Overall, this sustained support contributed to ASRAC’s broader efforts to: build capacity across the satellite bases; increase the amount of the IPA that is under active Bi and Yolngu stewardship; create better environmental outcomes and provide greater access to on-Country livelihoods.

‘This land had so many children, but now they’re all spread out... Bit by bit we are coming back for a few days at a time. If we come back, then Country will return to health, because it needs the real people for this place. If we come back, Country will be healed by us, and we’ll be healed by Country.’

Peter Djigirr, ASRAC ranger



Below: ASRAC ranger vehicle
Photo by Stacey Irving



Despite the recent increase in federal government support for Indigenous Ranger Programs, this funding is still not meeting the aspirations of all ranger groups, particularly in very remote areas where ranger work is one of the only reliable and meaningful employment pathways. KKT is proud to have supplemented this funding, ensuring Traditional Owners’ ambition of more people living and working on Country can be realised.

Increasing food security

Partner: Warddeken
Spotlight project: Tucker Plane

Each year in the Kuwarddewardde (Stone Country) of West Arnhem Land, many of the roads and tracks are significantly compromised by the wet seasons of kunumeleng and kudjewk that bring with them immense rainfall and flooding. This means vehicle access is highly unreliable for the better part of six months on an annual basis. While there is bush tucker available that people actively pursue, communities at the permanent outstations of Kabulwarnamyo, Mamardawerre and Manmoyi are still without secure access to store-bought goods—something that is a given for the majority of Australia.

This systemic issue extends beyond the Warddeken IPA, with 51% of First Nations households in remote areas of Australia experiencing food insecurity. Those who face food insecurity are often forced to rely on cheaper, convenience foods which can be nutrient poor and calorie dense. This has significant impacts on rates of chronic disease and other measures of health and wellbeing. It also causes flow-on effects for workforce and educational participation and economic opportunities.

All of this is why Warddeken conceived of the Tucker Plane, to ensure Nawarddeken families could return to live and work on their ancestral lands without compromising their access to the healthy foods and other vital basic goods that complement the bush tucker they have harvested for tens of thousands of years.

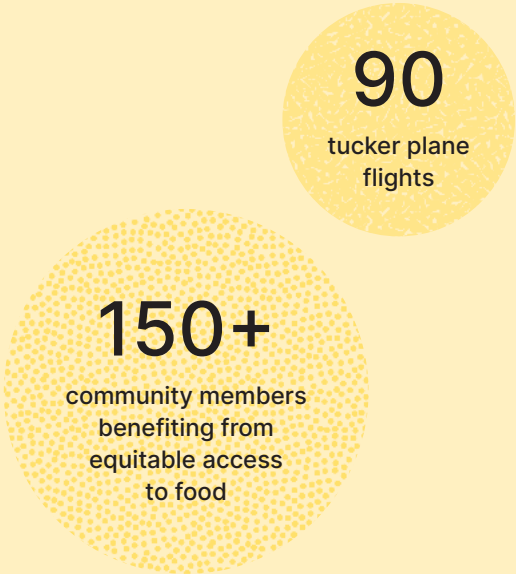
Over the past 12 months, the Tucker Plane has made over 90 food deliveries from Jabiru to these three very remote communities. Additionally, at Kabulwarnamyo, the most remote outstation within the Warddeken IPA, the Tucker Plane has also supported the community-owned Nabiwo Store: a permanent community store that is operated either by rangers or community members and supplements the fortnightly food orders with key dry goods. This kind of initiative ensures absolute community-control over what products are stocked and at what price.

The success of both Warddeken and the Nawarddeken Academy has led to increased and sustained populations at these formerly dwindling remote communities. This current and projected future growth now requires a new strategy for the Warddeken food security program. Whatever this looks like, the Tucker Plane will continue to be foundational to livelihoods at the ranger bases within the Warddeken IPA.

KKT provided funding for the Tucker Plane, subsidising the high cost of transporting food and other basic goods to three very remote communities—a service that underpins every element of life and work on Country in the Warddeken IPA.



Above: Kabulwarnamyo outstation
Photo by Adelaide Ford



Providing on-Country training opportunities

Partners: Warddeken and Mimal
Spotlight project: Bidwern Butj Uni

For many years, Traditional Owners, Elders and community leaders from West and Central Arnhem Land dreamed of an Aboriginal-owned, on-Country hub for adult learning. In 2024, this dream became a reality with the inception of the Bidwern Butj Uni (BBU): a community-controlled initiative, co-owned by Warddeken and Mimal, that supports bi-cultural training and professional development for rangers and others who work adjacent to the caring for Country sector.

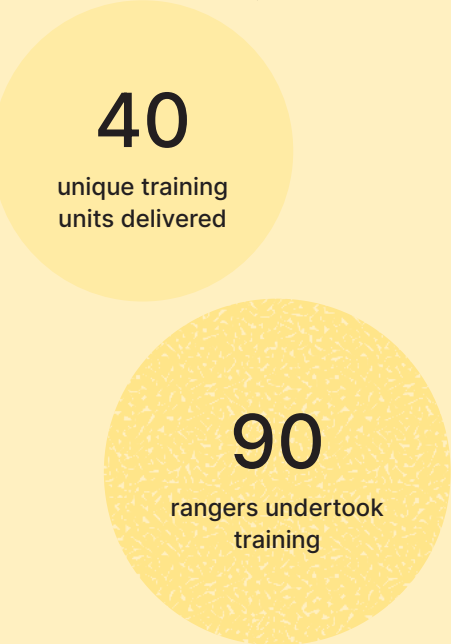
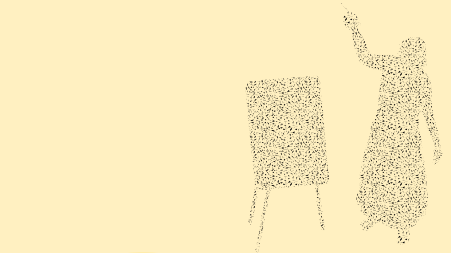
As the initiative has developed, ranger groups across West and Central Arnhem Land have had increasingly greater access to on-Country learning, facilitated in familiar and culturally safe settings. Over the past 12 months, the BBU has connected ranger groups with 40 training and professional development opportunities, ranging from one-off workshops to accredited courses.

The August 2024 Mapping Workshop with Winyama marked BBU's very first Training Camp, bringing together ranger teams from Warddeken, Mimal, Djelk, ASRAC, and Jawoyn for a landmark collaborative learning event. Held at Barrapunta, it was the first time multiple ranger groups participated together under the BBU banner, reflecting the program's commitment to regional bi-cultural capacity building. A total of 40 rangers joined the camp, where trainers from Winyama introduced practical QGIS mapping skills and digital data techniques tailored to land management. The hands-on format promoted peer learning, cross-group collaboration, and knowledge sharing. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and participants highlighted the value of working together and gaining digital skills that will support their ongoing work caring for Country. The camp established BBU as a convener of large-scale, multi-ranger professional development.

