



Taribelang Bunda
Healthy Country Plan

Acknowledgements

Our Taribelang Bunda Elders and Ancestors

National Indigenous Australians Agency

Front Cover Illustration

Booral Booral Dreaming (Big River dreaming)

By Uncle Raymond Broome ©

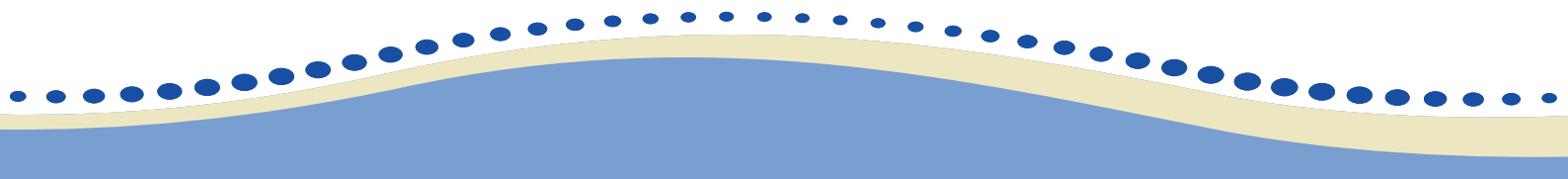
Maniwundun, (a long, long, long time ago). There was no rain, no water. The river had dried up. The only way the mob and the animals could survive was to eat the kangaroo grass and get the moisture from that. The Elders knew through their intuition that there was water somewhere. The Elders called a meeting, a yarning circle. How are we going to find the water, is someone hiding it? It was decided to have a *yawarr* (corroboree), all the neighbouring tribes were invited. At the *yawarr* there was to be a big dance, the best and fastest dancer was picked out. These dancers would be able to stir up the dust at the *yawarr*. The *waba ngoor* (wallaby) was selected to dance as he was the fastest. They also needed someone to watch as well, who can camouflage, to sneak and sticky beak around at the *yawarr* while the dust was being kicked up. *Murralong* (death adder) was selected to sneak around as he can change his colour to whatever his surroundings are. Just before the *yawarr* started the *murralong* turned camouflage and saw the *milbi* (freshwater turtle) come out of his shell. The *milbi* had a drop of water on his wet lips. *Murralong* went to Elders and told them about this. The Elders made a plan to go ahead with the *yawarr*. *waba ngoor* would kick up the dust during the *yawarr*, *murralong* would stay in camouflage, *waba ngoor* would be ready for *murralong*'s signal when *milbi* went into his shell for a drink of water. When *murralong* gave the signal, *waba ngoor* would kick *milbi* onto his back. Out rushed all of the water, the river started to flow, the springs started to flow. The curse was lifted. *Ungarra* (sea eagle), the guardian of the water, guided which way the water flowed out to ocean.

Moral – share don't be greedy.

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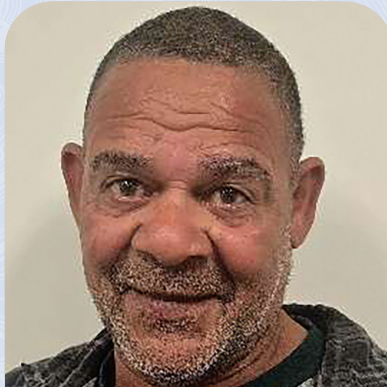
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The Board



WAYNE MOTHE
Chairperson



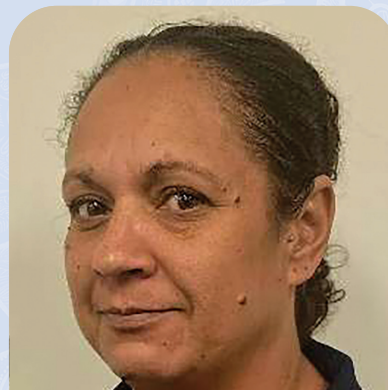
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Message From The Chair

As Chair of the Taribelang Aboriginal Corporation Board, I am proud to present our Healthy Country Plan – a powerful and living document that reflects the voices of our Elders, the strength of our culture, and our unwavering commitment to Country.

For too long, our culture, knowledge and voices have been ignored. But that time is over. It is now our time. We carry generations of knowledge, lore and responsibility that cannot be separated from the future of this land.

Our door is always open to genuine partnerships, to those who are willing to walk with us for the betterment of Country. Our Ancestors taught us the importance of respect and acknowledgement of other mobs and we continue this today. Culture is sacred. And with culture comes respect, integrity, and truth.

Our connection to this land and water stretches back over 60,000 years, carried through our stories, our ceremonies, our totems, and our responsibilities. This plan brings together that cultural authority with the tools of today – mapping, partnerships, and science – to guide how we continue caring for our Country into the future.

We know our Country is under pressure. Our rivers are being polluted, our sacred sites are at risk, and our totem species are fighting for survival. But we also know that healing is possible. When we walk in both worlds – cultural and scientific – and lead with respect and truth, we can protect what remains and bring life back to what has been damaged.

This Plan is not just about the land. It's about our people – our youth walking strong in language, our Elders sharing knowledge, and our communities shaping a future grounded in identity, self-determination, and belonging. We are living Culture.

On behalf of the Board, I thank all who contributed to this Plan. Let this be our shared commitment – to honour our Ancestors, to care for our totems, and to protect our Country for generations yet to come.

W. W. Mothe

Wayne Mothe
Chair
Taribelang Aboriginal Corporation



OUR COUNTRY AND US

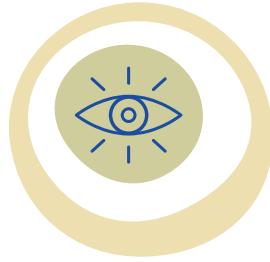
The Taribelang Bunda Peoples are the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters that span the Bundaberg region and surrounding areas, with boundaries south to Burrum River, Baffle Creek to the north and the Mount Perry ranges to the west. Our connection to Country extends back more than 60,000 years and continues today through deep cultural knowledge, spiritual connection, and a strong sense of responsibility to care for Country.

