



# Milingimbi Water

Djäka gapuw ḷamathanj - Care properly for our water

Report to the Power and Water Corporation from

Charles Darwin University

Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultancy Initiative

Schools of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Education



**PowerWater**



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The Intellectual Property of all the Yolŋu knowledge in the report is retained by the Yolŋu knowledge owners.

# Executive summary

In 2009, the Power and Water Corporation approached the Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultancy Initiative at Charles Darwin University to undertake a collaborative project to examine and improve engagement with Milingimbi community over issues of water management.

In preliminary meetings with representatives from Power and Water, East Arnhem Shire, and Territory Housing, we decided upon a community consultation in which two sides of the water story would be told – the Yolŋu side, and the Power and Water side. We proposed that the community story telling process would lead to discussions about ways forward with community engagement around water management.

Consultations were held at Milingimbi over four days. Visits were made to people's homes, to government agencies, and to significant sites around the island, including the bores and tanks. People talked about Yolŋu traditional knowledge of water, and the history of water since before the mission days. They talked about their understanding of contemporary water technology and use, how water should be cared for, and how Yolŋu are, and could be involved in water management.

Interviews in Yolŋu languages were transcribed and translated, and the ideas emerging were arranged into themes for Stage 1 of the report.

In Stage 2, Power and Water sent three representatives to Milingimbi to meet with key elders and the CDU researchers. At that meeting, issues arising from the report were discussed, the proposed posters were evaluated, and agreements made over ways forward for working together. Power and Water's conclusions are included in Stage 2 of the report. CDU's responses to further questions arising from the trip to Milingimbi are included in break-out text boxes throughout the report.

The Yolŋu elders conveyed their thanks to Power and Water for what they saw as a respectful and productive process.

The Power and Water Corporation also thanks Milingimbi Yolŋu and Charles Darwin University.

# 1 Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the many people at Milingimbi who took part in discussions and helped with this project.

We would particularly acknowledge, in alphabetical order, these people from Milingimbi and elsewhere:

- Balarrkpalarrk, custodian for Milingimbi community land, Wobulkarra clan
- Bilanya, clan elder, pastor, Birrkili Gupapuyŋu clan
- Daisy Baker, Milingimbi Shire Housing Officer, Wangurri clan
- Djirarrun, school student, Marranu clan
- Matthew Dharrgar, Yolŋu plumber, Wanybarrŋa Djambarrpuŋu clan
- Ganygulpa, clan elder, school teacher, Wangurri clan
- Guminda, Year 12 student, Marranu clan
- Janet Njumapuy, clan elder, Gamalanga clan
- John Cameron, Essential Services Officer, previously Milingimbi plumber
- John Greatorex, YACI consultant, Coordinator Yolŋu Studies, CDU
- John Morgan, community member, Miwatj Health Chairman, adopted by Dhalwaŋu clan
- Lapulun, Djambarrpuŋu elder and ex-chairman of Milingimbi council
- Lily Gurambura, custodian for Milingimbi town land, Gamal clan
- Malawa, clan elder, Djambarrpuŋu clan
- Maralwuy, Year 12 student, Naymil clan
- Marpiyawuy, senior Milingimbi elder, Gupapuyŋu clan, (märi-watanu custodian),
- Märritja, senior clan elder, Djambarrpuŋu clan
- Michael Christie, Yolŋu Consultancy Initiative, CDU.
- Miranda, Year 12 student, consultancy mentoree, Liya-Dhälinymirr Djambarrpuŋu clan
- Munguli, senior clan elder, Naymil clan
- Murarrgirrangi, clan elder, teacher, Gupapuyŋu clan
- Oscar Datjarranja, clan elder, Wangurri clan
- Paula Madiwirr, clan elder, teacher, Gupapuyŋu clan
- Ross Mändi, clan elder, Miwatj Health Board member, Dhalwaŋu clan
- Trevor van Weeren, consultant, artist, video, graphic designer
- Ursula Zaar, Water Resources, NT Dept, NRETAS)
- Wangurru, clan elder, consultant, Wangurri clan
- Waymamba Gaykamanu, consultant, Gupapuyŋu elder, ex-lecturer CDU
- Wulwul, clan elder, CDEP Coordinator, Djambarrpuŋu clan
- Wurrulŋa, clan elder, Djambarrpuŋu clan
- Yambal II, artist, his pictures of the Boduk story from 1976 used with permission, Wanybarrŋa Djambarrpuŋu clan
- Yirjiya, clan elder, consultant, CDU Yolŋu Studies lecturer, video, Interpreter, Liya-Dhälinymirr Djambarrpuŋu clan

## 2 Summary of Stage 1

In 2009, the Power and Water Corporation approached the Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultancy Initiative at Charles Darwin University to propose a collaborative project to examine and improve engagement with Milingimbi community over issues of water management. The project was also envisioned as a best practice example of community consultation and engagement that could be used as a model in other communities to support the roll out of the Power and Water Community Water Planning Initiative. In preliminary meetings with representatives from Power and Water, East Arnhem Shire, and Territory Housing, we decided upon a community consultation in which two sides of the water story would be told – the Yolŋu side, and the Power and Water side. We proposed that the community story telling process would lead to discussions about ways forward with community engagement around water management.

Posters and leaflets illustrating some of the Power and Water story were prepared in consultation with Power and Water. Other resources that were used during the consultations included; bore reports, maps, satellite images and Power and Water publications. Consultations were held at Milingimbi over four days. Visits were made to people's homes, to government agencies, and to significant sites around the island, including the bores and tanks. People talked about Yolŋu traditional knowledge of water, and the history of water since before the mission days. They talked about their understanding of contemporary water technology and use, how water should be cared for, and how Yolŋu are, and could be involved in water management.

The senior people all emphasised the sacred and totemic aspects of water in traditional and contemporary life. When people relate to each other, they relate through connections of kinship which are located in land, and particularly in water sources on the land. This is the case in each of the two halves of Yolŋu life – Dhuwa and Yirritja. There are Dhuwa and Yirritja waters just as there are Dhuwa and Yirritja people and Dhuwa and Yirritja land. When Yolŋu cry out sacred names and places in their funeral ceremonies, it is actually water they are crying to. Land owners of every clan group think constantly about the waters which are lying in their land because they are always singing and crying about them. The older people all know whether a particular water source is their mother, their sister, grandmother, grandchild etc. The younger people on the trip to the bore seemed less sure. Water is seen to have agency – it cares for people, it gives them life, it has its own feelings and commitments.

People told different ancestral stories about Dhuwa and Yirritja water. We heard the Dhuwa story of the wallaby who carefully protected fresh water sources so we can enjoy them today. We visited the Yirritja water at Macassar Well in Bush Camp, and heard about its creation story, how it has been used first by Yolŋu, then by Macassans and Yolŋu together, and then by the missionaries who used too much water for irrigation and the water went brackish. Macassar Well, and the Milingimbi community are all on Yirritja land. Lily, a traditional owner, showed us the remains of a small ancestral well in Top Camp called Gurruruwa, which had been covered over by housing contractors. We visited Dhuwa water sources in other parts of the island.

Everyone was concerned that there was limited water in the aquifers under the island – unlike the mainland where there is plenty. They told the story of how in the 1970s everyone was informed that the Milingimbi water was finishing up and they would have to move to a new community to be called Ramingining. 'But then Power and Water found new water for us, and we appreciate the excellent and clever work they do. We know where they go putting their marks down for bores – even if they didn't always properly consult with the traditional owners about it.'

Everyone knows the water comes from the bores. The Year 12 students, after a trip to the bores and the tanks as part of their study, were able to give a good explanation of the hydrology, the bores, tanks and reticulation.

Everyone had ideas about conserving water – from spring loaded taps, to stopping children from playing with the hose, to taking short showers and only doing laundry once a week. People suggested rain water tanks and meters as ways of managing consumption. Everyone seemed to know the procedure for reporting problems – which involves reporting to the housing office and filling out forms – but not everyone follows that procedure. Some people are shy of walking into the middle of the community, or of reporting to the housing officer, and there are language barriers and kinship avoidance barriers. Governments talk of the larger Indigenous townships like Milingimbi as if they are communities of people with common goals and aspirations, but that is not the case. People have been living in particular areas around the 'mission' for generations, reflecting particular links to their ancestral land often quite far away, and to their kin – the other clan groups to whom they are related through marriage. Very few people feel comfortable to go into all the other people's camps.

The majority of people had a sense of impending crisis – both from global warming (although there was no mention of rising sea levels) – and from the NT Government's plan to build fifty new houses at Milingimbi. "If we get fifty new houses there definitely won't be enough water to go round."

Older people remembered the mission days when there were highly trained Yolŋu plumbers (and mechanics, carpenters, electricians etc) working alongside missionaries in teams. Everyone insisted that we should have several properly trained Yolŋu plumbers, men or women, who have the ability and the authority to do all the plumbing work. To get there, we need a Balanda plumber who is trained to teach plumbing properly and who is prepared to work with Yolŋu respectfully, to learn something of the language and culture, to fit in to the community, and take part in community life. We don't want the Yolŋu plumber to just follow along behind the Balanda plumber, handing him the tools. Dharrgar has been working as the Yolŋu plumber for ten years now and has only one small certificate.

Milingimbi Yolŋu are keen to work with Power and Water to develop ongoing water management strategies 'through a partnership between two profound knowledges'. The Yolŋu see it as important always to start with Yolŋu ancestral knowledge and respect for water. Young people need to know the Yolŋu story before they will properly engage with the Balanda story, putting the two together carefully. For example, agreeing upon a good system of ongoing management requires an agreed understanding of the geography and demographics of Milingimbi. We need an education program which teaches the Yolŋu and Balanda knowledge together equally so we can learn to use it properly as we learn to love and respect it, and celebrate its links to our ancestral histories. For example we need to start always with an understanding of whose land the water is on. We also need more community education on the relation between water and health. Embedding the negotiation process in both Yolŋu and scientific knowledge will provide pathways for building workforce capacity, better coordination and alliance of services. It was thought that this might take a few years to get working properly.

Systems of repair and maintenance have been set up following Western governance

#### *What is 'work' in a Yolŋu context?*

*Yolŋu elders sharing their knowledge and acting with traditional authority are seen to be working – 'djäma'. Yolŋu do not separate out the idea of work from the rest of everyday life. Work is a social, political and cultural activity. In the past Aboriginal organisations (like the plumbing team or the housing team) were very successful in bringing people to work together because these other dimensions of work were acknowledged and catered for.*

models because the complexity of Yolngu kinship and culture have largely been invisible to government agencies of all levels. For example, the ways in which repairs and maintenance are organized should better reflect the ways in which different extended families are related through ancestral and historical clan connections, and live out their lives at Milngimbi through those patterns. If each extended family at the camp level (Top Camp, Njamuyani, Middle Camp, Army Camp etc) had one or two people who are supported to check up on the plumbing and report faults to the Housing Officer, like environmental health workers, that would be a better system. It would better reflect traditional governance, and those people could have other roles as well – like reporting back to the families other news from Power and Water, or from other government departments.

Everybody we spoke with appreciates the work of Power and Water, and they also expressed their appreciation for being engaged with, listened to, and having the Power and Water story explained to them carefully and respectfully for the first time in their experience. Traditionally much of the contact with Indigenous people has often lacked acknowledgement and inclusiveness of traditional knowledge, showing a lack of understanding and/or respect of the complexity around indigenous culture.

Overall, there was general agreement that the Yolŋu understanding of water as a sacred life giving resource owned by various clans and connected through kinship to stories of creation, ceremonies, rights and responsibilities had gradually given way to an understanding of water as a secular commodity produced and provided by government. Working together to develop good collaborative management strategies involves helping young people learn and remember the Yolngu and Balanda story of water.

People gave suggestions about working together to develop community water planning: We can collaborate to keep traditional water knowledge alive so that young people grow up respecting water 'both ways', we can keep the traditional wells alive and repair and replant the well where the pandanus were cut down and the well filled in by contractors, we can find ways for the senior custodians to work with the hydrologists and drillers, we can work more closely with the school aiming at good 'both ways' education and relevant focussed training leading to plumbing and environmental health work, we can work with the Shire to find plumbers and essential service workers who will enjoy participating in community life and who have formal training as a key part of their role, and give them a good induction into the language and culture of the community, and we can set up systems of decision making and information sharing and reporting which reflect the social and cultural makeup of Milngimbi today.

The elders wanted the consultants to convey their thanks to the people at Power and Water and they look forward to hearing back from them and working with them on water conservation projects in the future.



Scoping meeting with stakeholders

### 3 Origins of the Project

In early 2009, Power and Water Corporation approached the Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultancy Initiative at Charles Darwin University to propose a collaborative project to examine and improve engagement with the

Milingimbi community. They were particularly interested in working to develop good ways for Milingimbi people to become involved in water management in their community and explore ways to inform its Community Water Planning initiatives.

In preliminary meetings with Sophie Golding and Nerida Beard, we decided upon a community consultation in which both sides of the water story would be told – the Yolŋu side, and the Power and Water side, and the storytelling would lead to discussions about ways forward with community engagement around water management.

On 22nd June 2009 Yirjiya, Trevor, John and Michael met with representatives from Power and Water, East Arnhem Shire, and Territory Housing to hear the Power and Water story of water and discuss the scope of the project. Ursula Zaar told us about the Milingimbi hydrology and answered questions, and the other government departments contributed questions for the community discussions. In further discussions with Sophie we agreed on the scope of the project and the provisions for protecting the Intellectual Property of the Yolŋu knowledge authorities.

## 4 The Scope of the Project

The original Project Definition document issued by Power and Water stated:

"Milingimbi does not have an excessively high water consumption rate compared to other communities across the Top End. However they do have a stressed aquifer that has limitations on its projected production rates. Moreover, Milingimbi falls under the SIHIP program, meaning that in the foreseeable future there are programs in place that will potentially require an increase in usage of water across the community."

The value of carrying out the work in Milingimbi is high. The strong relationships that exist between the preferred consultant group (CDU) and the community, and the use of Yolŋu bicultural consultants would see an effective, locally relevant and culturally appropriate consultation and resource development.

What is the reason that they have such low consumption rates? Do they have a good water "ethic"? Clearly there are lessons to be learnt and it remains to be understood as to whether or not we can replicate these lessons in our higher consumption communities where wastage, not problems with our infrastructure, is deemed as an issue/problem to be addressed. The consultation envisages a discussion around the history and cultural values around water at Milingimbi, the current issues around water supply (supply and demand), what sort of actions/strategies the community, and potentially with Power and Water, could be implemented to address those current issues, and the sorts of resources which might facilitate, strengthen and celebrate those discussions."

In the meeting with Power and Water in June 2009 we agreed to deliver:

- A Final Report which would outline
  - the Milingimbi story of water
  - Milingimbi people's understandings of and reaction to
    - the Power and Water story of Milingimbi
    - the Territory Housing/Shire plumbing maintenance processes
  - Recommendations for Territory Housing/Shire about the possibility of training a local person to conduct basic plumbing
  - Details on the consultancy and resource development processes

- A Poster on the Milngimbi water story
- Graphic resources on the Power and Water story
- DVD on the Milngimbi water story including consultation process

## 5 The Yolŋu Consultancy Initiative and the Consultancy Process

The Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultancy Initiative has been involved in cross-cultural consultancy work for more than five years. We are developing research methodologies which allow Indigenous and nonindigenous knowledge systems to work together productively and respectfully. We use Yolŋu languages and Yolŋu ways of collaborating over knowledge work. Examples of previous work – on problem gambling, on medical interpreting, and on gifted and talented Yolŋu children in schools, can be found at the website [www.cdu.edu.au/yaci](http://www.cdu.edu.au/yaci). Over the years, we have reached agreement on levels of payment for Yolŋu knowledge authorities appropriate to the contributions they make (as traditional custodians of the land and its resources, and as custodians of ancestral knowledge) which are comparable to mainstream consultancy rates. All community members who participate in the family-level discussions are also paid. Each contributor signs a consent form and a receipt and 'hobby form' upon payment.

For this project, the following methodology was negotiated and agreed with Power and Water. In the event, we only made slight variations.

- Yirjiya Guyula and Waymamba Gaykamarju – both senior

*Could you explain more about your consultation process? What is the role of community and family meetings? How should we go about a similar process in other communities?*

*Before beginning any project, we first discuss the feasibility, timing and whether the Yolŋu consultants and key people to be involved in a project see positive outcomes arising from the research and whether the project sponsors are genuinely interested and committed to provide feedback and implement any recommendations. After this preparatory work for the Milngimbi project, the Yolŋu consultants again made contact with the key people and negotiated a plan for several days – visits, discussions, interviews. Being up front, acknowledging authority and paying people properly allowed the process to go smoothly. They suggested the key family groups we should talk to. Family group meetings are much preferable to community meetings. In family groups, everyone works with traditional authority. People are relaxed and comfortable in their own spaces. Not many people may turn up for a community meeting, timing may be difficult, old people may not be available, and people may not feel they can speak honestly and frankly.*

*If Power and Water were to implement a similar process at Maningrida, the starting point would be once again to find a small group of people who can speak for the land and the various people, and engage them quietly and properly for some initial discussions. From the CDU researchers point of view it is imperative key consultants and their communities feel their views and ideas are listened to, taken seriously and that tangible actions result from the work they do. If key people and their communities feel 'mined' for information the relationships between sponsors, key people and their communities will suffer, and putting into jeopardy the possibility of future collaborations.*

*It is great that Power and Water have a community engagement division because different employees can develop a good knowledge and relationship with the governance structures in each of the communities. There was a time when community councils could do much of that work of finding the right people and letting people know how to go about consultations and supervising their work. Now that the Shires have taken over and the community councils no longer exist, groups like the Housing Reference Groups and Local Implementation Plan reference groups are taking on some of that work.*

*We believe those groups work if they are properly constituted, properly remunerated and have some real authority. The situation is different in each community, and one of the key and initial roles of the Power and Water community engagement strategy should be to find ways of establishing contact with key people in each place. Some of our other research projects (into housing and education for example) have ended with strong Yolŋu recommendations for special places to be set up in communities for the elders to meet, talk, think through issues of concern, and be in a position to engage outside groups in their own way. We are looking for ways to take this further, and if we succeed, we will make sure that Power and Water has a chance be involved.*

bilingual consultants with strong ties to Milingimbi were the chief consultants. They began by letting key Milingimbi Yolŋu know about the proposed project.

- We finalised the proposal and reviewed the draft graphics prepared by Trevor, with PWC, on Sept 8<sup>th</sup>.
- We agreed on resources, and methods, confirmed deliverables and milestones.
- We informed the Shire Council, NLC and the Government Business Manager of the project.
- At Milingimbi we brought the key Yolŋu together for initial meetings to
  - Finalise content to be covered.
  - Finalise individuals and family groups to be consulted:
    - Agree upon three or four focus groups or similar method - Narawunhdhu, Bura/ Namuyani, Diltji – and times and places to conduct meetings – and document the process and its justification
    - Agree upon key traditional knowledge authorities who can participate in documenting the Milingimbi story of water
    - Key others to talk to: Essential Services Officer, Community housing Office, Shire Office staff
  - Finalise process, including times, payments, recording, resource development, documenting consensus and differences within and between groups, feedback to PWC, and feedback to the community
- Consultations in the community over three days.
- Informal report back to PWC on the emerging findings and progress and ideas for the resource production.

*Can you explain your rationale of payment for Aboriginal participation and knowledge sharing. What is a reasonable rate of pay?*

*Within traditional culture knowledge is owned and has value. It is routine practice within Aboriginal society for people to pay for access to knowledge and it is important to acknowledge that process. Also we are trying through the consultancy initiative to help professionalise Yolŋu consultants. The government and industry are prepared to pay CDU for consultancy services, and we believe they should be doing the same for senior knowledge authorities in Aboriginal communities.*

*We would suggest that any Yolŋu who has authority to speak for country or on behalf of clan groups, and works with government sharing knowledge and make decisions should be paid in the order of \$200 for a morning or afternoon meeting. During family or clan meetings not everyone will be paid the same. We make payments based on a number of variables, the age and authority of participants (with higher rates of pay for older people, where the presence of elders gives the meeting the necessary authority of the family or clan), level of active input, assistance with organising the meeting, the sensitivity and seriousness of the topic. More information about payment reasons and process can be found at [http://learnline.cdu.edu.au/inc/tfc/docs/Money\\_Matters\\_Michael\\_Christie\\_TfC.pdf](http://learnline.cdu.edu.au/inc/tfc/docs/Money_Matters_Michael_Christie_TfC.pdf)*



Initial meeting with elders at Milingimbi CDEP meeting room

- Draft final report, posters and DVD to PWC
- Draft posters and report to Milingmbi Yolŋu for comment
- Final poster and draft report, recommendations for PWC feedback strategy, and Community Water Planning process.
- PWC feedback to community (in conjunction with the Yolŋu consultants)
- Final report (including PWC feedback process), final posters and DVD



Essential Services Officer, John Cameron, showing how bores are measured to Lili and Year 12 students

## 6 What We Did

Trevor and John went to Milingimbi on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October and returned on Friday. Yiniya and Wangurru went on the Wednesday and returned on the Saturday.

Wednesday:

- Started with a meeting of key Yolŋu from the community at the CDEP office: ex-chairman Lapulunŋ, senior elder Marpiyawuy, and Wulwul
- Set up a meeting at the council office with key traditional owners of the island Lily, Wora, and Balarrkpalarrk, Oscar Datjarranja.
- First family group meeting at Njamuyani where most of the traditional owners live, talking about history of water, land ownership, the work of PWC, repairs and maintenance.
- Trip with the land owners to look at old soaks at Njamuyani, Macassar well, old wells at Bodiya outstation, and Bälma. Video interviews
- Video interview with Oscar, looked at town map and discussed reporting back process.
- Interview with Daisy Baker (NT Housing officer), discussion and review of reporting systems
- Meeting with Janet (custodian of the Dhuwa

*How do you know who the key people to engage are?*

*Key Yolŋu are identified by the Yolŋu consultants, some of whom have lived at Milingimbi. They are also known by CDU researchers who have individually lived and worked in Arnhem for over thirty years.*



A meeting at Bush camp

parts of Milingimbi Island) and family at Njamuyani discussed posters and water issues

- Interview with new plumber
- Further meeting with Marpiyawuy
- Visits with Balarrkpalarrk and Lily's family

Thursday:

- Meeting with Lily's family, discussion centering around the repairs and maintenance issues
- Senior people's discussion at the CDEP office, discussion around employment and training, old Yolŋu plumbers, and possible water management strategies.
- Interview with Dharrgar the plumber.
- Discussion and video interview with Larry Bilanya – Birrkili Yolŋu Story of water
- Discussion and video interview with Charlie Djirarrwuy – ex-Chairman of the pre-shire Milingimbi Community Council, who gave the Wangurri Yolŋu Story of water
- Meeting with Malawa and family, talked about problems of reporting water faults, need to train balanda on how to work with Yolŋu
- Discussion and video interview with Keith Lapulun – ex chairman – Djambarrpuynu story of water
- Excursion with school children and elders to visit the bores and tanks
- Visit to school with John Cameron (ESO) and Year 12 students.
- Meeting with Munguli's family, talking about home repairs, the shire, Yolngu positions alongside balanda, and how things worked in the past.
- Interviewed Ganygulpa after family discussions at the park where many people were present.
- Murarrgirrangi tells the story of Boduk the bush cockroach, and caring for fresh water
- Meeting at with Wurrulŋa's families at Njarawunhdhu (Bottom Camp).
- Meeting at Ross's house, how work gets done at Milingimbi, collaborations over work and planning on ways for community members to report water problems.
- Interview with Wurrulŋa
- Meeting with Oscar and some young men at a teacher's house for discussion over the maps, land ownership, water resources.

Friday:

- Meeting with Daisy Baker at the Housing Office, Repairs & maintenance process, the

- East Arnhem database system, assets recorded on database by the shire, people getting charged for repairs, 'head tax'
- Video interviews of John Morgan
  - Yirjiya interviewed by John
  - A coffin arrives and the community gather to meet and escort the cortege to Njamuyani.
  - Discussions with some of the Year 12 students
  - Yirjiya video interviews Maralwuy (Year 12) after a meeting with students' families and other young people.
  - Yirjiya interviews Djirarrwuy – on children's perspectives and responsibilities.
  - Met with and interviewed Lapulunj at Middle Camp after the funeral had started
  - Meeting with Bur'pur and family at Garden Camp.
  - Following meeting: Interview with Guminda, Paula and Miranda



Yirjiya setting up an interview with Djirarrwuy

## 7 Findings: The Milingimbi Yolŋu Story of Water

During all the community meetings there was ongoing discussion about the links between water and Yolŋu knowledge and religion. Senior knowledge authorities from Milingimbi who made special video representations about the Milingimbi Yolŋu story of water, were Bilanya (1), Djirarrwuy (2), Ganygulpa (3), Murarrgirrarrgi (4), Lapulunj (6), Lily (7, 8) Marpiyawuy (8, 9), Balarrkpalarrk (8), Marritja (11), Yirjiya (20) and Wurrulŋa (15). What follows is a summary of the various points made by these people in their interviews (with references to appendix and paragraph numbers) plus extra points brought up in the community discussions. Transcriptions and translations of relevant texts are in the appendices, starting page 35.

Water is life-giving (2:9). We call it 'living water' (1:8). It is life itself (6:4). We drink it for our life (1:2). Without it we would perish (12:1). It is a lifeline for every living thing, plants and animals (12:2). All animals need water (1:10). We have water by means of ancestral law, it has spiritual power and we must not steal or waste it (1:7), whether it's bubbling up from under the ground, or disappearing beneath it as at this time of the year, the late dry season which we call rarranhdharr (1:7, 11:1). Even when we see the water coming out of the bore, we feel love for it, because it belongs to the particular land owning clan group(s) and the old people used to look after it years ago (7:3). We know it's not free. Free water is what you get in a monsoonal downpour – use as much of it as you like (1:8). Conserving water makes us healthy (1:9).

Our ancestors had laws to govern the use of water (6:2). In the old days when they didn't have sugar or

*Can you draw out the idea of respectful and acknowledging engagement. How does that involve Yolŋu traditional knowledge?*

*Throughout Australia respectful engagement with Aboriginal peoples begins with acknowledging the traditional ownership of the land. Whenever decisions are made over resources, the stories of who owns what and who is caring for what get revised. Outside groups (like Power and Water) not only need to acknowledge and support those processes if they want to get good engagement, they really also need to commit themselves to learning about them, and getting to know the key people personally. This may mean some restructuring of the community engagement strategy, so that staff get to focus more specifically on particular communities. It also means providing payments for the work of key people.*

*Yolŋu understand discussion as the building of shared understandings and agreed ways forward in the engagement process. That involves acknowledgement and respect for everyone's authority. This is the most important element of the involvement of traditional knowledge. It's not so much what the Yolŋu know (although that of course is very significant) it's how they come to agreement which is authoritative and workable.*

take-aways, the people would just drink fresh water and then move from place to place. (2:6, 20:1). When they used to hunt they used to drink from the rivers and from wells, which they only used for drinking (6:6, 9:2). They would plan their hunting through their knowledge of where the water would be: 'Let's go hunting in that direction to get some crabs and sting rays. There'll be water there.' We still do that (18:2). They knew how to dig for water, and to make and use paperbark containers (11:1). We still know how to dig and find water, and we still drink it even if it looks a bit dirty (18:4). They looked after the water and had rules to abide by. They did not waste water (6:6, 9:2). They could tell which water was life-giving and which was polluted (11:1). Kids were kept away and told not to mess around with small water sources (9:3).