The BBU team also supported training opportunities at the 2025 Arnhem Land Fire Abatement Training Camp, hosted at Barnkey Waterfall in the Mimal IPA. The rangers in attendance represented Mimal, Warddeken, Djelk and Jawoyn. The broad focus areas were on-ground burning and fire scar gap-filling with some rangers completing nationally accredited units through rigorous practical development of field skills including: using backpack blowers to create functional firebreak lines; reading wind and weather conditions; utilising drop torches and mixing fuels. These are all essential for a well-prepared and truly locally-led approach to late season fire fighting.



Above: BBU graduation ceremony
Photo courtesy of Mimal



KKT secured the early, catalysing philanthropic investment that effectively enabled the establishment of the BBU. The recent award of SEE First Nations funding to support literacy and foundational skills marks an exciting milestone in diversifying BBU's financial base and expanding opportunities for on-Country learners. Continued and increased investment will be essential for ensuring BBU reaches its full potential as a community-driven adult education program.

Over the past 12 months, 90 rangers participated in the program, with 64 men and 26 women involved across all offerings. Notably, 43 men and 19 women completed more than one training unit, demonstrating deep engagement and ongoing professional development throughout the year. A total of 40 unique training units were delivered, encompassing both accredited qualifications and skill-building workshops. These ranged from 4WD licensing, remote first aid, and chainsaws, through to fire management and conservation. The breadth of units catered to a wide range of community needs and career pathways.

Finally, this year saw the exciting milestone of the first BBU training unit: "Survey and Maintenance 101", which is grounded in the rock art conservation methodologies that make up Warddeken's Kuwarddebim Project. This unit was piloted with senior Nawarddeken Academy students and was led by the Kuwarddebim Project's core team. The teaching began in the classroom, with students learning how to survey and document rock art galleries using iPads and colour bars. After this, they travelled to a nearby site where they were able to practise their new skills. They entered important data into Warddeken's database about the characteristics of the rock art, and then they cleared the perimeter of the site to protect it from late season wildfires. Overall, the delivery of this pilot unit marked a major moment in BBU's growth.



Above: Winyama mapping workshop at Barrapunta
Photo courtesy of BBU

Right: BBU graduation ceremony
Photo courtesy of Mimal



Educating future custodians



On-Country, bi-cultural education enables First Nations children and young people to learn from Elders and classroom teachers. This two-way approach supports the next generation to walk confidently in both worlds.

Across West and Central Arnhem Land, Elders reiterate time and time again that they want to see young ones growing up and being educated on Country, in both local Indigenous ecological knowledge and the Australian Curriculum.

In the Northern Territory there are over 30 operating Homeland Learning Centres: remote classrooms attached to a public school in a bigger community. Critically, there is no public record of student numbers, teaching ratios, educational outcomes or facilities associated with these schoolhouses. Consequently, they bear the brunt of the Northern Territory's systemic underfunding of public education and are sometimes frequented as little as once or twice a month by government teachers. Furthermore, prior to the realisation of self-determined solutions, there were outstations across West Arnhem Land that were without school entirely.

All of this unfairly places life and work on Country in direct opposition to full-time education for the next generation, creating an incredibly difficult situation for Traditional Owners dedicated to caring for their ancestral lands. Given this widespread lack of access to education, it is little surprise that the Northern Territory has the lowest proportion of students meeting the minimum standards for literacy and numeracy, and that only 40% of First Nations children are supported to finish high school.

Since 2015, KKT has supported the movement for bi-cultural, on-Country education for First Nations children in West and Central Arnhem Land. This began with the establishment of the Nawarddeken Academy, which now guarantees access to full-time, K-12 education at all three ranger outstations in the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). It then grew to include support for Mimal's Learning on Country Program, and the Homeland School Company in the Djelk IPA. Together with our partners, we are investing in the next generation of custodians.

Left: Learning on Country culture camp at Mount Catt
Photo courtesy of Mimal

This year, the projects we have supported in this pillar include:

Homeland schools for the Djelk IPA

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High school expansion

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Learning on Country (LoC) Program

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Growing the bi-cultural education movement

Partner: Homeland School Company (HSC)
Spotlight project: Homeland schools for the Djelk IPA

For the first time, the Nawarddeken Academy model is expanding beyond the Stone Country. Through the newly-formed Homeland School Company (HSC), Traditional Owners of the Djelk IPA are adopting an on-Country, bi-cultural approach that will similarly support children to learn on their homelands.

At most outstations within the Djelk IPA, state teachers only arrive a couple of times a week, and rarely for the full day. This has led to families moving between their ancestral homelands and the township of Maningrida to access consistent education. Overall, this has meant that children and young people are less able to sustain a connection with Country and families are forced to reckon with the deep complexities of life in a remote growth town.

To address this unacceptable standard, the HSC intends to register independent, bi-cultural schools at three homelands communities within the Djelk IPA, ensuring more families have access to full-time, on-Country education.

As an Aboriginal community-controlled organisation, the HSC is owned by members with an ancestral connection to the Djelk IPA. Since its establishment in 2023, the HSC has registered 150 members. By becoming a member, individuals can formally articulate their hopes for the schools. In addition to this, they can also nominate as a candidate for the HSC's Board of Directors. The successful registration of so many members is a testament to the hard work of the HSC's inaugural board and CEO in communicating the purpose and vision of the HSC to the wider community, and ensuring members can help shape its future.

This year, the HSC's most significant milestone was submitting their application to register three independent primary schools. The drafting process was highly extensive, involving strategic plans for each homeland and detailed school policies. At this stage, the Northern Territory Government has indicated that they will deliver an outcome by the beginning of 2026, which means the HSC is currently preparing to open the first school at Gamardi for Term 1. Importantly, once registration has been granted, the HSC will have access to ongoing federal funding.

This planned regional expansion is proof that this pioneering, on-Country education model can be scaled without compromising cultural integrity or local leadership—offering more children the chance to learn from their Elders on their homelands and to grow up strong in both worlds.

Philanthropic investment has been essential to the establishment of the HSC and remains a key priority for KKT as the organisation continues to develop. Early support will cover essential infrastructure upgrades, curriculum development, teacher salaries and classroom resources, until such a time that each school has secured its independent school registration and gained access to sustainable government funding.



‘By setting up independent schools on the homelands, we’re thinking about how our old people’s knowledge can be respected, and how we can teach the young ones on Country.’

