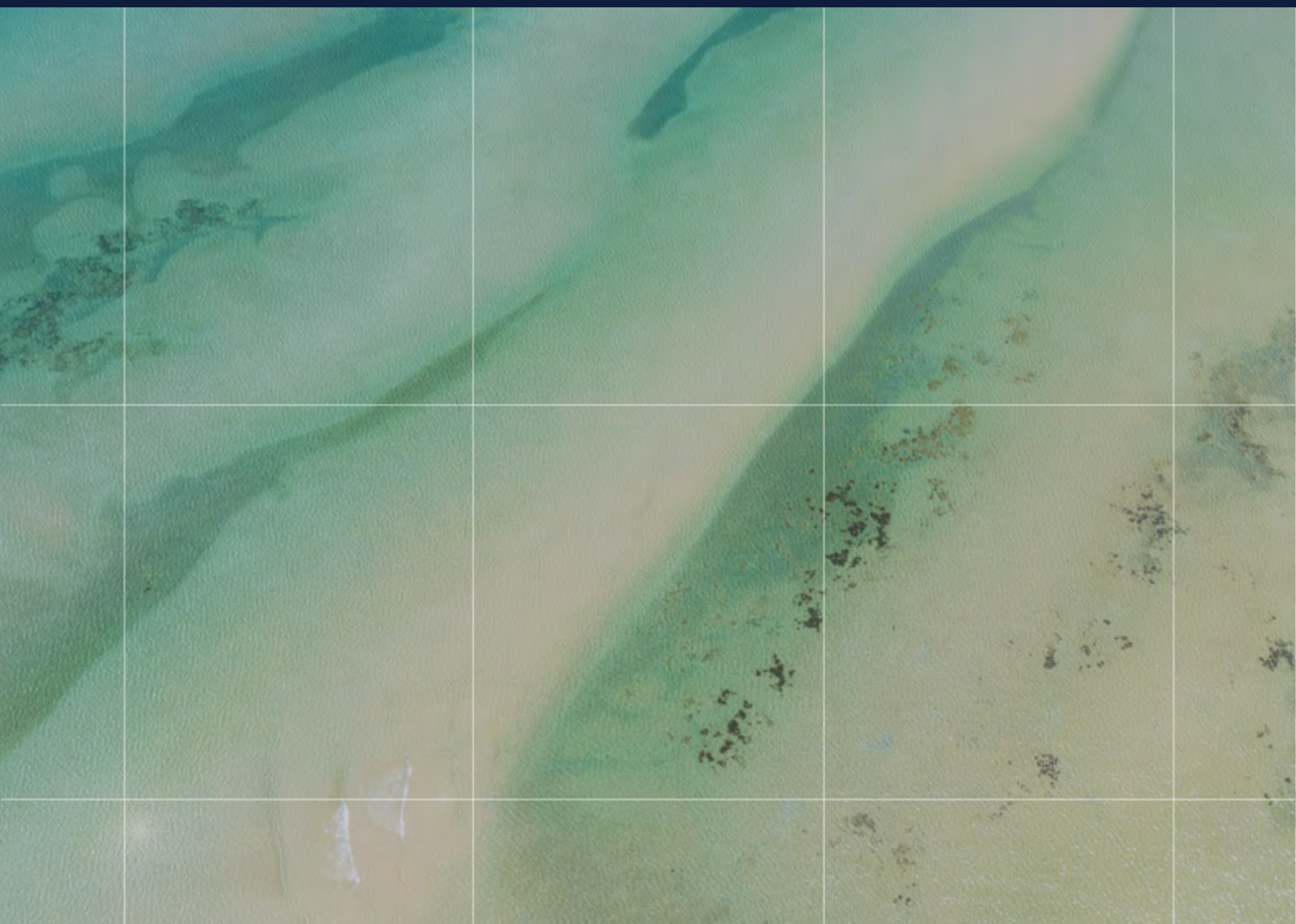
Anindilyakwa Land Council

# Data Unit Strategic Plan

## 2025 - 2028

An Anindilyakwa Road Map to Applied Data Governance and Sovereignty



Anindilyakwa
Land Council

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# Message from the ALC Chair

