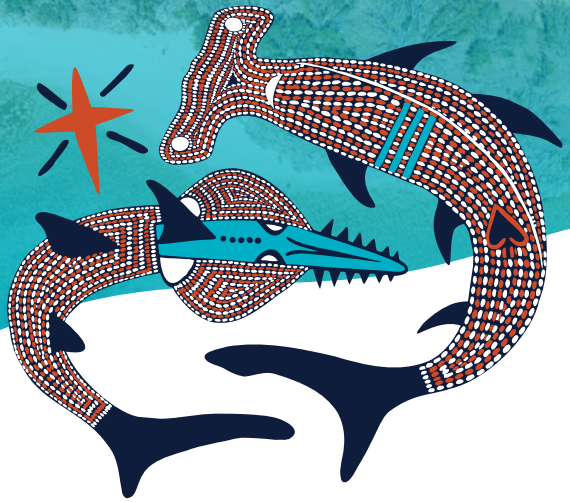
Anindilyakwa
Land Council

Stories from Groote

Edition 19
21 January 2026



Message from the Chair

In this edition of ‘Stories from Groote’, we are starting the year by reminding ourselves and our readers of the purpose and values of the Anindilyakwa Land Council.

In our ‘ALC goals for 2026’ article, we share this vision and a reminder of the activities we engage in to help support our purpose. This newsletter is one of the ways we can get the word out about the amazing work our Board Members and team members are doing to improve the lives of Anindilyakwa people, protect our environment, and share our culture.

This year, we plan to share lots more stories with you that reflect our purpose, along with good news from neighbouring Councils, communities and organisations we have worked with.

We’re starting our good news for 2026 with a film that documents the cultural practice of string-making and knowledge sharing, keeping an ancient tradition alive. We visit Groote Aqua’s rabbitfish program in Darwin, where our little fish are helping to clean up a big seaweed problem. And we share an article highlighting the success of community justice initiatives on Groote Eylandt.

In this issue, we’ve also provided a downloadable Board meeting schedule for the year ahead, for your information and convenience.

We hope you enjoy this issue. If you have any ideas for stories you’d like to share, get in touch with our team at corporate.media@alcnt.com.au

Cherelle Wurrawilya, Chair

Subscribe now

ALC Goals for 2026

We're hopeful 2026 will be a strong year for the ALC and the Anindilyakwa people. To mark the beginning of the year, we thought this would be a good opportunity to remind our readers of the ALC's goals and purpose, as well as the activities we support.

Our purpose

Cultivated by the Anindilyakwa people of the Groote Archipelago – our purpose is to:

- Protect, maintain and promote Anindilyakwa culture
- Invest in the present to build a self-sufficient future
- Create pathways for youth to stand in both worlds

The stories we publish in our newsletter speak to this purpose. We want to share how the ALC's programs – and the people working hard to advance them – are protecting our unique environment, promoting our culture, and creating a brighter future for our children.

Our key activity areas

To fulfil our purpose, we are focused on five key activity areas:

Caring for country - Protecting biodiversity and cultural values through ranger programs, land management, fire management, research, and biosecurity measures.

Economic and community development - Using royalties and partnerships to strengthen housing, employment, education, and infrastructure, while supporting Aboriginal corporations.

Monitoring mining and mine closure - Safeguarding Anindilyakwa peoples' interests in exploration, mining, and mine closure, with a focus on sustainable futures and transparent decision-making.

Preserving culture - Supporting Anindilyakwa-led programs, cultural sites, arts, language revival, and intergenerational knowledge transfer.

Governance - Implementing strong systems of reporting, risk oversight, board development, and conflict management to ensure compliance and accountability.

Looking ahead, we are excited to share many great stories about the people and programs of the ALC, as well as neighbouring Councils, associations and industries that support our vision and values.

Thanks for following our journey!

View our 2026 Board meeting calendar



Download the schedule

ALC welcome Kupa Teao as new Chief Executive Officer

Kupa Teao is joining the ALC after having served as the Chief Executive Officer of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation since early 2024.

Kupa has a wealth of experience in both the government and not-for-profit sectors, spanning more than three decades, working with medium- to large-scale organisations in New Zealand and Australia, including Yinhawangka Aboriginal Corporation, DEMED Aboriginal Corporation, Jabalbina AC and West Arnhem Regional Council.

He has strong skills in building partnerships with government, the private sector, community and Traditional Owners and is committed to effective ongoing engagement to ensure inclusive decision making.