Taribelang Bunda Country includes rich coastal, riverine, and inland environments, which have long sustained our people through hunting, fishing, gathering, and ceremony. Our ancestors developed an intricate understanding of the seasonal cycles, flora and fauna, and the interwoven relationships between land, water, and sky. This knowledge has been passed down through generations and continues to guide our responsibilities as caretakers of Country.



Today, Taribelang Bunda Peoples are working to strengthen our cultural identity and support the health of our land, waters, and people through community-led initiatives, cultural revitalisation, and partnerships grounded in respect and shared values. Our Healthy Country Plan is an extension of this commitment, ensuring that traditional knowledge and contemporary practices come together to protect, heal, and sustain our Country for future generations.

We would also like to recognise our traditional neighbours and our shared space tracks, our traditional permission systems and our deepest respect for each others Country.



OUR VISION

Taribelang Bunda People will be strong, proud and empowered through cultural knowledge, quality education, economic participation and growth.

We will care for our Country as our Ancestors did – with integrity, respect and culture – ensuring our lands, waters and sacred sites are protected, our language and knowledge systems are strong, and our people are healthy and connected for future generations.



OUR GOALS

Taribelang Bunda Country spans mountains, coastal and riverine saltwater, freshwater, grassland, wallum forest, woodland and wetland ecosystems.

Our Country is home to:-

- ▶ The Spirit of our Ancestors,
- ▶ Our People,
- ▶ Our Totems and their kinship species,
- ▶ Culturally significant sites,
- ▶ Culturally important flora, fauna and threatened species

Our goal is to care for, restore and protect Taribelang Bunda Country in ways that honour our cultural knowledge, sustain our ecosystems and strengthen the wellbeing of our people and future generations.

This Healthy Country Plan aligns with our Strategic Plan (see Appendix B) and will be used to support:-

- ▶ Strong and healthy culture based on integrity and respect
- ▶ Healthy Country
- ▶ An engaged and connected community
- ▶ Recognition and respect
- ▶ Economic sustainability
- ▶ Healthy people
- ▶ A strong voice for our Mob



OUR TOTEMIC SPECIES

Our Caring for Country aspiration begins with our Totemic species. We must take action to protect our totemic species and their kinship species (see inter-relationships at Appendix A - Kinship Species). Our Totemic species are:-

Theebine (Lungfish)

The Australian lungfish (*Neoceratodus forsteri*) is an ancient species endemic to Queensland. It is a living fossil, with ancestors dating back over 380 million years. The Lungfish is listed as vulnerable.

The Theebine originates from Taribelang Bunda Country in the Burnett River.

Kinship species for the Theebine include the Milbi and River Grass (*Vallisneria nana*).



Milbi (White-Throated Snapping Turtle)

The White-throated snapping turtle (*Elseya albagula*), a critically endangered species, holds deep cultural significance for us as a totemic animal. Beyond its cultural value, turtles play a vital ecological role in maintaining water quality and the overall health of our river system.

Like the Theebine the Milbi is vulnerable in its Traditional river systems including the Burnett River.

Kinship species for the Milbi include the Black Bean, River Grass, Milbi Grass and White Cedar.

The Burnett River was once so thick with Red Cedar and White Cedar – these were harvested for timber and their removal from the ecosystem has left our



river banks exposed and vulnerable to degradation. This has had a direct impact on the water quality in the river systems on Taribelang Bunda Country.

Meebar (Salt Water Turtle)

There are three species of saltwater turtle that frequent our Country including the Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), Green (*Chelonia mydas*) and the Flatback (*Natator depressus*).

The kinship species for the Meebar include Sea Grass, Mangroves and the Dugong that shares the Kinship species.

The Loggerhead turtle is listed as vulnerable, located at Mon Repos is the largest rookery in the Southern Hemisphere. The Taribelang Bunda People refer to the area known as Mon Repos as Meebarburra meaning place of many turtles.

Kabii (Brown Bee)

The native bee (*Austroplebia australis*) is a stingless bee that are a foundational species keeping us and our ecosystem healthy. The honey from the Kabii provide a direct food source, but the Kabii is also critical to pollination of our native plants that provide food and medicine. The wax from the Kabii has been used by Taribelang Bunda People in traditional tool making for tens of thousands of years and continues today.

Kinship species for the Kabii include the Red and Brown Bloodwood trees where the Kabii nest.

A direct threat to our Kabii is the clearing of Bloodwood trees from the ecosystem and the introduction of European Bees and the African Tulip Trees which is an invasive species that kills the Kabii.

Ungarra (White Breasted Sea Eagle)

The white breasted sea eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) is a top order predator that features heavily in our Traditional stories. We look for the Ungarra in the Paperbark Trees (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) the presence of both are indicators for a healthy wetland system.

Kinship species for the Ungarra relate to seasonal stories of the Melaleuca and the Mullet. The Taribelang Bunda People used the Melaleuca flowering season and the presence of the Ungarra as an environmental indicator to reference the start of Mullet spawning in the estuaries.



OUR PRIORITIES



Reconnection to Country

Our culture is based on integrity and respect. We are a proud People with strong cultural connection. There is very strong evidence supporting the Taribelang Bunda connection to the area. We will facilitate the reconnection and the recognition of connection to country by:-

- ▶ Truth telling
 - Developing on country immersion programs to share Traditional Ecological Knowledge and strengthen our cultural connection.
 - Educating the wider community about our Ancestral connection and the frontier war history of our Country

Strengthening our Culture and Language

Many of the place names in the Bundaberg region have roots in the Taribelang Language. Our priority is to strengthen our language within the Group but also to re-establish recognition of our culture and language within the community.

We will achieve this by:-

- ▶ Advocating for signage acknowledging the Taribelang Bunda origin of place names.
- ▶ Obtaining funding to reclaim our Language by us and for us.
- ▶ Connecting language back to Country.
- ▶ Facilitating Knowledge transfer from Elders and knowledgeholders to the next generation.

Protecting our cultural heritage

Cultural heritage is our tangible and intangible connection to Country. It is our foundational identity.

Our first priority is to incorporate mapping to identify our tangible and intangible cultural heritage. This process will involve restablishing/reclaiming our cultural boundaries. It is, and always has been, our inherited responsibility to care for cultural heritage.

As part of this plan we have identified some (but not all) sites of cultural significance and outlined our plans for protecting them.



