



## Mandingalbay Yidinji Traditional Owners Participatory 3 Dimensional Modelling (P3DM)



### Who are Mandingalbay Yidinji people?

We, the Mandingalbay Yidinji<sup>i</sup> people are an Aboriginal clan from the rainforests of far north Queensland, Australia. Our traditional *country*<sup>ii</sup> covers almost 10,000 hectares, some 40 kilometres of coastline and parts of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park World Heritage Area. Located very close to the city of Cairns, Mandingalbay Yidinji country is made up of marine, estuarine, freshwater wetlands, coastal plains, reef, rainforest, mountain and agricultural environments. Our country is also home to a large number of nationally rare, threatened and/or migratory species, such as the Southern Cassowary.

As Mandingalbay Yidinji people, we are inseparable from the land and sea, we are part of country and country is part of us. Our traditional country holds our creation stories, our knowledge and keeps us connected to our ancestors. Being on our country and *looking after country*<sup>iii</sup> helps keep our culture and our people strong.

While it remains a living cultural landscape for Mandingalbay Yidinji people, today, our country also includes National Parks and reserves, World Heritage Areas, other types of protected areas, freehold land and farming.

In 2006 after a long struggle of many years, we were legally recognised as the rightful Traditional Owners for parts of our country. We have worked hard to build processes and systems to ensure recognition of

Mandingalbay Yidinji people as leaders in looking after our own country.



In 2011 the Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal Corporation (MYAC) made history by declaring the first multi-tenured Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) in Australia. The Mandingalbay Yidinji IPA provides a framework for us to collaborate with government agencies to manage our country. Through the Djunbunji Land and Sea Program<sup>iv</sup> we partner with a range of Australian, Queensland and local governments, as well as private sector partners and NGO's to manage our country in a way which considers our cultural needs and meets external requirements.

### Mapping our Knowledge

We have recently completed a Participatory 3D Modelling (P3DM) exercise for the northern half of our country. Many of our people were involved in the

exercise, including kids, knowledge holders, rangers, men and women. The Wet Tropics Management Authority facilitated the P3DM exercise using IUCN (UNDP GEF-SGP) funding and drawing on technical support from CTA. We thank them all for supporting us in this process.

As a community, we built the tables, assembled the model, made decisions about what to show on our map 'legend' and finally mapped out our knowledge. This project really brought Mandingalbay Yidinji people together as one community.



History and some loss of language have meant that sometimes our knowledge cannot be passed down through the generations in the right way culturally. The P3DM project has encouraged us to share stories about our country and people, and most importantly to educate our young ones. It helped us to draw out important knowledge, to speak about it and to highlight how much knowledge remains within the minds of Mandingalbay Yidinji people.

### **Where to now?**

Mandingalbay Yidinji people live mostly in the Yarrabah community, one of Australia's largest Indigenous communities. In Yarrabah, 60% of the population are under 25 years of age, rates of high school completion are ¼ of the Queensland average, 45% are single parents and a huge 60% of people are unemployed. It's vital that we create opportunities for our people to become employed and economically self-sufficient.

Our corporation, MYAC, is on the cusp of a tremendous economic and community development opportunity. We are dreaming big! We have already laid important stepping stones towards success, including the development of a Strategic Business Plan to 2018, and a development proposal for the Mandingalbay Tourism Park at East Trinity. Copies of these key documents are publicly available at [www.djunbunji.com.au/strategic-plan/](http://www.djunbunji.com.au/strategic-plan/)

Although we have made good progress, MYAC recognises that to turn key ideas into action, especially action that generates community wealth, we will need a strong network of friends (and friends of

friends). For greatest impact these friends will need to be key influencers, lateral thinkers and most importantly to be action-oriented. In time, some of these friends may even become prospective partners.



We will also keep *looking after country*, just as we have done for several thousands of years. We will use the learnings of the P3DM project to assist us in developing our tourism enterprises, to continue educating young people and the broader community, and most importantly as a catalyst for safekeeping our vital traditional knowledge.

### **Would you like to see how P3DM is done?**

Join Mandingalbay Yidinji Aboriginal people at the **WIN & Pacific Community Dialogue Pavilion (Pavilion #2)**, while we do a live demonstration mapping our cultural knowledge using our 1:10,000 scale 3D model.

We will be working on it during lunch hours from **Thursday 13 - Saturday 15 November.**

Please also join us on **Monday, 17 November 8:30 – 12:00** at the **WIN & Pacific Community Dialogue Pavilion (Pavilion #2)** during the session “Voices and choices: The risks and values of geo-referencing traditional and local knowledge” where we will present our work, experiences and lessons learned in the process.

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<sup>i</sup> Pronounced *mun-ding-al-pie ii-din-gee*

<sup>ii</sup> *Country* – a term used by Australian Aboriginal people to describe the area of land and sea to which they are traditionally connected

<sup>iii</sup> Looking after country - the way that Australian Aboriginal people refer to caring for/managing the land and seascape, including cultural practices such as seasonal burning and more western practices such as weed eradication

<sup>iv</sup> Organisation established by Mandingalbay Yidinji people to engage in management of country