

A photograph of a river at sunset. The sky is a mix of purple and orange, with the sun low on the horizon. Tall, thin trees line the banks, their silhouettes and reflections clearly visible in the calm water. The foreground shows some fallen branches and debris along the riverbank.

Maluk Mangga Dyerri Malukmia Dyarrima

2017–2037 | 2026 Review

Growing What Is Good Dya (Country) Plan

Voices of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali,
Wergaia and Jupagulk Guli (Peoples)

Maluk mangga dyerri, malukmia dyarrima (pronounced *Ma-luk man-gga dye-rri, ma-luk-mia dya-rri-ma*) translates to “Seeds from long, long ago, planted for the future” – honouring the knowledge, stories and responsibilities passed down by Ancestors, and the collective commitment to carry them forward for future generations.



Acknowledgements

Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Guli (Peoples), known collectively as Wotjobaluk Nations, first came together in 2017 through family meetings and regional forums to talk about what we want for Guli (Community) and Dya (Country).



As part of this 2026 Dya (Country) Plan Review, we have revisited that work to reflect on progress, consider what has changed and identify future priorities. However, the words and visions shared in 2017 continue to guide the direction of this reviewed plan.

As part of the 2026 review process, the Wotjobaluk Nations came together to talk about the original plan, share updates and contribute ideas for the next stage of caring for Guli (Community), Limuk (Culture) and Dya (Country).

We thank all Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) who have shared their knowledge, ideas, photos, artwork and stories, both in the original plan and in this review process, bringing this reviewed plan to life.

This 2026 Wotjobaluk Nations Dya (Country) Plan Review was developed by the Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (BGLC) on behalf of Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Guli (Peoples) with funding support from the Victorian Government through the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

It builds on the original 2017 Wotjobaluk Nations Growing What is Good Dya (Country) Plan which was developed with financial support from the Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and Native Title Services Victoria.

The original project was also supported by the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority, through funding by the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.



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This publication is also available electronically on the BGLC website: **www.bglc.com.au**

Vision Statement

**A strong, self-determining
Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Community)
where Limuk (Culture), Dya (Country),
Heritage, Lore and Dyaling (Language)
are protected, practised and passed
on; and where our Guli (Peoples') rights,
responsibilities, knowledge and cultural
authority as Original Custodians
are recognised, respected
and upheld.**

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About This Plan

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Guli (People) are advised that this Plan contains culturally sensitive material, including images, quotes and names of Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Guli (Peoples) who have passed away.

Wherever possible, words in the Wergaia Dyalng (Language) have been used in this Reviewed Dya (Country) Plan.

Some of the artwork presented throughout this document was created during a Guli (Community) art-making workshop as part of Our Place Our Story, a project developed to celebrate 20 years of Native Title recognition and presented at the Wotjobaluk Nations Festival at Horseshoe Bend, Dimboola, on 13 December 2025.

Produced by BGLC, Our Place Our Story was a collaboration between Pink Lake Creative, The Dreaming Project, The Little Projector Company, BGLC's Dalki Murrup Ceremonial Performance Group and the Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Community). The project was supported by Federal Government funding from Festivals Australia.

The Guli (Community) Artists involved were: Aaliyah Batty, Kianah Batty, Mahalia Branson, Tyrese Douglas, Natalie Fox, Makayla Handy, Brett Harrison, Narla Kennedy, Shakira Kennedy, Jandamurra Lauricella, Tanisha Lovett, Belinda Marks, Jyson Marks, Savannah Marks, Aubrey Mullan, Aroua Mullan, Parni Magarra Rigney-Read, Katharina Vigenser, Layla Vigenser-Harrison, Dominic Vigenser-Harrison, Arina Vigenser-Harrison and Chris Harrison.

Some of the photographs presented throughout this document were captured by Mat Dooling of Exposure of Light Photography, Jumpin' Jac Photography and Ivan Masic, Little Projector Company — Our Place, Our Story.

Barengi Gadjin Land Council Ancestral Guardians Land, Water, Sky, Wind, Fire

Barengi Gadjin Land Council (BGLC) acknowledges and pays respect to our Ancestral Guardians of Lands, Water, Sky, Wind and Fire.

Our lands of learning, life, Lore, healing and Language.

Our waters of strength, survival and Culture.

Our sky that lights up our creation stories and seasonal movements across Country.

Our winds that speak to our fires and they speak to our Ancestors.

The five elements align with our five tribal clan groups the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Peoples.

We are the Wotjobaluk Nations.

Written by Jo Harrison-Clarke and endorsed by the Wotjobaluk Nations Full Group

Message from Chair 2017

It is with the highest honour that I would like to respectfully acknowledge all Wotjobaluk Traditional Owners, past, present and future, as we continue to walk in the footprints of our Ancestors. Our identity and culture are intrinsic to who we are as Wotjobaluk. It is important that we cherish and nurture all aspects of our lands, water and heritage in order to preserve the strength and resilience of our Peoples.

Historically, Wotjobaluk Peoples have been trailblazers in the advancement of our communities and self-determination. We were the first clan in Victoria to acquire Native Title (immediately after Mabo) in the early 2000s — a testament to the tireless hard work and determination of Wotjobaluk People throughout the early 1990s. The development of the BGLC Country Plan: Growing What is Good, brought Traditional Owners together to yarn about long and short-term priorities for our People. These yarns included individual family groups, regional meetings and group gatherings throughout 2016 and 2017 to gather as much information as possible from Traditional Owners living on and off Country.

Our Board of Directors aims to implement the Country Plan alongside a sustainable strategic plan, to point the organisation to a new and exciting future. A future that builds the capacity of BGLC to better meet the outcomes and priorities set out by Traditional Owners. BGLC has committed to a number of actions that can be accomplished through this Dya (Country) Plan. These include re-engaging with Guli (Community), creating strategies to better manage our land and water, looking after historical cultural sites, such as Ebenezer and The Ranch and maintaining our cultural practices.

The Board understands it will take some time to get to where we want to be as a mob which is why it is so important that our membership and Traditional Owners remain front and centre to help us successfully implement this Country Plan.



It's a very exciting time for BGLC and the Board of Directors would like to thank all Community members and Traditional Owners living on and off Country for participating in our meetings throughout 2016 and 2017 and contributing to this plan for our future.

Dylan Clarke

Chairperson

Barengi Gadjin Land Council
Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (BGLC)

Message from Chair 2026

It is with respect and pride that I acknowledge Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Guli (Peoples), past, present and future, as we continue to walk in the footsteps of our Ancestors and carry forward our rights and responsibilities to Dya (Country), Limuk (Culture) and Guli (Community).

The Growing What is Good Dya (Country) Plan was always intended as a long-term vision; a 20-year plan grounded in the voices, knowledge and aspirations of our Guli (People). This document marks the 10-year review of that plan. It is a chance to reflect on what has been achieved, recognise how far we have come and reaffirm the direction set by our Guli (People).

Over the past decade, important progress has been made across many of the priorities identified in the original plan. While there is still more to do, the achievements outlined in this review show the strength, resilience and determination of Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples). Across Dya (Country), cultural burning has continued, important places have been restored and stronger protection is in place for Dya (Country). Cultural renewal has grown through Dyaling (Language), dance and programs that support young Guli (People) to connect with identity and Dya (Country). Milestones such as the return of Ancestors, the transfer of significant places like Ebenezer and the establishment of ranger programs reflect a deepening of cultural authority and responsibility.

At the same time, the organisation has continued to grow, strengthening partnerships, creating employment pathways and building a stronger foundation for self-determination. These outcomes reflect many years of work by Elders, Guli (Community), the Board, staff and partners, all contributing to the shared vision set in 2017.

This review process has brought our Guli (People) together again to reflect, share what has changed and identify what matters most for the future. The vision and direction of the original plan remain strong. The voices captured in 2017 continue to guide this next stage, reminding us that this work is ongoing and intergenerational.

As a Board, we recognise our responsibility to carry this plan forward in a way that remains grounded in Guli (Community) priorities, cultural knowledge and long-term care for Dya (Country). The next 10 years will require continued focus, strong leadership and meaningful involvement from our Guli (People) to ensure the aspirations of the plan are realised.

I would like to thank all Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) who contributed to both the original plan and this review through meetings, stories, knowledge sharing and ongoing commitment to Dya (Country). I also acknowledge the work of the Board, staff and partners who continue to support this journey.

This is not just a review of a document. It is a reflection of who we are, where we have been and where we are going together.

Chris Harrison
Chairperson

Barengi Gadjin Land Council
Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (BGLC)



**Dalki Murrup Dancers
at 2025 Wotjobaluk
Nations Festival**

Our Achievements since 2017

Since the 2017 Dya (Country) Plan, important progress has been made across several of the aspirations and priorities identified by Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Guli (Peoples), known collectively as the Wotjobaluk Nations. While not every goal was fully realised, the years since 2017 have seen significant achievements in Limuk (Culture), Dya (Country), Guli (Community) connection, self-determination, economic development and organisational strength.

Healthy Dya (Country)

Building on projects like River Yarns, work continues across Wotjobaluk Dya (Country). This includes habitat restoration, protection of totem species and species monitoring, including support for Wilkerr (dingoes) protection, Wirrap (blackfish) relocation, platypus monitoring, butterfly habitat work and broader restoration projects that strengthen biodiversity and cultural responsibility.

Cultural Wanyap (Fire)

Since 2017, cultural burning has continued across hundreds of hectares of Wotjobaluk Dya (Country), supporting landscape health, strengthening biodiversity, increasing native vegetation, reducing Wanyap (fire) risk, protecting Cultural Heritage and carrying forward cultural knowledge through practice on Dya (Country).



