



Forever Protecting and Respecting the Sacredness of our Land



Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that this document contains images of, and references to, people who have passed.

This plan was developed by Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation with funds provided by the Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science and support from the Centre for Appropriate Technology.

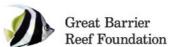
Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation's Community Action Plan project 'Strengthening Protections and Practices for National Heritage Listing' is funded by the partnership between the Australian Government's Reef Trust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.















# **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation (BLHGAC) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to community, land and sea. We pay our respects to Traditional Custodians, their cultures and Elders past and present.

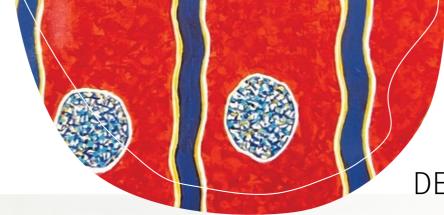
We also acknowledge the continuing land and sea country management and custodianship of the Great Barrier Reef and Reef Catchments by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners, whose enduring connections, heritage values and rich cultures and shared proactivity protect the catchments and reef for future generations.

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority is acknowledged for the great stewardship activities of protecting and managing the Outstanding Universal Value of the iconic Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area by supporting Traditional Owners.

Special acknowledgements to the Centre of Appropriate Technology, Community Bred, the Department of Environment and Science for the tremendous support to develop this plan for our future.

We thank and acknowledge all BLHGAC partners, in particular, the Australian Government, Australian Tropical Herbarium, Cape York Natural Resource Management, Environmental Systems Solutions, Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation, Great Barrier Reef Foundation, Many Rivers and Australian Government Reef Trust.

We sincerely thank Honourable Sussan Ley MP for her welcomed decision to help us reach the milestone of the Australian Heritage Council 2022 -23 Finalised Priority Assessment List. In addition, for her request for the Australian Heritage Council to assess the Binthi Warra Indigenous Heritage Places 'Thaman' and 'Yiirmbal' nomination for the National Heritage List.



We are very grateful to Balkanu and the Cape York Land Council for their invaluable assistance for the acquisitions and transfer of traditional land to Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation. In addition, for the logistical and technical support in the post transfer of traditional land. We take our hats off to Dr Kevin Murphy PhD, Cape York Land Council Lawyers and Gerhardt Pearson for their admiral work, and we appreciate Dr Gertrude Stotz's PhD foundational work.

Our thawuunh (friend) John B. Haviland (Distinguished Professor of Anthropology), we are grateful to you for salvaging the Guugu Yimithirr language and developing the dictionaries that are resourceful tools.

We respect and acknowledge Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council for the invaluable guidance and support and appreciate the service to our community.

Importantly, we pause to pay our respect and tributes to our Elders, past and present for instilling in us the pride and respect for our beautiful Binthi Country. This 'Healthy Country Plan' is an excellent resource for Binthi Warra youth for collaboration for learning and teaching our Elders wisdom.

We give praise and thanks to our Lord for the support of Lutheran Church of Australia for helping the Guugu Yimithirr Nation in our times of deep despair.

We acknowledge all the Traditional Owners, youth and community members involved in developing and workshopping these projects, as well as Community Bred for their planning support.

Finally, we thank Kristy Day Graphic Design and Illustration for the creative layout of our Binthi Warra Healthy Country Plan.



Our plan is dedicated to Reverend Georg Heinrich Schwarz 'Muni' and Sir Joh Bielke-Petersen.

This Healthy Country Plan is a legacy for our youth who are our valued assets as future land managers of very sacred Country. We will always love and cherish our future leaders and are so proud of them.

We have dedicated this plan to two honourable and special individuals, Reverend Georg Heinrich Schwarz and Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen in memory of the sacrifices they made for who and where we are today.

They and many others have helped us to protect, and to remain connected to, our Country and this plan is to guide us on our journey to achieve this goal.

'Muni' arrived at Cape Bedford on 13 September 1887, at the age of 19. He dedicated 55 years of his life as a Lutheran Missionary to the Guugu Yimithirr people. He was one of Queensland's most prominent Missionaries and was interned during World War II.

He passed away in Cooktown on the 22 March 1959. His grave is in Hope Vale and he is still remembered with annual celebrations of Muni Day.

As former Premier, Honourable Johannes Bjelke-Petersen (1968 to 1987) sympathised with the Guugu Yimithirr people's cause during their exile years as 'Prisoners of War' in Woorabinda during World War II.

With the help of the Lutheran Church, Alick Cameron, George Bowen and Paddy McIvor went to Brisbane to meet with Sir Joh.

Sir Joh then supported the return of the Guugu Yimithirr people from Woorabinda to the current Hope Vale.

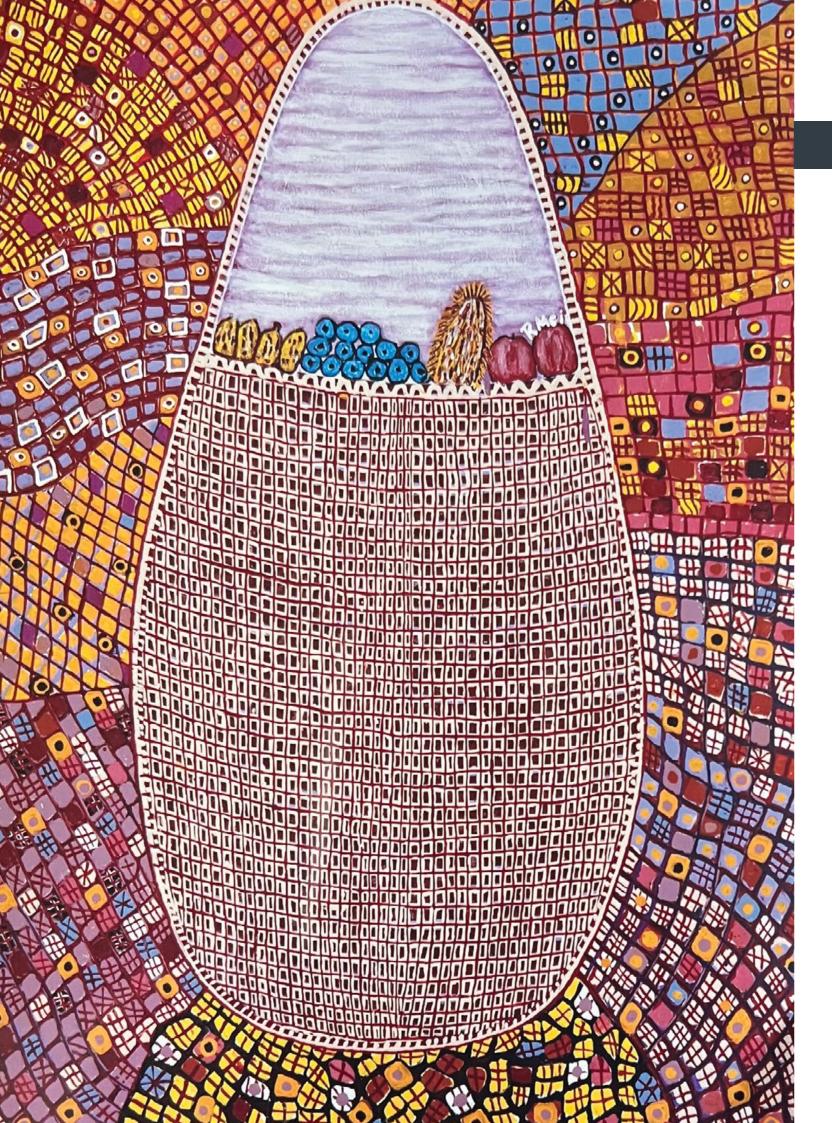
At the St John's Lutheran Church in Hope Vale is a plaque that commemorates this historic event.



Photo left: Reverend Georg Heinrich Schwarz 'Muni' Photo above: George Bowen, Sir Joh Bjelke- Petersen, Frank Berendorf, Pastor Vic Wenke and Paddy McIvor: Return to Hope Vale from Woorabinda (missing Alec Cameron)







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# PREAMBLE



We, the Binthi people, all stand together as one, upholding our culture and traditions with great respect for our old ways. We govern and lead our own business, future and traditional lands.

Others will listen to what we are saying and support our ways.

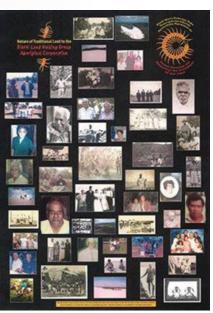
Our ancestors have entrusted us to carry on the traditions and to care for the country and all the animals, foods and plants within. We do not take more than the land can give, so it will provide for generations to come.

Our elders teach the young people knowledge and language of how to protect our artefacts, sacred sites, stories of our lands and water places, so they continue to live on for generations to come.

We support each other to live life to the fullest, ensuring we have happy homes, good healthcare, living a healthy lifestyle and a safe community free of crime and violence.

As a Christian organisation Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation [BLHGAC] has successfully adapted both their Christian faith and Cultural customs in the contemporary modern context

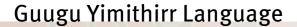




# GUUGU YIMITHIRR AND BINTHI WARRA CULTURE

Guugu Yimithirr People





Guugu Yimithirr is our language which translates to 'the way we speak'. Guugu meaning 'language/speaking' and Yimi-thirr refers to 'this way'. There exist various dialects and most notably: 'waguurr-ga' (inland vernacular and 'of the outside'); and 'thalun-thirr' (coastal and 'with the sea'); guugu nyiiguudyi; guugu nyalaadyi; guugu yinaa and guugu diirrurru. Through intermarriage the Guugu Yimithirr people are multilingual.

They spoke 'avoidance language' with certain members of the family and kin to a man's father in-law or brother in-law adopting a different vocabulary and speech with mother in-laws forbidden.

In addition to this practice and custom of certain forms of social avoidance they mastered the art of onomatopoeia. It is the process of creating a word that phonetically imitates, resembles, or suggests the sound that it describes. Such a word itself is also called an onomatopoeia. Common onomatopoeias include animal noises which is typical of the Guugu Yimithirr naming system of their birds and animals.

In Guugu Yimithirr language space is rendered in absolute terms like the cardinal points, north, south, east and west independent of whether something is in front of, behind, to the left or right of a person. Wherever they are, the language provides them with a mental cap for a precise dead reckoning of all points around them — a system of spatial coordination where the reference system is relative with respect to the subject.

John B. Haviland (Distinguished Professor of Anthropology) researched the Guugu Yimithirr language and compiled dictionaries.



# Binthi Warra Country

Binthi Warra are a 'waguurr-ga' clan whose land lies eastward to Cocoa Creek and Bridge Creek within the McIvor River and Morgan River catchments separated from the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area by three 'thalun-thirr' clans: Gulaal, Ngaatha and Dhiidhaarr/Thiithaarr/Thithaarr. We are one of 32 clans of the Guugu Yimithirr Nation. Dr Gertrude Stotz worked with the Binthi Warra to record our cultural heritage, genealogy and mapping.

The creation beings and spirits on our country are:

- **1)** 'Dunggan-ngay Thawuunh-thirr-gu', friendly spirit peoples' visitation sites
- 2) 'Gaalaaya', centipede spirit
- 3) 'Manu-galga-thirr' a ghostly creature and
- 4) 'Wabuga' a spear yielding man.
- 1) 'Dunggan-ngay Thawuunh-thirr-gu', friendly spirit people. They are from the spirit world and visit waterholes and lagoons, making merry, paddling canoes, laughing and screaming with joy and diving for freshwater mussels. Whenever people come nearby, talking or making any noise, the Dunggan-ngay disappear. Many of the spirit beings are mischievous but Dunggan-ngay are special, they are friendly (McIvor, 2010:67). They often visit the lagoon, lakes and waterholes near Guti and Buqa Gaalaaya;
- 2) 'Gaalaaya' giant centipede spirit's resting place at Buga Gaalaaya. This spirit protects this site and kills whoever trespasses. After it's epic journey throughout the dreamtime the Gaalaaya died and Buga Gaalaaya became it's resting place. The centipede is also a totem for the Binthi Warra and highly respected;

- adark being that devours the souls of its victim. It has a face of a lion and emanates sparks off it. It is often heard rather than seen because of the loud noise it makes which can be heard miles away. It also makes teeth grinding noises and is a shapeshifting creature that transforms into massive fire tornadoes. They are known to hang out near the swamp areas and eat coals from fires. (McIvor, 2010:67); and
- **4) 'Wabuga**' is the traditional story of a man with a spear that sits in a tree at **Buga Thabaga** which is an area of big blow flies. If **Wabuqa** sees people who come along with their mussel (sea water variety) and they try to run away in fear of him, he forces them to slow down and threatens to spear them if they do not. They come here to collect lily roots and freshwater mussels. This area is marked as the eastern boundary between the Binthi and Ngaadha/Ngaatha estates. It is in fact the track that has been created by hundreds of years of usage by the Ngaadha/Ngaatha people who walked between Coconut Island and Buga Gaalaaya (the ridge and lake area) where they joined the Binthi people for major ceremonies.