### Yolŋu connections to water

We learn about water from our elders (12:1) who tell us 'how, when, and why, to work with water and look after it' (12:2). The land contains water from both the Dhuwa and the Yirritja moieties (1:5, 1:2) and makes up both the sacred power (märr) and the emotional investments (ŋayanju) of our lives (1:2, 20:1). It is the source of life, and has a sense that connects 'deep in the cosmic knowledge of Yolŋu phenomena' (6:1). We are connected to water as we are connected to other people, through kinship (15:1). Some water we call grandmother, or mother or daughter or granddaughter (18:5, 18:6, 20:1). Water itself has its own desires (ŋayanjumirr) – it keeps people alive through its commitment to them and their land (1:7). It is the most important thing in our lives and we care for and respect it (12:1, 20:1). We have done this since the beginning of time (20:2). It breathes life into human beings (6:5). It has a profound lineage (6:2) connecting people through sacred names and places (ringitj) (6:3, 20:2). They used to protect it using spears (2:4).

### Ceremonial connections

Our ancestors survived by following the law. Part of the law has to do with sacred water, forbidden to young people. Only people who had grey hair were allowed to drink it.



Marrpiyawuy, Lili, John, Balarrk and Oscar at the Macassan well

*Power and Water is seen as the 'authority' in relation to community water infrastructure. Can you explain the difference between us engaging with Yolŋu and us providing our core service requirements.*

*Yolŋu recognise and rely on the technical expertise of Power and Water in pumping and providing a reliable source of drinking water to the town. In these matters Yolŋu expect Power and Water to make decisions for the benefit of residents. Traditional owners are respected when kept informed of these decisions. To locate, drill for water, or resolve broader community water issues, process is fundamental for respectful engagement. Respectful engagement processes require acknowledging the authority of, and active involvement of traditional owners. It is also fundamental to learn about these processes, and ensure key authorities are paid for their work commensurate with their level of authority.*

Other water holes were left untouched. So it is important for us to remember that we have to value the source (6:8).

Water comes from sacred sources (1:4). When Yolŋu cry out sacred names and places in their funeral ceremonies, it is actually water they are crying out to (1:2). Those land owners think constantly about their waters which are lying in their land because they are always singing, proclaiming and crying



An old map of Milngimbi

about them (1:5). The most senior ceremonial leaders, the Dhuwa Djirrikay and the Yirritja Dalkarra, can see that water when they think about it on their own land (1:5).

Different waters relate to each other as people do – mother and child or grandmother and grandchild – through their ancestral connections (2:5, 18.6). Milngimbi (we just call the whole place by the one name), has both Dhuwa and Yirritja water. Where the community stands, on Yirritja land, there is Yirritja water and at the top of the island in various different places, there is Dhuwa water (2:5-6). At the very top it becomes Yirritja again.

## Dhuwa Water

Murarrgirrangi told the Dhuwa story of 'How the Sea became Salt'. It is a story belonging to the Dhuwa traditional owners of Milngimbi – the Gamalanga, Gorryindi and Mälarra. In the story which is reproduced, illustrated in Appendix 4, page 46, the bush cockroach, the wallaby and the painted gecko were planning a ceremony. The cockroach and the gecko didn't know that the wallaby had hidden some paperbark containers full of fresh water. They organised to paint each other for the ceremony. The cockroach did a great job painting the painted gecko (as you can see from his beautiful pattern). Then the cockroach said 'It's my turn', but when the gecko painted him, he just splotched a couple of red patches on his shell (as you can see on a bush cockroach). He got up and looked at his reflection in the water. 'What a mess you made painting me up!' And he got really angry and ran around urinating in all the fresh water, making it salt. Fortunately, the wallaby was careful with water. He looked after it carefully. He had some fresh water hidden which he could put into small pools under a pandanus tree, and in other places. How are we going to look after the water, and keep it safe, like the wallaby?

We were shown the soak and a well at Bälma towards the top of Milngimbi Island, as an example of Dhuwa water in small seasonal wells: It is good and fresh at the end of the west



Old photo of Macassan well during the mission era

season and there are water lilies there (13:1, 18:1), but it gradually gets saltier through the dry season (13:1). There are bits of rubbish in there now (18:1). That place belongs to the Gorryindi and Gamalanga clans (18:2). Balarrkpalarlk said that he called that well at Bälma 'mother' (18:5). (His mother belonged to that group.)

### Yirritja Water

Milingimbi township is on Yirritja land, (2:3). The Milingimbi mission was established around a freshwater well which is now called Macassar Well because the Macassans used to use it as a water source (8:2,5). They used to collect trepang and then go and camp by the well to drink water (8:5). You can still see all the tamarind trees they planted (8:2). People call the whole island Milingimbi (in Yolŋu languages Milingimbi), but really Milingimbi is just the name of the well. The name of the whole island is Gupalgadi (8:4). (Yolŋu actually most often call the whole island Yurrwi – which is named after the cloudy water stirred up by the barramundi down in the beach area (8:4)). You can tell the Macassar Well has special origins because it is standing in the middle of a dry area surrounded by gum trees (8:1). Normally if you find a good fresh water source it will be surrounded by jungle, but at Macassar Well, it's just rock (8:1). It was created by a rainbow snake which came from Worrall, and then went on to a place called Madanangumu belonging to the Balatjini people. The totemic snake is called Warrbunuwa or Wunhanju or Mundukul. It's the harmless water python with the yellow belly, sung by Yirritja people (8:9). So Macassar Well belongs to the Njurruwulu branch of the Walamanju people. And when they died out, the Gamal branch of the Walamanju took over to look after it. They are still looking after it today. It's in the ancestral song of both groups of Walamanju (8:3). But it was always a special place for a lot of different groups of Yolŋu like the Ginatpa, the Burarra, and the Nakara who all moved to Maningrida in 1957 when the government station started there (8:7). The old people used to put their cycad nuts into the water to soak them for three days before preparing them. If you ate them without soaking them you'd die straight away (8:6). In the mission days it supported cattle and horses (8:5), and later the missionaries put a generator beside the well to pump water, and it went brackish so they had to abandon it (8:8).

The Yirritja water at Milingimbi is related to the water at Yilan (on the mainland further west of Milingimbi). The Walamarju look after them both, although the water at Yilan has been contaminated by pigs (7:4).

Another old water source called Gurruruwa is at Namuyani (Top Camp) near the houses (21:2). It belongs to the Njurrwulu Walamarju and is being looked after by Lily's people the Gamal Walamarju (21:7). It was used when they would hold ceremonies on the salt pans (21:2) long ago when there were no pumps or plumbers. It had pandanus growing around it – often a sign of the presence of water (21:7) but it was destroyed by some contractor's vehicle some time ago (21:5). Lily asked them last year to restore it (21:7).

Sacred Yirritja freshwater is called Gularri (2:3) and originates from a place called Burrwandji (2:3). It is connected with important people like Nangil, and we the new generation should regard the water which comes out of a tap as being sacred as well (2:6, 2:7). It's not something to be messed around with disrespectfully (2:4).

If we don't have a good system to care for our water resources, this land will punish us, because we are breaking the ways of the ancestors. The land is alive and watching us, the rain and wind are alive, if we look after water, then it will look after us (20:5).

## 8 Listening to the Power and Water story

Some of the older people made clear that they didn't understand the Balandia side of the water, but they were very grateful for the work of Power and Water over the years (9:1) and for this project (7:1, 7:2). 'We don't know how much water there is in the ground (1:3), but we do know that Milingimbi is a small island, not the mainland (11:11). And we know how to look after it (1:3). We understand that the water comes out of a bore (1:6, 9:2) even if we don't know how many bores there are (1:6). We know about how some water turns salty, and while we don't understand the technologies used, we can see the skills Power and Water have to know where to look for water' (13:2).

### History

The missionaries made bores and even a dam for the horses, saving water for the animals. They used it for the garden in the mission days, and taught us not to waste it (1:8). As the mission grew bigger the Balandia came walking all over the land, spearing it, looking for water (11:1). They built wells, thinking they would only be used for a short time, but they caved in, so they started to build tanks. But in the late dry season the levels went down and they were still building more houses, so they started drilling bores (11:2). We know the sites where drilling has been proposed - Djäraw, Bodiya, Gulambarj, and Dhudi-garrtjambal-nhirpanmin – because we hunt in those areas. (11:3). The Power and Water people put their marks out there on the land, and wait for the future to drill for more water (11:3).

*Can you elaborate on your ideas around engagement?*

*Yolju assume that consultation is a 'both-ways' process. There are different authorities and areas of expertise within PWC, the Yolju clan groups, and CDU. Serious engagement begins when all stakeholders acknowledge and respect each other's authority. The senior Yolju did this frequently throughout the process – they acknowledged Power and Water by making clear that they appreciate the work they have done providing water over the years, coming to visit them, and going with them for a tour of Milingimbi water sources and infrastructure, explaining how systems and technologies work, listening to their stories etc. Lily also made clear that she appreciated the role of CDU in bringing Power and Water and the Yolju people together in a respectful way, and helping guide the process. Respectful engagement is a consultation process where everyone's rights, knowledge and authority are acknowledged and valued. Some of these ideas are detailed in a research report on community engagement from a few years ago – which can be found at [http://www.cdu.edu.au/centres/spil/pdf/ICE@CDU\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cdu.edu.au/centres/spil/pdf/ICE@CDU_FINAL.pdf)*



Old photo of a water tank being constructed (mission era)

## Learning about the System

Some of the Year 12 students and their teacher went on an excursion with the CDU consultants, some community elders and John Cameron, the essential services officer to visit the bores and tanks (10:1). They found that under the ground, there is fresh water, not salt (16:1). They went to the bores and learnt how they test the water and how they work out how much water there is. They visited three of the five bores (10:2) put tapes down to measure the water level, and learnt about the two aquifers (10:3, 16:1). They visited the tanks which are on the edge of bush camp near the basketball courts, and learnt how the two big white tanks supply water for the green tank on the high stand which supplies the town (10:4). They learnt how the essential services officer increases the supply of water if there's a big crowd of people who come to Milingimbi for a festival or a ceremony (14:1).



Marpiyawuy and the Year 12 students during the excursion around the water infrastructure on Milingimbi



Milingimbi map showing Camp areas

It was also explained how chlorine is now added to the water to purify it. This excursion was well received. "Thank you for helping us and letting us know, because we didn't really understand before (7:1), no Balanda has ever done that before, you were the first ones to show us and explain, so that we could understand" (7:2, 20:26). For many people it has opened a door, it's opened their minds and made them think, not just using water, but about the whole system (20:26).

### The system for reporting and repairing faults.

Dharrgar the plumber says, "previously when I worked with John (Cameron) I used to carry forms for anyone who would ask for a job to be done, so they can learn how to sign, but they didn't continue that system (17:15). Now if someone's tap is leaking, they should think to go to the office and report it themselves. But sometimes they come to me: 'Hey, my tap is leaking'. I always say 'No, go to the office and fill out a form' (17:14)". 'We shouldn't turn a blind eye' (11:4,15:2). People who have a leaking tap need to go to the office and fill out a form (17:14). When you see a water problem – a leaking tap, shower or pipe – you should report it straight away to Daisy Baker, the housing officer (5:2). When we see a tap leaking or broken, we

*Can you expand on the idea of a camp based approach to water conservation?*

*The consensus in the interviews was that people will take more notice of water and housing issues if their elders are properly consulted and use their authority to make it happen.*

*A camp-based approach has to do with recognising these authorities. Particular clan groups and extended families at Milngimbi have been living in the same camp or 'suburb' for several generations. Within each of these camps there are strong governance networks. These traditional governance structures can be seen working every day at the camp level, so we weren't surprised to hear the suggestion of the camp-level governance arrangements.*

talk to the plumber and get it fixed (10:6, 15:2, 16:4). There is a delay between filling out the job card and getting the repair done (5:3). It used to be like this in the old days, except that the job card would go to the plumbing department, not to Housing (5:9).

There aren't any households where people can repair their own taps (17:14). If we see a broken tap or showerhead, we can go and get a job card, fill it out, and someone will come and fix it for us (3:8-10, 11:4). This system works okay, except that some Yolju don't bother to use the system (5:9), they don't pick up the job cards (5:2). This is sometimes because the older people do not feel comfortable approaching a Balanda office worker (20:3), some of them are shy (20:12), they don't understand the Balanda system and they don't speak much English (20:4, 20:9). Sometimes people get angry with us workers 'We've told you about the problem and you haven't fixed it' (17:15). There is a barrier that people run into, sometimes people are too shy or through avoidance relationships they are unable to walk into the office, and report a leaking tap (20:12). When trying to communicate with someone or go to the office, sometimes there is a tribal barrier, where one tribe cannot easily communicate with another tribe (20:16). Most people who have moved here, and who are not traditional owners, would find it very hard to go into the council office and report problems (20:19).

## The future

Today we are facing a global effect. Global warming and global warning to everyone, both to Indigenous and non-indigenous people. It's a problem (6:7). Later on they will build big houses, more houses in the future, and those houses will use water for many things,... maybe in ten years time our water will finish up. (11:3). Also we have heard that fifty new houses are to be built at Milngimbi, and if that were the case, then there definitely wouldn't be enough water (10:5, 17:5). At Ramingining there would be enough water for that many new houses (17:6). The population is definitely increasing here (11:8). If the water starts to run out, our water supply might be switched on and off like a clock (17:5). That's what happened in the mission days, the water and power went off at 10 o'clock (19:2). We might be back to living a life dependent upon finding water (11:6). We might have to walk around with plastic bottles of water for showering, washing clothes and drinking (16:5). Even the food we eat depends upon water (11:6, 12:2). We can't do without it (11:6). We can't drink the salt water or else we may have sick stomach and it will affect our body (11:6,8).



Community meeting at the Garden camp

So we need to take an active part in monitoring it (12:2). Rain water tanks would be a good idea, like the education houses used to have (19:3). The Education houses have meters. It would be good for us to be able to see how much water we have (19:4).

## 9 Findings: Training for Yolŋu

### Dharrgar

Matthew Dharrgar is the Yolŋu plumber (5:8). He fixes leaking taps, and fills out report forms if the people didn't do it themselves (17:1) and checks the depth of the bores in metres (17:3). He can do all sorts of repairs except for the parts of a hot water system which require an electrician (17:7). He used to work with John Cameron who taught him his job (17:2). John Cameron has the power to sign things which Dharrgar doesn't (17:4). He would like to learn to do that sort of work, but there is a lot to learn and at the moment he is busy working with a Balanda plumber who is new to Milingimbi (17:4). Dharrgar has done some training at Milingimbi, not in Darwin. They sent out books from Darwin, and he did the work and they put a tick in the book (17:8). He went to Darwin to get a certificate (17:9). When the new shire started, they wouldn't recognise his skills, they thought he didn't really understand the work (17:10). Dharrgar has been doing plumbing work for ten years now, it's time that someone was appointed to work alongside him and learn (17:12). When people tell him that they have a tap leaking, he has to tell them to go to the office and fill out a form (17:14). He used to carry forms along with him when he worked with John Cameron, but that system was stopped. Sometimes people get cranky with the plumbers because it takes a while to get things fixed (17:15).

### Training

Yolŋu people should be working alongside whichever Balanda is doing that plumbing work. That person should work with Yolŋu and train them (3:12, 15:4, 19:5), so that the Yolŋu can be educating other Yolŋu in the community (3:12) and be here if there isn't a Balanda plumber available (10:7, 15:4). We don't want to have to ask a Balanda plumber 'Come and fix my tap' (11:4, 16:3). We don't want to be following behind a Balanda who is doing all the work (20:6). That's one thing that really needs to change. At the moment, it's not happening like that (3:12). People would be prepared to take up training if they thought it would be an opportunity to take up an apprenticeship and be a proper plumber, not just working under the supervision of a Balanda plumber (20:22). We need Yolŋu plumbers and

*Can you explain the link between employment and empowerment — of the individual and the family.*

*Local people want to be employed but not if they are treated disrespectfully. Yolŋu like most of us want to work in places that are friendly, where everyone works as a team (and if possible with extended family), where the job is doable, where there is trust and responsibility, for reasonable rates of pay and training is on the job. It has to do with being actively and meaningfully engaged in activity whether it's going off and hunting, in a ceremony or in a work place. With more people being centralised into growth towns (away from traditional lands) there is less opportunity to hunt (as nearby lands are unlikely to be your country), then being productively employed (and earning) is a way for individuals and families to feel positive.*

*In mission and early government times many more Milingimbi Yolŋu were employed in teams of saw millers, builders, brick makers and teachers than are employed today. Yolŋu workers and their families were proud of their achievements. When contracts were publicly tendered large balanda companies won the tenders, and local Yolŋu lost jobs.*

*Nowadays when non-Yolŋu people are employed in communities questions are asked by Yolŋu. Why can't I get that job? Why can't I train on the job? I did the training, but still can't get a job. I didn't know that job was available? I worked for years, and have the skills but still can't get a job, What is wrong with me, why aren't I good enough? It hurts the spirit to look on as non-Yolŋu contractors do jobs that Yolŋu know they can do. We need to bring the non-Yolŋu and Yolŋu systems closer together, to look at the underlying reasons for past successes and cultivate an environment where Yolŋu will be able to apply for a win jobs.*

not just one or two (11:10). If the kids – boys and girls – are supported at school, they should be able to get training for plumbing. (16:2, 20:6).

## The Balandra plumber

So we need a Balandra plumber working in the community who also has experience and qualifications in training, so the Yolŋu and the Balandra plumber can know about and understand each other, in the social settings and at work (20:7, 20:23).

The Balandra plumber may not know how to relate closely to Yolŋu, he may be too shy to approach them (10:6). The plumber should have respect, should understand how the Yolŋu system works as well as how the Balandra system works. We need to understand where they come from and they need to understand where we come from (20:24). They should be willing to learn the language and culture, join in activities, ceremonies, maybe, come and sit down with people, take up kin relationships, be part of the community, go camping together, establish good communication and a good relationship (20:25).

## Community education framed through Yolŋu knowledge

Also we really need an education program to happen here, letting people know, educating Yolŋu, children and old people(20.2). Especially the children, so that they will carry those ideas, they will stay in their hearts and heads, how to care for water, and what water actually is. Where water comes from, and how we can keep the water alive. Just like the story Murarrgirrangi was telling. It was the wallaby who kept the fresh water alive, that's a story belonging to us Yolŋu, how the wallaby preserved the fresh water. The clever wallaby (3:13).

## Learn about Water and Health

We also need a water education story about water and health. If our head gets sick with a throbbing pain what do we think of? Panadol! As if we get healthy through Panadol! No, it's because we're not drinking enough fresh water. Our bodies want water, the water in our bodies starts to dry up. That's what gives us a headache. That's why we should be caring for water. Because our bodies need water. Our kidneys, lungs, those parts of our body which they call 'body organs'. That's how we breathe, have life, living without sickness, so it's the fresh water which gives us life. If you don't drink lots of water, your kidney will dry up and you'll get sick. (3:14)

## 10 Findings: Consultation for Water Management

This consultation about the Milingimbi water supply,

*Why do you value cross cultural awareness?*

*If Australia sends a trade delegation to Japan, delegates dispatched will understand Japanese culture, the language, how to be respectful, be polite, and how not to offend, because we recognise the Western view of the world, and the Western way of doing things is just one view and one way amongst many. Similarly Australian Aboriginal cultures are complex and sophisticated in ways often invisible to white Australia. Long ago missionaries to east Arnhem recognised these complexities and instituted mandatory Yolŋu language classes for all staff. Today there are few structural incentives for employees developing or implementing programs in Yolŋu communities to undertake accredited 'engagement' studies. With high staff turnover, employees working across several communities it is not easy to form close connections. When work in communities is approached with an open mind and heart, a respect for, and acknowledgement of Yolŋu culture and governance structures and protocols, productive outcomes are likely. Some skills that should be developed in all people working on Yolŋu communities are active listening skills, an appreciation and respect for Yolŋu world views, observance of Yolŋu communication and behavioural protocols and willingness to both learn from Yolŋu and teach.*

*What do you mean by 'close the gap'?*

*Identify ways for Power and Water to respectfully and meaningfully engage with Milingimbi Yolŋu residents for mutual and ongoing benefit.*

funded by Power and Water was undertaken to 'close the gap', and make a clear understanding of how water is being used here in the community, making sure that the understanding gets through to Yolŋu living in the land in the community using the water, so that Power and Water can come to help maintain a better water supply (20:10).

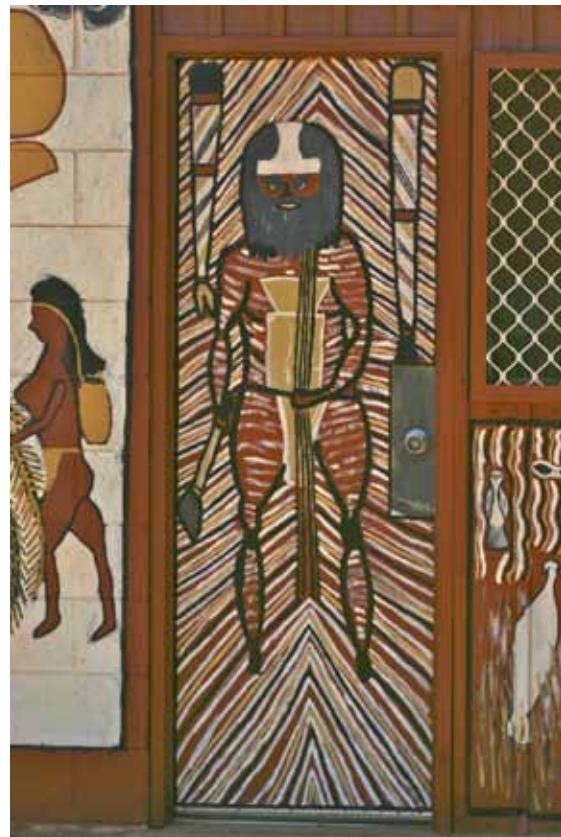
This project was said by Lily the traditional owner and caretaker of the land around the community and Macassar Well, to be the first time that she had been shown in detail what Power and Water is doing with the water at Milingimbi (7:1,2). She and others were very appreciative of the effort which Power and Water had taken to make this happen (7:2,5,11;12:7). It's great for Power and Water to come and talk to us here at the community and get the full true story (murrungum) from the right people (9:1).

### Beginning with Yolŋu knowledge

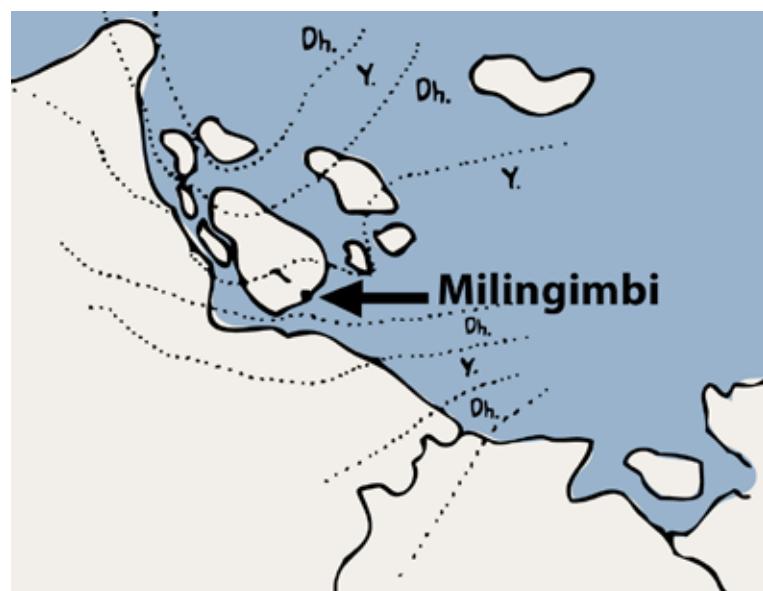
Water is so important to our life, that we need to find a 'better way' of managing it (1:5). We need to take water 'with a sense of respect in our life' (6:5). Sometimes it is used in a foolish way (6:2). We should love and respect it (marrkapthun) and hold it dear (dhangi'yun) (3:11). We have experience in our culture for looking after water, and we still live by that law (9:3). We look after the water, and we report leaks to the housing office. We have processes in place to make it work (9:4).

When we make plans about water, we need to do it properly, through a good system (manymakkurr romgurr) (1:4), think cleverly (gadaman'therr) (3:6), act caringly (nayanumirr) (3:7), offer our hands to help (gondjarryun) (3:6) find a good pathway for using it – we know it's not free. (1:8). We need to use the old people's law to think about how to use it in the modern world (6:4).

We should start by thinking whose land the water is on, where it comes from, whether it's Dhuwa or Yirritja (1:5). We must never think that the water just happens to be there of its own accord, not cared for, as if Yolŋu were not here. (1:5). We need to use our hearts, our heads and our eyes, and we need to think about our children's future, not just today (3:1-5).



Front door of the Housing Office



Map drawn by Djäwa of the moiety divisions across Milingimbi



Marpiyawuy and John Cameron at the water tower

representatives (7:9) but we want the Balanda from Power and Water to come again and talk to us (7:11).

We need to understand each other's background, Yolŋu and balanda, because if we don't have a good system to care for our water resources, this land will punish us, because we are breaking the ways of the ancestors, the land is alive and watching us, the rain and wind are alive, if we look after it, then it will look after us (20:5). And we need to work with the Power and Water authorities who are keeping an eye on the water story as well (6:9). We need an 'alliance of services with Power and Water and with our mala (clan) leaders' (12:3). There are two stories, the Balanda and the Yolŋu and 'we need to engage to build a partnership between those two profound knowledges' (6:11). Working with both the Power and Water and the community elders will enable us to 'have the ownership and the governance side' (12:3). That relationship will provide power and respect, through the diversity of beliefs and values (12:4). If we worked together with the government – the Shire, the Territory or the Federal Government – to put a limit on consumption, we can stop the water from drying up (2:9). Within five to ten years we should be able to have a strategic action plan locked in, with agreements on how we can engage each other, and stimulate and build up resilience (12:7).

## Community Capacity building

If we work together we can build the workforce capacity and implement pathways for the community-based Yolŋu workers (12:4). The Yolŋu knowledge and the university knowledge are both trades and specialities which should complement each other (12:5). Working

## Baland and Yolŋu working together

A good education will help us to understand our being in the world (3:9), and put our traditional knowledge together with Balanda knowledge so that we can understand how each other works (3:10).

We need to engage to build a partnership between those two profound knowledges. The Western knowledge and the profound knowledge of Yolŋu cosmology. We need to work together to make improvement, to look after the water resources within the community, to maintain a good communication, to build a bridge between the western world and the Yolŋu nation of Australia (6:11). We don't all need to be talking to each other in English, we trust our Yolŋu

together provides a win-win situation in which there are few misunderstandings, better coordination and an alliance of services (12:5). We want the water levels to stay good (11:4).

## Measures to control usage

Outside, where people are using water for washing and for small gardens around the house, the taps could have a lock on them to stop the children from playing with the water and wasting it (2:8, 54), or a meter could be installed (2:8, 11:9) We want to look after our water whether it comes out of a tap or a hose (9:2), so we can stay here, so we don't have to move from place to place looking for water when it runs out (2:4, 11:6). Some kids play with the water, wasting it, but we know we should save it, we should stop those kids, not let them play around (9:1). They should be playing in the seawater, there's plenty of that (15:2). We shouldn't tell them to play with the hose while we go off to cook their food (2:9) or leave the taps running (10:6). Some people take showers like buffalos (11:5). Let's have quick showers (16:4). And we use our new washing machines so much we run out of power! (11:5). We know not to let the water run when we're cleaning our teeth (15:5), and you men, when you're shaving your beards, don't leave the water running while you shave! (15:5, 10:6) And as for you kava drinkers, how about you use recycled water instead of our life-giving water to prepare your kava! (3:16). Turn off taps which are running! (15:2) We should be talking to each other all the time about using water properly. We get a new washing machine and we wash every day from Monday and Sunday. We should make a particular day for washing, do our washing once a week, saving water and electricity as well as caring for the earth (3:8). Dharrgar the Yolnu plumber sees people who turn taps on and leave them on, they don't turn them off (17:13).

