



*Far West Coast*

# Healthy Country Plan



## Contents

Acknowledgements .....	1
About this plan .....	2
The story of this plan .....	3
How the boards and the plans work together.....	4
The area our Healthy Country Plan covers .....	5
Our vision.....	6
How will we work together? .....	7
Summary of the Far West Coast Healthy Country Plan.....	8
Our targets.....	9
Threats to our targets.....	23
Threat ranking .....	26
Objectives and Projects .....	27
Learning as we go.....	30
Sources of information for this plan.....	31

## Acknowledgements

We thank our partners: Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Yumbarra Conservation Park Co-management Board and Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee for their financial assistance, expertise and other support in preparing this plan and thank all those who provided input. We also thank Bishman Kumar for producing the photo collage on the front cover.

For more information on the Far West Coast Healthy Country Plan contact:

Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation  
PO Box 596, Ceduna SA 5690  
**Phone:** (08) 8625 3340  
**Website:** [www.fwcac.org.au](http://www.fwcac.org.au)



**Photos on cover from top left in a clockwise direction:**

*Nullarbor Plain, Yellabinna Regional Reserve, Mount Finke, Googs Lake, Acraman Creek, Clare Bay, Chinaman’s Hat, Twin Rocks and the Bunda Cliffs.*

## About this plan

This plan was prepared by the Far West Coast (FWC) Working Group in consultation with FWC Aboriginal people. The working group is made up of the FWC members of the Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee and Yumberra Conservation Park Co-management Board who contribute on behalf of the Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation (FWCAC) with support from staff of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR). The FWCAC brings together six cultural groups who have native title interests within the region: Kokatha, Mirning, Wirangu, Yalata group, Oak Valley group and the Robert's group.

The central focus of the FWC Healthy Country Plan is to direct and support implementation of projects, prioritised by the FWC Working Group, as significant in creating and maintaining our culture and a healthy environment for our land and our people. This includes actively supporting engagement of Far West Coast people in caring for their country, particularly through the co-managed Far West Coast parks and reserves.

*We have come together as a single Native Title Group to work together to care for our country and ensure our culture remains strong.*



*Participants in the 1<sup>st</sup> Nullarbor on-country workshop*



*Participants in the 1<sup>st</sup> Yumberra on-country workshop*



## The story of this plan

### February 2015

The Nullarbor Parks Advisory Committee (NPAC) and Yumbarra Conservation Park Co-management Board (YCPCB) met with some Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation (FWCAC) Board members to discuss making a Far West Coast Healthy Country Plan to guide how the Far West Coast Aboriginal community could care for country. The group decided that the NPAC and YCPCB would make up the working group and would develop the plan as representatives of the FWCAC.



### May 2015

The Working Group had its first meeting to discuss what the plan would cover and to plan the first on-country workshop. They also agreed that the information from this process would be used for the park management plans.



### August 2015

Two on-country workshops were held, one for Nullarbor at Koonalda Homestead and one for the Greater Yellabinna and Wanna Munda area at Scotdesco.



These workshops included other members of the Far West Coast Aboriginal community who talked about what they wanted the future to look like, what was important to them (targets) and what was affecting those important things (threats).



### February 2016

At the Working Group meeting 2 at Scotdesco, the group used the information from the August on-country workshops to develop visions and decided which threats needed to be dealt with first.



### May 2016

At the Working Group meeting 3 held at Scotdesco, the group brainstormed strategies to manage the threats and improve the targets.



### July 2016

Two on-country workshops were held at the Iluka mine site, one for Nullarbor and one for the Greater Yellabinna and Wanna Munda area.



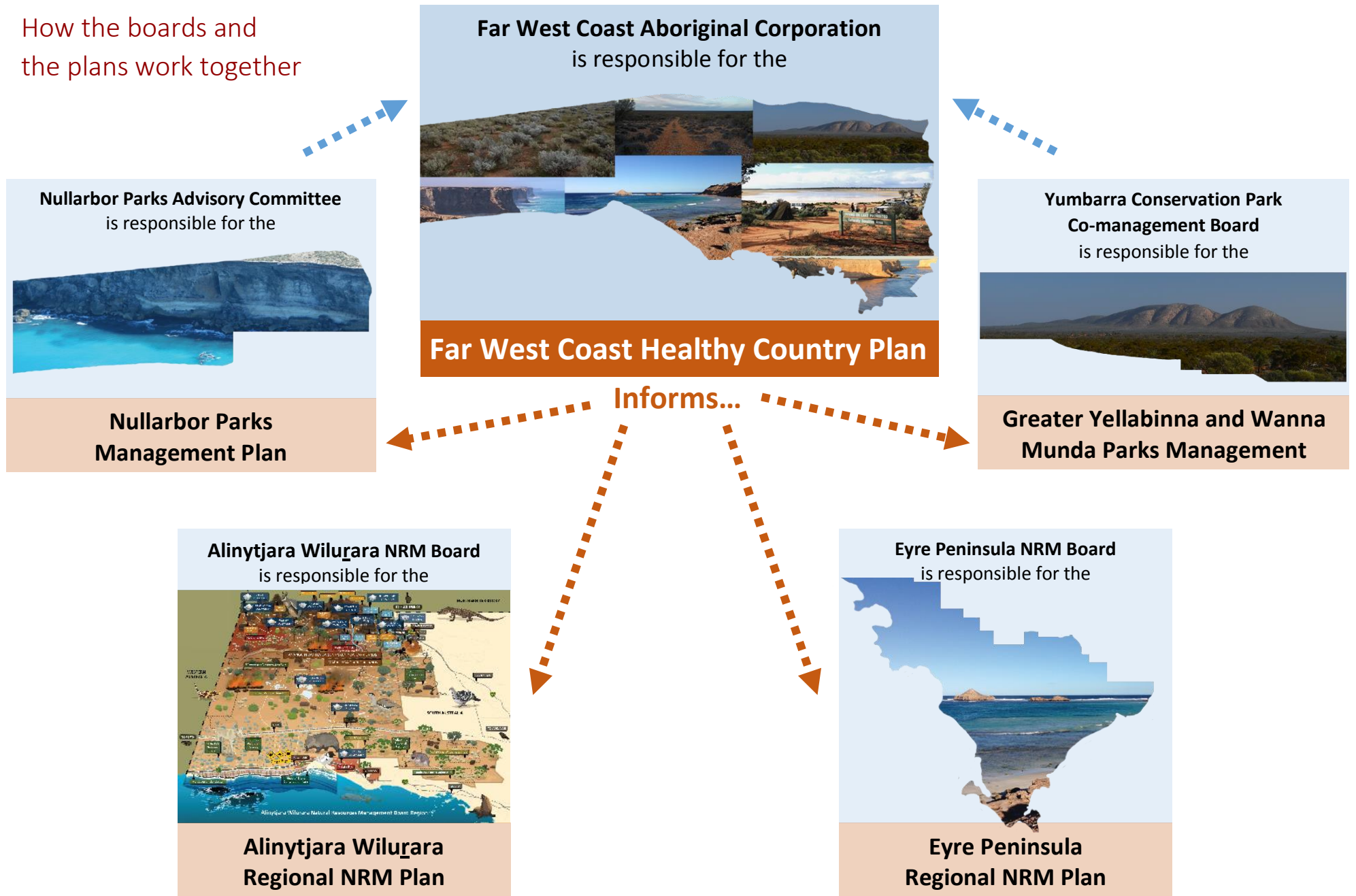
These workshops involved the larger group in developing projects from the strategies and activities to implement the strategies.