Our sacred sites are identified as, both or either:

**Thaman**'-(**noun**) forbidden ground, private property; areas of abundance of food, trade items or other resources, access to which is controlled by the clan. (Haviland (1988:49));

'Yiirmbal'-(noun) supernatural deity, the Creator. (Haviland, (1998:234)). Refers to spirits associated with dangerous or sacred places. Often takes the form of gigantic animals, but they can equally well be manifested by powerful destructive forces, punishing everything from serious wrongdoing to simple disrespect (Haviland with Hart (1999:195)).

Binthi Indigenous heritage places with outstanding natural and cultural values are **Guti**, **Buga** Thabaga, Buga Gaalaaya, Munnbaarr – Guupu - Gambi, Bilawiqu, Muwanta - Walnga, Guppa and Binthi Nganyja-wi (Binthi Bora Ground).

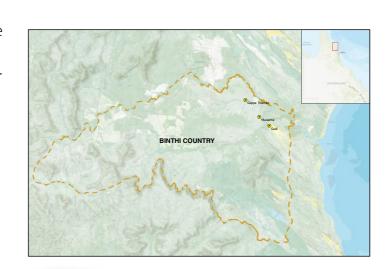
**Guti** is a majestical horseshoe shaped sand dune near the McIvor River with a mystical and beautiful lake/lagoon on top and in the middle of it. The water colour often changes colour from sky blue hue to a dark tea/brown tannin colour. The waters that seep through this mighty sand dune and into the creeks and lagoons have healing properties highly likely from the lightning strikes, silica sand, tea trees and clay. The **'Dunggan-ngay Thawuunh-thirr-gu**' are the friendly spirits and protectors of **Guti** and Buqa Gaalaaya lakes and lagoons.

**Buqa Gaalaaya** is very significant and cannot be traversed due to its sacredness and danger from the ancient giant 'Gaalaaya' spirit that lies there.

Buga Thabaga, Munnbaarr Gaapu-Gambi, Bilawiqu, Muwanta – Walnga and Guppa are the 'Thamaan' sites. Muwanta - Walnga is recognised as an exclusive site for the Binthi Warra, whereas the others were shared sites with the other clans of the Guugu Yimithirr Nation. Muwanta-Walnga was also the marriage ceremony site.

Binthi Nganyja-wi (Binthi Bora Ground) -**Nganyja** (initiation) was carried out at puberty and marked the passage from childhood to adulthood. Initiates were tested in obedience, respect for their Elders and self-control. For young men, the piercing of the nose or scarring on the chest were signs that they were initiated and carried authority. They now had the status of **nguumbaal** (initiated men) and were qualified to pass onto the next stage of their education and training.

There are also cave paintings on Binthi country, however, they are in another area on the ridges of mountains, ranges and hills nearby. They are unique as the colours are of blue and green hues, very different to Quinkan Country art.





# **Guugu Yimithirr Customs** and Society

Guugu Yimithirr are master ecologists and have a patrilineal moiety system and totemic society. Marriage was forbidden between the clans of the same moiety. The Binthi Warra belong to the 'waandarr' moiety and their totems (bing.athawuunh-nqay) ((noun) and --nqay, plural) are: brahminy kite 'wandi'; centipede 'qaalaaya'; and nightjar (Caprimulgidae) 'wambal'.



# 'Walahn gurra Mutharr'

Binthi Warra are well recognised as 'Walahn Mula Mihna-ngay' which means very good hunters and aspire to be 'Walahn' caring and sharing hunter as opposed to the despised lazy and selfish 'Matharr'.

These traditions, observances. customs and beliefs worked well within nomadic hunters and gatherers systems. With permission, nomadic bands traversed throughout the clan boundaries, according to the seasons and bush calendars, sharing and caring in the bounty. Respect for the spiritual associations of the peoples with the story places and for their unique historical places are central to the well-being of the people so that the traditional practices, cultural knowledge and history are passed on to keep strong connections to their Country.



# HISTORY OF CONTACT

**Guugu Yimithirr Timeline of Key Dates and Events** 

#### 24 June 1770

Cook reported the sighting of a strange animal which was: "of a light mouse colour and the full size of a Grey Hound, and shaped in every respect like one, with a long tail, which it carried like a Grey Hound; in short, I should have taken it for a wild dog but for its walking or running, in which it jumped like a Hare or Deer'

(Haviland, (1987:pp. 161-239))

Skirmish Point.

**History of Settlement to** 

**Current Context** 

Queensland Native Police Force

camps were established to further

disperse the Guugu Yimithirr Nation.

Twelve camps were set up

in the region during this time

1870's to the late 1890's

Joseph Banks recorded in his journal that the natives called it the 'Kangooroo' and it was confirmed by American Linguist John Haviland after 1979 that the word exists in the local language as and retaliations occurred and some '**qanqurru**' and denotes injuries sustained from shots, the 'black kangaroo'.

#### 11 June 1770 Lieutenant James Cook anchored

the HMS Endeavour at the mouth of the Endeavour River at the modern day Cooktown (Guugu ship after it hit a reef. After a month of their stay amicable interactions occurred with five men and they were shown the Endeavour River day a skirmish occurred over the share of the catch of local turtles 22 June 1993

#### had to be transferred to new trustees.

registered with the Register of the National Estate for its natural values.

#### 1993 -1994

Dr Gertrude Stotz undertakes fieldwork with Binthi Warra Elders to record Binthi Country boundary and sites for the Cape York Land Council.

#### 1994

The former Indigenous Land Corporation now current Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation purchased Mt Baird Station for the Binthi Warra to Binthi Aboriginal

#### 18 December 1997

their native title rights.

1874 onwards

Captain James Cook, was founded during the 30,000, and it was declared a municipality in 1876, but after 1885 gold production dropped and the town declined. Pastoral stations were established throughout the region and frontier battles and violence erupted in resistance to the pastoralists and miners which resulted in many casualties.

#### 1881

Reprisals of Mary Watson's death, Mounted police and native troopers under Inspector Hervey Fitzgerald from Cooktown shot many innocent coastal Cape York people from three mainland groups in retaliation. None of those Opium distributed by the mission Far North shot, it would be claimed afterwards, Chinese miners. were directly involved in the events.

#### 1882 onwards

Gold Rush Years poisoned with cyanide.

#### 1885 - 1886

1991

1991 (Qld) (the Act) was passed

along with the Torres Strait Islander

Land Act 1991 (Qld) in order to provide

mechanisms for land to be granted to groups of

The Aboriginal Land Act

establishes Cape Bedford Mission (Elim - first

#### 1986

Under the Community Services (Aborigines) Act 1984, a Deed was given to the Hope Vale Community Council as Trustees of Anthropology) by the then Premier Hon. Johannes Bjelke-Petersen. The Aboriginal Reserve Land held Council to act as trustees of the land for the benefit of the

#### 1971 - Magubadaay-gu

(forever)

John B. Haviland (Distinguished Professor Building, construction and begins his fieldwork the Guugu Yimithirr language.

#### 1950

The first families returned from Woorabinda.

#### 1956 - 1958

Church Hope Vale.

"It is our most sacred site. It is our St Peter's of Rome. It is our Notre Dame of Paris. It is a place the place where the spirit of our ancestors and our unborn – unite in our prayers the present living." Noel Pearson

#### 1943 - 1950

Seven years of trauma at Woorabinda. Pastor Victor Wenke ministered to the Woorabinda evacuees and Pastor Alick Cameron, Paddy McIvor and George Bowen emerged as the community leaders. With the assistance of the Lutheran opposition MLA Joh Bjelke-Petersen (who retained an interest in the Lutheran mission), they achieved the eventual return of the community to Hope Vale.

#### 19 April 2022

'Yiirmbal' National Heritage milestone for the Finalised Priority Assessment List.

#### 06 April 2016

Starcke East and Starcke West blocks handed back to the Binthi Warra to Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation.

23 March 1999 Hope Vale Community 110,000 ha of Aboriginal Freehold land owned by the 13 clans transferred to Hope Vale Congress Aboriginal Corporation in accordance with the 1997 Native Title

#### 17 May 1942

The military ordered the evacuation to Woorabinda internment and 'Muni' arrested and jailed in onboard the Poonbar. The elderly were taken to Palm Island and the remainder were taken by train to Rockhampton then trucked to Woorabinda.

#### 1939 -1945

Outbreak of World War II – Fear and suspicions of 'enemy aliens' with lapanese sympathies required registration. with threats of arrest and internment by government authorities.

#### 1939

to Muni's Eight Mile property.

#### 1908/1909

The Queensland Government extended the Reserve by 20,000 acres to incorporate the land along the McIvor River – Warrego Mission.

#### 1900/1902

'Muni' takes on the declining Bloomfield (Wujal Wujal) relocated from Mara

# 13 September 1887 22 June 1888 1897

2004

Authority.

Local Government

Reverend Georg Heinrich Wilhelm Poland Mission residents called him 'Mr Muni' or 'Father Muni' as 'muni' means black in Guugu Yimithirr as 'schwarz' is in German. He was also fondly known by those in the bush as 'Walarr' after his flowing beard.

**Group Aboriginal** 

*Aboriginals Protections* of Opium Act 1897 (later replaced by the Aboriginal Preservation and Protection Cooktown. to control and subdue people and forcibly removed

#### 1898

Dr Walter Edmund Roth Protector of Aboriginal Affairs for the northern



#### BLHGAC - What we do

We are a homeland-based not-for-profit Indigenous corporation and organisation. Our objectives include improving the cultural, economic, environmental and social well-being of our Binthi Warra community. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation is the peak organisation and trusted voice on behalf of the Binthi Warra for all of our Country.

#### Our work includes:

- Cultural and natural resource management activities across our estate;
- Development of partnerships to enable a strong future;
- Enhancing the employment prospects of our people and vocational skills and employment;
- Facilitation of projects to develop a healthy, sustainable and thriving community;
- Management of assets and infrastructure;
- Promotion and protection of our culture and tradition; and
- Providing opportunities for young people to maintain culture and involvement in our community.

Our work is cemented in the values and vision of our Binthi Warra people. The strategic vision for BLHGAC is to be standing in our country together as one Binthi Warra Bama/People. We are strong families:

- Confident in who we are;
- Proud of one another: and
- Proud of who we are.

#### The values that guide us

- We respect the land and all of our sacred places.
- We value our communities, families, our people.
- We contribute ideas to each other.
- We respect our Elders.

We are proud of our culture and our traditions and we welcome others with confidence and pride to experience and to respect it.

Refer to Appendix C (page 68) for our governance model and BLHGAC charter.



# ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES OF BINTHI COUNTRY

## **Our Country**

The outstanding natural values of our beautiful Binthi Warra Country are well documented, consisting of intact wetlands and rivers, significant coastal dune systems and sandstones, and important and threatened flora, fauna and ecological vegetation communities.

The sand country of Cape Bedford and Cape Flattery with characteristic dune landforms and associated vegetation is a prominent feature on the landscape. The Cape Bedford to Cape Flattery sand dune belt was placed on the Register of the National Estate (ID: 15071) and is under consideration for National Heritage Listing.