Dale Pascoe,
Chair of Homeland School Company



Right: HSC members at 2024 AGM
Photo courtesy of HSC

Below: Gamardi schoolhouse, Djelk IPA
Photo courtesy of HSC



Teaching senior students on Country

Partner: Nawarddeken Academy
Spotlight project: High school expansion

The Nawarddeken Academy was born from the ambitions of Elders and their families who did not want to have to make the difficult decision between life and work on Country, and a full-time education for their wurdurd (children). The overwhelming success of the first independent school at Kabulwarnamyo inspired Traditional Owners and families living at the Manmoyi and Mamardawerre outstations to achieve the same for their communities. Subsequently, by 2021 the Nawarddeken Academy was delivering on-Country, bi-cultural K–7 education across all three permanent outstations.

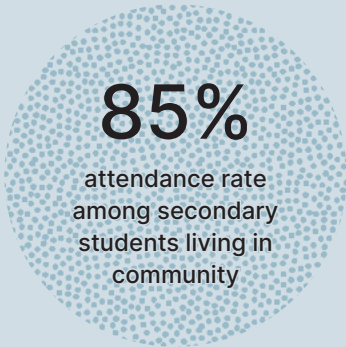
As the primary schools matured, attention turned to creating on-Country, two-way opportunities for senior students. Through philanthropic support, the Nawarddeken Academy began offering ungraded secondary education, ensuring every child could still come to school to learn and develop. However, senior students were still unable to formally graduate.

In 2024, the Nawarddeken Academy submitted an application to the Northern Territory Government to open an independent secondary school. This application was approved at the start of 2025, meaning that the Kunmayali (Knowledge) School was able to officially open its doors in time for Term 1, and now senior students can graduate on their homelands in the presence of their families and community.

This exciting milestone coincided with the completion of a new dual-purpose classroom at Mamardawerre, where early learners and families now spend their mornings, and where senior students spend their afternoons learning in a quiet space. The students have used this time to work on their first formal Year 11 subject called ‘Exploring Identities and Futures’, consulting families and Bininj teachers to create cultural profiles and timelines that reflect their past, present and future aspirations.

Ultimately, in just ten years, after decades of inadequate or entirely absent state provision of education, Elders and Traditional Owners have successfully secured self-determined, two-way K–12 education for wurdurd in the Kuwarddewardde (Stone Country).

Since 2015, KKT has deployed philanthropic funding to meet the critical start-up costs associated with the establishment of each Nawarddeken Academy school. This has demonstrated viability through to the first census date, after which time recurrent government funding has become available. This model ensures that philanthropic funding is being utilised when it is most effective: during the proof-of-concept phase.



‘This is a bush library, this is where you learn your knowledge.’

Ross Guymala,
Bininj teacher at Manmoyi

Left: Wurdurd (children) collecting kunkod (paperbark) for Manmoyi’s traditional shelter project
Photo courtesy of NAL

Sharing culture with the next generation

Partner: Mimal
Spotlight project: Learning on Country (LoC) Program

In 2019, Elders, Traditional Owners and senior leaders of Bulman–Weemol communities came together to devise a way for Bininj culture, languages and practices to be recognised and taught at the local government school, further safeguarding the safe passage of intergenerational knowledge. Their solution was the Mimal Learning on Country (LoC) Program: a collaborative, on-Country initiative between Mimal Land Management and Bulman School. Since then, the LoC Program has delivered weekly lessons to K–10 students, led by Elders and Mimal rangers and designed by senior cultural leaders.

This year, a total of 83 LoC lessons took place. Senior men taught spearmaking, while senior women ran harvesting trips for traditional materials and held weaving circles. Students were also taught how to make gumnut jewellery and paperbark boats, and there was a strong focus on sharing and documenting the at-risk Dalabon language.

Meanwhile, rangers led lessons that corresponded with important, seasonal land management activities like fencing, weed management and fine-scale burning. The LoC Program was also focused on senior students developing life skills that will support them to walk confidently in both worlds. This included work experience opportunities related to mechanics, hairdressing, driving and plumbing.

In addition to lessons, the LoC Program also facilitated three multi-day camps. The first was a trip to Wongalara Wildlife Sanctuary on Arnhem Land’s southern edge, where students learned about both traditional and scientific ways of measuring the health of flora and fauna. The second camp saw a group travel to Ramingining in the ASRAC IPA to learn about bushtucker harvest on saltwater Country, and the third camp was a community-wide event at Mt Catt outstation where Traditional Owners, Elders, rangers and students came together to share Bininj knowledge.

One of the stand-out moments for the year took place at the National Indigenous Music Awards, when the LoC Program and Bulman School won an award for their original song ‘Nidjarra’. Elders, teachers and students travelled to Darwin to accept the award in person, bringing immense pride to the Bulman–Weemol communities.

Unlike similar programs, Mimal’s LoC Program remains ineligible for government funding due to its size. While Mimal continues to advocate for access to ongoing government support, KKT remains really proud to fund this integral community resource, ensuring children are wholly engaged in the intergenerational transfer of traditional knowledge.

Below: LoC students gathered around seasonal calendar with Elder Elizabeth Lawrence
Photo courtesy of Mimal





Nawarddeken Academy students
at Mamardawerre outstation
Photo by Rebecca Parker

Partner insight

Nawarddeken Academy



Ten years ago, the first seeds of the Nawarddeken Academy were planted at Kabulwarnamyo. Elders and Traditional Owners held a bold vision of a community-owned school that would support and sustain the growing Warddeken ranger program that was bringing more and more Bininj back to Country. At that time, children of rangers living at Kabulwarnamyo had to move away from home to access full-time education. However, this changed in 2015, when we opened our first school. The classroom was simple: native cypress poles, a tarpaulin roof, desks set out under shade. Yet, it marked something extraordinary—the beginning of full-time, on-Country schooling and the start of a new chapter for life in the Kuwarddewardde.

Since then, we have been on a storied journey of securing bi-cultural, on-Country education for every child in the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). We have successfully opened and registered three primary schools; designed a two-way, place-based curriculum that follows the rhythm of the seasons; established an Early Learning Program at all three permanent outstations; and most recently, registered an on-Country secondary school.

For each of these significant milestones, the catalysing force was philanthropic funding sourced by KKT. Their ongoing investment in community ambitions effectively funded the critical start-up costs, including: community consultations; registration and compliance processes; infrastructure builds and upgrades; and salaries for teachers. In most instances, this comprehensive support was generally required for the first 12 months of operations, enabling each school to demonstrate viability through to the first census date, after which time recurrent government funding became available.

Since the successful registration of the Kabulwarnamyo primary school in 2018, the Mamardawerre and Manmoyi primary schools in 2021, and the Kunmayali (Knowledge) secondary school in 2025, government funding has sufficiently covered core costs, including staffing, teaching resources, and day-to-day expenses. However, gaps still exist. Federal allocation does not cover essential ongoing updates to on-Country infrastructure or other programs and resources that underpin the Nawarddeken Academy's two-way approach. We also still wholly rely on philanthropic funding to run our Early Learning Program. All of this and more is why our partnership with KKT remains critical to the Nawarddeken Academy's ongoing success and ability to deliver high-quality and truly bi-cultural education.