### September 2016

The Working Group reviewed the draft plan and gave feedback to improve it at meeting 4. They also considered how they could check that the plan was working.

How the boards and the plans work together



## The area our Healthy Country Plan covers

The Far West Coast Native Title area (outlined in pink on the map below) includes: the Nullarbor Parks (Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area, Regional Reserve and National Park), the Greater Yellabinna Parks (Yellabinna Wilderness Protection Area and Regional Reserve, Yumberra Conservation Park (CP), Boondina CP and Pureba CP) and the Wanna Munda Parks (Wahgunyah CP, Fowlers Bay CP, Chadinga CP, Point Bell CP, Wittelbee CP, Laura Bay CP and Acraman Creek CP).



Map of the Far West Coast Native Title Determination Area showing the parks and reserves.



## Our Vision

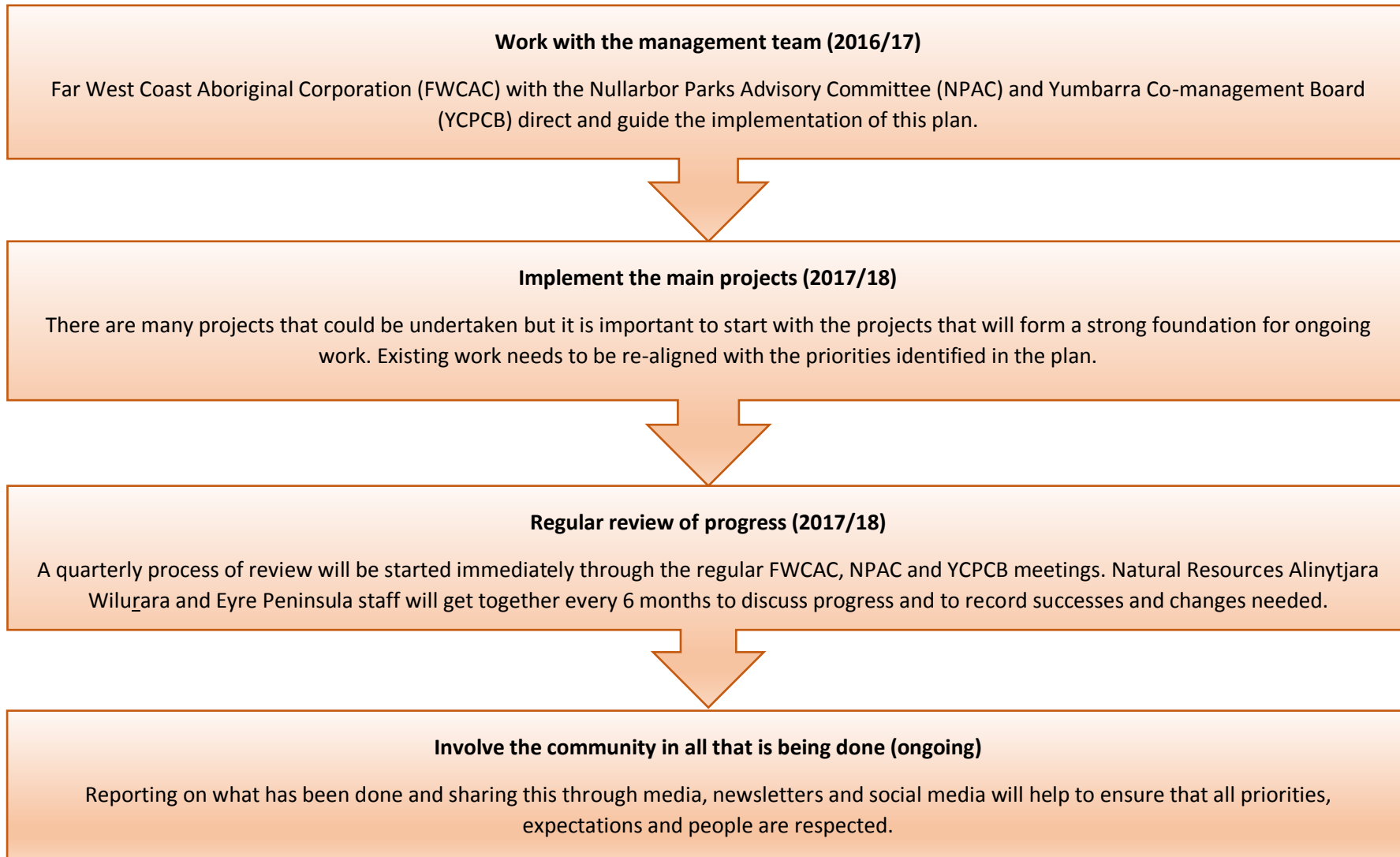
Together we will create a vibrant Far West Coast community where the unique Aboriginal cultures and the arid and fragile country is strong, shared and respected.