Improving cultural custodianship

The Taribelang Bunda community came together and agreed that the health of the environment must be improved while honouring our cultural traditions.

To strengthen cultural custodianship, we will continue to deepen our role as knowledge holders and country managers by formalising cultural mapping activities, leading monitoring and restoration activities and educating the wider community about our values, language, connection to country and historical sites.

Establishing a dedicated research facility and cultural centre on Taribelang Bunda Country would support intergenerational knowledge transfer, healing and advocacy for our People.

Cultural Custodianship and Conservation Leadership

Taribelang Bunda People acknowledge that our Ancestors have maintained unbroken connection to, and responsibility for, caring for Country for over 60,000 years. Today, we recognise the urgency and responsibility for this generation to reassert our cultural authority by actively leading stewardship efforts to protect our lands and waters. Strengthening the role requires meaningful partnerships with key stakeholders.

We will lead conservation efforts through the integration of Traditional Knowledge and contemporary science to protect, restore and enhance the health of our ecosystems. Our approach will be grounded in cultural protocols, place-based knowledge and a commitment to long-term sustainability.

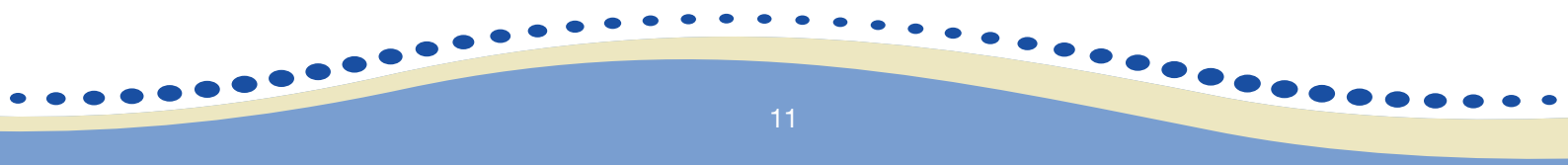
To support this, we will continue to undertake the following activities:-

▶ Education and Capacity Building

- Develop and deliver culturally informed education programs in local schools,
- Provide training and mentoring opportunities for Taribelang Bunda youth in land and sea management and research,
- Re-establish connection through knowledge transfer,
- Establish a seasonal calendar which identifies environmental indicators,
- Create education resources and
- Protect culturally significant landscapes

▶ Cultural Mapping and Site Protection

- Undertake detailed cultural mapping to identify, document and protect sacred and significant sites.
- Collaborate with Government and conservation bodies to formally recognise and protect culturally significant landscapes





► Habitat Restoration and Ecosystem Monitoring

- Establish a program to monitor species of cultural significance such as our totems and their kinship species, and contribute to data collection on endangered and threatened species.
- Establish a native nursery for restoration activities along our river systems and coastal areas.
- Implement revegetation projects using culturally significant plant species to stabilise river banks and improve water quality.
- Collect seeds to create native seed bank.

► Knowledge Exchange and Research Partnerships

- Design research projects with Universities and scientific institutions to support healthy ecosystems, informed by Traditional Knowledge and guided by our Elders and our communities priorities.
- Advocate for data sovereignty and ethical research practices aligned with Indigenous Data Governance principles.

► Cultural Education and Storytelling

- Continue education through culturally appropriate truth telling
- Create interpretive signage and public education materials to raise awareness of our connection to Country, Cultural Values and environmental priorities.
- Develop a save the Milbi campaign to raise awareness of the cultural significance and the threats and concerns to the white throated snapping turtle.

► Taribelang Bunda Circular Economy

- Create a native nursery to supply organisations and community programs including revegetation projects.
- Repurpose native timber being cleared from development sites to create artefacts.
- Creating place-based business for introduction of language and naming opportunities on country

It is our cultural responsibility and the priority for this plan to care for our totems and their kinship species.



CARING FOR COUNTRY



The Taribelang Bunda People have a sacred responsibility to care for Country, as passed down through countless generations. Our Ancestors have walked this land and navigated these waters for over 60,000 years, guided by the signs, stories and rhythms of Country itself. Our connection is not passive – it is active, spiritual and bound by obligation. When Country speaks, we listen.

Today this obligation remains. However, our Country faces serious pressures from human induced environmental degradation, urban, mining and agricultural development, and climate change. We are responding to those threats by asserting our cultural authority and combining Traditional Knowledge with western science to restore balance and ensure our Country remains strong and thriving.

What is threatening our country?

Freshwater Country

Freshwater systems are under increasing stress due to:-

- Declining Water Quality – Agricultural run-off, mining and pollutants are degrading river health
- Riverbank Instability – clearing and development has caused erosion and loss of native vegetation
- Loss of vegetation and infrastructure affecting natural waterflow and water quality.
- Depletion of Rivergrass (*Vallisneria nana*) – this culturally important plant provides habitat for Milbi (White throated snapping turtle) and Theebine (lungfish).

Saltwater Country

Our oceans and salt marshes are experiencing:-

- Seagrass loss – sediment run-off is smothering key feeding areas for Dugong and Turtle.
- Habitat loss and degradation – clearing and coastal development have caused erosion, habitat fragmentation, pollution, light and noise disturbance and loss of native vegetation including mangrove and wetlands.
- Saltmarsh loss and degradation – lack of fencing and cattle impact on saltmarsh includes trampling and compaction, altered tidal flow, overgrazing, disturbance of nesting areas and nutrient pollution from urine and faecal matter.
- Overfishing – decline of fish stocks and ecosystem imbalance.
- Marine debris and pollution.

Biosecurity Threats

- Invasive fauna and flora – feral pigs, foxes and invasive pests are damaging native habitats.
- Ecological imbalance – loss of apex predators such as the Dingo out of the ecosystem have altered food webs. As a direct result natural predators such as the goanna and the water rat numbers have increased placing additional pressure on threatened species.
- Lack of cultural management – without active cultural burning and seasonal knowledge, ecological pressures will continue to increase and become unbalanced.

What a healthy country looks like

Healthy Country is healthy people. It is our Country that speaks to us through its changing seasons, animal behaviours, plant cycles and sacred places – it is our Country that breathes, feeds, teaches and protects us.

Healthy Country is not just about biodiversity it is about our cultural connection, our ongoing knowledge systems and our obligation to our Lore.