The Morgan and McIvor Rivers to the north possess fringing Nypa Palms that abuts the area. These river systems merge and drain into the Great Barrier Reef lagoon 22km south of Cape Flattery. The catchments are relatively undisturbed due to their inaccessible nature and are full of rare and endangered species.

There is connectivity with Daarrba National Park (CYPAL) water system to the north-west, while the south-eastern corner contains 'Of Concern' vegetation (semi-deciduous vine forests including black bean, northern laurel, bush walnut, native mango and figs) with low representation in the protected area estate. There are pro-grading dune systems on the east and west coast with associated vine scrubs and bird rookeries.

The Morgan and McIvor Rivers, sacred lakes, creeks, streams, springs, and lagoons are all interconnected. In addition, there is connectivity to Daarrba National Park (CYPAL) and Biinir National Park (CYPAL) at its north-western corner. The area contains significant rainforests, and areas of high riverine aquatic significance. There are woodlands, swamps and rainforest patches near the junction of Morgan and

McIvor Rivers, with riparian corridors. Areas of mangroves with high species diversity play an important role in sustaining fish nursery areas.

The origin, evolution and processes involved in the formation of coastal dune lakes are diverse. The water level of coastal dune lakes may change quite markedly between seasons. Globally, dune lake systems are a rare aquatic system and the Binthi Warra is a proud host of this outstanding natural phenomena.

# Our Statement of Significance for Register for the National Estate Register

The Cape Bedford/Cape Flattery area represents over 40% of the total dune field area on Cape York Peninsula and contains significant representations of the dune landforms and vegetation found on Cape York Peninsula. The area contains some of the best examples of varieties of parabolic dunes on the tropical Queensland coast, especially large, elongate parabolic dunes. The dune field is also one of a few places in the world with an extensive development of active, large, elongate parabolic dunes.

The Gegenwalle ground patterns in the dune field are the best developed and largest in the world. In comparison to other dune fields in north Queensland the area contains a significant diversity of constructional and erosional dune landforms including relict and active parabolic dunes, large elongate parabolic dunes, broad low ridges, intra-dune corridors and Gegenwalle, inter-dune sandplains, lakes and swamps and streams.







The dune field has high potential as a research site for studying Geomorphological processes. The mangrove and samphire vegetation in the north of the area is an important nutrient source for offshore seagrass beds that support a major population of the dugong, considered to be an internationally vulnerable species.

Two threatened skinks inhabit the area, one of which is only known from the Cape Flattery dune field. The area is habitat to three plant species at the known limit of their distribution and six nationally threatened plant species. The area also contains small occurrences of closed forest, which is a regionally uncommon vegetation type. The headlands contain regionally uncommon wave cut platforms.

# Our Binthi Warra Seasonal Calendar

Binthi people have always maintained our strong knowledge of how our plants and animals interact with the landscape and the seasons. The Binthi Warra seasonal calendar shows this interaction, along with the movement and availability of different species throughout each year.





# **ABOUT THIS PLAN**

Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation (BLHGAC) is the peak organisation and trusted voice for the Binthi Warra.

Binthi Country is an environmentally important area. The land and catchments are highly intact compared with other catchment areas in Queensland, and the rivers flow directly to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. At the time It is a plan for Binthi Country and Binthi people of publication, BLHGAC lands are shortlisted for the Finalised Priority Assessment List for National Heritage Listing nomination due their significant and natural values.

BLHGAC received support from Queensland Government and engaged the Centre for Appropriate Technology and Community Bred to undertake an adapted Healthy Country Planning process. The process recognises the extensive work BLHGAC have done to date, which enables us to draw from our existing planning documents to develop our Healthy Country Plan.

There are many pressures that BLHGAC have identified which are impacting our Country. We hope through the development of this Healthy Country Plan we can implement the priority strategies to address these pressures and provide benefits for catchment and marine environments.

# Our planning process

The Binthi Warra planning process is adapted from the Healthy Country Planning (HCP) process (see page 22 and 23). The Binthi Warra Healthy Country Plan will guide the work we do over the next 10 years.

and focuses equally on social, economic, cultural and environmental values. It builds a pathway towards a sustainable future, creating opportunities for jobs and enterprise. It helps to bring community together to decide what things are important to look after, and how best to look after them.

Binthi Warra has undertaken significant planning over the past few decades. Because of this, we decided to build our Healthy Country Plan based on the plans we have already done, and the knowledge we have already collected and recorded.

In addition to this we have set aside time at our BLHGAC meetings over the past year to discuss the plan, and to incorporate current issues and aspirations for our group and for Binthi people. Therefore this plan draws of the knowledge of our Elders, our Ancestors and our leaders. It also draws on the knowledge of our partners and from science.

The HCP process clearly sets out our aspirations, what the threats to our country are, and how we will reduce those threats over the next ten years, to protect our Country and our culture, and to provide a secure future for Binthi Warra.









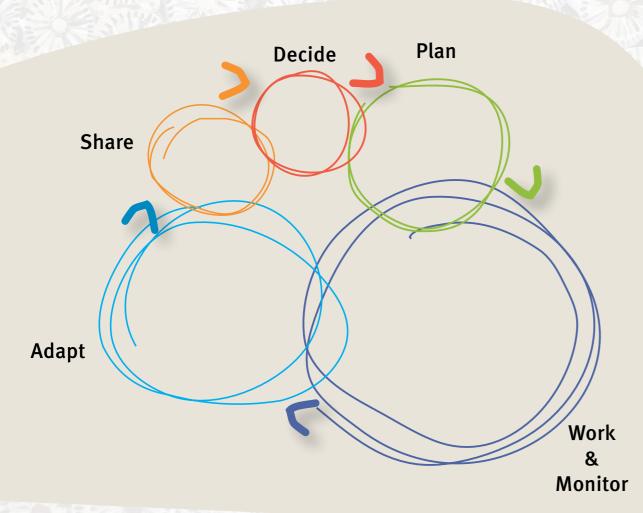




# **About Healthy Country Planning**

HCP was adapted from the 'Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation' an international set of common language and tools used worldwide on thousands of conservation projects. HCP is used by many different Indigenous ranger programs and First Nations groups across Australia. It differs from the 'Open Standards' as it incorporates culture, wellbeing, governance, infrastructure and economic development as well as looking after the land. By using this process we can communicate with others using the same 'planning for Country' language.

Developing the plan is just one component of the Healthy Country Planning process. In Figure 1 (below), it is represented in the define and plan stages of the progress. The work and monitor, adapt and share stages of the process are all referred to later in this plan.



#### Figure 1: The Healthy Country Planning cycle

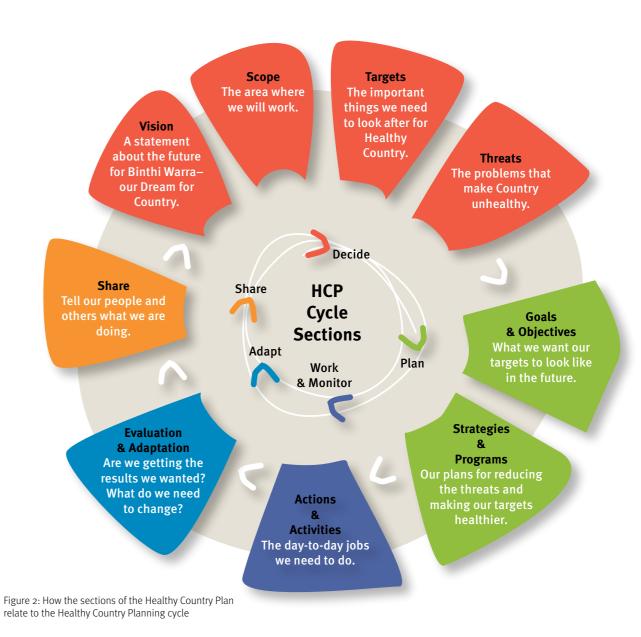
# The Healthy Country **Planning Cycle**

Healthy Country Plans all use the same language throughout.

- Vision –a statement for the future, what we are working towards
- Scope—the area where we will work
- Targets—the important things we want to look after
- Threats—the problems that make our targets unhealthy
- Goals and objectives –how we want things to be in the future

- Strategies—our plans for how we will tackle the threats and make our targets healthier
- Implementation plan—the work plans for the rangers, the actions they will take
- Monitoring and evaluation plan—the roadmap to see if what we are doing is improving the health of Country.

Figure 2 then shows how each part of the plan links with the Healthy Country Planning process.





# An overview of our Healthy Country Plan 2022-2032

Binthi Warra Bama-ngay Bubu Thana-ngan-Dabarrgu Ngarra-thinhu Magu-badaay-gu. Forever Protecting and Respecting the sacredness of our Land.

Nganthaan Binthi Warra Bama-ngay Binaa Nganthanun; Muguul-Muguul-ngay, Bama-ngay Ngamu-Gurraaygu; Nganthaangu Bada Gurra Bubu, Galmba Magu-badaay-gu. Forever honouring and respecting Elders, each other, and country.

# VISION





We are the custodians and renowned leaders of our Country aspiring to manage and protect its sacredness using traditional and modern techniques to shape a sustainable environment for future generations and to showcase to the world.

# **Programs**

Our programs are designed to reduce the impact of the threats to Binthi Country. We will monitor the impact of our programs to check that are working towards achieving our vision.

There are six programs under the Binthi Warra Healthy Country Plan:

- Community economic development
- Community engagement, with a focus on youth
- Cultural knowledge
- Getting our Country back
- Governance, advocacy and partnerships
- Working on Country.





# FOREVER PROTECTING

# **Targets**

Targets are the important things that need to be looked after. When we improve the health of our targets, we are working towards achieving our vision.

Health status Trend

- Important species including our totems and threatened species
- Binthi people
- Traditional knowledge and Sacred Sites
- Sand dunes and coastal country
- Water and waterways
- Mt Baird Station, and other properties and land holdings



**LEGEND** 

**Trend** 

# **Priority threats**

These are the biggest threats to our Country and our targets that we need to address first. If we reduce the threats, the health of our targets will improve.

## **Very High**

Not having access to all of our Country Mining and metal contamination Development, agricultural and roads Unethical research

Lack of resources

Wildfire

Lack of respect

Weeds and pest species

Illegal or suspicious activities on Country

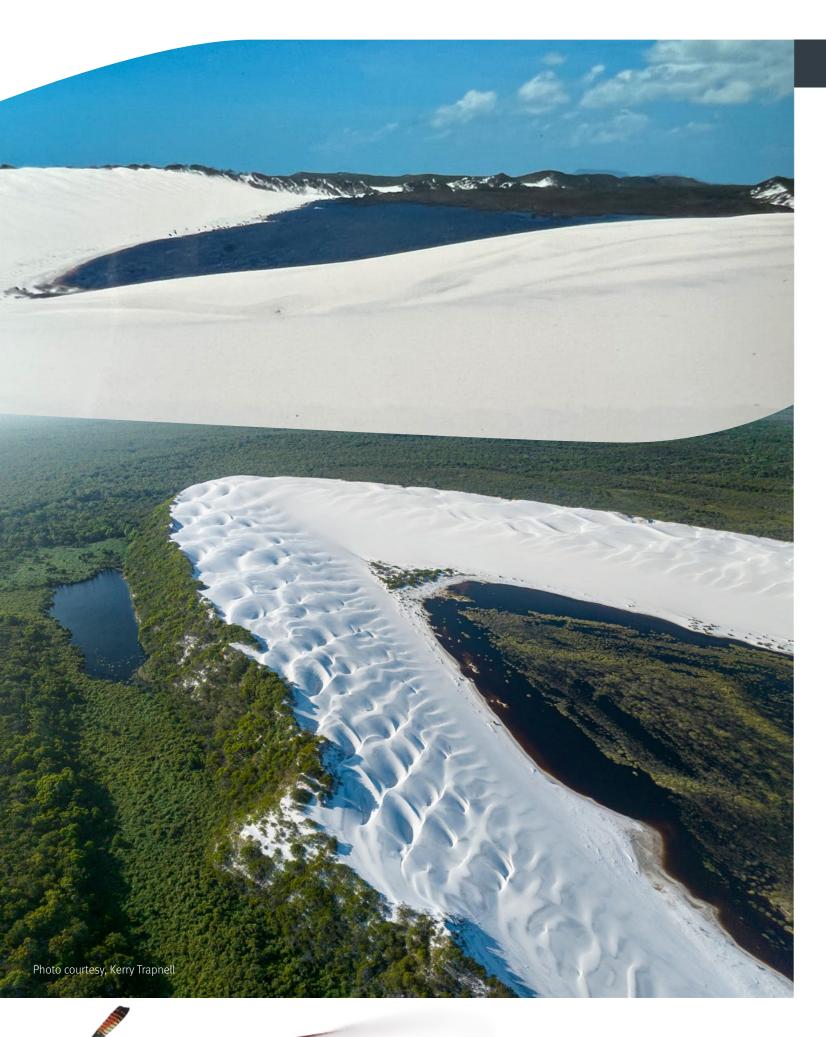
Feral animals

# High

Illegal hunting and taking too much Climate change Loss of transmission of cultural

knowledge and language





# BINTHI COUNTRY

(the scope of this plan)