Ultimately, the past decade has brought transformative change to the educational and socioeconomic landscape of the Warddeken IPA. Elders and Traditional Owners have achieved self-determined, two-way education for every child and young person in the Kuwarddewardde. The long-held dream of the next generation walking confidently in both worlds is now a reality.

The Nawarddeken Academy's vision for the next chapter is equally ambitious and deeply connected to Country. Our priorities include establishing a Learning on Country Program; securing recurrent government funding for our Early Learning Program; constructing a purpose-built, climate-resilient facility at Kabulwarnamyo to provide a safe, comfortable, and inspiring long-term space for education; and developing a structured leadership development program to foster Bininj succession as principals, education managers, coordinators and teachers. These plans are possible on account of the hybrid funding model the Nawarddeken Academy has access to through our valued and highly successful partnership with KKT. Together, we will build on the past decade's achievements and ensure that the Nawarddeken Academy's impact continues for generations to come.

Conrad Maralngurra, Chair and Olga Scholes, CEO
October 2025

Left: Nawarddeken Academy families
Photo by Stacey Irving

'Our partnership with KKT remains critical to the Nawarddeken Academy's ongoing success and ability to deliver high-quality and truly bi-cultural education.'

Thank you



Above: Black-faced cuckooshrike in the Warddeken IPA
Photo by Stacey Irving

'I've been with Warddeken since day one. I remember KKT being developed.

Before then, a lot of people weren't living on Country, but the funding KKT has found for partner organisations across West and Central Arnhem Land is definitely supporting more people to go back to Country to live and work.

Bi-cultural schools have been developed, ranger programs have grown and partner organisations have become stronger.

Without KKT donors, this wouldn't have happened, so we really appreciate their support.'

Fred Hunter, Traditional Owner of upper regions of the East Alligator River, Director of Warddeken and KKT

Supporters for the 2025 financial year include:

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Anna Josephson & Rickard Gardell	The Digger & Shirley Martin Environment Fund	Justin & Sally O'Day	Reece Foundation
	Emma & Dominic Stevens	Kingsley & Ros Allen	Richard & Diana Herring
Australia Post	Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal	Lawrence Acland Foundation	Rick & Elizabeth Tudor
Broomhead Family Foundation	Graeme Wood Foundation	Luke & Alicia Parker	Sally Guyatt & Andrew Barkla
Clare Murphy Fund	Gras Foundation	Macquarie Group Foundation	Sunglass Fix
Coco Mandorla, Peter Orlay & Morgan Mandorla	Green Family Foundation	Mary Hill	Vicki Olsson
Culture Amp Foundation	The Humanity Foundation	Dr Michael Lawless & Mrs Alison Watts-Lawless	Victoria Lane

Our deep thanks also go out to everyone not listed who made a donation in support of Country, culture and community.

Thank you to our founders	Thank you to our in-kind supporters
Warddeken Land Management Limited	Country Road
Bawinanga Aboriginal Corporation	Design by Nature
Jan & Peter Cooke AM	ELK
The Nature Conservancy	Mecca
The PEW Environment Group	The Hub
	White & Case



