

Achievements in the Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Region

2017-18



National
Landcare
Program



Government of South Australia
Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources
Management Board



Natural Resources
Alinytjara Wilurara

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people should be aware that this publication may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.



The Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management (AW NRM) Board and staff work to deliver on a range of outcomes and priorities as outlined in the board's *Business Plan 2017-18 to 2019-20*.

The following are some of the notable achievements in 2017-18.

Board: building and strengthening partnerships

The AW NRM Board strives to connect with communities by building and maintaining collaborative relationships with organisations at all levels (local, state, and national).

In support of Aboriginal enterprises, the Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management (AW NRM) Board held their 57th board meeting at Scotdesco (*Tjilkaba*) Community to strengthen and support the relationship between the board and the Scotdesco Community. The meeting provided an opportunity for the board to hear from community members about the NRM issues they considered most important in their region.

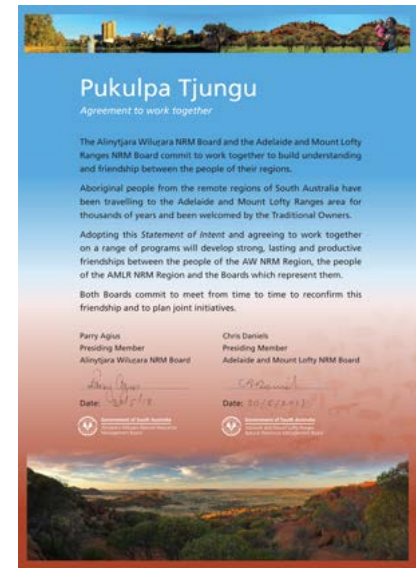
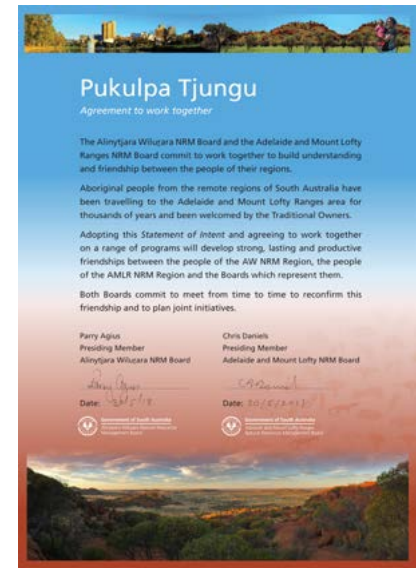
During the 60th board meeting in Oak Valley Community in the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands, the board met with the community and together developed a draft Memorandum of Understanding, *Tjungu Palya* (good together).

In May 2018, the AW NRM Board hosted an on-country trip for the AMLR NRM Board to Oak Valley Community in the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands. During the trip, the

two Presiding Members signed a *Pukulpa Tjungu* (happy together) Statement of Intent Agreement formalising the working relationship between the two boards.

The AW NRM Board Presiding Member was elected as Chair of NRM Regions Australia, enabling him to both bring a national focus to the AW NRM Region and provide a regional perspective to the national agenda.

Three new members were nominated by their communities and appointed to the AW NRM Board: Julie O'Toole from the Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal Corporation, and Sally Scales and Anton Baker representing the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands. All are strong advocates for their communities and understand the broader issues related to NRM in their respective regions.



10 Deserts Project

The AW NRM Board is one of seven indigenous organisations involved in the 10 Deserts Project. Funded by BHP Foundation, the project aims to sustain the health and resilience of Australia's iconic desert country and its people. The project was launched by an exchange of gifts between Traditional Owners and BHP Foundation representatives at Old Parliament House in Canberra in March 2018.



Adelaide meets the Bush: from planning to reality

The *Adelaide meets the Bush* exhibition, launched on 8 March 2018 at Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute, was an important milestone of the AW and AMLR NRM Boards' vision of bringing together the people of Adelaide and the Alinytjara Wilurara regions.

- Natural Resources AW staff worked closely with an independent film making company to record video footage and photographs capturing board members' and local community members' thoughts and lifestyles. The videos and photographs were displayed along with artworks collected from across the region.
- AW staff curated the paintings and *punu* (Pitjantjatjara: wooden artefacts) created by local artists and accessed through partnerships with community art centres from across the region.

- Over 200 people attended the exhibition launch. Due to unexpected high popularity of the exhibition, it was extended from one month to two.
- Approximately \$28,000 worth of artworks (11 paintings and all punu) were sold at the exhibition with all proceeds going back to the communities within the AW NRM Region.
- The exhibition attracted over 3000 visitors. Feedback received over the duration of the exhibition was overwhelmingly positive.

Three satellite exhibitions were installed in June and July 2018 as part of the *Adelaide meets the Bush* strategy. These were in Victor Harbor, Barossa Valley, and Ceduna.