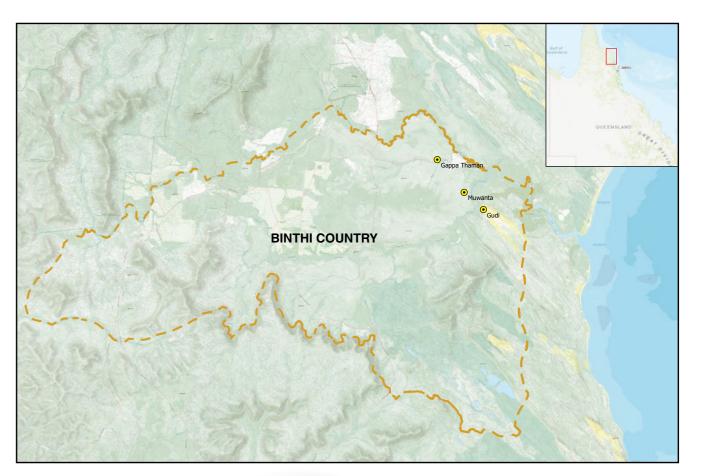
Binthi Country extends from south of Redbank, to Cocoa Creek and Bridge Creek and within the McIvor River and Morgan River catchments north of Cooktown. It comprises of mixed tenure and native title arrangements. Our neighbours are Buurnga, Daarrba/Daarpba/Dharrpa, Dhiidhaarr/ Thiithaarr/Thithaarr, Dyubi/Dyuubi/Thubbi/ Thuubi, Gambaar/Gambarr, Gulaal, Ngaadha/ Ngaatha, Nhirrbanh, Wundal and Wunuurr.

Binthi is the trustee for Burrngra land with Dhiidhaarr/Thiithaarr/Thithaarr, Dyubi/Dyuubi/ Thubbi/Thuubi, Ngaadha/Ngaatha and Nugal clans. Therefore Burrngra lands also fall within the scope of this plan.



Above: Dr Gertrude Stotz and Binthi Warra Elders on Binthi sacred site Guti undertaking fieldwork and mapping of Binthi Country for the Cape York Land Council (circa 1993).

Binthi Country is overlapped by Hope Vale Congress Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC, Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council boundary, Cape York Number 1 and Cook Shire Council boundary.





We are the custodians and renowned leaders

of our Country aspiring to manage and protect

its sacredness using traditional and modern

techniques to shape a sustainable environment

for future generations and to showcase to

the world.

>110V.

Binthi Warra Bama-ngay Bubu

Thana-ngan-babarrgu Ngarra-thinhu

Magu-badaay-gu

Forever Protecting and Respecting

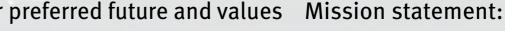
the sacredness of our Land.



Members set an example to our community for future. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation can ensure that the standards for traditional land management practices for

Our statement for honouring and respecting

Nganthaan Binthi Warra Bama-ngay Binaa Nganthanun; Muguul-Muguul-ngay, Bamangay Ngamu-Gurraaygu; Nganthaangu Bada Gurra Bubu, Galmba Maqu-badaay-qu.



Binthi Land Holding Group Corporation is committed to building a united clan that consistently practices the highest standards of our cultural land management to provide outstanding traditionally unique experiences in cultural and natural landscapes.

Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation is regarded as a creative and innovative Indigenous entrepreneur organisation that incorporates modern and traditional sustainability methods.

# Our preferred future and values

cultural and traditional solutions for a sustainable sustainability are world-class.

Elders, each other and Country.

Forever honouring and respecting Elders, each other and Country.





# **TARGETS**

Targets are the important things that need to be looked after. For Country and our people to be healthy, our targets need to be healthy. We have already done a lot of planning and work on Country so we are able to make a good judgement about how healthy our targets are now, and about the work we need to do to improve their health.

The legend on the right shows how we represent the health and trend of our targets.

We describe the health as 'very good', 'good', 'fair' or 'poor'; and the health trend (how the target health is changing) as 'getting better', 'staying the same or 'getting worse'.

### **LEGEND** Health status Trend Is the health getting any better of our target or worse? Very good Getting better Good Staying the same Fair Getting worse Poor

# Health status of Binthi targets

The table below summarises the current health status and trend of the Binthi targets.

Target	Current Health Status	Trend
Important species including our totems and threatened species	Ü	
Binthi people	<u> </u>	
Traditional knowledge and sacred sites	<u> </u>	
Sand dunes and coastal country	٥	
Water and waterways	Ü	_
Mt Baird Station, and other properties and land holdings	<u>=</u>	_

Figure 3: Table showing healthy status of Binthi targets. (etc.)



# TARGET ONE

Important species, including our totems and threatened species

#### Goal

By 2032 we will have increased protection for our important species, including our totem species, and their habitat.



This target is for all of the important species on Binthi Country. These species are important for many purposes including food, medicine, ceremony, pharmaceutical, Indigenous biocultural purposes.

The target includes our totem species – the white cockatoo (**Wandarr**), the centipede (**Galaaya**), Brahminy Kite (Wandi), and nightjar (Wambal).

It also includes the threatened species on Binthi Country, and the threatened ecological communities, including littoral rainforest and coastal vine thicket.

We have important sites for migratory birds and other special birds on our Country.

Our seasonal calendar identifies the species that are most important for Binthi people.

# **Target Health**

This target is in good condition, and staying the same, but we are very worried about what will happen if mining impacts our Country.



#### Indicators of health

This target is healthy when the threats of mining and tourism are reduced; we see increased numbers of species; habitat is healthy with the right species.



#### THREAT RANKING LEGEND

Medium

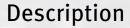
- Not having access to all of our Country
- Development, agriculture and roads
- Mining and metal contamination
- Unethical research
- Wildfire
- Lack of respect
- Weeds and pest species
- Ilegal or suspicious activity on Country
- Feral animals
- Illegal hunting and taking too much
- Climate change
- Loss of transmission of cultural knowledge and language

# TARGET TWO

# Binthi people

#### Goal

By 2032, Binthi Warra people will be regularly accessing our Country. Binthi people will be healthy, our Elders will be widely respected and cared for, and our youth are learning and participating in what we do. Wherever possible we will follow traditional Lore and Custom to respect each other and Country.



This target is about getting Binthi people living and working on Country, increasing employment opportunities, and respecting and caring for our Elders, each other and Country. It refers to increasing opportunities for our young people - to have access to continued education, for youth engagement in our programs, and getting them ready for future leadership opportunities.

# **Target Health**

Currently this target is in fair condition, and staying the same.



# Indicators of health

This target is healthy when employment opportunities for Binthi people increase; more Binthi people are on Country; our Elders are cared for, and youth are engaged.









- Not having access to all of our Country
- Unethical research
- Lack of respect
- Conflict, bad feeling and not respecting our Elders



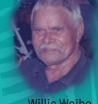














# TARGET THREE

# Traditional knowledge and sacred sites

## Goal

Our language is strong and being spoken. Our knowledge is passed on in the right way to the right people. By 2032, our sites will be thoroughly mapped, and our management of our sites will be strengthened.



## Description

This target is about honouring and knowing our traditional knowledge and sacred sites.

Elders are concerned that cultural practices and sacred knowledge be passed onto the young generations, to harness interest in their Country that still holds many cultural sites that have not yet been located or recorded such as burial sites, cave paintings and scarred trees.

Our sites include Guti, Buga-Gaalaaya Lagoon, Muwanta-Walnga Lagoon, (Thaman and Marriage ceremony site), **Gundurru**/Stingray and **Wandi/Brahminy Kite – Walnga-ngay** Lagoons (currently outside of Binthi title), resting places for the Ancient Stingray and Brahiminy Kite spirits, **Yiirmbal** (creation) Rainbow Serpent resting site at the McIvor River causeway.

This is also about our historical sites (Wayarego Mission and Palm Island), middens, dunes, mussels and yam **thaman** sites (National heritage area), cave paintings, and our stories.

# Target Health

Currently this target is in fair condition, and staying the same.



# Indicators of health

This target is healthy when our cultural sites and traditional knowledge are recorded and shared by, and with, the right Binthi people; when our cultural protocols are adhered to, in line with our Lore and law. Our management plans for cultural heritage and tourism are developed and operational; our seasonal calendar is complete, adopted and shared with Binthi people.

- · Not having access to all of our Country
- Development, agriculture and roads
- · Mining and metal contamination
- Unethical research
- Wildfire
- Lack of respect
- Feral animals
- Loss of transmission of cultural knowledge and language
- Weeds and pest species
- Illegal or suspicious activity on Country
- Illegal hunting and taking too much

# TARGET FOUR

# Our sand dunes and coastal Country

#### Goal

By 2032 the significance of our sand dunes and sandstone Country will be recognised, and they will be protected forever. The historic sites and the shared Palm Island will also be recognised and protected.

# Description

This target is about our spectacular sand dunes - parabolic dunes, elongated parabolic dunes, broad low ridges, intra-dune corridors and gegenwalle, inter-dune sandplains and coastal parabolic dunes and beach ridges. It also includes our coastal wetlands and estuaries, headlands and bedrock exposure.

There are significant cultural sites within our sand dunes.

Our sandstone Country holds our cave paintings with unique blue and green ochre – unique to our Country and very special to Binthi people.

Our historic sites are also close by – Warrego Mission, and Palm Island in the middle of McIvor River and shared with neighbouring clans.

# **Target Health**

This target is in very good overall, but we are worried about *Guti* collapsing because people are climbing and walking on it, and the wind is moving it. The lightening rods and sand samples are never to be removed from Guti and our other sand dunes.



# Indicators of health

This target is healthy when sand is no longer collapsing from people walking on the dunes, and we have protection (e.g. boardwalks) in place for access. National Heritage listing of our dunes, with our neighbours, will also indicate that the health of this target is improving.

- Not having access to all of our Country
- Development, agriculture and roads
- Mining and metal contamination
- Unethical research
- Lack of resources
- Illegal or suspicious activity on Country
- Loss of transmission of cultural knowledge and language
- Wildfire
- Lack of respect
- Feral animals
- Weeds and pest species
- Climate change

# TARGET FIVE

# Water and waterways

#### Goal

By 2032 our water and waterways will be in very good health, abundant with the right plants and animals, protected by Lore. Our water and waterways will be strong and able to stand up to the impacts of climate change, and they will be protected from the threats of mining, tourism, feral animals and weeds.

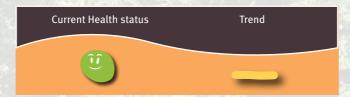
# Description

This target is about our near-pristine lakes, swamps, rivers and streams. It is about water quality and the health of our water, our riparian corridors and the keeping our water and waterways healthy for habitat of our plants and animals.



# **Target Health**

This target is in good condition and staying the same.