Women rangers at 2024 SWHC Forum
Photo by Milly Hooper

Right: Red-tailed black cockatoos
in West Arnhem Land
Photo by Stacey Irving

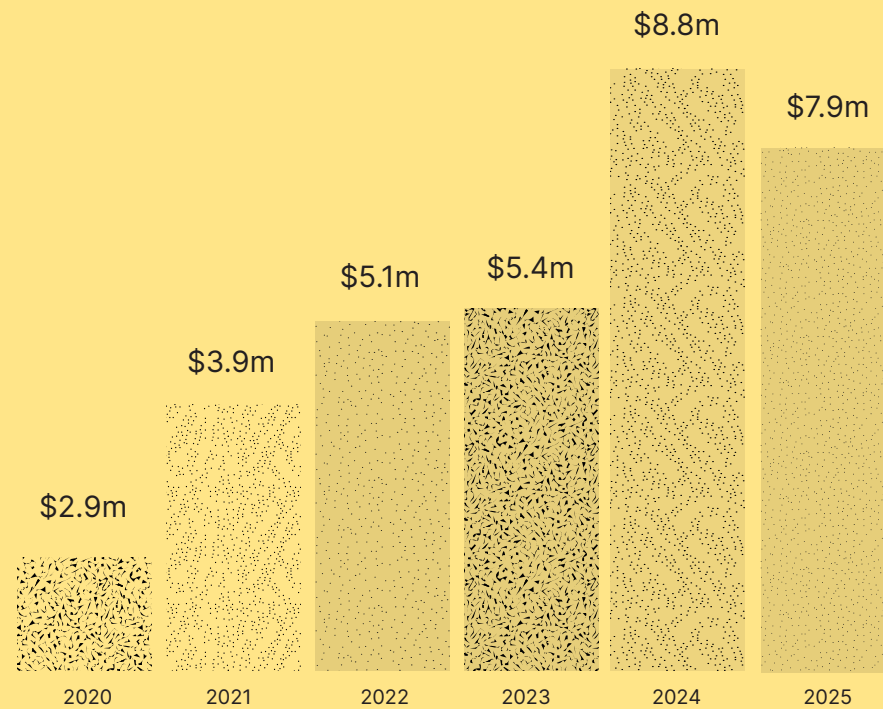
2025 financial report



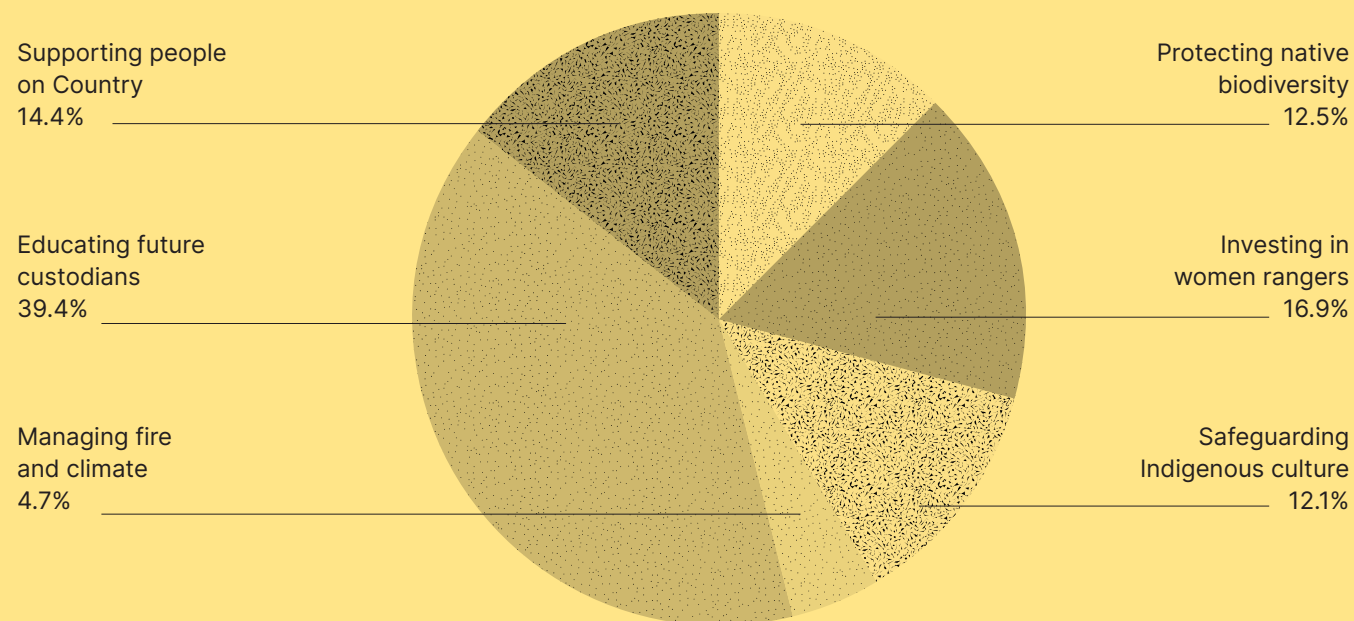
As we grow as an organisation, so does our impact.
We are connecting more funding with Aboriginal
community-controlled organisations than ever before.

Total income

Thanks to our supporters
our 2025 financial year
income was \$7.9 million.



Allocation of KKT grants made



Directors' Report

In respect of the financial year ended 30 June 2025, the Directors of the trustee company of the Karrkad-Kanjddji Trust (the Trust) submit the following report, made out in accordance with a resolution of the Directors:

Directors of the trustee company

The names of Directors of the company in office at the date of this report are: Dean Yibarbuk (Co-Chair), Justin Punch (Co-Chair), Emeritus Professor Jon Altman, Margie Moroney, Frederick Hunter, John Dalywater, Teya Dusseldorp, Cindy Jinmarabynana, Otto Campion.

Principal activities

Create a sustainable financial model that will assist funding of Indigenous ranger groups and land owners to protect and manage the natural and cultural environment of West and Central Arnhem Land.

Trading results

An operating deficit of \$1,038,752 was recorded for the year (2024: \$1,171,809 surplus).

Significant changes in the state of affairs

There were no significant changes not otherwise noted in the state of affairs of the Trust during the year.

Events subsequent to balance date

Since the end of the financial year the Directors are not aware of any matter or circumstances not otherwise noted within the report that have significantly affected the operations of the Trust, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Trust in subsequent financial years.

Likely developments

At present, no developments are planned which would significantly affect the operations or results of the Trust.

Directors benefits

No Director of the company has, since the end of the previous financial year, received or become entitled to receive a benefit (other than a benefit included in the total amount of emoluments received or due and receivable by Directors shown in the accounts) by reason of a contract made by the company as trustee of the Trust with a controlling entity or a related body corporate of a Director or with a firm of which a Director is a member, or with an entity in which a Director has a substantial financial investment.

Independence

A copy of the auditor's independence declaration as required under section 307C of the *Corporations Act 2001* is set out on page 66.

Signed at Sydney and Melbourne this 30th day of September 2025

Justin Rand

Justin Punch
Director

Jan Call

Jon Altman
Director

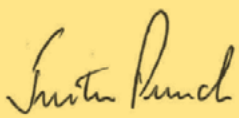
Directors’ Declaration

In the opinion of the Directors:

- a) The Directors of Karrkad-Kanjdji Ltd as trustee for the Karrkad-Kanjdji Trust (the Trust) have determined that the Trust is not a reporting entity and that the special purpose financial statements are appropriate to meet the information needs of members and users of the financial statements. The special purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with note 1 to the financial statements.
- b) The accompanying Statement of Financial Performance has been prepared so as to give a true and fair view of the results of the Trust for the year ended 30 June 2025.
- c) The accompanying Statement of Financial Position is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Trust as at 30 June 2025.
- d) At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Trust will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.
- e) The accompanying financial statements have been made out in accordance with the provisions of the *Corporations Act 2001* and laws and give a true and fair view of the matters with which they deal.
- f) The special purpose financial report complies with all of the mandatory Australian Accounting Standards and reporting requirements under the *Corporations Act 2001*.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors

Signed at Sydney and Melbourne this 30th day of September 2025



Justin Punch
Director

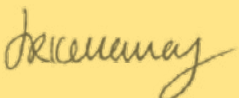


Jon Altman
Director

Independence Declaration

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in relation to the audit for the financial year ended 30 June 2025 there have been:

- a) no contraventions of the auditor independence as set out in the *Corporations Act 2001* in relation to the audit; and
- b) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



Jessica Kellaway, Partner
CA, CPA, Registered Company Auditor
30/09/2025

Statement of Financial Performance

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025(\$)	2024(\$)
Ordinary income		
Donations — projects & untied	3,706,956	4,187,630
Donations — KKT operations	512,074	841,712
Grants — projects & untied	3,060,591	3,178,974
Grants — KKT operations	460,324	368,399
Investment income	206,734	199,498
Other income	1,250	1,916
Total ordinary income	7,947,929	8,778,129
Expenses		
Advertising	5,315	814
Audit fees	4,700	4,600
Bank charges	3,257	3,928
Board expenses	93,108	65,444
Camping gear	206	3,140
Computer & internet	21,740	20,709
Consultants & contractors	55,109	9,640
Depreciation	10,228	11,189
Dues & subscriptions	6,088	6,581
Event expenses	50,309	77,259
Grants	7,422,863	6,366,479
Insurances	33,038	21,606
Investment management fees	14,234	10,447
Minor equipment	4,840	4,316
Office expenses	4,157	3,457
Printing	16,815	22,816
Professional development	4,848	12,486
Rent	85,822	69,493
Telephone	1,491	1,116
Travel expenses	151,726	108,658
Salaries & wages	891,297	698,270
Superannuation	97,359	76,091
Sundry expenses	8,131	7,781
Total expenses	8,986,681	7,606,320
Net operating surplus/(deficit) *	(1,038,752)	1,171,809
Non-operating items		
Unrealised gains on investments	74,358	24,790
Net total surplus/(deficit)	(964,394)	1,196,599

*The vast majority of Karrkad-Kanjdji Trust funding is gifted at the end of the financial year, and allocated to our partners for deployment in the following financial year. Refer to Note 3—Committed funds for more detail.

Auditor’s Independence Declaration

To the Directors of Karrkad-Kanjdji Ltd.