Supported by AW and AMLR NRM Boards, women from the Far West Coast and Adelaide regions shared their cultural knowledge and traditional basket weaving skills through public workshops held under the trees at WoMAD 2018.



People and the Community

Community-driven projects

AW NRM Board provided funding to support the Far West Aboriginal Women's Council to create the first west coast Seasonal Wheel calendar. The calendar will provide an important cultural knowledge record for generations to come.

Aboriginal employment and education in the region

Through funding made available to local communities, the AW NRM Board is committed to support employment of Aboriginal people actively engaged and employed in natural resources management.

In 2017-18, the board supported employment of 62 Aboriginal people. This is equivalent to 2.10 full time positions.

AW NRM Board's first school-based traineeship program proved to be very successful. The first trainee Latisha Richards went on to enrol in tertiary education majoring in Environmental Science at the University of South Australia after completing Year 12.

She was also awarded Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management as part of her traineeship.

With funding made available through the National Landcare Program, the board also supported employment of an Aboriginal Regional Landcare Officer to work on-county through APY Land Management.





People and Country

Visitor access management

The board funded employment of a professional stone mason to construct cairns (made from local stone) interlinked with chain barriers to control and guide visitor movement at three sites along the Nullarbor cliffs.

The four Aboriginal men employed to assist construction were taught basic skills in constructing stone posts and general stone masonry.

Eighty-two stone cairns were constructed and interlinked with 3.5 kilometres of heavy steel chain to confine visitors to designated parking and walkways.

These constructions effectively help reduce damage to surrounding vegetation including the Nullarbor Daisy which is only found in Nullarbor Plain region.

- A total of 5.47 ha of degraded cliff-top are now protected by traffic management structures. This includes closed access to the network of old tracks. These areas have been ripped to encourage natural revegetation and to deter off-road driving.

Sustainable pastoral practices in APY Lands

AW NRM Board supported employment of a Pastoral Manager to guide sustainable pastoral practices in the APY Lands through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. The project aimed to support local Anangu in gaining long term income and employment opportunities in the cattle grazing business while minimising negative environmental impacts.

In 2017/18 a consultant from Desert Wildlife Services revisited 26 sites established as part of the Natural Resources Audit to record data on plant species and land condition. This information is critical to inform adaptive management practices.

Twenty six land condition monitoring sites were set up at intermediate grazing distances from watering points concentrating on those areas currently under grazing to monitor the vegetation types as well as ground cover percentage.



Through the work of Natural Resources AW staff, the board received APY Lands pastoral group's endorsement of the Natural Resources Audit report as a guide to pastoral practices on APY Lands.

Healthy Country Planning

Led by Natural Resources AW staff, the APY Lands Executive Council endorsed the development of Healthy Country Plans as the basis for planning across their lands.

The two-day Healthy Country Planning workshops held at Kanpi Community for the Kanpi and Nyapari communities provided a closer understanding of the community's

NRM goals and concerns. To address the goals and concerns raised by the community, the AW NRM Board supported APY Anthropology to organise a working group for the Kanpi-Nyapari Undeclared Area at the end of June 2018.

Fire management planning

AW NRM Board works to protect and enhance existing native vegetation in the region. The first stages of an environmental values assessment was started in 2018 in conjunction with DEW and CFS for the APY region to inform fire management planning.

- Natural Resources AW supported remote communities in monitoring and managing fire regimes to sustain the overall health of their Country.
- These surveys provided critical information for the development of ongoing fire management plans including location, density and types of fuel load.





Country: Threatened species projects

In September 2017, Natural Resources AW staff joined a team of Bush Blitz scientists on a trip to the heart of the Great Victorian Desert. The team found, identified and recorded hundreds of fauna and flora species and specimens making an extraordinary contribution to the knowledge of the region's natural heritage. The most notable species discovered were the first *Acacia eremophila* ever recorded in South Australia, along with pea *Tephrosia sphaerospora*, and a collection of the pea *Swainsona kingii*, which is listed as Vulnerable in South Australia. Viable seed was collected from the latter for the SA Seed Conservation Centre.

Sandalwood

The AW NRM Board is committed to protecting the Australian sandalwood in South Australia using funds made available through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program. This threatened species is at risk of rapid depletion as a result of illegal harvesting.

- In 2017-18, Natural Resources AW staff undertook three survey trips to monitor

- sandalwood within the known habitats in Yellabinna Regional Reserve and the Nullarbor area.
- Over 500 trees were located and catalogued. Data such as GPS point locations, damage to the trees and suspected cause, the trees' reproductive stage, and the amount of seed on the ground were recorded.
- DNA samples were also collected from the trees providing the means to determine whether harvested sandalwood was taken illegally from the AW NRM region.
- In addition, the survey trips provided a training opportunity for local Aboriginal community workers to learn how to use CyberTracker software, tree identification, and damage assessment.