### Indicators of health

This target is healthy when we have good water quality; feral animals are kept out; riparian vegetation is intact, and revegetation has started; the right plants and animals are counted when surveyed. We need to undertake surveys of plants and animals, and hydrological studies of waterways, and their cultural and natural values so that we have a starting point to measure our actions.

- Not having access to all of our Country
- Development, agriculture and roads
- Mining and metal contamination
- Lack of resources
- Illegal or suspicious activity on Country
- Feral animals
- Weeds and pest species
- Climate change

# TARGET SIX

# Mt Baird Station, and other properties and land holdings

#### Goal

By 2032, we will be well on our way to seeing the return of all our traditional lands to BLHGAC. Binthi Warra traditional lands be recognised as ours and we are recognised as the Traditional Owners of Binthi as a whole – regardless of the various land tenures and titles in existence on our traditional estate at present - for the purpose of exerting some reasonable control of our estate in any negotiations that may take place in times to come. We will have established and successful pastoral, agricultural, tourism and other enterprises on our Country.

# Description

This target is about our Mt Baird Station and its boundaries, walnga-ngay (lagoons), other holdings we are responsible for, and other properties on our Country. It is about being to manage our land as we want to, and having the resources to do it. Currently our expenses are exceeding income on our properties.

This is about our business established on our country, purchasing of properties and land acquisitions; our gravel lease agreements.

# **Target Health**

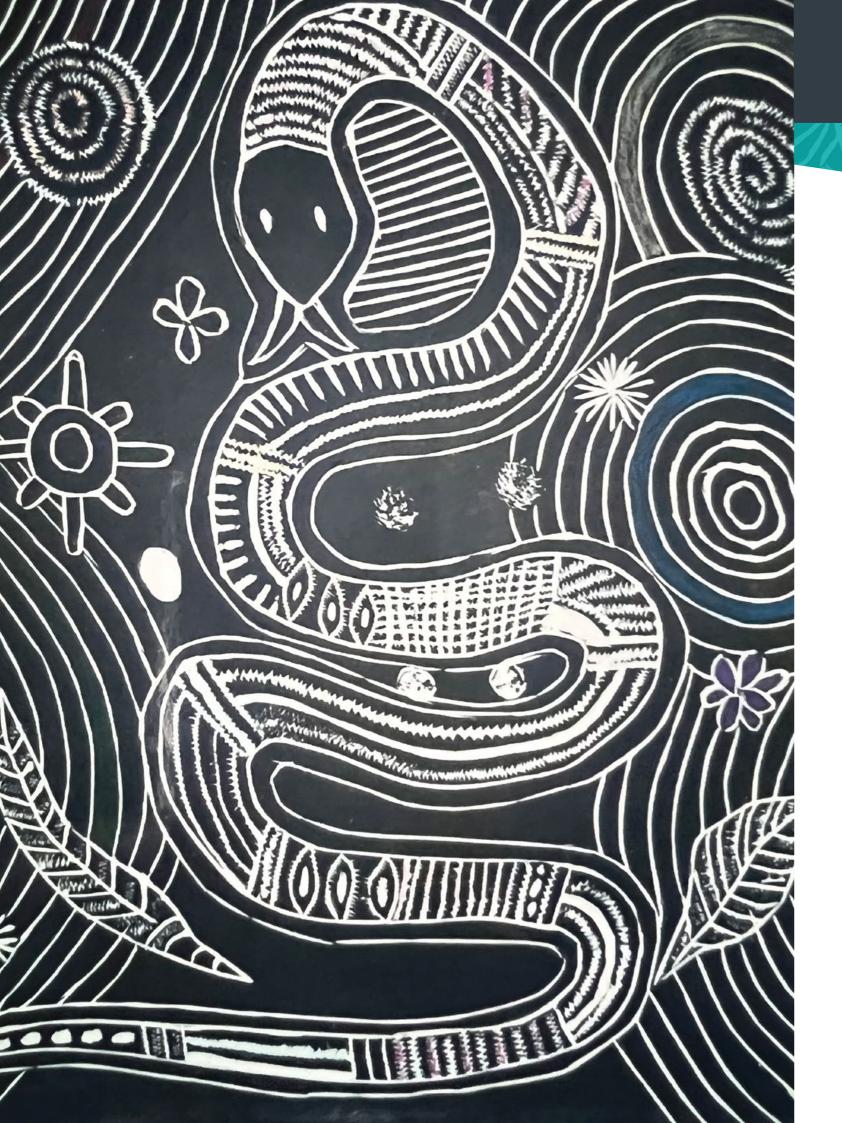
This target is in fair condition and requires attention and improvement.



## Indicators of health

This target is improving when we have access to all Binthi Warra Country, and is healthy when our land is back in our Custodianship. Our Country is healthy when we have the resources and finances to manage and operate; when we have partnerships with environmental groups, departmental agencies, philanthropists, scientists and businesses that support our goals; when we have successful businesses, a thriving ranger program and ecommerce opportunities.

# The biggest threats to our target Lack of resources Weeds and pest species • Illegal or suspicious activity on Country • Wildfire Feral animals



# THREATS TO OUR TARGETS - OUR PRIORITY THREATS

Threats are the things that make our targets unhealthy. We can make our targets healthier by reducing the impacts of, or removing, the threats.

Our priority threats are the ones that have the biggest impact on our targets, so they are the ones we want to deal with first.

Our threats are ranked using three criteria:

**Scope** – does the threat occur everywhere or only in some places?

**Severity** – will the threat destroy all of the target or only a small part of it?

**Reversibility** – can the damage caused by the threat by reversed?

The combined scores give an overall ranking for each threat, which tells us how bad the threat is, and this will help us to prioritise our programs. We can then rank our threats as very high, high, medium or low.

In HCP, there are colours associated with each threat, so that we can see how bad they are. Very high threats are red, high threats are yellow, medium threats are green and low threats are blue.

Very High	High
Not having access to all of our Country	

Development,
agriculture and roads

contamination
Unethical research

Mining and metal

. . . .

Lack of resources

Wildfir

Lack of respect

Weeds and pest species

Illegal or suspicious activities on countr

Feral animals

#### Medium

Poor governance

Impacts of tourism and visitors

Conflict, bad feeling and not respecting our Elders

#### Low

Poor communication and engagement

Figure 4: Summary of threats to Binthi Country based on threat ranking.

# THREAT RANKING

Threats \ Targets	Important species	Binthi people	Traditional knowledge and sacred sites	Sand dunes and coastal Country	Water and waterways	Mt Baird station, other properties and land holdings	Summary Threat Rating
Not having access to all of our Country	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High		Very High
Development, agriculture and roads	Very High		Very High	Very High	Very High		Very High
Mining and metal contamination	Very High		Very High	Very High	Very High		Very High
Unethical research	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High			Very High
Lack of resources			Medium	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High
Wildfire	High		Very High	High	Medium	High	Very High
Lack of respect	High	High	Very High	High			Very High
Weeds and pest species	High		High	High	High	Very High	Very High
Illegal or suspicious activity on Country	High		High	Very High	High	High	Very High
Feral animals	High		Very High	High	High	High	Very High
Illegal hunting and taking too much	High		High				High
Climate change	High			High	High		High
Loss of transmission of cultural knowledge and language	High	Medium	Very High	High			High
Poor governance	Low	Medium	Medium		Low	Medium	Medium
Impacts of tourism and visitors	Medium			Medium	Medium		Medium
Conflict, bad feeling and not respecting our Elders		High	Medium			Medium	Medium
Poor communication and engagement		Medium	Low				Low
Overall rating of threats to target	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High	Very High

Figure 5: Threat ranking summary against Binthi targets.





# Not having access to all of our Country

#### Threat level: Very High

While we have been working hard to get our Country back over decades, there is still land that we cannot access, and don't have ownership over. Binthi have cultural obligations to look after Country, our cultural sites and story places. When we don't have access to all of our Country, we can't maintain those obligations. Because of lack of time and resources we haven't been able to explore our Country, especially the cave paintings.

# Development, agriculture and roads

#### Threat level: Very High

Development, including building roads, causes erosion, sedimentation, pollution and loss of habitat. We are worried about the impacts that development will have on our Country. There are already gazetted roads in places that should be protected. The dune systems on our Country are culturally and ecologically important, and our waterways are near-pristine. We already have too many threatened plants, animals and ecosystems, so we need to make sure any new development on Binthi Country is carefully managed and monitored to create minimal impacts to our cultural and natural values of Country. This means looking to sustainable low impact agricultural, forestry, grazing and horticultural operations as well.

# Mining and metal contamination affecting water quality

#### Threat level: Very High

Mining is one of the biggest threats that is affecting the Binthi Warra. We are very concerned about the destruction to our very sacred land. Assessments from available data and expert judgement identified that both the Cape Bedford to Cape Flattery sand dunes and hydrological features and processes have natural and cultural values that satisfy World Heritage and National Heritage criteria. This threat is about big mining exploration on our Country that has big impacts on our cultural and natural values (like waterways and sand dunes), rather than low impact gravel extraction activities. We need to understand the impacts of mining on areas outside of the sand dunes.

#### Unethical research

#### Threat level: Very High

Researchers and their activities on our community are a concern for us. Some researchers do not follow ethical research guidelines, and some are not transparent in how they work or in their methodologies, nor do they share their knowledge.

We want to choose what research happens on our Country, and by whom. We want our research priorities met when people are on Country, and any new knowledge shared with us and our community. We want to manage our intellectual property and copyright, and be consulted on funding programs which overlap our Country.

No helicopters are allowed on Guti, ever.



#### **Objective:**

Restore customary care and respect for Binthi Country.



#### **Objective:**

By 2032, all development on Binthi Country will be sustainable, in line with our guidelines and standards.



#### **Objective:**

No mining on Binthi Warra lands, ever.



#### **Objective:**

We will continue to follow our strong policy and procedures about intellectual property, copyright and research.



#### Lack of resources

#### Threat level: Very High

This threat is about the when we don't have the funding, capacity, equipment and people to achieve our goals. It is also about the constraints placed upon us through funded programs, as some grant guidelines are very restrictive. While we have some projects underway, we don't have enough continuous funding and resources to achieve our vision.

### Wildfire

#### Threat level: Very High

Wildfire is a significant problem across
Cape York every year, and they are often
deliberately lit. On Binthi Country wildfire can
threaten our properties and our culturally and
ecologically significant sites. We want to use fire
in a culturally appropriate way for managing our
Country – there are some places that need fire,
and some places where we need to keep fire out.
To start, we need to stop wildfire across all of our
Country and reinstate our traditional patchwork
and mosaic burning systems in the cooler months
of June and July, within our seven-year cycle.

# Lack of respect

#### Threat level: Very High

This threat is about the problems that are created when people don't respect our Country, our Lore and our Elders.

# Weeds and pest plant species

#### Threat level: Very High

Weeds are plants that are in wrong places. In Binthi Country there are many roadside and pastoral weeds that have spread across our country. We don't have the resources to manage weeds across our Country. We particularly want to keep weeds out of our culturally and ecologically significant places.

Some of the main weeds of concern on Binthi Country are Sicklepod, Grader Grass, and Gamba Grass.

Weeds are mostly spread by vehicles, visitors and through the agricultural industry, for example, by cattle and other animals, and people walking into places where they should not be.



#### **Objective:**

By 2032, have the resources we need to achieve our goals, and to be back on Country.



#### **Objective:**

By 2028 the impacts of wildfire on Binthi Country will be reduced in line with our fire management strategy.



#### **Objective:**

By 2032 Binthi Lore, Country and Elders will be respected.



#### **Objective:**

By 2028 the impacts of weeds on Binthi Country will be reduced in line with our weeds management strategy.



# Illegal and suspicious activities on Country

#### Threat level: Very High

This threat is about when people are doing the wrong thing on Country. This includes trespassing - people exploring places where they shouldn't be. We have problems with people setting nets across our rivers. People have grown illegal drugs on our Country. Cattle duffing is also a problem.

# **Feral Animals**

#### Threat level: Very High

Feral animals are the introduced species that are damaging our Country. They include pigs, cattle, wild horses, wild dogs and feral cats. Pigs are causing significant damage to our waterways and lagoons, and we are working on ways to keep them out. We need to protect our sacred dunes from the damage that pigs, cattle and horses can cause. We need to learn more about the extent of damage caused by feral cats and wild dogs.