For Taribelang Bunda People a healthy Country, is an untouched natural beauty and would include:-

Cultural and Community Wellbeing

- Cultural knowledge including seasonal calendars, dreaming stories and language being actively shared and practiced.
- Young people learning from Elders on Country through ranger programs, art, storytelling and ceremony.
- Sacred sites and massacre places being recognised, protected and healing with Taribelang Bunda signage, interpretation and access.
- Community-led initiatives that support self-determination, economic development and environmental leadership.
- An ongoing role for the Taribelang Bunda People in planning, research, decision-making and governance related to land, sea and cultural heritage management.
- Protection of totem species whose presence reflects balance and belonging.

Freshwater Country

- Thriving Rivergrass beds - an abundant supply of Rivergrass (*Vallisneria nana*) providing critical habitat for the Theebine and the Milbi.
- Stable riverbanks with native trees and grasses holding the soil and filtering the water.
- Clear, flowing rivers and streams that are free of pollutants and support a healthy ecosystem.
- Restored wetlands and waterholes that provide spiritual and ecological refuge.
- Cultural access to freshwater places for ceremony, teaching and food security.
- Cattle farmers understanding the need for 100m preservation buffer along riparian zones.





Saltwater Country

- Thriving seagrass meadows across sites such as Baffle Creek, Burrum Heads, Walkers Point, Theodolite Creek and One Mile Creek that support Dugong and Turtle to thrive.
- Healthy mangroves and saltmarshes acting as fish nurseries and filters for sediment and nutrients.
- Clean open tidal creeks and estuaries, free from cattle encroachment, invasive weeds and unnecessary vehicle traffic.
- Coastal and island sites reviewed for cultural heritage and appropriate cultural signage and access.
- Active cultural use of sea country for fishing, ceremony, story sharing and intergenerational learning.



Land Country

- Ecosystems free of invasive species, with native flora such as bloodwood, melaleuca, gums, wattles and river mangrove growing in balance.
- Healthy populations of native animals including culturally significant animals such as goanna, water rat and dingo.
- Reintroduction of traditional fire practices to manage vegetation, reduce fuel loads and regenerate Country.

Our actions to Care for Country

We will lead conservation and healing efforts through the following actions:-

Advocate for Change

- Advocate through local council as the voice of Country
- Open access for Taribelang Bunda People to Country

River and Wetland Restoration

- Replant Rivergrass (*Vallisneria nana*) in culturally significant sites.
- Stabilise riverbanks through revegetation with native species.
- Implement cultural water monitoring to detect pollution and respond quickly.

Marine and Coastal Protection

- Establish seagrass and mangrove nurseries and lead site selection to restore habitats.
- Partner with key stakeholders to monitor Dugong and Turtle numbers and foraging behaviour.
- Document and manage island and reef-based cultural sites affected by sea level rise.



Cultural Knowledge and Education

- Develop and teach seasonal calendars based on traditional indicators.
- Support school-based programs that teach Taribelang Bunda cultural and environmental knowledge.
- Record and safeguard Dreaming stories and place names linked to land and sea.
- Advocate for signage and protection of culturally significant sites.
- Develop a campaign for awareness and protection of the milbi – the freshwater white throated snapping turtle

Biosecurity and Invasive Species Control

- Conduct feral animal management, targeting pigs, foxes, cats and dogs across Taribelang Bunda Country.
- Remove invasive weed species from saltmarsh and freshwater ecosystems.
- Explore the reintroduction of cultural fire and native predators to rebalance ecosystems.

SIGNIFICANT PLACES

Taribelang Bunda Country is a richly diverse cultural landscape that spans saltwater, freshwater, grassland, wallum forest, woodland and wetland ecosystems. These ecosystems not only sustain native species but also carry the deep spiritual and ancestral connections of our People.

Our Country is home to:-

- Sacred and historical Cultural sites
- Threatened species and ecological communities
- Culturally significant flora and fauna
- Living landscapes that hold ancestral memory, identity and Lore.



Many sites remain undocumented, and cultural mapping is a priority to ensure these places are protected and their stories are shared with future generations.

Cultural Sites of Significance

Burnett Heads Fish Trap

The Burnett Heads fish trap is an iconic reminder of the traditional knowledge, the engineering prowess and our Ancestors deep connection to Country. The fish trap is a sophisticated intertidal structure designed to catch fish by managing tidal flows.

Threats:

- Sediment deposition caused by altered river flows now threaten to bury the site permanently.

Planned Actions:

- The site will be documented through shared story, lidar drone mapping and ecological assessment to preserve knowledge and support cultural heritage protection



Tantitha

Tantitha is a place of strong ancestral connection, linked with traditional use of freshwater resources and ceremonial activity. Our old people grew up in Tantitha and have a very strong sense of loss not being able to access Country.

Cultural significance:

- Red Bloodwood country – significant species for Kabii
- Un-recorded grave sites
- Lagoon is a significant gathering place and camp site

Planned Actions:

- Further mapping and documentation of stories from site.
- Advocate for access to the lagoon for Taribelang Bunda People.
- Request permission to rehabilitate the lagoon.
- Establish a plan to buy-back Country in the Tantitha region.



Rosedale/Berajonda

This area is rich in family history and intergenerational knowledge. It contains:-

- Grave sites
- Oral history about Grandad Possum (Jimmy Possum), the sole survivor of a massacre who was hidden in the hollow of a tree as a baby and raised at Rosedale Station. Grandad Possum lived his entire life at Rosedale Station.

Planned Actions:

- Mapping and protection of the grave sites.
- Document community led storytelling projects to preserve this powerful history.
- Cultural survey the entire area.
- Re-introduce traditional cool burn to improve the ecosystem.

Baffle Creek

Baffle Creek is a pristine river system and is the only unregulated river systems in the region.

Cultural significance:

- Known for its ecological integrity and sacred values.
- Home to a birthing tree, requiring immediate cultural mapping and protection.
- Home to Milbi and Theebine.

Planned actions:

- Establish cultural and ecological monitoring.
- Avocate for World Heritage or Indigenous Protected Area recognition of Baffle Creek's intact ecosystem.



Boreham Park

Boreham Park is a community recreation space situated in an urban area with strong cultural connection.