In other states people have meters and have to pay for their water like their power and their rent. We are very lucky, but if we don't use the water properly, the government might change its mind and start charging us for the water we use. The government has given Power and Water the power to do that (2:10). Maybe it's an idea to put water meters into houses, like the power meter. Some people are stupid or ignorant or lazy, but they might understand



The Macassan well in the present day

through the money side when the bill arrives! That's the discipline that would cause them to think. He might be able to see value in other things, but not in water. (3:15)

John Cameron was the plumber at Milingimbi for many years, before taking up the ESO position in 2009. He also estimated that up to 60% of the reticulated water is wasted, and over the past year he had changed around 300 taps in 100 houses. There is a significant issue with both infrastructure and management. He mentioned an initiative that he had set up with Yolŋu workers going around the community on bikes fixing taps and dealing with water matters. He also talked about his experience of the use of water timers and spring loaded taps neither of which he thought proved very successful. He said that putting water meters on Yolŋu houses would cost around \$2,000 per house and probably was not a real solution, if people didn't pay their water bills, he thought it would legally not be an option to turn off their water supply anyway.

There should be a better system, which is easier for Yolŋu so they don't have to report to the office and sign. In some cases there are relatives at home who can do it for them: Someone paid to get out of the office and visit people in their homes who can tell them of any problems they may have (20:8). We need someone in the middle like that (20:9), someone the people in the various camps feel confident and comfortable with. This person's job could be educational as well, reminding them about water management, and the infrastructure (20:13).

There are many different clan groups here, so it's not really easy for one person to deal with everybody (20:15). For one thing, there are avoidance relationships (20:12). And there are different camps, with different extended families in each of them: Bottom Camp, Middle Camp, Top Camp, Bush Camp, what they call 'Army Camp' and Garden Camp. (20:15). And then as well as that, there are the traditional owners of the land (20:15). There's only a few of them (20:18). For most people here, this is not their actually home, they have traditional homelands elsewhere in Arnhemland (20:18). So there are what you could call language barriers and what you could call tribal barriers for the whole community to be served by just one Yolŋu (20:16). Some people just can't talk to each other (20:16). People don't feel comfortable to move freely throughout all the camps, they stick to where their own clan groups are (20:17).

It would be good to have specifically identified people to go around checking the houses in their own camp – for example Army Camp. The family members could report damaged water systems, pipes, taps to this particular person, and he or she could go and report it, and fill out the forms, and maybe even get the forms, take them to the people, and let them fill them out at home, where they feel more secure: one at Army Camp, one at Bush Camp, one at Top Camp etc (20:20). These people could work both ways, telling Power and Water the story the Yolŋu have to tell, and telling the people the Power and Water story. And not only for Power and Water, but for all the various business of the government and the Shire (20:21).

We should find a caretaker for each house – a water carer, whose job it would be to look after all the things to do with water, checking on the taps, and talking to people about water... (3:7, 5:5). Maybe they could do an inspection every fortnight (5:5) or every week (7:7) and then give their report to the housing people (5:5, 7:7). They would go and sit down with the people and say 'Is it okay if I look at the plumbing in your house?' (5:7). Maybe he could fix the problem himself (5:7). Not just one person, but three or four, from their own different camp areas (5:6, 5:7). This would avoid the problem of the Yolŋu who see the problem but don't do anything about it (5:6).

## 11 Yiniya's reflections on the Consultation Process

We have talked to many people through the course of the project and explained what we are doing here. It has opened a door. It's opened their minds and made them think, not just about using water, but about the whole water management system. And now, thinking about when we were talking about this program back in Darwin for a few months before we came out, going through with the people at Milingimbi really helped me a lot. People have said, "This has never been done before. We can see now, and understand." And that's only the start of it. They were saying "Nobody has actually shown and told us about this type of story and it is really good that we are able to learn more about our home".

I think most of the people especially here in this community know us already, so looking at us and the stories that we bring has a positive meaning. It's unlike Centrelink, and unlike other people, because once we go and sit down, we approach people in a way that we are actually being received by getting a warm welcome. I'm well known around these camps here. I have nothing against any camp here at Milingimbi, and because of that reputation people accepted us really warmly, we know that we are bringing something that is helpful to the people out here. To those people we had a talk to, it's different. It's not politics. We are not talking about government policy or anything, we are just talking about simple water, the resource of water, and through the sacred connecting names (ringitj), and songs and ceremonies, and how it's connected, and how we live in this community. People when they spoke about their side of the story, their clan side of the story, about how the sacred names of water systems fit into this clan - this, that and the other - made it feel as we are talking about real life. We are not talking about, "We are coming to build a police station here, and if kids don't go to school then we'll be sending out a police truck to round them up", that sort of thing is hurting (20:26-8).

*Yiniya is an elder of Liya-Dhälinymirr Djambarrpuju clan, a CDU Yolŋu Studies lecturer, video producer, interpreter and consultant with the CDU Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultants Initiative and has spent several years living in the Milingimbi community.*

## 12 Some Yolŋu terms

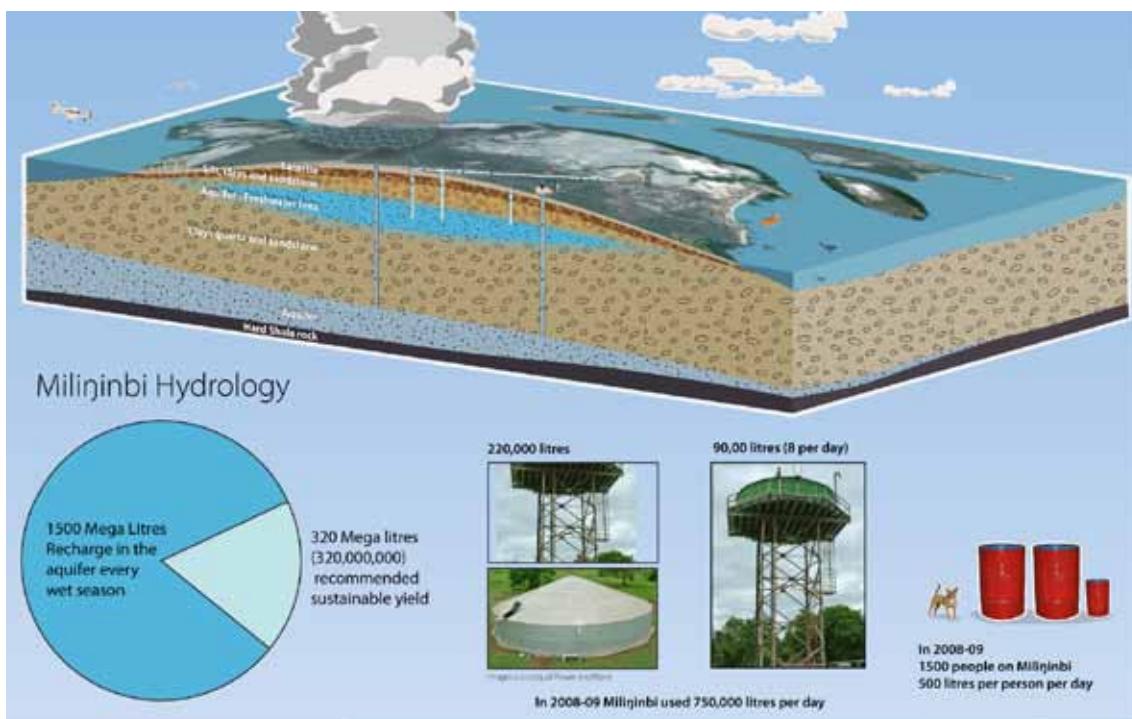
dalkarra	Yirritja ceremonial leader (who can call out the totemic water names)
dhaniya	water container made from paperbark
dhangi'yun	care for, hold close
Dhuwa	One of the halves of Yolŋu life. Some water is Dhuwa and some Yirritja
djiirrikay	Dhuwa ceremonial leader (who can call out the totemic water names)
gadaman'	clever, thoughtful (eg in the management of water resources)
Gamalarnga	traditional owners of Dhuwa land on the north of the island
gananjathala	small waterholes on flat land after the wet season
gapu	water
gapu – manutji	small well dug out from a soak
garmak	water
gonj-djarryun	offer to help
Gorryindi	traditional owners of Dhuwa land on the north of the island
gularri	sacred Yirritja floodwaters
gunga	pandanus, often a sign of the presence of water
gutjark	water
Mälarra	traditional owners of Dhuwa land on the north of the island
rom	traditional law and good practice

märr	spiritual power inherent in some things including water
monuk	salt (water)
mundukul	water python
murrungum	whole (truth, story) – working together to build agreement on the whole story
ŋarkula	water
ŋayanu	source of feelings and emotions. Water itself is said to have ŋayanu
rarranhdharr	later dry season, little water around
raypiny	fresh (water)
ringitj	sacred ancestral names connecting clans with each other and with places and water
Walamanu	traditional owners of Yirritja land around Milingimbi community
waltjan	rain
Yirritja	one of the halves of Yolŋu life. Some water is Dhuwa and some Yirritja

## 13 The Poster Resources

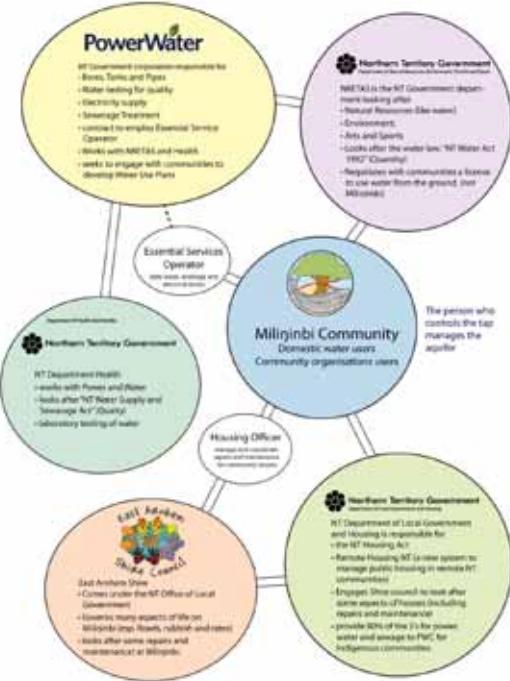
Three posters were designed and printed for the community consultation. One poster was a detailed cross-section of the island showing the aquifer and water management infrastructure and was designed to use in explaining the Hydrology of Milingimbi. This poster received the most interest from people we spoke with and worked best in telling the Power and Water story. When we spoke to people about aquifers, bores, pumps, recharge etc this illustration was very helpful.

The second poster showed a stylised community situation with various water usages . The idea behind this poster was to provide stimulus to talk about community usage and management. It did not receive as much interest as the Hydrology poster but was useful in focussing discussion on various water management issues. A third poster attempted to represent the broad picture of the networks of organisations, administration, management and responsibilities (Stakeholders) relating to water management at Milingimbi. This poster





Milingimbi Water - Stakeholder relationships, roles and responsibilities



did not spark much interest, it was heavily text (English) based and probably too abstracted for people to make a real sense of it. It was helpful for the consultants in reminding them how the network operated.

During the initial community consultation we also used the official 'SLAP' map of Milngimbi to talk to people about bore locations, land ownership and who lived where. We also showed some printouts of various reports produced by NRETAS and Power Water (Bore reports, Groundware reports, etc) to show people what sorts of planning and documentation are used in relation to planning and water management for Milngimbi.

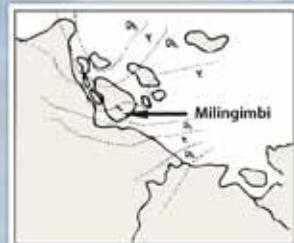
We agreed with Power and Water, that we would use some of the images from these posters and some of the photos we took during the consultancy to produce the final posters as part of the resource development arising from the consultancy.



# Milngimbi Gapu



1976 Milngimbi map by Wunyimirra showing clan ownership using Gupapuyum language



An old Milngimbi map from a story by Djawa showing locations between Chura (CH) and Tjungu (T) land boundaries.

Raying carntu mala nigit, inggatap  
spit suit bigga bawarrnayi, empa yali  
il ga gringi.  
We have control Fresh water, which we call  
the place we are managing, and which we  
also control.

#### Milngimbi Elders talking about water



Milngimbi important Yolŋu people  
language, Yolŋu language, Dhuwa (male)  
language, Lurru (female). Lurru dhu yamarran  
otherwise.

Water is actually related to us, as this is our  
life, like our health, our water, the food after our water property.

Fine, ga guth ga saastham, moolie  
moolie, moolie, moolie, moolie, moolie, moolie,  
like this man says we meeting fine  
yarn.

No, really have water by means of ancestral  
line of first spiritual power. Didn't I say it on  
yesterday?



Gapu dhawell Important Yolŋu,  
Milngimbi very dhawell gapu, to help suffice,  
go anybody limited yolŋu, please Milngimbi  
dhawell beko kola, after care.

Water is an important life given for us, but  
we have to take care, and we have to protect  
and take care after the water.



Taka nyaya dhu maku yom, bili tayl  
gurumarr. Ga yaka tanya dhu yamarr  
gapu, biljan djalithun bawarrnayi;  
manku yom name.

We must care increased water because water  
is our life. We won't throw it away or treat it  
dissapear.



Experience shukun lirruru ga saastham  
djukurr gapu, ga dhayu bila nhukun  
Bunba tumbu bill ga biki rom.

My father experience of looking after waters,  
and nowdays we still have the same line.

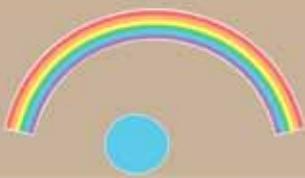
Jimmy

Wanjala

Tjungu

Mangayup

These designs represent three traditional stories about Milngimbi water. They have been adapted from drawings produced by the artists (elders and custodians) during a visit to Milngimbi.



Dhawarrnayi Culunguwan dhawarrnayi moolie Milngimbi  
This is Culunguwan, the ancestral python and the first ocean flood  
by Tolapakarr



Milngimbi and Tjungu story of Rulopyi on the beach  
by Tolapakarr



Milngimbi story of the diversity fish project  
Two Milngimbi people digging for water  
by Tolapakarr

[www.powerwater.com.au](http://www.powerwater.com.au) • [www.cdu.edu.au/gapu](http://www.cdu.edu.au/gapu)

**PowerWater**

#### Acknowledgements

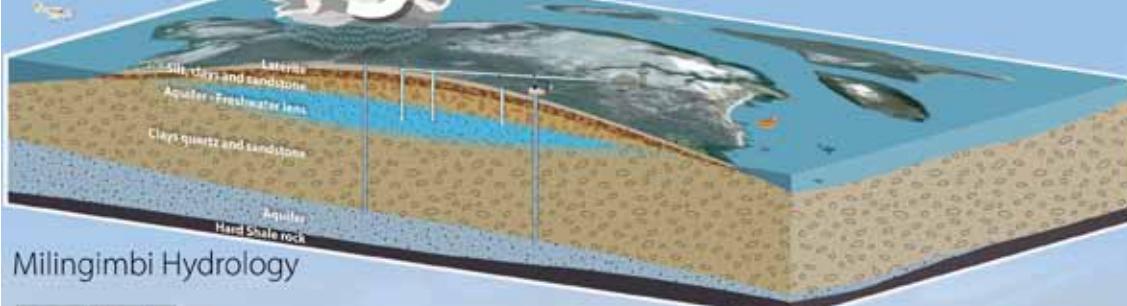
Charles Darwin University  
Charles Supple, John Greenhill, Wunyimirra Gupapuyum and Michael Christie  
The people of Milngimbi, especially Lja, Macmanayi, Bitteru, Oonnerma, Worralla, Balikarr, Balikyapalarr and Wilpalyi, Milngimbi for permission to use the map  
Tessie van Wassen from Milngimbi Creek Productions.

This poster is one of three produced as part of a Water Conservation Project by the Power and Water Corporation. Power and Water engaged the Charles Darwin University Yolŋu Aboriginal Consultancy Initiative to visit the Milngimbi community to talk with people about their traditional Yolŋu water story of water, the different ways of viewing water, and about ways of working together to manage water. This poster represents some aspects of the Milngimbi Yolŋu story of water. For more information visit [www.cdu.edu.au/gapu](http://www.cdu.edu.au/gapu) and [www.powerwater.com.au](http://www.powerwater.com.au).

Poster representing some aspects of the Milngimbi Yolŋu story of water

# Power and Water & Milngimbi community - Water Conservation Project – Power and Water stories

# Milngimbi Water



## Milngimbi Hydrology



In 2008-09 the Milngimbi community used 750,000 litres each day.

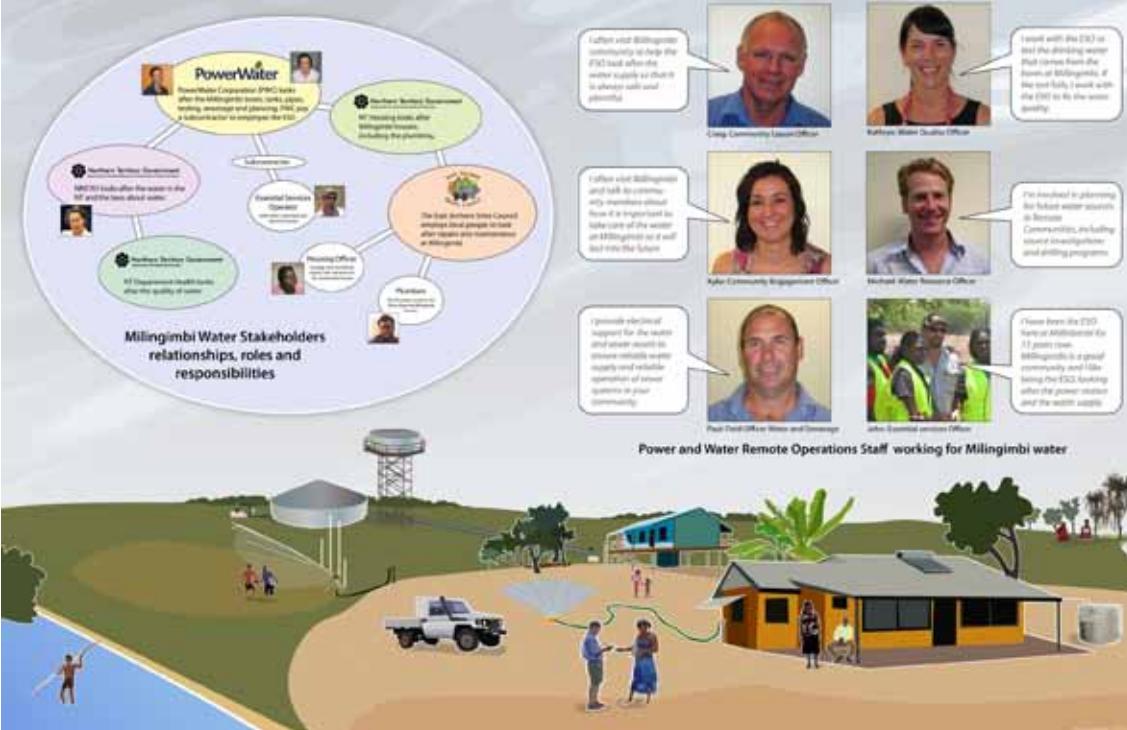
8 of these per day or  
500 litres per person per day  
(2½ drums full)



Illustration showing how much water is used in Milngimbi each day



Documents about water relating to Milngimbi



[www.powerwater.com.au](http://www.powerwater.com.au) • [www.cdu.edu.au/gapu](http://www.cdu.edu.au/gapu)



Acknowledgements:  
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The people of Milngimbi, especially Lly, Warramuru, Lapilaj, Gunggadaw, Kuluwiyup, Jutta Mergan, John Camerons, Clancy Baker, and Dherige  
Urula Zee, from NITIS  
Reproduced from Milngimbi Product Note

This poster is one of three produced as part of a Water Conservation Project by the Power and Water Conservation Team and they engaged the Charles Darwin University Aboriginal Cultural Consultancy to invite the Milngimbi community to talk with people about the Power and Water story of water, the Milngimbi story many of water, and about ways of working together to manage water. This poster segments some aspects of the Power and Water story of water. For more information visit [www.cdu.edu.au/gapu](http://www.cdu.edu.au/gapu) and [www.powerwater.com.au](http://www.powerwater.com.au).

Poster representing some aspects of the Power and Water story of water

Power and Water & Milngimbi community - Water Conservation Project – Working together

# Milngimbi water conservation

## Djäka gapuw ḥamathan Care properly for our water

*Learn more that we will work together  
More here and thank you for  
sharing your stories with us.*

*Power and Water have committed to respectful  
working closely with Milngimbi through  
• Learning directly with the Milngimbi community  
to conserve water  
• Sharing information and knowledge  
• Increasing our education opportunities  
• Supporting opportunities for local employment*

*Thank you, after a while we had to leave  
those who work with you, they asked you and you brought them  
here to learn. We were impressed at  
the way you work with the people here. You are the  
way of conserving the water.  
So thank you.*

**Milngimbi elders talking about working together**

*Long ago Milngimbi didn't have open water which the fishes would drink. The missionaries put a generator in to pump out the water and it was salty and they had no freshwater.*

**David Boddam**

*We need to think about the future. How we are going to look after the water so that later on children and their children and then their children will have water because it's so scarce that we live, we don't have water and health.*

**Ganggulu**

*There should be research and a sound knowledge of how the water system works and how the Belmont system works. Because we need to understand the environment and the environment of where we can health understand each other. When you're working on the ground in a Native community we also need to understand where they come from.*

**Titus**

*It has to be an culturally appropriate way as we then can be able to build up building the knowledge capacity and language so that we can have an employment status workforce to be involved in their future workforce, and to be able to one day become qualified.*

**John Morgan**

*As we need to engage to build a partnership between those two proficient knowledges, culture and knowledge.*

**Lapululu**

**Power and Water & Milngimbi community will use a camp based approach in future engagement**

[www.powerwater.com.au](http://www.powerwater.com.au) • [www.cdu.edu.au/gapu](http://www.cdu.edu.au/gapu)



Acknowledgments:  
Charles Darwin University  
Vryke Gupta, John Gossage, Waymardha Gaykumarja, and Michael Christie  
The people of Milngimbi, especially Lila, Marngomay, Lapululu, Ganggulu, Balanggulait, Schie Morgan, John Cameron, Daisy Belket, and Changer  
Trevor van Werven from Mimi Creek Productions

This poster is one of three produced as part of a Water Conservation Project by the Power and Water Corporation. Power and Water engaged the Charles Darwin University Inirus Aboriginal Community Initiative to visit the Milngimbi community to talk with people about the Power and Water story of water, the Milngimbi's story of water, and about ways of working together to manage water. This poster represents the main 'working together' outcomes of the project. For more information visit [www.cdu.edu.au/gapu](http://www.cdu.edu.au/gapu) and [www.powerwater.com.au](http://www.powerwater.com.au).

Poster representing some aspects of the main 'working together' outcomes of the project

## Section 2

### 14: Power and Water's Conclusions and Moving Forward

In designing this project Power and Water sought to facilitate a discussion and document the history and cultural values around water at Milingimbi, both from an essential service and community member perspective. We wanted to tell the present day story of water in the water supply, to share the problem of water conservation with the community and to work together to develop water conservation solutions. We aimed to engage the community in a culturally appropriate way and to learn about best practice engagement methods. For this reason Power and Water sought the skill and expertise of the CDU, Yolŋu Consultant Initiative – a group of Yolŋu and Yolŋu-speaking consultants who could work from within the culture rather than outside it. The work that resulted was a collaborative effort from the consultants, the Milingimbi community and Power and Water.

The process sought to gain an understanding of what sort of actions and strategies the community and Power and Water could implement together to address current water consumption issues and develop a set of resources to facilitate and strengthen these actions/strategies.

Throughout the process all participants had the opportunity to partake in a collaborative form of information and knowledge sharing. The Milingimbi elders and custodians of water shared their stories of water and its history, of traditional water management, of the value of water and its sources as well as their aspirations for the professional management of water into the future by local Milingimbi Yolŋu people working with local service providers. Power and Water shared the contemporary water story detailing the science and practical management behind the delivery of water to the community. In addition Power and Water shared their concerns for the sustainable management of water into the future for the Milingimbi community. Finally the group from CDU, Yolŋu consultant initiative cohesively allowed the two groups to work most effectively together, to gain and understand of each other and map a path for future work.

Now that we have approached the end of this project Power and Water look to our future work with the Milingimbi people and water conservation with high hopes. The journey we have made with CDU and the people of Milingimbi as our guides has taught us many things that we hope to embrace as best practice principles for our future work at Milingimbi, Yolŋu communities in general and other Indigenous communities alike.

We value the Milingimbi community's emphasis on approaching all future engagement in an acknowledging and inclusive manner and as such Power and Water want to ensure we continue to work with the Milingimbi people in a culturally appropriate way. As such Power and Water sought to revisit with the Milingimbi people to reiterate to them our learnings and our hope for the future of water management at Milingimbi. Senior management at Power and Water has been supportive of the process from the commissioning of the project and continue to show their support of the outcomes and learnings. This was demonstrated when Power and Water staff, along with senior management, revisited the community with the aim of working collaboratively with key members of the community to develop a set of actions that Power and Water can commit to for future works and approaches to water management at Milingimbi. These will form the basis of a water conservation program for implementation in 2011.

Power and Water is very happy with the commitments that have been made, as they have been an acknowledging, inclusive and most importantly a collaborative effort that has taken into account the voice of the Milingimbi people represented throughout the engagement process. We look forward to the future of water management in Milingimbi and in keeping in line with the commitments you find below.

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The following document describes the main conclusion reached through the collaborative sharing of our “water stories” with the local Milingimbi Yolŋu people, CDU Yolŋu consultants and Power and Water Corporation.

In acknowledgement of the relationships forged through this project the following commitments/ recommendations provide a clear way forward to improve water management for Power and Water and the local Milingimbi community. The commitments aim to ensure the Milingimbi water supply remains healthy and well maintained, and to engage the understanding of the traditional knowledge and authority already at work in the community.