Significant Places

Since 2017, major restoration of the Billabong at the Ranch, alongside improvements at Antwerp Reserve and other important places on Dya (Country), has strengthened access, safety and opportunities for Guli (Community) to spend time on Dya (Country). The transfer of Ebenezer Mission's title to BGLC marked an important step in returning stewardship of a highly significant cultural and historical place to Guli (Community).

Management and Protection

The Ranger Program was established to strengthen Wotjobaluk Nations-led care for Dya (Country), cultural education and cultural protection. Beginning at Dyurrite, the program represents an important first step toward developing a broader ranger program.

Repatriation

In 2024, we had the honour of bringing many of our Ancestors home to Dya (Country). As we continue our cultural responsibilities to our Ancestors, we will continue to carry them home and carry their voices forward.

Limuk (Culture)

Building on projects like the Earth Oven Project, cultural renewal continues through initiatives such as Kinship Camp and the launch of the Dalki Murrup Ceremonial Performance Group. Ongoing cultural practices continue to strengthen Guli (Community) connection, support the sharing of knowledge and protect Limuk (Culture) for future generations.

Dyaling (Language)

Building on the work of the Dyaling (Language) Reference Group formed in 2016, Dyaling (Language) revival has strengthened through the launch of a Dyaling (Language) Subcommittee, ongoing classes and the release of the Wergaia Dictionary.

Dalki Murrup Dancers
creating the Bunyo
Budnitt film for the
Our Place Our Story
project



Guli (Community)

BGLC membership has grown to over 350 members. Since 2017, more than 30 events and meetings have been held on Dya (Country), including the Wotjobaluk Nations Festival in 2025 (marking 20 years of Native Title recognition), which was attended by over 500 people.

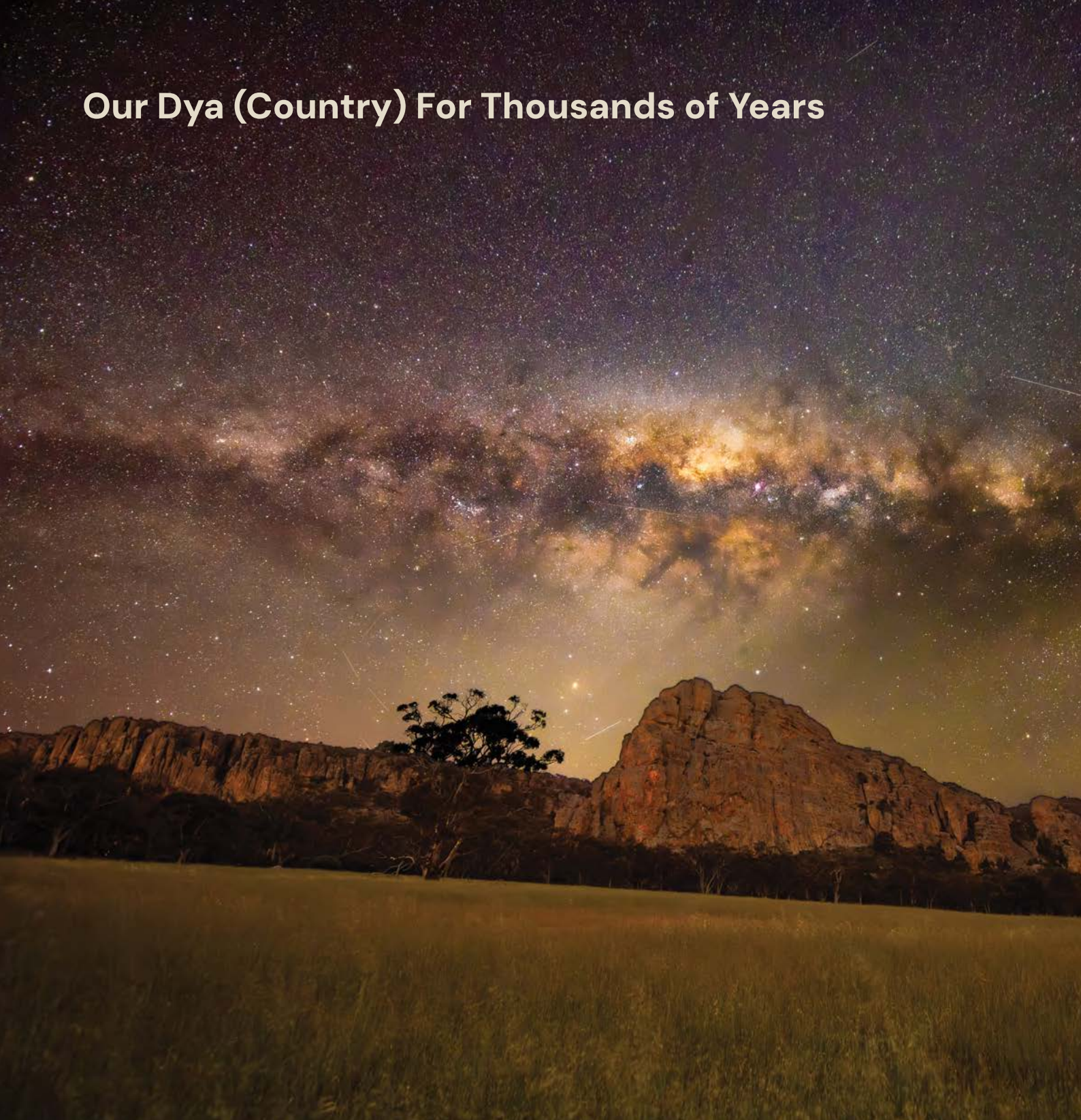
Self-Determination

The 2022 Recognition and Settlement Agreement marked an important step in strengthening rights, joint management and long-term decision-making for Wotjobaluk Nations. This includes new agreements and processes that strengthen how activities on Dya (Country) are assessed and managed, ensuring Wotjobaluk Nations decision-making is embedded in how land is used and cared for. The establishment of the Yity Yity Land Management Board also marked a significant step in strengthening the Wotjobaluk Nations leadership and joint management across Dya (Country). Alongside this work, the Wotjobaluk Nations has participated in the statewide Treaty process and formally registered to prepare for a Wotjobaluk Nations Treaty.

Economic Sustainability

Dalki Garringa Native Nursery has grown into an important hub for revegetation, employment and enterprise. Hundreds of thousands of plants are grown each season, supporting restoration partnerships, including work with Zoos Victoria to protect habitat for the endangered golden-rayed blue butterfly. The nursery is also supporting salt harvesting initiatives and creating employment for our Guli (People) through nursery operations, restoration projects and growing enterprise opportunities.

Our Dya (Country) For Thousands of Years



Tchingal above the Dyurrite Cultural Landscape. Photo: Mat Dooling, Exposure of Light Photography.

Tchingal Creation Story

In the time before time, the Great Ancestor Spirit, Bunjil, began to create the world we see around us: the mountains, the lakes, the forests and the rivers, the plains and the seas. He created all the plants and all the animals. When he had created the beautiful sandstone ranges of Gariwerd, he often took the form of Werpil the Eagle so that he could view his

work. Bunjil appointed two brothers, the Bram-bram-bult brothers, sons of Druk the Frog, to finish the task he had set himself. Their job was to bring order to the new world; to name the animals and creatures, to make the languages and give the laws. The brothers had a big job, sorting things out here on earth.

There was a huge, ferocious emu called Tchingal who lived on the flesh of people and animals. His home was in the Mallee scrub. He was hatching an enormous egg. One day, while Tchingal was away from the nest, Waa the Crow flew past. Feeling hungry, Waa decided to have a peck at the egg. He was pecking away quite happily when Tchingal returned. The monster emu was furious. Waa fled across the country towards Gariwerd, with Tchingal right behind him. As he approached the ranges, Waa saw a crack in the mountains ahead. He flew into it, thinking he would be safe from Tchingal there. But Tchingal rushed at the mountain and struck it a mighty blow with his foot. The mountain split open under the force of the impact, releasing a mountain stream and creating a gap, Barigar, also known as Rose's Gap. The emu chased Waa through Barigar, right to the other side of the range. Waa spotted another crack in the rock face and tried to hide there, but again Tchingal delivered a mighty kick to the rock and split it right open. This is how Jananginj Njau (Victoria Gap) was formed, where Bugara (Glenelg River) passes out onto the western plains. With the sun low on the horizon, Tchingal decided to make his camp at the foot of the new gap. This is why the place is called Jananginj Njau, which means "the sun will go". The next morning, Waa rose early and escaped to the nearby Moora Moora swamp. As this was his totem site and, therefore, sacred territory, Tchingal was forbidden to follow him there. Tchingal was angry, and he was also very hungry. Just at this moment, he spied a man, Bunya, out hunting in the distance. He decided to make a meal of him. When Bunya, who was not very brave, realised the emu was after him, he took off as fast as he could. Instead of using his spears to protect himself, as a warrior should, he threw them to the ground and scrambled up a large tree. Tchingal, not being able to climb, decided to wait. He knew that Bunya would have to come down some time. Meanwhile, Waa the Crow had flown north to where the Bram-bram-bult brothers were staying. He told them of his narrow escape and of Tchingal's ferociousness. Already angry at the emu for his bad deeds, the two brothers decided to punish him.

They came down to the mountains and saw what they thought was a bright star shining – it was Tchingal's eye. Approaching the bird from different directions, the brothers crept up and threw their spears. One struck the emu in the chest, one in the rump, and one in the neck. Tchingal raged and stormed at the brothers, but he was fatally

wounded. He ran off towards the northern plains, losing blood all the time. Soon he died, and the trail of blood he left behind him turned into the Barringi Gadyin (Wimmera River). The Bram-bram-bult now approached the tree where Bunya had hidden. They told him to come down, but Bunya was too scared and called back that he would stay there until they made sure Tchingal was dead. The elder brother was angry at such cowardice. He waved his spear and caused Bunya to become a possum, telling him to always stay in the treetops and to hunt for his food only at night.