Cultural significance:

- Charlie Boreham was the last full blood – he died at Barambah and was known as the King of Bundaberg.

Planned actions:

- Advocate for signage and recognition of Charlie Boreham and his family.

Cedars Creek

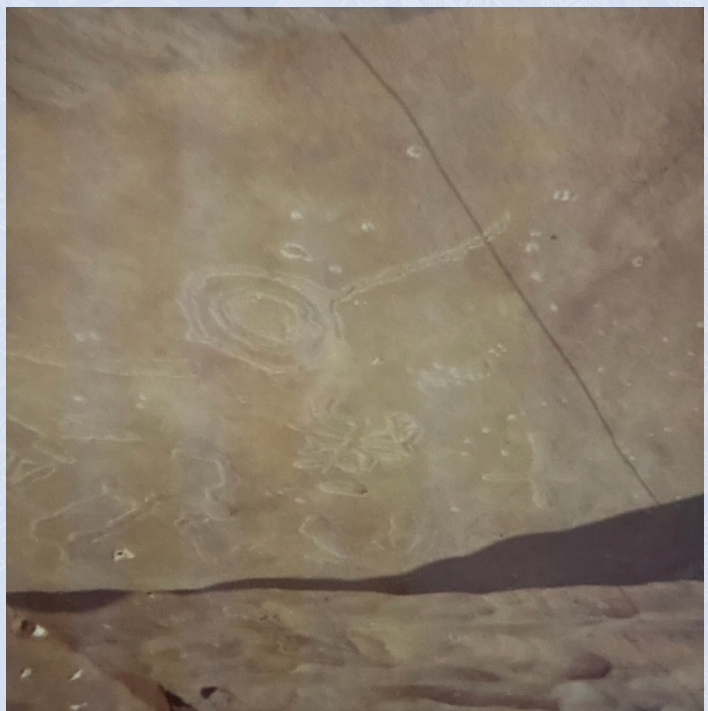
Cedars Creek is a waterway which flows south towards the Burnett River.

Cultural significance:

- Cedar Creek is a known massacre site.
- Cedar Creek is a milbi nesting area and home to the Theebine.
- Over one hundred ancient rocks were relocated from Cedars Crossing. These rocks bore deep cultural markings and hold strong connection with the Taribelang Bunda People.
- Cedar Creek also contains sighting trees of cultural significance.

Planned actions:

- Increase public awareness of the significance of the massacre site, rock engravings and sighting trees.
- Establish a plaque for community awareness.
- Activate any buy-back opportunities to purchase the property where the massacre site and sighting trees are.



Taribelang Bunda Rock Engravings

Paddy's Island

Paddy's Island lies about 3km northeast of Bundaberg City. The Taribelang Bunda People now know Paddy's Island as Burrayabung (place of many dead).

Cultural significance:

- Paddy's Island was the scene a large scale massacre where hundreds of Taribelang men, women, children and babies were killed at the hand of early white settlers.
- The Island continues to have spiritual significance with ancestors residing there, un-recorded grave sites and it's visible reminder of survival and cultural resilience.

Planned actions:

- Re-establish family gathering for healing.
- Mapping of grave sites.
- Cultural Mapping.
- Traditional caring for country activities to include traditional cool burns to rehabilitate the Island.



Bingera National Park

Bingera National Park encompasses 54 square kilometres of diverse coastal ecosystem. It contains a significant Wallum ecosystem remnant which is considered vulnerable to endangered. It provides habitat to many threatened species including the Emu, the Great Glider, Kabii, native flowers and the threatened *Melaleuca cheelii* (Honey Myrtle).

Cultural significance

- Native species that have cultural connection and rely on the Wallum habitat include emu, great glider, native bees, native flowers and threatened species.
- Our old people advocated for this area to never be touched.

Planned actions:

- Environmental mapping of Bingera National Park will be completed to allow planning for management actions to ensure the integrity of the ecosystem.
- Cultural Heritage must be recorded as this area is under threat from sand mining.



Walla Island

Walla Island is protected flood-prone riverine land along the Burnett River. It is a lesser known Island near Booyal. It provides habitat to many threatened species including the Emu, the Great Glider, Kabii, native flowers and the threatened *Melaleuca cheelii* (Honey Myrtle).

Cultural significance:

- Walla Island is a significant site to the Taribelang Bunda People.

Planned actions:

- Environmental and cultural mapping of Walla Island will be completed to allow planning for management actions to ensure the integrity of the ecosystem.
- Cultural Heritage must be recorded as this area is under threat from sand mining.



Walla Island

Mon Repos – Meebarburra (place of many turtles)

Cultural significance:

- Men's business area/ceremony site is currently on the site of the Girl Guides. Bora Rings have been destroyed.
- Culturally significant Midden Sites still exist and must be protected.
- Freshwater springs are healing springs.
- The freshwater could also be dug up in the sand – this is what kept the Meebar coming back to the area.
- Stone Quarry with stone axe artefacts.



Planned actions:

- Insert Taribelang Bunda People and stories back into the landscape at Meebarburra.
- Cultural Tours to be run by Taribelang Bunda People.
- Attend turtle training to be involved in turtle conservation efforts.
- Educational signage to advise of cultural significance including Lore for men's business areas.



Theodolite Creek - Woodgate

Theodolite Creek is in Southern Taribelang Bunda Country

Cultural significance:

- Home of Woopai – John Broom's brother
- Shell midden sites
- Gathering for old people on the way to Bunya Mountain gathering
- Transition country