After the synthesis of all information gathered in the community Power and Water returned to Milingimbi to reengage with the key traditional owners and authorities, and as many of the original contributors to the report as were possible. This reengagement focused on mutual understanding, and agreement on the following commitments to the sustainable management of the Milingimbi water supply:

### Working with the community:

- We will meet with the senior land owners and custodians on at least an annual basis to cultivate relationships both existing and new. The best way to broker this engagement is through the Government Business Managers Indigenous Liaison Officer and or directly with the senior land custodians.
- We aim to engage with the senior land owners and custodians in an inclusive and respectful manner, acknowledging the importance of their contributions to our work.
- While formal permits to enter Milingimbi through the NLC are not required by Power and Water to carry out essential service work we are committed to undertaking all work in a respectful manner. As such we will endeavour to inform the community of our intention to carry out engagement work, this will be done through the appropriate channels, such as the Indigenous Liaison Officer, who will in turn assist us to notify the senior land owners and custodians.
- We acknowledge the valuable authority and contributions of the senior land owners, custodians and community members; as such we are committed to paying variable rates for said contributions, e.g in meetings and for consultant advice.
  - We respect the traditional authority structures of the landowners and custodians, and understand how important it is for us to work through traditional authority to collaborate with the community to develop water management practices which are truly sustainable and as such are consistent with traditional values.
  - An existing structure that could facilitate this effectively is the Local Implementation Plans (LIPs) reference group. Outside of this group and as stated above, the best way to broker this engagement may be through the Government Business Managers and their Indigenous Liaison Officer and or directly with the senior land custodians.
  - We will investigate engaging with similar pre existing organisational structures at other Yolŋu communities.
  - Key issues for discussion with this group/s may be:

- proposed new infrastructure in and around the community
- bores, pipe lines, power poles, sewer works etc.
- site visits for community engagement, ongoing maintenance and water quality monitoring
- new employment opportunities and employment practices and training
- closing the loop in terms of discussion with the Shire, Territory Housing and the Northern Territory Department of Education about water at Milngimbi

## Information/ Knowledge Sharing and awareness raising:

- We are committed to respecting traditional Yolŋu knowledge and law around water and its sustainable management.
- We are committed to developing within the wider Power and Water organisation an understanding and appreciation of Yolŋu traditional knowledge, governance, ownership and management of water resources
- We are committed to working towards increasing the understanding of Yolŋu law within Northern Territory government agencies and, where appropriate, discuss this work with National and Local Government agencies.
- A key way to begin the sharing of information and knowledge is through the appropriate dissemination of this report, posters and DVD to all channels deemed appropriate. Including the general public and various government agencies and organisations.
- In disseminating water and energy conservation messages to the community we recognise the advice of the land owners and custodians and will endeavour to take a camp based approach as this method is deemed to be the most appropriate.
- We acknowledge the importance of cross cultural awareness and sensitivity when working on community. In demonstrating this we would advocate for the appropriate Power and Water staff to attend or partake in appropriate cross cultural awareness training.

## Focuses on School Based Education:

- When embarking on school based water conservation activities we are committed to



Meeting with elders, Power and Water Remote Operations staff and Charles Darwin University representatives

involving the community elders and particularly the land owners and custodians.

- We are committed to the promotion of the ancestral knowledge of water, and the ownership and continued care of the resource through the new generation. We acknowledge that Milingimbi people see this traditional knowledge as essential to the future health of the Milingimbi community and its water supplies.
- In aiming to promote traditional links we acknowledge the importance of traditional knowledge working together with contemporary hydrological and technical knowledge when developing and distributing educational materials
- We will work to make sure the materials we produce are accessible to school students as well as community members.
- We aim to enhance water conservation curriculum by working with the appropriate government agencies to create culturally appropriate and sensitive materials.

## Local Employment

- We are committed to the training of local Yolju to work as Essential Services Officers and or Indigenous trainees. Although Power and Water do not employ these officers directly we aim to investigate, possible opportunities for the employment of Yolju trainees.
- We acknowledge that it is the responsibility of the East Arnhem Shire to employ tradesmen for the maintenance of the Indigenous housing stock as part of their contract with Housing. We commit ourselves to working with the East Arnhem Shire and Power and Water subcontractors to:
  - Provide copies of this report, posters and DVD to all employees and homeland resource organisations.
  - Seek opportunities to work together to develop collaborative strategies for the training of local people in plumbing and essential services skills and qualifications.
  - Advocate a greater understanding, appreciation and respect of Yolju traditional knowledge, culture and way of life. Promote all staff and contractors to live and act by these principles by employing culturally sensitive workers. We will offer to help develop appropriate job descriptions and links to training for non Yolju workers
- We will work with the senior land owners, custodians and community members on a community driven project to restore the well at Njamuyani. At the time of writing this document the involvement of the Land Management Rangers was being investigated by the land owners and custodians.
- We acknowledge the long term commitment of Matthew Dharrgar, the local plumber and aim to work with appropriate agencies to try and improve the professionalisation of local workers.

These recommendations, along with the overall project, have come about through collaboration with the local land owners, custodians and community members of Milingmibi. Power and Water endeavours to continue to develop acknowledging and respectful relationships, and as such wish to readdress these commitments at some time in the future. It is anticipated that this will be done within 12 months of the finalisation of this document.

# Appendices — Transcriptions and Translations



## 1. Bilanya Garawirrtja

*Interviewed by Yirjiya*

1 Yuw manymak, ɳarra dhu nhawi. Njarranydja dhuwal Bilanya Garawirrtja ga ɳarra dhawal-guyanjan dhiyala. Dhawal-guyanjan ɳarra, ga ɳuthar ɳarra, ga djäma ɳarra märranjala. Djämaw ɳarra marŋgithina dhiyala, nhakuna. Early days, missionariesgalana marŋgithina dhäwuw malaŋjuw ga walal gan lakaranjala nhakuna.

2 Yan muka limurr dhu, nhaltjan limurr dhu ɳämany, lakaramany ɳarra dhu dhäwuny gapupuy, gapupuy dhäwu. Njarkula dhuwala, njarkula dhuwala, wäŋanjur ga ɳorra, wäŋanjur. Wäŋa nhakun Dhuwa ga Yirritja mala wäŋa, yuw limurrungu. Limurrungu wäŋa yäkumirri mala, ga ɳayi gapu ga ɳorra nhakuna Dhuwa ga Yirritjanjur wäŋanjur. Ga gapuny ɳayi dhuwal märrnjur ga ɳayanjur limurrungal walŋanjur. Balanya nhakun ɳunha Dhuway ga ɳayatham, ɳurunji ringitjthirri, ga Yirritjay ɳuli ga, ga ringitjthirridhi bili, gapu ɳuli ga lakarama. Ga gapunydja ɳayi dhuwala walŋamirri, walarjawa limurrungu limurru dhu ga luka.

3 Yuw, dhuwala gurririnjür nhakuna wäŋanjur nhakuna dhiyala Yurrwi, Yurrwi nhakuna limurru dhu guyanja dhuwala nyumukuniny wäŋa, ga yaka limurru marŋgi nhakuna, gapu ga dharrwa ɳorra, wo lurrkun, Ga limurru marŋgi nhakuna how limurru dhu nhakuna bäki ɳunhi gapuny. Bäki limurru dhu use nhakun ɳathaw ga lupthunaraw, ga be nhaku limurr dhu nhakun bäki.

*Okay, my name is Bilanya Garawirrtja, and I was born here. Born, grew up, and found work. I learnt work here. I learnt from the missionaries in the early days, and they were talking to us.*

*So what shall we do, how will we listen? I will tell a story about water. This water is here, lying in the land. The land contains both Dhuwa and Yirritja moiety places. All our places have names, and there is water in both Dhuwa and Yirritja areas. So water is in the sacred power and emotions of our life. For example the water that Dhuwa people have, they cry ancestral connections with that water, and the Yirritja people, when they cry, they are calling Yirritja water. So water is life-giving, we drink it for our life.*

*Okay, so here on this small island Milngimbi, we need to remember that this is a small place, and we don't know whether there is a vast amount of water, or not so much. But we do know how to look after it. We have it to use for food and washing and whatever else.*

4 Yuw ringitjnjur dhuwal limurrunj dhuwal  
ŋarkulany mala, ringitjnjur Yirritjawal, ga ringitjnjur  
Dhuwalawal, every wänjanjur ga mala lakaram.  
Dhuwanjur wänjanjur gapu ga ḡorra, ga Yirritjawal  
wänjanjur gapu ga ḡorra, ga limurr marngi mirithirr  
nhakuna. But limurr dhu nhakun mirithirr nhäma  
ga guyanja, ga nhaltjan limurr dhu ga use dhuwali  
gapu nhakuna. Gapu limurr dhu use nhakun  
manyakkurr yän romgurr yuw. Njunhi limurr  
nhaku nhakuna djäl gapuwa.

5 Manymak, first limurr dhu rom nhäma, yolku  
nunhi wänja, wänja nhakun Dhuwa ga gapu ga  
ḡorra Dhuwanjur wänjanjur. Ga they, walal nhakun  
ga ḡunhidhi wänja-waṭanjuw nhakun ga guyanja  
gapu ga ḡorra walalaŋ ḡuli walal ḡuli ga ringitjthirr  
eh, Dhuwa. Ga ḡunha Yirritja walal ḡuli ga  
ringitjthirr, ga ḡunhi ga Yirritjanjur wänjanjur gapu  
ḡorra. Ga dhiyak limurr dhu mirithirr marngithirr,  
yaka limurr dhu, yaka limurr nhakun dhu bitjana  
guyanja dhuwal, gapu ga yänan gänan dhärra,  
djägamiriw dhärra, ga bäyŋun gi yolŋu living,  
bitjan limurr dhu yaka guyanja. Njunha ga yolŋuy  
guyanja džirrikayyu ga dalkarray ḡunha gay' ga  
gapu nhäma, guyanja ga ḡunha wänjanjur nhanukal  
ga ḡorra ga yow. Ga, Yow dhäwu, nhawi limurr  
dhu bulu guyanja limurr dhu mirrthirr limurr dhu  
yuta nhe ga yindi nhe yolŋu Dhuwa, Yirritja. Yurr  
limurr dhu gapu mirithirr, dhuwal gapu dhuwal  
mirithirr important nhakuna limurrungu lifegu.  
Important limurrungu walŋaw, ga limurr dhu use  
better way. Using yän dhu gapuny better way  
yana nhaku limurr djäl malanha. Yuw, ga yaka  
nhakun limurr dhu wasting water, bitjan ga rom  
waŋa gapuw.

6 Manymak warrpam limurr marngi, gapu limurr  
ga dhiyan bala luka nhakuna borepuy. Bore ga  
ŋula nhämunha' dhärra dhuwala Yurrwi, limurr  
nhakun marngi, ga beŋurdhi limurr ga dhuwala  
lukanydjya. Limurr ga luka ḡathaw, ga gapuw  
limurr ga lukanydjya gapu ḡunhi, limurr dhu djäma  
gapuy, ga lupthun limurr dhu, ga bulu limurr dhu  
nhakun, limurr dhu nhakun washing girri' malanha  
rurrguyun. Limurr dhu use ḡunha bala washing  
machinelil gapu. Dhuwali mala limurr dhu nhäma  
mirithirr.

*But this water is still from our ancestral connections, both Dhuwa and Yirritja, telling about every place. There's water in Dhuwa land and in Yirritja land, we know that very well. But we need to look carefully and think about how we use this water. We need to do it through good processes, for whatever we want to use it for.*

*Okay so first we look at ancestral law, whose land is this? It's Dhuwa land, and the water comes from Dhuwa land. And those land owners know about the water lying there and think about the water there that belongs to them, because they sing and cry that Dhuwa water. And the Yirritja, they cry and sing those Yirritja places where water can be found. We need to understand this properly, we must never think that the water is there by its own accord, not cared for, as if Yolŋu were not alive, we must not think like that. There are Dhuwa and Yirritja ceremonial leaders, called Djirrikay and Dalkarra (respectively) who see that water, who remember it on their lands. So we need to keep thinking about this story, whether we are old or young Dhuwa or Yirritja. It's very important for our life. We need to use the water in a better way for our needs. Don't waste it, that's what the Yolŋu law says.*

*Okay so we all know that the water we are drinking these days comes from a bore. I don't know how many there are here at Milingimbi, but we know that we are drinking from them. We use it for food, for drinking, for work, for bathing, and for washing clothes. Like we even use it in the washing machines. We should look at this carefully .*

7 Yuw, ga gapu ga ḡayatham romdhu yolju� ḡayanumirr ḡayi, ḡayanumirr ḡayi. Yaka dhu mananjirr gapu wo wasting dhu gapu ga ḡunha gapu limurr marŋgi, whether ḡayi ga gapu dhärra yan, dharrwa yan ḡayi ga buwalbuwalyun, wo bäyŋun marrtji yir'yun bala gapu. Yir'yun marrtji bala, balanya nhakun dhuwala rarranhdharr dhuwala bala walu. Rarranhdharr walu ḡayi dhu marrtji gapu gulgulyun nyumukuninydhirr. Limurr marŋgi mirithirr dhuwal bili muka limurr gan marŋgithin nhäma. Yaka nhe dhu nhakun gapu malŋ'maram rarranhdharr eh, because gapuny ḡunha marrtji ḡayi yir'yun balayi gulgulyun. Eh, dhuwal gorrmurthirr marrtji wänjany, wänja marrtji gorrmurthirr ḡayiny marrtji gapuny ga gulgulyuna. Räwakthirra ḡayi dhu drythirna, eh so limurr dhu guyanja nhakun. Guyanja ga nhäma wisely. Mirithirr limurr dhu wisely nhäma dhuwali gapu rom. Gapu is limurrun walŋaw, limurrun walŋakum limurruny ga, yal'maram limurruny ga, ga limurr marŋgi nhakuna.

8 Dhuwali limurrun living water ḡayi yäku. Living water, limurr dhu living ḡurijiyi gapuy. Yuw, ga so limurr dhu nhakun use ga dhuwali gapu mirithirr manymakkurr dhukarrkurr. Gapu dhuwal yaka yanbi nhawi, yan free. Free dhuwal yaka gapu, bili limurr gan marŋgithin early-day Missionariesgal, walal gan lakaranjal. ḡunha, ḡunha freenydja nhe dhu, ḡayi dhu waltjan nyärryun, ga nhe dhu gapu dharrwa märram. Gapu nhuju gardengu, gapu nhuju everythinggu. Dhiyal napurr gan marŋgithin walalangal Missionariesgal early day. Yuw ga, walal gan lakaranjal gapu limurr dhu yaka wasting. Wiripu walal gan djäma bore. Nhawi dam, dam gapuw, eh raingu, so walal dhu ga yarraman'thu luka eh.

9 Balanya malany ideas ḡunhidhi, save the water ḡunha animalgu yolku, yoljuw warrpam'ku limurr dhu ga ḡunhidhi share water. Warrpam'θu nhakuna. Yuw, balanya napurr gan marŋgithin nhakun Missionariesgal, walal gan napurrun rom lakaranjal, ga yaka wasting nhakun gapu, tap dhu lapmaram, wandirrna dhu ga, yaka Always dhal'maram dälkum, dhal'maram tap märr ga dhu ḡayi ga gapu save, bitjan bili, ga that mean limurr dhu ga nhina nhakuna gapu mirithirr walja.

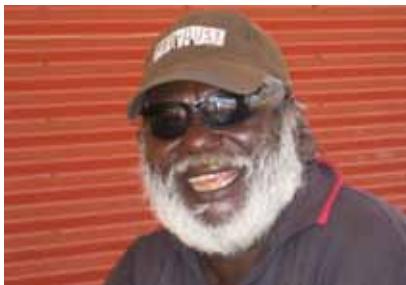
10 Bukmak yolju, warrakan, warrakan djäldhi, butthunamirr, gal'yunamirr. Warrpam gapuw limurr djäl. Ga balanya dhäwu.

*Yes, Yolju have water by means of ancestral law, it has spiritual power. Don't steal it or waste it. We know that water, whether it is bubbling up from the ground or whether it's disappearing. It goes down at this time of the year late dry season (rarranhdharr), it goes down small. We know this very well because we have seen it. You can't find water around in the pre-wet season, because it's all sunk down. Yeah, now that it's getting really low, the water is sinking down. It can dry up, so we need to think about it. Think wisely. We need to look carefully how to use water wisely. Water is for our life, it gives us life, it cools us, we know that.*

*We call it our 'living water', we live by means of that water. So we need to find a good pathway for using water. It's not free you know. It's not free, we know that from the days of the early missionaries, they told us. Free water is what you get when there's a monsoonal downpour, you can use as much as you like. For the garden, for everything. That's what we learnt in the mission days. They told us not to waste it and they drilled bores. And a dam for the rain, for the horses to drink.*

*They thought like that. Save water for the animals, for all the people, let's share it. With everything. Yes, that's how we learnt from the missionaries, they told us their way, not wasting water from the tap, not turning it on and leaving it running. Always turn it off firmly, so we can save water always, and that means we will live very healthily.*

*All people and animals. Animals need it too, the flying ones and the crawling ones. We all need water.*



## 2. Djirarrwuy

Interviewed by Yinjiya

1 Y) Gatjuy mak dhäwu rraku lakaranj  
ŋarkulapuy, nhaltjan nhe ga ŋarkula nhäma?  
Lukanhamirr dhuwal limurr li ga luka ga  
dilkurruwurr gan nhaltjarr nhinan. Nhä ŋayi  
ga ŋula dhäwu ŋorra?

2 D) Eh, nhawi nhakun dhuwandja ga  
dhäwuny ŋorra nhakun ŋayi ŋarkula, dhuwali  
wangany ŋarra dhu lakaram dhuwal gularri.

3 Gularri ŋarkula. Dhuwal ŋarra ga Yurrwi  
nhina ga Yirritjanjur wänjanjur, ga gapu ŋayi  
dhuwal marrtjin gularri dhä-mukthunawuy.  
Benjur bärupal walalaŋgal märipuluwal.  
Marrtjin ŋayi ga--an ga ŋunha bala rraku  
yapa Gumurrnjur Burrwandji. Dur'yurr ŋayi  
gan ŋunha Gumu--urr, bäynu, bäynu ŋayi  
watthuna gapuy. Guyay nyumukuniny'thu,  
luplupthurr gan gulun'jur, guykthurr ŋayi,  
lapnha Burrwandji gumurr, Lätharra, bala  
ŋayi irrakaymirriyinan. Wandjan ŋayi  
wanawanajur. Gurruparna marrtjin gularri,  
benjur, benjuri bili yan. Yorr ŋayin nhakun  
watergiverny Burrwandjiyny, ŋarraku yapa.  
Ga ŋayiny benjurdja bala gan märi'mirrinjung  
rraku dhä-muŋmuŋ marrtjin. Gurrupardja  
ŋayi ŋarkula rälin, bala bitjarra yarrupthurr  
dhunupan, ga bala bitjarrna buku-miwatjililna.  
Bala ŋayi Dhälinylil gurrupar ŋoykurr ŋarkula.  
Gurruparna ŋayi Dhälinynha bundurrra  
Butjala number two, ŋayiny number one  
Butjala Gumurrnjurdja. Gularriny ŋayi gan  
marrtjin benjur bili wangany yan, Burrwandji.

*Okay tell us a story about water, how do you see water? It's drinkable, and we drink it, but how did the old people live? Is there a story there?*

*Yes, there's a water story in there, I'll tell the story about gularri.*

*Gularri is water. Here I am at Milingimbi, in a Yirritja place, and the gularri water, it was silent. From the crocodile people, my mother's mother. It came over there at my great grandmother's place in the hills of Burrwandji. Flowing, but not at the place Burrwandji, it didn't come up there. A small fish was swimming there, spat out a sacred connection, and it opened, in the hills of Burrwandji, Latharra, and it took on a sound. Running down from all the tributaries, giving the gularri water, from there, and there, all the different places. So the water-giver is Burrwandji (in the Mitchell Ranges), my mother's mother, coming down silently. Gave the water in this direction, and went straight down, towards the west. Going underground to Dhälinybuy, naming a second place Butjala (clans also take these names). The first one was back there. That Gularri water came down, still the same, Burrwandji water.*

4 Y) Ga nhawi balanya, yaka ɳali dhu warku'yun

D) Bäyŋu, Yaka ɳayi gi warkuyunaraw djälthi, ɳarkula dhuwali Gularri. Dhuwali ga ɳayatham, ɳäthil gan ɳayathanjal ɳarrakal gurruŋ'mirriju� walal märryu garay bili dhunjamiirr galkaw, ɳanydja yän märryu garay walal gan ɳayathanjal. Law ɳunhi walalaŋ dilkurruwurrugu baman'. Gapu dhuwal ɳayi life giver bukmakku from beginningŋur how old people was living. Nhaltjarr gan old people living. Ga dhuwana marrtjin gan gapu--u, ga dhuwana bat Yurrwin, and now ɳarrany dhuwana Yurrwin ga nhina Makarrwala beŋur marrtjin yanpala, dhiyal ɳuthar miyalkmirriyin, djamarlkuli'mirriyin, dhuwana ɳarran. Gapuny dhuwal ɳorrany ɳayi ga, ɳarra yolŋu ɳarra dhu look after ɳarkulaw märr ga dhu ɳarra yaka bulu dhadhar'yun wanganyŋur wäŋanjur ga wiripuŋulil larrum ɳarkulaw.

5 Y) Näthildja ɳunhi nhakun balanya bawalamir gan dilkurruwurr nhinan, wanhami gan gapu manutji bandanydhin ga larr' wiripulil, guwa'kuwatjmar wäŋa mala?

D) Eh, bili once muka dhu ɳunhi ɳarkula'mirriyirr wäŋa, ga ɳunhi gan ɳayi nyimdhurr bala ɳarkula, ga larr' wiripujuw wäŋjaw ɳupar.

Y) Yorr ringitjkurr yän, Dhuwa, Yirritja ga ɳorra mala?

D) Dhuwa and Yirritja marrtji ɳorra nhakun

Y) Gurrutumirr mala?

D) Yuw gurrutumirr mala, Yothu Yindi, wo nhakun märi-gutharra, balanya mala ɳorran marrtjin Dhuwa Yirritja mala ɳarkula. Ga ɳayiny nhakun dhuwal wäŋa a Yurrwi, wangany yan Milingimbi napurr li ga lakaram yäku. Ga ɳayi dhuwal wäŋany Dhuwa ga Yirritja, Yothu Yindi. Dhuwal ɳayi ga ɳarkula ɳorra, dhuwal limurr ga luka dhuwal Yurrwi, dhuwal wiripu ɳarkula Gularri.

*So it's not something to be messed around with.*

*No, it doesn't want to be messed around with, that Gularri water. My cousin holds that, they held that faith with spears, they didn't use sorcery, just spears. That's the law of the old people long ago. Water was the life-giver from the beginning, whoever old people were living. How the old people lived. And here's the water coming all the way down to Milingimbi, and here I am now at Milingimbi. Makarrwala came here from there as a young man, he grew up here, married and had children and here I am. There's water here and I'm going to look after the water, so that I don't have to move away and search for water in another place.*

*And in the old days, the old people would have been all over the land, where ever a waterhole dried up, then they'd be up and off in another direction, and facing up to different places.*

*Yeah, once, in a watery places, and the water disappears, and up and off chasing a different place.*

*But only through ancestral connections to place, the Dhuwa and Yirritja were both already there.*

*Yes of course, Dhuwa and Yirritja already there.*

*With kin links?*

*Yeah, mother-child (yothu yindi) or grandmother-grandchild (märi-gutharra) those connections throughout the waters from both moieties. So here at Yurrwi, we just call the whole place Milingimbi. And it has both Dhuwa and Yirritja land, mother and child. So there's water here, that we drink here at Milingimbi, some of it is our Gularri water.*

6 Nunha bala ga ḡorra Dhuwaŋjur nhawijur, balanya nhakun ḡunha bala ḡunhi gulun'jur, ga ḡunhi wiripu, ḡarkula Dhuwa. Ga bitjandhin, bitjanan walal li ganha marrtjinyany dhuwalatjany ḡunhi dilkurruwurrdja. Yorr, nhakun walal gan ḡunhi yaka mak mirithin djoka' lukan balanyamirriy timedhu, ga take away, ga djoka. Nhawi take away ga ḡula nhä bäyŋu. Nanydja fresh one walal gan lukan, bala walal gan movingna. Gapu dhuwal Yolŋuwal termskurr, warku'yun ḡali dhu balanya nhakun Yolŋuy dhu lluka monuk ḡarraku ranga, monuk yäkumiriw. "Krrrr" bitjan nhe dhu, nhe dhu burakirr, ḡunhiyi bala gan ḡäthili dilkurruwurru balanya using. Märrmay' gan last nayathanal ḡarrakala yapa'mirriju manda dhiyal Warrawurr balanya rom. Balanya bili ḡayi ḡarkulany yaka yän warku'yunaraw. Bejur bili gapuny ḡayi marrtjin, ga dhuwal bala. ḡarraku yapa'mirriju Nangil, ga dhuwal bala ḡarraku ḡändi'mirriju nhawijur Djilpin. Dhuwali mala ḡarkula warrpam' dhuyu mala.

7 Ga ḡali dhu ḡanya yolŋuy nhäma dhuyukum yan gapu dhiyan bala tapmirriy waluy, ya balanya nhakun mit. Bitjandhi bili ḡanya treating nhakun dilkurruwurru gan treating. Ga nhakun räliny ga wapthun new generationlildja nhakun, ḡarrany ga dhuwal nhäma.

8 If balar limurr outside tap mala djäma dhuwandja ḡarrakun gänan mulkurr, ga nhawi balar limurr ḡula locker nhirrpul. Nhawi balanya ḡunhi ḡayi dhu yalala birrirri'yun. Wo balanya ḡunhi tap mala ḡayi bitjan li ḡapmaram ga birrirri' ya balanya mala buku tap, ga ḡunhi yalala ḡanya ronjamaram, ga bitjan dhu djudup'maram holelil ga dap djamarrkul'i'waldhi warku'yunarur. Bili dhuwalidhin ḡayi nhakun nhawiny märr importanttja. ḡunhi limurr dhu normal yän tap using balanya nhakun dhiyan bala limurr li ga using yan ḡunhi ḡayiny dhu ga djamarrkul'iny ḡuriŋi bul'yuna tapthu. Ga gätnimirriw mala djämaw, nhawiku gätni marrtji li yurr'yun, wo farm nhe dhu nyumukuniny djäma wäŋarjur, wo washing machinemirriy mala. Walal dhu ḡula nhä märram nhakun nyumukuniny nhawi tapethinya balanya ḡunhi numberkurr li ga wandirr gapu ḡayi dhu ga ḡunhi bili yan using. Ya' balanya mala

*There's Dhuwa water over there, like over there in that billabong (pointing towards Nalitjirriwa), is Dhuwa water. So that's how it is our ancestors passed through this land. But of course they didn't have a lot of sugar at that time, or take-aways. No take-aways or other things. They just ate fresh food then moved along. In Yolŋu terms, if we are not serious; like if a person drinks salty water, which is sacred to me, the salty one now without a name. If you say "Yuck" then you will be speared, the old people were using laws like that. My two sisters at Mäpuru are the last people to still hold that law. So that's it about water, it is not to be used disrespectfully. The water has come from far away and here it is. My sister Nangil (clan), and there my mother at Djilpin. All those water places are sacred.*

*And you and I will look at it making it sacred in these days of tap water, you see, mate? Treating it in the same way that the old people used to treat it. So it came down and moved to the new generation, and here I am!*

*If we have taps outside, this is only my own thoughts, we could put locks on them. And then we could make it so we can turn it on. Or taps that turn off themselves (spring loaded) or with locks on them so we can stop the kids playing with the water. It's quite an important thing. If we just have the ordinary taps like we have now, then the kids are going to play with them. And in the garden, those who water their gardens or little farms, and washing machines. They should get something like the counter inside a tape machine with the numbers running around, and use those. That sort of thing.*

9 Yaka limurr djäl, using the djamarlkuliwal mirithirr gapu. Luplup ɳayi, "Luplup dhiyali tapnjur, ɳarra ɳathil nhawi ɳatha batha'pathan". Wo bul'yurr walal djamarlkuli dhiyali hose walal warryu'warryurr gi. Gapu dhuwali important limurrun, lifegiver ɳayi dhuwali gapu, to help ɳatha, ga anybody limurr yolŋuy, please limurr dhiyarj bala look after ɳarkulaw.