Reaching the spot where Tchingal had died, the brothers plucked all the feathers from his body. Splitting each feather down the centre, they threw one half to the left, the other to the right, making two piles of emu feathers, each the size of a present-day emu. The splitting of the feathers can still be seen in all emus. Their feathers are double, with two separate halves. After feasting on Tchingal's flesh, all the people travelled to collect his egg. It was so big and heavy that no one could lift it until Babimbal the Wattlebird came along. He was very strong and managed to carry the egg to Horsham, where it was cooked and made into a great feast. Babimbal had the honour of dishing it out, and in so doing, he splashed himself with some of the yolk, creating the wattles on the side of his head.

Before leaving, the Bram-bram-bult ordered the two emus to divide their large egg into several smaller ones in future, so they wouldn't be as jealous of their one egg as Tchingal had been. In this way, they hoped to keep the peace. Now, if you look at the Southern Cross, you can see the story told in the stars. At the head of the Cross is Bunya, the timid possum. Three of the stars are the spears hurled by the Bram-bram-bult. The large western star is the spear that struck Tchingal in the chest, the smaller star next to it is the spear that passed through his neck, and the star at the bottom of the Cross is the spear that struck him in the rump.

Tchingal himself is the dark shape that lies next to the Southern Cross. The eastern star of the Cross is Druk, the mother of the Bram-bram-bult, and the two brothers are the Pointers of the Southern Cross. Waa, the Crow is at a safe distance on the other side of the sky, as the star we know as Canopus.

Our Story

For tens of thousands of years, Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River) has been central to life on Wotjobaluk Dya (Country), a place for gatherings, ceremonies, trade, and a source of food, Gadyin (Water) and navigation. It also holds deep cultural meaning and is connected to creation stories.

Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) have been living on Wotjobaluk Dya (Country) for tens of thousands of years, in interconnected local groups, each of which was associated with a particular tract of Dya (Country). A person belonged and shared rights to the resources of the local group of his or her father; however, the groups were part of a shared cultural system. Guli (People) enjoyed social connections and access to resources beyond their local group.

The availability of particular foods across the land encouraged Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) to move from season to season. Wirrengren Plain in the Mallee and Lake Buloke in the Wimmera were important areas for large gatherings and for the trade of items such as stone axes, spears and possum skin rugs. Interaction with surrounding groups took place and firm connections were established through trade, marriage and kinship.

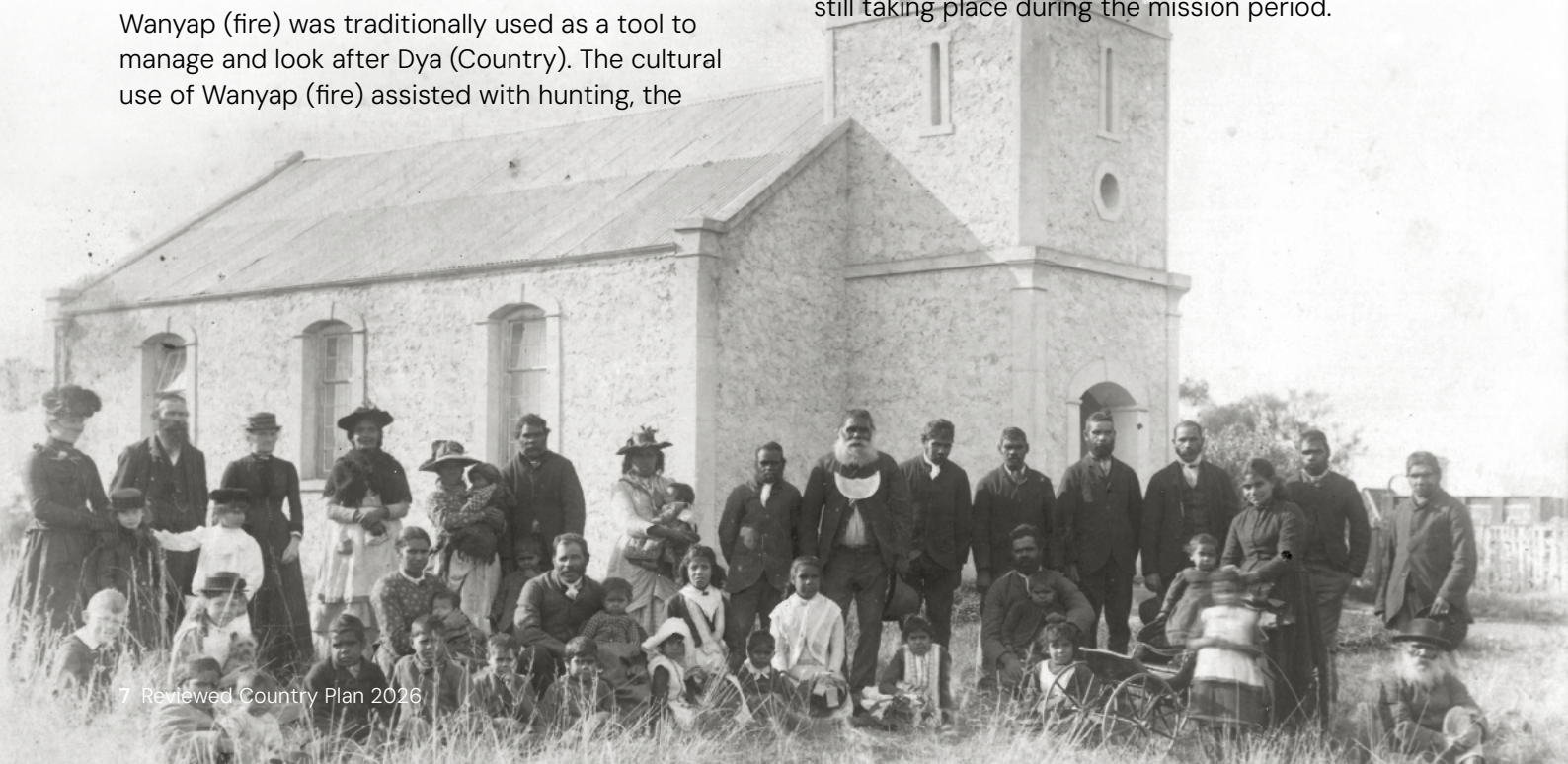
Gadyin (Water) was essential and the Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River) provided abundant food. Small sources of Gadyin (Water) were important too, such as soaks, clay pans, rock holes, and the roots of different kinds of Mallee eucalypts and hakeas. Plants were used for food, medicine and trade, and supplemented a diet of birds, fish and mammals.

Wanyap (fire) was traditionally used as a tool to manage and look after Dya (Country). The cultural use of Wanyap (fire) assisted with hunting, the

gathering of edible tubers and roots and helped ease movement through densely vegetated areas. The mosaic of burnt and unburnt areas that arose from cultural burning practices also minimised the spread of damaging wildfires and promoted diversity in the landscape.

The taking of lands by pastoralists brought rapid and devastating changes to the Wotjobaluk Nations. Our Ancestors persevered, maintaining an unbroken connection to Dya (Country), kinship, Dyaling (Language) and cultural knowledge under changing and often harsh conditions. Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River) also remained a place of survival, where families stayed connected to Dya (Country), to one another and to cultural knowledge during periods of severe disruption. Our Ancestors sought refuge at 'friendly' pastoral runs, where a familiar sense of local-group life was maintained. Guli (People) moved around but could be associated with particular runs and families. Through these associations, many of our Ancestors took on the European family names of these pastoral families.

Ebenezer Mission was created in 1859 by Moravian missionaries on important traditional grounds near Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River), becoming one of the places where many of our Ancestors lived under mission control. Within the mission fences, cultural practices such as Dyaling (Language), dance, song, traditional burial and traditional marriage were restricted. Outside the mission boundaries, ceremonial life and kinship continued with our Guli (People) maintaining Lore and connection to Dya (Country). Records also show corroboree gatherings still taking place during the mission period.



Our Contemporary Situation

Following the closure of Ebenezer Mission in 1904, many families moved away from Wotjobaluk Dya (Country). Some families remained in places connected to Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River) and Datchak Creek, including Antwerp, where connection to Dya (Country), family and cultural knowledge continued despite ongoing pressures. From the 1960s onwards, families who had lived on and around residential sites along the Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River), began moving into the nearby townships of Horsham, Stawell, Warracknabeal and Dimboola. Places such as Antwerp, The Common, The Ranch and Billabong remain significant to our families and continue to hold memories, stories and knowledge carried by Elders across generations.

Today, many families have returned to the Wimmera area. Following the Mabo decision and the passing of the Native Title Act 1993, we lodged a native title claim to have our pre-existing rights and interests in Dya (Country) formally recognised. After more than a decade of research and negotiation, the native title rights and interests of our Guli (People) — the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Guli (Peoples) (together known as the Wotjobaluk Nations) — were determined by Justice Merkel of the Federal Court on 13 December 2005. This was the first time that the ongoing existence of native title in south-eastern Australia was recognised by the Federal Court.

At the same time, we entered into a suite of agreements with the State of Victoria (the 2005 Settlement Agreements). Also at this time, Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (BGLC) was appointed the prescribed body corporate to hold the native title rights and interests in trust for our Guli (People), the native title holders.

In 2007, BGLC was appointed the Registered Aboriginal Party for much of the ILUA area, with responsibility for protecting and managing Aboriginal Cultural Heritage. Prior to the passing of Victoria's Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative cared for and protected Aboriginal Cultural Heritage in the Wimmera.