## How we will work together

This plan is about achieving the vision of the Far West Coast people for their country and it needs to be clear on the priorities. Twelve projects will be carried out, building on the work already in progress:



## Summary of Far West Coast Healthy Country Plan

*Vision: what we want the future to look like*





<p><b>Our Vision:</b> Together we will create a vibrant Far West Coast community where the unique Aboriginal cultures and the arid and fragile country is strong, shared and respected.</p>		
<p><b>TARGETS</b> Important things we want to look after</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultural knowledge</li> <li>• Cultural sites</li> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Community and wellbeing</li> <li>• Coastal landscapes</li> <li>• <i>Wanna ma</i> (coastal food)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine animals</li> <li>• <i>Gabi</i> (water)</li> <li>• <i>Guga</i> (bush meat)</li> <li>• Important plants</li> <li>• Animals of significance</li> <li>• Places of significance</li> </ul>
<p><b>THREATS</b> Problems we want to stop or reduce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feral predators</li> <li>• Knowledge loss</li> <li>• Onshore and offshore mining</li> <li>• Lack of employment opportunities</li> <li>• Uncontrolled visitation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camels</li> <li>• Buffel grass</li> <li>• Inappropriate hunting and harvesting</li> <li>• Inappropriate fire regimes</li> <li>• Lack of funding</li> <li>• Dog fence</li> </ul>
<p><b>PROJECTS</b> What we will do to keep people and country healthy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen knowledge of country</li> <li>• Fire management</li> <li>• Camel management</li> <li>• Buffel grass eradication</li> <li>• Feral predator management</li> <li>• Minimise the impact of the dog fence on native animals</li> <li>• Good <i>gabi</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visitor management</li> <li>• Minimise impacts and maximising benefits from mining</li> <li>• Sufficient funding to implement the plan</li> <li>• Create employment opportunities</li> <li>• Recognition of Aboriginal people's skills and knowledge</li> <li>• Enough healthy <i>guga</i></li> </ul>

## Current Health of our Targets


The people and the country are connected and everything is linked; when the country is not healthy, the people cannot be healthy and vice versa. For our planning we talked about all the things that are important to us and then grouped them together into twelve “targets”. We know that if we look after these targets that the whole of country and the people will be healthy.

When we look after all the targets we will be looking after the things that are important to us and the whole community, including what scientists, visitors and local people value. Taking care of specific sites such as rockholes means that we are looking after our cultural sites, water sources and the different plants and animals that rely on the rockholes for survival.

### Key

-  **Very Good** – as healthy as it can be
-  **Good** – might need a bit of support
-  **Fair** – needs a lot of support
-  **Poor** – needs urgent attention

**FAIR**




**Guga (bush meat)**  
includes: *gibra* (bush turkey), *malu* (red kangaroo), *wadu* (wombat), *gulda* (sleepy lizard) *barna* (goanna)

**FAIR**




**Marine animals**  
includes: dolphins, whales, seals, sea lions, penguins, fish, sharks, seabirds

**FAIR**




**Gabi (water)**  
includes: rockholes, salt lakes, caves, soaks, groundwater

**FAIR**




**Wanna ma (coastal food)**  
includes: oysters, razor fish, cockles, *galda maru* (crabs), *mudi* (fish), *moona ma* (limpets), shellfish, seafood, squid

**FAIR**




**Employment**  
includes: jobs as rangers, tour guides etc., Aboriginal enterprises and businesses, training and education

**FAIR**




**Important plants**  
includes: *bulgar* (sandalwood), water mallee, *guduyah*, quandong, bush medicine

**FAIR**




**Animals of significance**  
includes: all land animals including dingoes, thorny devils, sandhill dunnarts, echidnas, snakes and birds

**FAIR**




**Community and wellbeing**  
includes: spiritual health, physical health, health of country

**FAIR**



**Cultural knowledge**  
includes: stories, language, dance, knowledge of the right way to do things, cultural safety

**GOOD**




**Recent Heritage Places**  
includes: Koonalda, Googs Lake, Mt Finke, dog fence, whaling station ruins, Gilgerabbie Hut

**POOR**



**Cultural sites**  
includes: rockholes, flint mines, ochre sites, middens, burial sites, artefacts, caves

**POOR**



**Coastal Landscapes**  
includes: dunes, the reefs, the creeks, the caves, the *bindhara* (swamps), soaks and bays



HCP TARGET

## Cultural Knowledge

FAIR

### Cultural Knowledge Indicators

- Aboriginal elders with traditional knowledge recognised as cultural knowledge experts / teachers
- Old people passing knowledge to young people
- Cultural knowledge is guiding everything we do

Cultural knowledge is held in the stories, dance and songlines that are passed from our old people on to our young people. This knowledge is a map of country that tells us how to move between waterholes and find food. It is about teaching our children in language so they know the names of the plants and animals and they can learn the right way of doing things.

It's about being able to teach our children but also about sharing some knowledge with other people through signs and classes.



HCP TARGET

Cultural Sites

POOR

Cultural Sites Indicators

- Right people managing right sites with right knowledge
- Park workers are culturally safe and informed
- Public awareness and respect for cultural sites
- Cultural site knowledge passed through generations (so not lost)

Our cultural sites are all over the Far West Coast area. Most people could pass by a cultural site and have no idea it is there but other sites, such as, Koonalda Cave are well known and well-studied. We know where our sites are located and how to look after them – this knowledge is passed on to us from our Elders through stories, dance and songlines. We need to be able to protect these sites and protect visitors from doing culturally unsafe things and damage to our sites, either unwittingly or deliberately. Our cultural sites are protected through legislation.

Some of our sacred sites can only be known to specific people and need to be kept secret. We encourage people to visit other sites to marvel at the natural beauty and appreciate our ancestor’s art while gaining an understanding of our culture. We are proud of our culture, the oldest living culture in the world and cultural sites provide places for us to continue to practice it and for others to learn and respect us and our culture and country.