He was born and grew up in Aotearoa (New Zealand), and has a connection to both Aotearoa and the Cook Islands. Kupa will reside on Eylandt with his partner and will be based in the ALC Head Office, Alyangula.

Kupa Teao will commence in the role of Chief Executive Officer on **Monday 16th February 2026**.



Vale Shane Marshall, GARC

The ALC Board wishes to pay tribute to the late Shane Marshall and extend our condolences to his family, friends and loved ones following his passing on December 30, 2025.

Shane was appointed Chief Executive Officer of the newly formed Groote Archipelago Regional Council in 2024. He became a valued member of the Groote Archipelago community and made a meaningful contribution to the community he served.

Our thoughts are with his family and his community at this difficult time.

New film explores the cultural ties of string making

Protect, maintain and promote Anindilyakwa culture

The ALC Media Program and Anindilyakwa Arts are proud to share a new film that explores the traditional art of string making and weaving on Groote Eylandt.

Marrubuda Merra (Strength of String), follows master weaver Elsie Bara, sisters Sue and Maureen, and other Anindilyakwa artists as they gather fibres to weave a traditional kayuya (dilly bag), all the while passing down their knowledge to daughters and granddaughters.

“For the Warnindilyakwa people (this process) is very important. This string is not new, it’s from the past. And the ladies at the art centres keep doing it for the future, passing knowledge and skills to our young ones, so they can keep on doing it when we aren’t here anymore,” said Noeleen Lalara, Lead Art and Cultural Officer, Anindilyakwa Arts.

Filmed at Ayungkwiyungkwa, around the big fig tree, and at Anindilyakwa Arts Umbakumba, the film reveals the power and significance of string in bringing Anindilyakwa women together on country, to create, share knowledge and make memories.

Explore artworks available at anindilyakwaarts.com.au



Credit: Britten Syd Andrews

Groote's rabbitfish to the rescue in Darwin

Protect, maintain and promote Anindilyakwa culture

Recently stocked goldlined rabbitfish from Groote are loving their new home in waters around Darwin, where their favourite food is top of the menu - seaweed!

Seaweed can be a nuisance for Darwin's Waterfront lagoon, a popular spot for locals and tourists to swim and snorkel. Excess growth and floating mats of seaweed can lead to reduced water visibility, impacting water quality and the lagoon's viability.

Enter Groote's seaweed-loving rabbitfish!

These small but mighty fish love grazing on seaweed, which is helping to naturally reduce seaweed cover and improve the health of the local marine environment.

Bred at Groote Aqua's Little Paradise facility on Groote Eylandt, the fish were gradually introduced into their new home via a floating pool. Once released, they quickly embraced their role as reef gardeners, cleaning up the algae that would otherwise smother the coral.

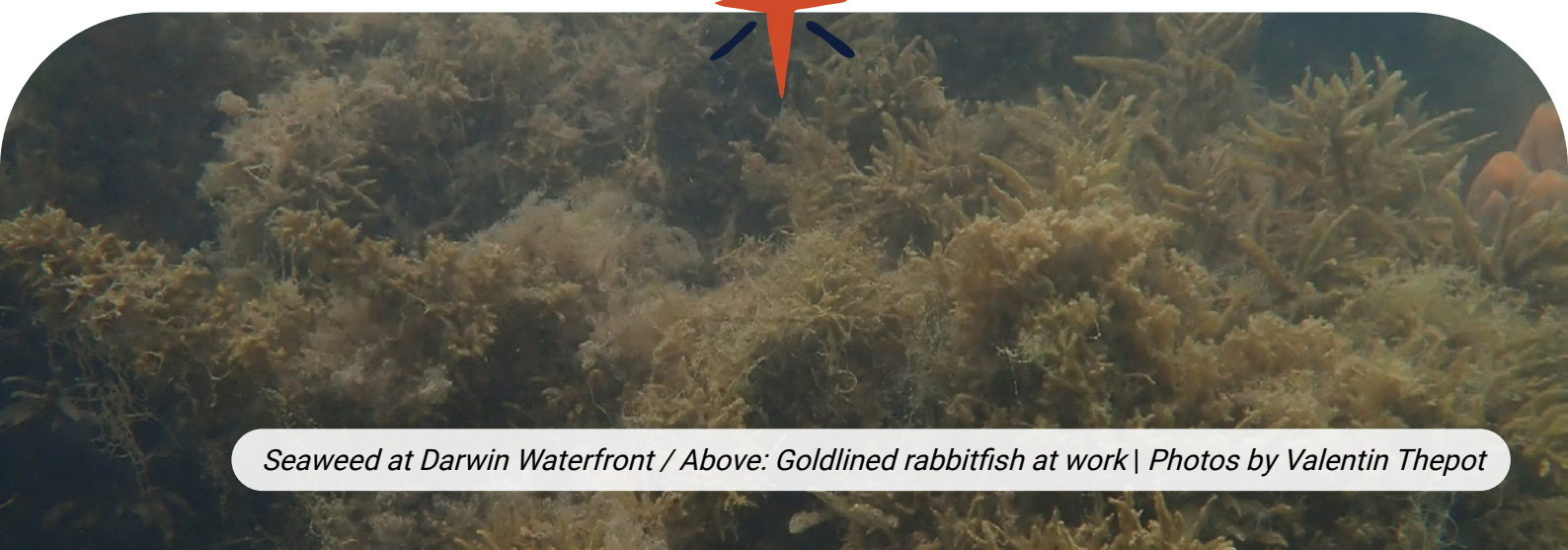
The project is a collaboration with Pandora Expeditions and the Darwin Waterfront. Their mission is to clean up the lagoon to strengthen and restore local ecosystems, and help Pandora Expeditions grow and maintain coral gardens in the Waterfront.