Wotjobaluk Nations Peoples celebrating the Native Title determination in 2005

In 2013, a review of the 2005 Settlement Agreements was undertaken, and both BGLC and State review teams recommended that the agreements be renegotiated under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010. Renegotiations commenced in 2017, guided by the priorities outlined in the Growing What is Good Plan, marking the next step in more than a decade of persistent work to strengthen our legal recognition and role in caring for Wotjobaluk Dya (Country).

Also in 2017, Barengi Gadjin Land Council purchased the historic Wail Nursery, originally established in 1946 by the Victorian Forestry Commission. This created new opportunities for Indigenous-led economic development, revegetation, training and the establishment of a public nursery space grounded in care for Dya (Country).

Our Guli (People) maintain a strong and enduring connection to Wotjobaluk Dya (Country), guided by Elders whose knowledge, experience and cultural authority continue to shape responsibility and care for Dya (Country). The ability to manage and protect Wotjobaluk Dya (Country) and Limuk (Culture) remains central. We invite readers of this Dya (Country) Plan to work alongside the Wotjobaluk Nations in respectful partnership to support our continued cultural, social, environmental and economic strength and to help inspire future Wotjobaluk Nations leaders and generations.

Our Dya (Country), Including Significant Sites

Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River) is central to Wotjobaluk Dya (Country) — a living waterway that connects landscapes, significant places, cultural memory and long-standing rights and responsibilities across Dya (Country). Its banks, floodplains and connected waterways hold scar trees, middens, campsites and burials where generations of Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) have lived, gathered, fished, travelled and cared for Dya (Country).

The natural landscape of our Dya (Country) varies from vast undulating grassy plains, rivers and wetlands to sand-hill and Mallee Dya (Country). The heart of our Dya (Country) is characterised by gently undulating plains covered by woodlands, heathlands and to the south-west, amongst less fertile soils, many wetland systems.

Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River) begins its journey in the Pyrenees Range and flows north-west across the Wimmera Plains to Gurru (Lake Hindmarsh), receiving inflow from fourteen tributaries. Barringgi Gadyin's (Wimmera River) banks, lined with Bial (River Red Gums) and Black Box trees, scar trees, burials and middens demonstrate our long association with this waterway. Many important places sit along or near Barringgi Gadyin, including, to name just a few, Ebenezer, Antwerp, The Common, Wopert, The Ranch and the Billabong — places that continue to hold cultural, historical and family significance for the Wotjobaluk Nations.

Ebenezer remains an important place near Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River), where generations of Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) gathered long before colonisation. Antwerp, along Datchak Creek and nearby river systems, remains important for family connection, camping, fishing and cultural memory. The Common and The Ranch hold strong Guli (Community) memories along the river.

Scarred trees along river and creek systems, including at Antwerp and The Common, continue to show long-term cultural use of bark for canoes, containers, shields and shelter. At The Ranch and Billabong, generations of families lived on Dya (Country), and the site remains recognised as an Aboriginal Place.

Gurru is Victoria's largest fresh Gadyin (Water) lake and is fed by Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River). In turn, when it floods, it feeds into Ngalpakatia/Ngelpagutya (Lake Albacutya) via Outlet Creek, which tends to occur around every twenty years. The substantial wetlands that form after flooding are recognised under the Ramsar Convention for the Protection of Wetlands and are of great significance to the Wotjobaluk Nations. However, the last time Gurru filled was in 1975, and the recent introduction of complex piping systems has affected the flow of this Gadyin (Water) system. Gurru and Ngalpakatia/Ngelpagutya are also popular destinations for holidaymakers.

The landscapes and vegetation found in Wotjobaluk Dya (Country) are characterised by the Wimmera, Lowan-Mallee, Murray-Mallee and Greater Grampians bioregional descriptions. The Wimmera bioregion covers the southern and central areas of Wotjobaluk Dya (Country) and was largely cleared for agricultural purposes in the first half of the 20th Century. Within each Wimmera subregion, the vegetation types, landforms and soils are similar, as are threats to biodiversity. However, the health of biodiversity is not uniform and the condition of biodiversity varies across the landscape with the type, intensity and history of land use, the climate and geography.

The Lowan Mallee bioregion, characterised by semi-arid and sparse non-eucalypt woodlands and grasslands, is found within the Little Desert National Park, the Big Desert Wilderness and parts of Wyperfeld National Park. The Lowan Mallee is not as developed as the surrounding areas and is protected in these Parks and Reserves. The climate is semi-arid, and droughts or long periods of time without rain are a natural occurrence here.

Eucalypt woodlands, varieties of shrubland, grasslands and swampy woodlands are found in the Murray–Mallee bioregion in the north–east of Wotjobaluk Dya (Country) and around Ngalpakatia/ Ngelpagutya and Gurru. These lakes are two important areas in which Native Title has been recognised for the Wotjobaluk Nations. Similar to the Wimmera bioregion, the Murray–Mallee also has highly modified landscapes due to high-fertility soils prized by farmers.

The Gariwerd (Grampians) bioregion is characterised by prominent ridges of sandstone and striking parallel ranges and valleys. The steep escarpments and gentle back slopes support many types of heathlands, shrublands, woodlands and

forests. Abundant food, Gadyin (Water), shelter and connections with Creation Stories make this area an important and spiritual place. Gariwerd is shared Dya (Country) with neighbouring Guli (Peoples) including Djab Wurrung and Gunditjmara and holds deep cultural and spiritual significance for the Wotjobaluk Nations, with Wotjobaluk Nations Creation Stories connected to this area, alongside extensive rock art, cultural sites and long histories of occupation across the landscape.

Dyurrite Cultural Landscape (Mount Arapiles) is a living cultural landscape of deep cultural, spiritual and historical significance, connected to Creation stories, ceremony, toolmaking and long-held cultural knowledge. This includes long-standing practices of moving through and climbing Dyurrite. Surveys at Dyurrite have recorded extensive Cultural Heritage, including artefacts, rock art, shelters and one of Australia's largest stone quarry complexes.

Much of the flora of Wotjobaluk Dya (Country) is found in the major parks, reserves and state forests, such as Wyperfeld, Dyurrite Cultural Landscape (Mt Arapiles – Tooan State Parks), Gariwerd and Little Desert National Park. The entire region contains over 2000 sites of cultural significance associated with reserves, waterways, floodplains and wetlands.

Wotjobaluk Country





“[The Ranch is] a peaceful place of gathering, sharing and nurturing – that’s how I remember it... I would love for future generations to experience that culture and history.”

Dylan Clarke, Clarke Family Group



Our Goals

Goal 1

Thriving Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (People)

Strengthening wellbeing, learning and opportunity through every stage of life.



Our Guli (People) thrive when they are strong in identity, connected to Dya (Country) and empowered across all stages of life. We live with confidence and purpose, grounded in connection to Dya (Country), Limuk (Culture), family and Guli (Community). Our strength comes from having the resources, support, opportunities and pathways needed to grow, contribute and succeed across all stages of life. When our Guli (People) are healthy, connected and able to step into education, work and leadership, it strengthens individuals, families and our future.

'For me, it is that People are thriving – whether that is through employment or participating in activities on Country.'

Roxy Mayer-Marks, Marks Family Group

Priority outcomes



Wellbeing
is supported through
Limuk (Culture),
Dya (Country) and
connection

Cultural
and spiritual
connection, Aboriginal
identity, and connection
to Dya (Country) are
strong and celebrated

Access
to skills, leadership
and opportunity is
expanded

Dya
(Country) is
protected, cared
for, understood and
actively utilised by
Guli (Community)

Education
and employment
pathways are strengthened
across all stages of life,
creating long-term security,
stability and meaningful
purpose

Equity,
wellbeing and
long-term stability are
strengthened across Guli
(Community)



Key Areas

Health and Wellbeing

Our Guli (People) are supported to be healthy through a strong connection to Dya (Country), Limuk (Culture), Guli (Community) and opportunity. Spending time on Dya (Country), protecting Limuk (Culture), strengthening Guli (Community) connection, supporting equitable access and creating opportunities for participation all contribute to the health and wellbeing of our Guli (People). When our Guli (People) are connected in these ways, our wellbeing is strengthened across all stages of life.

Education

We recognise that everyone learns differently and that culturally responsive support, alternative pathways and practical opportunities are needed so children, young people and adults can continue building knowledge, skills and confidence for the future, while also strengthening identity through culturally grounded formal and informal education. Informal learning is also strengthened through family and Guli (Community) responsibility, knowledge sharing and cultural connection. In formal education, we want our Guli (People) to have clear pathways through education, training and lifelong learning, with the support needed to succeed at every stage. Clear and supported education pathways also help open access to higher qualifications, leadership roles and meaningful work, including in caring for Dya (Country), Cultural Heritage, community services and other fields that strengthen our future.

Access and Opportunity

We want clear pathways into education at all levels, employment, leadership and enterprise so our Guli (People) can step into opportunities with confidence. This includes traineeships, mentoring, professional development, procurement opportunities and practical pathways that connect education, training and employment. Strong access to opportunity helps more of our Guli (People) move into skilled work, leadership roles and emerging industries that align with Guli (Community) priorities and cultural values, while remaining strong in identity and Limuk (Culture) and supporting succession planning, mentoring and leadership development across generations. Strong access to opportunity also means reducing barriers that prevent our Guli (People) from participating in education, employment, leadership and enterprise.

Meaningful Jobs

We want our Guli (People) to have access to meaningful jobs that create pathways to build experience, strengthen leadership and increase participation across a wide range of fields, including trades, professions, business, health, education, government, Cultural Heritage, caring for Dya (Country), Guli (Community) organisations, enterprise and other skilled work, while also supporting long-term stability, wellbeing and economic security for individuals, families and Guli (Community). Clear employment pathways help build confidence, support economic independence and create opportunities for our Guli (People) to take on roles they value and want to lead, whether on Dya (Country), within Guli (Community), or in broader industries and workplaces. This includes strengthening participation in caring for Dya (Country), Cultural Heritage, organisational leadership and other roles that support our Guli (People), Dya (Country) and future generations.