#### **Objective:**

By 2032, our established Ranger program will ensure our presence on Country so we can monitor and report on illegal activities.



#### **Objective:**

By 2028 the impacts of feral animals on Binthi Country will be reduced in line with our feral animal management strategy.

# Illegal hunting and taking too much from our land and water

#### Threat level: High

This threat is about when people go hunting on our Country without permission and also about when hunters take too much. Our hunting is governed by Lore and our seasonal plant calendar. In the past, we managed and shared our resources and visitors only took what they needed, not what they wanted. When illegal hunting occurs it creates problems and imbalances for Country and people, and for endangered species and ecosystems.

Illegal hunters cut fences and light fires and can cause wildfire.



#### **Objective:**

By 2028, we will control access to our Country and stop illegal hunting.

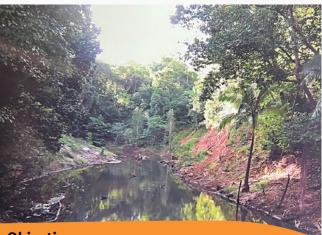
# Climate Change

#### Threat level: High

Climate change may affect our Country in a number of ways: less rain, more intense flooding rains, more intense cyclones, more severe bush fire seasons, rising sea levels and higher temperatures.

Our seasons are shifting, which changes how our plants and animals behave. We are worried about unpredictable rainfall, big storms and flooding, and how these changes can impact fire, and our water supply.

We want to be able to monitor the impacts of climate change and increase the resilience of our Country to change.



#### **Objective:**

By 2032 we will understand the risks to our Country from climate change, and we will *implement strategies which increase the* resilience of targeted areas and species that are under threat.



# Loss of transmission of cultural knowledge and language

#### Threat level: High

Elders are concerned that cultural practices and sacred knowledge need to be passed onto the young generations, so as to harness interest in their Country that still holds many cultural sites. Many sites have not yet been located or recorded such as burial sites, cave paintings and scarred trees. We need access to the sites to help us to do this.

## Poor governance

#### Threat level: Medium

Our Binthi governance is strong at the moment. However we recognise that if it fails in the future, there is a risk we won't achieve our vision for Country, and for this plan.



#### **Objective:**

By 2027 our cultural sites will be protected, and our Elders will be confidently passing on knowledge to younger people.



#### **Objective:**

We will continue to maintain and improve our strong governance and promote our Corporation as an attractive, well-functioning and compliant organisation.

# Tourist and visitor impacts

#### Threat level: Medium

Some visitors on Country don't understand that places are culturally and ecological important, do not follow rules and protocols, and have little respect for Country. It only takes a few people to do the wrong thing for big issues to arise. We are concerned that people will drive too close to culturally significant sand dunes, through our precious waterways and lagoons, and create unwanted tracks throughout.

People are using buggies, which can be dangerous, and we are worried about accidents occurring on our Country. The damage caused to our cultural sites cannot be fully repaired. People bring in weeds, and leave rubbish. They climb and walk on our sacred dunes and we are worried the dunes will collapse. The impacts of tourism and visitors to our Country is a big problem for us to manage. We need Traditional Owners on Country to manage tourist and visitor impacts.



#### **Objective:**

By 2027 the impacts of tourists and visitors on our Country will be visibly reduced, through the implementation of our Community Economic *Development Program.* 

# Conflict, bad feeling and not respecting our Elders

#### Threat level: Medium

We want to minimise the risks that may occur if conflict, bad feeling and Elder disrespect arises. While this isn't a big problem for us right now, we recognise that this threat could undermine our work and our goals. We want to give our Elders the recognition and respect they deserve.

#### **Objective:**

We will continue our obligations to care for our Elders and respect each other, and where needed follow our dispute resolution policies and procedures.

# Poor communication and engagement

#### Threat level: Low

Misinformation can occur if we are not communicating well. We want open, honest and transparent communication and engagement. Ethical guidelines need to be put into place to support this transparency. Involving our Binthi community is incredibly important to work towards our goals. It is about how well we communicate with others, and how others communicate with us. We need to know how to walk in both worlds. We need to be able to project ourselves to the world, presenting a positive corporate image, and having the resources to do that.

#### **Objective:**

We will continue to develop tools and enhance our communication and engagement with Binthi people and partners.





# **PROGRAMS**

Programs are our roadmaps for looking after our targets, reducing and managing our threats, and working towards our goals and vision.

They outline the key strategies we will use to improve the health of our targets, and look after Binthi people and Country. We can use indicators to monitor how well our programs are working.

There are six programs under the Binthi Warra Healthy Country Plan:

- Community economic development
- Community engagement, with a focus on youth
- Cultural knowledge
- Getting our Country back
- · Governance, advocacy and partnerships
- Working on Country.

# Community economic development program

**Goal:** Continue to improve our business and employment, financial management, governance and management and planning and priorities for community economic development.

#### **Strategies**

- Implement our MOU with Many Rivers for our community economic plan to maintain and enhance our financial and governance position
  - Many Rivers will help with business propositions e.g. Twin Rivers and Hoods, and business registrations, Bookkeeper, website development, financial management, cash flow and business planning
  - Develop our own cultural eco-tourism projects, campsites and infrastructure
- Continue with small scale gravel extraction as an income earner on Binthi Country

- Change BLHGAC status to charitable and not-for-profit organisation so we are eligible receive donations, and other financial benefits of charitable status.
  - Use charitable trust status (when received) to enhance our financial position to meet our land and sea management objectives, and to reduce the rates with the Cook Shire Council
- Grow our corporation and show our strong financial position by attracting and managing grants well
- Support Traditional Owner small business enterprises on Binthi Country and their donations to BLHGAC
- Create scholarships for Binthi people to get the education aligned with our aspirations for Country.

#### Threats addressed by this program:

- Not having access to all of our Country
- Lack of resources
- Unethical research
- Poor governance
- Impacts of tourism and visitors
- Conflict and bad feeling
- Poor communication and engagement.

- Number of new enterprises
- Increase/decrease in funding
- Increase / decrease of TO jobs on Country
- No new supporting organisations
- Financial success of enterprises
- Positive or negative reviews.



# PROGRAMS CONT.

# Community engagement program, with a focus on youth

Goal: Engage our community, particularly youth, to care for Binthi catchments and land.

#### Strategies

- Communicate with our members via our newsletter to keep them updated
- Identify and seek out opportunities that engage Binthi youth in caring for Country, such as a seasonal calendar competition for youth and Junior Rangers
- Increase the awareness of the importance of education, and support Binthi youth to obtain qualifications that contribute to Binthi development, relevant to community expectations, emerging technologies, and sustainability
- Identify and establish scholarship opportunities for Binthi people to get the education aligned with our aspirations for Country
- Work with Binthi Warra Elders and youth to bridge the knowledge gap
- Recognise and support the contribution of our volunteer members
- Find simple ways for our volunteer members and our staff to effectively contribute to our efforts for the advancement of the organisation
- Promote our compliance with *Corporations* of (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 to strengthen the community's assurance of the competence of BLHGAC
- Promote governance training
- Take a leading role in the community on issues such as climate change and sustainability

• Engage with Binthi youth to promote their organisational commitment and provide pathways for qualified Binthi youth to participate in Binthi programs.

#### Threats addressed by this program:

- Lack of respect
- Loss of transmission of cultural knowledge and language
- Poor governance
- Conflict, bad feeling and not respecting our Elders
- Poor communication and engagement
- · Lack of resources.

#### **Indicators**

- Level of satisfaction of members
- % of Binthi people involved in Binthi activities
- % of Binthi youth involved in Binthi activities
- No. of activities undertaken
- No. and reach of communication products and activities.



# Cultural knowledge

**Goal:** By 2032, we will map, record and document our cultural sites, knowledge and language for future Binthi generations.

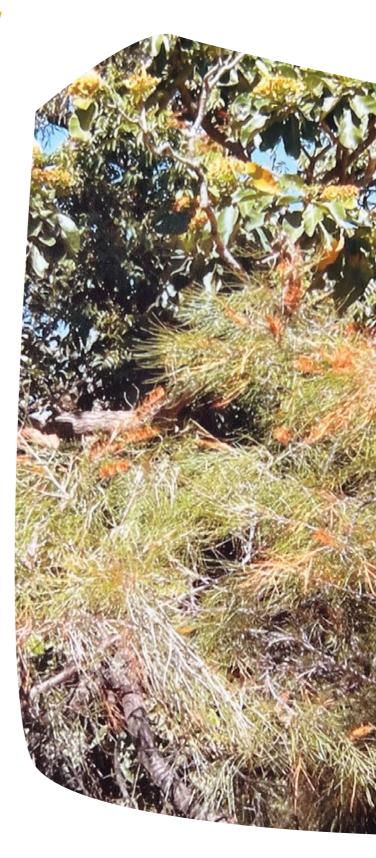
#### **Strategies**

- Get ESS up and running to record cultural knowledge and sites – data repository including for natural values
- Promote our seasonal calendar
- Develop posters with the ESS technology
- Protect our cultural sites through management of sites
- Elders and youth working together to share and learn Binthi culture and language.

#### Threats addressed by this program:

- Development, agriculture and roads
- Not having access to all of our Country
- Mining and metal contamination
- Unethical research
- Lack of respect
- Illegal or suspicious activity on Country
- Illegal hunting and taking too much
- Loss of transmission of cultural knowledge and language
- Poor governance
- Impacts of tourism and visitors
- Conflict, bad feeling and not respecting our Elders.

- ESS is operational and data is being recorded
- Level of satisfaction of members
- Seasonal Calendar and posters are complete
- % of Binthi young people involved in Binthi activities
- No. and effectiveness of protection measures for cultural sites.





# PROGRAMS CONT.

# **Getting our Country back**

Goal: Continue to restore customary care of Binthi Country, and strengthen our heritage protections and management practices.

#### **Strategies**

- Fully understand (through data collection and mapping) the status and title that is over Binthi lands
  - Understand the status of the native title claims that overlap on Binthi Country and the impacts for Binthi
  - Members understand the tenure arrangements and the legislations for Binthi Country and can have leases on clan lands
- Investigate the best type of tenure that works for us financially and legally – we need more advice on this
- Acquire Hoods and Twin Rivers (historic sites and thaman places - plentiful) and take advantage of the agricultural opportunities on those properties
- Pursue National Heritage Listing for our Binthi Warra Country, and work with other surrounding clans for National Heritage listing
- Continue to get support from Cape York Land Council for legal advice and to advocate for our rights (e.g. increased price for gravel)
- Investigate Indigenous Protected Area status - to see if it works for us financially and legally
- Pursue cultural heritage body status application
- Ensure we have Directors on the representative bodies such as Hopevale Congress and Cape York Number 1 claim, so we can manage and make decisions for our Country.

#### Threats addressed by this program:

- Mining and metal contamination
- Unethical research
- Lack of respect
- Loss of transmission of cultural knowledge and language
- Poor governance
- Conflict, bad feeling and not respecting our Elders
- Poor communication and engagement.

#### Indicators

• 90% of Binthi Warra Country under Binthi Customary Care.



# Governance, advocacy and partnerships

Goal: Maintain and strengthen our good governance for Binthi People, our corporation and for Country.

#### **Strategies**

- Continue to implement our Cultural Identity Maintenance Checklist for our programs and services
- Follow and promote our Governance Model and BLHGAC Charter (see Appendix 3)
- Resolve membership and Director issues with overarching native title claims
- Review and update our rule book to ensure we maintain strong governance
- Follow, review and update our policies and procedures to ensure good governance
- Implement dispute resolution policies and procedures
- Work with other groups for a big voice to advocate for our rights - cultural, economic, social, environmental, financial and legal
- Continue to advocate for no mining on or around Binthi Country
- Engage partners in research and tourism who are willing to co-design research, assist with Eco-tourism Australia certifications, fund jobs, and equally involve Binthi people, and are respectful of culture and Country
- Become certified and registered with Supply Nation
- Become a member of the Indigenous Art Code and register with Viscopy (The Copyright Agency), and join other groups and associations that support our goals.