"This project was a happy and unintended off-shoot of our rabbitfish project," explained Dr. Valentin Thepot, Groote Aqua's Operations Manager. "But it's showing how local Groote aquaculture can enhance coastal environments and create healthy, beautiful environments for everyone to enjoy."



Tania Mac-Kay, Founder and Director of Pandora Expeditions, is excited by the results.

"Right here in the lagoon, the rabbitfish are already proving to be amazing helpers, shaping a more vibrant marine environment for everyone. We look forward to continuing this collaboration and helping showcase the fantastic work of Groote Aqua across the Northern Territory," she said.



Seaweed at Darwin Waterfront / Above: Goldlined rabbitfish at work | Photos by Valentin Thepot

Spotlight on Groote's 'quiet revolution in healing, rehabilitation and justice'

Invest in the present to build a self-sufficient future

We've been talking a lot about the success of the Anindilyakwa Healing Centre – a therapeutic residential program for Anindilyakwa men at risk of reoffending and imprisonment. Not only did the centre show great outcomes following an independent evaluation report, it also featured in an ABC news report about the power of bush healing.

Now, the Paul Ramsay Foundation (PRF) – contributors of a $3.45 million grant for the construction of the Anindilyakwa Healing Centre – have shared their insights into the success of the Healing Centre and other social justice initiatives on Groote Eylandt.

Read PRF's feature article on 'Investing in self-determined alternatives to custody' for a deeper look at how the ALC and the Northern Territory Government's Local Decision-Making Agreement (LDMA) is giving Anindilyakwa people greater control over their own justice system.

Investing in self-determined alternatives to custody – PRF News

"In Groote Eylandt, in the heart of the Gulf of Carpentaria, the Anindilyakwa people are leading a quiet revolution in healing, rehabilitation and justice. Through the Community Justice Group and Anindilyakwa Healing Centre, local leaders are creating safer, stronger futures built on cultural strength together with contemporary rehabilitative practices..." read the full article.



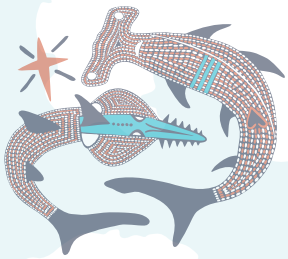
Highlights from the article:

- In the five years since the LDMA was introduced, crime on Groote Eylandt has almost halved, decreasing from 861 recorded crimes in 2020 to 448 crimes recorded in 2025.
- The ALC launched the Community Justice Group in 2020. Made up of community Elders and respected persons, the group supports peacemaking (mediating and de-escalating conflicts) and provides advice, support and education to reduce the rate of offending.
- The Community Court is gaining a positive perception among locals, who see the Community Justice approach as fairer and more impactful. As one community member said, "In Local Court, they're just seen as their crime, but in Community Court, they are seen and heard as a person."



Photos by Britten Syd Andrews

Our values



One People One Family
Ngarrurrakawuruma ngarnumamalya

Pride
Ngarriwerrikiyangmakwajinama

Honesty/Truth
Akuwerrikilyangmandukunadinama

Listen
Akeningmidini-yada

Respect
Akumaringkirradinama

Our Future
Ambakumurra-yada

The Strategic Plan 2023-33

Protect, maintain and promote Anindilyakwa culture

Invest in the present to build a self-sufficient future

Create pathways for youth to stand in both worlds

Anindilyakwa Land Council

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