*Cherelle Wurrawilya*
ALC Chair

For a long time, us Anindilyakwa people, like many First Nations groups, have struggled to have access to data about ourselves. With better access to information about our health, housing, education, community justice and our country, we knew we would be better placed to plan for a brighter future on the Groote Archipelago. This is why in 2023 we took the step to be the first land council in Australia to have our own data unit, responsible for driving our effort to take control over the information about us and our country.

I am proud that since this program has started, this Data Unit has been driven by young Anindilyakwa people who are gaining important skills for their future careers and is guided by an ALC board who work closely with the program to ensure its success.

It's important that the Data Unit continue to work toward the goals laid out in this plan, and continue to build the capacity to monitor and evaluate the development of the Groote Archipelago to help us underpin the work we do across all programs at the ALC.

# Our Mission

Provide the Anindilyakwa community with access to, and control over information about their community and their country to support evidence-based decision making and to plan for a better future.

Ena akeningmikini-yada ngarrababurnu-manja ngarnumamalya angalya-langwa akwa ngarrabarrngarna ngarrambilyama enena-manja ayangkidarrba Mikbamurra, Milyilya, akwa Milyakburra-manja.

# Our Goals

1

**Keeping Data Safe:**

Establish appropriate data governance that addresses legal requirements, data sharing agreements, consent and privacy.

2

**Knowing Our People:**

Establish and operate a comprehensive Community Information System for all Local Decision Making bodies, ensuring full functionality and quality data.

3

**Mapping Our Country:**

Continue to develop the ALC's geospatial capability by implementing best practice, and supporting ALC departments to collect and manage their geospatial data effectively.

4

**Being Trusted:**

Be a trusted source of Anindilyakwa social, economic and environmental data that supports decision-making and reporting.

5

**Sharing Our Knowledge:**

Lead in First Nations applied data governance and sovereignty and share our approaches and learnings for the benefit of other communities.

# Goal 1

## Keeping Data Safe:

**Establish appropriate data governance that addresses legal requirements, data sharing agreements, consent and privacy.**

## Why are we doing this?

Ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of all information which the Data Unit holds is our number one priority. It is important that as we pursue our goal of collecting and managing longitudinal linked data concerning individual outcomes on the Groote Archipelago, that we maintain best practice in data security and safety. This will ensure that individual records are always kept confidential and only ever analysed and used in a manner which is de-identified.

Establishing effective data governance ensures compliance, secure data sharing, and privacy protection. This approach mitigates risks, builds stakeholder trust, and protects ALC from legal and reputational harm, while enabling informed decision-making to drive strategic action.

## How will we achieve this goal?

*This will be achieved by:*

- *Implementing clear policies.*
- *Securing data sharing agreements.*
- *Ensuring compliance with legal and privacy regulations.*
- *Regularly updating governance practices.*

# Goal 2

## Knowing Our People:

**Establish and operate a comprehensive Community Information System for all Local Decision Making bodies, ensuring full functionality and quality data.**

## Why are we doing this?

The objective of establishing and operating a Community Information System for all Local Decision Making bodies by December 2025 is to centralise data, enhance efficiency, promote collaboration and inform decision-making.

The creation of a Community Information System will mean that each Local Decision Making body responsible for service delivery will not have to replicate baseline population datasets, and can instead add their data to a centralised system. This will further unlock the potential of data linkage between services, providing more contextualised insight for monitoring and evaluating programs and their impacts on community.

This unified system aims to improve transparency and accountability while future-proofing operations to meet increasing needs for effective data management.