Goal 2

Strong Wotjobaluk Nations Limuk (Culture)

Limuk (Culture) and Dyaling (Language) are strong, visible and growing.

Limuk (Culture) stays strong through Lore, Dyaling (Language), practice, kinship and responsibility to Dya (Country). Dyaling (Language) is Limuk (Culture), and Limuk (Culture) is who we are. It connects us to our Ancestors, Elders and children through our stories, our ways of doing things and our knowledge. It stays strong when Guli (People) come together, when children learn on Dya (Country), when Dyaling (Language) is heard and when cultural practice is part of everyday life. Keeping Limuk (Culture) strong means keeping identity and responsibility strong, so future generations know who they are, where they come from and what they carry forward.

**‘When there’s respect between
People based on our Lore,
we grow stronger.’**

Ngalungurruk Jennifer Beer, Kennedy Family Group

Priority outcomes

Wotjobaluk Nations Dyaling (Languages) continue to be revived, learned, and shared

Learning on Dya (Country) continues to strengthen cultural identity and spirituality

Knowledge, stories, cultural materials, data and intellectual property are protected and managed under Wotjobaluk Nations authority

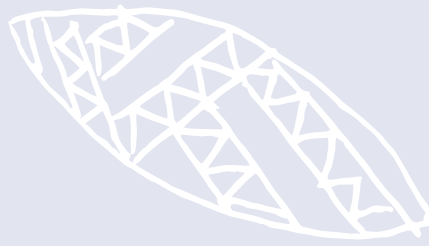
Tangible and intangible Cultural Heritage is researched, identified, managed and protected

Wotjobaluk Nations history, stories and cultural knowledge are respectfully shared in ways determined by Guli (Community) through regular and coordinated time on Dya (Country)

Intergenerational knowledge sharing remains strong through Elders, families, leaders, Dya (Country) and future development of a Wotjobaluk Nations Keeping Place



Key Areas



Intergenerational teaching

Cultural knowledge will continue to be shared from one generation to the next through regular time together on Dya (Country), where Elders, adults and young Guli (People) can listen, observe, practise and learn in the right way. This includes recognising knowledge, responsibilities and cultural practices are shared through women's business, men's business and other culturally appropriate ways of learning. Learning through shared experience, story, cultural practice and being on Dya (Country) helps keep knowledge strong, strengthens belonging and ensures responsibilities continue across generations.

Cultural practice

We will continue strengthening and sharing our Limuk (Culture) by creating regular opportunities for our Guli (People) to learn, practise and reconnect together on Dya (Country). Activities such as Earth Ovens, tool making, basket weaving, bark canoe making, burning possum skins, and walking on Dya (Country) bring our Guli (People) together and keep traditional knowledge strong across generations. The launch of the Dalki Murrup Ceremonial Performance Group is an important step in strengthening Limuk (Culture), identity and Guli (Community) pride. We want our children to learn Limuk (Culture) on Dya (Country), where they can listen, observe and receive knowledge in the right way. This also includes strengthening how stories, objects, recordings and cultural materials are kept, shared and protected for future generations, including future aspirations for Wotjobaluk Nations Keeping Place.

Cultural identity

Our individual and Guli (Community) cultural identity comes from knowing who we are, where we come from and staying connected to Limuk (Culture), Dya (Country), family and Guli (Community). When Limuk (Culture) is practised, shared and visible in everyday life — including through Dyaling (Language), artwork and design in public spaces — it strengthens identity, pride and confidence, especially for younger generations. Keeping cultural identity strong helps our Guli (People) remain connected to the changing seasons, the flow of Gadyin (Water), the movement of living things and to the families, kinship and responsibilities that weave everything together.

Dyaling (Language)

Dyaling (Language) carries Limuk (Culture), memory, identity and ways of understanding Guli (People) and Dya (Country). It holds stories, knowledge and meaning in the land and connects generations through how we speak, learn and relate to one another. We will revive, preserve and learn Wotjobaluk Nations Dyaling (Languages) so more of our Guli (People) hear, speak and share Dyaling (Language), making it more visible in signage, naming, public spaces and everyday life across the wider Guli (Community).



Goal 3

Healthy Wotjobaluk Dya (Country)

Caring for Dya (Country) following Lore and knowledge passed down for thousands of generations.

Through our enduring Ancestral and physical connection, we are Wotjobaluk Dya (Country), and Wotjobaluk Dya (Country) is us. It links us to our Ancestors, Spirits, land, Gadyin (Water) and Big Sky and connects us to our Limuk (Culture), Stories and Dyaling (Language). The foundation of our future is our connection to each other as Guli (People), Guli (Community) and Dya (Country). We are strong as a Guli (People) and when we care for Dya (Country), Dya (Country) will sustain us and future generations.

'If we follow Bunjil's law and look after the Country, then Country will look after us. All the rules we have come from Bunjil. I must pass on Bunjil's law so it continues. I am looking forward to getting some of my Country back before I die so I can die knowing I have done what Elders expected of me. The Beal trees are dying at Lake Albacutya because they are not getting enough water. If we look after the river, it will run clear again, run all the way to the Teardrop lakes. If the Wotjobaluk continue to follow Bunjil then things will go on as the Old People want'.

Uncle Jack Kennedy, Kennedy Family Group

Priority outcomes

Native species, habitats and living systems are cared for and restored through the Wotjobaluk Nations knowledge and responsibility

Climate responses recognise the impact on First Peoples and are guided by the Wotjobaluk Nations cultural knowledge and responsibility

Threatened, culturally significant and important species for the Wotjobaluk Nations are recognised, protected and actively cared for across Dya (Country)

Decisions about land, Gadyin (Water), development, mining, infrastructure and energy recognise the Wotjobaluk Nations cultural authority, minimise harm to Dya (Country) and create long-term Guli (Community) benefit

Cultural Wanyap (fire) grows and is recognised and used as a legitimate tool to protect and strengthen Dya (Country), with opportunities for Guli (Community) to participate in cultural burns and continue cultural Wanyap (fire) knowledge

Gadyin (Water) rights, including cultural flows, are actively pursued and secured, supporting healthy Gadyin waterways

Significant places are protected, restored and cared for under the Wotjobaluk Nations authority through culturally appropriate access management, monitoring and long-term planning that responds to erosion, flooding, Wanyap (fire) and climate impacts

Key Areas

Gadyin (Water)

Gadyin (Water) is life and healthy waterways sustain wildlife, cultural practice, Guli (Community) wellbeing and future generations. Waterways are places of meeting, navigation, story, memory and food, with strong connections to songlines, gathering places and cultural continuity across Dya (Country). Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River) and other rivers, wetlands and lakes are central to life on our Dya (Country), holding our cultural responsibilities, supporting ecological renewal and teaching us, connecting us and feeding us across generations. We will continue returning Gadyin (Water) to important places, including the long-term restoration of Gadyin (Water) to Lake Hindmarsh (Gurru) and Lake Albacutya, recognising their deep cultural, ecological and historical importance and the rights and responsibilities of the Wotjobaluk Nations to care for these waterways.

Significant Places

Barringgi Gadyin (Wimmera River) connects many significant places across Dya (Country). These places are central to our past, present and continuing experience and carry our stories, connections, resilience and cultural responsibilities. Places across Dya (Country), including mountains, lakes, wetlands, creek systems and cultural landscapes, carry deep cultural, spiritual and historical significance. This includes places such as Ebenezer, Antwerp, The Ranch, Billabong, Wopet Bungundilar, Sisters Rocks and The Common, which hold layers of meaning through cultural practice, family history, scarred trees, places where our Guli (People) have lived, ceremony and our long and continuing connection to Dya (Country). The list in this plan is not exhaustive and there are other places across our Dya (Country) that hold importance through story, family connection, Ancestors and ongoing cultural responsibility. We care for these places by protecting Cultural Heritage, supporting access, strengthening knowledge and keeping them respected and understood by future generations.



Cultural Wanyap (Fire)

Cultural Wanyap (fire) is grounded in Lore that our Guli (People) have used for thousands of years to care for Dya (Country). Cultural Wanyap (fire) supports the health of the landscape, encourages native plant regeneration, reduces fuel loads, protects biodiversity and helps maintain balance across Dya (Country). It also helps protect Cultural Heritage by reducing damage to significant places, scarred trees and cultural landscapes. It is guided by careful observation, with Wanyap (fire) applied in the right place, at the right time and for the right purpose. We will continue to assert our enduring cultural responsibilities and decision-making authority in caring for Dya (Country). Cultural Wanyap (fire) is about restoring relationship, supporting renewal and continuing responsibilities between Guli (People) and Dya (Country).

Climate and Dya (Country)

Caring for Dya (Country) in a changing climate requires attention to Wanyap (fire), Gadyin (Water), wind, plants, living creatures, Guli (People) and Big Sky as connected parts of one living system. Climate change is already affecting our Dya (Country), and like many First Peoples communities, we often experience these impacts more deeply because of the ongoing effects of colonisation, including disruption to cultural land management, Gadyin (Water) access and decision-making. Cultural Wanyap (fire), healthy Gadyin waterways, thriving plants and animals, strong Communities and careful attention to seasonal patterns all help keep Dya (Country) healthy and strong. Climate responses must recognise the Wotjobaluk Nations cultural authority, support ecosystem restoration, protect cultural landscapes, storylines and other Cultural Heritage and ensure activities on Dya (Country) do not cause long-term harm to Dya (Country) or Guli (Community).