#### Threats addressed by this program:

- Development, agriculture and roads Not having access to all of our Country
- Poor governance
- Lack of resources
- Conflict and bad feeling
- Poor communication and engagement
- Mining and metal contamination
- Unethical research
- Impacts of tourism and visitors.

- Level of satisfaction of members
- No. of new and continued partners
- Level of satisfaction of funding bodies
- Acceptance of annual audits and acquittals
- Implementation of Cultural Maintenance Checklist for our programs and services
- % of research on Country which in Binthi led, or co-designed
- Increase/decrease in mining activity
- 100% of Binthi Country protected from mining and visitor impacts.





# PROGRAMS CONT.

# **Working on Country**

**Goal:** By 2032 we will be working continuously on Country, and have strong heritage protections and management practices in place.

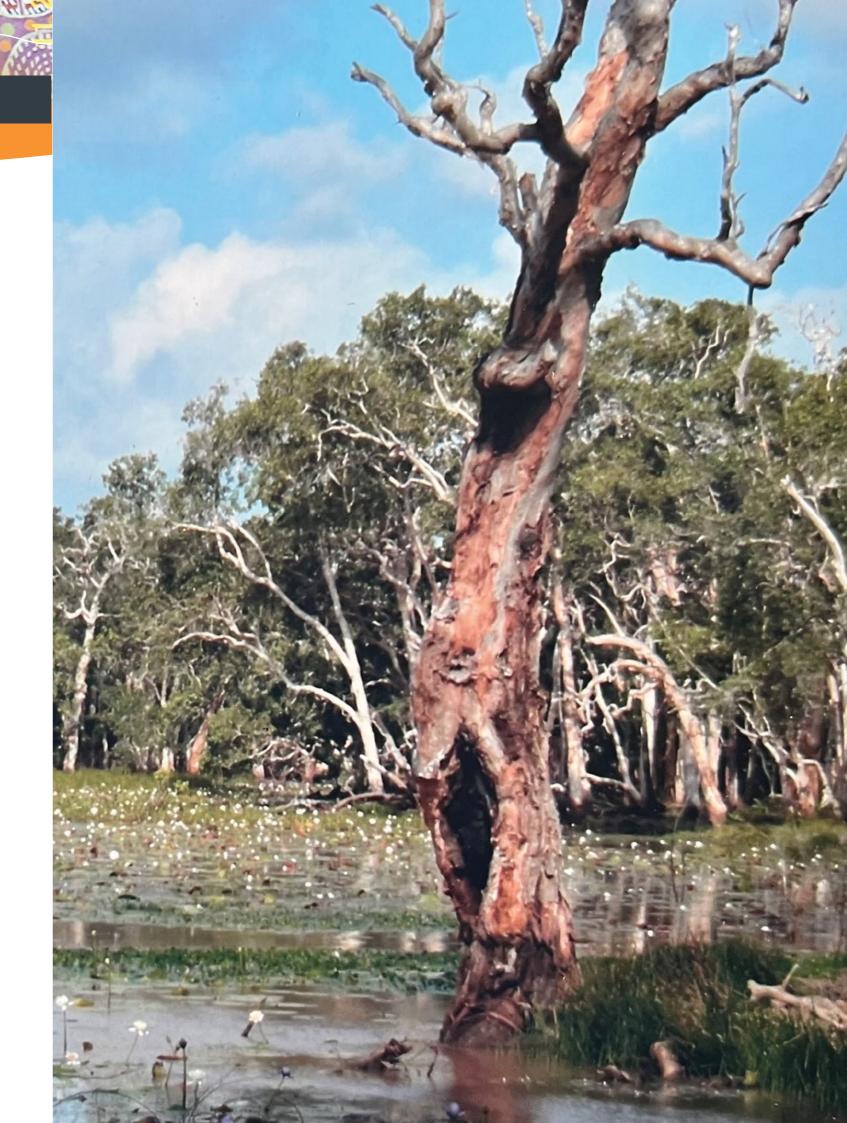
#### **Strategies**

- Continue to seek project funding to grow and provide jobs for our young people
- Implement our GBRF Community Action Plan project with Cape York NRM by 2023
- Establish our ranger program
- Investigate setting up Mt Baird as a ranger base
- Ensure we have effective policies and procedures in place to look after our staff, including WHS for people on Country
- Access Country via drone for monitoring and compliance
- Resource and implement projects that improve the health of Country and culture, and build that capacity of Binthi people.
- Agriculture and animal husbandry
- Fencing at Mount Baird and our lagoons
- Muwanta fencing project with Cape York NRM to reduce impacts of feral animals
- Investigate boardwalks and another entry onto Guti
- Collect and record baseline data about our ecological and cultural targets so we can measure the impact of our plans and projects
- Develop and implement plans to manage Country
- Fire management plan
- Weeds management plan
- Feral animals management plan
- Tourism management plan
- Investigate fee for service for work we undertake.

#### Threats addressed by this program:

- Mining and metal contamination
- Development, agriculture and roads
- Not having access to all of our Country
- Lack of resources
- Wildfire
- Weeds and plant pest species
- Illegal and suspicious activity on Country
- Feral animals
- Illegal hunting and taking too much
- Climate Change
- Loss of transmission of cultural knowledge and language
- Impacts of tourism and visitors.

- No. and type of full time and/or permanent jobs on Country
- % of Country burnt by wildfire annually
- % of Country burnt in line with the fire management plan
- Increase/decrease in feral animal and weed disturbance
- Increase/decrease in feral animal and weed presence
- No. of Binthi people trained in land and conservation management
- No. of training sessions to support implement of projects delivered
- % of increase tree coverage
- % of Country protected through fencing, fire, weed and feral animal management
- Presence/absence of species in the right places
- % of bare earth
- Level of satisfaction of Elders and Cultural advisors.



# MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation are tools we use to know if we are achieving our vision.

The Healthy Country Plan guides our work for the next 10 years, and as a working document, we need to track our work along the way to see if our actions are making a difference.

We will monitor the work we do, and the impact this work has on the threats, and on the health of our targets, over time.

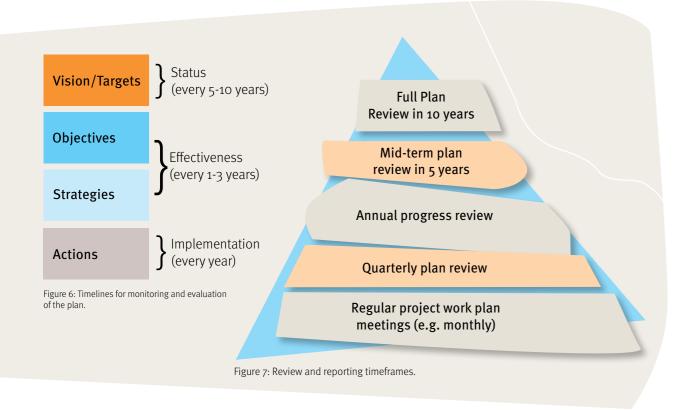
We have indicators which show us how our work is tracking. We look at the indicators to see if things are improving as we work towards achieving our vision.

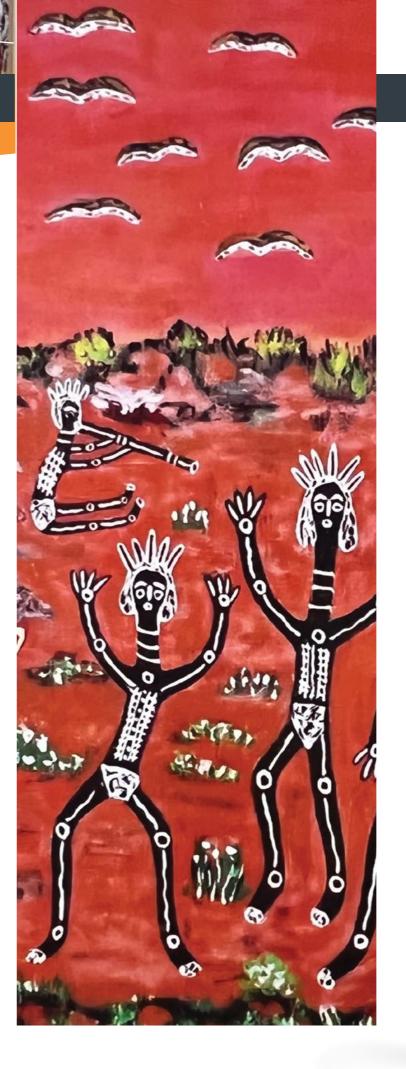
As we begin to implement our plan and learn more about what is happening on our Country, we can adjust our actions, as things change and improve.

Every quarter at the Directors meeting, BLHGAC discuss how the work is going—are we doing what we said we would do?

Once a year, the BLHGAC will review the work completed in the past year and see what impact it is has had on the threats. Are we on the right track to achieve our objectives? Does anything need to change?

Every five years, the BLHGAC will review the health of the targets to see if the work we are doing to reduce the threats and improve the health of our targets is working. Are we on track to achieving our goals and our vision? Does anything need to change?





# COMMUNICATING OUR WORK

# **Sharing**

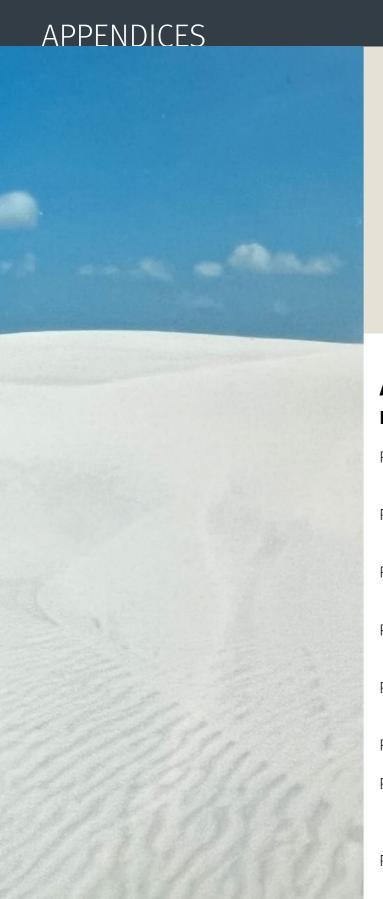
When the work from our plan gets underway, it is important to tell the story of what we are doing and how we are going. We want our Elders, our children and our community to support our work and get involved in our programs. Telling our story is also an important way to record the work we are doing, share what we have achieved and show the changes we are seeing for Country.

BLHGAC will share the progress of the Binthi Warra Healthy Country Plan through community meetings, reports, newsletters, and through community social media sites.

We will keep governments and funding bodies informed of what we do at meetings and through our reports.







**Appendix 1** – Roy McIvor Artwork found in this plan

**Appendix 2** – Threatened Species list

**Appendix 3** – BLHGAC Governance Models

and Charter

1) Capacity Building Cultural Governance:

2) Governance Model; and

3) Charter

**Appendix 4** – Summary of Binthi Warra plans, policies and procedures.

# Appendix 1 Roy McIvor Artwork found in this plan

Birri-ngay Gurra Walnga-ngay (Homeland Rivers and Lagoons) 2006

Page 10 Ngayu Binaa Ngathu Bubu (I Love My Country) 2007

Page 10 Binthi Birri Gurra Nganyja-wi (McIvor River and Bora Ring)

Page 17 Maji Bithaaygu Buliili (Raindrops) 2007

Page 28 Dunggan-ngay Thawuunh-thirr-gu (Friendly Spirit People) 2007

Page 42 Yiirmbal (Rainbow Serpent)

Page 55 Walahn gurra Matharr (Good hunters and lazy hunters) 2006 (McIvor, R. (2010:61))

Page 65 Gambie Wuuri (Flying Fox Dance) 2003

# Appendix 2

### **Threatened Species List**

Queensland Government, Wetlandinfo. Wildlife of McIvor, Morgan rivers and coastal creeks (Eastern Cape York) water *quality improvement plan catchment* https://wetlandinfo. des.qld.gov.au/wetlands/facts-maps/wildlife/?AreaID=wqipmcivor-morgan-rivers-and-coastal-creeks-eastern-cape-york (accessed 31 August 2022).

There are 1193 species listed on Wetlandinfo in Wildlife of McIvor, Morgan rivers and coastal creeks (Eastern Cape York) water quality improvement plan catchment (which includes Binthi traditional lands). The table below shows 27 species that are listed as critically endangered (1), endangered (5),

near threatened (7) and vulnerable (14) under the *Nature* Conservation Act 1992, with their corresponding Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 listing.

Under the Environment Protection and *Biodiversity* Conservation Act 1999 9 species are listed as vulnerable (6), critically endangered (1), endangered (1), and extinct (1).

Kingdom	Class	Scientific Name	Common Name	NCA	EPBC
animals	birds	Cyclopsitta diophthalma macleayana	Macleay's fig-parrot	CR	
animals	birds	Limosa lapponica baueri	Western Alaskan bar-tailed godwit	Е	V
animals	birds	Numenius madagascariensis	Eastern curlew	Е	CE
animals	birds	Charadrius leschenaultii	Greater sand plover	E	V
animals	birds	Charadrius mongolus	Lesser sand plover	E	E
animals	birds	Esacus magnirostris	Beach stone-curlew	E	
animals	birds	Hirundapus caudacutus	White-throated needletail	NT	V
animals	reptiles	Ctenotus rawlinsoni	Cape heath ctenotus	NT	
animals	reptiles	Lerista ingrami	Ingram's lerista	NT	
animals	reptiles	Lygisaurus tanneri	Endeavour River litter-skink	NT	
animals	reptiles	Chelonia mydas	Green turtle	NT	V
plants	land plants	Leichhardtia araujac		NT	EX
plants	land plants	Leichhardtia araujac		NT	
plants	land plants	Cucumis costatus		V	
plants	land plants	Dianella incollata		V	
plants	land plants	Acacia solenota		V	
plants	land plants	Pseudolycopodiella limosa		V	
plants	land plants	Pseudolycopodiella limosa		V	
plants	land plants	Homoranthus tropicus		V	
plants	land plants	Xanthostemon arenarius		V	
plants	land plants	Acriopsis emargina	pale chandelier orchid	V	V
plants	land plants	Habenaria rumphii		V	
plants	land plants	Habenaria xanthantha		V	
plants	land plants	Cyclophyllum costatum		V	V
plants	land plants	Hedyotis novoguineensis		V	
plants	land plants	Stackhousia sp. (McIvor River J.R.Clarkson 5201)		V	
plants	land plants	Stylidium elachophyllum		V	

Conservation Act 1992

Critically endangered Endangered

Near Threatened Vulnerable

NCA – Status under the Nature EPBC – Status under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

EX: Extinct

CE: Critically endangered

Endangered Vulnerable



# **Appendix 3**

#### **BLHGAC Governance Models and Charter**

- 1) Capacity Building Cultural Governance;
- 2) Governance Model; and
- 3) Charter

#### 1) Capacity Building Cultural Governance

While both Indigenous and western governance models share many core principles of integrity there is perhaps an important defining difference. While Traditional Owner groups understand that both their western governance framework and their Indigenous governance framework must similarly ensure sound financial management it also MUST ensure Traditional law/lore and custom is followed and upheld.

Western governance is a straight-forward tick the box process primarily focused on the accountability, compliance and performance of organisations. Indigenous governance is slightly more complex. Indigenous governance, while committed to the performance, accountability and compliance principles of western governance, requires additional cultural-specific measures to be included and upheld to ensure cultural performance, accountability and compliance in accordance with individual Traditional Owner group culture, custom and law/lore.

There can be on occasions where the two governance models clash within the boundaries of Traditional law and custom where rules are strict – both committed to the principle of transparency. Whereas cultural law/lore places demands on particular relationships that are driven by the cultural law/lore imperative. This is where the two worlds can and do collide.

The way an Indigenous organisation can achieve comprehensive and clear communication with their family and community is one crucial marker of effective Indigenous governance. They must be able to demonstrate that they are doing this and must build in checks and balances that can withstand any criticism from their family and community that claims that they are not being kept informed.

#### 2) Governance Model

#### Performance

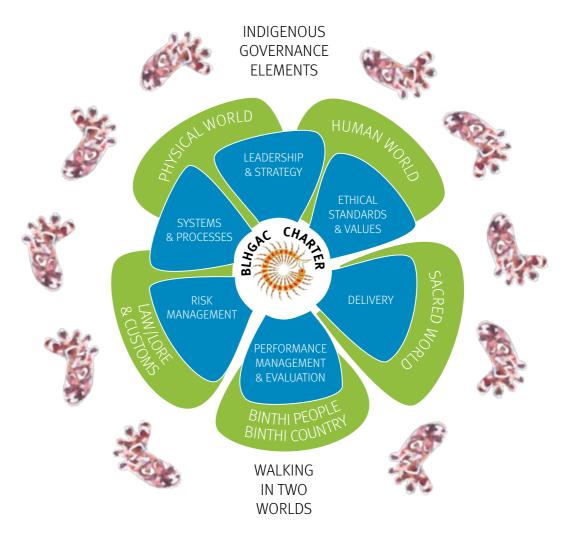
- Enhance individual and collective Traditional Owner outcomes through continuous improvement;
- Improve delivery of the Corporation through effective use of resources; and
- Improve results through use of effective performance information and systems.

#### Accountability

- Act impartially to meet expectations with integrity, transparency, openness and law/lore and custom;
- Ensure confidence in decisions and actions through clear procedures, roles and responsibilities; and
- Fulfill cultural obligations and legislative requirements in the best interest of our land, people and environment.

#### **Guiding Principles**

- · Accountability and transparency;
- Binthi people, Binthi country;
- · Commitment to collaborate with external stakeholders;
- Cultural honour and integrity in accordance with law/lore;
- · Cultural and public defensibility; and
- Work for the common good of all Traditional Owner groups.





#### 3) Charter

The Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation is the trusted voice and peak body for the Binthi Warra representing our collective cultural, social, spiritual, heritage, environmental and economic concerns, interests and aspirations of ALL Binthi Warra with connection to Binthi Country.

#### Our Purpose

Our purpose is to ensure the effective management of all project activities connected to Binthi Country by bringing Binthi Warra together with external industry and government stakeholders to build collaborative and mutually respectful partnerships.

Our strategy is to ensure the acknowledgement of our Free, Prior and Informed Consent rights are upheld by all external stakeholders and that the full and proper account in project decision making processes take into consideration our collective cultural, social, spiritual, heritage, environmental and economic concerns, aspirations and interests. We are committed to:

- Contributing cultural, social, spiritual, heritage and environmental knowledge to inform, guide and streamline government regional interest development approval processes and cultural heritage and environmental policy development;
- Contributing to the sustained cultural, social, spiritual, heritage and environmental protection and preservation of the Binthi Warra, for current and future generations;
- Ensuring Binthi Warra and external stakeholder compliance with legislative conditions set out in the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 and other relevant intergovernmental legislative conditions set by the Commonwealth and Queensland governments;
- Ensuring transparency of communication and decision making within and across all Traditional Owner groups, and with external stakeholder that we are engaged with;

- Ensuring that ALL project development activities within Binthi Country are subject to rigorous culturally and scientifically informed environmental assessment;
- Ensuring that ALL programs and services within Binthi Country meets our training need for members and will assist in the preservation and protection of Binthi cultural and natural heritage and as specified in the Cultural Identity and Maintenance Checklist and Policy and Programs and Services Policy: and
- Unlocking and maximising the economic potential and participation of Binthi Warra in balance and harmony with our Natural, Physical and Sacred worldviews and our obligation, in accordance with our law/lore and custom, to take care of our land, people and environment.

#### **Guiding Principles**

The following principles guide our commitment to working in collaboration with each other, across our respective Binthi Warra families and with our external stakeholder:

- Our knowledge and information must be acknowledged and embraced. Our voice has to be heard to ensure authentic cultural. social, spiritual, heritage and environmental protection and preservation of Binthi Country, for the common good of current and future generations;
- We apply ethical business practices and sound systems that are informed by cultural lore and custom and western governance to support our sustainable development;
- We celebrate our ancient lore and custom and will always act with cultural honour, integrity, dignity and humility in all that we do;
- We represent our people and respect our diversity and our individual rights to ensure Binthi People, speak for Binthi Country; and
- We are the continuous and oldest living people and culture in the world and carry cultural. spiritual and environmental knowledge and information transferred through thousands of generations from ancient millennia.

#### Membership

A person who is eligible to apply for membership must be:

- an Aboriginal person who is entitled by Aboriginal tradition to the use or occupation of land to which the Corporation holds title whether or not the traditional entitlement is qualified as to place, time, circumstances, purpose or permission; or
- a Statutory Title Holder (Refer to rule 15); and
- over the age of 18 years.

#### Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal **Corporation Directors**

The Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation Directors works in collaboration with the Queensland Department of Environment and Science and acts as the first point of contact for all external stakeholders wishing to engage and facilitate project engagement activities with the Corporation.

#### **Contact Details**

blhgac@gmail.com

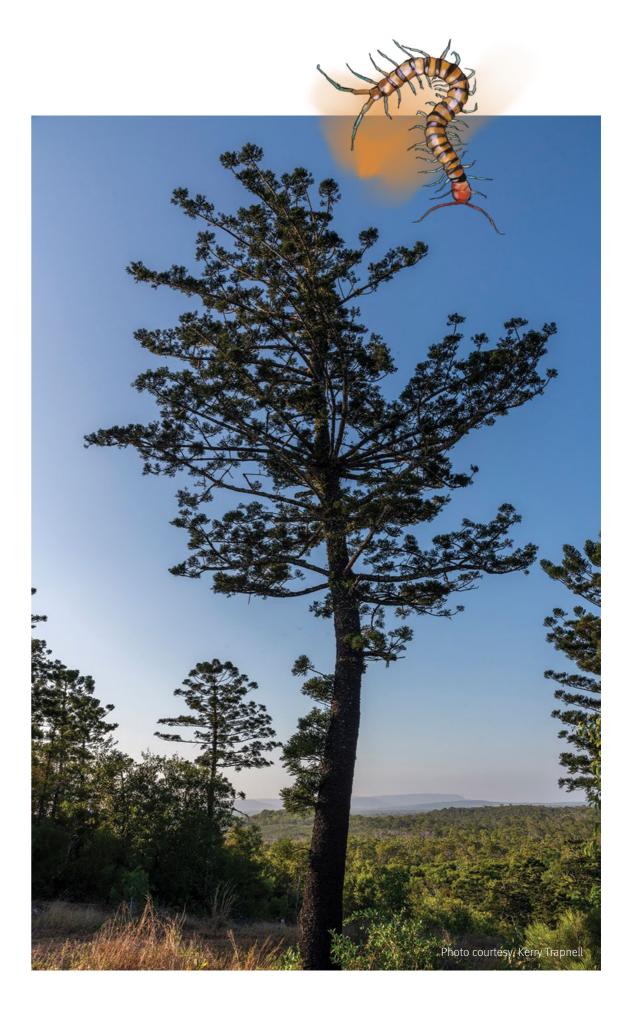




# Appendix 4 Summary of Binthi Warra plans, policies and procedures

- 1. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, Child Safe Organisation
- 2. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, Code of Ethics
- 3. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, Covid Safe Organisation
- 4. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, First Aid Management
- 5. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, First Aid Policy and Procedures
- 6. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, Emergency Management Plan
- 7. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, Marketing Plan
- 8. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, Policy and Procedures Manual
- 9. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, Scenario Plan
- 10. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, Strategic Plan
- 11. Binthi Land Holding Group Aboriginal Corporation, WHS

For more information on our plans, policies and procedures, contact our office (details on back of the plan).















We are a homeland-based, not-for-profit Indigenous organisation, working on behalf of our Binthi Warra community. Contact us through our website **www.binthi.weebly.com**.