HCP TARGET

## Employment

FAIR

### Employment Indicators

- Number of Aboriginal people employed and contracted
- Number of opportunities available for training and employment
- Number of active Aboriginal-owned businesses

Our parents, grandparents and great grandparents were moved off our land to make way for pastoralism. Some stayed in the area, living on missions such as Koonibba and others worked for the farmers, shearing sheep but many moved away, looking for more opportunities and a better life for their children.

Employment and training opportunities need to enable us to maintain our cultural values. We also need employers to value our cultural knowledge. There are some jobs on-country with government, in farming and at the Jacinth-Ambrosia mine but not enough for everyone. We want more of our children to get higher degrees so they can get better jobs. More Far West Coast people could be employed in the jobs that do exist. There are also opportunities that could be turned into jobs and businesses for Far West Coast people especially in nature-based and cultural tourism as well as awareness and education in Aboriginal cultures.





HCP TARGET

## Coastal landscapes

POOR

### Coastal Landscapes Indicators

- Elders/TOs happy sharing culture
- Presence of associated plants and animals
- Visitors are happy, safe and inspired
- People doing the right thing

The Far West Coast is well known for its rugged, remote and beautiful coastline. We call the coastal area “*Wanna Munda*”. Lots of people come to visit the coast to fish, surf, camp, enjoy the spectacular views and watch wildlife such as whales and sea lions. *Wanna Munda* includes: the dunes, the reefs, the creeks, the caves, the *bindhara* (swamps), soaks and bays. Coastal soaks provide fresh water and the coastline is dotted with camps where there are middens, fossil sites, burial grounds and flint working sites.

These significant cultural sites need protection and need to be maintained by the right people. *Wanna Munda* is home to many types of animals and plants with some, such as the Nullarbor daisy, only found along the Far West Coast.





HCP TARGET

*Guga* (bush meat)

FAIR

*Guga* Indicators

- Number of different types of animals
- Numbers of each type of animal
- Amount of fat and taste
- Area of vegetation with right fire regime

*Gibra* (bush turkey), *malu* (red kangaroo), *wadu* (wombat), *gulda* (sleepy lizard), goanna and emu are bush meats collectively known as *guga*. This target also includes the things that make *guga* abundant and healthy such as the plants they feed on like saltbush and bluebush. We still hunt *guga* such as *gibra*, *malu*, *wadu* and *gulda* and we share whatever we catch with our extended families and within our communities. Food is an important part of our culture. The hunting, preparation and eating of such food allows us to continue our culture and traditions. It is also a time to bring families together. The whole process gives us a healthier way of living.

Today, opportunities for us to hunt and eat *guga* are limited as many of us live far away from our traditional hunting grounds and we may not have access to vehicles or have the time to go hunting. Changes in the way land is managed, competition from pests or destruction by pests affects the amount of *guga* that is available to hunt.



HCP TARGET

Animals of significance

FAIR

Animals of significance Indicators

- Numbers of different types of animals
- Numbers of each type of animal
- Area of vegetation with appropriate fire regime

Lots of animals that live in the Far West Coast are important to us because they are totemic animals. Other animals are also important because they are considered important for conservation as they play a special role in the environment.

Many species are threatened and need to be protected and have their habitats protected so future generations will get to see them. Some of the types of animals that are important to us are: Wombats, Major Mitchell Cockatoos, Wedge-tailed Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Dingoes, Thorny Devils, Sandhill Dunnarts, Brown Snakes, Painted Lizards, Echidnas and Marsupial Moles. Some animals that used to live on our country cannot be found here anymore because of changes to the land and feral predators such as cats and foxes.





HCP TARGET

*Gabi* (water)

FAIR

Gabi Indicators

- Animal tracks
- Water available when it should be
- Good water quality

*Gabi* is the lakes, rockholes and soaks that hold significance for culture and biodiversity and the groundwater that supports the whole area. As the area is semi-arid, *gabi* is important for survival as well as spirituality. It is not just the water itself but includes the animals and plants around it that make *gabi* healthy – together they form a system that supports each other. Many of the water sources are also our sacred sites and they need to be maintained.

There are pathways across the whole area that our ancestors used to travel from place to place safely with enough water and food to survive. This information is passed on generation to generation through stories and songs. In the past water has been drawn from sources such as Koonalda Cave to provide water for stock. Although the sheep stations on the Nullarbor have closed there is farming in other areas that require water. The Jacinth-Ambrosia mine in the Yellabinna Regional Reserve draws groundwater from the Nullarbor Regional Reserve. The Far West Coast is a semi-arid area where water is scarce so it is a precious resource that we all need to take care of.



HCP TARGET

## Marine animals

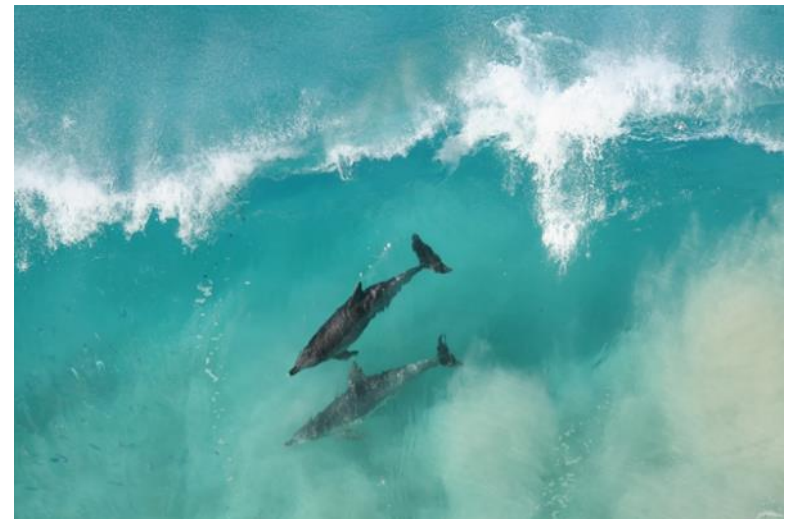
FAIR

### Marine Animals Indicators

- Population structure
- Breeding success
- See them where they should be
- Species composition

The remote nature of the coastline means that it is home to many threatened species. This includes ospreys and white-bellied sea eagles who make their nests along the cliffs where they are safe from predators and people.