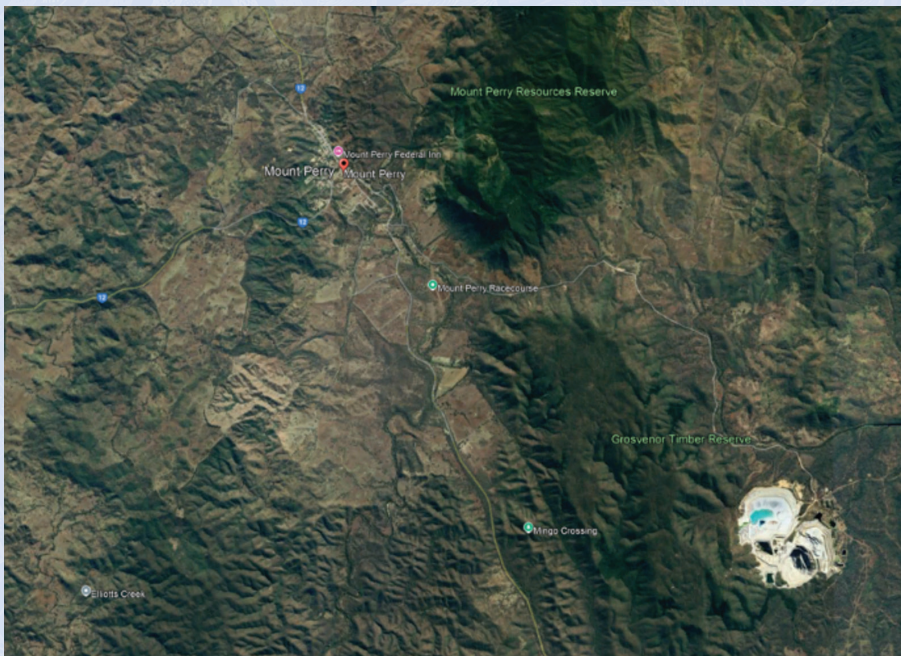
Planned actions:

- Cultural mapping
- Signage and educational awareness program of the cultural significance of the area.



Mount Perry

The Taribelang Bunda People know Mount Perry as Boolboonda.



Cultural significance:

- Western boundary of the tribe.
- Burial grounds.

Planned actions:

- Cultural mapping.
- Lead mining rehabilitation efforts.
- Advocate for change and respect of Taribelang Bunda Country.



Barolin Reserve to Elliot Heads

Barolin Rocks is within the Southern Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The entire area from Barolin Reserve to Elliot Heads holds cultural significance to the Taribelang Bunda People.

Cultural significance:

- Barolin Rocks – culturally significant formations where fresh water was gathered.
- Quarry – stations – different semi-circles – each section were working on different artefacts.
- Midden site.
- Traditional cave sites.
- Coloured sands are a significant site on an area currently for sale for development.

Planned actions:

- Quarry is protected simply because the identity of the site is not disclosed
- Cultural mapping required – significant rock formations, explore and survey to map cultural significance
- Lobby to protect significant cultural heritage with coloured sands and other cultural sites that are at risk of destruction with potential sale of land and redevelopment.

All significant sites are to be mapped, recorded and protected.

A formal cultural mapping program will identify and protect the following key site types across Country:-

- Shell midden sites
- Birthing trees
- Land and estuary artefacts
- Massacre sites
- Stone Quarries and resources sites.



Next steps for protection and recognition

To ensure the survival of these significant places:-

- Community-led cultural mapping will be undertaken, combining Traditional Knowledge, historical records and digital technologies (eg GIS, drone imaging)
- A scoping program will be developed to locate all historical records
- Heritage protection applications will be pursued
- Partnerships will be developed to ensure ethical research and conservation practices
- Interpretive signage and education materials will be created to share stories with young people and visitors, led by Taribelang Bunda voices.

KEY ACTIONS

Advocate for Change

- Provide a strong voice for Taribelang Bunda People to lead on-Country efforts.
- Make the wider community listen to our voices.
- We are about our Culture and we are serious about being heard.

Cultural mapping and protection

- Map sites of cultural significance
- Document oral histories
- Develop internal cultural database
- Secure access, recognition and protection of sacred sites

Habitat Restoration

- Ranger led restoration programs
- Mangrove and seagrass nurseries
- Riverbank restoration
- Erosion control near farms and development zones

Education and Youth Programs

- Seasonal Calendar development with Elders
- School Partnerships for cultural and environmental education
- Language education

Species Recovery Projects

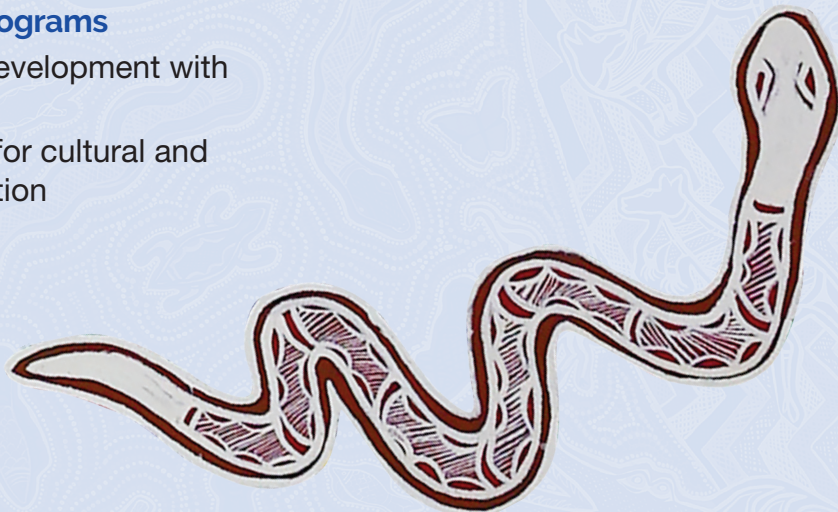
- Establish Milbi and Lungfish hospital and research centre
- Monitor water quality and ecosystem health
- Implement feral animal control programs

Tourism and Economic Opportunities

- Eco-Tourism based on healing Country, cultural storytelling and hands-on conservation
- Develop site interpretation plans and signage using Taribelang Bunda language

Land Back and Infrastructure Development

- Secure land parcels with cultural and ecological significance
- Build facilities for research, education and community gathering





PATHWAY TO IMPLEMENTING THIS PLAN

Establish Governance and Leadership

Key Activities

- Form a Healthy Country Steering Committee made up of Taribelang Bunda Elders, cultural knowledge holders, rangers, youth and technical experts.
- Develop a terms of reference to guide decision-making, data sharing, and cultural authority.
- Develop a reporting process for head Ranger to report to Committee on daily implementation and on liaison with partners.

Outcomes

- Strong cultural governance structure.
- Clear roles and responsibilities.
- Decision making guided by our Elders and our values.