10 Ga dhuwandja nhakun ɳarra ga thinking balanya nhakun, if limurr dhu bala nhäma interstate mala. Interstate, ɳunha ga interstate mala change, they're paying rate for gapu, latritj, nhawi rent, everything walal ga pay. Limurrdja lucky but if, limurr dhu ga bitjan bili yän showing yätjkurr, gapman'thu dhu limurrun ɳanydjala'maram ga bitjandhin limurr dhu start paying offna, gapu ga everything. Bili Power and Waterw ɳunhi nhawi ganydjarr walalan through walalangal, yurr Gapman'ku. Balanya.

*We don't want the kids to waste it. "You play around swimming at the tap and I'll just go and cook the dinner". Or playing around pulling the hose. Water is an important life-giver for us for our nourishment, and everybody, please let's look after the water.*

*And I was just thinking, if we look at those people interstate. Interstate, things are changing, they're paying rates for water, electricity, and rent, they pay for everything. We are lucky, but if we show ourselves to be poor at conserving water, the government can turn around and we'll have to start paying too, for water and everything. Because Power and Water have the power through the government to make that happen.*



### 3. Ganygulpa

interviewed by Yirjiya and Waŋgurru

1 Yuw dhuwal ḷarra dhu limurruŋ waŋa ḷalimurr dhu ḷayanjumirriyirra, ga mulkurrmirriyirra, ga manjutjimirriyirra.

*I'll say something for us all. We need to use our hearts, our heads and our eyes...*

2 Yaka ḷali dhu ga guyanja dhuwal bili walu today, dhuwal walu.

*We shouldn't just be thinking about today, these times,*

3 ḷunhany ḷali dhu bala futureny ḷali dhu guyanja, nhatjan ḷali dhu gapu, gapuw djäka ga.

*We need to think about the future, how we are going to look after the water.*

4 Märr ga walal dhu yalalanjumirriy limurruŋ djamarlkuli, ga walalaŋ djamarlkuli ga ḷunhiwurriy djamarlkuli walalaŋ dhu ga ḷarkula ḷorra

*So that later our children and their children and then their children will have water:*

5 Bili ḷarkulay muka ḷalimurr ḷuli ga dhuwal nhinany walŋany, ḷarkula ḷali ḷuli ga luka ḷuli ga walŋany nhina.

*Because it's by water that we live, we drink water and we are healthy.*

6 Ga ḷali dhu gadaman'thirra ḷali dhu responsibledhirra ḷali dhu, goŋ-djarryun ḷali dhu ḷuriki ḷarkulaw djäkaw.

*We need to get smart, responsible, and offer to take part in caring for water.*

7 Balanya nhakun tap mala ḷunhi dhu ga wandirr ḷarkula, ḷali dhu marrtji ga mukmaram, nhäma ḷali dhu ga ḷayanjumirriyirra, ga mukmaram ḷali dhu. Ga nhawi mala balanya tap mala daw'yunawuy, mulkurr shower wo nhawi tap mala ḷunhi laundryŋjur nhawijur. Daw'taw mala ḷali dhu marrtji ga nhäma walalany ḷunha Housingŋjur ga job card märram, ga wukirri job card walal dhu marrtji ga fixing walal dhu ḷunhiyi. Yaka gi nhänu bay' ga

*So if a tap's running we should go and turn it off, act responsibly, and turn it off. And any broken tap or showerhead, or taps in the laundry, broken ones that we see, we should get a job card from Housing, and fill it out, and then they'll come and fix it. Don't just look at it and do nothing.*

7 Ga, manymak nayi wangkanydja idea balanyayi nayi dhu ga, nayi dhu limurr wana-nhirrpan djäkamirr each houseŋur djäkamirr, gapu-djäkamirr. Nhanju njurikiyi yoljuw nhawi nhanju djäma nayi dhu ga djäka n̄arkulaw mala. Check up nayi dhu ga tap mala, n̄arkula mala nhathinya ga nhawi, wo balanya nhakun, wänjakurr, wänjakurr nhakun nhawi gam.

8 Marŋgi-gurrupanmirr ga raypirri'yunmirr usinggu gapuw nhaliy waluy n̄ali dhu ga gapu baki nhaku malanjuw. Balanya nhakun wiripuny n̄alimurr li ga dhuwal nha? Washing machine limurr li yuta märram bala ga every dayna be washingdja. Every dayna washing benjur Monday to Sundayna washing. Nayi dhu n̄ali walu nhirrpan washing day, washing daydja washing day once a week n̄ali dhu ga washing. N̄unhi n̄ali ga once a week washing girri, n̄unhiny n̄ali saving gapun, ga electricityn and plus n̄ali ga djäka dhiyak earthgu.

9 Every day n̄ali dhu gollil djuy'yun yothuny, yalalanjumirriw njäyi dhu marr ga marŋgi. Gakal'-n̄amathirr nayi dhu. Yalalanjumirriw nhaltjan nayi dhu dhiyak mother naturew djäka, earthgu dhiyak. Bili dhuwal gam', n̄unhi nhuŋu yothu gi bäyŋu gol, nayi bongun monuŋuyiny djamarlkuliwdja gapuw, njurikiyiny n̄unhi gadaman'kuny mala.

10 So, bili, dhuwal n̄ayi ga balanya mala rom n̄orra mulkurŋur ga romŋur n̄äpakiwal guyanjanhanjur. Ga litjalangal ga romŋur n̄orra yorr n̄ali dhu n̄unhiyi märram bala n̄ali dhu dhä-manapana. Marr ga n̄ali dhu dharanjan n̄ulatjandhi litjalangiyingal.

11 Bitjan nhakun bambayyu gan gäthur lakaranjal, ringitj mala litjalaj ga dhuwal n̄orra. Raypiny n̄arkula mala ringitj, ringitjthirr n̄ali n̄uli bitjan burrwurryun, wiripu n̄ali li ga giritjirr. N̄ali dhu bitjandhiyi djäka gapuw dhiyan bala, bitjandhi n̄ali dhu marrkapthun, bitjandhi n̄ali dhu dhangi'yun. Ga balanya.

*So here's the idea, we should choose a caretaker for each house, a water-carer. That person's job would be to look after all the things to do with water. Check up on the taps, how the water is going, throughout the groups of houses.*

*Letting people know, and talking to people about using all the time water properly – for whatever it is used for... For example, what happens? We get a new washing machine and we wash every day. Washing every day from Monday to Sunday. We should make a particular day for washing, do our washing once a week. If we just wash clothes once a week, we will be saving water and electricity as well as caring for the earth.*

*If we send the kids to school every day, later they will know. They will have a good way of being in the world. For how they will look after mother nature, for the earth. Because you see, if your child doesn't go to school, he might be the one who is later responsible for the water of our children, that's what he should be learning about.*

*So there are these principles in the heads and ways of Balanda (nonAboriginal) people, and in their thoughts. And we also have a law, and we will get our traditional law and put it together (with the Balanda ways). So that we will be able to recognise each other's ways.*

*Like Jessie told this morning, we have sacred connections (ringitj) with water. We have sacred fresh water, which we call for when we are mourning, and which we also dance. That's the care we should be taking with water today, we should love and respect it, we should hold it dear.*

12 Yuw, ga wanganydja, nha wanganyjuny ga nhawi. Yolju mala dhu ga djäma ɳäpakiwal ɳunhi gapu djämamirriwal, yol ga djäma Power and Water. Yolju'yuljuny mala ɳayi dhu märram, ɳayi dhu ga training ɳunhiyi yoljuny. Märr ga dhu ɳurinjyi yoljuy educating wiripunjunhan yoljuny communitynhan. ɳunhiyi wanganydja dhu malj'thun rom dhiyal. At the moment ɳayi gi bäyŋu ɳunhiyi rom malj'thurr. Ga balanya.

13 Wiripuny, wiripuny napurr djäl, ɳayi dhu education program ga dhiyal malj'thun, marŋgi-gurrupan, educating yolju, djamarlkuliny, ɳalapalnha. Especially djamarlkuliny' märr ga walal dhu ga ɳunhiyi gurrukam guyanjanhawuy ɳorra walalangal dhu ga ɳayaŋjunjur ga mulkurrnjur nhaltjan walal dhu djäka gapu, ga nhä ɳayi dhuwal gapu. Ga wanhanjur ɳayi ɳuli ga marrtji gapu ga nhaltjan ɳali dhu ɳunhiyi gapu waljakum. Bitjarr nhakun bambayyu gan ɳunhi lakaranjal dhäwu. ɳunhiyi wetiy waljakunjal gapu, dhäwu limurrungal ga ɳorra yoljuwal, wetiy waljakunjal gapu. Gadaman'thin ɳayi weti. Ga balanya

*Yes and one other thing, this one thing. Yolju people should be working alongside whichever Balandia is working for Power and Water. That person should work with Yolju and train them. So that the Yolju can be educating other Yolju in the community. That's one thing that really needs to happen. At the moment, it's not happening like that. That's true.*

*Also we really need an education program to happen here, letting people know, educating Yolju, children and old people. Especially the children, so that the will carry those ideas they will lie in their hearts and heads, how to care for water, and what water actually is. Where water comes from, and how we can keep the water alive. Just like the story (Jessie) was telling. It was the wallaby who kept the fresh water alive, that's a story belonging to us Yolju, how the wallaby preserved the fresh water. The clever wallaby.*

14 Balanya nhakun, wangany ḷarra dhu lakaram nhawi gämurru' dhuwandja healthkurr. Liya yanhi limurr li ga rirrikthun Lun'thun limurr li marrtji. "Yakay liya ḷarrany marrtji barrtju'parrtjun". Limurrdja li nhän guyanya, wanganyna yan Panadolna, yanbi ḷunhi Panadolyu dhu ḷali waljathirr. Yaka! ḷunhiny ḷali ga gapu lurrkun', lurrkun' ḷali ga gapu luka. Rumbal litjalaj dhuwal djäl gapuw, gapu ḷuli bandanydhirr litjalangal rumbaljurr. Bala ḷuli ḷunhi liyan ḷalitjalany barrtju'parrtjun. ḷurikiyi wanganydja ḷali dhu djäka ga gapuw. Bili ḷunha ḷalitjalaj rumbal djälthirr ḷayi ga gapuw ga ḷunhi ḷali dhu ga gapu bäyŋu luka dharrwa, or ḷalitjalaj dhu dhawar'yurra gapu bandanydhin, Yurrwiny dhuwal lurrkun'ha gapu, eei dhiyan ga lakaram. Dhuwal nhuma ga nhama wunjili....eii dhuwal amount of gapu limurr ḷuli ga märram, ga ḷunhi bala ḷalimurr dhu, gapuw bäyŋu ga djäga, ḷunhi bala limurr gi Panadol nha yan luki.... Ga dhirjurjun Panadolyun. Yuw ga ḷuruk ḷunhi wanganydja gam' gapuw, kidney ḷunha, burrgutjku, di'tiw nhawiku gu ḷunha rumbaljurr limurrungal ḷunha organs mala walal ḷuli lakaram, body organs mala litjalaj rumbaljurr, that's why ḷali ga ḷir'yun walja ḷali ga nhina, rerrimiriw ḷali ga nhina, wo ḷunha ḷarkulay ḷalitjalany ḷayi ga waljakum. ḷunhi ga bäyŋu gapu dharrwa gapu luka, ḷayi ḷalitjalaj dhu kidney bandanythira bandanydhirra bandanydhirra bala dhu rerrin märram.

15 Wiripuny, guyanjanhawuy nhawi, ḷula balanj limurr, birrka'yurr, metermirrayam nhawi gapu. Bili power limurrur metermirr ga nhä wrong gapuwdjä. Bili wiripuny ḷayi Yolŋu dalwur ḷayi, ga dhuŋa ḷayi ga duŋduŋ ḷayi. Ga yurr ḷayi dhu ḷunhalatjan rrupiyagurr dharajan, ḷunhi nhangu bill dhu du'yun gapupuy. Nayi dhu ganyim'dhun, Way' dharjan rrakal! Raypirr ḷunhiyiny raypirri guyanjanhamaram ga ya' bitjan. Bili ḷunhan yän bala ga value nhäma nhawiñurnha wiripurnha mala ga bäyŋun ga nhäma value gapunjurdja.

16 Recycle water walal dhu ga bäki. Wiripuny ga nhäwi, gamurru, kava (bulunga), nhe dhu kava lukanhamirriy ga, recycle water wadapmaram, bili nhe ga ḷunha gapu waljamirr wasting, ḷunha waljany gapu, ga nhe dhu ga recycle water bäki. Bijtan nhuŋu walal dhu ga birri'yun, ḷula nhaliy, bala nhe dhu ga ḷunhiyin bäki.

For example, here's a story for you which makes a point about health. If our head gets sick with a throbbing pain and we say "Yakay! Something is sticking pins my head". What do we think of? Panadol! As if we get healthy through Panadol! No, it's because we're not drinking enough fresh water. Our bodies want water, the water in our bodies starts to dry up. That's what gives us a headache. That's why we should be caring for water. Because our bodies need water, and if we don't drink enough water, or if our water dries up, because at Milingimbi here there's not a lot of water, see this tells you (pointing to the hydrological diagram). Can you see this picture? This is the amount of water we draw from, and if don't look after the water, and we just eat Panadol, we'll die of Panadol! So here's one thing about water: Our kidneys, lungs, those parts of our body which they call 'organs.' Body organs in our body. That's how we breathe, have life, living without sickness, so it's the fresh water which gives us life. If you don't drink lots of water, your kidney will dry up, dry up dry up and get sick,

Maybe it's an idea to try putting meters for water. So the power has a meter, so what's wrong with water? Some people are stupid or ignorant or lazy, But he might understand it through the money side when the bill arrives. He'll get a shock! Hey' that's a lot for me! That's the discipline, it would cause him to think. He might be able to see value in other things, but not in water.

They should use recycled water. That's another point, those of you who drink kava, you should soak it in recycled water, so you won't be wasting the water of life . That's what they should use when they prepare kava for you!



#### 4: Jessie Murarrgirarrgi

tells the story of 'Boduk, Yegali' and Wet̄i' – 'Bush cockroach, painted gecko and the wallaby'

Illustrations by Yambal2, first painted for the book 'Boduk', Milingimbi, 1976, used with permission.

Dhuwandja dhu rra dhäwu lakaram nhawipuy Boduk, Wet̄i , ga Yigali walal. Ga dhäwuny ɻunhi.

*I'm going to tell the story of the bush cockroach, the wallaby and the gecko. This is the story.*

Yaka ɻunhi marnji, manda Boduk ga nhawi, walal ɻunhi yaka marnji, ga ɻayiny ɻunhi Wetiny marnji.

*They didn't know, the bush cockroach and the other one, they didn't know what the wallaby knew.*

ɻunhi ɻayi gan gänjal gapu djakarunmirr ga gänjaldja ɻayi ɻunhi...

*That he was carrying water in a paperbark container, he was carrying it....*

Mandany gan ɻunhi, wandinan walal marrtjin ɻunhi–i dhutna walal, ga ɻayiny dhu yigaliny' ɻunhi ga wanjan ɻayi dhu. "Yolnha ɻathil dhu rra ɻämindja?"

*And those two came along and sat down, and the gecko started to speak: "Who am I going to paint first?"*

"Nhawinha, nhuna ɻäthil Yigali," Bodukthu.

*"Maybe I'll paint you first," said the cockroach.*

ɻayiny Bodukthuny ɻämirma ɻanya manymakunjalna, ga bidi'yurr marrtji--n, ɻanya miny'tji-wapthurr gan.

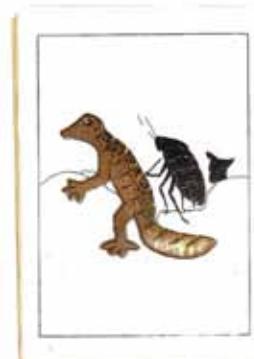
*And the cockroach painted him up beautifully, painted him up, then they changed over painting.*

"Aa ma', ɻarranhany muka, ɻarranhany muka, bidi'yurr."

*"Okay, now me, my turn, paint me up".*

ɻanyanhany muka ɻayi bidi'yurr ga midikumarna, bala ɻayi rur'yurr ga nhänhamin ɻayi gapunjur.

*But he painted him really badly. And cockroach got up and looked at himself in the water.*



Nayi gan ḷunhi gapuny bānin raypiny warrpam', ga ḷunhi ḷayi rur'yurrdja ga nhänhaminany ḷayi gapunjur.

Bala ḷayi waŋan, "Go! Dhuwal ḷarra nhuna gan ḷamathanjal bidi'yurr, ga nheny ḷarrany dhuwal yätjukurrkuŋal bidi'yurr! Ga dhiyali galkurr!"

Bala ḷayi gapun waryurr, gapun ḷayi waryurr,

᷊ayiny wetiny wandin ga dharrparnha gapu. Nunhiyidhi weti, yigali' ga boduk, ḷunhi ḷayi gapuny djalkuminydhin, waryurrdja ḷayi.

Bala ḷayi monukthinana, monukthinan, dhuwana limurr li ga ḷunhi ɻuka dhäkay manymak ga dhakay damurrunj.

Ga nhaltjan ḷalin y dhu dharray, bili ḷayiny gan ḷunhi wetiynytja gänjal yän gapu raypiny nhanjuwuy ḷayi.

᷊alin y dhu bitjandhi nhakun ḷunhayi weti? Nali dharrayna, gapuw litjalangalarjaw.

Bitjarr ḷunhi weti marrkapthurr gapuw, ga limurr dhu bitjandhi bili marrkapthun gapuw.

᷊anj'janjdhuna djamarlkuliny', ga dharraynha limurr dhu ga, gapuw.

*There was fresh water everywhere, it was all fresh. And he got up and looked at himself in the water.*

*And he said: "Hey I did a great job of painting you, and you made a real mess of painting me! Just wait there!"*

*And so he urinated in the water,*

*And while he was urinating in the water, the wallaby went off and hid the fresh water. That's the story of the wallaby and the gecko, and the cockroach who urinated in the water.*

*So it all went salt, so we have salt water; we can drink either good tasting water, or salt water.*

*So how are we going to look after it, like the wallaby who carefully carried his own fresh water?*

*Shall we do the same thing as the wallaby? We will care for our water.*

*In the same way that the wallaby held that water precious, so we will hold water precious as well.*

*Stop the children from wasting it, and we will look after our water.*





5: Oscar Datjarraña  
talking to John Greatorex

1 J) Wanha balaŋ ɳayi dhu ga Power and Watery njamatham djäma dhiyal, dhäwu malŋ'maram yolŋuwal, tapnjur, seweragenjur, hotwaternjur. Märr dhu yolŋu yaka weyin galkun ɳula nhaku, ga dhukarr manymak, märr dhu ɳayi. Marr dhu ɳayi yolŋu, nhunuŋ ɳula, mak ɳapipi'mirriju, ɳändi'mirriju, wo yothu yan dhunupa marrtji dhäwu gurrupan ga yan walal dhu djäma. Wanha dhukarr manymak?

2 O) Ma, ɳarra li ga thinking, yan muka ɳarrapi li ga thinking nhawi bulany. Nhawi, yan ɳarra li ga thinking mak some yolŋu mala dhuwal too lazy, ɳunhi walal li nhäma ɳunhi gapu mala leaking li ga, or sewer, sewer line. Njunhi nhakun wiripuny ɳayi li blockage, wo nhakun R&Mgu (repair and maintenance) tapku, wo leaking tap nhawi, leaking taps, or showers, wo pipe nhakun. Mak ɳarra ga thinkingdjä, maybe mak everything latju, but yolŋu li lazythirr. Balaŋ walal li, nhänjuny, straight away reporting to nhawilil, aa yolkal, Daisy Bakerwal, wo job card bäyŋu walal li mänŋu nhawikal plumbing section yuw, ɳunhal nhawijur.

3 Ga it takes one week, mak one and half days, nhakun filling up napurr li ɳunhi nhawi job card for RM, ga it takes nhawi, delay nhakun ya balanya nhakun one and a half days ya balanya.

J) Balanday wo yolŋuy?

O) Balanday ga mak yolŋuy, Matthewy bäy, mak yan rra ga thinking

4 J) Ga nhaltjan limurr dhu dhiyali nhakun, wanha dhukarr manymak, limurr dhu ralpakum, or ɳula dhukarr ga ɳorra? Nayiny dhu ga bondi malŋ'maram dhu dhäwu, ɳunhi ɳayi dhu ga gapu lurryun yan ?

*How do you think Power and Water could work well here, getting the message from the Yolŋu about taps and sewerage, hot water... so they will not wait a long time for anything, and the best way for him to, or for you or your uncle or mother or children go straight and tell the story so they can fix it up? What's the best way?*

*Well I was thinking – this is just what I have been thinking myself.. that some Yolŋu are too lazy, when they see water leaking, or a sewer line, or if there's a blockage, or the R&M people need to repair a leaking tap or shower or pipe, I think it's all okay except for the lazy Yolŋu. They should see it and report it straight away to Daisy Baker, they don't pick up those job cards from the plumbing section..*

*So it takes a week, or one and a half days between when you fill out the job card and when work is done.*

*By a Balandia or Yolŋu*

*Probably a Balandia, but maybe Matthew (Dharrgar), I think.*

*So what are we going to do to make people willing to cooperate, is there a way ahead? To find out quickly that the water is running?*

5 O) Or, mak ḷarra ga thinkingdja easiest waydja, yuṭa limurr gan thinking ya ḷunhi ḷunhal, inspectiondja dhu ga ya bitjan through every houses. Märr ga dhu walal ga, ḷula nhämuny, mak fortnight walal li inspection, ya biyak, every housesgu. Nhänju'nhanju gi bala gurrupula walalangal. Bala walal li nhakun run throughn gi yolthu dhu ḷunhi inspecting.

6 J) Yolthu dhu inspecting?

O) Nula yolthu, ḷula yolinha walal dhu nhirrpan.

J) Wanjanydu bukmakku wänjaw wo benjuri linygu yan suburbjur?

O) Yaka wanjanygu, or three, or four yolju'yulju from different places yurr nhawi ya balanya. Nhawi nhakun, check nhawi, check up marrtji ḷunhi wänjalil inside, from every nhawi, camps area nhawi, for every nhawi ya balanya. Nayi dhu nhawi nhakun nhäma bala ga run throughn ya bitjan plumbinggu, bili some yolju lazyn mala. Nhawi nhakun nhäma walal li ga nhämäny bay'na yan, yuw.

7 O) Yurr napurr li yän djäma yän djourra, nhakun ḷarra, especially ḷarra li ga yan most, most of the time, ḷunhi li leaking tap, nhäma rra li nhakun somewhere, ḷarra li sometimes reportn yan bala nhawilil. Nhawilila, bala--a R&Mjur, repair and maintenancejur ḷunhal nhawirjur or plunbingjur. So we should have nhawi mak inspect, get people from every campjur to inspect every houses, ya balanya. But yaka nhawiny, but, you like marrtji ga sit down with people, house owners, ga say, is it ok I can your house for certain occasions, ya balanya. Dhiyak, dhiyak, dhiyak, nhawiku sewer blockage ga nhawiku, leak nhawi, leaking taps ya balanya malany, run through. Ga bilin.

So otherwise ḷayi, sometimes ḷayi dhu, um if there's a fault ya balanya. Nhakun ḷunhi ḷayi ga yolju nhina yan, nhakun bush campjur, ḷula nhämunha' bunbu, ḷayi dhu benjuriyolju marrtji ga check up walalan. Yuw, ya balanya nhakun. Yuw ḷunhi latjuny, or get three from every camps ya balanya, to inspect or four.

*I think the easiest way is a new idea we were thinking about having an inspection throughout all the houses. So that they can, how often? Maybe every fortnight do an inspection, for all the houses. They could have a look and then give the report to (the R&M people), the person who does the inspection can run through all the work to be done.*

*Who will do the inspections?*

*Wheover they put in place*

*One person to do all the houses or from each suburb?*

*Not just one, maybe three or four, from different places... checking up inside each house, from all the different camp areas, for each one. He could have a look around at the plumbing work which needs to be done, because some Yolju are lazy. They see a problem and don't do anything about it.*

*We just need to fill out the form, like I, when most of the time I see a leaking tap somewhere, I sometimes report it to Repairs and Maintenance. So we should have inspectors, get people from every camp to inspect every houses. But you know, like go and sit down with people, house owners, and say, Is it ok I can inspect your houses for this and that, like a sewer blockage or leaking taps... Sometimes he could just repair the fault.*

*So if a Yolju is living in bush camp, however many houses there are up there, someone from there would go and check up on them? Yes, like that, get three from each camp to do the inspections, maybe four.*

8 J) Ga yol ḷunhi dirramu ga djäma dhiyanj bala,  
John Camerongal?

O) Dharrgar, Mathew Dharrgar.Another plumber,  
assistant plumber ḷayi ga djäma

J) Ga nhaltjan nhe ga guyanja, manymak nhakun  
duh Yolŋuy djäma?

O) Manymak ḷayi li ga djämäny ḷunhi, but bäyŋu  
report coming in from the, nhawikupuy, nhawijur,  
wänja-waṭanuy li gi bäyŋu report to bala housinglil,  
nhawi Daisy Bakerwal.

9 J) Yuw, yuw, ya', ya' ma bilin manymak.  
Ga wanha balanj baman', baman' ḷayi gan  
manyakkunjal marrtjin, wo balanya linygu yan?

O) Mak walal gan ḷäthildja latju, nhawi job card  
mak walal gan baki ḷäthildja. Dhiyanjuny bala R&M  
ei? Job card ei baman' ḷuwuydja, Galiwin'kuny  
walal gan baki, by the time ḷarra gan plumbing  
djäma ḷunhaldja. Yu--w, ga dhiyanjuny bala, ei still  
manymak ya balanya latjuyirr ḷayi ga, manymak.  
But yolŋun lazy yuwalktja. Nhawin nhakun house  
owner ya balanya. Some are latju, some aren't,  
they don't bother. Ya balanya.

*What's the name of the Yolŋu who  
works with John Cameron?*

*Matthew Dharrgar.*

*Do you think it's good for a Yolŋu to  
do that work?*

*Yes, it's good for him to do that work,  
but the house-owners don't report to  
the housing officer Daisy Baker.*

*Okay, good. And how about long  
ago, did it run okay back then, or was  
it the same as now?*

*I think it used to be good, they used  
to have job cards. Now it's R&M.  
They used to have job cards, back  
in the time when I was a plumber  
at Galiwin'ku. But it's still good these  
days, but Yolŋu can be lazy. The  
house owners. Some are good, and  
some really don't bother.*



## 6: Lapulunŋ

Interviewed by Yiniya

1 Well, just a bit of briefing on why water is so precious in the lives of people. In the olden days, gapu (water) for example, gapu is really a source of life for the being. It has got the sense that connects deep in the cosmic knowledge of Yolŋu phenomena.

2 Sometimes gapu that you see that are used in a foolish way. Gapu is really sacred to the knowledge of Yolŋu. It has got the profound lineage. Gapu is the source of life that suits Yolŋu people in a cultural term, in a cultural terminology.

3 Sometimes gapu connects with ringitj (ancestral alliance). There is sacred stuff, that Yolŋu people value gapu – dhuyu (sacred). So it is really a source of life that connects within the profound knowledge of Yolŋu. It has got the cosmic knowledge and also deeper in the essence with our forefathers and our ancestors beyond.