Some of these animals, like the southern right whales and humpback whales travel thousands of kilometres to get here. Every year southern right whales migrate from the seas near Antarctica to breed and to give birth and nurse their calves in the relatively protected waters of the Head of Bight and Fowlers Bay. Other animals like dolphins, seals and sea lions live in the area all year round and feed on fish and crustaceans. The whales, seals and sea lions were hunted almost to extinction by early settlers. Long nosed fur seals have recovered and are now abundant but the southern right whales and Australian sea lions are taking longer to recover and have special provisions in place to protect them and help their species recover.





HCP TARGET

## Important plants

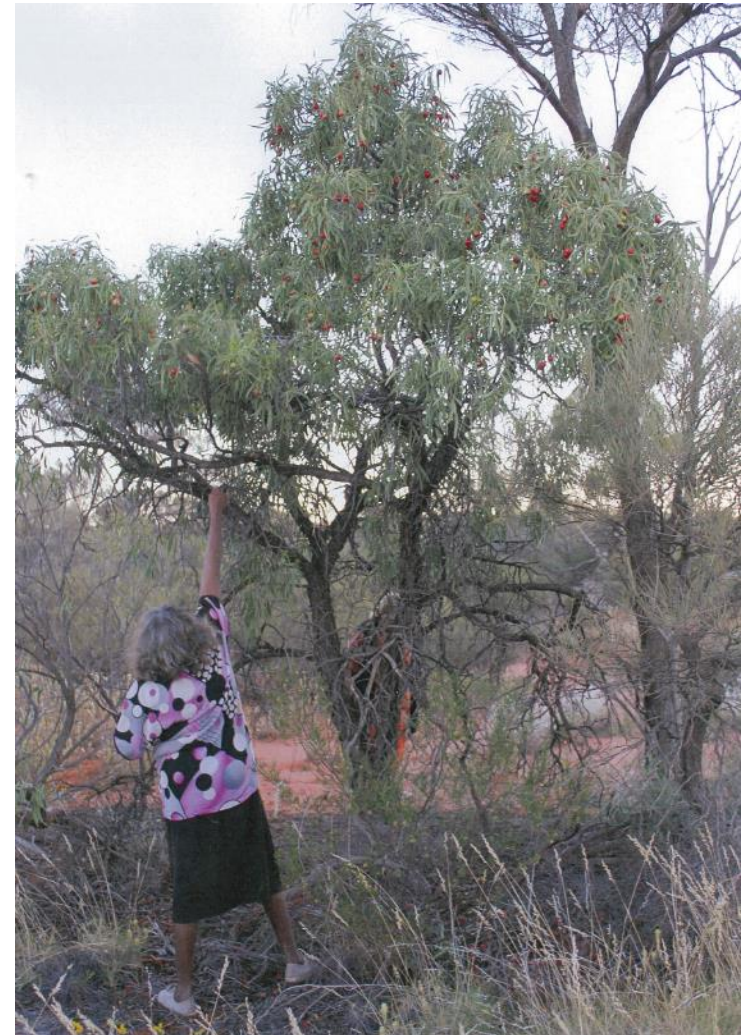
FAIR

### Important Plants Indicators

- Animals that spread useful plants are there
- Easy to find
- Animals that are dependent on them are abundant

These are the bush foods that are good to eat like: quandong, *gulgara* (bush banana), *bildy bildy* (pigface) and *warlga* (bush tomato) and the bush medicines that treat our illnesses when we're sick like: emu bush (*E. alternifolia*) and sandalwood. These plants provide food, water, medicine, and material for tools, weapons and art and craft. Plants are also important because they provide food and habitat for animals, particularly totem animals and *guga*.

Bush tucker plants are more than just a food source. They are important for cultural reasons and for our health and wellbeing. The process of collecting, preparing and eating food is a way for us to share cultural knowledge. Similarly, bush medicine is used to treat specific ailments and the collection, preparation and administering of the medicine is also a way to get out on-country and share knowledge.



HCP TARGET

*Wanna ma* (coastal food)

FAIR

*Wanna Ma* Indicators

- Presence and amount of *wanna ma*, in right places at the right time of year
- Condition and variety of sizes

The coast of our country is famous for its seafood. For us this seafood is our *wanna ma* and it sustained our ancestors for thousands of years. We search the rocky reefs and sandy bays for periwinkles, razor fish, *galda maru* (crabs), mussels, *moona ma* (limpets), oysters and abalone. Some of these we eat and some we use for bait to catch fish.

Our coastline is famous for mulloway, a huge fish that people travel from far away to try and catch. There are plenty of other types of *mudi* (fish) and seafood that we like to catch and eat like; salmon, squid and flathead. Going fishing and camping is an activity that lots of our families do together.



HCP TARGET

## Community and wellbeing

FAIR

### Community and Wellbeing Indicators

- School involvement
- People of all generations out working on country
- Community attitude and participation
- Hunting and use of traditional foods
- Use of language

For the Far West Coast people the area is our home, supermarket, pharmacy, school, church and cemetery. Country supports our physical and spiritual health and wellbeing – if the country is not healthy we cannot be healthy and vice versa. Knowledge on how to take care of country and our sacred sites is passed on to us from our Elders in the form of songs, dance and stories and being shown how to do things.

We need to be able to go out on country to take care of cultural business and to eat our traditional foods and use our traditional medicines. It is important for us to continue our culture and language. To be able to do these things in modern society, and to live with pride, we need to work and be respected within in our community and the broader community.





HCP TARGET

Recent heritage places

GOOD

Recent Heritage Places Indicators

- Stories recorded
- Signage
- Presence of pest plants and animals
- Presence of flora and fauna
- People doing the right thing

There are lots of places that are important because of their Aboriginal history, recent history or cultural significance. Koonalda Cave is classified as a National Heritage Site because of the finger flutings which were recorded as being at least 20,000 years old proving that Aboriginal people were in Australia for much longer than the previous estimates of 2-3,000 years.