## How will we achieve this goal?

*This will be achieved by:*

- *Developing a centralised Community Information System that integrates Local Decision Making data.*
- *Aligning with stakeholder needs.*
- *Ensuring system compatibility and providing comprehensive user training.*
- *Periodic community censuses will also be conducted to provide important population-based information and indicators to track change over time.*

# Goal 3

## Mapping Our Country:

Continue to develop the ALC's geospatial capability by implementing best practice, and supporting ALC departments to collect and manage their geospatial data effectively.

## Why are we doing this?

Making informed decisions based on high-quality spatial data is essential to ensuring the ALC is able to effectively plan for the future. Historically, the ALC has lagged behind government and private sector with access to and capacity to use fundamental spatial tools for planning and operations. It is vital for the ALC to equip itself with the same capabilities as government and industry to enable effective spatial decision-making.

## How will we achieve this goal?

*The collection of baseline datasets, including a LiDAR and aerial imagery survey of the Groote Archipelago, has been completed. The Data Unit will:*

- *Continue to manage the acquisition of new data on a needs basis.*
- *Continue to enhance capacity by training Traditional Owners in drone operations and by collaborating with all ALC's departments to identify their needs.*
- *Targeted upskilling through training programs will ensure that staff can effectively utilise spatial data in their work.*

# Goal 4

## Being Trusted:

Be a trusted source of Anindilyakwa social, economic and environmental data that supports decision-making and reporting.

## Why are we doing this?

The Data Unit will hold data and analytical skills which will support stakeholders across the Groote Archipelago who are working toward positive community outcomes. The ALC acknowledges that their investment in the Data Unit should benefit the community, and it is therefore critical that the community trusts the Data Unit and the information it can provide.

Being a trusted source of Anindilyakwa social, economic, and environmental data ensures the Data Unit is able to provide information to assist with decision-making, transparency, and accountability for community-focused initiatives. With the trust of community, we can support tailored solutions, sustainable development, and compliance with reporting requirements, ultimately empowering positive outcomes for the Anindilyakwa people.

## How will we achieve this goal?

*This will be achieved by:*

- *Accurate data collection that is contextual, locally-gathered and ground-truthed.*
- *Strong governance and collaboration with the Anindilyakwa community.*
- *Reliable analysis and transparency.*
- *Ongoing engagement will ensure the data supports informed decision-making and reporting.*

# Goal 5

## Sharing Our Knowledge:

**Lead in First Nations applied data governance and sovereignty and share our approaches and learnings for the benefit of other communities.**

## Why are we doing this?

We aim for our work to be a model for other communities, demonstrating best practice in First Nations data governance and sovereignty. By supporting knowledge sharing and collaboration, we increase the reach and impact of our work. This empowers communities to control their own data, fostering trust, cultural preservation, and informed decision-making.

## How will we achieve this goal?

*This will be achieved by:*

- *Successfully creating and implementing a robust Community Information System.*
- *Adhering to effective data governance frameworks and sharing lessons learned.*
- *Actively host and attend forums to exchange knowledge and engage with stakeholders to expand our impact and reach.*
- *Through collaboration and continuous improvement, we will strengthen our approach and broaden our influence.*

# Key Activities

## The key activities of the Data Unit are to....

Assist Local Decision Making groups to define their data needs and support the collation of data to measure the outcomes of programs and initiatives.

Provide bi-annual social indicators reports to the ALC's Finance Committee and the ALC Board to support assessment of *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth)* section 64(3) applications.

Develop and administer surveys for community to complete in response to requests made by the ALC Board, to support informed decision making.