Plants & Living Creatures

Healthy Dya (Country) depends on plants, animals and living systems being supported to thrive in the right places and in the right balance. This includes caring for important habitats, protecting culturally important totem species, supporting migratory species and ensuring the right plants are growing in the right places across our Dya (Country). Caring for living things means recognising that plants, animals, insects and trees are part of the health of Dya (Country) and part of our cultural responsibility. This includes restoring native species, protecting biodiversity, protecting important species and strengthening habitats so future generations inherit a healthy Dya (Country).

Big Sky

Big Sky holds deep cultural meaning across our Dya (Country). It includes Creation Stories, stars, weather, winds and seasonal patterns that guide understanding of Dya (Country) and the relationships between land, Gadyin (Water) and living things. The sky also brings Gadyin (Water) to Dya (Country) and has long been central to teaching, movement, timing and cultural knowledge, including Indigenous astronomy. Big Sky remains part of how we observe Dya (Country), understand change and carry cultural knowledge across generations.

Goal 4

Strong and Connected Guli (Community)

Staying strong and united through kinship, Limuk (Culture) and responsibility to Dya (Country) and one another.

We are a strong Guli (Community) built through kinship, shared responsibility and connection to Dya (Country). Guli (Community) strength is built over time through relationships, trust, inclusion, participation and shared responsibility to one another and Dya (Country). It also depends on our Guli (People) being able to exercise cultural responsibilities, maintain connection to Dya (Country) and participate in decisions affecting Guli (Community) and future generations. Guided by our Elders, Ancestors and Guli (Community) Leaders, we continue to strengthen relationships, participation and connection so future generations remain strong in identity, Limuk (Culture) and responsibility to Dya (Country) and each other

"Community is at the heart of who we are as Wotjobaluk Nations. By coming together, we create opportunities to support one another, protect our heritage, and build a future that respects and uplifts our cultural identity."

Ngalungurruk Jennifer Beer, Kennedy Family Group

Priority outcomes

Bringing
our Ancestors home
remains an important
cultural responsibility
and priority for the
Wotjobaluk Nations

Guli
(Community)
connection, participation
and relationships continue
to strengthen across
generations and lived
experience

Elders
and Knowledge
Holders are known,
and their knowledge is
acknowledged, shared
and celebrated

Young
Guli (People)
are increasingly
supported into Cultural,
Guli (Community) and
leadership rights and
responsibilities

Our strong unity and
beliefs are built through
Limuk (Culture), participation,
celebrating milestones and
achievements and ensuring all
Guli (People) feel included,
respected and valued

Families
and Guli (Community)
regularly spend time
together on Dya (Country) to
strengthen Limuk (Culture),
identity and shared
responsibility

BGLC,
as our authorised
group entity responsible for
implementing this Dya (Country)
Plan and other agreements, has a
forever home that could include
cultural gathering places,
meeting spaces and a
Keeping Place



Key Areas

Intergenerational Strength

Our strength as a Guli (Community) comes from the knowledge, stories, responsibilities and cultural understanding carried across generations. For over 1,600 generations, our Ancestors have passed knowledge forward, and today that responsibility continues through the guidance of Elders, Knowledge Holders, Guli (Community) Leaders and families. Strengthening shared stories, cultural understanding and respectful knowledge sharing across generations remains central to how we care for Dya (Country), support one another and ensure future generations remain strong in identity and responsibility.

Connected Guli (Community)

A strong Guli (Community) is built through connection, between generations, families, Limuk (Culture) and Dya (Country). We value opportunities for our Guli (People) to come together, share knowledge, support one another and take part in shaping our future. Through time together, cultural practice and shared responsibility, we strengthen identity and ensure our Guli (Community) builds knowledge, stays connected and remains resilient. Staying strong as a Guli (Community) requires ongoing and intentional care for relationships, opportunities to come together and spaces that are inclusive of all Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples). Supporting young people to grow in confidence, cultural knowledge and responsibility is part of strengthening our future leadership, with knowledge shared gradually across life, in the right way and at the right time. This also depends on recognising and drawing on the knowledge of Elders, Knowledge Holders and Guli (Community) Leaders whose cultural knowledge continues to guide Guli (Community), Dya (Country) and future generations. We keep our Guli (Community) connected and informed through regular gatherings, family meetings, cultural activities and shared opportunities that encourage participation, relationship-building and ongoing connection across Guli (Community).

Inclusion and Respect

We have lived through a long and, at times, difficult history, yet our identity, kinship and connection remain strong. Our shared history and connection to Dya (Country) continue to hold us together and shape a strong Guli (Community), whether our Guli (People) live on Dya (Country) or away from it. Our Guli (Community) is strengthened by its diversity, and we want all our Guli (People) to feel respected, included and connected. Creating spaces where all Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) feel respected, welcomed and safe to participate remains important to strengthening Guli (Community). This includes our Guli (People) with disabilities and our Guli (People) of diverse genders and sexualities, who are an important part of our Guli (Community) and our future.

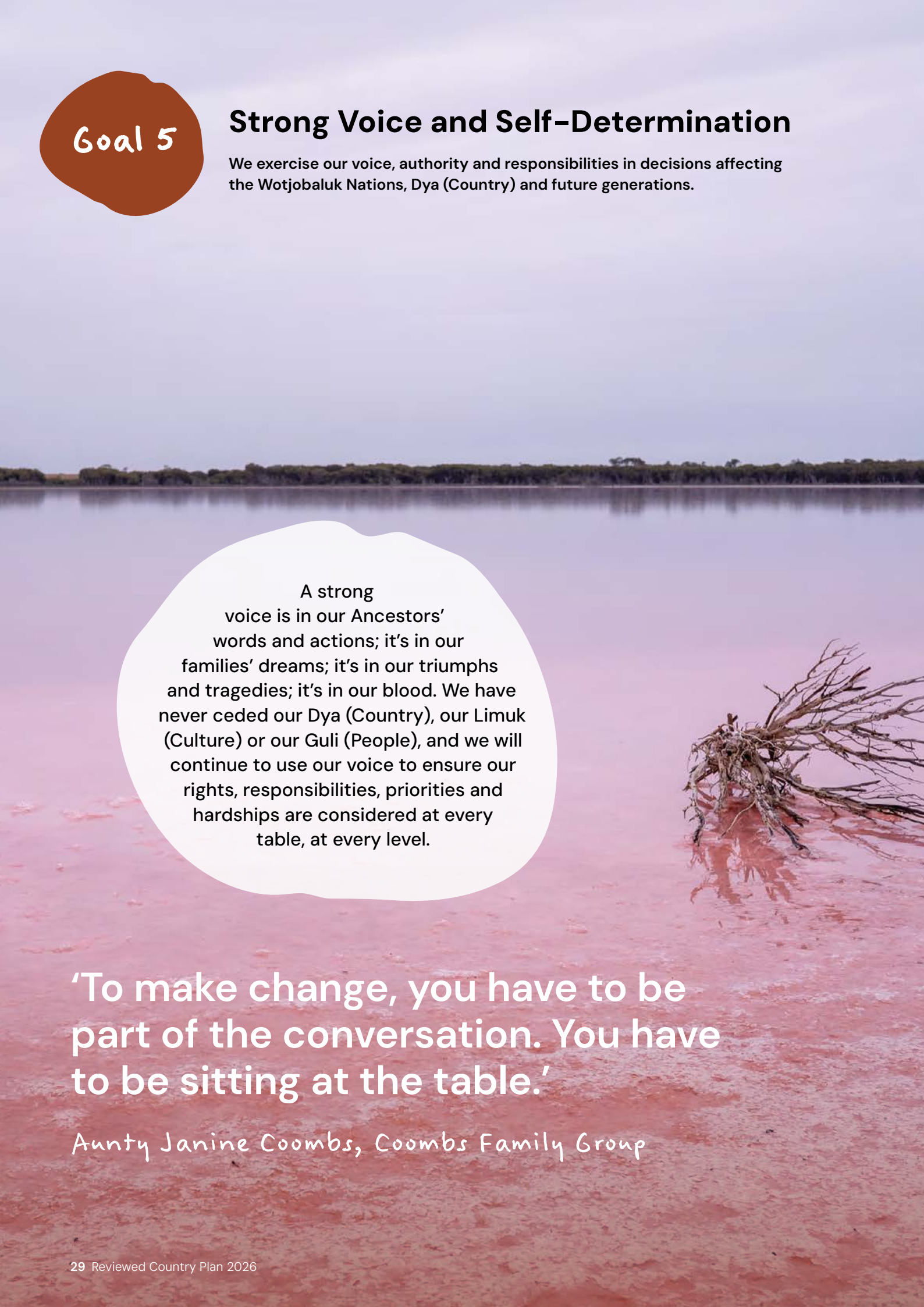
Connecting to Dya (Country)

Strong connections to Limuk (Culture), Guli (Community) and Dya (Country) are maintained through time spent on Dya (Country) with Elders and families. We want regular time with other families — camping, walking, listening to stories, learning Dyaling (Language) and teaching our Limuk (Culture) in the places that matter to us. We want our Elders to feel comfortable speaking on Dya (Country) so we can hear their stories, inherit their knowledge and carry our responsibilities forward. We want to look after Dya (Country) by walking on Dya (Country), learning what to look for, sharing cultural knowledge and seeing what needs our attention. Dya (Country) is alive and continues to teach us through Gadyin (Water), seasons, cycles, sky, plants and all living creatures. By caring for significant places, Gadyin waterways, native species and cultural knowledge, we keep Dya (Country) healthy, which keeps our Guli (People) strong now and for future generations.