Quandong trees

The AW NRM Board funded various projects to protect the region's native vegetation including monitoring quandong trees through the National Landcare Program.

- Natural Resources AW staff, Friends of the Great Victoria Desert, and two cultural advisers surveyed camel damage to quandong trees in the Great Victoria Desert in late 2017.
- In total 37 photopoints were photographed with little evidence of increased weed infestation since the 2016 survey.
- The survey was part of an on-going program that provides the state herbarium, NRM ecologists and the local communities with an overview of vegetation changes in various locations over time.

Warru

The AW NRM Board proudly supports the Warru Recovery Program in the APY Lands. Various activities included:

- Participating in the successful translocation of 40 animals to the isolated outcrop known as Wamitjara in the APY Lands.
- setting up remote cameras at Wamitjara in APY Lands. In October 2017 the

cameras captured the first images of young warru seen since 2005.

- taking part in the annual warru monitoring survey with the Warru Rangers in the APY Lands. Thirty two traps were set that resulted in the capture of 37 warru indicating that the population within the pintji (predator-free fence) is increasing. Sixteen pitfall traps were also established to survey species and numbers of small vertebrates in the pintji.

Sandhill dunnarts and malleefowl

The AW NRM Board supports communities and stakeholders to manage the impact of pests on two threatened fauna species in the region – sandhill dunnarts and malleefowl. In 2018, Natural Resources AW staff undertook a sandhill dunnart survey in May and a malleefowl survey in July.

- A key outcome was the discovery of sandhill dunnarts in the eastern section of the Yellabinna Regional Reserve, extending their known range by 80-90 km.
- Two female sandhill dunnarts were found in long unburnt habitat, with the most recent fire scar being from a 1988 burn.
- All malleefowl mounds previously recorded within the Yellabinna and Maralinga Tjarutja regions were surveyed for nesting activity and signs of potential breeding. Three mounds showed signs of activity which hopefully will result in malleefowl nestlings in the near future.



Country: managing pests



Camel

The AW NRM Board is committed to supporting local communities to minimise the impact of large herbivores in the region. In 2017-18, a total of 600 camels were removed from the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands.

Buffel grass

Through the National Landcare Program, the AW NRM Board funded various projects to implement the priorities identified in the Alinytjara Wilurara Buffel Grass Operational Strategy and continue progress towards meeting the region's objectives of managing buffel grass infestations within the AW NRM Region.

- Rural Solutions SA was engaged to undertake an extensive research (desktop and on-ground) to update AW's Buffel Grass Operational Strategy and produce a Buffel Grass Best Practice Management Guide for the AW NRM Region. AW staff and community members mapped a total of 436 known infested sites within the southern AW NRM Region.
- Natural Resources AW staff worked together with local organisations such as Ceduna

- Aboriginal Corporation and Oak Valley Community to undertake an extensive buffel grass inspection and treatment at Yellabinna and Yumbarra reserves. Approximately 11268 ha of buffel grass was destroyed to protect around the 18 million hectares of natural environment across the Maralinga Tjarutja Lands and the Nullarbor region.
- Building on the work carried out in 2016-17, five community members were contracted through Antakirinja Matu-Yankunyjatjara Aboriginal Corporation to map and undertake buffel grass spraying and other pest weeds within the Tallaringa Conservation Park, and the north-eastern perimeter of the park (bordering Mt Willoughby/Wintinna and Wallatina stations).

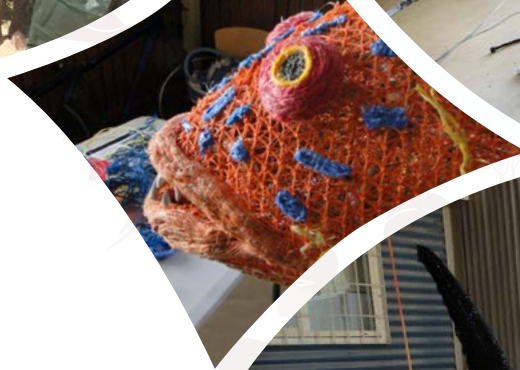




Water

The AW NRM Board values and protects water resources in the region by supporting communities to manage coast and marine areas. In 2017-18, the board funded the Yalata Youth Program to undertake multiple marine debris surveys over a period of 12 months with funds made available through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program..

- The amount and type of debris collected from the region's coastal areas was recorded and the material stored for use in the Marine Debris Art Project
- As part of an internationally recognised program that highlights the environmental issues associated with marine debris through art, the material was used by local Aboriginal artists to create two impressive Marine Debris sculptures, a Killer Whale and a Harlequin Fish.



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