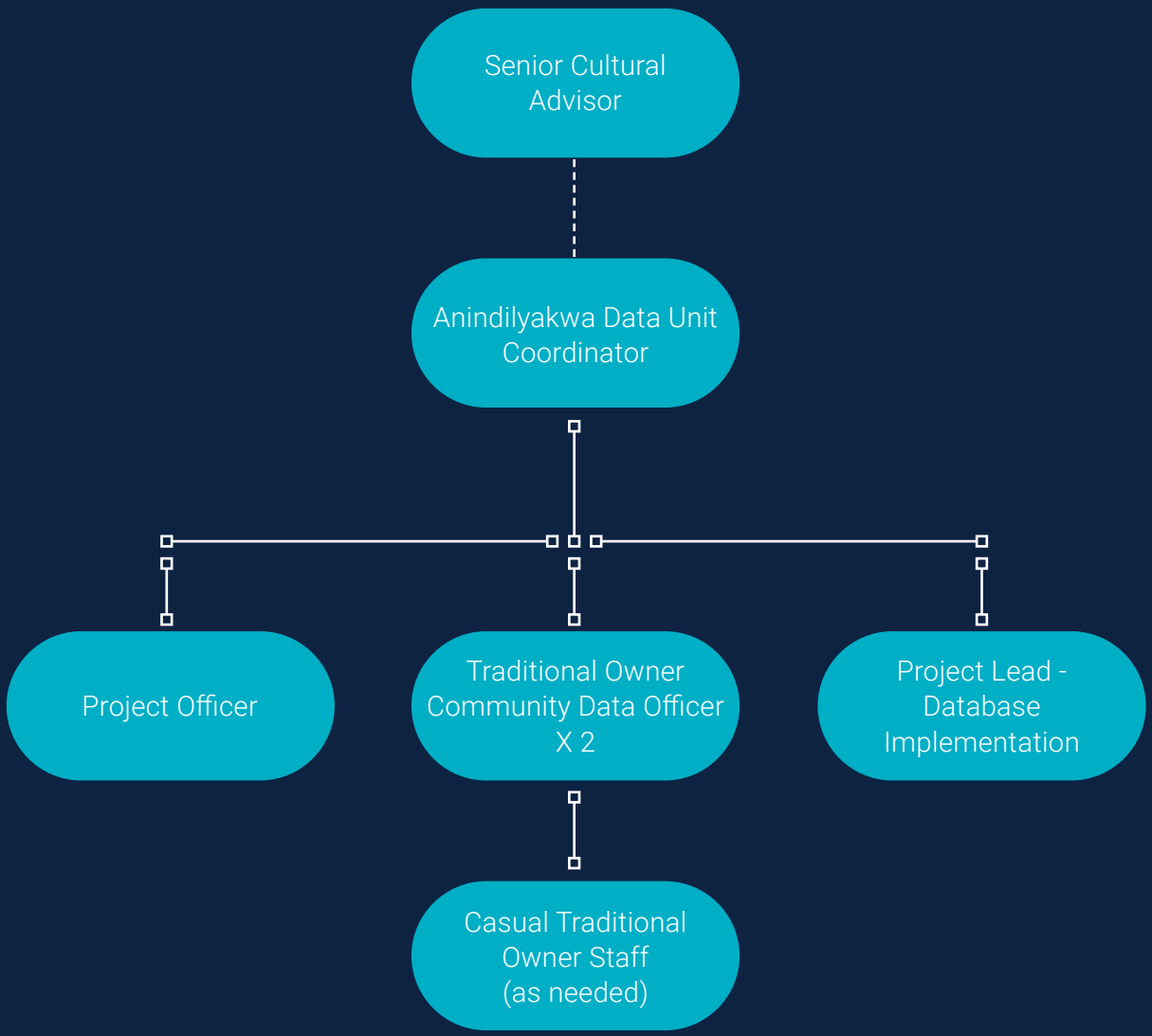
Enhance ALC's reporting obligations by providing quality data and analysis specific to the Groote Archipelago.

Provide guidance and protocols relating to the ethics of equitable collection of research data. To ensure that data about the Groote Archipelago community is retained by the ALC Data Unit.

Establish the ALC Data Unit as best practice in geospatial technology for Indigenous communities, the focus will be on leveraging high-quality spatial data and specialised tools for cultural and country mapping work.

# Data Unit Structure

The Data Unit is part of the Royalty Development Unit of the ALC and takes direction from the ALC Board.