Children, Young People and Future Leaders

We want our children and young people to grow up strong in identity, connected to Limuk (Culture), Guli (Community) and Dya (Country) and supported to learn and grow at stages throughout life. This means early cultural grounding, strong support through school, cultural education, mentoring, leadership opportunities and clear pathways into adulthood so future generations are confident to carry responsibility, make decisions and help lead Guli (Community) into the future. Knowledge, stories, responsibility and cultural understanding should be shared gradually across life, in the right way and at the right time, so young people are prepared to carry what comes next.





Goal 5

Strong Voice and Self-Determination

We exercise our voice, authority and responsibilities in decisions affecting the Wotjobaluk Nations, Dya (Country) and future generations.

A strong voice is in our Ancestors' words and actions; it's in our families' dreams; it's in our triumphs and tragedies; it's in our blood. We have never ceded our Dya (Country), our Limuk (Culture) or our Guli (People), and we will continue to use our voice to ensure our rights, responsibilities, priorities and hardships are considered at every table, at every level.

'To make change, you have to be part of the conversation. You have to be sitting at the table.'

Aunty Janine Coombs, Coombs Family Group

Priority outcomes

The Wotjobaluk Nations exercise authority and influence decisions that affect Dya (Country), Limuk (Culture) and Guli (Community)

Leadership opportunities led by Guli (Community) are developed and shared, and those who want to speak for Guli (Community) are supported with the knowledge and skills to grow their voices

A Local Traditional Owner Treaty, together with participation as signatories to the historic Statewide Treaty process and reserved representation, strengthens Wotjobaluk Nations authority, rights and self-determination

The Wotjobaluk Nations authority is understood, recognised and respected, and we continue to build skills and confidence in carrying and speaking this authority, grounded in Limuk (Culture), Lore and knowledge

The Wotjobaluk Nations priorities, rights and authority are reflected in government policy and decision-making



Key Areas

Recognition and Respect

We are the Original Custodians of this land, with responsibility to our Dya (Country) and all who live here. We will continue to seek recognition of our enduring rights and responsibilities as the Original Custodians, respect for our knowledge, Limuk (Culture) and obligations to Dya (Country) and understanding of our aspirations and our history before and since colonisation. Our connection to Dya (Country) and our cultural authority remains unbroken, and that must be recognised in how decisions are made, how relationships are built and how our future is shaped.

Self-determined decision-making

Self-determined decision-making means we continue to make decisions about the matters that affect our Dya (Country), Limuk (Culture), Guli (People) and future. It means our priorities are set by our Guli (People), our knowledge guides the way forward and decisions are made in ways that reflect our responsibilities, rights and long-term aspirations. This also includes strengthening governance capability, so we continue leading with confidence across organisations, partnerships and decision-making spaces.

Representation

Strong representation means our Guli (People) are at the table when decisions that impact us are made, bringing our knowledge, Limuk (Culture), experience and priorities into the conversations that shape our future. It also means supporting our Guli (People) to step into leadership, speak with confidence and carry the Wotjobaluk Nations perspectives across government, organisations and Guli (Community) life.

Advocacy

We will continue to advocate for outcomes that reflect our priorities, rights and responsibilities. This means ensuring our voices are present where decisions are made, building strong relationships with governments, agencies and partners and speaking up for what matters to our Guli (People), our Dya (Country) and our future. Advocacy is about turning our knowledge, experience and aspirations into practical change that strengthens our Guli (Community).

Strong Voice

Our future must continue to be informed and shaped by our Elders, leaders and children. Strong voice and self-determination mean our knowledge, authority, rights and responsibilities remain central in the decisions that affect our Dya (Country), our Guli (Community) and what comes next. We must leave future generations with solid foundations, a strong identity and a clear place in shaping the future. Partnerships must remain grounded in respect for cultural authority, shared responsibility and our decision-making.





Goal 6

Economic Sustainability

Our long-term strength is grounded in Dya (Country) and Guli (Community).

Economic sustainability is about creating lasting benefit, reducing inequity and strengthening long-term security and opportunity for all our Guli (People). It means building an individual, Guli (Community) and organisational economy where our Guli (People) can participate, lead and grow opportunities that support families now and leave strong foundations for future generations.

‘Economic development should materially improve the lives of our Mob.’

Shane Fry, Harrison Family Group

Priority outcomes

Enterprises are developed on Dya (Country), continue to grow and provide opportunities and income

Procurement opportunities support long-term economic participation, capacity and opportunity across Guli (Community)

Economic growth remains grounded in Dya (Country), Limuk (Culture), Guli (People) and cultural responsibility, and reflects Guli (Community) priorities

A strong Wotjobaluk Nations economy is grounded in self-determination and creates broad and lasting opportunities, wellbeing and economic security across the Wotjobaluk Nations and future generations

Future opportunities align with cultural values, especially in areas where we have the cultural authority to undertake proposed works

Enterprises developed by individual Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) are nurtured and supported where possible



Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) are increasingly supported into economic leadership, employment, enterprise and decision-making

Key Areas

Dya (Country)-based development

Dya (Country)-based development creates opportunities through work, enterprise and investment that remain grounded on Dya (Country) and guided by our priorities. It means economic development that strengthens Guli (Community) while respecting cultural rights and responsibilities, protecting Dya (Country) and creating long-term benefits for future generations, including opportunities such as cultural tourism and other activities that share our knowledge in the right way. Economic participation also includes strengthening the Wotjobaluk Nations control, benefit and decision-making in activities occurring on Dya (Country).

Economic pathways

Strong economic pathways help our Guli (People) move into employment, enterprise and leadership through clear and practical opportunities over time. This means strengthening the links between learning, work, procurement and enterprise so economic participation continues to grow in ways that support families, Guli (Community) and future generations.

Procurement

Procurement creates real opportunities for our Guli (People) by increasing access to contracts, supporting Wotjobaluk Nations businesses and keeping economic benefit connected to Guli (Community). This also means procurement processes recognise Wotjobaluk Nations knowledge, skills, cultural authority and responsibilities to Dya (Country).

Enterprises

Strong enterprises create long-term opportunities for our Guli (People) while staying grounded in cultural values and responsibility to Dya (Country). Building and growing enterprises means creating pathways for employment, leadership and economic participation in ways that strengthen Guli (Community) and support future generations. This includes building on existing work such as Dalki Garringa Native Nursery, which demonstrates how enterprise can create employment, strengthen cultural knowledge, support care for Dya (Country) and create future opportunities connected to bush foods, native species and other Wotjobaluk Nations businesses grounded in enduring cultural practice.

Future Opportunities

Future opportunities mean preparing for new economic opportunities in ways that reflect our priorities, protect Dya (Country) and create long-term benefits. This includes building capability, forming strong partnerships and ensuring our Guli (People) can participate in and benefit from emerging industries, with outcomes that support Guli (Community), not just development.



Pathway to Implementation – Governance Structure and Responsibilities

This plan reflects both the enduring rights, responsibilities and cultural authority of the Wotjobaluk Nations, and the aspirations and priorities our Guli (Community) continues to pursue for future generations. The priorities and actions set out in this Dya (Country) Plan will help us achieve our aspirations and vision, which we believe will make a difference for Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples). The ideas generously shared across our Guli (Community) will guide planning and action for many years to come. The development of Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (BGLC) Strategic Plans will be strongly guided by the priorities identified through the Dya (Country) Planning process. This ensures that the work of the organisation reflects the aspirations and knowledge shared by Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples).

For the second half of the 2017–2037 Dya (Country) Plan, Annual Action Plans will be developed with members through member engagement during July and August each year. The proposed actions will be workshopped in the second half of each year before being presented to the BGLC Board for endorsement.

These Annual Action Plans will then inform the development of BGLC's annual operational plans, ensuring that the organisation is responsive to Guli (Community) priorities, emerging opportunities, available resources and changing circumstances, while continuing to work towards the broader aspirations set out in this Dya (Country) Plan. Progress against these plans will be reported back to members through Full Group meetings and other Guli (Community) communication channels.

This approach ensures the Dya (Country) Plan remains responsive to Guli (Community) priorities, available resources and emerging opportunities.

Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (BGLC)

"Our core responsibilities: restoring Limuk (Culture), healing Dya (Country), strengthening Guli (Community) and advancing self-determination."
Annual report 2024–2025

In 2017, the Dya (Country) Plan identified BGLC as a transparent, cohesive and sustainable organisation reflecting respect, Limuk (Culture) and diversity.

BGLC represents the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Guli (the Wotjobaluk Nations), whose Native Title Rights were recognised in a 2005 Native Title Consent Determination, the first such recognition in south-eastern Australia.

BGLC is registered under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 (CATSI Act) and is therefore the recognised authority to speak on behalf of the Wotjobaluk Nations. BGLC must meet obligations set out under the CATSI Act, comply with ORIC's regulations and observe legal precedents established by Court decisions (known as 'common law').

Within Victoria, BGLC is the Registered Aboriginal Party responsible under the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act for the management and protection of our Cultural Heritage and has been authorised by the Wotjobaluk Nations to manage all Recognition and Settlement Agreements negotiated under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act.

BGLC has the responsibility to implement the Dya (Country) Plan by using it to guide partnership and planning work. To assist this implementation, BGLC will develop annual operational plans in September / October each year to guide the implementation practical delivery of this Dya (Country) Plan.

Board Of Directors

BGLC is governed by a Board. Under Rules 5.2 and 5.5 of the Corporation’s Rulebook, members have the right to stand for and vote in the election of a director representing each family group with whom they identify. Each of the eleven (11) family groups is linked to one of the eight (8) apical Ancestors identified in the Corporation’s Rulebook. In addition to the family group directors, the Board holds one seat for an independent or specialist non-member director.

The work they do on behalf of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Guli (Peoples) of the Wotjobaluk Nations is acknowledged and deeply appreciated.