There are also the sites that were recorded by the early explorers and then the more recent history of the pastoralists such as the Gurneys who managed Nullarbor Station and built Koonalda Homestead. Other places of significance include: the whaling station ruins at Fowlers Bay, Gilgerabbie Hut, Googs track through Yellabinna and Yumbarra and the Dog Fence that tell of the history of the area and the people that came to a place that was considered a frontier and in some ways still is.



## Threats to our Targets

There are many threats that affect the health of the things that are important to us. By identifying the threats and working out ways to manage them we can improve the health of our targets. We identified many threats but we cannot work on all of them so we have decided which are the most important ones and will focus on them.

### Knowledge loss

Cultural knowledge is handed down from generation to generation. For this to happen, Elders need to take young people out on country to teach them how to hunt, take care of cultural sites, how to find water, where to find bush medicine, and how to navigate across the landscape. If there are not enough opportunities for Elders to get out on country to transfer knowledge to the next generation then the knowledge will not be passed on to the right people and country will not be cared for properly. Our children go to school and learn in English but not their own language and there are fewer opportunities for them to learn their own languages. This means that there is a risk of our languages not being used and maintained.

### Inappropriate hunting and harvesting

There is some evidence to suggest that native animal and plant species, particularly sandalwood is being taken illegally. This affects the biodiversity of the area as well as impacts on culturally important animals and plants. There is also inappropriate hunting of *guga* and overharvesting of bush tucker by Aboriginal people. This may be due to a loss of traditional knowledge and culture so that people don't have the right information to hunt at the right times or when to collect different types of bush tucker and medicine.

The use of four-wheel drive vehicles and guns also mean that it is easier to cover large areas and hunt. This combined with a lack of traditional knowledge can lead to some types of *guga* being overharvested.

### Camels

Camels were used to transport loads before roads and rail were available. Some of them escaped and now there are herds of camels roaming across the desert and semi-arid areas of Australia. They have multiple impacts: they have a severe impact on native vegetation by trampling and feeding on it and compacting the earth. Although they can survive for long periods without drinking they still damage cultural sites such as rockholes as they seek out water in the arid environment. They also consume water so that it is not available for native species and contaminate the water with their faeces. Sometimes they die in the rockholes and pollute them so they cannot be used until cleaned. Camels also cause damage to remote communities when they go into towns during drought to find water in houses and water towers.



### Uncontrolled visitation

Visitors are encouraged to come and visit the parks but visitors need to respect the country and the culture. Most visitors will be respectful if they know the places that are appropriate for them to visit and if they are given the right information. Some work has already happened to improve visitor experiences and to make sure that they do not have an adverse impact on the country.

Lots of tracks and unauthorised campsites have been created by people driving off the main roads and tracks looking for somewhere to camp. Some work done already has closed unnecessary tracks and rehabilitated them. Tracks people should use have been improved by grading and putting up direction signs. Authorised campsites in some parks have been defined and upgraded with facilities such as park benches being constructed to encourage people to use the campsites.

Visitors also need information on Aboriginal cultures, natural heritage and European history to be able to appreciate the parks and what they protect. Visitors also need to be kept away from areas which are not safe.



### Inappropriate fire regimes

Fire was used by Aboriginal people in the Far West Coast area to cook, for clearing areas, safety and warmth. It was also used for hunting to enable new shoots to attract *guga* to come to feed, for ceremonial purposes and for communication.

This meant that fire in the landscape was managed around specific sites. Changes in climate and the removal of Aboriginal people from their traditional lands have meant that fire regimes have changed. This can have a negative impact on cultural sites, animals (particularly threatened species such as the sandhill dunnart and totemic species that cannot escape), native vegetation if the fire is too intense and people's property and lives. Traditional burning and prescribed burning, if carried out correctly can help prevent dangerous bushfires.

### Lack of funding

Insufficient and/or inconsistent funding makes it difficult to develop long term programmes to protect natural and cultural heritage as well as support Traditional Owners to carry out their responsibilities.

Without funding it will be difficult to implement the strategies and actions needed to reduce the impact of threats and improve the health of targets. A lack of funding also affects the ability of the Far West Coast people to develop sustainable programmes that provide employment for the Far West Coast people in managing the natural and cultural heritage of the area.



### Mining onshore and offshore

Mining and petroleum exploration and extraction is permitted under strict conditions across much of the Far West Coast. Mining is not allowed in the vast Nullarbor and Yellabinna Wilderness Protection Areas which were established to protect unique ecosystems and cultural sites.



Currently, there is a mineral sands mine (Jacinth-Ambrosia mine) owned by Iluka operating within the Yellabinna Regional Reserve that uses ground water extracted from beneath the Nullarbor Regional Reserve. This mine provides significant employment for local Aboriginal people and adheres to strict environmental requirements. The other key impacts include clearing areas for exploration and operational tracks and the mine area itself. There are stringent requirements for rehabilitation of affected areas with Cultural Heritage Assessments conducted to identify cultural sites and ensure they are protected from the impact of mining and exploration. Offshore oil and gas exploration poses the threat of oil spills that would impact on the fragile coastline, cultural sites, and marine species (including migratory species) of the Far West Coast and needs close attention.

### Lack of opportunities (facilities and employment)

Many Far West Coast people want to work on country in jobs such as park rangers and land management officers. However, the number of positions available is limited. Mining provides some employment opportunities with a number of Aboriginal people currently employed by Iluka at the Jacinth-Ambrosia mine site. There are also some opportunities for Far West Coast people to work in the tourism industry providing opportunities to work on and for country.



### Buffel grass

Buffel grass is widely recognised as one of the most serious environmental threats to the rangelands of Australia. It is very hardy and capable of destroying Australian ecosystems and threatening many plant and animal species with extinction. It invades landscapes rapidly competing with native grasses and shrubs. With a much higher burning temperature than native grasses, it poses a very real threat to woodlands, community safety and infrastructure. Heavy infestations also prevent traditional hunting, foraging and cultural activities. It has been identified along the railway line and the Eyre Highway in the Far West Coast area and while it is actively managed, it remains an ongoing threat.