# Key Capabilities

We are strengthening our key capabilities to support us to achieve our mission and goals.

## Traditional Owners on Our Team

Our team is made up of Anindilyakwa Traditional Owners who are trusted in community, provide cultural knowledge and are positive role models for the future generation.

## Trust and Confidence

Continuing to build on the community and stakeholder trust and confidence that we successfully harnessed during the development of the Social Indicators report in 2022, is important to us.

## Quality Data and Analysis

We will build capability to audit the quality of data we hold. Utilising our technical skills to provide data and analysis will be balanced with ensuring that capability is built into the system for general user-friendly access to data reports.

## Partnering with Experts

The ALC has a Memorandum of Understanding in place with the Australian National University (ANU). Expert advice has guided the establishment of the Data Unit. The ANU continues to work with us as we develop systems and protocols. We will continue to collaborate with experts in the field to strengthen the Data Unit.

## Knowledge Sharing

We recognise the importance of sharing our experience and demonstrating the benefits of our work, particularly with other First Nations communities. We actively bring knowledge back to the Groote Archipelago from other parts of Australia and the world.

# Working Collaboratively

The Data Unit works collaboratively with a range of stakeholders to achieve mutual benefits.

## Working Collaboratively

Aerometrex

Groote Eylandt Mining Company (GEMCO)

ALC Board members representing the 14 clans of the Groote Archipelago

Groote Archipelago Regional Council

Anindilyakwa Housing Aboriginal Corporation

Groote Eylandt Executive Steering Committee

Australian National University (ANU)

Groote Holdings Aboriginal Corporation

Australian Research Council

National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA)

Groote Eylandt Bickerton Island Primary College Aboriginal Corporation

Northern Territory Government Departments and Programs

Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia (CRCNA)

Warnumamalya Health Services Aboriginal Corporation

Elders in Angurugu, Umbakumba, Milyakburra and satellite communities

The Community Justice Group

## | Working Collaboratively

# The Australian National University

The ANU has cultivated a partnership with the Anindilyakwa people, emphasising collaborative research initiatives that respect and incorporate their knowledge and rights. In June 2021, ANU and the First Nations Portfolio signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the ALC to form the governance basis of all future partnerships between the two parties. The principles guiding this collaboration emphasise full partnership, informed consent, transparent communication, and the safeguarding of Anindilyakwa knowledge and intellectual property. Since this signing, the Data Unit has worked extensively alongside the ANU who have helped to form the Data Unit from its inception.

### Achievements of the partnership with the Data Unit to date:

A comprehensive community profile about socio-demographic and economic indicators of the Anindilyakwa people led by Professor John Taylor (2022).

Successful partnership with the Fenner School of Environment and Society on the CRCNA project.

Successful Australian Research Council Linkage Grant with the ANU School of Demography.

Moving forward, the Data Unit will continue to collaborate with the ANU's School of Demography, Fenner School of Environment and Society, and First Nations Portfolio to ensure that the Data Unit follows best practice across both our population data analysis and, geospatial and environmental data acquisition and analysis. The ANU School of Demography will work alongside the Data Unit specifically to achieve our second goal of implementing a Community Information System and the Fenner School will continue to support us in our third goal of continuing to improve our spatial data practice.

## | Working Collaboratively

# Local Decision Making Agreements

The ALC, on behalf of the Traditional Owner's of the Groote Archipelago, signed a Local Decision Making agreement in 2018 with the Northern Territory Government. The Local Decision Making Agreement is a commitment to work collaboratively to transfer services to community control in the areas of community housing, education, economic development, law, justice and rehabilitation, health and wellbeing and local government. The Data Unit will work closely with Anindilyakwa Traditional Owner led organisations to define their data needs and to support the collation of data to measure the outcomes of Local Decision Making programs and initiatives.