This auditor's independence declaration has been provided pursuant to s307 of the *Corporations Act 2001*.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2025

		Note	2025(\$)	2024(\$)
Assets	Current assets			
	Cash at bank - Operating Accounts	2a	2,191,244	1,381,005
	Cash at bank - Public Fund	2b	2,649,448	5,197,452
	Contingency Fund	2c	545,265	518,826
	Stripe Donations Account	2d	1,521	9,993
	Trade receivables		149,160	169,884
	Net GST receivable		22,220	82,957
	Prepayments		18,034	-
	Other current assets		8,489	59,242
	Total current assets		5,585,381	7,419,359
	Non-current assets			
	Plant & equipment	4	42,987	8,815
	Intangible assets	5	6,119	12,785
	Endowment Fund	6	1,589,743	1,237,264
	Total non-current assets		1,638,849	1,258,864
	Total assets		7,224,230	8,678,223
Liabilities	Current liabilities			
	Trade payables & accrued expenses		52,467	593,021
	Other payables		59,420	48,040
	Provision for annual leave		64,413	39,080
	Provision for long service leave		27,244	-
	Total current liabilities		203,544	680,141
	Non-current liabilities			
	Provision for long service leave		7,310	20,312
	Total non-current liabilities		7,310	20,312
	Total liabilities		210,854	700,453
	Net assets		7,013,376	7,977,770
	Equity			
	Committed & allocated funds*	3	5,580,829	7,342,703
	Retained earnings		1,344,319	621,197
	Investment revaluation reserve		88,228	13,870
	Total equity		7,013,376	7,977,770

* A significant portion of Karrkad-Kanjdji Trust's equity as at 30 June 2025 is represented by cash and cash equivalents that are tied to projects, FY2026 operational expenditure and committed for future use by the trust. Project commitments as at 30 June 2025 are displayed in Note 3.

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the year ended 30 June 2025

*Retained Earnings includes movements in Committed and Allocated Funds

	Investment revaluation reserve (\$)	Retained Earnings* (\$)	Total (\$)
Balance of Equity as at 1 July 2023	(10,920)	6,792,091	6,781,171
Revaluation of investments	24,790	-	24,790
Operating Surplus for the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024	-	1,171,809	1,171,809
Balance of Equity as at 1 July 2024	13,870	7,963,900	7,977,770
Revaluation of investments	74,358	-	74,358
Operating Deficit for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025	-	(1,038,752)	(1,038,752)
Balance of Equity as at 30 June 2025	88,228	6,925,148	7,013,376

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025(\$)	2024(\$)
Cash flows from operating activities		
Cash inflows:		
Operating receipts	8,523,652	9,323,252
Interest receipts	165,626	169,686
Cash generated from operations	8,689,278	9,492,938
Cash outflows:		
Payments to suppliers & employees	(1,552,222)	(1,188,512)
Payments for grants	(8,605,369)	(6,465,227)
Cash used in operations	(10,157,591)	(7,653,739)
Net cash generated from/(used in) operating activities	(1,468,313)	1,839,199
Cash flows from investing activities		
Cash outflows:		
Purchase of plant & equipment	(1,485)	(4,235)
Purchase of investments	(250,000)	-
Cash used in investing activities	(251,485)	(4,235)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	(1,719,798)	1,834,964
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	7,107,276	5,272,312
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	5,387,478	7,107,276

Notes to the Financial Statements

Note 1

Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001* and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. The financial report has been prepared on a consolidated basis consisting of two entities, The Karrkad-Kanjndji Trust, ABN 98 502 331 587 (the Trust); and Karrkad-Kanjndji Limited, ABN 69 139 324 557 (the Company). The Company exists solely for the purpose of acting as trustee of the Trust and receives donations and grants into the gift bank account it operates. Revenue received is then transferred to the Trust for use in its charitable activities.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the mandatory Australian Accounting Standards applicable to entities reporting under the *Corporations Act 2001* and the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The accounting policies that have been adopted in the preparation of the statements are as follows:

- a) Cash and Cash Equivalents
Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.
- b) Trade Debtors and Other Receivables
Trade receivables are recognised and carried forward at invoice amount including any applicable GST.
- c) Investments
All investments are measured at market value. Unrealised movements in market value are recognised as non-operating gains or losses in the Statement of Financial Performance and accumulated in the Investments revaluation reserve account in Equity.
- d) Trade and Other Payables
Liabilities for trade creditors and other amounts are carried at cost, which is the fair value of the consideration to be paid in the future for goods and services rendered including any applicable GST.
- e) Revenue Recognition
Revenue is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the association and the revenue can be reliably measured.

Grants and donations are recognised in accordance with AASB1058: *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*.

- f) Employee Liabilities
These liabilities accrue for staff as a result of services provided up to the reporting date that remain unpaid or for entitlements unused.
- g) Income Tax
The company is exempt from paying income tax due to it being a not for profit entity under s50-5 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.
- h) Comparatives
Where necessary, comparatives have been reclassified and repositioned for consistency with current year disclosures.
- i) Contingent assets and liabilities
There have been no events which meet the definition of an event as per AASB 110 Para 3. There are no contingent assets, contingent liabilities or any obligations as per AASB 137 Para 10.
- j) Goods and Services Tax (GST)
The company is registered for GST. All revenue and expense amounts are stated as exclusive of GST.

<u>Note 2</u> <u>Cash and Cash</u> <u>Equivalents</u>	2025 (\$)	2024 (\$)
Note 2a Operating Funds		
Operating Account	2,137,771	1,312,016
Day to Day Account	53,473	68,989
Total Operating Funds	2,191,244	1,381,005
Note 2b Public Fund		
Gift Account	2,649,448	5,197,452
Total Public Fund	2,649,448	5,197,452
Note 2c Contingency Fund		
Contingency Fund	545,265	518,826
Total Contingency Fund	545,265	518,826
Note 2d Stripe Donations		
Stripe Donations Account	1,521	9,993
Total Stripe Donations	1,521	9,993
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	5,387,478	7,107,276

<u>Note 3</u> <u>Committed Funds</u>	2025 (\$)	2024 (\$)
Project Commitments		
Endowment Fund	1,589,743	1,237,264
Protecting native biodiversity	49,466	287,568
Managing fire and climate	93,500	269,035
Educating future custodians	1,903,803	2,626,228
Investing in women	550,158	904,426
Safeguarding Indigenous culture	101,450	337,340
Supporting people on Country	20,000	-
	4,308,120	5,661,861
Allocated Funds		
KKT Operations FY2026	266,691	122,593
KKT Contingency	545,265	518,826
KKT Project Development Fee	460,753	1,039,423
	1,272,709	1,680,842
Total funds held available for future use as at 30 June	5,580,829	7,342,703

<u>Note 4</u> <u>Plant and Equipment</u>	2025 (\$)	2024 (\$)
Computer equipment	48,537	14,005
Accumulated depreciation	(11,000)	(10,345)
	37,537	3,660
Furniture and fixtures	703	703
Accumulated depreciation	(416)	(346)
	287	357
Plant and Equipment	7,084	5,599
Accumulated depreciation	(1,921)	(801)
	5,163	4,798
Total plant and equipment	56,324	20,307
Total accumulated depreciation	(13,337)	(11,492)
Written down value	42,987	8,815

<u>Note 5</u> <u>Intangible Assets</u>	2025 (\$)	2024 (\$)
Website	20,000	20,000
Accumulated amortisation	(13,881)	(7,215)
Written down value	6,119	12,785

<u>Note 6</u> <u>Endowment Fund</u>	2025 (\$)	2024 (\$)
Opening balance at market value	1,237,264	1,194,094
Contributions	250,000	-
Reinvestment of net income earned	28,121	17,910
Movement in market values—realised and unrealised	74,358	25,260
Closing balance at market value	1,589,743	1,237,264

Note 7
Segment Note
—Public Fund

Segment Statement of Financial Performance for the year ended 30 June 2025

In accordance with the Karrkad-Kanjdji Trust Deed of Trust, Karrkad-Kanjdji Trust maintains a Public Fund. Income and expenditure related to actities of the Public Fund are detailed below.

	Public Fund	Other	Total
Ordinary income			
Grant income	-	3,520,915	3,520,915
Interest and investment income	136,896	69,838	206,734
Donations	4,075,045	143,985	4,219,030
Other income	-	1,250	1,250
Total ordinary income	4,211,942	3,735,987	7,947,929
Expenses			
Grants	5,079,889	2,342,974	7,422,863
Operations	1,430,057	133,761	1,563,818
Total expenses	6,509,946	2,476,735	8,986,681
Net operating surplus/(deficit)			
	(2,298,004)	1,259,252	(1,038,752)
Non-operating items			
Unrealised gain on investments	-	74,358	74,358
Total net surplus/(deficit)	(2,298,004)	1,333,610	(964,394)

Note 8
Related Parties and
Key Management
Personel

Key management personel comprise the Chief Executive Officer and Directors and Committee members of the Company.

Other related parties include close family members of key management personnel, and entities that are controlled or jointly controlled by those key management personnel individually or collectively with their close family members.

During the year ended 30 June 2025 Karrkad-Kanjdji Trust entered into no contracts with related parties (2024: \$nil).

Independent
Auditor's Report

Report on the Financial Report

To the Directors of Karrkad Kanjdji Trust

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of *Karrkad Kanjdji Trust*, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the statement of financial performance for the year then ended, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the director's declaration.

In our opinion, the financial report of Karrkad Kanjdji Trust, in all material respects, for the period 1st July 2024 to 30th June 2025 is in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001 and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- a) giving a true and fair view of the Trust's financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1; and
- b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards and to the extent described in Note 1, the Corporations Regulations 2001 and Division 60 the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2022.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Trust in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution and Use

Without modifying our opinion expressed above, we draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the directors' financial reporting responsibilities under the *Corporations Act 2001* and for the purpose of fulfilling the entity's financial reporting responsibilities under the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Responsibility of Directors for the Financial Report

The Directors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report, and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the reporting requirements and needs of the Trust. The Directors responsibility also includes such internal control the Directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the Directors are responsible for assessing the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Trust or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Directors are responsible for overseeing the Trust's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Trust's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Trust's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Trust to cease to continue as a going concern.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

GALPINS ACCOUNTANTS, AUDITORS & BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

Женщины

Jessica Kellaway, Partner
CA, CPA, Registered Company Auditor
30/09/2025



Wudurd (children) with
kuwarddebim (rock art)
Photo by Sam Harris

Supporter insight

Aesop Foundation



Above: Aesop staff members and other KKT donors visiting Dr Dean Yibarbuk's Country in West Arnhem Land

Aesop and the Aesop Foundation have been supporting KKT's work since 2018. We are united by a shared strategic ambition to support Indigenous communities in Arnhem Land, to protect nature, culture and language by supporting rangers, education and traditional land care practices.

Our partnership has gone from strength to strength, initially with tied funding which developed into unrestricted grants, based on mutual trust. Our trust is grounded in consistent year-on-year growth and development. From 2018 to 2022, the Aesop Foundation supported KKT, Warddeken Land Management and the Nawarddeken Academy to preserve the endangered Kunwinjku language, safeguard cultural knowledge and improve first and second language literacy in West Arnhem Land.

Initial funding enabled the creation and distribution of five bilingual books and audio resources for 3,200 Kunwinjku speakers to access. This work evolved into developing the Nawarddeken Academy's community-designed Indigenous Language and Culture Curriculum (ILC); producing a wide range of bilingual print and digital resources; training Elders, Traditional Owners and rangers in cultural documentation technology; and fostering stronger intergenerational knowledge exchange.

From 2021 to 2022, this work expanded from Kabulwarnamyo to Manmoyi and Mamardawerre, delivering 20 new language resources, workshops and a multi-school ILC framework, significantly increasing access to culturally relevant education across the Warddeken Indigenous Protected Area.

In 2022, based on the impactful results and excellent reporting, we began to make untied grants. These unrestricted donations allow KKT to use the funding wherever and whenever they need it. This is a reflection of trust-based philanthropy which is at the heart of Aesop Foundation's values.

A memorable moment in our partnership came when Aesopians spent time on Country with Traditional Owners and community leaders. Seeing KKT's work firsthand offered a deeper understanding of its impact and strengthened our connection to the communities we support—an experience both humbling and deeply enriching.

Over the seven years, our partnership has flourished, we have made grants of more than \$1 million to help protect Indigenous knowledge, land and language in Arnhem Land. We deeply admire the dedicated team we work with at KKT. Their commitment to community-led impact and cultural integrity is reflected in thriving programmes, which we are proud to support.

Jules Chalmers
Head of Social Impact
September 2025

'Our partnership has gone from strength to strength, initially with tied funding which developed into unrestricted grants, based on mutual trust.'

Looking ahead

Our partners’ upcoming priorities

Decentralising ranger programs

Enabling Traditional Owners and rangers to live and work on their ancestral lands in some of the most remote parts of West and Central Arnhem Land by improving infrastructure and access to seasonal outstations. This shift will strengthen local cultural authority, support more fine-scale fire management and bolster place-based decision-making.



Investing in youth

Supporting the creation of on-Country pathways for the next generation of rangers by purposefully linking a decade of bi-cultural education with local ranger programs. This bridge between senior students and ranger programs will further ensure ecological knowledge is passed down from Elders, while also equipping young people with the skills and opportunities to thrive.



Preparing for nature markets

Identifying market-based approaches that align with Traditional Owners’ cultural and environmental aspirations. This feasibility stage will involve the development of methods for biodiversity markets that will guarantee sustainable and high-integrity future revenue sources for ranger groups, supporting livelihoods and the ongoing management and protection of Country.



Above: Rosemary Nambulwad,
Director of Warddeken and
senior ranger
Photo by Rebecca Parker

An invitation to you

The foundations of Indigenous land management across Arnhem Land are secure and strong. What comes next depends on the depth and longevity of your collective commitment and allyship. With sustained philanthropic support, Arnhem Land’s most remote and precious places will remain under the careful and expert stewardship of Traditional Owners; skilled rangers will continue to advance their professional careers; and young people will be supported to grow into the next generation of leaders within their communities.



Interested in supporting the work of our partners?

1. Get in touch to learn more

Our staff love catching up with KKT supporters, whether it be over the phone or over a cuppa. Get in touch to organise a time to connect via mail@kkt.org.au

2. Share this story

Know someone who might be just as inspired by this work as you are? Why not share this report with them or scan the QR code to send a digital version.

3. Directly support the work

You can make a contribution (big or small) that will bolster the strength of Indigenous land management across West and Central Arnhem Land.



Access the digital version of this report here

Above: Chantelle Miller, Director of Strong Women for Healthy Country Aboriginal Corporation
Photo by Milly Hooper

Common terms

In this report there are some terms from dialects in the Bininj Kunwok ('Bin-iny goon-wok') language group traditionally spoken in West Arnhem Land.

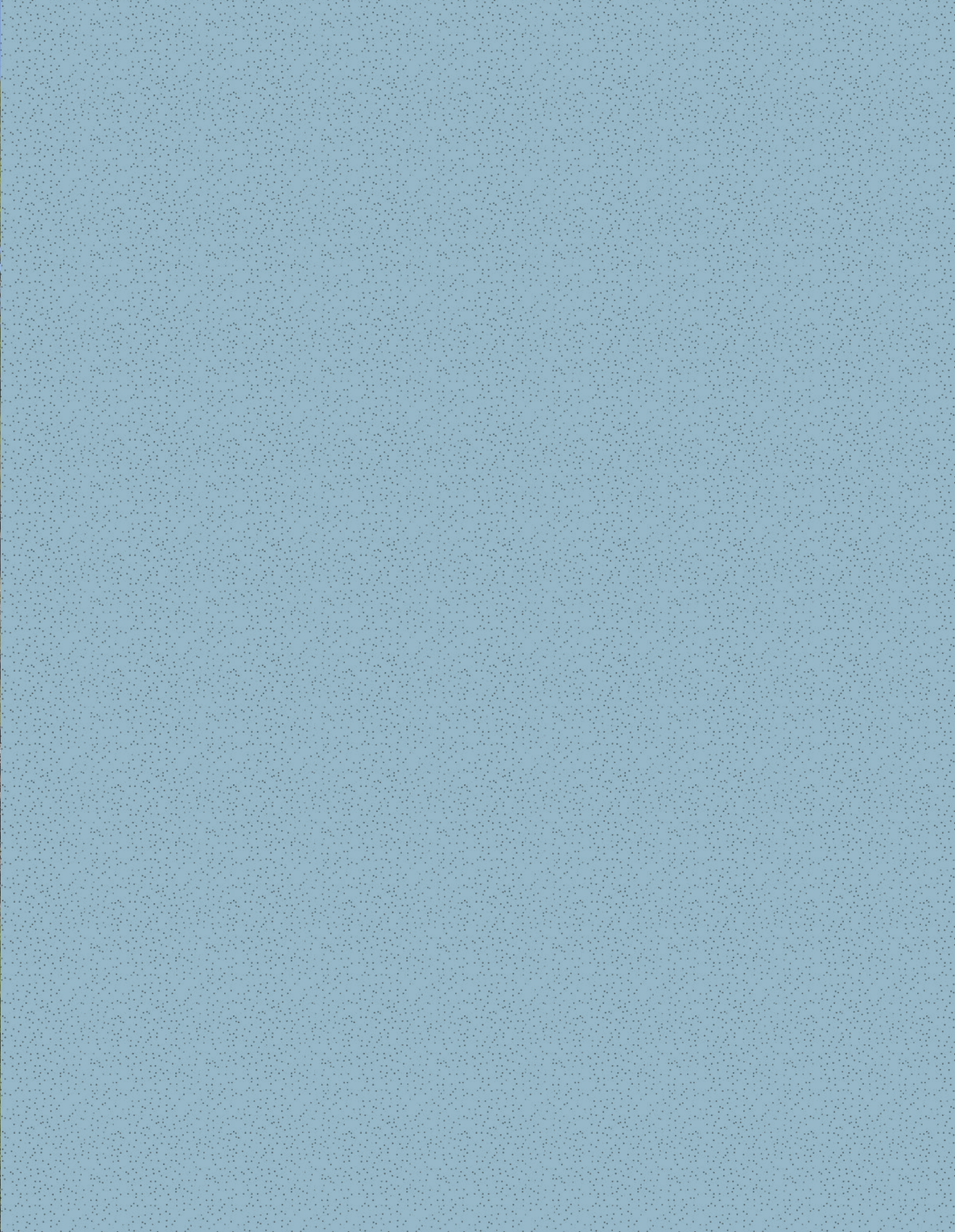
Anbinik ('Un-bin-ick'):	Endemic and culturally significant proto-eucalypt tree species with the scientific name <i>Allosyncarpia ternata</i>
Balabbala ('Ba-la-ba-la'):	Shelter; Platform
Balanda ('Ba-lun-da'):	Europeans; Person of non-Aboriginal descent
Bininj ('Bin-iny'):	Indigenous person or people from West and Central Arnhem Land; Man; Male
Daluk ('Dah-look'):	Woman; Wife; Female
Djungkay ('Jhoong-gai'):	Ritual managers who have inherited cultural and ceremonial responsibilities for Country
Kanjdji ('Gun-gee'):	Below; Downstream; Lowlands
Karrkad ('Gada-gut'):	Higher ground; Above the escarpment
Kunmayali ('Goon-my-ah-lee'):	Knowledge
Kuwarddebim ('Goon-wahr-day-bim'):	Rock art
Kuwarddewardde ('Goon-wahr-day-wahr-day'):	Stone Country of the West Arnhem escarpment
Mayh ('My'):	Animal
Wurdurd ('Woor-doord'):	Children
Yirlinkirrkirr ('Yilin-gir-gir'):	White-throated grasswren with the scientific name <i>Amytornis woodwardi</i>

Other key terms

Bi ('Bee'):	People of north-east Arnhem Land who speak Rembarnga
Yolngu ('Yoll-noo'):	Indigenous person or people of East Arnhem Land



Stone Country of West Arnhem Land
Photo by Rebecca Parker



For the protection and management
of the natural and cultural environment
of West and Central Arnhem Land.

kkt.org.au
mail@kkt.org.au

Karrkad Kanjdji Trust
Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Country
Level 2, 696 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000



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