4 Gapu dhuwal ḷayi yuwalktja, walŋa ḷayi walŋa ḷalapalmi gan ḷäthil gapu use nhawiyu romdu, mak dhuwal gan gapu dhuwal ḷayi , wiripu ḷayi gapu dhuwali ḷayi dhuyu, ga dhiyan djunama nhakun gämurru limurr ga nhäma, ḷunhi ḷayi ga affecting, global with source of water dhiyan bala in today's modern balanya.

*Water is really life. Ancestors before used to use it lawfully. Some water is sacred and nowadays we come to point where it affects globally in this modern world.*

5 Ga how limurr as Yolŋu limurr dhu use gapu especially dhiyal Milingimbi, Milingimbi is a small community, but limurr dhu value, ga take care of the water resources dhiyal nhakun, the source gapuw, ga bili nhakun ḷarra gan stating, some gapu ḷayi dhuwal nhakun limurr dhu garrkuluk ḷayi gapu, it's a source of life, garrkuluk that breathes life into human beings, and therefore limurr dhu nhakun yolŋuy take nhakun gapu with a sense of respect in our life, not to use too much of those gapu...

*How we as Yolŋu can use water, especially here in Milingimbi being a small community, but we have to value and take care of the water resource here, the source of water. I've already stated that some water is sacred. It's a source of life that breathes life into human beings. Therefore we as Yolŋu have to take water with a sense of respect in our life. Not to use too much water.*

6 ... because baman'tja ḷayi walal gapu gan bäki dhuwal yolŋuy walal gapu ḷunha huntingmirrikurr walal gan marrtjin ga lukan walal gan gapu. Hunting walal gan yolŋ walal ga manimirrijur gan gapu lukan. Ga wiripu ḷunhi gapu manutji mala ḷunhi yän walal lukan walal, yolŋuy walal lukan bitjarr, ga dharray walal gan, rommirriyanjal gan bitjarr dharray.

*Long time ago people used water when they used to hunt. When they used to hunt they used to drink from the rivers and drank from wells, they only used them for drinking. They looked after the water and had rules to abide by. They did not waste water.*

7 Yaka walal gan wasting gapu, ga dhiyan bala limurr ga facing nhakun global effects, global warming, ga global warning to warrpam both Indigenous and nonIndigenous people, nhakun it's a problem.

8 Yow gapu ɳayi dhuwalidhi, bili rra lakaranjal, there's parts that bukmak yolju ɳjalapalmirr mala gan nhinan romdu, ɳunhi rra martjin lakaranjal, wanjany ɳayi dhuyu, ga dhuyu ɳarkulaya, bäyŋu gan yolŋuy lukan, yudayuday, dhukitŋŋ ɳurruk, ɳjalapalmirri gan lukan, ga wiripu ɳayi gan yän gunjharran dhärranan gapu malany. Yow. Ga dhuwali nhakun ɳayi very important that limurr dhu valuing dhuwali, the source gapu ɳayi walŋamirri ɳayi gapu, dhiyal Milingmbi limrru yolŋuy limurr dhu dharray.

9 Ga dhuwaliny mala nhakun ɳunha the Power and Water authoritiesthu mala ga nhämadhi bili, ga ɳunha bala ɳunhi cultural terminology, ɳunha ɳjalapalmirri gan knowledgejur ɳayathanjal balanya mala ɳarkula dhuwal ɳunhalatjarr bala wakir'yunamirrijur ga bäydhì muŋmuŋdhurr gan romdu, ɳunhäljarra bala dhuyu malany ɳarkula. Yow balanya.

10 Y) One thing there because the balanda from the Power and Water want to learn of how we view water in our culture. If we work side by side, make them understand our rules and we can learn about their rules. It's like closing a gap. Probably talk a little bit on that issue.

11 L) I reckon there is two stories from the balanda perspectives in how to look after and how to take care of the water resources within the community. So we need to engage to build a partnership between those two, profound knowledges. The westernised knowledge and the profound knowledge of Yolŋu cosmology. In a way of working towards how to engage the Yolŋu knowledge and the balanda knowledge. And to work together to make improvement, how we could look after the water resources within the community. And maintain good communication to build a bridge between the western world and the indigenous nation. The Yolŋu nation of Australia. So we look after that through that engagement. And build a strong memorandum of understanding, in that sense. Thank you.

*Today we are facing a global effect. Global warming and global warning to everyone, both to indigenous and non indigenous people. It's a problem.*

*And the water as I have said before there's part when all ancestors survived to do with rules. One is that it is sacred, and the sacred water was forbidden to young people, only people who had grey hair were allowed to drink. Other water holes were left untouched. That is very important issue that we have to value the source – the water that keeps us alive, we will care for it.*

*Here in Milingimbi we have to look after it. The Power and Water authorities are keeping an eye as well. And the cultural terminology that the ancestors had in their knowledge of water. Whether they were roaming they still respected the rules and the sacred waters. Yes, this is how it was.*



## 7: Lily Gurambura

Interviewed by Yiniya and John

1 Good morning my name is Lili Gurambura ga bapurru ḷarra Gamal Walamarju ga thank for nhawi nhakun nhuma ga napurrunku gunga'yun ga marŋgi-gurrupan djäمامirr mala, bili ḷäthil napurr gan wawu nhinan, ga ḷarra ga nhumalany buku-gurrpan.

2 Nhakun gapu barpuru limurr marrtji nhäma bøynu ḷäthil bitjana balanda dhuwal nhakun first time nhakun nhuma napurrunku mel-gurrupan ga marŋgikuma märr ga napurr dhu marŋgi nhina nhakun ḷarra dharraymirr walalaŋgal gumurrŋur Nurruwulu Walamarju yan ḷarra dharraymirr.

3 Ga nhawi nhakun gapu ḷarra gapu nhakun marrtjin nhuma nhäma ga ḷarra märr-ŋamathirr gapuw, nhukun dilkurruwurr walal gan ḷäthil lukan gapu, bili gapu dhuwal nhawi nhakun bapurru'mirr ga yolŋuy gan dharray ḷäthil.

4 Ga dhiyan bala walal ga dharray yan ḷunha gapuw ḷunhal dhuwal wo nhakun nhawunjur nhakun manda dhuwal wäwa'manydji wäŋa Yurrwi ga Yilan. ḷunha dharray walal ga gapu, yurr nhuwi napurr destroy gapu pigipigi yow pigipigi dharrwathin.

5 Ga nhakun ḷarra dhu bitjan thank-you nhumalan John ga Trevor ga Mark mirithin ḷarra märr-ŋamathirr nhuma napurrunku marŋgi-gurrupan gapu ga thank-you nhumalan.

*Good morning, my name is Lili Gurambura and my clan is Gamal Walamarju. Now thank you for helping us and letting us know, because we didn't really understand before, and I would just like to thank you.*

*Like, when we went yesterday and looked at the water, that was the first time. No Balanda has ever done that before, you were the first ones to show us and explain, so that we could understand. Like, I am the caretaker of the land of the Nurruwulu Walamarju, just the caretaker.*

*And that water you showed us, I felt a real love for that water, the same as the old people used to drink, because that water has a clan affiliation, and the Yolŋu used to look after it long ago.*

*And still today, looking after the water, up there, and over at Yilan. Through clan connections, the water in Macassar well is connected to the water at Yilan. We look after it, although that water at Yilan has been contaminated by pigs.*

*So I'm thanking you John, Trevor and Mark (Yiniya), very much appreciate what you have done, thank you.*

6 J) Ga mukul ɳula nhe ga idea  
ŋayathamyan nhakun nhaltjan walal  
duh ga power and watery ɳula nhä dhu  
bulu nhakun bulu nhakun malŋ'maram  
nhumalangal dhäwu wo djäma nhumalangal  
tap ɳula nha pipe mala ɳulanha nhakun.  
Wanha dhukarr manymak walal dhu ga  
badak warjanhamirr dhäwu malŋ'maram  
nhumalangu ga du'yun nhumalaj wo nhuma  
duh yan waŋa walalany yan waŋgany.

7 L) Yaka. Napurr dhu malŋ'maram ɳunjhal  
nhakun every camp ɳani Bush camp, Top  
camp, Army camp, Gatni camp, Bottom  
camp, every each nhakun yolŋu dhu ga  
dharray every nhakun one week dhu ga  
dharray check up tap mala ga nhawi, ga  
gäma walal dhu report nhawikal mukulwal  
Djanydjay. Manymak, manymak yow ma.

8 J) Ga bulu ɳarra dhu waŋa nhunany yan  
English nhunu latju mirithirr wanha balan  
nhe gi waŋa Englishgurr walalan Power and  
Waterw wo rum'rumdhum nhe ga?

9 L) Yaka rumrumthun ɳayi dhu translating,  
Gamarraŋ, ɳarra trust Gamarraŋ.

J) Yow. Manymak

10 Y) Yaka, walal dhu gayul djarrany'tjun ga  
nhuma dhu ga ganyim'thuna, wäŋa, balanya

11 L) Yow, nhawi djäl napurr balanda  
Darwinbuy nhakun nhuma barpuru buna  
three, ga bulu napurr djäl Power and Water  
marrtji walal dhu marrtji walal dhu räli ga  
ɳarra märr-ɳamatthirr walalan Power and  
Water ga nhumalaj manymakkum nhuma  
ga djäma, ga thank-you.

*So aunty, do you have any ideas that Power and Water might find from you to do with water, taps, pipes etc. What would be a good way forward to keep talking and find a good story? Do you want to keep talking to them or is this once okay?*

*No, we need to find someone to talk from every different camp, Bush camp, Top camp, Army camp, Garden camp, Bottom camp, we need a Yolŋu to look after it, every one week to check up on the taps, and report to my aunt Djandjay (housing officer). Yeah, that would be good.*

*Okay and I'll ask you another thing, your English is very good, how about you say something in English for Power and Water, or are you shy?*

*No I don't want to, Gamarraŋ can do the translating, I trust him.*

*Okay*

*Maybe they would start digging when you aren't watching and you'll get a shock to see that place, you see.*

*Yes, we want a Balandia from Darwin like you three who came the other day, and we want Power and Water to come again, they can come here. I really appreciate the work of Power and Water and the work that you are doing, thank you.*



## 8: Visit to Macassar Well

Lily, Balarrkpalarrk and Marpiyawuy talking to John

1 M) Yow we standing here and we look at the areas we look at the areas all around and think this area is not right for waterhole like this, waterhole eh? We can find waterhole like this, this place when we go towards maybe jungle area out of nhawi gum trees and all that we like this area rock underneath.

2 Ga Macassan came here long time they used to get water here they reckon and maybe they dug little bit out hey that's why we can see little bit all around and we have plenty tamarind trees here, maybe there one day they were digging and same time eating tamarind, that's why we get plenty here. And this water hole is not from the land, from those people that happen long time ago and there's a story there yow nhawi.

3 L) Nhawi, Dreaming of rainbow snake, rainbow snake yow milj'thurr nhawinjur Worralljur, Worralljur ga rälin. Yow ga dhipunjur Madanangumu walalanj Balatjini. Yindi dhäwu. Ga dhuwal Nurruwulu wärja. Nurruwulu. Walamanju. When they die, when they pass away, Nurruwulu, the Gamal Walamanju take over. Yow we look after it. Two clans.

M) Like now, they're doing it today.

L) Now we're doing it, ga manikay napurrun Walamanju we are nhawi, Gurrka-gulalay Walamanju.

4 M) Milngimbi is not the whole Island, Milngimbi is here

L) Yuwalk mak whole island Gupalgadi.

*When you stand here and look around, you can see that it's not the right sort of country for a waterhole. Usually you find water when you get near to a jungle area, away from the gum trees, but here we can see there's rock underneath.*

*And the Macassans came here a long time ago, they used to get water here they reckon and maybe they dug it out a bit and there's lots of tamarind trees here, maybe they were digging and at same time eating tamarind, that's why we get plenty here. So this waterhole is not naturally occurring, and it wasn't made by the Macassans, there's a story there.*

*It was the rainbow snake dreaming, it flashed over at Worrall, and came in this direction. And then from here, over to Madanangumu belonging to the Balatjili people. It's a big story. So this area belongs to the Nurruwulu branch of the Walamanju people. When they died, the Gamal Walamanju took over to look after it. There's two of those Walamanju clans.*

*That's what's happening today.*

*Yes, we're looking after it, our song is Walamanju, the Gurrka-gulalay sort.*

*Milngimbi is not the whole island. It's just this small place here.*

*Yeah the real name for the whole island is Gupalgadi.*

M) the whole island you can see it on the map...

*You can see the whole island on the map.*

J) Ga Yurrwi nhänjur yäku

*And where did the name Yurrwi come from?*

B) Njunhi ḷayi dhuwali, nhawi, dhol, dhol balanya nhe marnji, like ganu', guyay ḷayi njunhi ratjukthu mak garkuyiy dhu bitjan dholumba, ... yow Yurrwi dhuwal yäku just nhawi balanya

*That's the dust or the cloudiness in the water, the barramundi or maybe a garkuyi came and stirred up the cloudiness in the water. That's what Yurrwi is named after.*

L) Dusty water

*Dusty water*

5 B) Ga yäku dhuwal Milingimbi land where we're standing it's Milingimbi, but the name changed to Macassar Well, Macassans were working here. Maybe they thought it was their well eh? They used to get trepang and they used to come here. They used to drink water here. And dharrwa yaraman' eh? Ga buliki used to come and drink here? ...

*So the place where we're standing is actually called Milingimbi, but the name changed to Macassar Well because the Macassans were working here. They used to collect trepang and then come up here for water. And once there were also horses and cattle here.*

6 M) And old people used to put into here, gapu, is cycad nuts? Sucking out the poison one eh? You can't eat it straight away. Yakan nhe dhu you eat it you die straight away the cycads nut get nhawi dhu and everybody sing it yow and that's where they comes. The women that passed away put it to soak it into water for three days,

*And they old people used to put cycad nuts into the water to leech out the poison. If you ate them straight away you would die straight away. It's something in the ancestral songs. They women who have now all passed away used to soak those nuts in the water here for three days.*

7 L) Yow they special place for different, different country like nhawi nha njunhi way Ginatpa they used to live living here can a have a the Ginatpa, ga Burarra, Nakara ye dharrwa bapurru ye dharrwa bapurru. Then they moved from here to Maningrida, Maningrida started Maningrida started 1957.

*Yes it's a special place for people from all different areas, like the Ginatpa, the Burarra, the Nakara, lots of different clan groups. They they moved from here to Maningrida when it started in 1957.*

8 B) Yow dhuwal njunhi billabongdja nhawi gapu njäthil gapu itself bäynu Macassan there its clean water, so the clean water they been drinking yow they been small hole.

*Yes, before the Macassans came it was just clean water which the Yolju would drink, the hole would have been smaller*

But there they put generator listen to this yow try to get more water to gather now yow and after that they abandoned yow.

*Then they put the generator in here to pump out the water, and then they had to abandon it.*

9 L) But rainbow snake make this hole yes  
dreaming ḥe dreaming

M) Yow yaka nhawi and like cutting out they reckon lightning happen here by rainbow snake, this one yirritja wärja yirritja dhuwa rainbow snake. This one python with yellow belly hey, harmless, they can't bite us. That Yirritja that Yirritja one this one, and dharrwa people from that area they sing Yirritja snake hey yow people I know not from here baydhi about that dhuwa snake. Warrbunuwa ḥani yow ga wiripu ḥayi dharrwa yäku ḥi dharrwa yäku ḥunha bili Wunharju ḥe nha ḥunhi wiripuny mundukul walal ḥunhili bala yäkuyam. Wanhanjurtja nhaka Miwatj side yaka limurruŋ dhuwali nhä limurruŋ.

10 B) Nhänju bay limurr dhu ga nhawinjurnha wanha ḥunhi gapumirr ḥunhi wana Bälma.

*But it was actually the rainbow snake that made this hole. Its dreaming.*

*Yes, so they reckon the hole was made by the lightening from the rainbow snake, the Yirritja one, the python with the yellow belly, harmless, can't bite us. That's the Yirritja snake and many different people from different places sing that Yirritja snake. The Dhuwa one is different. Yes the snake was called Warrbunuwa, also Wunharju, also Mundukul, that's what they call it over there to the east. No, that's what we mob call it over here.*

*Maybe we should go and have a look out towards Bälma.*



## 9: Marpiyawuy

final interview by John and Yirjiya

1 Yuw manymak, yan muka nhakun dhäwu gapupuy ḷunhi Power and Water Authority walal bitjan thinking walal dhu dhu räli community wal ronjiyirr ga malj'maram dhäwu nhakun nhaltjan limurr dhu ga gapuw djäka mala. Which is manymak nhakun dhiyan bala walalan, nhakun walal ga räli limurrungal ronjiyirr ya bitjan, ga dhäwu nhakun li murruŋguŋ märram, nhaltjan limurr dhu ga gapuw mala djäka,

2 Balanya nhakun nhuma marrŋi, every gapu mala limurr ga märram wänjanjur. Wänjanjur limurr ga gapu mala märram, ga ḷunha tapnur limurr ga djäka, ga hosegu limurr dhu ga djäka balanya nhakun nhuma marrŋi djamarrkuli. Walal li djamarrkuli ga bul'yun warku'yun gapu, ga nhakun limurr marrŋi limurr dhu ḷunhi gapu save ya bitjan, ga limurr dhu djamarrkuliny gulmaram yaka walal dhu ga bitjan.

3 Bili nhawi limurruŋ ga experience ga yindi mirithirr ḷorra, ḷunhi dilkurruwurr walal gan nhinan diltjinjur baman'. Ga walal gan nhakun gapu manutji mala, gapu manutji mala ḷunhi walal gan lukan ḷunhilidhi ga wanhami walal gan nhinan wänjanjur mala. Nhuma marrŋi ḷunhi nhakun gan dilkurruwurru gapu lukan, ga djamarrkuliy ga ḷayi gan dilkurruwurru nhakun bitjarr, "Yaka nhuma dhu djamarrkuli gapu rarryun, warku'yun nhuma dhu ga bul'yun" Bili ḷunhidhi nhakun gapu limurruŋ manymak ya balanya, so nhakun limurr marrŋi djäkaw. Experience nhakun limurr ga ḷayatham djäkaw gapuw, ga dhiyan bala nhakun limurr ḷunhi bili ga bäki rom.

*Okay, so it seems that the story is about water, that the Power and Water Authority thought they would come to the community and find out the story of how we care for water. Which is great, for them to come back to us you see, and get the full story of how we care for water.*

*For example, as you know, all our water comes from the land. We get our water from the land. So the water that comes from a tap, we care for it, and from a hose, we care for it, you young people know. Some kids play with the water, wasting it, but we know we should save it, we should stop those kids, not let them do it.*

*Because we have a huge history of experience to draw upon, from when the old people used to live in the bush, long ago. There were these wells they used to drink from there, and at whichever place they were staying. You know that those old people used to drink water, and the children, and the old people would say 'Don't you children pour out that water, mess with it or play around in it.' Because that was good clean fresh water, so we know how to look after it. We have experience of looking after water, and nowadays we still have the same law.*

4 Yän muka limurr ga djäka ya bitjan, nhuma marngi, dhiyal nhakun Yurrwi communityw limurr ga djäka mala gapuw, bäyyu nhakun limurr gi wasting. But some dhikayi mala lurkun leaking ga tap mala, ga wandirr ga gapu, but nhakun limurr li djorra märram, marrtji limurr dhu ga housing officelil. Ga lakaram ḷunhili märr ga dhu plumber bondi ganydarryu djäma balanya mala. But we're doing that already ya balanya. Balanya nhakun djämaw already limurr ga ḷayatham marngin nhakun mala limurr. Ga balanya. Yuw ok, ḷarra I'm David Marpiyawuy from Milingimbi.

*So you see, we look after it, you know, here at the Milingimbi community we look after water, we don't waste it. But some taps around here are leaking a little bit, the water is running, but we get a form when we go to the housing office. And tell them there, so that the plumber will come quickly to fix it. We're already doing that. We have the processes in place to make it work, we know. That's it. Yes, okay I'm David Marpiyawuy from Milingimbi.*



## 10: Miranda and Maralwuy

Interviewed by Yinyiya

1 Y) Gapupuy ḷunhi bala nhuma yawungu marrtji borelil nhä nhuma ga ḷunhi marngithirr

Mi) Nhawiku, marrtji napurr barpuru ḷunhi borelil, marngithirr napurr ga gapuw nhaltjan napurr dhu ga nhäma gapu nhamunha' ga nhina nhawithu, John Camerondhu lakaram napurrungal ga nhaltjan dhu ga ḷunhi, gapu mala testing ḷunhal borenjur ga nhämunha' hours nhawi dhu ga gapu räli marrtji dhpal townlil... bala napurr marrtjin balan bore napurr ga nhäma ḷunhi ḷunha nhämunha' ga bore dhiyal Milingimbi dhärra

2 Ma) Three ḷani?

Mi) Five, yurr napurtja marrtji threelilnha, threelilnha yan. Wangany airport galki märrmany wanganydja ḷunha bala. Ga wanganydja napurr ḷunhi marrtji ga nhawidhun tape measurenha ya bitjan gapulil balayi djudupmaram nhawi balanya ga malymaram ḷunhi gapu dhika ḷoynjur ḷorra ga. Märrma'jur layer-jur wanganydja märr gandarrjur, gandarrjur ga wanganydja ḷayi mirithirnha ḷunhan bala dhuwana nhakun.

3 Y) Nhä ḷayi dhuwali yäku ya dhuwali

Mi) Aquifer

Ma) Wanganydja, wanganydja napurr ḷunhi bitjan firsttja bitjan ga dhiyal ḷayi gandarrjur bitjan gulyun, ga wanganyjurnydja band dhipalnha bala marrtji ḷoylilnha.

*Tell us about what you learnt about water yesterday when you visited the bore.*

*Okay so we went to the bore and we learnt about how they test to see how much water there is in the bore, and John Cameron showed us how they test the water in the bore, and how they work out how long the water in the tank will last... and then we went out for the trip and saw all the different bores here at Milingimbi.*

*Were there three?*

*Five, but we only went to see three One is near the airport, no two and the other one is in that direction. And one that we went to we put the tape measure down into the bore to work out how much water would be down there. Yeah two layers, one not far down, and another way down there, you can see it here on this diagram (showing the poster).*

*What's it called?*

*Aquifer*

*So there's one band of water along the top and there's another band along the bottom.*

4 Ma) Ga benjuyi napurr ḷunhi marrtji ga dhipalnha nhawilinha tank dhika dhärra ga nhawijur dhuwal diltjijur, diltjijur ḷunhi basketball court galki.

Mi) Yow bala ḷayi ḥakaraman ḷunhi tank mandany märrma' green one mandany ga dhärra, balayin watharr mandany ga tank dhärra ḷunhiyin ḷunhi ḥakaraman ḷunhi napurrunj ḷurruṇu mel-gurrupan nhawi nhawi napurrunj ḷunhi malŋ'maram nhamunha' gapu ga ḷunha ḷunhi märrma'jur märrma'jur nhawijur ḷorra ḷunhi dhärra gapu benjuryin li ga borenjur marrtji balayin.

M) Ga benjuryin li ga marrtji borenjurnydja ga bala tanklilnha garrwarlil ḷunhi green one li ga dhärra wala'walarr ḷunhi weyi'weyin ḷunhi. Ga bejurdhi li ga pumpingtja ga räliny marrtji townlilnydja gapu mala.

5 Y) Yow ga studykurrnydja nhuma dhuwal project nhuma ga djäma midiku nhuma, nhäthinya nhumalanj nhatjinya nhuma malŋ'maram studyjurnydja. Nhawi nhaltjan ḷayi ga dhiyan global warmingduh ḷayi ga ḷunha affecting marrtjin nhawi ḷayi? Gapu marrtji lurrkun'thirr limurruṇ wo manymak dharrwa.

M) Lurrkun'thirrnha gapu marrtji dhuwanydja Milingimbiny bili nhakun napurr ḷäma bili ga fifty wäŋa marrtji bulu räli ḷani, bili bäyunun gapun nhakun näp Milingimbi yolŋu'yulŋuw walal dhu ga luka.

6 Y) Ga nhän nhumalanguny advice nhaltjan nhuma dhu nhakun communitytja dhäwu ḥakaram gapu dhu daw'tawmaramany djalkthun wo djäka walal dhu manyakkum.

M) Djäka dhu latjukum. Yaka dhu ga tap walal dhu ongum bay wo nhawi sinkŋur dhu ga yaka gapu wandirr yän mukmaram walal dhu ga yaka walal dhu ga ongum.

Y) ḷunhi dhu ga yätjirr ḷayi tap wiryun dhu ga ḷunhi tap daw'yunawuy nhumany dhu nhäma bäynha nhanju wo nhuma dhu ḷula yolkal ḥakaram.

M) Lakaram muka plumberwal ḷayi dhu djäma bondi.

*And after that we went to the tanks, which are out in bush camp, not far from the basketball courts.*

*And then he told us about the water in the two green tanks – actually white ones, and first he showed us how he can tell how much water is in the tanks, and then how the water gets into the tanks from the bores.*

*And after that the water goes up into the green one – the very high one. And from there water comes down for all the uses of the town.*

*So how did you find your study, you and my sister? Do you think global warming will have an effect? Will our water supplies become smaller or will they be okay.*

*The water here is getting less at Milingimbi because we have seen that there is going to be fifty new homes built here, and then there certainly won't be enough water for the Milingimbi people to drink.*

*So what do you advise for the people in the community – what story will you tell? Should they use as much as they like or look after it carefully?*

*Look after it carefully. Don't just turn the tap on and leave it, or leave the water running in the sink. Just turn it off, don't leave it running.*

*If a tap breaks, and you see it's not working, do you just leave it or who would you talk to.*

*Talk to the plumber of course to get him to fix it quickly.*

7 Y) Plummer nhakun li ga wiripun balanda nhina ga ɳayi li ga rum'rumdhun yolŋuw. N huma ga djälthirr ɳayi dhu ɳula Yolŋu wiripun plumber, limurruŋgal areanjur gäna mala.

M) Yow napurr ga djälthirr ɳayi dhu Yolŋuy ga djäma plumber, bili nhakun yow lingu if ɳayi balar' nunhi balanda marrtji nhakun holidaygu ga yolnha balaŋ gi djäka dhiyakuny gapuw mala, napurr djäl yolŋu'yulŋuw mala dhu marŋgithir balanyaraw plumbinggu ɳula nhaku mala märr ga dhu gäna dhu marŋgithirr ya witjan ga djäma dhiyak.

*So we have a Balandia plumber here, but maybe he's a bit shy of Yolŋu. Do you think we should have a Yolŋu plumber here, in our area?*

*Yes, we want a Yolŋu to do the plumbing work, because if the Balandia plumber goes on holiday, then who is going to look after the water. We want Yolŋu to learn how to do it, the plumbing and whatever, learn it by themselves and work on it.*



## 11: Marritja

Interviewed by Yinjya

Y) Yow. Njarra nhawi, biyak.

1 M) Yow njarra nhawi. Nhä muka? Sorry, njarra Djami. Yaka muka Djamitjany, Sammy njarra, Marritja njarra yäku. Djaminy yan dhuwal wakal balanya. Dilkurruwurr gan njäthil marrtjin gapuy nhinan walal gan. Diltjinjur walal gan marrtjin ga gananjathala walal gana djarrany'tjurr walal gan, malj'maranjal gan dhukunmirr gapu. Ga nhänjal walal gan bay', ga wiripu walal gan djarrany'tjurr ga manymak gan dhawatthurr, bala gan nyan'thurr. Rakalay walal gan nyan'thurr rakalay. Njunhilidhiny timedhu walal gan marrtjin rarranhddarryu walal gan malj'maranjal gapu manjutji yän. Ga during nhakun waltjan gan nyärryurr, waltjan gan nyärryurr, ga walal gan anywhere gapu nyan'thurr.