Key Anindilyakwa Traditional Owner led Local Decision Making organisations that the Data Unit works with include:

- Anindilyakwa Housing Aboriginal Corporation
- Groote Eylandt Bickerton Island Primary College Aboriginal Corporation
- Groote Holdings Aboriginal Corporation
- Community Justice Group
- Warnumamalya Health Services Aboriginal Corporation
- Groote Archipelago Regional Council

# Funding Agencies

Core operational funding for the Data Unit is provided under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth)* section 64(1) as part of the ALC's funding allocation. The Data Unit pursues other funding sources to support the establishment of systems infrastructure, capital and projects. Key funding agencies include the CRCNA and the Australian Research Council.

Through a diversified funding stream the Data Unit is able to fulfil its strategic and operational goals.

# Sharing Findings with Community

To ensure transparency, trust, and empowerment through effective distribution of data findings, the ALC Data Unit aims to present information in accessible, culturally relevant, and engaging ways that resonate with the community.

## Communication Objectives

### Transparency:

Provide the community with clear and concise updates on data findings.

### Empowerment:

Enable community members to be informed when attending general decision-making meetings and participating in community development initiatives.

### Cultural Relevance:

Tailor communication approaches to align with the Anindilyakwa preferences, language, and cultural context.

## Key Communication Channels

### Community Radio:

Community radio will be used to share project findings and data highlights through monthly short segments featuring Traditional Owners and community leaders, ensuring broad accessibility and engagement.

### Posters:

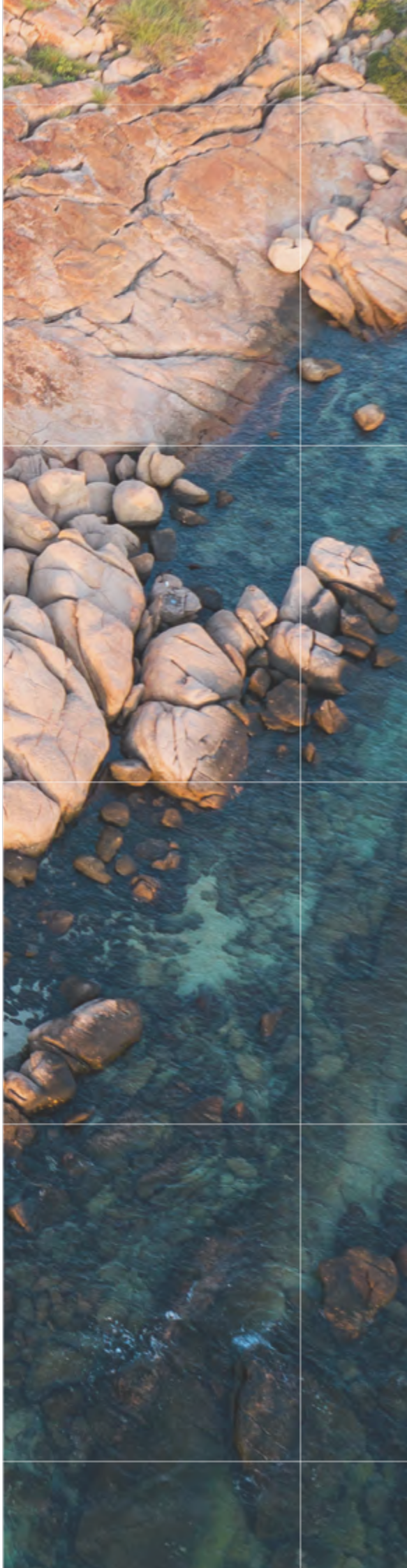
Posters will be used in high-traffic communal areas to share key findings with bold visuals and minimal text, including QR codes or phone numbers for more details.

### Infographics:

Infographics will be used to simplify complex data for better understanding, sharing them digitally and physically to highlight trends, progress, and community success stories.

# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ALC | Anindilyakwa Land Council |
| ANU | Australian National University |
| CRCNA | Cooperative Research Centre for Developing Northern Australia |



Anindilyakwa Land Council

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