Prioritise and Stage Activities

Key Activities

- Use the Healthy Country Plan and associated data to prioritise:-
 - Advocating for a Taribelang Bunda voice on Country
 - Cultural mapping and education
 - Cultural site recognition and protection
 - Species and habitat restoration
 - Launch campaigns for species awareness and protection
- Develop a five-year staged work plan with short medium and long-term priorities

Outcomes

- Practical and achievable goals over time

Build Partnerships and Secure Resources

Key Activities

- Identify key partners
- Develop MOU's to guide collaborative work on Country

Outcomes

- Regional agreement on priorities
- Resourced implementation
- Shared responsibility and transparent collaboration



Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI)

Monitoring

What to monitor:-

- Condition of key ecosystems
- Cultural site integrity and access
- Populations of key species
- Community participation and ranger skill development

Methods

- Two-way monitoring – blending Traditional Knowledge and western science
- Drone imagery, water testing, cultural observation
- Seasonal indicators aligned to cultural calendars



Evaluation

- Set targets and success criteria for each project area
- Use participatory evaluation – rangers, elders and community reflect together
- Evaluate annually and after each major activity

Reporting

- Provide a report on Country Health in accordance with what Country tells us.
- Digital story maps and community presentations
- Updates to funding partners and collaborators

Improvement

- Revise priorities based on what is working and what is not
- Incorporate emerging knowledge
- Allow for flexible adaption led by cultural authority

Most importantly recognise that this is a living document.



APPENDIX A – Kinship Species

TOTEMIC SPECIES

Lungfish

Milbi

Meebar

Kabii
native bee

Ungarra
White Breasted
Sea Eagle

Lungfish

Jinjinburra
Mullet

Freshwater
lobby

Paperbark
Melaleuca
quinquenervia

Vine – smell
similar to
honesuckle in
flower (summer)

Milbi

Dugong

Bulyim
witchety grub

Rivergrass
Liliaeopsis
Brasiteiensis

Blackbean

Meebar

Barramundi

Porcupine

Bloodwood –
red or brown

White Cedar

Kabii
native bee

Bingera Bony
Bream

Blue Gum

Ungarra
White Breasted
Sea Eagle

Mangrove
*Avicennia
marina*

Seagrass

Lungfish

Rivergrass
Vallisneria nana

Lungfish – vulnerable

Critically endangered in its
Traditional Rivers

Milbi

Rivergrass
Vallisneria nana

Blackbean

When the bean is growing – the Milbi
are fertilising eggs
Nut ground after rinsing for flour

White Cedar

Flower indicates end of Milbi breeding
season

Milbi Grass
Lomandra

Raspy surface reedy seeds –
sawsedge garnia
Weaving
Nut drop signals milbi hatching
Nut ground after rinsing for flour

Critically endangered

One generation away from
extinction

Human induced changes to
environment

Degradation of nesting sites

Feral Pests

Meebar

Rite of passage
for hunting

Seagrass

Mangrove
Avicennia marina

Avicennia flowers
March to December

Flowers drop
December to March

Meebar Hunting Party
when in close

Eggs October to end
April (food sources)
limited harvest

Green vulnerable

Loggerhead endangered

Human induced mortality rates

Loss of habitat

Coastal development

Seagrass foraging area loss

Boat strikes – increased vessel

Dugong

Decreasing numbers

Human induced mortality rates

Loss of habitat

Coastal development

Seagrass foraging area loss

Boat strikes increased vessels



Kabii native bee

Native Food source
Tool making/wax

Bloodwood – red or brown

Kabii hound in hollows at Tantitha

African Native Tulip Tree kills native bees

- Rapid expansion of ANTP planting by councils

Ungarra White Breasted Sea Eagle

Paperbark
Melaleuca quinquenervia

Smoking ceremony

Jinjinburra Mullet

Stocks depleted

Over fishing?

Check size limits/net fishing

Native foods

Barramundi

Vine – smell similar to honeysuckle in flower (summer)

White yellow flower

Indicates water is 28 degrees or above

Barra are already up in the freshwater

Head out to salt to spawn

Young then come back into salt/brackish shallow water to feed and grow

Bulyim witchety grub

Blue Gum

Rasping on skin good for soothing teething

Loves the blue gum saplings

Summer – Bulyim everywhere – warmer season

Porcupine

June carrying milk – requires careful preparation

June – August – breeding season – do not hunt

Bingera Bony Bream

Plant flower??

Flower indicates Bingera season

Macaranga	Salt water spear		
Lilly Pilly			
Bunya Nut	Collection restricted	Always had to plant one on the way home	
Bombarra (macadamia)	Which type of macadamia takes oxygen out of water		
Jaggera – Foam Bark			
Red Ash – soap bush	Takes oxygen out of water for fishing		
Monkey Soap Tree	Used for washing hands/body		
Lomandra Dianella	Purple seeds	Used for dye	Traded
Gums	Coolamon	Kayak	
Gunni Tree	Hunting Spear	Firesticks	
Pandanus	Dried leaf weaving	Nut ground after rinsing to make flour	
Native Hibiscus	Rope		
Kangaroo Grass	Seeds ground		
Spear Grass	Seeds ground	Note GRT taken over since spear grass removed from the landscape	



BUSH TUCKER

Lack of access to traditional lands

Freshwater lobbies	Status unknown			☐
Mushrooms/fungi				☐
Porcupine	Diminishing	Roadkill infrastructure and development	Old man tucker – not for young people	☐

LAND COUNTRY

	CONDITION/THREATS	CULTURAL CONNECTION	ACTIONS
Riverbanks - across the road from Woodgate - Burnett River	Poor – erosion, trees being removed by landholders, cane farm converted to small crops – creating finer soil sediment		
Moneys Creek	Used to be clear – looks like butter chicken		
Baffle Creek	Healthy ecosystem – under threat Cattle encroachment on saltmarsh habitat – impact on water quality – herbicide runoff, sediment	Rosedale/Berajonda (family connection – graves)	Cultural mapping required
Cedar Creek Crossing			
River Grass <i>Lilaeopsis Brasiliensis</i>	Extremely depleted 2013 floods trying to restore natural growth Important for catching sediment	Important food source for Milbi and provides safety for young milbi and lungfish Used for Milbi Grass dillibags	
Milbi Grass		Used for weaving dillibags Indicator for Milbi laying when seed drops	
Wetlands		Food, reeds	
Freshwater Springs - Mon Repos - Moore Park Beach		Dreaming story – Hummock and Meebarburra connected through the creek – Hummock is the turtle – rainbow serpent made the creek straight to the Hummock – stories intertwined with Wakka Wakka	
Water Quality	Fine soil sediment, nutrient run-off		

SEA COUNTRY

	CONDITIONS/ THREATS	Places	CULTURAL CONNECTION	ACTIONS
Reef		Lady Elliot improving Lady Musgrave	5000 – 8000 years ago – Islands were inhabited by Taribelang Bunda People	
Water Quality				
Seagrass	Under threat and decreasing – sediment runoff	Baffle Creek Burrum Heads Theodolite Creek One Mile – small batch north of Burnett River mouth	Important feeding grounds for Totemic and food species	
Wetlands				
Saltmarsh Areas		Youngs Creek to Paddy's Burnett Heads Wallace Creek Theodolite Creek Elliot River Burrum River Mouth	Habitat for food source	

BIO SECURITY

FeralAnimal	Pigs Foxes Deer Dogs Cats	Killing native species Competing for food source	
FeralWeed	Weed transfer needs to be curbed Seeds in water Catsclaw creeper – clogs up the creek Giant Rats Tail		
Natural Fauna and Flora out of control			
Goanna	Numbers increasing due to apex predator removal	Threatto • Meebar eggs	Medicinaloils
Dingo			Used as hunting animal
Native Water Rat		Threat to Milbi	



APPENDIX B – Cultural List

Massacre Sites	Middens	Scar Trees	Directional Markers (sighting trees)	Quarry	Coloured Sands	Fish Traps	Birthing Trees
	Strathdee Midden Sites		Due West Marker	Protected by lack of knowledge of wherabouts			
				Significant site Rock Quarry –trade stones –different stations working on different stones -workbenches		Sediment deposition	
				Gin Gin Quarry		Food source	
				Booyal Quarry			

Land and Estuary artefacts							

CULTURAL SITES FOR RECOGNITION/PROTECTION

Meadowvale

Mon Repos

Boreham Park

Barolin Reserve

Barolin Rocks to Elliot Heads

Riverview

Tantitha

Paddy's Island

Wallum National Park

Great Great Grandfather John Broom last initiated man at Mon Repos (Meebarburra – place of many turtles) – young men Hummock onto Meebarburra

Charlie Boreham – full blood died at Barambah – known as the King of Bundaberg

Right beside mens business area – rock formations hold freshwater – cultural connection to be recorded – at risk of being destroyed

Not protected – significant site requires cultural heritage assessment – currently for sale

Reserves – native flowers banksia, bushtucker, yellow waterhole creek – water was poisoned and poisoned rations handed out

Unknown Grave Site position – possibly to the left of the homeseite – must locate – graves, lagoon food source and gathering place – camp – No access for Traditional Onwers – no TO input, signage, access – needed for the old people

Protected – threatened species habitat – native species emu, great glider, native bees – QPWS Sand mining

CULTURAL SITES FOR RECOGNITION/PROTECTION

Meadowvale

Mon Repos

Boreham Park

Barolin Reserve

Barolin Rocks to Elliot Heads

Riverview

Tantitha

Paddy's Island

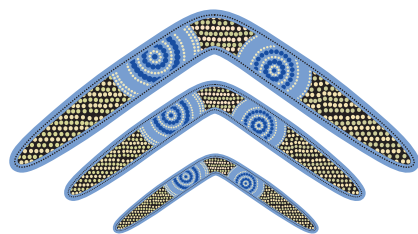
Wallum National Park



APPENDIX C - Strategic Plan 2023 - 2025

Strategic Plan 2023-2025			
Our Vision			
Our Purpose			
Our Valued Behaviors			
Caring, Sharing and Respect for our Land, our People and our Environment to invest in our Shared Future - United in Focus, Spirit, Culture and Family Kinship.			
Bunda People	Our Vision	Our Purpose	Our Valued Behaviors
Bunda people will be strong, proud and empowered through cultural knowledge, quality education and economic participation and growth.	Culturally Inclusive Leadership and Governance	We work with cultural honour, integrity, dignity and humility and in the spirit of partnership to maximise outcomes for our Bunda families.	Supporting and Caring for our People and Culture
Key Result Areas	Education Engagement and Excellence	Social Enterprise Development	Land, Sea and Cultural Heritage Rehabilitation and Preservation
Goals	Support pathways that maximise Bunda family participation in education in pursuit of excellence.	Support pathways that maximise Bunda family opportunities in social enterprise development.	Consolidate Bunda family responsibility for land, sea, water and cultural custodianship.
Outcomes	- Bunda families receive fair and equitable financial return from all development within our land and sea area. - Family aspirations, goals, outcomes and financial affairs effectively managed through Bunda People's Family Trust. - Strategic partnerships established and maintained with key stakeholders maximise Bunda family social, economic and cultural participation and growth.	- Bunda people have access to quality vocational and business development training programs. - Maximise Bunda people's access to business contracts from project developments within our land and sea boundary. - Maximise Bunda people's access to real jobs from projects developments within our land and sea boundary.	- Formal family tree clearly defines and strengthens Broome family kinship connections. - Language development and kinship connection strengthens Bunda family cultural knowledge, understanding and spiritual wellbeing. - Bunda families have access to quality kinship care, cultural, recreational and health support programs, services and facilities. - Develop Bunda people's cultural appreciation program and "Welcome to Country Protocol".
Measures	- Bunda Family Trust allows for autonomous management Bunda people's affairs. - Increased social, economic and cultural participation and growth for Bunda people. - Annual Operational Plan supports achievement of strategic goals and outcomes. - Bunda family Native Title, land and human rights sustained.	- Increased participation in quality education enhances access to higher education and employment and improves lifestyles for Bunda people. - Deficits addressed and participation in quality education maximised.	- Bunda families stand united to support and care for our families. - Bunda language reinvigorated and practiced. - Improved health and spiritual wellbeing across Bunda families. - Bunda people deliver local cultural appreciation programs and conduct Welcome to Country ceremonies.





**TARIBELANG
ABORIGINAL
CORPORATION**