2 Yän marrtjin nayı mitjin yindithinan, yindithinan, yindithinan, bala marrtjin nayı näpakiytja garrarrakthurrnha bala barrtju'parrtjurrnha wänya larru'larrunalnha gapuwnha. Larrunalnha walal, malj'maranjalnha, ga djarrany'tjurr, "Dhuwal limurr dhu ga gapu nyan'thun yan guwarr". Nayı bulu yindithin marrtjin, townthin, nayı marrtjin lurrtu'lurrthunmaranjala bala tanknha marrtjin nayı djäma, yindin tanknha, gułunnha nayı. Yurr rarranhddharr nhangu yätjkurr nayı gan rarranhddharr gapu gan tapnjur leaking ya' dhuwalawurru, ga nayı gan njunhi tanknjur gapu yupthurr. Yupthurr nayı gan yupthurr yän. Ga bulu dhu nhakun njunhi bonguj bala' njal'yurr ga nayı ga balanda still dhu marrtji yan ga drilling nayı dhu, djarrany'tjurr nayı dhu, gapu nayı dhu malj'maranj.

*Say yes I am so and so.*

*Yes I am so and so. What am I saying? Sorry, I am Djami. Not Djami, but my name is Sammy Marritja. Djami is just for fun. The ancestors moved and lived by water. Going through the bush finding small water holes, and digging, finding water polluted. And looked at it and left it, and dug somewhere else, and good water would come out, and they would drink it. Drinking from paperbark containers. In those days it would be the late dry season and they could only find water in small holes. During the wet season they would get water anywhere.*

*As the mission grew bigger and bigger the Näpaki came walking all over the land, spearing it, looking for water. Searching, finding, then digging "This water will only be a temporary supply". But the mission got bigger, became a town, the wells caved in and they started to make tanks, big tanks, full of water. But in the late dry season, it went bad and the taps leaked and the water levels went down, and down and down. And now, in the future when build more houses, and the Balanda will be drilling, digging, finding water.*

3 Dhiyal bandji Yurrwi. Nhakun ɳunha diltjikurr, nhakun nhawi ɳunha Djäraw, nhä mak ɳunha Bodiya. Bili ɳunhidhi marrtji dhärra'tharr mark. Ga nhawijur Gulambar, Dhudi-garrtjambal -nhirrpanmin, ɳunhi mala marrtji mark mala dhärra ɳarra li ganha nhänha, hunting ɳarra li gana ɳulatjanayi.

Nunhi walalarŋ mark yalalanjumirri bala' dhu yindi djäma, dharrwathirr dhu bala' walal dhu marrtji ɳunhi yalala nhirrpaa'nhirrpana mala gapuw. Ga dhiyanu bala nhakun ɳayi ga yupthun, rarranhdharrnydjä ɳayi lik ga gapu yupthurr tankjur. Ga gunmul ɳayi li baladhi ɳal'yun. Yurr mak ten years time mak dhu dhuwal gapu lumurruŋ dhawar'yurr. Yän nhakun Power and Water-y ga lakaram ɳäthil, ɳarra dhäwu dhuwal märram.

4 Y) Ga tap mala bakpak marrtji wänjakurr mala dhärra. Nhaltjan limurr dhu ga? Yän nhäma bay', gänan wandirr dhu ga? Wo ɳula gunja'yun?

M) Tap dhu ga dhärra nhakun ɳunha wänjakurr mala every campmirr mala, either inside ɳayi, or shower room, or outside garden tap, on dhu ga leaking, djululu'yun dhu ga bitjan ɳarkula djululu'yun , walal dhu ga djäma. Wandirr napurr dhu ga ɳän'thun ɳäpkiny mala. "Plumber, djäma rraku ɳunha nhawi ga leaking." Napurr yaka djäl napurrur dhu ga leaking dharrwa gapu. Napurr djäl ɳayi dhu ga gapu normal yan dhärra ɳunhalı bili yän markjur.

5 Y) Gapu dharrwamirr mala, lupthun li ga ɳäthil dhudikurr.

M) Wiripuny yolŋu napurr li wadapthun nhakun detuŋ bitjan. Ga washing machinemirr mala. Ga washing machinemirr napurr. Ga bitjan bili nhakun dhu ga washing, washing, washing. ɳayi li gapu nhakun wandirrnha li ga dhawatthuna, ɳayi lika ɳunhi gapuny yupthuna, yupthuna, yupthuna. Wiripuny ɳayi ɳunha bala power-ny li marrtji ɳal'yun. Wiripuny napurrur li power dhawar'yun. Larruman napurr li ga. Gapuy li ga lakaram, gapuy. Balanya.

*Here at Milingimbi. In the bush such as in Djäraw or in Bodiya. They have already been marked. Both Gulambar, and Dhudi-garrtjambal-nhirrpanmin are marked, I've seen them when I was hunting around those areas.*

*They have been marked for the future when they'll be building many houses, and putting in all sorts of things for water. Because when more houses come in the future those spots will be used for water. Right now the water is going down in the late dry season, it goes down in the tanks. And in the wet season it goes up. So maybe in ten years time our water will finish up. That's just what Power and Water said, long ago, I got that story.*

*And also the taps that are in the houses that are leaking, do we turn a blind eye or do we need to help?*

*Any taps that are in the houses, either inside the house, in the shower room or the garden tap that are leaking we have to do something. We have to go and get the white men. "Plumber, fix my leaking thing". We don't want a lot of water leaking. We want the water to stay at the normal level, standing at the mark.*

*Those that use water a lot, like people having bath after bath.*

*Some of us Yolŋu have bath like a buffalo! The ones with the washing machines. We have washing machines. Always washing washing washing... The water going through and pouring out down down down. So the power bill goes up. We run out of power and we have to go off and look for a power card. Water tells us that.*

6 Y) Ga dhiyanjuny bala dhuwal same ḷunhi wo yätjkurrnha?

M) Bäyjun yätjkurrnha. ḷunhi dhu yalalanjumirriy dhawar'yun, gapuy muka limurr lika nhinany. Ga ḷathany nyar'thun gapuy. Ga gänany bäyjun. Yakan limurr dhu monuk nyar'thun, munjun limurr dhu rirrikthuna gulunnha, rumbalnha. Monuktja gapu yätjkurr.

7 Náp ḷayi ga dhuwal bulyundja gapuny Yurrwiny? Yurr nhakun djägan limurr dhu manymakkuman? Manymakkuman dharray nhanju, ḷurukun tankkun ga communitywnha dhuwal ga nhina Yurrwi.

8 Bili ḷayiny ga mala bunhamirr, dharrwa, bulu. Bulu ga ḷuthan, bulu ga ḷuthan. Yalalanjumirriw, generation, generation. Yurr nhäil gapulil, ya'-bitjan. Yakan napurr dhu buluny berjur pipe bala monuklilnydja. Bäyjun wrongdhirrnha dhu. Ga ḷunhi bili yän gapu raypiny, living waterny ḷayi.

9 ḷayi dhu ḷula Power and Waterydja nhaltjan? Gunga'yun ḷayi dhu limurruny räli? ḷula giningarr mala manymak gunga'yunamirr nhirrpanhaddirpan?

Nhirrpan ḷayi dhu giningarr mala latjukum märr ḷayi dhu ga metregurr yan wandirr gapu metregurr yan. Dhuwali nhakun wanganydjä report ḷayi nhakun dhu ga metergurr wandirr, every campgurr. Märr ḷayi dhu ga level mala lakaram, level mala ḷuruk mala tankku mala. Gulungu nhanju.

10 Plumber limurruŋ yolŋu. Marŋgithirr dhu bulu? Dharrwa? Mirithirr dhu marŋgithirr dharrwa yolŋu yaka wangany, märrma, dharrwa märr ga dhuka every wäŋa check up mala. ḷayi dhu ga bungawa'mirriŋu wandirr ḷayi dhu ga check up. Djalkiriy walal dhu ga marrtji, mutikay.

11 Märr dhu ga nhina yan limurr bitjana bili, ḷurijidhi gapuy limurr dhu nhina. Limurr dhu yalalanjumirrnydja ḷunhi ḷayi dhu yätjirrnydja bäyŋu, limurr dhu ga larruman.

Dhuwal ḷayi dhakal, ḷunha ḷayi makarr- yindi.

*Is today the same or worse?*

*It will be bad. Later on when it runs out, our whole lives may again be focussed upon getting enough water. Even the food we eat depends upon water. We can't do without it. We can't drink the salt water or else we may have sick stomach and it will affect our body. The salt water is bad.*

*There is enough water here in Yurrwi, but can we be more careful? Be more careful about the tanks and the community here in Yurrwi.*

*The numbers of people are growing big. The population is growing bigger, larger number of population in the generations to come. And to what quantity of water will the population grow? We can't pipe in the salt water, that would be wrong. Fresh water is the only living water.*

*So what should the Power and Water do? How could they help us here? Put some meters in place?*

*Put in good meter readings so that it will read the water by the meter. That is very important for every camps that every water usage is measured by the meter readings, so that we know how much level of water is in the tank.*

*More Yolŋu plumbers have to learn. More people have to learn not one or two so that they can check up houses. Their boss can check on them. They can walk or drive.*

*So that we can survive with what water we've got because later on when it's gone we will be looking for water.*

*This is an island the mainland is over there.*



## 12: John Morgan

Interviewed by Yiniya

1 Yeah, Hello, my name's John Morgan and I've lived in Milingimbi for the last twenty years, and I'm really keen to share what I've learnt from a lot of my elders in this community. The important thing for us in our life is water, and how we look after it and respect it. And how we interact with the water as well, because without water the bottom line is it's our living water to survive, otherwise we will perish.

2 It's important with water that we should look after it, monitor it but also keep the opportunity so we could work with our elders to enable us to say how, when, why, to work with water and look after it because once our water runs out, our resources, then particular things that are affiliated with it, that all comes from the water, is all living things from the plants to also the animals that actually supply us, so it gives everything a lifeline to every living things.

3 The important thing that I'd like to share also is how important water is that we need to look after it. Look after in a way that we can actually look for the future as well because our population is growing, and we need to look after it and also work closely, an alliance of services with Power and Water, and also with our mala leaders to engage because they are our common law, and it enables us to have the ownership and the governance side.

4 To give that power and respect, that through our diversity of beliefs and values, let's respect each other and unify our services, but it has to be a cultural appropriate way so we then can be able to look at building the workforce capacity and pathways so then we can look at employing Yolŋu workforce to be based in their communities, and to be able to one day become a qualified Power and Water worker.

5 Also to look at plumbing, so there's trades there and specialties, that we have in our Yolŋu traditional teaching, should also complement the university world as well, in the mainstream. Because at the end of the day, it's about a win-win situation, and sharing our resources and sources, and how we engage an alliance of services so we can have better coordination and also reduce the arguments and the misunderstandings of fundings.

6 So if we have one pooling funds that enables us to actually develop and grow and saying that we are all Australian citizens, and this is our legitimate right, to say 'okay, let's get together, come to the table, work' and be very passionate because at the end of the day we are the first Australians of this land. And with local knowledge, and insight and surveys, our elders show where the water resources are.

7 So thank you for listening to me, have a nice day, and I would like also to acknowledge Power and Water and also my märi John G, Mark and his other fellow worker which I apologise I forgot his name but it's important that we should continue this and it should be locked in at least by five to ten years, strategic planning so then we have a community action plan and strategies, and also methods and how we can engage and stimulate and build up a resilience. Thank you very much.



### 13: Bodiya visit

Lily, Balarrkpalarrk, Marpiyawuy, Oscar, John and Trevor

1 B) Freshwater water luka ga wet-season time, and then mak nayi dhu change junhi yalala, yalala nayi dhu junhi change bala nayi dhu junhi salty-yirra. Balanya nayi dhuwali type. Dhiyak cattlegu, old peopleyu gan use.

2 M) Yaka limurr marngi because they got, PAWA, they've got dhiyanjung bala nhakun dharrwan girri' ya' balanya, dharrwan new onesnha. Balanj walal malŋ'maram yätjkurr gapu or good one ya balanya. Bili walal gadaman, walal mel marŋgimirr.

*We drink fresh water here in the wet-season, and then the water changes later on, later it changes and becomes salty. That's the type (of water from this bore). The old people used this water for the cattle.*

*We don't really understand, but PAWA have got lots of technology, new things, to find out if this water is any good. They are clever, they can see where to put the bores down.*



## 14: Maralwuy

Interviewed by Yinjiya

1 Yindikum ɳayi ɳuli dhanjangum bitjan Yolŋu'yulŋu dharrwa marrtji räli ɳayi dhu ɳunhi yindikum märr number. Yolŋu'yulŋu dharrwa marrtji räli, nhakun visitors mala, ɳayi dhu dhanjan gapu nhakun dhu ga using dhiyal. Nhakun bapurru li dhiyal nhakun dhanjan visitor ɳuli marrtji'marrtji räli.

*They make the amount of water go up like this: If lots of Yolŋu come here, like visitors then they increase the amount of water in the tanks. When there are lots of people here, then they will use more water so they pump more water to the tanks. Like recently there were many people here (for a ceremony).*



## 15: Wurrulŋa

Interview by Yirjiya

1 Nhawi ŋayi dhuwal wanganydjä gapu limurruŋ gurrutumirr. Dhuwa dhuwal gapu ga Yirrtja. Limurr dhu ŋamatham dharray.

2 Nhawi limurr wiripuny ŋuli dhuwal tap birrirri'yun baynha ŋayi ŋuli ga gänan bala wandirr djul'yun gapu. Ga ŋuli limurr dhu nhäma balanyapuy ŋayi dhu ga wandirr gapu tapnjur, limurrnydjä dhu mukmaram, wo ŋuli ŋayi yaka manymak ga limurr dhu bala plumberwala gäma märr walal dhu dhuwali mukmaram.

3 Djamarrkuli, ŋuli ŋayi djäl, ŋayi dhu marrtji nhäkur damurruŋ'lil ŋunhiyi ga yindiny nhawi bulyun. Ga dhuwandja banydji wäŋanurnydja mala yakan dhu ŋayi warku'yun.

4 Yolŋuw muka napurr djäl ŋayi dhu marngithirr balandawal balanyaraw malaŋuw. Yalalarŋumirriw ŋayi dhu marrtji ŋula nhäkur ga ŋayi dhu ga yolŋu nhina dhiyal märr ga ŋayi marŋgi ŋayi dhu yalala balanya happen ŋayi dhu marrtji ga mukmaram ŋunhidhi mala gininggarr, tapnjur mala dhuwal. Wo ŋayi dhu ŋula nhä mukmaram.

5 Lupthurŋ ŋirra ga mukmaraj gapu. Nhuma dhu ga mitthunmirr ŋunhi dhawarrak yaka walal gapu birrirri'yurr bay'. Gapu ŋunhi limurruŋ save.

*Water is actually related to us, as kin, here we have both Dhuwa and Yirritja water. We look after our water properly.*

*Also some of us people turn on taps and leave the water running or dripping. If we see water running from a tap we need to go and turn it off. And if the tap is broken then go and see the plumber, so they can turn it off.*

*If children want to play with water then they need to go to the salt water, there's plenty there for the children. But this water around the town, they must treat this water respectfully.*

*We want Yolŋu to learn from a balanda how to do that plumber work. So later when the balanda plumber goes away, then that Yolŋu will be here to carry on with the work. If something happens there will be a person here who knows what to do. To turn the taps off or turn off something.*

*When washing teeth, turn off the water. When you men are shaving your beard, don't leave the water just running, so we can save our water.*



## 16: Guminda

Interviewed by Yinya

1 (from first interview) Nhäma napurr noyjur ga gapu bulyun raypiny, yaka monuk, bala napurr tape galkan bala djakanupan.

2 (from second interview) Njarrany ga djälthirr nayi dhu djamarrikulji dirramurruwurr mirithirr ga marrtji wo miyal marrtji walal dhu ga golil mirithirr, ga marnjithirr nhawiku mala gapuw, power and waterw' walal dhu ga mirithirr yan marnjithirr. Graduate nhakun walal dhu bala traininglilinha walal dhu marrtji. Training walal dhu power and waterw' ga plumbinggu wiripuny.

3 Bili yaka yan napurr dhu ga yolju mala relying balandawal mala.

4 Nunhi dhu ga tap leaking nhakun wäjakurr mala, ga yolju'yolju mala dhu ga djulkthun, yaka walal dhu ga nhäma bay njunhiyithi. Mukmaram walal dhu gurga'yun. Ganga yan marrtji lupthun bilin.

5 Golnjur napurr ga marnjithirr, Nunhi dhu bäyjun gapuny, bäynha dhu dhawar'yuna gapu limurmuydja dhu startnha balanyaray buma'puma. Balanyaray napurr dhu washing girri ga lupthun ga njulkthun. Ga sharingmirr gapu.

*We saw that underneath, inside the ground there is fresh water, not salt water, we put a tape down and measured it.*

*I want young boys to go to school and girls too every day so they can really learn about water, and Power and Water. Then graduate, then get training. Training for Power and Water, and for plumbing,*

*Because we Yolju don't want to be relying on Balandia.*

*If a tap is leaking, and people are passing by, they can't ignore it. It is important to go and help turn the tap off.*

*Let's have quick showers,*

*We learn in school, if our water runs out then we will start filling water into containers like this one (holding up a plastic water bottle). We will have to use containers for showering, washing clothes, and drinking and we will have to share water.*



## 17: Matthew Dharrgar

Yolŋu plumber, Interviewed by Yiriyia and John

1 Y) Nhä mala nhe ga djäma?

D) Dharrwa mirithirr. Gapuw ḷuli wandirr tap dhu ga leaking. Djämaw ḷarra ga marngithirr. Yolŋu ḷuli lazythirr djämaw djourraw'. nhakun ḷarra ḷuli dhawatθun, djäma djourra' ḷarra dhu wandirr baladhi ga ḷunhi djäma nhawi tap ḷunhi wanha ga gapu leaking, yo balanya mala. Dhiyanjuny balanya mala djäma mala.

2 J) Nhepi li djäma mutika djaw'yun, bala djäman?

D) Ne! Njäthildja, linyu li ga djäma John. Bili ḷarrany marngi-gurrupar Johndhu. Yolthu? Cameronthu. Nayi ḷarrany marngi-gurrupar ga bulu nhaku mala ...

3 Balanya munatha ga bore nhämunha dhu marrtj gapu ga metre. Nunhi dhu ḷupan malŋ'maranjal.

4 Nunhiny gan ḷayin John Camerondhun djäma. ḷayin ḷuli sign djourra' malany bala djuy'yuna nhawilia PAWAAlila. Ne ḷarrany ga bäyŋu.

Y) Yan muka djälthirr nhe ga balanya yan nhakun marngithinyaraw?

D) Ne. Yan nhakun dhuwandja ḷayi yindirjura djämanura PAWAŋurnha ga ḷarrany nhakun dhuwal yutawalnha balandawal.

*What are the different things you do?*

*I do lots of things. Like leaking taps, I'm learning about those things. If the Yolŋu don't fill out the forms, saying what the problem is, I hurry to fill in a form and go back and fix the leak. That's the sort of thing I do.*

*You get the car and do the work by yourself?*

*Yes, previously, John and I did the work. John taught me, John Cameron. He taught me that and all sorts of things...*

*Like a bore, like check the metre level in the bores, John Cameron taught me this, measure it and find out.*

*This is what John Cameron would do. He would sign the form and send them to PAWA. I don't do it.*

*Well do you want to learn to do that sort of work?*

*Well working with PAWA involves a lot of different things, and at the moment I'm work with a balanda who is new (to Milngimbi).*

5 Nhakun buluny dhu wäña djarrwathirr ɳayiny dhu gapuny bulu bäyŋun dhärra gapuny. Bili wäña dhuwal nhakun island. Njunyi dhu wäñany dharrwathirr napurr dhu yaka gapu wasting. Napurr dhu ga yan luka timegurr.

6 Nunha nhakun wäña makarr yindi nhakun Wärrkjur manymak ɳayi balan wäña yindi.

7 J) Ga ɳunhi nhakun nhe li ga marrtji djäma mak ɳayi li ga djul'yun gapu tapŋur wo ɳula nhä garrwarŋur waterŋur nhe li ga djäma balanya mala?

D) Ne hot waterŋur, ɳarra li mukmaram ga nhirrpan yuta, pipe ya balanya Ga ɳunhi latiritj, ɳunhi nhanŋu latiritja, bili ɳunhi latiritja ɳunhi dhu ga djäma licencemirriyinha yan mala.

8 J) ɳula nhe gan yan formal ɳäthil warkthurr yan nhakun apprenticeship ɳula nha? Ne. Djäma nhe gan?

D) Djäma ɳarra gan yurr yaka ɳunha Darwinŋurdja. ɳarra gan dhiyal bili course dhiyal bili Yurrwi.

J) Walal gan beŋur marrtjin räli?

D) Yan walal gan gurrupar djorra' malany ɳarra gan nhäŋjal ga djäma ga ɳayi gan ɳunhi tick ɳunhi djorra'ŋjur.

9 J) Ga ɳula nhe ga guyanja ɳula nhe certificate märraŋjal.

D) Dhuwal ɳarraku djorra PAWApy ɳunhi ɳarra djulkmaranaldja ɳarra Darwinlia marrtjin ɳarra märraŋala djorran.

10 Nunhi ɳarra wapthurr shirelila ɳayi bungawany mala larrunjala ɳarraku bäyŋun recognise ɳarrany yanbi yaka marŋgi.

11 J) Ga nhe ga djälthirr bulu?

D) Yow. Johndhu ɳarrany dharrwa marŋgi-gurrupar pumpgu ɳunhi ɳuli blocked ɳarra ɳuli lapmaram ga djalkthun dhukun mala.

*If the number of houses increases, then there won't be enough water, because we are on an island. If more houses are built here then we won't be able to waste any water. Water availability would have to be timed by a clock.*

*Over there on the mainland like at Ramingining it would be okay for that community to grow.*

*So is your work, if there's a leak from a tap or somewhere up the top, do you do that sort of work?*

*Yes, I can turn off the hot water and put a new one in place, the pipes. If there is electrics, then that's for him, because if there are electrics only people with licences do that work.*

*Have you had any formal training? What did you do?*

*I've been studying, but not in Darwin. I have been doing my course here at Milingimbi.*

*Did they come out from Darwin?*

*They sent the books out, and I looked at them and did the work, and they put a tick in the book.*

*And did you get any sort of certificate?*

*This is my PAWA certificate (showing his certificate), I went to Darwin to get that.*

*The Shire came and they had a look, but no, they didn't recognise what I have done as if I didn't really know.*

*Do you want more training?*

*Yes, John has taught me a lot, like fixing broken pumps, washing them to get rid of the rubbish.*

12 Bili ḡarra ten years djäma. Ga waŋan ḡarra yolŋuny yolthu dhu djäma ḡarrakal märr ḡayi dhu marŋgithirr.

13 Walal ḡuli tap birriŋyun ga bay'ha, bäyŋun walal ḡuli mukmaram. ḡarra li dharrwamirr waŋa walany. Walal ḡuli ḡatha djinawa wäŋanjur ḡatha djalkthun baynha sinkŋur. Ga ḡarrany li marrtji ga warja, 'Way yaka nhuma dhu ga sinklil ḡatha ḡurrkam junha nhuma dhu garbage baglil galkan'.

14 Y) Wanha balaŋ gi wiripu yolŋu nhini ḡayi dhu ga nhäma gapu djul'yunawuy?

D) Bäyŋu. Yaka ḡarra marnŋi. Dhiyal banydji djäma djourra. Yolŋuw ḡunhi ḡuli ga tap leaking walal ḡuli guyanja marrtji officelil ga djäma djourra report. Wiripuny walal ḡuli ḡarraku buna yolŋu mala, 'Way tap ḡarraku ga leaking'. ḡarra li waŋa 'Yaka, bala nhe dhu marrtji officelil ga nhe dhu djäma report'.

15 Djäma ḡarra first balanyayi Johngal, ḡarra ga djourra' gäma, ḡayi dhu ḡula yol waŋa, ḡayi dhu learn sign, bitjandhi ḡarra waŋa first time, yurr bäyŋu. Wiripuny ḡuli yolŋu walal napurruŋ djämamirriw marikuman, madakarritjthirra.

*I've worked for ten years. Now I have said to the people, who will work with me so they can learn?*

*People turn on taps and leave them on, they don't turn them off. I tell them many times. And I always say, "Hey, don't throw food down the sink, put it in the garbage bag. .."*

Are there other people who can repair taps?

*None. I don't know that. We do a form here, here we do a report and send it to them (in Darwin?) If someone's tap is leaking, they should think to go to the office and report. But sometimes they come to me: "Hey, my tap is leaking". I always say "No, go to the office and fill out a form".*

*Previously when I worked with John I used to carry forms and whoever would ask (for a job to be done), so they can learn how to sign, that what I said first, but nothing (they didn't continue that system). Sometimes people get angry with us workers ("We've told you about the problem and you haven't fixed it").*



## 18: Bälma Visit

Lily, Balarrkpalarrk, Marpiyawuy, Oscar, John and Trevor

1 M) Even though limurrŋu dilkurruwurr  
mala they looked after waterholes  
manyakkum, ga look after properly, there's  
dharrwa rubbish now. Only we get water  
here, is wet season, water lilies all around.

2 B) Wet seasongu dhuwal gapu, and there's  
Dry one yaka. Walalanj Dhuwakunditjku.  
Gorryindi, Gamalanġaw, walalanj. Walalanj  
wäŋa Dhuwakunditjku. Maliwar. Dhuwana  
nunhi wänjany walalanj.

3 O) Hunting 'Walal, bala dhuwana gapuny.  
Nunha gapumirr wäŋa limurr bala. Nunhi  
walal njuli first planning, "Oh let's go hunting.  
Okay nunha". First thing, walal li thinking  
gapu first. "Okay limurr dhu hunting, nhawi  
mala nyoka buma, maranydjalk. Nunha  
gapuny".

4 B. Né njulkthunaraw ga maranydjalk dhu  
ñoman. Dhiyan bala ñayi dhuwali easy  
yolŋuw. Malŋ'maram gapu, tapŋur wo  
bawalamirrinjur, townnjur. Näthilnydja bäŋju  
napurr malŋ'maranha tapŋur gapu bäŋju.  
Nhawiŋjur napurr balanya wellŋjur nhänjal.

Napurrunguwuynydja, yän napurr dhu  
djarrany'tjun gapu ñunha dirtmirr bäydhi  
luka.

5 B. Nayanumirr muka napurrŋu gapu.  
Rraku nayanumirr dhuwal gapu, nhakun  
rraku ñändi'mirrinju.

6 L. Yaka yan dhuwal bili. Nhakun  
ñunha, limurrŋgal wäŋanjur. Napurr dhu  
guyaŋanhimirra, wayirri-waṭanju, ñamini-  
waṭanju, guyaŋanhimirra.