### Feral predators

Cats, foxes and wild dogs prey on small native animals including birds, small mammals and reptiles. It is highly likely that some species, such as western quolls, are locally extinct within the Far West Coast area due to the impact of cats and foxes. Although baiting programmes temporarily reduce the number of feral animals, they continue to have a devastating impact on local animal and bird populations.

### Dog fence



The dog fence divides cattle grazing districts in the north from sheep grazing districts in the south. It is maintained to protect sheep from dingoes. The dog fence runs along part of the eastern boundary and through part of the Far West Coast Native Title Determination Area.

The fence also prevents the movement of native animals across the area and there are concerns about some getting caught in the fence.

## Threats to meeting our Target

### Threat ranking

**Key**



**Low**

Likely to cause some damage to all or part of the target and will be relatively easy/inexpensive to repair



**Medium**

Likely to cause moderate damage to all or part of the target and will take reasonable effort/funds to repair



**High**

Likely to cause serious damage to all or part the target and will be difficult/expensive to repair



**Very High**

Likely to destroy all or part of the target which will not be able to be repaired.

Targets/ Threats	Cultural knowledge	Cultural sites	Employment	<i>Guga</i> (bush meat)	<i>Gabi</i> (water)	Animals of significance	<i>Wanna munda</i>	Marine animals	Important plants	Places of significance	<i>Wanna ma</i>	Community health and wellbeing	Summary of threat rating
Feral predators				H	VH	VH	VH						VH
Knowledge loss	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	M	H	H	H	VH
Mining onshore and offshore	L	H	M	H	M	L	M	H	L	M	VH		VH
Lack of employment opportunities	VH		VH		H								VH
Uncontrolled visitation	M	H		L	M	L	H	L	M	H	H	M	H
Camels		H		H	H	M	M		H				H
Buffel grass				M	H	M	H		H	M			H
Inappropriate hunting and harvesting				H					L		H		H
Inappropriate fire regimes				H		H	H		H	L			H
Lack of funding	H	H	H	M	L	M	H	L	M	H			H
Dog fence				M									L

## Objectives and Projects

(what we want to achieve)

### Strengthen knowledge of country

We will get more people out on-country so Elders can share their knowledge and stories.

**Objective:** Strengthen knowledge of country with language used and knowledge passed on by 2021

**Strategies:**

- Master's Apprentice program return to country visits with school / men / women / old / young / middle-aged people
- Use language
- Transfer knowledge and stories to young

### Enough healthy *guga* (bush meat)

We will hunt in the right way, in the right season, so there is enough healthy *guga* for all.

**Objective:** Enough healthy *wadu* for everyone to eat in the right season by 2021.

**Strategies:**

- Seasonal hunting calendar
- In-Park hunting management (seasons / guidelines)



### Camel management

We will manage camels particularly around rockholes so they don't damage cultural sites.

**Objective:** By 2036 rockholes aren't polluted or damaged by camels in the Greater Yellabinna and *Wanna Munda* parks and camel numbers are maintained low enough for minimal impacts on important *gabi* sites in the Nullarbor parks.

**Strategies:**

- Regionally-based camel management program
- Maintain widespread camel culling

### Feral predator management

We will control cats, foxes and wild dogs around shorebird beach nesting sites and when successful, we'll expand the programme to other sensitive sites.

**Objective:** By 2026 hooded plover nests are protected from feral predators so chicks fledge.

**Strategy:**

- Targeted feral predator management programme

### Visitor management

We will provide visitors with information so they can learn about and respect our culture and country and will use proper tracks and campsites.

**Objective:** By 2026 visitors are only using designated tracks and campsites

**Strategies:**

- Visitor management plan is developed and implemented

### Fire management

We will set up a fire unit so we can use fire to help keep country healthy.

**Objective:** Aboriginal people are actively involved in the management of fire within 5 years

**Strategies:**

- Establish a fire team

### Buffel grass eradication

We will keep managing buffel grass until there is none left in our country and stay vigilant to stop it from spreading again.

**Objective:** Aim to eradicate buffel grass in all of our parks by 2036.

**Strategies:**

- Work with partners in regional approach to eradicate buffel grass



### Minimise impacts and maximise benefits from extraction activities

We will make sure that any mining and oil exploration and extraction has minimal or no impact on our country and the benefits of it for Far West Coast people are maximised.

#### Objectives:

1. Maximise benefits (employment, education, funding, resourcing, skills) to people and country and minimise impacts (water, clearing, damage, disturbance, weeds) of mining and exploration offshore and onshore.
2. We are ready to stop any negative impacts on environment and culture by mining and exploration.

#### Strategies:

- Minimise impact to coastal environment
- Be well informed for decision making on mining
- Manage water for mining
- Manage weeds, pests and rehabilitation
- Develop relationships with companies involved in mining

### Enough money to make the plan work

We will find funds from different sources to support the projects so we can do all the things we need to keep Far West Coast country and people healthy.

**Objective:** Access available government (Working on Country, Indigenous Protected Area, Indigenous Land Corporation, National Landcare), industry (Iluka, mining, royalty) and philanthropic funds as needed to support Healthy Country projects (employment, research, management) by 2021.

#### Strategies:

- Build fundraising capacity to secure funds from multiple sources by employment and Board development

### Creating employment opportunities

We will grab opportunities so that we can create sustainable businesses and jobs that allow Far West Coast people to work on and for country.

**Objective:** By 2020 we have sufficient facilities to support FWC people to enjoy and manage country and allow others to enjoy and respect country while minimising impact and by 2025 there will be more long-term employment opportunities available to FWC people.

#### Strategies:

- Develop a FWC ranger programme
- DEWNR and FWCAC to identify and build facilities
- Partner with organisations to develop a range of employment and business opportunities

### Recognition of Aboriginal people's skills and knowledge

We will make sure that we receive recognition and benefits for our skills and knowledge with increased responsibility and participation in park management.

**Objective:** Real recognition and benefits for Aboriginal skills, knowledge and intellectual property within the life of this plan (by 2025).