2017

- Dylan Clarke
- Jennifer Beer
- Janine Coombs
- Brett Harrison
- La Vergne Lehman
- Allan (Kat) McDonald

2026

- Chris Harrison
- Dylan Clarke
- Kerry Clarke
- Janine Coombs
- John Gorton
- Ceara-Leigh Larkins
- Roxy Mayer-Marks
- Marjorie Pickford
- Daniel Rodaughan



Partnerships

Partnerships play a vital role in advancing BGLC's mission to care for Dya (Country) and strengthen cultural, environmental and Guli (Community) initiatives. Partnerships include working together, developing joint projects and working with funding bodies to enable a wide range of initiatives, including Dyaling (Language) revival, creative arts, ecological restoration and the protection of Cultural Heritage.

Before Native Title, non-Aboriginal people did not appreciate Wotjobaluk Nations Cultural Heritage. They feared what Native Title would mean for their rights. But now things are changing. There is more respect for Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) in the wider community, and partnerships must recognise the enduring rights, cultural authority and decision-making responsibilities regarding Dya (Country).

More Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples) are part of the workforce, and the wider community is increasingly learning about Wotjobaluk Nations Limuk (Culture). Aboriginal Cultural Heritage requirements are having an impact on public and private land, and BGLC's role in managing and protecting our Cultural Heritage is beginning to be understood. We are ready to share with people who want to connect and understand, and to work with organisations as they develop their cultural awareness.

The Co-operative Management Agreement confirmed for us that partnerships grounded in recognition of Wotjobaluk Nations cultural authority are important in managing Wotjobaluk Dya (Country). We have negotiated joint management of many significant parks and reserves through the RSA process, which will strengthen our decision-making regarding the management of Wotjobaluk Dya (Country).

Collaborative partnerships are central to this work. We want stronger partnerships with State and federal government departments, their agencies and authorities and organisations such as Catchment Management Authorities, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Parks Victoria, Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water, local government authorities and many independent organisations such as Greening

Australia, Trust for Nature, Landcare Australia, the local Landcare groups and various Committees of Management.

This plan will also inform our engagement with partners and the government. The priorities outlined here provided an important foundation for the implementation of our Agreements with the State under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act and for working with our partners, government departments and organisations involved in caring for Dya (Country), including Parks Victoria and other land and water management partners.

We anticipate ongoing respectful conversations with all our partners that will help create and progress the aspirations and goals outlined in this plan. We look forward to continuing to strengthen these relationships.

Yity Yity Land Management Board

BGLC will engage many partners to progress and implement the Dya (Country) Plan. Most significantly since the Dya (Country) Plan was endorsed in 2017, is the Yity Yity Land Management Board, established under the Traditional Owner Land Management Agreement and the Conservation Forests and Lands Act (1987) Vic on 13 December 2025, the 20th anniversary of our Native Title Determination.

The Yity Yity Land Management Board makeup and responsibilities are outlined in our Traditional Owner Land Management Agreement and will have eight members: five designated Traditional Owners, two community members and a Secretary's nominee. All members will be appointed by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change after nomination by BGLC and undergoing relevant probity checks. The Secretary's Nominee is appointed by the Minister.

The Yity Yity Land Management Board will lead the management and protection of Dya (Country) within jointly managed parks and reserves to be granted as Aboriginal Title. Currently, these are the following, but may be added to in the future:

- Black Range State Park
- Dyurrite Cultural Landscape (Mount Arapiles–Tooan State Park)

- Wyperfeld National Park
- Little Desert National Park
- Lake Albacutya Park
- Lake Hindmarsh Lake Reserve
- Barrabool Flora and Fauna Reserve
- Wail State Forest (portion only)
- Big Desert Wilderness Area
- Red Rock Bushland Reserve
- Horsham Police Paddock Reserve
- Ararat Regional Park (portion east of the Western Highway)

The Yity Yity Land Management Board's first role is to develop a Joint Management Plan for all the parks and reserves. This Joint Management Plan must be informed by this Dya (Country) Plan, cultural values, ecological principles and legal obligations.

The Yity Yity Land Management Board is dedicated to upholding cultural responsibilities, promoting ecological sustainability and advancing the rights and interests of the Wotjobaluk Nations in land and Gadyin (Water) management. This will be done in direct relationship with Barengi Gadjin Land Council and in partnership with public land managers and relevant partners, including Parks Victoria, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and others.

Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative

Another important community partner is Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative (GGAC). Whilst wellbeing is an important part of the work of BGLC, it is within the context of Wotjobaluk Nations Guli (Peoples') wellbeing in connecting with Dya (Country) and Guli (Community). Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative (GGAC) is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation and delivers Primary Health, Allied Health, Home and Community Care, Youth and Community Justice, Aboriginal Family Services and Early Years programs.

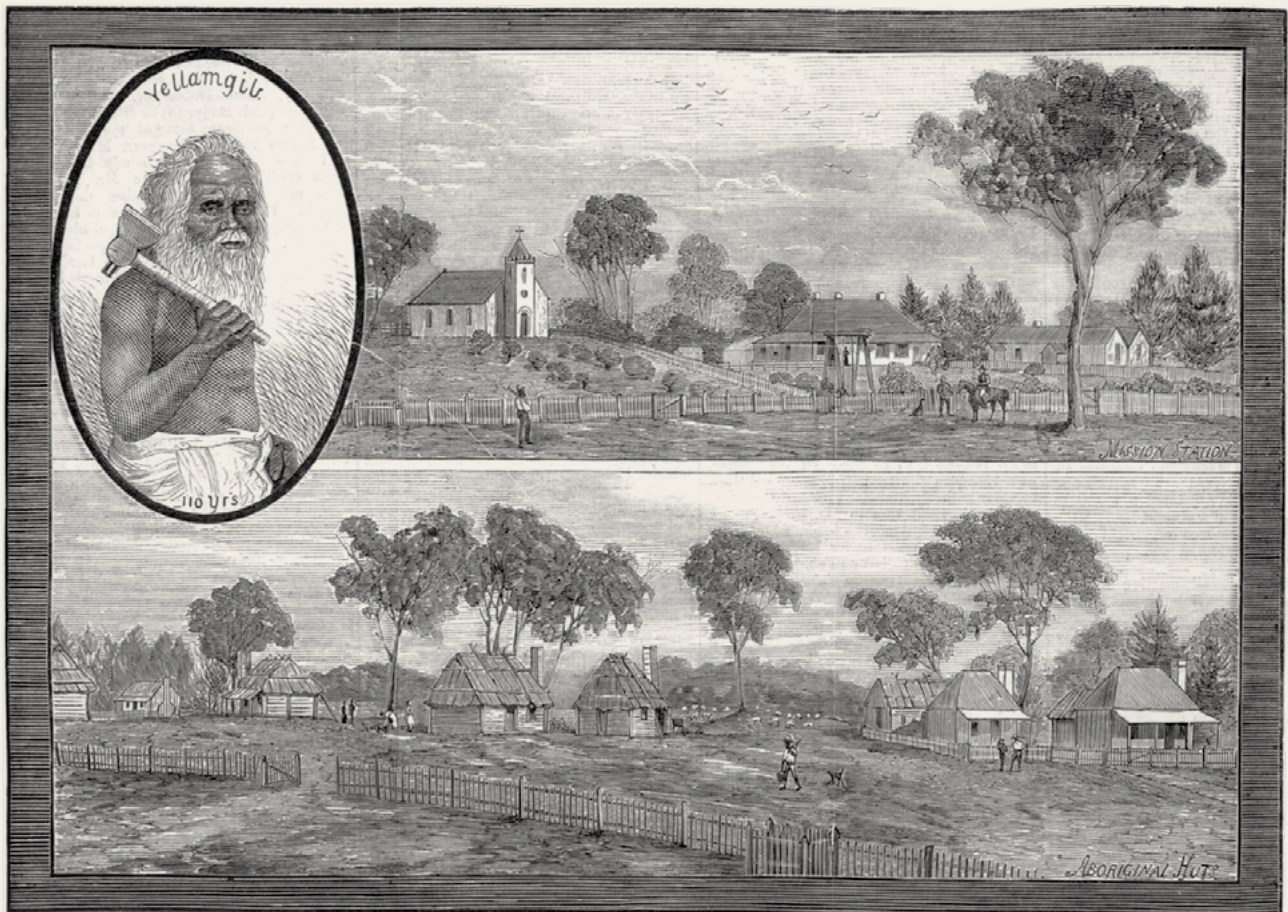
Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-operative (GGAC) is on Wotjobaluk Dya (Country), offering a range of health, support and cultural engagement services to all First Peoples within the local government areas of Horsham Rural City Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council, Hindmarsh Shire Council, West Wimmera Shire Council, Ararat Rural City Council and Yarriambiack Shire Council.

As the only other Aboriginal-controlled organisation on our Dya (Country), this is a critical relationship where we partner on projects that meet both our organisation's and members' needs.

Gellung Warl

Gellung Warl is an important partner in progressing our rights and aspirations. Gellung Warl is the permanent representative body established by Victoria's Treaty to strengthen First Peoples' voice, representation and decision-making across Victoria. The three components of Gellung Warl are the First Peoples Assembly, on which BGLC has a representative; Nginma Ngaiga Wara, their independent accountability and implementation arm; and Nyerna Yoorrook Telkuna, the ongoing Truth Telling and healing commission.

Our partnership is important as a signatory to Victoria's Treaty and as we have a designated position on the First Peoples Assembly. We are also registered to develop a local area Traditional Owner Treaty, strengthening our self-determination. This relationship will play an important role in strengthening our advocacy, representation and long-term structural change for our Guli (People) and Dya (Country).



MISSION STATION, DIMBOOLA.

La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria. First published in the Illustrated Australasian New, 22 March 1882.



Barengi Gadjin
LAND COUNCIL
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION RNTBC

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