*Even though our old people, they looked  
after water holes in a good way, they looked  
after them properly, there's lots of rubbish  
here now. We only get water here (at  
Bälma) during the wet-season, and there are  
water lilies all around.*

*This is a wet-season waterhole, no water  
here in the dry season. This place belongs to  
the Dhuwa people, Gorryindi and Gamalanġa  
(clan names). It belongs to those Dhuwa  
people. This is Maliwar's (Gamalanġa man)  
country. It belongs to those Dhuwa people.*

*Go hunting, then "There'll be water over  
there, that place has water, let's go there"  
When they planned to go hunting, "Let's go  
hunting. Ok. Over there" They first thing we  
think about is water. "Ok let's go hunting,  
get some crabs and sting rays. There's water  
there".*

*This water used for drinking and for the  
preparation of stingrays. Nowadays it's  
easy for Yolŋu, to find water, at the tap or  
anywhere in the town, but previously we  
didn't have taps, we had wells.*

*As for ourselves we can dig and find water, it  
doesn't matter if it has dirt in it. We still drink  
it.*

*We feel an emotional connection to water,  
like in our hearts, like this well here is my  
mother,*

*Not just here. Just like in our country. We  
all think about and remember (these wells),  
some we call grandchild, some we call  
daughter, we remember them.*



## 19: Paula

Interviewed by Yirriya

1 Dhuwal gapu raypiny dhuwal nhawi ɻunha borenjur limurruij ga ɻorra.

*We have fresh water here through the bores.*

2 Ɋarra marngi Ɋarra gan nhäjal mitjinmirriy. Ɋayi gan ten o'clockthin bala gan mukthurrnha power ga gapu rrambanji.

*I know what happened in the mission times. The water and power were both turned off at 10 o'clock.*

3 Ɋayi dhu PAWA -y gurrupan tank mala wänjakurr. Dhärra dhu marrtji, märr ga dhu ga waltjan ɻunhi, nyärryun, Ɋayi dhu ga ɻunhi baladhi buma gapu. Märr dhu ga tap - puynydja gapu dhärra gänan yan mukmuknha. Limurr dhu ga ɻunha bala tankpu using. Nhakun ɻunhi njäthil marrtjin educationgurr dhärran tank mala. Waltjan gapu gan baladhi, nyärryurr gan baladhi tanklil.

*PAWA should give tanks throughout the community. They can stand there, so when it rains they will fill up, they will collect water. And the water in the tap will be there waiting. So the tap water is not used. We can use tank water. The education houses used have tanks. Rainwater used to go into the tanks.*

4 At the momenttja dhiyanuny bala Ɋayi ga meter mala ga dhärra ɻunha Education housesnjur. What about yoljuwalnydja? Napurr djäl marr ga napurr dhu ga nhäma ɻunhidhi. Nhämunha' gapu dhu ga ɻunhi lakaram Ɋayi.

*At the moment, Education houses have meters. So how about the rest of us? We want to see it. How much water it says we have.*

5 Traininggu napurr djäl yoljuw. Yolju dhu training balandawal, Ɋayi dhu marngithirr ga. Yalala Ɋayi dhu balanday limurruny gunharayun Ɋayi dhu ɻunhi ɻunhiyi yolju dhärra dhiyal, permanent resident. Balanyaraw, Ɋayi dhu fixing marrtji. Yalala limurruij tap mala bakthun wo leaking dhu ga gapu Ɋayi dhu ganydjarryu fixing.

*We want training for Yolju. Yolju should train with balanda, so they can learn, so when the Balanda leaves that Yolju who lives here permanently here will do the work here, when taps break, water leaking, they will fix them quickly.*

Balanya nhakun walal dhu marrtji ɻunha traininggurr, apprenticeshipgurr. Yoljuw napurr djäl Ɋayi dhu start trainingnha.

*So they should go through training, go through an apprenticeship. We want Yolju to start training.*

6 Marngi-gurrupan walalany märr ga walal yaka ga wasting while walal dhiyan bala young.

*Teach them while they're young not to waste water.*



## 20: Yinjya

Interviewed by John

1 Yo. Dhuwal idea napurr yawungu nhawi djäma dhuwal, nhawipuy Milingimbi Yolju gapu. Nhawi dhäwu märra'marram, ga dhukarr malj'malj'maram nhaltjarr nayi gan njathil rom norran. Yolju walal gan nhinan, njarkula nayi gapu, yoljuw nhinanharaw. Dhäwu nayi ga gapuw norra ga ringitj nayi, ga gurrutu nayi. Näthil njuli ganha yolju marrtjinya Yolju bala räli liw'maranha gapu manutji guwatjmana, wiripunjur nhinanha. Ga nhinanha ga yän nayi njuli dhawar'yuna ga larr wiripulili gapu guwatjmana.

Nhinanharaw balanya yoljuw, walja nayi dhu nhina gapuy. Ga lupthun ga djäga nhannuwuy nayi, watjimmirr ga djamarlkuliw djäga nayatham walalany, warrakan lukanha njula nhä njatha. Gapu nhakun waljamirr, nhinanha walal ganha, wänjakurr liw'maram.

2 Bulu nayi ga ringitjkurr mala gapu norra. Dhuwal napurr yawungu malj'malj'maram ga dhäwu dhuwalanduwuy gapupuy, dhäwu. Dhudi nayi dhäwu gapu, ringitjkurr, manikay dalkarra nhaltjan ga norra ringitj mala. Märrmirr nayi gapu, nayanumirr yoljuw, ga märryu dap'maram.

Yaka nanya dhu warku'yun, bili nayi gurrutumirr. Ga yaka nanya dhu djändhurr gapu, bitjan djalkthun bawalamirr, warku'yun nanya.

Waljukum nanya djäga, yoljukum gurrutumirriyam ga baki nanya dhunupawurr dhukarrkurr, benjur bili nayi ga rom norra. Ga manymak.

*Ok. This idea that we have been working on, about Milingimbi Yolju water. Collecting stories, and uncovering the ways from earlier times. Yolju were living, with water, for people to live.*

*Water has a story, it has ringitj, kinship, Previously the old people would travel to and from wells. Stayed there until the water finished, then up and off to another water.*

*Water is for people to live, water gives life. And wash and look after himself, wash himself and his children, for eating with meat, and other food. Water gives life, in all places people used to live like this.*

*Waters are connected through ancestral ringitj connections. We have been finding out about water stories from this place. The real water story comes about through ringitj, ceremonial leaders' songs the ringitj connections. Water has spiritual strength and conviction for Yolju, this spiritual strength holds (us).*

*We must not warku'yun (mistreat) water, because water is our kin. Not to throw it about, treat disrespectfully.*

*Give water life and look after, make it a relative (gurrutumirriyam), and use respectfully, this was our tradition since the beginning of time. Ok.*

3 Dhuwal yawungu dhiyan bala napurr dhukarr djarr'yun ɳayi dhu. Dhiyanjuy bala nhakun yindin dhuwal wäŋa, nhakun mainly dhiyal Milingimbi. Wäŋa marrtji ɳuthan mala, ga Yolŋu ga mala bunhamirr dharrwa mirithirr, bala' marrtji dharrwathirr.

ɳayi dhu gininggarr bakthun tapenjur mala. Nali dhu either dälkum ga gunga'yun ɳalipi djäma, wo marrtji nali dhu ga ɳunhal walalanj officeñur buna. Walal dhu, walalawuy ɳula djäma. Djourra' nhakun ɳunhili fillingup, ga job card balanya, walalanjal märram ɳuruki tapku djämaw gapuw. Ga ɳunhili ɳayi ga dhukarr rom balanya bili ɳorra, bili wiripu yolŋu ɳayi, manymak ɳayi dhu guwatjman balandawal, ga waŋa walalanjal gapupuy, "ga ɳunha tap rraku yätjin, bakthurr ɳunhal wäŋanjur". Wiripuny ɳäyi ɳalapal yolŋu. yaka ɳayi gumurr marngi ɳayi marrtji dhu ga bunan balandaw.

4 Wiripuny ɳayi gora-dumurr. Nhaltjan ɳali dhu ɳunhiliyiny gunga'yun yolŋunj? Gapu ɳayi dhu yalala nhantu wäŋanjur yätjiir, ga marrtji dhu ɳayi, ga djämaw ɳayi dhu ɳär'thun ɳuruki, tapku, ya bitjan. Ga ɳayi dhu nhakun, wiripu-wiripu mala limurru, gana'kana nhina yolŋuwal, wiripuny gora-dumurru, wiripuny dhunja ɳayi balayi wupitjlili marrtjinyaraw. Ga wiripuny ɳayi ɳalapal, ɳunhi ɳayi dhu rum'rumdhum, bili ɳayi ɳalapal litjalanj yolŋu. Nali dhu nhantu djäma. Ga ɳayi dhu ga nhina officeñur mak balanda ga yaka ɳäyi marngi mirithirr romgu limurrun. Ga dhuwali limurr ga djäma dhiyan bala märr ga ɳäyi dhu ɳunhal bala dharanjan yolŋu nhaltjan ga nhina wiripu yolŋu gora dumurr, wiripuny ɳayi ɳalapal, wiripuny ɳayi rur'rumdhum, wiripu dhunja Englishku. (6.00)

5 Let's understand each other's background. This land will punish us, because we are breaking the ways of the ancestors, the land is alive and watching us, the rain and wind are alive, if we look after it, then it will look after us. For these reasons we should learn about their ways, so we can come and work together and look after the water.

6 Our own people should learn plumbing, to do water work, he shouldn't learn, always following balanda who is doing all the work with his own energy.

We need a proper plumber who is fully licensed and with a degree, whatever and a certificate, like a balanda needs through the balanda legal system,

*Recently and right now we are looking for a way. Today this is a big place, mainly here at Milingimbi. The town is growing, and the people are having big families, there are increasing numbers of houses.*

*When a part breaks in a tap, we can fix it ourselves or go to people at the office and they can do it, fill out the job card for fixing that water tap.*

*There is a way, because it's ok for some to approach a Balanda and talk to them about a water problems at their home, "My tap is broken there at my home." But there are also older people who are not comfortable or know how to approach a balanda.*

*And some people are very shy. How can we help them? When sometime his water breaks at home, and he goes, and asks at the at the office for repairs to be done to that tap. We are all different types of people, living separately. Some are shy, and some are unable to go to the office. There are old people, who will feel uncomfortable, because the elder is our person, we can do that for him.*

*There's maybe a balanda who doesn't know about Yolŋu.*

*We are doing this work so that balanda can understand us, that some of us are shy, and other elderly (not aware of balanda systems), also some not comfortable, and some don't speak English,*

7 A balanda who knows how to train, so the Yolŋu can take his place, with the right certificate to train Yolŋu.

So that the community and the plumber know about and understand each other there at home and at work.

8 How about a system that is easy for Yolŋu, so that people do not have to go to the office and sign, maybe there are relatives at home who can go and sign for us, or he can come out of the office as part of their job description, for when the water system (taps) fail, that person comes out and sees the people at their home, and that they residents can say, 'this and this are broken.'

9 Some Yolŋu are very shy, some only know a little English, some don't know the balanda system for reporting. There needs to be some people in the middle to help us.

10 The idea of doing this research, this consultation with the Milingimbi water resource supply through Power and Water was to close the gap or make a clear understanding of how water is being used here in the community, and the understanding gets through to Yolŋu living in the land in the community using the supply of water, where the Power and Water comes in with help to be able to maintain a better water supply, maintaining through the housing that we live in, in this community.

11 Make sure that the water is being properly used somewhere in the community, some where in the system there should be education of how water should be used properly especially with looking after taps, where there are leaks before it gets any worse, should be reported, and the place where it is leaking needs to be reported needs to somewhere where it can be reached easily by people in the community whether it's going into the office and writing out a job description or filling out a form or there needs to be some one in the community from the different and various camps where people feel more confident reporting to, reporting a problem to their own people who works in the council, rather than having to go up to the office and can't understand what the, where they can't understand and where they find it a little bit hard to communicate with balanda people working in the offices,.

12 There is a barrier that people run into, sometimes people are too shy to walk into the office, and report a leaking tap, sometimes there is an elderly, or a senior leader at home that can't actually talk, through avoidances, through a senior leadership that should be respected, somewhere in the middle there should be having a Yolŋu person, our own people trained to walk up and check all the taps around a certain community, round their own clans, the camp where they live.

13 And someone else should look after the camp where they live, for reporting leaking taps, and sometimes further education to actually educate our people, our community about the shortage of water, and the infrastructure of the water around the community such as here at Milingimbi.

14 J) Napipi can you tell me little bit about Milingimbi town itself? What people live here and are there suburbs or different camps where different families live or is it mixed? What's Milingimbi like as a town?

15 Well living in Milingimbi is a camp, community or town that has lots of different tribes, clans, and one person to be able to work in the plumbing workshop, it's not really easy for them to be able to communicate with the different clans in the community,

We probably have a few camps in the community, there's the Bottom camp, and Middle Camp, Top Camp, the Bush Camp, what they call Army Camp and the Garden Camp.

And the people since they have come to live here have moved into small tribal areas of their own clans and estates of nations, and left alone the traditional owners of this land, living on one particular area,

16 And trying to communicate with one particular plumber or someone that you can go and report to is very hard, sometimes there is a language barrier, and sometimes there is tribal barrier. Like this particular tribe cannot really, easily communicate with this particular clan.

17 J) So does that mean, is there much movement, do people visit from one camp to another? And will they visit every camp or stay within their own camp?

Y) I think most people like to visit their own clans, where their own clans are staying, rather than going across to other clans, they can, but there are some sort of restrictions that they don't feel comfortable, going up to another camp, where another clan-nation lives, that way the communication and the understanding and having easy access to working together is a little bit hard.

18 JG) Does that mean that, you mentioned the name traditional owners and there are lots of clan nations somewhere else, does that mean there are people who have their ancestral country somewhere else? Where they are traditional owners somewhere else?

Y) Yes there would be traditional owners who live here and not the whole community, they are only a few people who live here. Most people who have moved into here just the same as elsewhere in Arnhemland have their own traditional homelands and have moved from various communities, from various homelands which are their homes, which is back in Arnhemland. This is not their actual home.

19 J) So does that mean that some people in some camps may not be happy going up to the main office and even talking with Yolŋu who work in that office?

Y) People wouldn't really feel that confident, because people have moved in from different communities, different clans, from other areas, it would be very hard to go into the council office and report some problems like this. That would be a problem where no only reporting or having difficulty speaking English or having difficulty trying to find their way around the office there would be tribal difficulties there as well.

20 J) Can you think of any ways, have you heard over the last few days when you've been talking with people any ways that might be able to make, any ideas, paths that might communication easier, any systems?

Y) I've walked around the camps and spoken with people, it would be better if the people have their own service people if you like. People who can go up around the camp like say for instance people living here at Army Camp, there would be one person that could go around houses checking, or people from Army Camp can report damaged water systems, pipes, taps to this particular person, and he or she can go and report it, and fill it out out, and maybe even get the forms, take it out to the people out there, and let the people fill it out at home, where they feel more secure. Yes I think it would be, there's been people talking about, there should

be some service people at their own camps, one at Army Camp, one at the Bush Camp, one at Top Camp, who can look after these sort of resources.

21 J) Would those people also be able to take stories back to Power and Water, there might be stories that PAWA want to talk to Milingimbi residents about? Would that work in the reverse way as well?

Y) Yes, yes I think it would work if those same people, those same people can have a way where they can communicate with Power and Water, communicate with the Council, communicate with the people. Get stories what the people want here in the community, get stories what the Power and Water wants to do, and later on there might, of course we'll be under a Shire council and they also have, they call their rent or have to pay for some parts, or taps and damage in the water system around the houses, the Shire council might have policy where the people have to go by, and there needs to be a clear understanding between the people, the power and water and the shire council working together.

22 J) Have you got any ideas on training, on people becoming plumbers and people doing work to fix up and repair?

Y) People are quite prepared to take up jobs and trained to be proper plumbers if they are given an opportunity to take up apprenticeship training to become tradesmen and be a proper plumber. Not just working under supervision under some white plumber who has passed their degree, and done an apprenticeship to be a tradesman in that particular job.

We need our people to be a tradesman in that area too.

23 J) What are some of the barriers to doing that? Why hasn't it happened?

Y) I think a lot of people, people that might be coming in getting a job in the council and the communities in the past haven't really looked at, and applied for, applied positions for a tradesman who actually does training, training people to become or doing apprenticeships, and teaching people to become proper tradesmen. It's just there were people that came in, might have had experiences in plumbing but never actually had qualifications where they can actually train people, and that's been some barriers. There have been a lot of people who wanted to train. And they can only teach them so much because the plumbers that work don't really have that qualification where they can teach Yolŋu people.

24 J) Is it important for people to be sensitive to people from a different culture? And work in... if we have people from Western culture if they come to Milingimbi to be able to respect Yolŋu ways, is that important for people here?

Y) There should be respect, there should be a sound knowledge, or the understanding of how the Yolŋu system works, and how Balanda system works. Balanda needs to come in and work with people and have some sort of awareness where they can both understand each other when people are working on the ground in a Yolŋu community and we also need to understand where they come from.

25 J) If you are looking at people who have come in, if you are looking at someone who has been here a year or longer; what sort of things do they do that makes you feel comfortable with that person? So if we've got a balanda plumber and a Yolŋu plumber what are the things that show they have a good relationship? What are the things, what behaviours do they have that show you that they are suitable for that job?

Y) The people need to be people who are willing to come and learn the language and culture, join in ceremonies maybe. Join in the activities, come and sit down with people, take up relationships with people and be part of the community. That way we can closely know each other. It's like for example, in Balandia world when people want to get to know someone they take them out to dinner and talk to them, tell them who they are, where I come from, what background I have, and eventually we get to know each other, that is a good way, a good opportunity to get to know each other. In a way we are doing the same too. Come and have dinner with us, come and sit down with us at the camp. Come camping with us, and we'll show you what we are like and that way we learn from each other, and we'll establish better communication where we can work together and have a good relationship.

26 J) Working out here for a few days now and meeting people from the suburbs, the different camps, what's the feedback you get. Do you think the way we are working is successful? Do you think we are respected and people are happy to tell their stories? What do you think about the process that we've been doing, how has it been received by the people at Milngimbi?

Y) To those people that we have come across and actually had a talk to and explained what we are doing here. To those people it has opened a door, it's opened their minds and made them think, not just using water, but the system. It has helped them a lot, even when I came here, although we were talking about this program back in Darwin for a few months, actually going through with the people out there has really helped me a lot . People have said, "This has never been done before. We can see now, and understand." And that's only the start of it. But they were saying nobody has actually shown and told us about this type of story and it is really good that we are able to learn about our camp better.

27 J) I've been a little bit embarrassed sometimes and a little shy about being another white person coming in with another story, on top of other stories that other people have come with Centrelink or FaHCSIA or Mission Australia and I've been a little cautious and concerned that I don't want to be putting another story on top of people. Do you think people feel pressured with the way we have been working? or do you think they feel comfortable?

Y) I think most of the people especially here in this community know us already. They know John and most people know Trevor and know me that I have lived here in this community and looking at us and the stories that we bring have a positive meaning. It's unlike Centrelink, and unlike other people, because once we go and sit down we approach people in a way that we are actually being received by getting a warm welcome by the people. I'm well known around these camps here. I have nothing against any camp here at Milngimbi, because of that reputation people sort of accepted us really warmly, we know that we are bringing something that is helpful to the people out here. Unlike if I might add. I was sitting at the shop and one of the Senior Elders said, "My wife is getting brain washed because it was this other mob before, and now she is getting confused by this other mob, and nothing is actually being done. " They come back in with a different name, but doing the same thing, and nothing really happens.

J) Like one man said yesterday, "Same face different uniform."

Y) But to those people we had a talk to and actually spoken to, it's different, it's not politics, we are not talking about government policy or anything, we are just talking about simple, water, the resource of water, and through the ringitj, and songs and ceremonies, and how it's connected, and how we live in this community. People when they spoke about their side of the story, their clan side of the story, about how ringitj of water system fit into this clan, this that and the other, made it feel as we are talking about real life, We are not talking about. 'We are coming to build a police station here, and if kids don't go to school then we'll be sending out a police truck to round up kids'; that sort of thing is hurting.



## 21: Nàmuyani Visit

John talking to Lily, Balarrkpallarrk, and Walandi next to the salt pans close to the Top Camp houses at Nàmuyani.

1 Balandagurr dhu rra ga waña? Dhuwal gapu manutji dhuwanydja. Yolŋukurr, balandagurr. Märrma'yirr ḡayi dhu.

2 B) Dhuwal wäña, dhuwal gapu manutji gapu manutji dhuwandja Gurruruwa wänjany yäku, ga nhawuku Walamarjuw gapu dhuwandja, drinking water. Dhuwal nhawi li gan dhuwal communityw nhawi water dhiyal walal ḡuli gana drinking. Yow ga nhakun nhawi business area walal ḡuli gan use dhuwal gapu walalarj.

3 W) Baman' ḡäthil yurr bäyŋu nhawi pump ga plumber nhawi balanya, ga bäyŋu walal li generator bayŋu ya balanya just water hole balanya.

4 B) Bäyŋu walal gan wasting gapu, yän dhuwal walal gan drinking nhawi walalarj lifeku, use walal gan. Dhuwal (Gamalanga nhawi gu dhuwal Gamalanjaw), nhawigu Walamarjuw napurrun gapu, ga yalala napurr dhu ḡunha bala Barrunganjur nhäma gapu walalarj gapu.

5 W) Ga dhuwandja ḡäthildja yän ḡayi gapu ḡayi gan dhärran well, yurr gapu manutji. Yurr dhiyan bala mak mutikay munygum mak nhawiyu gabundaynha mala yow contractaynha mala. Njarrany yäku ga nhawi Walandi ḡanydja ?

*Should we talk in English? (Here's the waterhole here.) Yolŋu and English, both.*

*This place here, this little water hole is called Gurruruwa, and this water belongs to the Walamarju, drinking water. This water was for the whole community, they would drink here. So when there were big ceremonies here, they would use this water.*

*Long ago, when there were no pumps or plumbers, and no generators, just a water hole.*

*They didn't use to waste water, they just used it for life, that's what they used it for. The Gamalanga (no!) the Walamarju, this water belongs to us Walamarju people, and we can see their (Gamalanga) water later over at Barrunganjur.*

*Yes so there used to be water here in a well, not a well really, a water hole. But now some vehicle has squashed it down, it was the carpenters, the contractors who did it. My name is Walandi (is that okay?).*

6 J) Ga manymak nhumalangal ḷayi ga bitjadhi ḷorra dhiyanj bala?

W) Manymak napurruny nhuma liyamirryanjal bili napurr dhu try nhakun nhawi ya bitjan.

B) Godarr napurr dhu djäma baladhi ronjanmaran napurr dhu yaka limurr marnji mak bäy, ya balanya. Bili yolŋu dhuwal napurr mak ap dunduŋ mala balanya nhakun bulu ronjanmaram balayi

O) But dhiyanj bala nhakun Bulany walal nhawi ḷunha bala bore gapu drinking water ḷunha bala which is manymak. But njäthil clean water ya balanya peoplegu yow clean water njäthil ga dhiyanjuny bala nowadays bäyŋu.

7 L) Nhawi Bulany guyanja napurr ga dhuwal gapu bili ḷarra waŋan walalaŋ last year yow bitjan ḷarra. "Dhuwali nhawi nhä ḷunhi gunga mel-lakaram ga gapu", ga ḷarra djäl walal dhu nhawi warkthun mark walal dhu warkthun, ḷarra walalaŋ bitjarr waŋan yapa miny'tji yow, yow last year. Ga dhuwal nhakun gapu manjutji nhawi living water dhuwal gapu. Anyhow nhawi ḷarra, ḷarra Gamal Walamanju ga wäŋa dhuwal Nurruwulu Walamanju yow.

*Is it okay by you people for it to stay like this?*

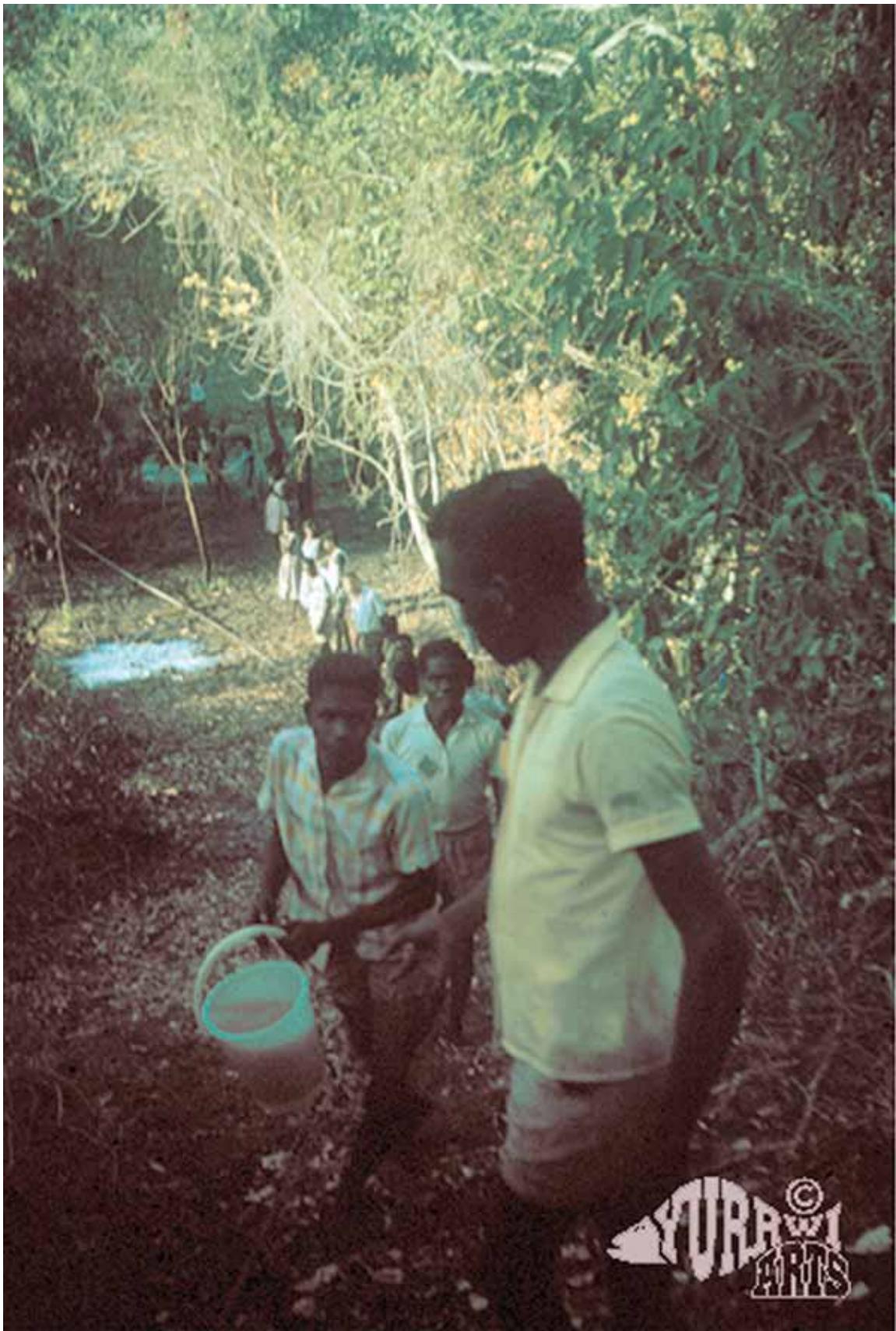
*It's good that you have brought it back to our minds.*

*Very soon we will try to make it go back to its old state, we don't know. Some of us are not able to get it back to its original state.*

*So you see that now we use water from the bore which is good. But long ago, this was clean drinking water for people, but not today.*

*We are thinking about this water. And last year I said "Look there was pandanus there telling us of the presence of water", and I want them to put it back as a land mark, they should do the work, that's what I told them last year. You see this small waterhole is living water. Because I belong to the Gamal Walamanju people and this place belongs to the Nurruwulu Walamanju.*





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