#### Strategies:

- Develop and implement policy and procedures for the acknowledgement and use of knowledge, skills and Intellectual Property
- Implement and drive the government's co-management policy to achieve majority Aboriginal co-management board and legal ownership of parks.

### Good *gabi* (water)

We will visit *gabi* sites like rockholes and caves to maintain and protect them.

*Gabi* (water) is an important resource that requires protection and maintenance.



**Objective:** By 2021 important rockholes, caves, sites and blowholes are maintained in their natural state (protected / not modified)

**Strategy:**

- FWC people and rangers maintain rockhole / *gabi*

### Minimise the impact of the dog fence on native animals

We will find out how much impact the dog fence has on our native wildlife and find out how we can reduce it.



**Objective:** Dog fence has minimal impact on native animals

**Strategy:**

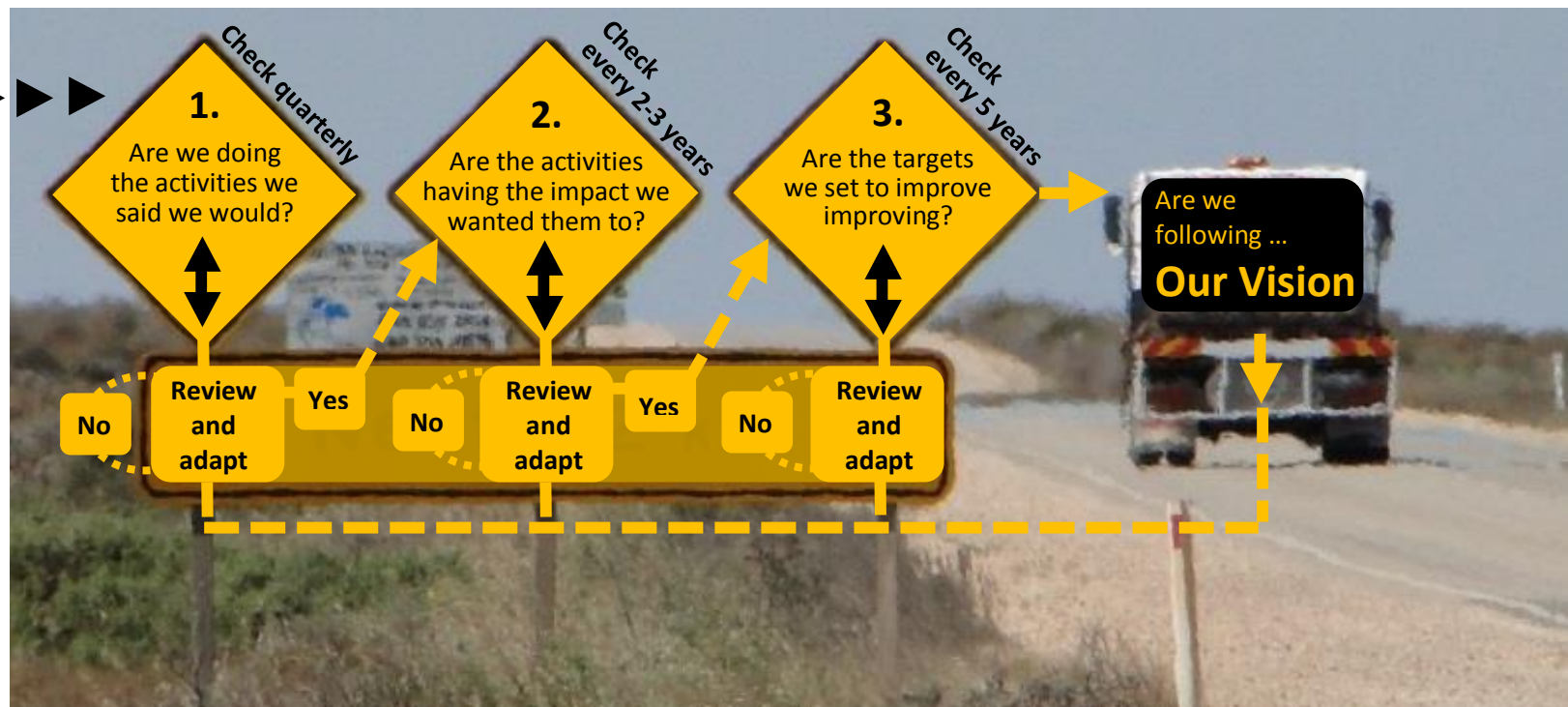
- Understand the impacts

## Learning as we go (monitoring, reporting and improvement)

We want to know if our strategies are working and to do this we need to check that the work set out in the plan is happening and that is changing what we wanted it to. We will monitor a number of indicators (signposts) which will tell us how well our strategies are working, if threats are being reduced and if the health of our targets is improving.

### Following the Signposts...

Start using  
our Plan ▶▶▶





## Sources of information used in this plan

Alinytjara Wilurara Natural Resources Management Board (2011) *Alinytjara Wilurara Regional NRM Plan*

Cane, S. & Gara, T., (1990). *Undiri: Aboriginal association with the Nullarbor Plain: a report to National Parks and Wildlife Service, South Australia*

Caton, B., Detmar, S., Fotheringham, D., Haby, N., Royal, M. and Sandercock, R. (2008). *Far West Coastal Action Plan and Conservation Priority Study*. Alinytjara Wilurara NRM Board and Department of Environment and Heritage

Caton, B., Detmar, S., Fotheringham, D., Laurence, S., Quinn, J., Royal, M., Rubbo, N. and Sandercock, R. (2011). *Eyre Peninsula Coastal Action Plan and Conservation Priority Study Volumes 1 and 2*. Eyre Peninsula NRM Board and Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Adelaide

Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (2013) *Yellabinna Reserves Management Plan*

Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (2013) *Yellabinna Reserves Management Plan* (Supplementary Document)

South Australian Native Title Service (2013) *Far West Coast Cultural and Natural Resource Management Plan* (Draft)

Tschirner, K. Read, J.L. Graham, J.K and Ward, M.J. (2012) *Alinytjara Wilurara Buffel Grass Operational Strategy*, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources