

(2012- 2027)

# ALC 15 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN



NOVEMBER 2012

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This document is a culmination of the thoughts, vision and articulation of the Anindilyakwa people living on the Groote archipelago. The plan has been endorsed by an Executive Board that represents all 14 clans in the Groote archipelago and is led by the current Anindilyakwa Land Council (ALC) Chairman Tony Wurramarrba and Deputy Chairman Lionel Jaragba and Deputy Chief Executive Officer Joaz Wurramara.

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mining will not be on Groote Eylandt forever and the Anindilyakwa Land Council (ALC) needs to prepare for the point in time when mining ceases (current mine life is 15 years). The ALC is tracking the fluctuations in the world economy and wants to invest now for a viable, culturally rich, sustainable and low cost economy, not dependent upon mining royalty income. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to allow the Anindilyakwa people to take the future into their own hands.

The objectives of the consultative processes that underpinned this document were two-fold:

To ensure that Traditional Owners make informed decisions.

To ensure that decision making processes are consistent with the cultural tenets and drivers by which Traditional Owners make choices within their own culture.

The Strategic Plan recognises that decisions made outside of these parameters will hold minimal legitimacy and will not engage Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island people in applying the plan.

- In the development of the Strategic Plan, the Groote Eylandt community has provided the ALC with three key guiding vision statements:
- Protect, maintain and promote Anindilyakwa culture;
- Invest in the present to build a self-sufficient future;
- Create pathways for youth to stand in both worlds.

The following goals and actions have flowed out of these core principles underpinning this plan:

### **GOAL A: PROTECT THE LAND AND SEA**

In protecting land, the ALC is to consolidate the rapid expansion of its Land and Sea Ranger program to preserve the pristine ecology of the Groote archipelago. The ALC must keep close environmental accountabilities provided for under the Mining Agreement with GEMCO and work with all major stakeholders on the islands in the same spirit of cooperation and best practice environmental management.

At current production rates the mine life for GEMCO's operations is 15 years. In addition, GEMCO are undertaking a pre-feasibility study into further expansion options. GEMCO has an interest in an area referred to as Southern Leases located south west of Groote Eylandt. This area comes out of moratorium after 5 years in January 2013. GEMCO is also actively exploring in the area referred to as the Eastern Leases and it is expected to yield positive results for the mining company. This plan outlines actions to be taken to conduct comprehensive anthropological and archaeological studies in the Southern Leases area so as

to facilitate informed decision making by Traditional Owners if an exploration license is requested by GEMCO. In relation to Eastern Leases thorough environmental assessment is required before proceeding with any new mining agreement. This plan sets out actions for Traditional Owners to be consulted to provide input into requirements of any new mining agreement. Planning for mine closure will also continue.

The *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act (1976)* and the *Native Title Act (1993)* afford no Traditional Owner rights over sea country. For the Anindilyakwa people, sea country is as important to their culture as land. This plan outlines measures to protect sea country by:

- Securing an ongoing exploration and mining moratorium;
- Securing National Heritage listing;
- Placing a Native Title Claim;
- Declaring an Indigenous Protected Area;
- Applying the Blue Mud Bay High Court ruling over the Groote archipelago.

This Strategic Plan also seeks to develop a potential linkage with the environment of the Groote archipelago and economic opportunity in a post-mining era. In particular, it will seek best practice standards in developing what is now phrased a 'carbon offset economy'. In particular, it seeks to access government grant and private sector funding to establish:

- Large scale solar power farms powering vehicles, boats and community housing;
- A proper waste management regime reducing landfill and pollutant content;
- Large-scale export-orientated aquaculture ventures;
- Bio-mass offset schemes as a result of current environmental rehabilitation activities;
- Sources of bio-diesel supply for off-road vehicles and heavy machinery;
- A 'low burn' savannah burning regime;
- House and public buildings built with energy-efficient construction techniques.

## **GOAL B: DEVELOPING BEST PRACTICE SERVICE DELIVERY**

Significant issues currently face Anindilyakwa people around education, health and essential services in the Groote archipelago.

### **EDUCATION**

While a great deal of effort in recent times has gone into establishing community education governance structures, the key decisions around the recruitment and administration of school principals and teachers are made without reference to the communities in which they operate. This document recommends an investigation into the possible establishment of independent schools on the Groote archipelago.

School curriculum should be bilingual. Anindilyakwa is the first language of youth and evidence supports that English should be taught alongside the native language to yield optimal results. A bilingual literacy and numeracy program must be made available in early childhood, schools, training and employment entry support structures.

Evidence presented to the ALC indicates that various teachers in Groote Eylandt schools state their early years students are experiencing chronic Otitis Media. They are reporting that as many as 75% of the students are experiencing hearing loss with 25% of the class experiencing hearing loss to such an extent that they should receive an amplification device. Collaboration between schools, NT Health and the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF) is urgently recommended to address this issue.

The physical environment of Angurugu School is a remnant of the 60's and 70's days of alcohol and petrol sniffing violence. A large program of rebuilding and refurbishment needs to be established.

There is a view growing in the community that a residential college be established away from Angurugu for year 5 and 6 students to break a generational lack of support to attend school.

This Plan outlines key pathways in career options for youth in the Groote archipelago through both essential service delivery jobs and through a large range of cultural enterprise activities.

## **HEALTH**

This Strategic Plan has analysed the future demand for services for the aged, Machado Joseph Disease (MJD) patients and sufferers from other chronic disease. Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island's senior population is expected to nearly triple in the next 15 years. There is expected to be a marked increase in the number of people requiring aged and/or disability care services as well as an increase in the number of carers needing to access respite services.

Coupled with this is the evidence that there are 24 confirmed cases of MJD (at May 2012) with a further 106 at risk with a 50% chance of being confirmed. The next generation incidence is likely to reflect 5.4% of the population or about 114 people.

Current generation survival is an average of 15 years post diagnosis with wheelchair confinement from around five years and the disease progressively worsening until high level care for the last five years. Next generation onset will be at an earlier age and a more severe onset. Life expectancy will be shorter at around 10 years and wheelchair confinement within a few years with high-level care requirements by five years.

Three main drives for greater on-island facilities are that:

- Only three patients are in an appropriate level of care (in Darwin) as there is a reluctance to leave both family and the island. Poor access to community services and residential care have meant that people sometimes experience substandard care and die prematurely at home in preference to being sent away for care.
- As the next generation will be much younger, they will not have the sibling or family structure available to provide them with care and these are the same people who the current generation of sufferers are relying on for care.
- As the next generation of sufferers will be much younger, there will be multiple generations requiring significant support at the same time, placing a major spike on services.

Estimates suggest 77 likely cases in the near term progressing to a medium term trend of around 114 people with increasing severity. Using uniform distribution, the Groote archipelago could progress quickly to a 30 bed high dependency requirement and then up to a 60 bed high dependency need within 10 years. The balance of patients could potentially be evenly split between at home, day therapy and periodic respite.

In summary this would imply two construction phases to add 30 bed additional capacities to existing aged care facilities and then an additional 30 beds later on. Given the reluctance of MJD sufferers to leave home, any excess capacity could be absorbed by aged and disability patients. However, with the next generation it appears there will be little choice other than residential care.

A major outcome of this Strategic Plan is to advocate for measures to establish a substantial local workforce to cater for senior people and patients of MJD.

It also recommends that patients of renal failure be afforded increased services and support on Groote Eylandt.

### **INCREASE AGED CARE SERVICES**

Groote Eylandt's senior population is expected to nearly triple in the next 15 years. There is expected to be a marked increase in the number of people requiring aged and/or disability care services as well as an increase in the number of carers needing to access respite services.

The ALC is committed to contributing funding via GEBIE to expand aged care infrastructure and to work with other stakeholders including Federal and Territory governments via mainstream health funding channels. The ALC believes it is important that the service is increased to offer day and/or overnight respite as well as long term residential care, supported accommodation and increased specialised care for MJD patients. Another priority for the ALC is encouraging the numbers of Anindilyakwa people working in the health sector.



Community members and leaders have approached the ALC to lobby for more services to be provided for renal failure patients in the Groote archipelago, rather than for these services to be provided for in Darwin. The current dialysis unit for treating this condition is currently based in Angurugu and is inadequate. Most are treated in Gove or Darwin. Research is required into the scale of this people suffering from renal failure and for the on island unit to be suitably expanded to meet demand.

It is clear that current Home and Community Care Services will need to increase and expand, primarily meals on wheels, to meet higher demand. More extensive lifestyle programs integrated with the residential care facility which distinguish and address the breadth of need and age cohort of clients.

Workforce planning is required to build a care workforce of local community members to meet the growing demand for these services and ensure residents can get the care they require within the comfort of their communities while receiving a high standard of care.

This strategic plan also recommends investigation into infrastructure requirements for aged and disability care services. This plan recommends possible strategies for improving the governance of health services on the Groote archipelago.

### **MUNICIPAL SERVICES**

Applications are currently before the NT Government to deliver services to repair and maintain social housing stock by direct contracts between NT Housing and GEBIE Civil and Construction (GCC) rather than currently auspiced through the East Arnhem Shire Council.

It is recommended to explore renewable energy options for Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island, in particular to investigate the feasibility of building and operating solar power stations. This should be done through a combination of power purchase agreements with Power and Water in the communities of Umbakumba and Bickerton Island and with the corporate investment sector to build and operate a solar power station to service Alyangula and Angurugu.

It is the view of the community that other municipal services (water, sewerage, public areas, waste management and roads) could be delivered by local businesses with a local workforce. This would require structural changes to the current service delivery model provided by the East Arnhem Shire Council (refer to section 'Moving Towards a Regional Authority').

### **HOUSING**

The Strategic Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Program (SIHIP) delivered 80 new houses, 43 rebuilds and 60 renovations to Anindilyakwa communities in 2011 and 2012. It is understood some 20 houses are still needed in Angurugu to address overcrowding.

There are people from Umbakumba and Milyakburra living in Angurugu and consideration needs to be made for people moving back into their own communities, especially as

Angurugu continues to grow and is experiencing a land shortage (constrained by the surrounding GEMCO mining lease).

It is also incumbent upon future building works to consider utilising best practice techniques of construction to create durable structures that minimise power consumption, use local materials and can be built with local workforce teams. These techniques should be developed in the impending wave of building works scheduled over the next five years (two Trade Training Centres, Umbakumba Health Centre, Milyakburra Cyclone Shelter, three Cultural Centres and Angurugu and Umbakumba government housing subdivisions).

The ALC Executive Board is yet to consider a proposal to invest royalties (clan by clan) into a new house building scheme, subsidised and supported by GEBIE. Consultations are underway with ALC and GEBIE Boards and with clan groups.

### **TRANSPORT**

In order to increase training and employment prospects for residents, the transport system on Groote Eylandt will be improved. Some measures under consideration are to:

- Establish a regular 12 seater bus service between Umbakumba, Angurugu, Malkala and Alyangula;
- Establish a small sized barge service between Groote, Bickerton and Numbulwar;
- With the completion of the Umbakumba road less reliance on diesel consuming four-wheel drives should be considered for service providers. Hybrid vehicle schemes should be considered for use on sealed roads, powered by future solar farm power supply;
- Investigate options to reduce large expenditure on private charter and commercial airline services.

### **FOOD**

Obtaining reasonably priced, fresh food in the region is expected to become a major problem after mining. To provide fresh food security to the general population will require market gardens to be established in all communities. They will provide the following benefits:

- Fresh food;
- Employment and training opportunities;
- Affordable food;
- Local and regional economy income streams (potentially);
- Improvements in community health through better nutrition;
- Opportunity for associated businesses and commercial enterprises.

## **THE FUTURE OF ALYANGULA**

In a post mining future a “normalised” Alyangula could remain a hub for businesses, services, tourism, holiday accommodation and Anindilyakwa people with high-end healthcare needs.

The ALC is looking at ways to better link Alyangula to the Groote archipelago’s other three communities in areas such with service delivery, business and health care.

One potential value of Alyangula, given its relative sophistication of services compared to other communities, is the potential to provide enhanced services for Anindilyakwa high need aged and MJD patients.

A financial analysis needs to consider appropriate facilities to be developed within Alyangula versus current Anindilyakwa communities to achieve cost efficiencies.

## **GOAL C: DEVELOP A LIVING CULTURAL ECONOMY**

Youth have disengaged with the education system and mainstream life particularly in the community of Angurugu. Addressing this requires a comprehensive “hands on” approach to the education curriculum, as previously outlined. With the support of the ALC, both Australian and Territory Governments are applying a regime of warnings and fines combined with stopping Centrelink payments to parents who do not send their children to school. In consultations with the ALC, communities said they want to see a broad based investment in developing a range of culturally-based enterprises where youth and elders will positively engage in protecting, maintaining and promoting their culture to the wider world.

The Anindilyakwa Ambaka Murri-yada Yirrilangwa Youth strategy 2012-2016 was created as a way forward to engage local youth and to provide opportunities for youth to develop into culturally strong and well rounded members of their community and who are able to operate in two worlds. Extensive consultation with youth has determined that in particular they see the strength of their culture being combined with education and job creation as the essential missing ingredient in engaging youth with the education system. This strategic plan supports the implementation of the Youth Strategy.

The ALC is proposing to establish Multimedia and Cultural Enterprise Centres (Centres) in Angurugu, Umbakumba, Milyakburra and within the Dugong Beach Resort precinct at Alyangula. The Centres will be utilised by all community members particularly youth and elders to positively engage in activities that are culture-based while also utilising modern technology to archive, share and create cultural content using various mediums. The design of the Centres will be informed through further consultation with Traditional Owners. The Centres will be equipped with ‘safe keeping’ places including clan songs, stories, artefacts, videos and photographs, genealogy archiving facilities, language centres, visual arts, media recording and editing facilities including music recording studios and photographic display areas.

## **UNDERLYING PRINCIPALS AND CORE FUNCTIONS**

The underlying principles of the Centres' operations are intrinsically linked to the vision statements of the Strategic Plan:

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

The concept of the Centres comes from a strength-based approach to utilise the important and strong aspects of Anindilyakwa people; culture, language, history, customary practices and connection to country, to engage individuals in early childhood development, education, training and economic participation. This is what Anindilyakwa people have told the ALC they want.

The functions and activities of the Centres will complement the Stronger Futures priority area for action in school attendance and educational achievement. It will provide culture-based programs from early years through to employment. In particular, it complements the school attendance and enrolment welfare reform measures by providing avenues for re-engaging youth into the education system through the Centres' programs. The Centres will also provide training and employment pathways for youth, which will give weight and relevance to schooling.

The activities of the Centres will target these four developmental stages, which are described in further detail below:

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

The Centres will host a range of early childhood development programs and activities and work in partnership with early childhood service providers in engaging families in the development of the newborn to five-year-old cohort. Linguistics activities of the ALC will operate as a part of the Centres, with the view that current services are enriched and expanded, particularly in Umbakumba and Milyakburra. The Early Childhood Language and Literacy course introduced under Stage 2 of the Regional Partnership Agreement would be further developed and delivered as part of the Centres' activities. The Early Childhood Language and Literacy course has been delivered by the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation working closely with parents, carers and teachers in Umbakumba, Angurugu and Milyakburra by delivering workshops that teach foundational pre-literacy and language learning platforms in Anindilyakwa and English that can be used to support the early learning of their children. Partnerships with the Families as First Teachers program and playgroup will also see the Centres being accessed by these and other early childhood service providers in engaging families in early childhood learning that is linked to first language and culture. These programs and activities will access the rich collection of the Centres' materials, which include clan songs and stories in enriching the early development of children by grounding them in culture-based learning.

## **SCHOOLING**

The Centres will be located adjacent to the schools in each community and will offer programs and activities specifically for school-aged children to engage with Anindilyakwa heritage and culture as part of the school curriculum and in after school activities. The Centres will provide a first language education program delivered by linguists based at the Centres and in partnership with schools as an embedded part of the curriculum. Every child will have the opportunity to develop a strong foundation in Anindilyakwa. Students will also be engaged in learning about Anindilyakwa history, kinship system and other pertinent areas to a child's development and understanding of their heritage and identity as part their clan and community. This program will form a part of every child's development and would be used as a tool to re-engage youth who have not been attending school into a learning environment. Elders will be engaged in delivering this program. A multi-media program will also be developed that engages youth in interacting with a range of media including filming and editing, radio programming and music with the aim of creating different mediums of sharing and promoting Anindilyakwa culture. The program will provide young people with technical skills in this field. The program will seek opportunities for young people to promote what they have developed to the wider world, building their skills to operate in both worlds and to potentially develop a viable local industry in this field. The multimedia program will also enable youth to explore their individual interests and talents. This interactive and attractive program will be a natural drawcard for young people and will be linked to a school attendance incentive program. The above programs will align to the strategy that every child is engaged in learning and training every day.

## **TRAINING**

History has shown that most Anindilyakwa people grow up and choose to live their lives on the Groote archipelago due to their strong connection to family and land. It is also evident that many young people go through schooling without adequate opportunity to explore career pathways or to gain a genuine appreciation for the relevance of an education and how it will benefit them in the realisation of their future economic participation in society. The Centres will provide training in a range of areas related to cultural activities. The Centres will seek to build the capacity of local people to take responsibility of running the facilities.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

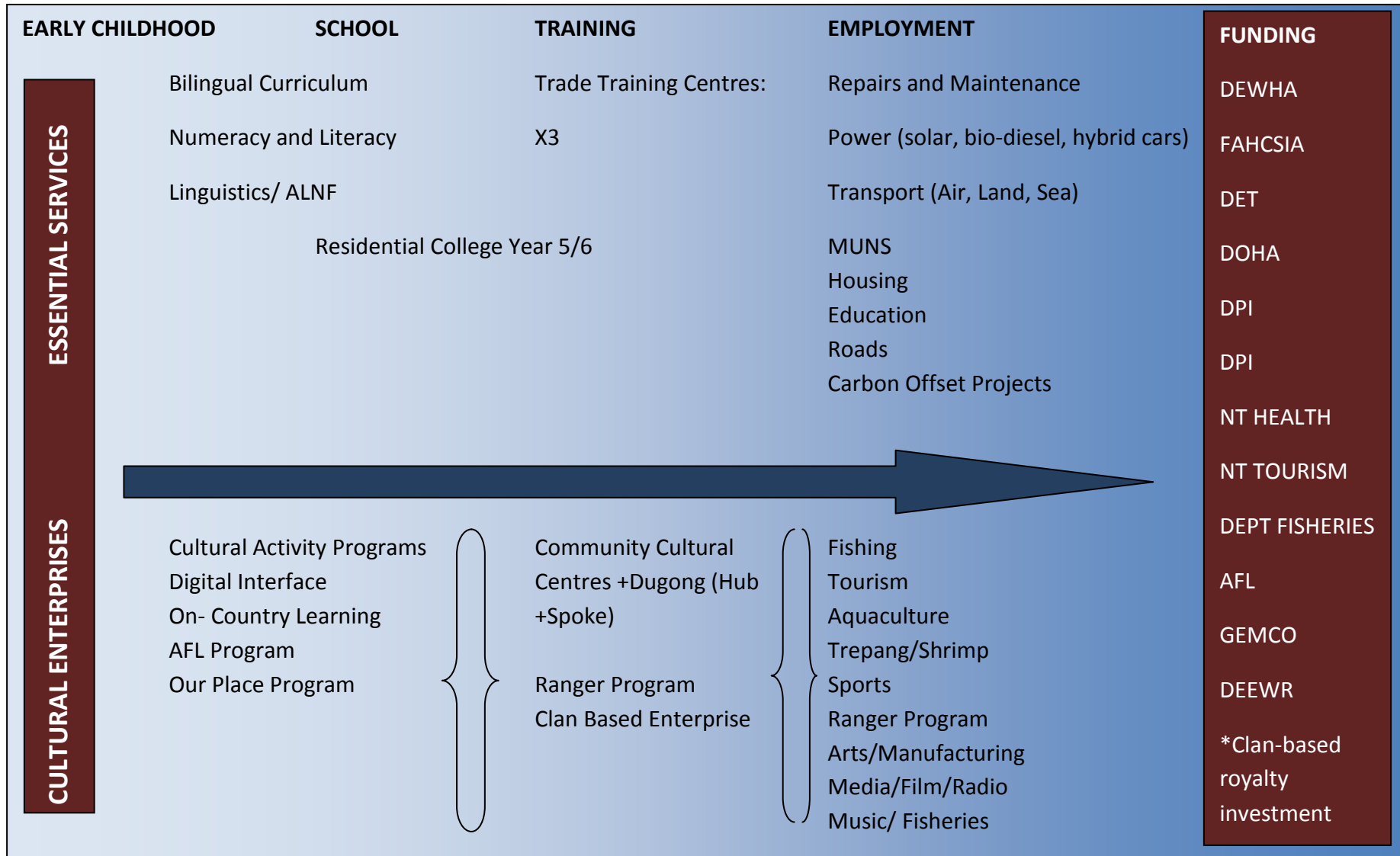
In July 2013, the Australian Government will introduce the Remote Job Community Program (RJCP) across remote communities. This replaces four existing programs currently delivering employment and participation services, including Job Services Australia, Disability Employment Services, Youth Services, CDEP and the Indigenous Employment Program (IEP). One service provider will be contracted to work directly with communities and, importantly, develop a Community Action Plans (CAP). For the Groote archipelago, the ALC Strategic Plan will inform the CAP.

The ALC Strategic Plan identifies two principle streams of options to integrate early childhood, education, training and employment for Anindilyakwa people:

- Essential Service delivery
- Cultural-based enterprises

The following chart illustrates a comprehensive and integrated approach to dealing with this issue:

Figure 1: Two stream economy.



## **STRENGTHENING THE ANINDILYAKWA LANGUAGE**

In 2012, staff from the Groote Eylandt Linguistics Centre operated by ALC consulted with communities to find out what language and cultural services Anindilyakwa people want.

*“What we really want in communities is teaching kids songlines, stories and totems from a young age. And the younger men learning to sing their cultural tribal songs. For younger women learning totems, dancing and stories. Also learning about bush and ecology, gathering bush tucker and bush medicines. Most Anindilyakwa people can speak their language very well. In terms of reading and writing the language on paper this is difficult for most. Only a small percentage of people can read and write Anindilyakwa. The findings have set the direction for the department’s work into the future” (Joaz Wurramara, ALC Deputy CEO).*

There is excitement and expectation in the communities about new resources being developed and made available on a digital platform. As an integral part of the ALC Strategic Plan, ALC Linguistics will link into the proposed Trade Training Centres and Cultural Enterprise Centres.

The current Linguistics Centre in Angurugu will relocate and form a major part of new cultural centres in all three communities. A focus will be to continue to ensure the community drives language and culture activities. Language and culture will be applied as an important component within the school curriculum.

Another priority will be increasing community access to culturally and historically significant records. Staffing is proposed to increase to allow material to be digitised, catalogued and archived and to work closely with schools and programs for training and employment.

## **MAP ANINDILYAKWA ART SITES**

To date no comprehensive mapping and recording of rock art across the archipelago has been conducted. To link in with the overall protection, maintenance and promotion of Anindilyakwa culture theme of this plan, it is imperative that this should occur.

## **GOAL D: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY CAPACITY**

### **TACKLE SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

It is well known that Anindilyakwa leaders were the first across Australia to ban alcohol consumption in their communities. They were also among the first to introduce opal fuel, which eliminated the malaise of petrol sniffing overnight. In its place has emerged the widespread use of cannabis within all communities and families. According to a recent report on substance misuse on Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island, a staggering six out of 10 Anindilyakwa people regularly smoke marijuana across both islands (Lee and Conigrave 2011). Around nine out of 10 people smoke tobacco, which is a significantly higher



proportion compared with Indigenous people in other parts of Australia (where fewer than five in 10 are smokers). Many Anindilyakwa people are also starting smoking as young as 10 years old. When asked why people smoke, the most common reasons were boredom, unemployment, lots of stress and copying others.

Alcohol is also a big problem for Anindilyakwa people when off island. It is estimated that at any one time there are 100 to 150 Anindilyakwa people drinking in Darwin. During royalty, rent or holiday time, many go to Darwin to drink. Drinking on the mainland can cause considerable family problems and is also felt in the workplace as people are missing and a lot of money is wasted trying to bring them back.

The ALC proposes that the next step is to convene a two-day summit on Groote Eylandt with the aim of developing a comprehensive and holistic strategy and action plan for addressing substance misuse.

The core participants of the summit will be a cross section of community representatives from Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island. Representatives will also be invited from relevant government agencies (including senior NT police engaged in drug enforcement and intelligence, relevant Australian Government Health and Ageing and NT Health personnel), knowledgeable independent experts in the development and delivery of substance misuse strategies and relevant non-government agencies.

The summit's objective will be to develop a holistic action plan to substance misuse for the next five years, to be incorporated into the ALC Strategic Plan.

### **CREATE SAFE COMMUNITIES**

The ALC is working with the Australian, NT and local governments and communities to make communities safer as part of the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery.

The development of a place based plan and strategies that address community safety concerns are actions within the Agreement for Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra.

### **DEVELOP LEADERS**

There is a strong commitment within the ALC for long term planning that will provide the Traditional Owners with the capacity to take ownership of vital services for Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island in preparation of a future without mining.

It is proposed that a Leadership Program is developed, which is open to Aboriginal employees across the Groote archipelago, regardless of the organisation they work in.

This program would ensure that key positions within the ALC, GEBIE and its subsidiaries, East Arnhem Shire Council, Aminjarrinja, Groote Eylandt Aboriginal Trust and other organisation have a succession plan for Aboriginal staff to move into leadership roles.

The program would be aimed at up-skilling Aboriginal employees in areas of literacy and numeracy, computer skills, report writing, understanding policies and procedures, cross cultural brokerage, specific skills to undertake their roles and career development.

The program would be headed by a Steering Committee that would develop the terms of reference and to oversee and endorse the development of the program.

A memorandum of understanding would be developed between the ALC and participating employers, which includes the understanding that the employer would financially support its employees undertaking the Anindilyakwa leadership program.

### **GOAL E: WORKING WITH ALL PARTNERS**

Working with all partners, including all local Indigenous organisations, businesses, Australian, Territory and local government agencies, and non-government organisations is crucial for the success of the Strategic Plan.

#### **THE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (RPA)**

Stage One of the Regional Partnership Agreement between the ALC, the Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government began in May 2008. In November 2009, the ALC, Australian Government, Northern Territory Government and additional partners East Arnhem Shire Council and the Groote Eylandt Mining Company signed Stage Two of the RPA.

The RPA is significant and unique because it was made on the principals of partnership and collaboration between Anindilyakwa people, all levels of government and the mining business. It represents a large commitment to carry out infrastructure development where there had previously been a backlog in addressing infrastructure needs. The RPA also includes commitments to improve a range of social development factors including schooling, early childhood development, governance and leadership, economic development and participation, support of youth, sport and recreation activities, and health and safety in communities. The RPA covers the entire Groote archipelago, thus encompassing the priorities of the Anindilyakwa people as a whole. To date Anindilyakwa people have committed more than \$33 million from their own resources to RPA projects.

In July 2012, an RPA Evaluation was finalised and endorsed by the RPA Committee. The Report found the RPA 'to be working strongly as a government, Indigenous community and industry partnership.... [It] exhibits effective qualities of leadership, an ethos of collaboration, trust and effective management practice'. The evaluation highlights that 'the success of the RPA arrangements cannot be attributed to one factor or indeed several factors in isolation'. It is a combination of a number of key inputs and processes that has determined the overall success of the RPA (Tempo Strategies, 2012, p.6). Notably, the needs and aspirations of Indigenous communities is the driving force for the partnership and that the community through the ALC has identified an overall vision, priority issues to be

addressed and objectives for their community. The prominent role of the ALC, and its involvement in all stages of planning and implementation, has been a significant factor in ensuring efforts are aligned to the will of the Anindilyakwa people. Commonwealth and territory ministerial, and senior-level department support for the work under the RPA has been vital in making progress. The report also highlights pressing governance issues, one of which is the need to give some clarity about the duration of the RPA to support effective long term planning.

### **A PROPOSED RPA STAGE 3**

The ALC recommends that the Strategic Plan forms the framework for a new iteration of the RPA. An RPA Stage Three should be entered as a five-year action plan towards achieving the full 15 year ALC Strategic Plan. The ALC supports the findings of the RPA Evaluation and envisages that the recommendations of the report would be addressed in the development of Stage 3 of the RPA. This document specifically proposes an RPA Stage 3 yet to be negotiated with all stakeholders. It is hoped that this may be agreed to in the first half of 2013.

Within the ALC Strategic Plan, a draft RPA Stage Three spanning years 2013-2018 is outlined in a detailed list of actions, consistent with the Vision Statements and the subsequent goals endorsed by the ALC Executive Board. The following course of action is proposed:

- Presentation of key features of the full ALC Strategic Plan to the RPA Committee (Oct 2012)
- Form an Executive Committee to negotiate a RPA Stage 3 committing to specific actions consistent with elements of the first five years of the Plan
- Formalise that agreement with both Australian and NT Governments by mid 2013

### **AUSTRALIAN AND NORTHERN TERRITORY GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS**

The recent RPA collaborations have occurred through strong endorsement and collaboration with both Australian and NT Labour Governments. Both the Federal Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Jenny Macklin) and the NT Chief Minister (Paul Henderson) were signatories to these agreements and have been instrumental in applying a rigorous on-going 'whole of government' support to the roll-out of the agreements.

Territory elections were held in August 2012 which resulted in a change of government from Labour to Country Liberal Party (CLP). All previous RPAs and collaborations (IPA, Mining Moratorium, Blue Mud Bay negotiations) have been conducted between the ALC and Federal/NT labor governments. There is no doubt that during the era of these Labor Governments, huge progress has been made through high level political support and collaboration, and diligently supported by both Commonwealth and NT public service CEO's and staff.

At the time of releasing this document (October 2012) the ALC has yet to formally open negotiations with the incoming CLP regarding ongoing issues of particular importance to the Traditional Owners of the Groote archipelago. It should be noted that the Groote Eylandt Indigenous communities were among those people in the bush that changed their longstanding allegiances with the NT Labor Party in the 2012 election in favour of the CLP. Issues surrounding the reform of local shires and the resulting diminution of local community empowerment to deliver local services and to make decisions underpinned this change.

It is the view of the ALC that the critical work across the Groote archipelago should be viewed as politically bi-partisan and it is imperative that consistent collaboration continues to occur in the important work ahead.

### **GROOTE EYLANDT ABORIGINAL TRUST (GEAT)**

The Groote Eylandt Aboriginal Trust (GEAT) was established in the 1960s through the governance of the Church Missionary Society (CMS) to manage and distribute mining royalties and to negotiate with the mining company that resulted in the CMS Agreement. This activity was taken over by the ALC when it was formed in 1991 but GEAT continues to receive funds to allow it to provide services to Anindilyakwa people.

The ALC is committed to strengthening its relationship with GEAT for the benefit of Anindilyakwa people. It is widely viewed that it is critical for both ALC and GEAT to work closely together to progress issues outlined within this document. Discussions have recently opened up with GEAT to collaborate on the following issues:

- ALC support in issuing Section 19 land development applications from GEAT;
- Mutual collaboration in monies made available for funerals and ceremonies;
- Prevention of cane toads reaching the Groote archipelago;
- Sharing the cost of power bills payable to the Power and Water Corporation.

It has also been discussed that in the proposed RPA Stage Three that GEAT become an important and close partner within the RPA.

It is also critical that GEAT actively engages with the ALC, GEBIE and all partners in the response to this Plan.

### **LOCAL INDIGENOUS BUSINESSES IN THE GROOTE ARCHIPELAGO**

ALC has created, through its business arm GEBIE, multiple business ventures through direct royalty investment. Meanwhile other local Indigenous businesses with Traditional Owner Boards have been developing mostly without this direct ALC support. The relatively small extent of support that ALC offers other businesses is a matter which needs to be rectified in the work ahead. All local businesses need to be supported. There are three principles which guide the investment that ALC makes in devolving funds for economic development:

- To create local capacity to run local services in the communities
- To employ Anindilyakwa people
- To generate return of royalty investment for the Traditional Owners

It is incumbent on the ALC Executive Board to support all local businesses that meet these criteria, provided there remains full disclosure and accountability in the investments made.

## **GOAL F: MOVING TOWARDS AN ANINDILYAKWA REGIONAL AUTHORITY**

### **THE GROWTH OF THE ALC**

The ALC was established in 1991 under the *ALRA*, and is under the auspices of the *Commonwealth Authorities and Corporation Act (1997)* and as such is a Commonwealth Statutory Body. Operational funding for ALC is provided for out of the Aboriginals Benefit Account (Section 64-1). Under the *ALRA* it is empowered and funded operationally to act on behalf of the Traditional Owners for all land ownership and management activities within the Groote archipelago. At the time of its establishment, it had an operational budget of \$390,000 and was run by a proportionately small team of people.

Since 2007-08, the statutory responsibilities and related workload of the ALC have increased beyond all expectations and planning. In May 2008, Stage One of the RPA was signed and, required the ALC to undertake and coordinate a significant number of major projects in the Anindilyakwa region. Stage Two of the RPA was signed in November 2009 and included additional stakeholders; with the East Arnhem Shire Council and the Groote Eylandt Mining Company (GEMCO) joining the partnership.

Over 60 local projects (including those brought forward from Stage One) have been initiated as a result of RPA Stage Two (which also includes township leases). These projects cover a broad spectrum of community life ranging from extensive capital works programs (housing and road works), community development projects, health, education and training, youth strategies, economic development, safe communities, youth diversion and development, substance misuse as well as overall partnership support. While signed onto by ALC much of this activity has been and continues to be delivered by ALC's business arm GEBIE. More than \$33 million of GEBIE funds (royalties handed on by ALC) are now committed to deliver commitments under the RPA over the next few years.

It should be noted that of the \$6.2 million annual budget that ALC now operates on, only \$1.5 million is sourced from Section 64-1 under the *ALRA*. The balance is comprised of grants to the Anindilyakwa Land and Sea Rangers (a major employer of Anindilyakwa people) and a \$2.1 million charge to its business arm GEBIE for advocacy and administration to deliver key commitments under the RPA and other non-core ALC responsibilities such as protection of the Groote Eylandt sea country.

The reality is that the ALC has been performing duties outside of the legislation that underpins it and it is the view of this Strategic Plan that it is timely to question the sustainability of this arrangement, from a legislative, financial and governance point of view.

### **GROOTE EYLANDT AND BICKERTON ISLAND ENTERPRISES ABORIGINAL CORPORATION (GEBIE)**

In compliance with the *ALRA*, the ALC established its business arm GEBIE to invest Traditional Owner royalties into business and sustainable economic return opportunities. While GEBIE businesses have grown rapidly under the influence of the RPA's, the focus of GEBIE has moved away from the core realm of business into the arena of delivering social welfare programs at its own expense. There is an inherent tension in this arrangement for both directors and staff. What was expressly established as a business has moved to become a destination for distribution of ALC royalties, a quasi-welfare organisation and a delivery mechanism for mainstream government services.

### **ROYALTY INCOME**

Over the last few years, ALC has received annual royalty incomes of more than \$20 million, which has been largely distributed to GEBIE to honour commitments under the RPA. Recent world events, including the global financial crisis affecting consumer demand in Europe, contractions to the US and a corresponding contraction to demand for commodities in China economy have translated into an end to the mining boom and a slowing down of demand for iron ore and simultaneously for manganese sourced from Groote Eylandt.

GEMCO royalties have reduced 50% over the last six months during the formulation of the Strategic Plan. It is the advice of GEMCO that the current royalty incomes will likely remain at this new level for the life of the mine (which is currently set for a minimum of 15 years depending upon traditional owner agreement to allow more access to deposits). The community has understood this and encouraged the ALC to prepare for a future not dependent upon royalties to underpin its economy and wellbeing.

The organisational dependence upon royalties must correspondingly slow down and eventually cease. Simultaneously there is a growing acknowledgement with Traditional Owners that the current economy of royalty and welfare dependence is not sustainable and changes must be made in how "business is run".

### **MOVING TOWARDS IMPROVED GOVERNANCE – THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL AUTHORITY**

At the ALC Executive Board meeting held on 28 September 2012, there was an in-principle agreement to explore the transition of a number of current responsibilities to the management of a regional authority, properly mandated by NT Government legislation, staffed and funded to deliver a range of essential services across the Groote archipelago. It

is viewed that this would be a natural progression of maturity in the current partnership arrangements under the RPA. It would deliver current and projected core mainstream service needs by Anindilyakwa people and create a sustainable long-term economy. It would also allow the ALC to focus on its core legislated responsibilities – to act on behalf of the Traditional Owners for all land ownership and management activities – and allow GEBIE and other local businesses to deliver economic return on investment of royalties to the Traditional Owners through business activities delivering services to the Regional Authority.

Features of the Regional Authority could include:

- A board derived from all traditional owner clans across the Groote archipelago as a result of the ALC tri-annual elections (14 representatives) plus general managers of each area of core responsibility;
- The establishment of independent schools delivering bilingual education and pathways from early childhood through to full employment, working collaboratively with the establishment of Trade Training Centres and Cultural Enterprise Centres (Centres) in Angurugu, Umbakumba, Milyakburra;
- The delivery of core health services on the Groote archipelago to cater for increasing demand for aged, disability and MJD patients utilising a core local workforce;
- Delivering core municipal services by direct contract to the NT Government, reducing current bureaucracy and increasing efficiency utilising locally established Indigenous businesses;
- Responsibility for delivery of services to outstations, social program, and employment services, leaving it to focus on building core business capacity to:
  - Create local capacity to deliver local services in the communities.
  - Employ Anindilyakwa people.
  - Generate return of royalty investment for the Traditional Owners.
- Develop a capacity to build houses and infrastructure utilising local materials and local labour, subsidised by a modest royalty banking scheme;
- Deliver the ALC Strategic Plan's two principle streams of options to integrate early childhood, education, training and employment for Anindilyakwa people:
  - Essential Service delivery.
  - Cultural-based enterprises.
- Contract services to Anindilyakwa-owned business providers.

Figure 1: Proposed new structure (1)

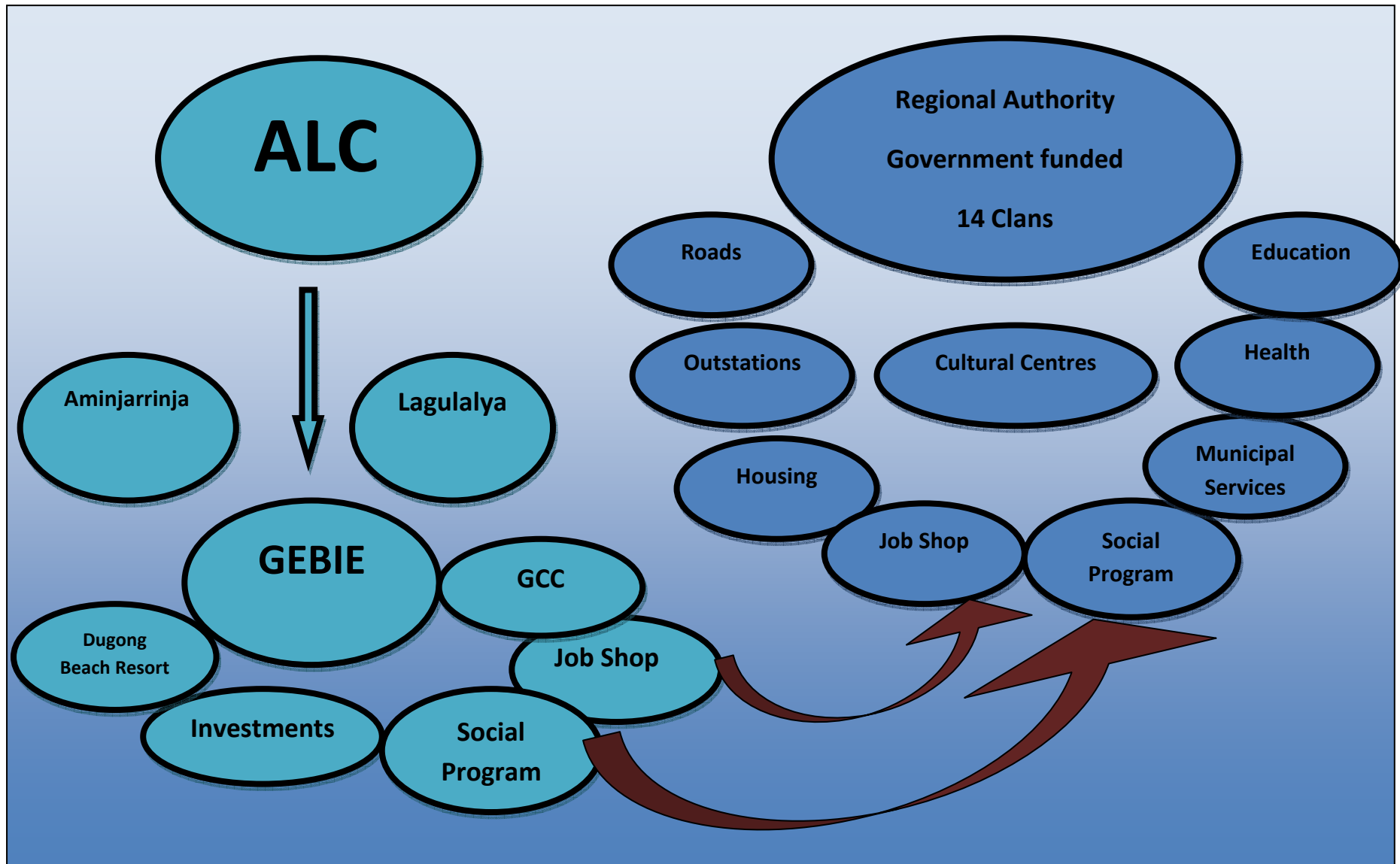
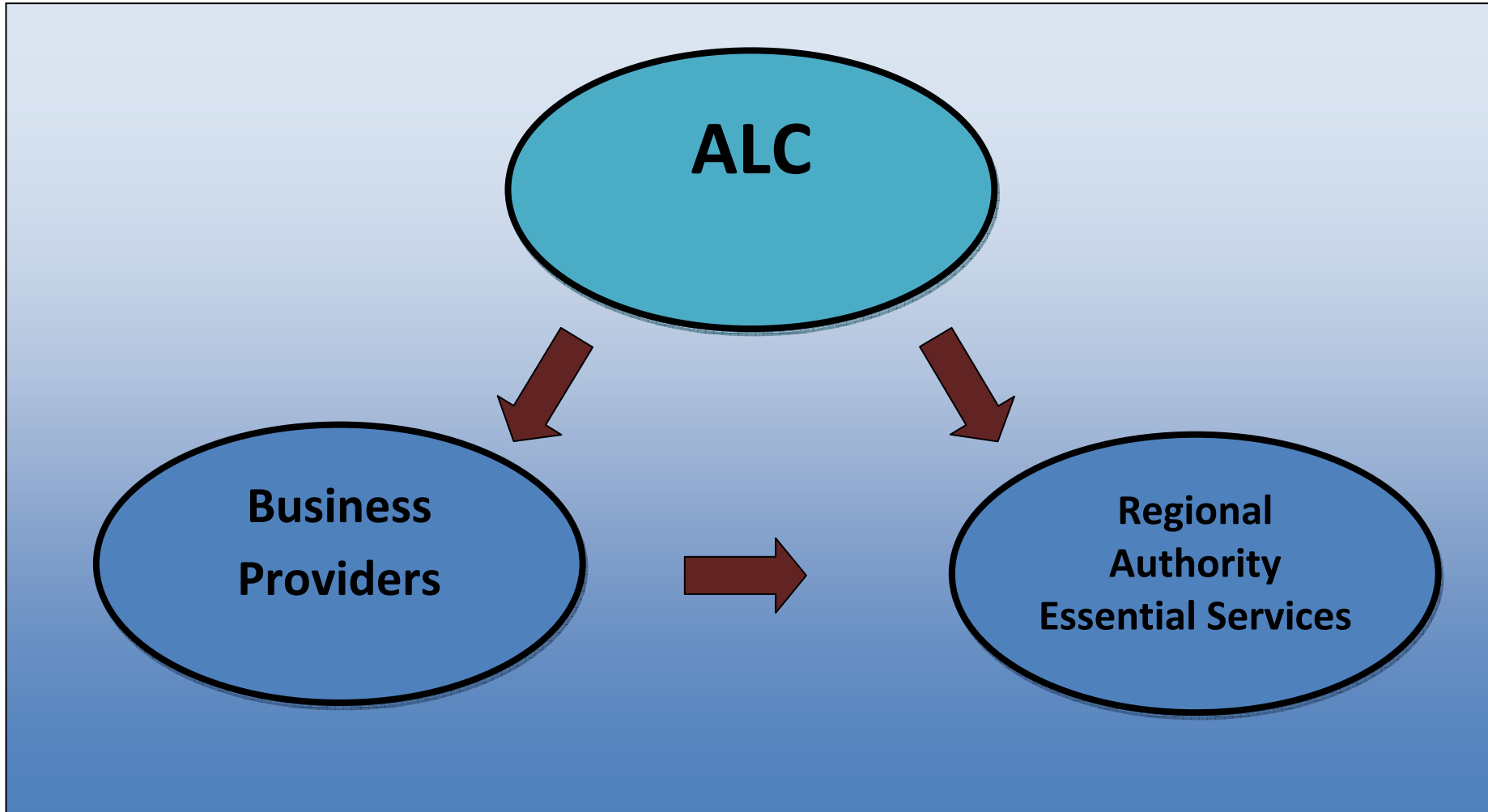




Figure 3: Proposed new structure (2)



**TIPS ON READING THIS DOCUMENT**

- Any good plan should be a living plan. It is intended that this Strategic Plan be updated when needed and reviewed as a whole annually by the ALC Executive Board.
- This Executive Summary has attempted to provide a useful overview of the overall concepts detailed in the subsequent pages.
- It is recognised that it is a large document and unlikely to be read in its entirety – its sections will be relevant to some and not others.
- Each major goal and subsequent actions have been distilled into tables for easy reference in the appendix.
- The RPA Stage 3 proposal draws on the first five years of the plan and will be subject to negotiation with our partners – and is likely to therefore change before being agreed upon.

The references listed at the end of the document should provide very useful background information to the Strategic Plan.

## 2. BACKGROUND TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The ALC represents Traditional Owners of the three Indigenous communities; Angurugu and Umbakumba on Groote Eylandt; and Milyakburra on nearby Bickerton Island; as well as a number of outstations. There are 14 clan groups divided into two moieties and they are bound to each other by a strict kinship system.

Anindilyakwa people continue to practice their traditions and customs, adhering to the law and kinship systems of their ancestors. Most live within one of the four townships on the Groote archipelago. Angurugu has a population of 1000 and was set up as a mission by the CMS on the banks of the Angurugu River on Groote's mid-west coast. The Umbakumba community has a population of about 583 and is located some 65 kilometres from Alyangula by road. It was established in 1938 by Fred Gray and was later run by the CMS as an extension of their Angurugu activities. The Milyakburra community has a population of about 176 permanent residents and is situated on the central eastern part of Bickerton Island; east of the mainland, between Groote Eylandt and Blue Mud Bay, and west of Groote Eylandt.

The predominately European township of Alyangula primarily services the accommodation and amenities needs of GEMCO; the manganese mining subsidiary of BHP Billiton, established in 1965. GEMCO is also responsible for maintaining the all-weather aircraft landing strip on Groote Eylandt. The world's richest manganese deposits are found on Groote Eylandt and BHP Billiton (through GEMCO) is a significant economic and employment contributor to the Anindilyakwa people.

The ALC began operation in 1991; replacing the role previously carried out by the Northern Land Council. The ALC works for the benefit of Groote Eylandt people, and liaises with GEMCO on all matters that affect the land, rehabilitation and the people.

Section 23 of the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act (1976) says the functions of a Land Council are to:

- Find out and express the wishes of Aboriginal people about the management of their land and legislation about their land.
- Protect the interests of traditional Aboriginal owners, and other Aboriginal people interested in Aboriginal land; assist Aboriginal people to protect sacred sites, whether or not on Aboriginal land.
- Consult traditional Aboriginal landowners and other Aboriginal people interested in Aboriginal land about proposals for the use of their land. Negotiate on behalf of traditional landowners with people interested in using Aboriginal land and land under claim.
- Assist Aboriginal people claiming land and, in particular, arrange and pay for legal assistance for them.

- Keep a register of Land Council members and members of Aboriginal Land Trusts and descriptions of Aboriginal land.
- Supervise and assist Aboriginal Land Trusts. In carrying out its functions, the Land Council must consult with traditional landowners and other Aboriginal people with an interest in the land. Landowners must give their consent before the Land Council enters into an agreement, or takes any action affecting their land. The Land Councils also have statutory responsibilities and duties to:
  - Attempt to conciliate a dispute between Aboriginal people regarding land matters.
  - Hold in trust, and distribute to Aboriginal associations, statutory payments from the ABTA to communities affected by mining operations and income received on behalf of landowners under negotiated agreements.
  - Process applications for permits to enter Aboriginal land.

In Goal E of this document, specific issues are discussed about the current status of the ALC and the roles that it has been required to fill causing it to go far beyond its mandate under the *ALRA*. At the time of writing, the ALC is at a critical point in its evolution as a peak representative body for Anindilyakwa people. Reforms are required to seek an improvement in the quality of mainstream services into the Groote archipelago and specific recommendations are made at the conclusion of this document to address these issues.

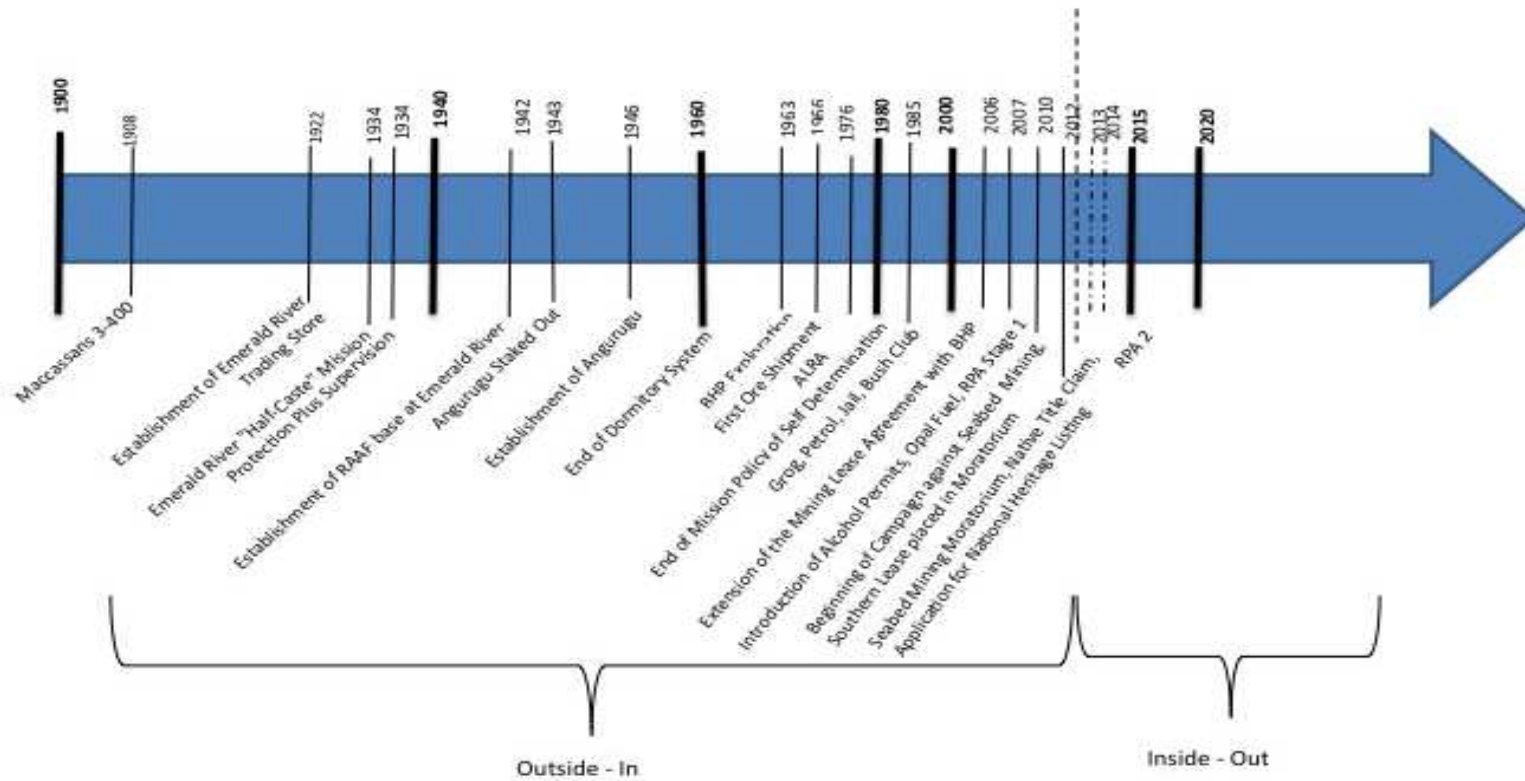
#### **PRINCIPLES ON BEST PRACTICE CONSULTATION AND DECISION MAKING**

There are a few imperatives that drove ALC to develop a long-term strategic plan. Firstly, there is a broadly held view among Anindilyakwa leaders that the local Anindilyakwa royalty fed “economy” generated by mining activity will not and should not last forever. While leaders recognise their societal dependence upon royalty income and welfare payments and they want to see a future for their children without both.

Secondly, significant influences and events that have profoundly impacted (mostly negatively) upon Anindilyakwa people since European settlement have been externally driven and mostly without consent. The community have expressed that they wish to determine what their future will be like and to lay the foundations for that now. The purpose of the ALC 15 year Strategic Plan (2012-2027) is to allow the Anindilyakwa people to take the future into their own hands.

In the past, most decisions have been imposed on Groote Eylandt people from the outside. This has included the presence of Macassans, missionaries and the mine. It has also included successive Government policies that have been largely imposed from outside, such as Protection 1931-1934; Protection plus Supervision 1934-circa 1950; Assimilation circa 1950-1981; and Self Determination 1981-present. Traditional Owners feel they have had minimal input into decisions made which have made significant impacts on their lives. They say decisions have come from the outside in. They want to see this reversed. The issue of the process of consultation itself therefore arose from out of the development of this plan.

Figure 4: Anindilyakwa timeline 1900- 2020



The consultative framework of the ALC consultative processes was based upon two tenants:

- To ensure that Traditional Owners make informed decisions.
- To ensure that decision making processes are consistent with the cultural tenets and drivers by which Traditional Owners make choices within their own culture.

The Strategic Plan recognises that decisions made outside of these parameters will hold minimal legitimacy and will not engage Groote Eylandt people in applying the plan. It is also the recommendation of this document that such tenants should underpin the engagement with Anindilyakwa people in the future pathway forward.

#### **UNDERSTANDING CONSULTATION WITH ANINDILYAKWA PEOPLE**

- Firstly, with many of the issues where Traditional Owners are expected to make a judgment there is, often, more than one argument or one point view that needs to be articulated in the interests of empowering Traditional Owners to make informed decisions.
- A traditional owner can only make an informed decision if they receive full information. This includes not only facts but also the 'evidence' typically used by mainstream people to build an argument in support of a particular viewpoint.
- Traditional Owners must also be provided with the tools to question arguments. The communication style of the Anindilyakwa people does not include debate. This means that they will typically not ask the type of questions that challenge the facts/evidence or the thrust of arguments by mainstream people. Mainstream people must therefore provide individuals who will play the role of "Devil's Advocate" in decision-making forums. Outside stakeholders must endeavour to ensure that people presenting information to traditional owner decision-making forums prepare in advance, with the aim of providing full information.
- There is little direct translation across the two languages, Anindilyakwa and English. It is critical that trained interpreters be provided for all forums where complex information will be presented Traditional Owners. Mainstream people presenting information to Traditional Owner forums are also encouraged to liaise with ALC Cross Cultural Officers on how to best to deliver full information.
- Secondly, to ensure that decision making processes are consistent with the cultural tenets and drivers by which Traditional Owners make choices within their own culture it is always essential that the appropriate Traditional Owners (those with the authority to make decisions in particular contexts) are present at decision making forums. This is a very fundamental point, because over the past generation, government services have been characterised by external decision making mechanisms delivering policies and services into the communities which are driven from capital cities from multiple siloed departments. The disempowerment of the community into the decisions which affect them with respect to services and staff has in turn created a culture of disengagement by community people who receive those core services. This has been highlighted in recent times in the delivery of Shire municipal services, education department decisions in the recruitment of key staff

and in the periodical withdrawal of on-the-ground health staff from the communities of Milyakburra and Umbakumba.

- It is recommended that ultimately the community take increasing control of key services in the key decisions being made in the recruitment of experienced outsiders when required, in the formulation of policies of programs being delivered and in the acceleration of local employment levels to assist in the delivery of those services. Later in this document it is proposed that the Anindilyakwa people be supported to incrementally establish a locally driven 'regional authority' funded and accountable to government agencies to deliver appropriate services in education, health and housing and municipal services. This could be governed by representations from all 14 clans (drawn out of the elected members of the ALC) and with relevant service experts involved to deliver an efficient and best-practise range of core essential services to its own people.
- It is finally recommended that non-local people presenting information to Traditional Owner forums will be required to undertake the ALC's Cross Cultural training module, *Consultation and traditional owner decision making*.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- When consulting, all facts and points of view must be presented – not just one point of view
- Trained interpreters must always be provided in critical decision making forums
- The correct cultural leaders must be present for key decisions being made
- It is recommended that a Regional Authority governed by representations from all 14 clans (drawn out of the elected members of the ALC) and with relevant service experts involved be created to deliver an efficient and best-practise range of core essential services to its own people
- ALC's Cross Cultural training module, *Consultation and traditional owner decision making* should be mandatory for all external stakeholders living and working on the Groote archipelago.

### **3. CONSULTATIONS TO DEVELOP THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

From September 2011 until April 2012, the ALC embarked upon an extensive consultation with Anindilyakwa communities to develop this long term Strategic Plan to inform the direction of the organisation into the future.

Views were gathered by the CEO, Chair and Deputy Chair, Anindilyakwa Liaison Officers and ALC staff in 17 face-to-face meetings in Angurugu, Umbakumba, Milyakburra, Bartalumba Bay and Malkala over six months. Input came from the two moieties which are made up of 14 clan groups.

The ALC Board Members provided substantial input into the development of the Strategic Plan. The consultations began with meetings of the ALC Board Members to confirm what the key discussion points should be. The consultations with community included discussions of what Traditional Owners would like the future of Groote Eylandt to look like for their children and grandchildren, what should be the main focus areas of the ALC and what actions need to be taken to realise the vision. Details of all consultations and attendance lists from meetings in the communities are provided in the Appendix number.

Further, confirmation of emerging themes came from extensive consultations by the Youth Steering Committee in the development of the Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island Ambaka murri-yada Yirrilangwa Youth Strategy, by Groote Eylandt Linguistics and the Women's Resource Centre consultations during 2011/12.



Figure 5: SWOT Analysis – Grootte archipelago

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong, iconic, ancient culture</li> <li>- Strong Anindilyakwa language</li> <li>- Impressive local knowledge</li> <li>- Stable entities</li> <li>- Ongoing GEMCO royalty stream</li> <li>- GEBIE Job Shop as job network provider</li> <li>- Existing organisation and management focused on planning ahead</li> <li>- Significant community wealth</li> <li>- Intent / support of key stakeholders</li> <li>- RPA in place</li> <li>- Land tenure of township leasing</li> <li>- Shire established</li> <li>- Economic base for the island through GEMCO mine</li> <li>- Pristine natural resource base - land and sea</li> <li>- Indigenous Protected Area status</li> <li>- Strong links with senior levels of Government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Young generation losing culture &amp; disengaged</li> <li>- Workforce not job ready</li> <li>- Low literacy and numeracy skills of working age cohort.</li> <li>- Lack of experience in operating enterprises</li> <li>- Mobility and motivation of workforce</li> <li>- Substance-abuse</li> <li>- Poor health</li> <li>- Low levels of private wealth accumulation</li> <li>- Land tenure restrictions</li> <li>- Sunset of current GEMCO lease</li> <li>- Inconsistency of GEMCO royalty</li> <li>- Housing maintenance response times</li> <li>- Overcrowding in Angurugu</li> <li>- Reliance upon Centrelink</li> <li>- Low education attendance</li> <li>- Poor education outcomes</li> <li>- Angurugu School infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unexplored tourism</li> <li>- Linkages with other operators</li> <li>- Local organisations seeking to engage with Indigenous Communities</li> <li>- Numerous business opportunities</li> <li>- Numerous employment opportunities</li> <li>- GEMCO - further expansion of mine beyond current lease</li> <li>- Township leasing creates opportunity for business investment, home ownership and private enterprise</li> <li>- Renewable energy opportunities</li> <li>- Sea-based economic activities</li> <li>- Opportunities to reduce expenses</li> <li>- Space for horticulture/food production.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further land losses and interruptions to song lines due to mining</li> <li>- Loss of key staff</li> <li>- Competition between stakeholders</li> <li>- Diminishing royalties</li> <li>- Lack of shared vision</li> <li>- Increase of Machado Joseph Disease</li> <li>- Increasing numbers of elderly requiring care</li> <li>- Loss of royalty and lease payments if mining stops</li> <li>- Work overload- organisationally and amongst local leaders</li> </ul>

## 4. VISION

### THE VISION OF ALC IS TO:

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

These vision statements have been distilled from broad consultations and have been consistent themes from young to old Anindilyakwa people.

**Protecting culture** is about the totems and songlines that underpin all Anindilyakwa social life. Nowhere is this more relevant than the threats from mining to the seabed that buffers the Groote archipelago from the Australian mainland. Across this sea country, there is a complex web of songlines that connects Groote Eylandt and Bickerton people to the coastal clans across the waters. The Anindilyakwa people are “reincarnationists”. They believe in life after death and in the human soul being reborn into another body after the current body ceases. To maintain these ancient pathways is a matter of life and death for Anindilyakwa people as their spirits must be sung back upon death to the origin of the individual’s songline. If the line is damaged by human activity anywhere along that continuum then that soul cannot be reborn – they will die forever.

**Maintenance of culture** is about keeping alive what is still vital. Many people are concerned that the younger generation is now beginning to be unsure about their genealogies – how they relate to other clans, families and individuals. Much work is currently being done through ALC anthropology and language centre staff to preserve and record the genealogical histories of all families on the island. This is crucial work that will assist youth in knowing their place in Anindilyakwa culture. The protection of the first language of Anindilyakwa people is also emphasised by both community members and prominent educationalists to be of critical importance. Evidence is overwhelming that a bilingual education program is superior to learning only in English. The reality is that a year one student still does not speak English when they first go to school. This is a strength not a deficit and must be a means of engagement not alienation at the onset of the formal schooling process.

**Promotion of Culture** is about looking to what is clearly an asset for Anindilyakwa People and in particular Anindilyakwa youth. Classical thinking around education, training and employment centres on mainstream society pathways for life-long opportunity, in competition with the rest of the non-Anindilyakwa world. Living and knowing about the world’s most ancient culture and in promoting that to the outside world provides a unique opportunity for youth in the Groote archipelago to assert themselves as individuals in the broader world.

**Investing in the present to build a future** is about using mainstream government investment to establish a local capacity to run the Groote archipelago that will remain in a post-mining era. There is a specific range of opportunity to develop a local workforce to deliver appropriate education curriculums (bilingual) in independent community schools, and to establish a residential college to work with year five and six students. Anticipating the increased level of Machado Joseph Disease occurrence, a doubling of the aged population and caring for those with chronic diseases will require a matching increase in appropriate infrastructure and a family-based trained workforce. Anindilyakwa people do not want to leave the island to deal with these problems. They want to remain on their country and to be cared for by their own. Government investment needs to be targeted within the Groote archipelago rather than in capital cities as a more cost effective and appropriate response. Housing (maintenance, refurbishments, new housing), municipal services and the capacity to look after key infrastructure provides another suite of opportunities to develop a self-sufficient capacity into the future.

This document also looks to the long term opportunity to link with major private sector investment to develop a low carbon economy. This will potentially include developing large scale solar farms to create cheap power, sources of bio-diesel for off-road vehicles and heavy machinery and a switch to electric-powered marine and land transport systems. The opportunity for a clan-based workforce to establish a carbon credit-financed regime of early season savannah burning is already being negotiated with the private sector. The growing of fresh food in the Groote archipelago rather than the reliance upon barge transport from capital cities will also reduce costs and provide more employment and address the current levels of poor health.

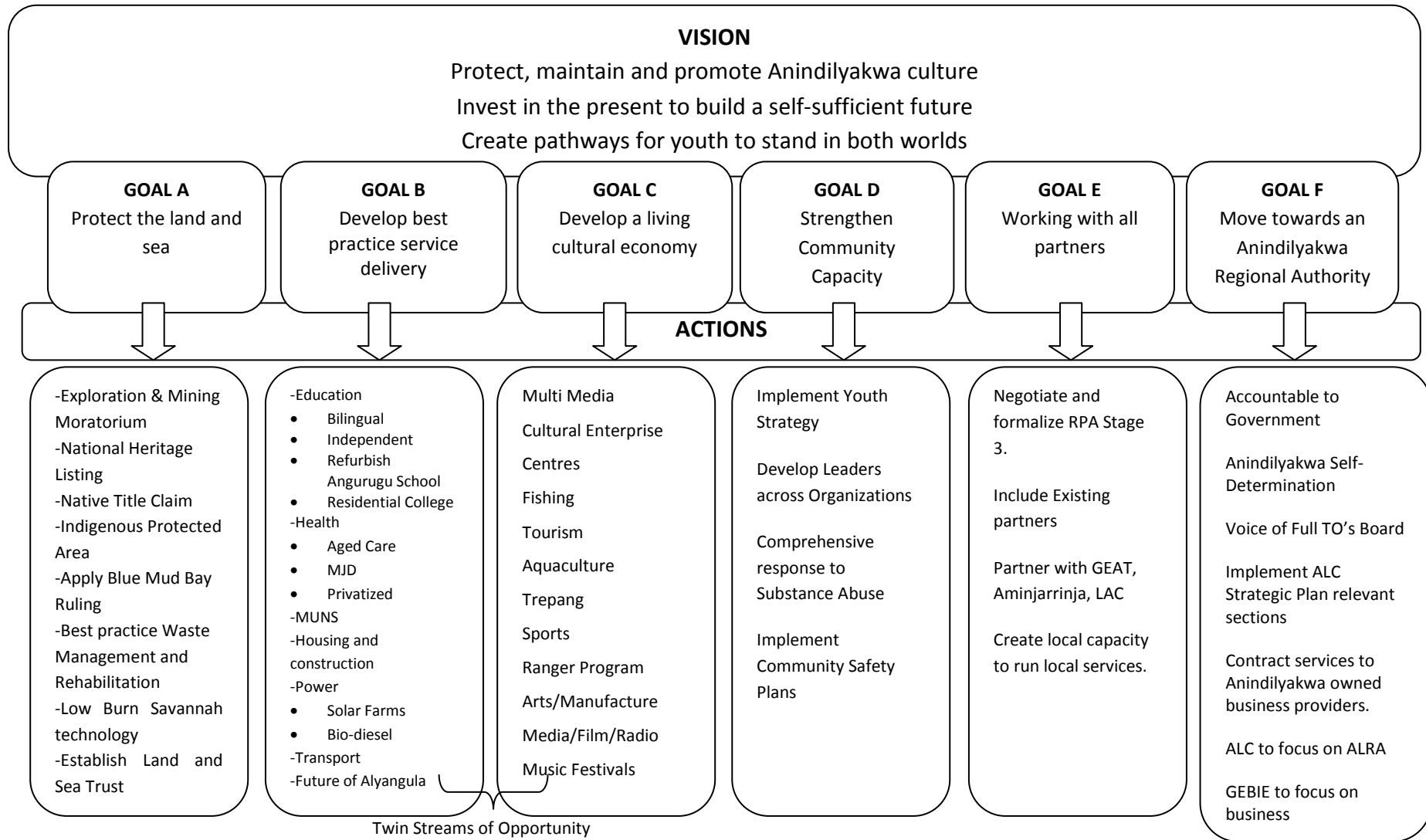
Historically, Groote was exploited by its northern Maccassan neighbours as a source of sea products prior to European occupation. The recently released Federal Government's *White Paper on Asia* has identified the future opportunities for Australia to align its future economy with Asia's inevitable economic rise and associated massive demand for supply. The Groote archipelago is clearly in a strong position to take advantage of this. **It is the view of this Strategic Plan that it is imperative to explore and establish, over the next 15 years, a large-scale aquaculture industry capable of replacing the current reliance on mining royalty income.** It recommends the investment of current royalty income into the establishment of an aquaculture export industry to Asia. Already, small scale trepang industries are being established and others proposed. They should be supported by ALC's economic arm, GEBIE, and by GEAT. The ALC Ranger program has already identified the possible viability of clam meat in trials to the north of the archipelago. The ALC is currently working with market researchers to identify the largest aquaculture opportunities for Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island.

**Create pathways for youth to stand in both worlds** focuses on culture-based enterprises as a key way to engage youth within the education, training and employment system. It utilises

the strength of culture to develop what is exportable to the wider marketplace by creating Cultural Enterprise Centres. These will be community owned and run, adjacent and working with schools. They will utilise internet, film, radio, music and other media to empower youth to speak to the outside world on their own terms. Links between iconic Groote art and the design/manufacturing sector is also seen to be an exciting opportunity to engage with a broader world thirsty for new and unique consumer products.

Commercial and game fishing, cultural tourism, sports, and a boosted ALC Ranger program to manage land and sea country will also be important components of a culturally rich economic future that ensures Anindilyakwa people engage with the outside world on their own terms.

Figure 6: Strategic Plan on a page



## **5. GOAL A: PROTECT THE LAND AND SEA**

### **5.1 PROTECT THE LAND**

Groote Eylandt has a unique and diverse environment with pristine beaches, spring water swimming holes, open woodland, rainforest, red sand dunes, and rock art which is thousands of years old.

The Groote archipelago is in an enviable position in the context of the NT's, Australia's and indeed the world's natural environment.

Having all these qualities in a single place is rare in the context of contemporary Australia and truly makes Groote Eylandt a highly valuable location in terms of environmental values.

#### **OPTIMISE MINING AGREEMENT**

Ironically it is the manganese deposits on Groote Eylandt that are mined under lease by Groote Eylandt Mining Company (GEMCO) which currently underpin the viability of the Groote Eylandt economy. GEMCO has its own port facilities and the resource is mined through simple open-cut operations to the south of the mining township of Alyangula. GEMCO is one of the lowest-cost manganese ore producers in the world and this together with the high-grade ore and relative proximity to Asian export markets make it unique.

GEMCO produced 4.3 million tonnes of ore in financial year 2011/12. At current production rates it has a reserve life of 15 years. GEMCO has recently undertaken an expansion project. The expansion project expands the capacity of GEMCO's processing plant by an estimated 1.0 mtpa at a cost (to BHP Billiton and Anglo American) of US\$183 million. In addition, GEMCO is undertaking a pre-feasibility study into further expansion options.

GEMCO mining leases were renewed for 25 years from 2006. It is yet to be agreed with the Traditional Owners whether these mining leases will move to an exploitation phase, thereby extending the mine's operational life from a current available ore resource of 12-15 years.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF MINING MORATORIUM – SOUTHERN LEASES**

The area referred to as the Southern Leases (EL 2455) is located in the south west of Groote Eylandt and extends from the South Point Tasman area in the west to the Amagula River region in the East and northwards towards Second Creek and Leske Pools.

GEMCO (BHP Billiton) has had an interest in this area for several years as it is part of its large southern lease on Groote Eylandt and potentially holds significant manganese deposits. GEMCO currently operates in mining areas sufficient to sustain the company on Groote Eylandt for the next 12 to 25 years. A key company policy of BHP Billiton is future planning, including the securing of long term resources, hence their interest in the southern region of

Groote Eylandt. Without this security it is unclear how long the company will retain its current tenure on Groote Eylandt.

The lease area in question comes under the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act 1976 and ownership of the lease area is granted under the NT Mining Title Act. Access is granted by consent – simultaneous by both NT Minister and Traditional Owners of the affected lands prior to any activity occurring in this area. Traditional owner consent is usually in the form of Exploration and Mining Agreements and future exploration and mining then continues within the provisions of the agreement.

To date, the Traditional Owners have resisted applications from BHP Billiton to access this area for exploration purposes. With the rejection of GEMCO's request for an Exploration Licence in 2009, the lease area automatically went into moratorium for five years, ending in January 2013.

During the moratorium period, the mining company is not permitted to raise the topic or discuss issues relating to acquiring this area for exploration or mining with the Traditional Owners of the area. At the conclusion of each five-year term, the company can request consent from the Australian Government and the Land Council to negotiate with the Traditional Owners to explore in the area. Under Section 46 of the *ALRA*, if the Traditional Owners of an area and the NT Minister for Mining agree to allow a company to explore for minerals in an area and the company is successful in finding minerals and wishes to proceed to mining in the same area there is very little the Traditional Owners can do to prevent active mining. The Land Council and Traditional Owners are then not asked to provide consent for the mining phase, only the appropriate Minister. The Southern region of Groote Eylandt contains significant cultural importance to several clans including ceremonial grounds and burial sites. Unfortunately the anthropology and archaeology of this area is poorly defined as yet, and much work needs to be completed in both fields prior to any serious consideration of disturbance of any type in this region.

While the approaches by mining companies can be put aside through the moratorium process for five-year periods, it remains critical for anthropological and archaeological studies to be conducted in this region in near future. Anthropological, archaeological and flora and fauna studies would provide a depth of information about the cultural, historical and biological characteristics of the land to enable Traditional Owners to make informative decisions about whether the land is suitable for mining or must be preserved for particular reasons. With the completion of mining on the main leases near Angurugu and potentially in the Eastern Leases, the critical decisions to allow access to new areas will no doubt bring all parties to the table in the future.

There are two forms of mining agreement that can be developed as a result of consent being provided for exploration by the Traditional Owners, the Land Council and Minister.

**Conjunctive Mining Agreements:**

- Full exploration and mining provisions are included in one agreement;
- Can provide more certainty on returns;
- Disadvantage is that it is a highly technical document and tends to be time consuming to develop;
- Also, it creates a scenario where the entry and conditions are negotiated before the extent of the resource is known.

**Disjunctive Agreements:**

- Two different agreements; exploration agreement separate to mining Agreement; as is the case with the Eastern Leases;
- Creates the need to negotiate twice – both for exploration conditions and later for mining conditions;
- Disadvantage is that it provides less certainty for both sides however, could be seen as providing a more acceptable progression for all parties;
- Allows definition of the resource before parties agree on terms.

The end of current mining will also mean the loss of royalty payments for Anindilyakwa people. These payments and other social benefits have been a part of life for most Groote Eylandt locals over the past 50 years. The decisions that need to be made by the next generation of the community to allow mining elsewhere on Groote Eylandt including the Southern Leases will have to be informed decisions. Without substantial knowledge and communication to the Traditional Owners of the value of areas within the region, the ALC fears that culturally important areas may be lost to mining.

While the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (NT 1976) does provide some protection of the area through the moratorium process, the overall protection into the future firmly sits with the Traditional Owners of the southern areas. It is a responsibility of the Land Council to ensure the Traditional Owners are fully informed and assisted where possible in restoring cultural knowledge of these important areas. The ALC must ensure full information is provided to all relevant Traditional Owners so that the correct decision is made.



**ACTIONS:**

1. Educate Traditional Owners of the value of areas within the Southern Leases.
2. Conduct comprehensive anthropological and archaeological studies in the Southern Leases area.
3. Negotiate with Traditional Owners if posed with a request for an Exploration License by GEMCO (BHP Billiton) after January 2013.
4. Seek advice on an ALC position to future exploration/mining of the Southern Leases area.

**EASTERN LEASES**

GEMCO (BHP Billiton) currently holds Exploration Retention Licenses over the areas in the head waters of the Emerald River referred to as the Eastern Leases. There are two leases in the area both located north of the Amagula River and east of the Emerald River.

GEMCO is currently actively exploring for manganese in both leases and it is expected that this program will be completed in the next two years. Preliminary exploration reports have indicated that viable manganese deposits do occur in both leases and GEMCO is proposing to move into the mining phase in the next three to five years.

GEMCO sought consent from the Traditional Owners of the affected lands in 1997 and consent was provided for GEMCO to explore the area and, in turn, mine if a viable resource was detected. While many Traditional Owners may regret that this disjunctive agreement was made, there is a limit to what can be done if GEMCO decides to go ahead with mining in the future.

Several cultural sites have been identified in the lease areas and these have been protected by exclusion zones and some signage. Most culturally significant areas occur on the southern and eastern boundaries of the leases close to the Amagula River and its associated songlines.

Beyond the concerns of cultural site impacts, there remains significant concern on the potential environmental impacts of mining in this area on the Emerald River. The Emerald River is a perpetual stream fed from a catchment located within the GEMCO leases hence any disruption to this flow would be devastating to the river and its surrounding ecology.

It has been highlighted to GEMCO that any attempt to mine within the leases will require significant environmental assessment to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the Emerald River or its associated environs. Any move by GEMCO towards mining in the

Eastern Leases will require a new Mining Agreement and this will provide a valuable opportunity for the ALC and the Traditional Owners to seek tight controls on what is permitted in the area, cultural area restrictions, environmental obligations, and financial compensation and community benefits.

**ACTIONS:**

5. Lobby for significant environmental assessment before proceeding with any new Mining Agreements in the Eastern Leases area.
6. Consult with the Anindilyakwa community on any requirements to be included in a new Mining Agreement, including cultural area restrictions, environmental obligations, and financial compensation and community benefits.

**PLAN FOR MINE CLOSURE**

Groote Eylandt Mining Company (GEMCO) mines manganese from a number of leases on the western coastal plain of Groote Eylandt.

Senior GEMCO and the ALC representatives have commenced planning for the end of mining on Groote Eylandt. The meetings are held quarterly to develop a plan for decommissioning and rehabilitating the area covered by GEMCO's lease. The plan would consider which infrastructure is to be retained.

The ALC expects that the mine site itself, including processing plant, workshop, offices and administration areas would be cleared away. The road supply, power-lines and water pipelines and the harbour access would be retained and the ALC is to look at possible future uses. The ALC will also investigate optimal use of current land management and rehabilitation practises for long-term sustainable economic development. Examples include solar farms, aquaculture ventures, and biomass growth carbon-offset schemes.

Mine closure planning needs to be underpinned by the principles of self-sufficiency and the retention of assets that have benefits for a low cost and sustainable economy, while disposing of assets that are expensive to maintain.

**ACTIONS:**

7. Conduct regular negotiations with GEMCO around mine closure planning.
8. Liaise with GEMCO in creation of an official mine closure plan.
9. Investigate optimal use of current land management and rehabilitation practises for long term sustainable economic development.
10. Build capacity in local people to take over the operation of GEMCO facilities such as roads, power and water supply, and port facilities.

## **5.2 ESTABLISH A CARBON OFFSET ECONOMY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

There is a range of opportunities emerging for Indigenous landowners in the carbon market. Carbon sequestration and storage and biodiversity protection are quickly emerging as a new economy in Australia. Carbon credits can be purchased and used by companies to cancel out, or offset, the emissions they generate during their normal course of business, for example by consuming electricity. Carbon credits can be used to offset emissions voluntarily, that is, through the voluntary carbon market, or to meet regulatory requirements, under the compliance market.

The Australian Government's Carbon Farming Initiative is a carbon offset scheme being established to help the environment by reducing greenhouse gas pollution. Legislation to underpin the Carbon Farming Initiative was passed by Parliament on 23 August 2011. The scheme has been operational since December 2011. This legislation provides a framework for how to generate and verify carbon credits so it can be traded.

Various methods of carbon offsetting being explored for Groote Eylandt include wildfire abatement (or savannah burning), bio diesel, soil creation, biomass and large-scale solar farms.

### **SAVANNA BURNING**

The ALC hopes to implement a savannah fire management project to offset part of the greenhouse gas emissions from large corporations in exchange for a fee.

The Federal Government has announced that savannah fire management will be classed as a methodology under the carbon farming initiative, which means payment for those individuals or organisations that can show they have improved fire management in northern Australia.

Late season wildfires in Australia's far north are a major contributor to the country's carbon footprint. The methodology encourages strategic burning, so that groups such as Indigenous landholders and pastoralists can reduce the number and the strength of fires and cut carbon emissions. Burning early in the dry season reduces the fuel that would have been available if the fire had occurred later in the year.

The ALC hopes to profit from the savannah fire management methodology, both to create an additional source of income for the Anindilyakwa people and to create a better fire management outcome for the region.

It is important to note that deliberately lit fires on country is already occurring across the Groote archipelago, mostly late in the dry season which is not optimal for the health of flora and fauna. For this initiative to be a success it will mean close consultations with the Traditional Owners from all clans to work together with a trained ranger team to implement an effective and measurable approach to the practice of burning country.

A project such as this has a range of ancillary benefits aside from the generation of income. These include the potential for Indigenous Australians to use traditional environmental knowledge; the engagement and employment of Aboriginal people and the inclusion of the Traditional Owners in knowledge transfer, planning and decision making. The work on the ground will rely on the local people, who own the land and have deeply held convictions regarding its sound management.

The project relies on the appropriate re-introduction of sound fire management practises across the Groote archipelago, which comprises of 259,300 hectares. It will be undertaken by the ALC in collaboration with GEBIE and implemented by ALC Rangers with the support of a number of independent experts.

**ACTIONS:**

11. Secure a contract with a large corporation or government institution to offset its carbon emissions.
12. Design, manage and operate a savannah fire management program on Groote Eylandt/Bickerton Island utilising the ALC Ranger program.

**SOLAR FARMS**

A large-scale solar farm is being considered to supply power for Angurugu and potentially Alyangula, as an alternative source to GEMCO's diesel generators.

The ALC is also seeking to set up solar farms in collaboration with Power and Water in both Bickerton and Umbakumba. The projects could be augmented by some sources of biodiesel and would be eligible for Indigenous-specific grants through the Commonwealth Government and for payments under a carbon offset scheme.

It is proposed to seek corporate investment through joint ventures for capital to establish the solar farms and it is envisaged that they would be paid off through an offset income and fully owned by the community after about 15 years.

High-level advice is currently being provided to the ALC to test the viability of such a scheme together with support from the Australian Government.

**ACTIONS:**

13. Investigate setting up solar farms to supply power for Angurugu and potentially Alyangula, as an alternative source to GEMCO's diesel generators.
14. Investigate setting up solar farms in collaboration with Power and Water in both Milyakburra and Umbakumba.

**SOIL CREATION BIO-MASS FOR CARBON OFFSET AND DIESEL SUPPLY**

Nutritious soil is the basis of sustainable urban farming. Unfortunately, much of the ground on Groote Eylandt is of poor quality. The ALC is looking at techniques such as growing nitrogen-fixing to mulch back into the ground to accelerate decomposition and create fertile soil. Successful techniques could be applied on GEMCO mine rehabilitation areas, to prepare them for future large-scale food production.

The ALC is currently working with leading Australian and international experts to investigate the potential development of carbon offset schemes on GEMCO leases. This work seeks to establish the viability of growing bio-mass through rehabilitation as a claimable carbon credit activity, with a cultivation component to provide a potential source of cheap cost diesel (bio-diesel) into the future.

**ACTIONS:**

15. Investigate soil creation techniques suitable for Groote Eylandt and apply to GEMCO mine rehabilitation areas in preparation for food production.
16. Investigate the viability of growing bio-mass through rehabilitation as a claimable carbon credit activity, with a cultivation component to provide low-cost diesel (bio-diesel).

### **LANDFILL METHANE CAPTURE**

There are now recognised technologies that attract carbon-credit funding where methane emitted from organic waste decomposition in landfill sites is captured and converted into clean power. The whole issue of landfill management and waste disposal on Groote Eylandt is currently an area of collaboration between GEMCO and ALC. Advice is being sought by the ALC as to the viability of a methane capture scheme for a new consolidated landfill site to be located on GEMCO's mining leases.

#### **ACTIONS:**

17. Establish the viability of a methane capture scheme for a new consolidated landfill site to be located on GEMCO's mining leases in collaboration with Indigenous enterprise companies.

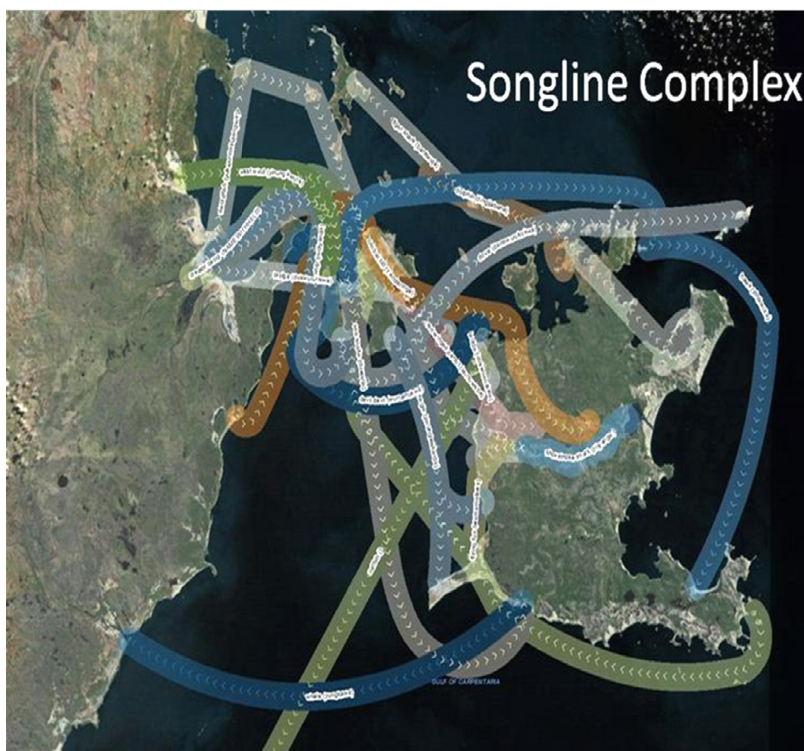
### **5.3 PROTECT THE SEAS**

Surrounding Groote Eylandt is a marine environment with fabulous reef systems and rich, Indigenous, commercial and recreation fisheries. Importantly, the sea country of the Anindilyakwa people is crossed by songlines associated with male ceremonial law, which is the basis for the authority of senior Traditional Owners. The songlines provide spiritual links among the islands within the Groote archipelago as well as from the Groote archipelago to the mainland. The songlines are also the basis for social and exchange links between Anindilyakwa people and their neighbours.

In the lead up to 2012, these songlines have been threatened due to proposals by mining companies to explore and mine the waters surrounding the Groote archipelago. It is important to note that under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (1976) and the Native Title Act (1993), no ownership for Traditional Owners is supported by legislation. The ALC is funded by the Commonwealth to protect its ownership over traditional lands only. The recent Federal High Court decision brought about rights over the inter-tidal zone via the 'Blue Mud Bay' ruling, however this does not apply to open waters.

A number of key initiatives have been led by the ALC investing its own royalty income to lobby for and place as many layers of protection over their sea country.

*Figure 6: Songlines lie at the heart of the Warnindilyakwa culture.*



#### **SECURE A MINING MORATORIUM**

The ALC has successfully lobbied for a moratorium on exploration and mining in the NT's coastal waters for three years, beginning in 2012. The moratorium announced in March 2012 by the NT Labor Government of the day was a big breakthrough for the ALC's Seabed Mining Committee working with senior Traditional Owners and ceremonial leaders. NT elections were subsequently held in September 2012 resulting in a change of government. The ALC is currently negotiating for ongoing protection with the Country Liberal Party.

#### **ACTIONS:**

18. Seek support from the new NT Government, Country Liberal Party to develop permanent protection from exploration and mining in the Groote archipelago coastal waters.

#### **SECURE HERITAGE LISTING**

The Groote archipelago and surrounding waters are being considered for inclusion in the National Heritage List. This is a list of places considered to be of outstanding heritage significance to Australia.

The Australian Government is considering including the area for its national heritage values relating to Aboriginal sea country and songlines. It would be included as an 'emergency listing' due to the threat of seabed exploration and mining activities.

The listing would affect seabed exploration and mining activities, but not general marine activities such as fishing, boating or shipping transport.

There are guidelines and 10 criteria used to consider the heritage value of the place. The Department of Environment produces a report, which then goes before the Australian Heritage Council to consider. The Council's decision then goes to the minister, who has the final say. If approved, it is the responsibility of the Department to uphold this heritage value.

However, if the seas around Groote Eylandt were listed for their exemplary heritage value as a unique form of Aboriginal sea country, especially the spiritual system which is manifest within these waters, then that would mean other Aboriginal societies with sea country would probably not get their seas on the register. The ALC can therefore either apply for Heritage Listing for the sea country around Groote Eylandt or get the societies of northern Australia together and apply to have them all listed as one exemplary system of Aboriginal sea country.

For an application to be successful, the researchers and authors of the application must have a strong knowledge of the places their application will be compared. For Groote Eylandt this would be comparing Groote sea country to other aboriginal sea country areas. The ALC therefore needs to build its knowledge of other saltwater people across the north in order to pre-empt the criticisms of the assessors.

**ACTIONS:**

19. Apply for National Heritage Listing for sea-country of the Groote archipelago.

**MAKE A NATIVE TITLE CLAIM**

Native title is the recognition by Australian law that some Indigenous people have rights and interests to their land that come from their traditional laws and customs. The concept recognises in certain cases there was and is a continued beneficial legal interest in land held by local Indigenous Australians which survived the acquisition of radical title to the land by The Crown at the time of sovereignty. Native title can co-exist with non-Indigenous proprietary rights and in some cases different Indigenous groups can exercise their native title over the same land.



Native title recognises Anindilyakwa people as those with property rights to their sea country. A native title claim over sea country would force mining companies to consult with Groote Eylandt people first.

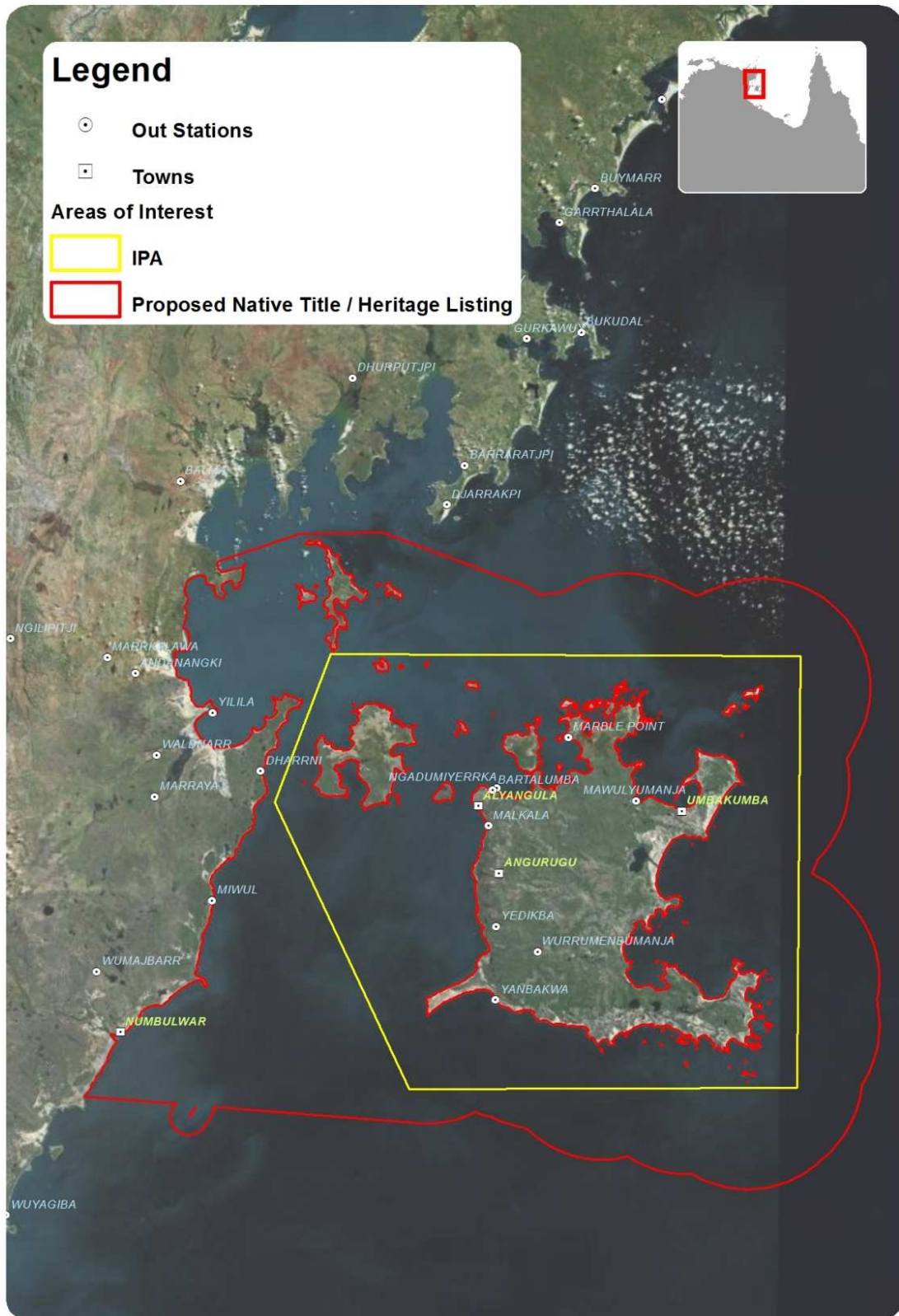
However, to date, no Aboriginal group has successfully claimed exclusive possession over their sea territory. In all decisions over sea country so far, the courts have said the sea does not have boundaries and all vessels have a right of free passage. This right sits alongside the native title right, i.e. it is shared and therefore non-exclusive.

Because Groote Eylandt people have exclusive possession of their terrestrial territory already, the sea claim is a once off project.

**ACTIONS:**

20. Register a Native Title Claim over Anindilyakwa sea country.
21. Seek a consent determination with the NT Government for a Native Title Claim over Groote archipelago seas.

Figure 7: Map showing areas of proposed Native Title and Heritage Listing



### **DECLARE AN INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA OVER THE SEAS**

An Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) is an area of Indigenous-owned land or sea where Traditional Owners have entered into an agreement with the Australian Government to promote biodiversity and cultural resource conservation. In return the Government agrees to give some support to the Traditional Owners to carry out the land management work required to conserve its ecological and cultural value.

Groote Eylandt has an IPA over its terrestrial territory already but not over the sea yet. IPAs come into existence by asking all interested parties in the area to agree to the management plan and the critical role of rangers in the protection of that area. This of course means getting groups with very divergent interests to agree to the IPA and its plan. For Groote Eylandt this has meant having commercial and recreational fishing groups agree to the plan as well as government departments that have a role in land and sea like quarantine, marine safety and resources and the environment.

Once everyone agrees to support the IPA it is then dedicated and then the government is turned to for support and funding of the ranger groups that will protect the area. The rangers with this funding then carry out the roles and activities spelled out in the Management Plan.

#### **ACTIONS:**

- 22.** Formally invite politicians and TOs to a meeting to dedicate the revised IPA, which includes the seas around Bickerton Island and Groote Eylandt.

### **APPLY BLUE MUD BAY HIGH COURT RULING TO GROOTE EYLANDT**

The Blue Mud Bay Decision, handed down by the High Court on 30 July 2008, is relevant in relation to the above by expanding the 'Aboriginal Land' definition under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* to include inter-tidal zones. This decision confirmed that Aboriginal land extended out to the low tide mark and not the high tide mark. This inter-tidal zone is rich in crabs and barramundi.

The Decision also makes it clear that a fishing licence granted under the *Northern Territory Fisheries Act*, does not entitle the licensee to enter or remain on Aboriginal land or fish in waters on Aboriginal land without the permission of the relevant Land Council. The conditions of the permit therefore prevail over the terms of the fishing licence, although the ALC has agreed to interim access arrangements for commercial and recreational fishers and other water users for waters overlying Aboriginal land pending the outcome of Blue Mud Bay settlement negotiations between Land Councils and the NT Government.

The ALC is in negotiations with the NT Government, which is potentially offering funds for perpetual access to the inter-tidal zone around Groote Eylandt for fishing.

**ACTIONS:**

23. Continue negotiations with the NT Government around access to the inter-tidal zone as in the Groote archipelago.

## 5.4 JOINT LAND & SEA INITIATIVES

### CARRY OUT THE LAND & SEA MANAGEMENT PLAN

In 2006, Groote Eylandt and the surrounding islands were declared an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA).

An IPA is a form of protected area that is declared or dedicated by Traditional Owners, rather than by a government agency. Though not established by legislation, an IPA is managed according to internationally agreed protected area guidelines and provides the basis for collaboration between Traditional Owners, ALC Rangers, government agencies and others with an interest in the Groote archipelago to look after all the cultural and natural values of the area. The existing land-based Anindilyakwa IPA is recognised by the NT and Australian governments as part of the National Reserve System of Protected Areas.

A Land and Sea Management Plan were released to explain how the land and sea of the Groote archipelago will be managed through the framework of an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA). The Management Plan sets out Traditional Owners' vision for country, describes the important cultural and natural values, identifies threats to those values and summarises how the land and sea country will be managed by ALC Rangers and through collaboration with government agencies, researchers and others. The ALC has had numerous consultation meetings over the last four years to develop the five-year Management Plan.

ALC Ranger activities under the plan include:

- Carrying out regular land and sea patrols.
- Site recording, protection and management.
- Controlling weeds and feral animals.
- Removing ghost nets from the sea.
- Undertaking research, monitoring and biosecurity and fire management projects.
- Maintaining roads to outstations.
- Supporting cultural knowledge and practises.
- Engaging in training and professional development.
- Toad monitoring using sniffer dogs and remote sensing.
- Animal and plant surveying.

- Turtle research and monitoring.
- Northern quoll tracking.
- Fisheries research.
- Climate change research.
- Cultural mapping on land and sea.
- Junior ranger program.
- Culture camps
- Education, communication and community involvement.

**ACTIONS:**

24. ALC Rangers to carry out the roles and activities spelled out in the Anindilyakwa IPA's Management Plan and review this plan annually.
25. Conduct extensive anthropological research with traditional and ceremonial Elders to document sacred sites and songlines across the Sea Country.

Figure 8: Anindilyakwa Indigenous Protected Area Land and Sea Management Plan

## ANINDILYAKWA INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA LAND AND SEA DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

### Warnindilyakwa People and Country



Groote Eylandt archipelago is the traditional land and sea country of the Warnindilyakwa Traditional Owners, referred to by our language name Anindilyakwa.

Ancestral spirits brought us here from the mainland along Songlines that created the land, rivers, animals, plants and sacred sites.

About 1200 Anindilyakwa people live at Angurugu and Umbakumba on Groote Eylandt and Milyakumba on Bickerton Island.

### Our Landscape/Seascape Values

- Relationship between people, culture and country
- Kinship with animals and plants on land and sea
- Identity as island and saltwater people
- Songlines that link us to the mainland
- Sacred sites on land and sea
- Traditional food from land and sea
- Traditional knowledge and practices
- Culturally significant species on land and sea
- Habitats that sustain people, animals and plants

### Conservation Significance

- Nationally and internationally significant nesting sites for marine turtles and seabird colonies
- Approximately 300 plant species and 330 vertebrate species
- 12 threatened animal species, including Northern Hopping-mouse, Brush-tailed Rabbit-rat and Northern Quoll
- Absence of cane toads, feral pigs, feral horses, feral donkeys, feral buffaloes and most invasive pasture plants
- Pristine marine environment supporting populations of dugong, four species of marine turtle, many fish and shark species, and coral reefs.

### Managing Country

**Legal Means**

- Accession permits for access to land areas (Land Rights Act)
- Negotiated access arrangements for tidal areas (Land Rights Act)
- Sacred Sites Act
- NT Fisheries Act
- Negotiated compliance training and authorisation

**Other Effective Means**

- Ranger patrols
- Ghost nets removal
- Fee-for-Service contracts (AQZs and others)
- Weed management
- Feral animal management (including cane toad monitoring)
- Fire management
- Site recording, protection and management
- Research and monitoring

### Our Shared History

**1600s - 1900s**

Maccassan fishermen sailed down from Indonesia with the annual northwest monsoon.

**1920s**

Church Missionary Society brought Christianity and formal education to our communities.

**1960s**

GEMCO manganese mine established.

**2007**

Dugong Beach Resort opened.

### Our Vision for Culture and Country

- Our niches are in the land, the sea and the Songlines.
- Our land and sea country are more important to us than money - since country is destroyed it cannot be replaced.
- We want to keep our land and sea country healthy like it is now for our future generations and for all our countrymen that our Songlines connect us to on the mainland.

### Our IPA Journey

**2004:** Anindilyakwa IPA over all our islands.

**2010/2011:** Consultations with TOs, government and others about expanding our IPA into sea country.

**2011:** All our land and sea country within the Anindilyakwa Land Council boundary dedicated as an IPA (IUCN Category V Protected Landscape/Seascape).

### Threats to Our Country

**Seabed mining would:**

- Cut through our Songlines
- Destroy our sacred sites
- Destroy dugong and turtle feeding grounds
- Pollute our waters
- Lock us out of hunting areas

**Weeds**

Weeds present on the IPA include Buffal Grass, Greaser grass, Mission Grass, Coffee Bush, Guinea Grass, Hiptail, Neem and Snake Grass.

Invasive pasture grasses present in Anindilyakwa threaten the local ecology and fire regimes.

**Feral Animals**

Many feral animals common to the Top End do not yet occur on the IPA.

Russ Deer, Asian House Gecko, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, House Mouse, Black Rat, feral cats and wild dogs are found on the IPA.

### Research and Monitoring

- Toad monitoring using sniffer dogs and remote sensing
- Animal and plant surveys
- Turtle research and monitoring (nesting surveys and satellite tracking)
- Northern Quoll tracking
- Fisheries research
- Climate change
- Monitoring and reporting on implementation of Management Plan

### Supporting Culture

- Traditional knowledge recording and application
- Cultural mapping on land and sea
- Junior Ranger Program
- Culture camps
- Supporting Elders to access country
- Education, communication and community involvement

### Using Our Country

**Our main food from the sea includes:**

- Dugong, Green Turtle, Flatback Turtle, Trevally, Milkfish, Parrot fish, Stegomyia
- Mulubin, oysters, mud mussels, clams

**Our main food from the land includes:**

- Mandakiriyerna - long yam
- Yiburu-wa - native honey or "sugarbag"
- Yiburu-wa - eagle wallabies
- Yaraja-wa - geonads
- Yimardukwubu-wa - blue-tongued lizards
- Mangkarika - wild plum
- Angarokaka - jungle currant
- Marrngam da - bush currant
- Yimuranga - wild prune

### Healthy People - Healthy Country

**Healthy Culture**

- Maintaining ceremony
- Maintaining language

**Economic and Social Development**

- Ranger jobs, training and mentoring
- Business opportunities in environmental services and tourism

**Health Promotion**

- Supporting access to bush foods
- Supporting wellbeing and healthy choices through culture camps

### What the IPA Dedication Means

We are committed to protecting, caring for and sustainably using our land and sea country through:

- Traditional law and practices
- Land & sea patrols, management, education and research
- Negotiation & collaboration with government
- Negotiation & collaboration with others
- Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act
- Native Title Act

IPA dedication is a non-legal process. It does not impact on any current authorities, licences or access rights. Any changes to current arrangements will only occur through negotiation and agreement.

### IPA Governance

- Direction by Warnindilyakwa Traditional Owners
- Implementation through Anindilyakwa Land Council
- Collaboration with government and stakeholders through IPA Consultative Committee

**Management Principles:**

- Respect for Warnindilyakwa law, Songlines, spiritual and cultural values
- Maintenance of biodiversity values
- Protection of biosecurity integrity
- Sustainable use of natural resources on land and sea by Traditional Owners
- Sustainable recreational fishing
- Economically viable and ecologically sustainable commercial fishing
- No seabed mining
- Land and sea managed together

### Anindilyakwa Land and Sea Rangers

Rangers based on Groote and Bickerton Islands:

- Implement IPA Management Plan
- Carry out regular land & sea patrols
- Control weeds and feral animals
- Remove ghost nets from the sea
- Undertake research, monitoring & biosecurity and fire management projects
- Maintain roads to outstations
- Support cultural knowledge and practices
- Engage in training and professional development

### Supporting Documents

IPA Technical Definition	IPA Governance Arrangements and Agreements	IPA Annual Work Program	IPA Fire Management Strategy	IPA Weed Management Strategy
IPA Cultural Management Strategy	IPA Fisheries Management Strategy	IPA Accession Agreements		

### **ESTABLISH A LAND & SEA TRUST FUND**

The ALC is investigating the establishment of a Land and Sea Management Trust Fund that could support the ranger program into the future. Both the Government, private and philanthropic sectors are being approached. A trust fund would make the ALC Ranger program less reliant on cyclical government funding and would allow operational expenses to be met with interest from the a Trust Fund investment strategy.

#### **ACTIONS:**

26. Investigate setting up a Land & Sea Management Trust Fund.

## **5.5 DEVELOP SEA-BASED ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES**

Groote Eylandt is fortunate to have a large coastline with a comparatively small population, resulting in a relatively pristine marine environment and healthy marine stocks. Like many Aboriginal communities, the Anindilyakwa people have strong customary links with their aquatic environments and rely on fish for food and culture. However unlike other NT communities, the Anindilyakwa people do not currently take advantage of the economic development opportunities afforded them by a fertile seabed environment.

It has been identified by independent consultants advising ALC that there exists significant economic opportunity for Anindilyakwa people to establish large-scale aquaculture ventures to augment and eventually replace the dependency on royalty income. Detailed technical research is being undertaken to establish optimal ventures targeting lucrative Asian export markets. There are a number of possibilities being explored including: giant clams, fishing, shrimps and trepang.

### **TREPANG**

Trepang, often referred to as the sea cucumber or sandfish, are found in northern seas of the Gulf of Carpentaria. There is a large international market for trepang; for example, China purchases about 30,000 tonnes of trepang each year and Australia only supplies about 300 of this. Since the early 1990s, Tasmanian Seafoods has harvested thousands of tonnes of trepang from the Top End coastline. After drying and processing, it is exported to Asian countries such as China and Japan, where it wholesales for up to \$150 a kilogram, and can cost consumers as much as \$280 a kilo. Aminjarrinja has an agreement with Tasmanian Seafoods, which holds the only Australian licence to harvest the slugs in the wild.

The processing of the trepang involves boiling, gutting, re-cooking with mangrove bark to add flavour and colour, then drying and smoking. A processing laboratory has been set up in Umbakumba and production has just commenced at the time of producing this report.



Local business, Angabunumanja Aboriginal Corporation and Tropical Aquaculture Australia have also established a joint venture, called Traditional Trepang Traders Joint Venture, to set-up a sustainable trepang farming business at Bartalumba Bay.

The joint venture has secured leases and licences and is calling on the ALC to recommend seed funding of \$375,000 via its economic arm GEBIE to help set up the enterprise, which is predicted to have net profits over \$4 million by the third year.

#### **HISTORY OF TREPANG ON GROOTE EYLANDT**

*Wild harvesting of trepang has been going on since the 1600's as one of Australia's oldest export industries. Every wet season between the late 1600's and 1908 Macassan sailors fished for trepang or sea slug from Groote Eylandt. While the trepang is not generally thought of as tasty seafood in Australia, Asian consumers love it and believe it has medicinal qualities. Trepang prized by the Chinese as an aphrodisiac Trepang were so abundant on the beaches that the Macassan sailors often stayed for months at a time. The remains of trepang processing plants dating back to the 18th or 19th centuries can still be found on Eylandt.*

#### **COMMERCIAL FISHING & SHRIMPS**

NT commercial fisheries provide high quality seafood such as mud crab, tropical snappers, barramundi, shark and mackerel to restaurants and retail markets across the world. Aquaculture is currently quite small in the NT at only \$27.08 million, including \$5.75 million in barramundi.

The ALC is investigating the potential of different fish species for their commercial viability with the aim of helping local fishing people to set up small businesses.

Another project being explored is a large-scale aquaculture venture: a shrimp farm exporting product to China.

The ALC plans to explore funding and resources available for pilot programs and establishing costs, and approach existing operations in places including Berri Springs, Nhulunbuy or Humpty Doo for insights and information.

The ALC is also exploring existing commercial Spanish Mackerel and wild Barramundi operations in East Arnhem with the view to cooperate on freight and distribution lines.

#### **GIANT CLAMS**

New and innovative aquaculture projects are being actively explored in partnership with NT Fisheries and other stakeholders.

Recent advances in culture methods for giant clams have been encouraging and the ALC Rangers are currently working with Darwin Aquaculture and NT Fisheries to trial whether they can be grown on Groote Eylandt and sold overseas.

A secondary aim of the trial is to grow giant clams to make up for the population decline caused by people harvesting them.

The ALC is to support any prospective business venture that meets the following criteria:

- It must employ predominantly Anindilyakwa workers and foster Anindilyakwa leadership;
- It must enhance a local economy and a capacity to develop a self-sufficient economy into the future;
- If royalties are to be invested it must make a return on investment.

ACTIONS
27. Pursue the establishment of large-scale aquaculture ventures to augment and eventually replace the dependency on royalty income.
28. Support the joint venture between Aminjarrinja Enterprise Aboriginal Corporation, NT Fisheries and Tasmanian Seafoods to trial growing trepang.
29. Provide seed funding of \$375,000 to help Traditional Trepang Traders Joint Venture set-up a sustainable trepang farming business at Bartalumba Bay.
30. Investigate various fish species for their commercial viability and help local fishing people to set up small businesses in commercial fishing.
31. Investigate the feasibility of establishing a large-scale shrimp farm to export product internationally.
32. Explore funding and resources available for pilot programs and establishing costs.
33. Approach existing operations in places including Berri Springs, Nhulunbuy and Humpty Doo for insights and information.
34. Explore existing commercial Spanish Mackerel and wild Barramundi operations in East Arnhem with the view to cooperate on freight and distribution lines.
35. Continue a trial to grow giant clams on Groote Eylandt and if successful find an overseas market and set up a commercially viable business.

## **6. GOAL B: DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **6.1 EDUCATION**

During consultations, the community emphasised that it wants to see a quicker turnaround of services, less dependency on government agencies to provide those services and more opportunity for employment of local people. In particular, it voiced concern over the slow and inefficient response to the repair and maintenance program being delivered by the East Arnhem Shire Council in contract to NT Government of Housing and Local Government. It also expressed deep concerns about the lack of school attendance, particularly in the community of Angurugu, symptomatic of a general malaise in engagement with mainstream service delivery.

Overall it has become clear during consultations that the issue of service delivery contracted by government departments over the last 50 years has created disengagement and a sense of disempowerment for Anindilyakwa people. This was particularly the case most recently in the withdrawal of Community Councils that ran Shire Services in local communities as part of the reforms that led to the creation of 'super shires' by the NT Labor Government in 2009. Across the NT it has been judged to have been a retrograde reform.

The ALC has actively utilised its network, particularly through the Regional Partnership Agreement (RPA) Committee to lobby for a reduction of bureaucracy and more direct mechanisms to engage local Indigenous businesses and to establish appropriate governance mechanisms to conduct improved service delivery.

To some extent this has already started to occur. The ALC has established Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Indigenous Enterprises (GEBIE) to invest royalties into the establishment of multiple business and social ventures, operating with mixed success and profit. GEBIE Civil and Construction (GCC), which is the principal business established under the SIHIP programme from 2010-2012, now has an unprecedented opportunity to expand into a first class provider of essential services to the Groote archipelago. Currently it is faced with more than \$30 million of construction work, mainly in delivering government contracts over the next few years.

Aminjarrinja Enterprises is an Umbakumba-based local Aboriginal organisation that has established a wide range of small businesses, all functioning profitably in their own right. According to Aminjarrinja, in the financial year of 2011/12 it turned over \$12.3 million with a profit of \$3 million. In Milyakburra through the Lagulalya Aboriginal Corporation (LAC), which since starting up in early 2012 has taken over running the Milyakburra Store, the local women's centre and traditional shire services such as waste collection.

The ALC will continue to work with current and emerging Aboriginal organisations in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra to help local people provide their own services. It

is particularly important that this should be a collaborative effort, both internally within those business providers and externally with the support of relevant government agencies.

### **A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO EDUCATION**

According to Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 Census data, there are 655 young people between five and 24 years of age living in Angurugu (366), Umbakumba (236) and Milyakburra (53). There are critical issues facing Anindilyakwa youth and the preservation of the Anindilyakwa culture. Angurugu school attendance figures give an indication of the challenge faced in engaging students in schooling. Most recent figures show that in Term 2 of 2012, less than nine percent of students were attending school more than 80% of the time. Many, 43%, attended school less than 20% of the time. At Umbakumba school, in term 2 of 2012, 33% of students attended school more than 80% of the time, while 10% attended less than 20% of the time. At Milyakburra, the figures are marginally better compared with Umbakumba; 37% of students attend school over 80% of the time, while 8.6% attend less than 20% of the time. Most youth are not attending school regularly enough to develop the necessary competencies to enable them to excel in tertiary education, training or employment.

Many factors contribute to poor attendance. In Angurugu, staff houses are yet to be constructed and that teachers do not live in the community in which they work and the school itself essentially needs rebuilding, Groote Eylandt has ongoing high levels of cannabis use and notwithstanding the SIHIP program, overcrowded housing is still an important contributing factor in Angurugu. Even more alarmingly, about 60% of people across both islands are regular cannabis users, causing problems such as mental health issues and a lack of motivation. Most fundamentally, it is not clear exactly what jobs Anindilyakwa children can look forward to and how schools can prepare them for a chosen future.

In December 2010, the Anindilyakwa Education and Training Board (AETB) was established to drive reforms in education. The establishment of education boards was a response to the recommendation from the *New Ownership, New Responsibility* report (Ramsey et al 2009) calling for greater control of education by local people. The Board comprises members from each community and representatives from both levels of government and GEMCO. The Ngakwurralangwa College was also established as a collaboration of the four schools on the island and school councils have been set up. The AETB is in the final stages of developing an action framework as a tool to guide action, and to improve education, employment and youth development initiatives and resources. Governance training workshops for Anindilyakwa people participating in the education forums is also underway. While the establishment of the new structures has been a major undertaking, a renewed focus is needed to ensure that these structures, strategies and activities are achieving direct results on education outcomes.

### **AUTHORITY ON EDUCATION**

Fundamental concerns still remain within the ALC as to the current structure of education on the island. The structure is such that decisions made by local education boards ultimately need to be approved by the Department of Education and Training. The ALC has heard community concerns as to why high quality teachers and school principals leave the island. The ALC is lobbying for increased involvement in Department decisions by local people. It is the overall conclusion of the ALC that ultimately Anindilyakwa people would be better served if they were to establish their own independent schools. Ultimately the fundamental matters of curriculum (bilingual and rich with cultural content) and recruitment (the selection of administrators, principals and teachers) should be decided by Anindilyakwa leaders.

### **BUILD HOUSES FOR TEACHERS IN ANGURUGU**

A major commitment under the RPA was to place government service providers into communities to improve engagement and to optimise their services. As part of the Regional Partnership Agreement, houses for school teachers will be built in Angurugu in 2013. There have been marked improvements in Umbakumba and Milyakburra Schools since teachers moved into the communities.

### **CANNABIS USE**

With the implementation of complete bans on alcohol consumption within all communities, cannabis has largely taken its place. Recent studies have indicated well over six in 10 men, women and children across the Groote archipelago are regular to heavy users of cannabis. While it can be argued that this is due to boredom and a general disengagement with mainstream society, it is the view of ALC that a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach will be required to respond to this issue. A major summit on substance misuse is planned for early 2013 to engage with the community and service providers to develop an appropriate response.

### **LINKING COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTRES WITH SCHOOLS**

Extensive consultation has determined that young people see the strength of their culture being combined with education and job creation as the essential missing ingredient in engaging them with the education system. Groote Eylandt communities are therefore saying they want to see a broad based investment in developing a range of culture-based enterprises where Anindilyakwa youth and elders will positively engage in protecting, maintaining and promoting their culture to the wider world. In response to this, the ALC is planning on constructing three Community Cultural Media-Enterprise Centres in each of the communities. These will be built adjacent to schools and work closely with the school staff and students in developing bilingual and culturally rich learning materials.

### **CREATE CLEAR MULTIPLE PATHWAYS FROM SCHOOL INTO TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT**

This document identifies two principle streams of options to integrate early childhood, education, training and employment for Anindilyakwa people:

- Essential Service delivery
- Culture-based enterprises

### **BOARDING SCHOOLS**

There has been significant investment by both the NT Government and GEBIE to support students wishing to attend boarding schools on the mainland. This has been of limited success to date. Most students return to the island for ceremonies and funerals and do not return to school. It is currently the policy of the AETB to not support large-scale boarding school attendance but rather address the inadequacy of current education on the island. The ALC supports this policy.

### **RESIDENTIAL FACILITY**

The ALC, in conjunction with other stakeholders, is investigating the possibility of establishing an on-island residential facility for Year 5 and 6 students. The learning facility would be an attempt to prevent a further generation of students who are disengaged from schooling.

The ALC envisages that the facility would be situated away from the township of Angurugu and managed by largely Indigenous staff where students can maintain a regular routine of meals, classes and recreational activities. The ALC is proposing to investigate and learn from the success of similar initiatives across the country.

### **LINKING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE WITH WELFARE PAYMENTS**

Both the Federal and Territory governments have moved to deduct Centrelink payments and to implement additional fines to the parents of children who consistently do not attend school. This has received the support of the ALC Executive Board and with community leaders across the three communities.

### **REBUILD ANGURUGU SCHOOL**

The community of Angurugu remains entrenched in a cycle of youth being disengaged from the local school. This is a complex multi-faceted issue, which requires a comprehensive response. Issues include ongoing overcrowded housing, lack of options for students to see pathways from schooling into meaningful pathways and jobs and substance misuse. Coupled with these challenges, Angurugu School suffers from gloomy and inadequate infrastructure. In the 1960's to 1980's when alcohol and petrol sniffing was rampant in Groote Eylandt communities, Angurugu School was created as a highly-secure facility with security screens and military-style layout. The general consensus is that it has the appearance of a detention centre. Based on the population size of Angurugu and an equitable basis with rest of Australia, such a structure would not be tolerated for a school.

The ALC is lobbying for a rebuild of the school; an indicative figure to rebuild it is about \$15 million.

## HEARING DIFFICULTIES AND LEARNING

As part of the implementation of the RPA Stage 2, the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation is working closely with schools across the Groote archipelago. The following facts and extracts of communication have been provided to the ALC for consideration.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the prevalence of Otitis Media within Indigenous communities ranges from 40% to 70% compared to only 5% in more advantaged populations around the world. In Australia, chronic ear infections affect up to 40% or more of Indigenous children living in remote areas.

The unacceptably high incidence of Otitis Media in Indigenous communities is having a devastating effect on educational outcomes. Impaired hearing has been associated with poor school achievement for Indigenous students, who are unable to hear correctly in the classroom and are thus placed at significant disadvantage, particularly in reading and language acquisition (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012*).

With the onset of Otitis Media emerging at a very young age, the ability of these Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to develop the skills that form the foundation necessary to learn to read and write successfully is severely compromised. Action is urgently required.

“Various teachers in Groote Eylandt schools tell me that they have been told their class members in the early years are experiencing chronic Otitis Media. They are reporting that as many as 75% of the class members are experiencing hearing loss with 25% of the class experiencing hearing loss to such an extent that they should receive an amplification device (such as a hearing cap, hearing aid or amplified sound in the classroom via a specially designed microphone that the teacher wears). Unfortunately, they are also saying that the children do not tolerate these devices”. Mary-Ruth Mendel, ALNF Founder.

Groote Eylandt children are experiencing multiple barriers to school-based reading.

The ALNF Early Literacy and Language program specifically addresses the following two barriers:

- Challenged developmental growth in the cognitive and sensory perceptual skills required for reading development
- Poor pre-literacy development that requires compensatory strategies for hearing loss and other language learning difficulties.

In this Phase One of the ALNF program, children in participating learning sites/classrooms have already shown promising positive learning growth.

However, not all class teachers have fully implemented the ALNF Early Literacy and Language strategies or utilised the resources provided in Anindilyakwa and English. Discernible gains can be shown through the test results for those children who have had the benefit of committed teachers though the early phase of this project. The ALNF is concerned

that the message: “These are essential learning steps and strategies to compensate for ‘deafness’ and language learning difficulties,” is not adequately getting through to all of the school community.

### **BILINGUAL CURRICULUM-BASED LEARNING**

The community consultations have advocated for school curriculum to be bilingual. Anindilyakwa is the first language of youth and strong evidence supports English to be taught alongside the native language to yield optimal results. A bilingual literacy and numeracy program must be made available starting in early childhood right through to schooling, training and employment. The ALNF Early Literacy and Language program has developed tandem resources in Anindilyakwa to facilitate successful reading development in both English and Anindilyakwa in a manner that addresses hearing loss and learning challenges. The tandem resources provide a solid bilingual reading and writing foundation.

#### **ACTIONS:**

36. Closely review and monitor education data on an ongoing basis.
37. Establish improved governance including the possible creation of independent schools
38. Establish a bilingual-based learning curriculum
39. Build on the strong start already provided in the ALNF Early Literacy and Language Program and link this in with an enhanced Groote Eylandt Linguistics Centre capacity to develop community-based capacity in bilingual educational and pre-employment support programs
40. Establish a link with community cultural centres and school learning curriculum
41. Implement the ALC Strategic Plan school-training-employment strategy
42. Work with community health centres and schools to address the difficulties associated with hearing impairment and learning
43. Investigate and learn from the success of residential school facilities across Australia, with the view to establishing an on-island residential school for Year 5 and 6 Anindilyakwa students
44. Lobby for a rebuild of Angurugu School
45. Complete school teacher houses in Angurugu
46. Conduct a summit on Substance Misuse and carry out identified actions.



## 6.2 HEALTH

This Plan has analysed the future demand for services for the aged, patients suffering from Machado Joseph Disease and sufferers from other chronic diseases. Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island's senior population is expected to nearly triple in the next 15 years. There is expected to be a marked increase in the number of people requiring aged and/or disability care services as well as an increase in the number of carers needing to access respite services.

The evidence is that there are currently 24 confirmed cases of MJD at May 2012 with a further 106 at risk with a 50% chance of being confirmed. The next generation incidence is likely to reflect approximately 5.4% of the population or around 114 people. Current generation survival is an average of 15 years post diagnosis with wheelchair confinement from around five years and the disease progressively worsening until high level care for the last five years. Next generation onset will be at an earlier age and a more severe onset. Life expectancy will be shorter at around 10 years and wheelchair confinement is expected within a few years with high level care requirements by five years of age.

Three main factors appear to drive the need for greater on-island high need health-care facilities:

- In general there is reluctance by chronically ill patients to leave both family and the island. Poor access to community services and residential care have meant that people experience substandard care and die prematurely at home in preference to being sent away for care.
- The next generation of MJD patients will be much younger and they will not have the sibling or family structure available to care for them. These are the same people who the current generation of sufferers are relying on for care. The next generation of sufferers will be much younger and there will be multiple generations requiring significant support at the same time, placing a major spike on services.
- Taking confirmed MJD cases plus 50% of current at risk, there are 77 likely cases in the near term progressing to a medium term trend of around 114 people, with increasing severity. Using uniform distribution firstly over 15 years and then later over a 10-year period, Groote Eylandt could progress quickly to a 30-bed high dependency requirement and then up to a 60-bed high dependency need within 10 years. The balance of patients could potentially be evenly split between at home and day therapy and periodic respite.

This would imply two construction phases. The first would be add an additional 30 bed capacity to existing aged care facilities and then another 30 beds later on. Given the reluctance of MJD sufferers to leave home, any excess capacity could be absorbed by aged and disability patients. However, with the next generation it appears there will be little choice other than residential care.

A major outcome of the Strategic Plan is to advocate for measures to establish a substantial local workforce to cater for senior people and patients of MJD and chronic diseases.

### **INCREASE AGED CARE SERVICE**

GEBIE currently provides funding to the Mungkadinamanja Flexible Aged and Disability Care Centre in Angurugu, which provides aged care services to all three communities. The building is well maintained and originally built to community design.

The ALC is committed to contributing funding via GEBIE to expand aged care infrastructure and work with other stakeholders to ensure local aged care residents receive the best care possible. Some additions will also be necessary to expand the service for people affected by MJD. While the ALC is prepared to commit royalties to these needs, it is clear that given the scale of the issue, funding will need to substantially come from Federal and NT governments via mainstream health funding channels.

A recent review of aged care in the region found that aged care services were only partially meeting the communities' needs for aged care. It also found knowledge about the full range of activities that could be provided by an aged care service was generally low. The ALC believes it is important that the service is expanded to offer increased day and/or overnight respite as well as long term residential care, supported accommodation and increased specialised care for MJD clients. Currently, use is limited to occasional short time overnight/period respite and palliative care short stays. This is partly due to challenges with introducing local staff to work shifts.

The community needs to be consulted on the expansion of these services and whether they would see services for aged, disability and MJD centralised into one complex for the whole Groote archipelago or that services would be located within each community.

Another priority for the ALC is encouraging the numbers of Anindilyakwa people working in the health sector. The ALC will look at avenues to promote local residents to work in the health sector and to take up training that can lead to a job in the field. Building a workforce now will provide the opportunity to expand services in the future and empower people to be independent.

### **ENSURE CARE FOR MJD PATIENTS**

Machado Joseph Disease is a genetic neuro-degenerative disease. There is currently no cure, and individuals living with the disease are progressively unable to use their muscles until they become wheelchair bound and completely dependent on others.

To care for a person with moderate through to severe MJD is a difficult job. Individuals with MJD need help for all personal, community and instrumental activities of daily living, and have a lot of problems with sleeping, swallowing, feeding themselves, communicating, going to the toilet etc. Family carers become exhausted as they are often up for most of the night helping the person with MJD. It is physically hard, because the person with MJD must be

lifted for all transfers (car, wheelchair, toilet, bed etc), showered, fed, toileted, dressed and have their shopping, banking, laundry, cleaning and other personal matters done for them.

Being a carer is also emotionally hard because often the carer is related and may have the disease themselves.

**PREVALENCE AND NATURE OF MJD ON GROOTE EYLANDT**

Modeling conducted by the MJD Foundation in conjunction with Associate Professor John MacMillan (Genetics Health Queensland) from 2010 to 2012 provides an accurate picture of the rates of MJD in the NT Indigenous population and has enabled some basic projection figures to be calculated. The current (symptomatic and ‘at risk’) figures have been confirmed through direct family contact in these remote townships. The projected figures have been determined using a validated Huntingtons Disease projection method, the Conneally model.

While worldwide the prevalence of MJD is 0.63/100,000, the projected figures for the next generation in these townships are up to 5,455/100,000 (5.4%). These are by far the highest rates of MJD anywhere in the world.

Table 4:

*“ConneallyPM, Am J Hum Genet 36:506-526, 1984”.*

*At risk individuals are direct descendants of those with the disease who have at least a 50% chance of having the disease and are living today.*

**(\*) Note, this table is current as of May 2012.**

Location	Symptomatic	At risk alive today	/100, 000 current and 1 <sup>st</sup> generation
Groote Eylandt (*)	24	130	909-5455
Yirrkala	11	110	TBC
Galiwin’ku (Elcho Island)	21	115	807-4902
Ngukurr	10	94	TBC
Central Australia	5	20	TBC
Oenpelli	3	8	TBC
<b>Totals</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>517</b>	

## **GETTING YOUNG**

There are two types of MJD. One has a fairly stable 'age of onset' (usually around middle age) the *Machado* type and a type that tends to affect the next generation earlier and earlier, the *Joseph* type.

A research paper published in Archives of Neurology in February 2012, *Mutational Origin of Machado-Joseph Disease in the Australian Aboriginal Communities of Groote Eylandt and Yirrkala*, confirms Indigenous Australians from Groote Eylandt have the more aggressive 'Joseph' strain and that the origin is likely Asian (rather than Portuguese as previously hypothesised). The implications of this on projected figures and service delivery in Arnhem Land are significant, as with this more aggressive 'Joseph' strain, Groote Eylandt can expect the average age of disease onset to become younger and the disease progression more rapid, and consequently see an increase in the number of people and families affected by the disease in more than one generation at the same time.

In stark terms, for communities like Angurugu this means that in 15 to 20 years, up to 150 people will be symptomatic with MJD (i.e. 5% of the population), so it is realistic to project 100 wheelchair users, most of them under 50 years of age.

Of most concern to planning the care of people with MJD is the fact that the aggressive anticipation effect experienced by the younger generations means that the informal care networks so heavily relied on in these families will quickly be decimated, necessitating increased reliance on care from outside the family, provided by government and NGO community services.

## **NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME (NDIS)**

In early 2012, the Australian Government introduced a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) for all Australians.

An NDIS will turn the way the government currently caters for disability services on its head. Rather than funding based on historical budget allocations, a funding pool will be based on actuarial (statistically calculated) assessment of need.

It will recognise that disability is for a lifetime, and so it will take a lifelong approach to providing care and support. This means that assessment will look beyond the immediate need, and across the course of a person's life. For example, home modifications might be expensive up front, but if they afford a person with significant disability the opportunity of greater independence, or if they mean that a carer can continue to care for their loved one, it is a good investment.

While the national focus for the NDIS is providing a choice of service provider for individuals, the reality is that in most remote Indigenous communities there is none or perhaps only one service provider.

An NDIS Task Force has been formed and one of the 'building blocks' being examined for the NDIS is Indigenous Disability. The Productivity Commission recommended several options

that are being examined such as block funding; and supporting remote community partnerships.

The MJD Foundation is working in collaboration with the NDIS Task Force to both identify and provide advocacy regarding the disability need/profile in remote Indigenous townships.

What this actually means for the people of the Groote archipelago is still not known, however what is known is that where historically those with MJD have received services that have been “snuck in” under aged care funding, this will become a lot more structured under Individual Disability Plans and providers will be required to document and prioritise care to those who fit the funding requirements. While the service provider for ‘Aged’ and ‘Disability’ care may be the same, the way these services are administered will be vastly different.

### RENAL FAILURE

Community members and leaders have approached the ALC to lobby for more services to be provided for Renal Failure patients in the Groote archipelago, rather than for these services to be provided for in Darwin. Those patients who are in Darwin apparently do not have accommodation provided and struggle to cope away from their families. Current indications are that this is affecting a significant percentage of the total population.

NT Health has provided some statistics for people with a diagnosed renal condition. There will be, of course, others at risk of renal problems with co-morbidities such as diabetes.

Renal functioning is usually classified in 5 stages, with Stage 1 being normal and Stage 5 being kidney failure. Kidney Health Australia explains these stages quite well on their web page: <http://www.kidney.org.au/kidneydisease/tabid/578/default.aspx>

The breakdown of numbers by community and stage of renal disease is below. Stages 3 to 5 are classified as Chronic Renal Disease.

Township	Stage	Number diagnosed
Angurugu:	3	16
	4	1
	5	7
<b>Sub-total:</b>		<b>24</b>
Umbakumba:	3	8
	4	0
	5	1
Sub-total		9
<b>Total</b>		<b>33</b>

The current dialysis unit for treating this condition is currently based in Angurugu and is considered inadequate. Most people are treated in Gove or Darwin.

**ACTIONS:**

47. It is recommended to immediately upgrade the dialysis unit in Angurugu with mainstream health funding.

48. Lobby for an immediate upgrade of the dialysis unit in Angurugu.

**OTHER ENHANCED SERVICE PROVISION**

It is clear that current Home and Community Care services (known as HACC services) will need to increase and expand from the current scope of service delivery (primarily Meals on Wheels) due to higher demand. The effectiveness of these services can make an enormous difference in supporting people to remain in their homes for longer.

More extensive lifestyle programs integrated with the residential care facility which distinguish and target 'aged needs' versus 'disability needs' are required for a younger cohort.

Increased capacity for Health Services to provide weekly home visits for wheelchair users who are unable to access appropriate transport in order to physically get to these services will also be necessary.

**WORKFORCE PLANNING**

Supporting and advocating for programs which build a care workforce of local community members will help ensure people are more decently cared for by their own people within the comfort of their own culture. This will ensure that any economic benefits of having local health care facilities are enjoyed by the local communities.

An analysis would be useful to determine the best means to support Certificate III/IV Aged/Disability/Chronic Disease Care education through initiatives such as partnering with registered training organisations, and having a local 'regional authority' capable of coordinating local Community Service and Health (CS&H) education provision on Groote Eylandt.

A CS&H training option on Groote Eylandt could be attractive to Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. This is because the qualifications are nationally relevant and transportable and the experience gained would be valuable in building a local workforce and would make work in community services an attractive option.

As a part of any CS&H education program on Groote Eylandt, it would also be beneficial to look into possible pre-vocational training and VET programs; for example running a Certificate II in Community Services would be a way to engage secondary students.

A further possible strategic initiative could be looking at providing disability employment opportunities for those people living with disabilities in the community (eg. GEBIE Job Shop, NTG initiatives, etc).

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

The ALC advocates for the following proposed infrastructure for Groote Eylandt:

### **MJD AND AGED CARE FACILITIES**

- Advocate for the Angurugu Flexible Aged Care Centre to become a 24/7 multi-functional residential care facility.
- People who can no longer be cared for in their homes are currently sent into Darwin residential care. There are currently two Groote Eylandt people living with MJD in permanent residential care in Darwin (and others without MJD), and the numbers will grow significantly in the future. There are cases of Groote Eylandt people living in their community in seriously compromised situations because they refuse to go to Darwin and family can no longer provide adequate care. Having a residential care facility on Groote Eylandt would mean that there can be more regular temporary respite periods for families who wish to keep their family member with MJD at home.
- Planning must occur to determine whether Angurugu should remain the only 24/7 residential care facility across all Groote Eylandt communities, and if so, the extent of expansion of the number of beds required in the future. There is currently a day care facility in Angurugu and Umbakumba and a proposed service at Milyakburra. Whether these become one, two or three residential care facilities influences the planning, service provider negotiations, costings and infrastructure planning.
- Ensure adherence to Australian Standards building codes for accessibility (AS1428.1-2009), which must be met as part of any form of negotiations (GEMCO, EASC, NTG, FAHCSIA) to ensure that all new and upgraded community buildings are fully accessible. This could be something that is agreed to as part of the Regional Partnership Agreement (RPA Stage 3). Every individual has the right to be able to gain access to a community building. In fact, from 2009 it is the law. The ALC has the right to insist these standards are upheld.
- Audit existing community buildings to determine accessibility, and put plans into place with service providers for agreement that all buildings/offices must be upgraded to become accessible (i.e. Centrelink, supermarket, Shire, bank etc). This includes not only ramps and bathrooms, but considerations such as easy-swing doors, lowered desks etc.
- Wheelchair users are unfortunately being excluded from various buildings, activities or events because of accessibility limitations. Similarly, they are having to rely on others for things they could otherwise do themselves. For example, wheelchair users cannot currently see over the counter at Alyangula Police Station and consequently do not go there to report issues; wheelchair users cannot access the EASC building in Angurugu to collect mail, request repairs and maintenance on their home, obtain ID or participate in activities/meetings of community importance.

- Staff accommodation for 24/7 residential care facility in Angurugu  
To attract and retain qualified and high quality staff, it is important that staff have adequate housing to enable a work/life balance and privacy. A 24/7 care facility in particular means that staff are working shift work. Shared accommodation is poor practice and leads to high levels of staff turnover.
- Construct a specialist training/education and resources centre (including provision of genetic education services/digital technology etc.) to support people with MJD and their families and to train/educate carers and wider community. (This facility could serve as a base for outreach to other Arnhem Land townships becoming an MJD centre of excellence for the region).
- The move towards tele-health and tele-rehabilitation will allow individuals with MJD (and their on-Eylandt treating teams/carers) to access specialists for support and guidance with treatments and interventions, including targeted therapy and genetic education programs (for example the MJD Foundation's highly successful Skype Speech and Swallowing Therapy trials, and Closing the Gap on MJD Genetic Education program). At present the fly-in/fly-out nature of many allied health and specialist services is such that many people miss out on, or refuse to participate because they do not see any practical outcomes or benefits to themselves.
- Footpaths in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra so that wheelchair users are not forced to be on the road, and to allow access to the community in the wet season.
- When the only means of transport is to push a wheelchair user on the road, this is a huge safety risk for all involved. In addition, individuals with mild to moderate MJD report that they do not like walking or riding the three-wheeled bikes within the community, because if they 'wobble', fall, or trip over hazards (dogs, potholes, etc) they are on the road and risk being run over. In the wet season there are parts of the community that are completely inaccessible (even on the road) which leads to social isolation of people in wheelchairs.
- Accessible driveways leading to footpaths in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra.  
In the wet season, driveways become muddy or even submerged. Those individuals using mobility aids (eg. walking sticks and wheeled walkers) or wheelchairs, cannot leave their homes. In some extreme circumstances, care organisations cannot access the home to provide services (eg. Meals on Wheels).
- Awnings over pathways, ramps and carports to houses where people in wheelchairs live.
- It takes significant time to transfer a wheelchair user from a vehicle into their house (or visa versa). In the wet season, everyone becomes soaked. This significantly increases the incidence of chest infections and pneumonia in individuals with MJD, a population whose immune and respiratory system is already compromised.
- Lighting/awnings on public walkways and footpaths
- This is necessary for safety and increased accessibility after dark
- Shelter/accessibility at Groote Eylandt's light aircraft terminal



- This is important for sheltered and accessible transport between communities for those requiring mobility aids.
- Wheelchair accessible taxi/bus service
- Accessible transport options provide families with the ability to take their wheelchair dependent members on social and community outings in safe vehicles. Currently safety is often compromised by lifting individuals into vehicles where they are not safely restrained, or they are not taken out at all, which leads to social isolation.
- Wheelchair accessible vehicles for clinics/health services
- To facilitate more accessible health care for individuals in wheelchairs. At present the health centres are unable to transport wheelchair users who subsequently are unable to attend recall or specialist appointments or access health staff when they are sick.
- Hydrotherapy pool
- Hydrotherapy is one of the most effective forms of therapy and exercise for those with musculo-skeletal injuries or disabilities and/or joint pain. A pool in which to provide therapy options that is private, custom made, and in community would have significant physical, emotional and social wellbeing benefits for all community members, not just those with MJD.
- Accessible fishing wharf
- To facilitate therapy for those with disabilities and accessible community activities which are not only physically beneficial to those living with a disability but also imperative for social and emotional wellbeing.

**ACTIONS:**

49. Conduct a review of exact projected needs for additional aged, disability and MJD patients over the next 15 years.
50. Apply for government funding for additional infrastructure.
51. Depending upon community support, expand the current aged care facility in Angurugu over the next five to 10 years.
52. Work to increase community engagement with the current aged and disability care services.
53. Continue to work with MJD Foundation on appropriate support and care for MJD clients.
54. Advocate for more extensive lifestyle programs integrated with the residential care facility which distinguish and target 'aged needs' versus 'disability needs'.
55. Advocate for increased capacity for health services to provide weekly home visits for wheelchair users who are unable to access appropriate transport in order to physically get to these services.
56. Advocate for programs which build a care workforce of local community members.
57. Advocate for an analysis to determine the best means to support Certificate III/IV aged/disability care education.
58. Look into possible pre-vocational training and VET programs to support aged/disability care education (i.e. Certificate II in Community Services).
59. Look at providing disability employment opportunities for those people living with disabilities in the community.
60. Advocate for the following proposed infrastructure for Groote Eylandt:
  - Angurugu Flexible Aged Care Centre to become a multi-functional 24/7 residential care facility.
  - Plan for the expansion of the number of beds required in the future.
  - Ensure adherence to Australian Standards building codes for accessibility (AS1428.1-2009), which must be met as part of any form of negotiations (GEMCO, EASC, NTG, FAHCSIA) to ensure that all new and upgraded community buildings are fully accessible.
  - Audit existing community buildings to determine accessibility, and put plans into place with service providers for agreement that all buildings/offices must be upgraded to become accessible.

- Staff accommodation for a 24/7 residential care facility in Angurugu.
- Construct a specialist training/education and resources centre (including provision of genetic education services/digital technology, etc) to support people with MJD and their families and to train/educate carers and the wider community.
- Footpaths in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra so that wheelchair users are not forced to be on the road, and to allow access to the community in the wet season.
- Accessible driveways leading to footpaths in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra.
- Awnings over pathways, ramps and carports to houses where people in wheelchairs live.
- Lighting/awnings on public walkways and footpaths.
- Shelter/accessibility at light aircraft terminal.
- Wheelchair accessible taxi/bus service.
- Wheelchair accessible vehicles for clinics/health services
- Hydrotherapy pool
- Accessible fishing wharf

#### **GOVERNANCE OF HEALTH SERVICES**

In order to ensure the best possible respite and residential aged and disability care is available on Groote Eylandt, the ALC and GEBIE should decide on one of the strategies below to determine its level of engagement as a key stakeholder. Each of the options above requires a full cost/benefit and capacity analysis performed and a strong understanding of the NDIS implementation, aged versus disability funding, and federal/territory government structures.

**ACTIONS:**

61. Under a Regional Authority Structure provide a locally managed Health Service (Aboriginal Medical Service “AMS”) funded by Federal and Territory Governments (OR)
62. Form a strong partnership with the existing service provider (NT Health and East Arnhem Shire) (OR)
63. Lead a partnership with a new/alternate aged/disability service provider (eg Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation)

### **6.3 STREAMLINE MUNICIPAL SERVICES**

In the lead up to 2012, there has been a significant increase in infrastructure and housing in the communities on Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island. This has helped to improve the living conditions and to increase the education and economic opportunities available on the island.

It is essential that the supporting essential services infrastructure i.e. water, electricity and sewerage, are also raised to a level that will sustain those infrastructure investments into the future and provide the opportunity for further developments. This should take the form of upgrades to ensure the ongoing functioning of facilities. Environmentally sensitive energy generation should also be progressively introduced so that the islands will be largely self-sustaining and not dependent on high cost energy sources.

#### **POWER**

Power is currently supplied by GEMCO facilities to Angurugu and Alyangula. Umbakumba and Bickerton Island power is provided by diesel-powered generators. Power capacity on the island may restrict the amount of new developments that can occur. The issue of power on Groote Eylandt will be particularly critical once the GEMCO mine closes. GEBIE currently pays all power bills across the three communities but has plans to implement a power supply user pays system during 2013.

In conjunction with NT Government Power and Water and the private sector, the ALC is exploring renewable energy options for Groote Eylandt to decrease dependency on non-renewable sources over time. One option being investigated is to set up large-scale solar farms to supply all communities at low cost into the future. This should be considered as part of an overall carbon offset subsidised scheme for the whole Groote archipelago.

Construction of solar power stations in remote communities is increasing in popularity. For instance, about one million watts of solar panel were installed in the remote NT communities of Ti Tree, Kalkarindgi and Alpurrurulam, supplying up to 80% of the electricity demand of the communities during the day.

**ACTIONS:**

64. Explore renewable energy options for Groote Eylandt.
65. Investigate the feasibility of building and operating a solar power station on Groote Eylandt. If feasible, sign a power purchase agreement with Power and Water and/or the corporate investment sector to build and operate large- scale solar power farms on Groote Eylandt.
66. Investigate a carbon offset scheme in collaboration with GEMCO and other carbon emitting private sector partners.

**WATER & SEWERAGE**

Water and sewerage on the island is maintained by the NT Government's Power and Water Authority. The ALC believes an assessment of the status of water and sewerage infrastructure in Angurugu and Umbakumba needs to be conducted and a plan developed to resolve current outdated infrastructure and develop expansion to cater for growth in both communities.

Engineering assessments would be necessary to establish the status as a first step. It is envisaged that the actual work could be directed to an existing or emerging local Aboriginal business (i.e. GEBIE Civil and Construction, Aminjarrinja Enterprises, etc). This would enhance local employment as well as develop new skills in local people.

In the short term, the immediate resolution of sewerage in Angurugu is required to stop annual overflow due to aged pipes.

**ACTIONS:**

67. Work with other stakeholders to develop a plan to resolve outdated water and sewerage infrastructure and to cater for the expansions of Angurugu and Umbakumba.

## **WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Effective waste management practices are vital to the ALC's efforts to protect the Anindilyakwa environment.

### **Waste management facilities**

Currently there are two open tips, which convert waste to land fill, managed by the mining company, GEMCO. Hazardous chemicals and oils are shipped from the island. GEMCO has plans to close the current dry tip and rehabilitate the land. This is a potential site for a solar farm (see section 6.1.3.3). The current wet tip will become a dry/wet tip featuring recycling, and its management is expected to go out to tender in 2013.

As part of a comprehensive commitment to protecting the environment, the ALC hopes to lobby for world-class waste management principles and to develop waste management plans. The ALC is researching techniques to handle waste and their environmental impacts.

### **Removal of car bodies**

Vehicles on Groote Eylandt have historically not travelled long distances due to the rough conditions of Umbakumba Road. The consensus view was that high usage of the Angurugu to Umbakumba road, by anything less than robust 4WD resulted in a one-year vehicle life. As a result, there are a large number of dead car bodies in the communities, with more than 300 undisposed of in Angurugu alone. A committed clean-up program is expected to see many tonnes of metal removed from the island. The ALC is investigating the purchase of a metal crushing machine to make this possible. The ALC and GEMCO will use a designated area within the current "Wet Tip" area off the Rowell Highway as a point to crush car bodies and remove off Groote Eylandt by barge as scrap metal.

### **Vehicle levy**

The ALC is proposing a policy to charge a levy for all vehicles, sea containers and boats brought onto Groote Eylandt. The levy will be held in a special account against the license holder for each vehicle, sea container or boat brought onto the island. The amount will be set at the cost of recycling at the end of its life. If the car is removed from the island before that time, the levy will be reimbursed.

### **Capturing methane**

Another technique being explored by the ALC is to capture methane from wet waste and use it to generate electricity. All activities should have the aim of making Groote Eylandt clean and environmentally friendly.

**ACTIONS:**

68. Sign an MoU with all business, service providers and key organisations on the island to jointly create a comprehensive waste management system for the Groote archipelago.
69. Introduce a policy to charge a levy for all vehicles, sea containers and boats brought onto Groote Eylandt.
70. Coordinate regular crushing of car bodies and removal off Groote Eylandt by barge as scrap metal.

**ROADS**

Preparation should begin now to improve road infrastructure within Angurugu so that minimal upgrades are required in future. A comprehensive maintenance plan should be created for all road infrastructure. The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) through the Indigenous Remote Service Delivery Special Account is supporting East Arnhem Shire Council with an application for funds to 'make safe' the internal road network in Angurugu. The application for \$1.1 million is progressing and is awaiting approval by the Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (as at November 2012, Stage 2 of a two-stage application process had been submitted by East Arnhem Shire Council). If successful, the funding will enable the Shire to bring the internal roads network in Angurugu to a standard that will be safe for all road users including pedestrians. This will then provide the Shire with the time and opportunity to prepare and submit applications to other funding sources to upgrade the roads to an appropriate standard.

Designs for footpaths and road crossings suitable for wheelchair access needs to be incorporated into these works.

**ACTIONS:**

71. Work with stakeholders to resurface Angurugu roads with proper drainage, footpaths and curbing.
72. Conduct a comprehensive hydrology master plan for Angurugu.
73. Seek on-island capacity to service all sealed and gazetted roads on Groote Eylandt.
74. Maintain ongoing support for ranger outstation road maintenance program.

## **6.4 CHANGE THE HOUSING MODEL**

### **BUILD NEW HOUSES**

The Strategic Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Program (SIHIP) delivered 80 new houses, 43 rebuilds and 60 renovations to Anindilyakwa communities in 2011 and 2012. But an estimated 20 houses are still needed in Angurugu to solve overcrowding.

Advice from the NT Government is that Angurugu qualifies for 30 refurbishments and 18 complete new buildings to replace houses beyond economic repair. Umbakumba qualifies for two or three refurbishments and two replacements. It is being discussed that this work could be conducted through a select tender process utilising local Indigenous building companies. The NT Government has advised that these works are scheduled for the 2013/14 calendar year.

There are residents from Umbakumba and Milyakburra currently living in Angurugu and provision needs to be made for people to move back into their own communities, especially as Angurugu continues to grow and is constrained for space due to the surrounding GEMCO mining leases.

### **Self-funded house building scheme**

The ALC is putting a proposal to its members to invest royalties (clan by clan) into a new house building scheme. Consultations are underway with ALC and GEBIE executive boards and with clan groups.

Under the proposed building scheme, the ALC/GEBIE would pay for construction of the houses and they would be paid off by individual clan-based rent royalties over time, by agreement. The houses would be privately owned by the clans for the use of their families.



The advantage of a self-funded house scheme (rather than a government-sponsored scheme) means that new houses could be built with the pride and a sense of ownership of relevant clans involved in the financing of the program.

### **Best practice construction methods**

It is the view of the ALC that more research and trials need to be conducted to establish best practice housing construction methods on the island utilising local material and local labour and skills. Both Aminjarrinja Enterprises and GCC have now developed substantial competency in conducting such work. GCC has developed its own quarry north of Angurugu producing crushed rock for concrete-associated works and has now commenced a pilot program utilising the by-product of rock crushing that produces a fine powder that when mixed with cement can be utilised to create concrete blocks. Work is expected to begin in 2013 to construct new government-contracted buildings from these blocks.

It is also intended to look at the more aesthetically pleasing and higher performing passive thermal properties of rammed earth construction techniques. The ALC is recommending the use of rammed earth as being more suitable for Groote Eylandt than the concrete blocks as it requires minimal labour during construction versus high labour in concrete block construction. Rammed earth is not to be confused with mud brick construction. Rammed earth is a proven performer across Australia in significant government-funded buildings and has been widely accepted as creating iconic and low power-consuming structures.

### **Home ownership**

The Australian Government's Home Ownership on Indigenous Land (HOIL) program provides loans for people living on community-titled land who otherwise would not be able to obtain home loan finance.

Groote Eylandt was among the first four approved HOIL sites in 2006-07. A total 90 loans were allocated for Groote Eylandt. However, by 2012, there was still no home ownership on Groote Eylandt.

Major barriers to home ownership are that land is held communally rather than by individuals and low financial literacy of the Anindilyakwa people.

The question remains for local people as to what the benefits of home ownership are. The current system provides for adequate housing, secure tenancy and adequate repairs and maintenance (albeit this has been a contentious issue).

**ACTIONS**

75. Discuss with ALC and GEBIE Boards, consult with clan groups, and conduct a financial analysis of running a house building scheme in which individual clan-based royalties might be used to pay off construction of new homes.
76. Explore building techniques suitable for new Groote Eylandt houses.
77. Trial the use of locally-produced concrete and rammed earth through the current building program scheduled for Groote Eylandt.
78. Investigate the viability, pros and cons and community interest for a local scheme versus a government-sponsored scheme.
79. Provide opportunities for financial education of Groote Eylandt people.

## **6.5 STREAMLINE REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE**

Repair and maintenance of Groote Eylandt houses has been a slow and often tedious process. There has been widespread concern among community members who are not satisfied with the level of service provided by East Arnhem Shire Council in regards to this.

In 2012, the ALC began reviewing the current housing services delivery model with stakeholders. It emerged that the system was too complicated as there were too many layers and steps required to be undertaken before simple jobs could be carried out.

The ALC/GEBIE have negotiated with the NT Government to be offered through a select tender process a contract to provide services to repair and maintain existing social housing stock and to provide tenancy services across the three communities. This will replace the current arrangement whereby the East Arnhem Shire Council provides this service and will effectively reduce bureaucracy by 50% and significantly boost local community employment and response times to reported faults. It is projected that this program will begin in July 2013.

Existing and emerging Aboriginal businesses on Groote Eylandt (currently GEBIE Civil and Construction [GCC] and Aminjarrinja Enterprises) will carry out these works. Training will occur within the Trade Training Centres soon to be built in the communities of Umbakumba and Angurugu. A part of this new model will be a joint service delivery at a community level. It is the view of ALC that these companies should not compete against each other, rather collaborate to win more on-ground contracts against off-island based companies.

The old ALC building in Angurugu is expected to be fit out as a shop front for the Repairs and Maintenance and Tenancy Support programs. Physical locations will also be sought from

which to provide the service for Milyakburra and Umbakumba, co-located with NT Housing. These locations will be the first port of call for anyone requiring repairs and maintenance. Local people employed at the front desk would log the job using the same software system used by NT Housing, to ensure jobs can be approved quickly. This will be an ideal program in which to build a predominantly Anindilyakwa workforce, to develop a comprehensive training and trade apprenticeship program, and to link in with substantial other building works due to take place across the three communities.

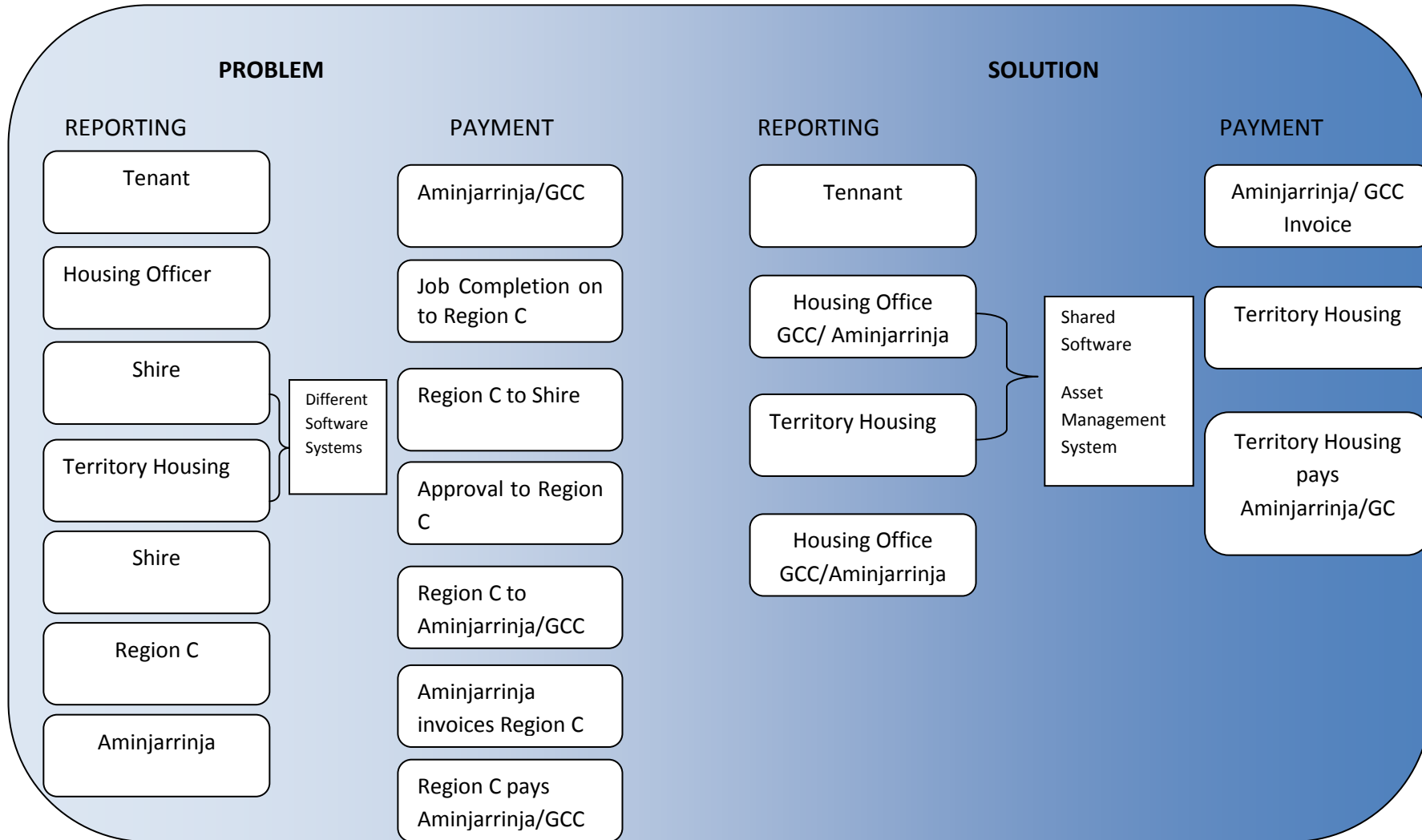
**ACTIONS**

80. Negotiate a contract with Department of Housing to directly contract Aboriginal businesses on Groote Eylandt to carry out local housing repair and maintenance works with the aim of reducing response times.

81. Negotiate a contract with Department of Housing to directly contract a Tenancy Support program .

82. Set up shop fronts in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra to administer housing repairs and maintenance and Tenancy Support.

Figure 9: Streamlined repairs and maintenance



## **6.6 PRODUCE FOOD ON-ISLAND**

In the past, communities across northern Australia including Groote Eylandt have had to be self-reliant, particularly in relation to fresh food. The Church Missionary Society established large farm-style gardens and kept livestock and was generally quite successful in supplying fresh food for the mission and the local population. With the demise of the missions also came an end to the productive gardens and the beginning of almost total reliance on imported produce.

Despite many attempts and the enormous benefits that can be forthcoming from market gardens, few communities operate successful gardens. The reasons for failure are many and varied but most fail due to a lack of ownership by the community.

Obtaining reasonably priced, fresh food in the region is expected to become a major problem after mining. To provide fresh food security to the general population will require market gardens to be established in all communities. They will provide the following benefits:

- Fresh food;
- Employment and training opportunities;
- Affordable food;
- Local and regional economy income streams (potentially);
- Improvements in community health through better nutrition;
- Opportunity for associated businesses and commercial enterprises.

### **ANGURUGU**

A market garden is already established in Angurugu on the original mission garden site and is operated by GEAT. While it has not yet reached its full potential, the infrastructure is available to improve the productivity with minimal additional financial input. It is recommended that GEAT is supported to progress this important venture. A goal is to work towards a partnership in community management of this garden into the future.

### **UMBAKUMBA**

Currently there is no established market garden in Umbakumba however there are the remnants of a former garden located at Four Mile Outstation including some mature fruit trees. With the absence of reasonable soils in the Umbakumba region and minimal quality surface water, the existing site at Four Mile Outstation still represents the best location for a market garden in this area. A full assessment of this existing area and a review of other potential sites is required.

## **MILYAKBURRA**

A suitable site for a market garden in Milyakburra is yet to be determined and should be based around adequate soils, fresh water supply (surface or bore) and community accessibility. Milyakburra already feels the impact and restriction of being on a remote island with higher fuel and food costs and irregular transport services not currently experienced on Groote Eylandt.

To be successful in establishing a market garden requires substantial planning to ensure success. The lessons of other communities need to be taken into account and ownership of the enterprise must come from the community to ensure ongoing success.

The initial establishment of each garden will require significant financial input to cover the cost of equipment, machinery, plant material, irrigation, infrastructure (including accommodation), fencing, fertilisers, fuel, storage sheds, training and wages.

It is not expected that the gardens will be economically viable in the first few years and profitability is not the major aim of these enterprises. It is expected that excess produce may be available for sale to commercial catering and food supply businesses to help offset costs.

It is hoped that, through proper on-the-job training and mentoring, ownership and operation of the gardens will be primarily a community responsibility. Too often community gardens rely on heavy non-Indigenous support to remain viable, which eventually leads to their closure.

## **OUTCOMES EXPECTED**

It is considered that fully functioning market gardens could produce the majority of key food items (seasonally) for the residents of Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island. While some food will always be required to be imported, it is hoped that people will take advantage of produce at a reasonable price over expensive imports. Due to climate restrictions and seasonal availability, it cannot be expected that all fruit and vegetables currently available will be able to be grown in these gardens.

The type of produce expected could include root crops (sweet potato, carrots, peanuts, cassava), tomatoes, corn, zucchini, pumpkin, cucumber, cabbage (several), beans, melons (several), eggplant, Chinese vegetables, herbs and fruit (bananas, mango, mandarins, oranges, lemons, avocado, passionfruit, pawpaw, pineapple).

The ventures would also be an ideal avenue to trial large-scale production of long yam or other local foods as well as sugar bag.

It would be expected that this style of vegetable production and excess produce would eventually allow for small-scale production of chickens for eggs and meat.

Availability of organic, fresh and healthy food at an affordable price is a key fundamental in any community working towards a sustainable future. Creation of productive market gardens is achievable and it is essential that the community recognise the importance of succeeding in this enterprise and taking ownership.

**ACTIONS:**

83. Support GEAT in improving productivity of the market garden in Angurugu and work towards a community management partnership.
84. Conduct a full assessment of the Four Mile Outstation area as a market garden location and a review of other potential sites if they are available.
85. Determine a suitable site and establish a market garden in Milyakburra.
86. Make plans to operate community market gardens in a sustainable manner with low energy inputs.
87. Ensure Anindilyakwa people take ownership in any market garden enterprise.

## **6.7 PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF ALYANGULA**

### **THE TOWNSHIP**

Alyangula is a well serviced and maintained town. It encompasses 264 houses and 24 flats, which are subject to an ongoing refurbishment program. This is usually awarded at 20 houses per contract.

The town also has a variety of recreation and amenity areas including a swimming pool, golf course, squash court, community hall and a recreation club. This caters for a permanent population of about 1000 plus 'fly in fly out' (FIFO) staff and a highly variable number of contractors.

The town is powered by a 16mw power station, which powers both the town and the mine site at a usage split of 40:60.

GEMCO has conceptual plans to reconstruct the centre of the town, subject to capital funding availability. There is also a 550-person village proposed for FIFO staff to replace the current semi-permanent accommodation. Currently this is on hold due to downturn in the industry as a whole.

Alyangula's infrastructure and services are far more advanced than the Indigenous townships across the East Arnhem region.

### **ALYANGULA POST MINING**

In a post mining future, Alyangula could remain a hub for businesses, services, tourism, holiday accommodation and Anindilyakwa people with high-end healthcare needs.

The ALC is looking at ways to better link Alyangula to the Groote archipelago's other three communities in areas such with service delivery, business and health care.

The town should encourage entrepreneurs looking to establish small businesses that service the island. This would ensure fewer turnovers of residents, a more stable population and more community pride.

One potential value of Alyangula, given its relative sophistication of services compared to other communities, is the potential to provide enhanced services for Anindilyakwa high need aged and MJD patients. This is a sensitive subject as Anindilyakwa people prefer to live close to other clan members and close to their traditional country.

A financial analysis needs to be conducted to consider appropriate facilities to be developed within Alyangula versus current Anindilyakwa communities.

The majority of the current port in Alyangula could be dismantled and the area regenerated. Some of the structure would be retained for the current barge facility and for use as a harbour for boutique tourist boats that could be linked to the GEBIE-owned Dugong Beach Resort.

A major new jetty is planned for the town beach picnic area (Old Boat Ramp) which will be invaluable in laying the ground for developing fishing tourism.

The next steps forward will be to hold detailed mine closure planning meetings with GEMCO. These meetings will discuss what assets should be made available to the ALC into the future and how to ensure these are well maintained and ready for future use.

The township is under a Special Purpose Lease until 2065, which restricts many activities, such as buying and selling houses. This could be replaced with an Office of Township Leasing (OTL) lease in the long term that would see it becoming a 'conventional' town that receives municipal funding for essential services and in which property can be bought, leased and sold.



**ACTIONS:**

88. Hold regular mine closure planning meetings with GEMCO to discuss what assets should be made available into the future and how to ensure these are well-maintained and ready for future use.
89. Conduct a financial analysis to consider appropriate facilities to be developed within Alyangula versus current Anindilyakwa communities to be utilised by Anindilyakwa people after the mine closes.
90. Construct a major new jetty at the town beach picnic area (Old Boat Ramp) to service a local fishing, aquaculture and tourism industry post mining.

## **6.8 REBUILD ANGURUGU SCHOOL**

The physical environment of Angurugu School is a remnant of the 60's and 70's days of alcohol and petrol sniffing violence. A large program of rebuilding and refurbishment needs to be established. Youth in Angurugu have stated that they don't like to go to school because students from the other moiety (there are two on Groote Eylandt) tease and bully them. These non-attending students feel shamed by their illiteracy when they do attend the facility. It is recommended that infrastructure be planned around a more appropriate separation of moieties and sensitive to clan rivalries. There is also a strong logic to consider taking the classroom out to the clan housing enclaves – to take the school to the students.

There is also a view growing in the community that a residential college be established away from Angurugu for Year 5 and 6 students to break a generational lack of support to attend school. A potential site could be the current outstation area in Thompson's Bay being developed as a cultural camp area for youth from Umbakumba.

## 7. GOAL C: DEVELOP A LIVING CULTURAL ECONOMY

### 7.1 STRENGTHEN YOUTH TO LIVE IN 2 WORLDS

There are critical issues facing Anindilyakwa youth and the preservation of the Anindilyakwa culture. Critically youth have become disengaged from the education system and mainstream life, particularly in the community of Angurugu. This requires a comprehensive approach in taking a more “hands on” approach to the education curriculum as previously outlined. With the support of ALC, both the Australian and Territory governments are applying a regime of warnings and fines combined with a deduction of Centrelink payments to parents who do not send their children to school. In the ALC’s consultations, community members said they want to see a broad based investment in developing a range of culture-based enterprises where youth and elders will positively engage in protecting, maintaining and promoting their culture to the wider world. Extensive consultation with youth has determined that in particular they see the strength of their culture being combined with education and job creation as the essential missing ingredient in engaging youth with the education system.

The report *New Ownership New Responsibilities* independently reviewed education on the Groote archipelago and one of its recommendations was ‘to investigate how best to deal with the implications of local cultural values within the school, and identify culturally-informed remedies for improving attendance and making the school more attractive to potential students’ (Ramsey, Cummins, Hansen, Wauchope, 2009,p. 9). The report also notes a widespread support for introducing Indigenous language and culture programs. It recommends that the ALC: ‘work with community elders, assistant teachers and curriculum officers to develop an Anindilyakwa language and culture program for delivery in schools as an additional component to studies in other learning areas of the NT Curriculum Framework’ (Ramsey et al, 2009, p. 95).

Most recently, the Anindilyakwa Ambaka Murri–yada Yirrilangwa Youth Strategy 2012 – 2017 was created as a way forward to engage local youth and to provide opportunities for youth to develop into culturally strong and well rounded members of their community who are able to operate in two worlds. It contains a comprehensive list of goals, strategies and actions developed during an extensive consultation process. The Youth Strategy is overseen by youth service providers who are a part of the Youth Steering Committee, a sub-committee of the RPA. A Youth Services Coordination Unit is being established within the ALC to facilitate the implementation of the Youth Strategy and to coordinate an integrated approach to youth service provision. A focus of the Unit will also be to establish and maintain a youth-driven decision making group that empowers young people to get involved in the community and carry out projects that they want to see come into fruition.

**ACTIONS:**

91. Establish the Youth Services Coordination Unit, made up of a Youth Services Team Leader and Mentor and a Youth Service Coordinator, reserved for an Anindilyakwa person and with a strong focus on training and development.
92. Further develop the action plan for the Youth Strategy with timelines for delivery, key performance indicators, funding and responsible areas determined.
93. Implement the Youth Strategy.
94. Confirm longer term funding for the Youth Services Coordination Unit past June 2014 when current funding ceases.
95. Evaluate the Youth Strategy.
96. Develop a Youth Strategy for 2018 onwards.

## **7.2 BUILDING A NETWORK OF CULTURAL ENTERPRISE CENTRES**

The ALC is proposing to establish Cultural Centres in Angurugu, Umbakumba, Milyakburra and within the Dugong Beach Resort precinct. Youth have indicated interest in engaging with multimedia, arts and music to express, record and share Anindilyakwa culture. The centres will be utilised by youth, elders and community generally to positively engage in protecting, maintaining and promoting Anindilyakwa culture so that generations to come understand and are knowledgeable about Anindilyakwa culture and are promoting their culture to the wider world.

The centres will be available to all community members, particularly youth and elders, to positively engage in activities that are culture-based while also utilising modern technology to archive, share and create cultural content using various mediums. The centres will operate in a hub and spoke model with the Dugong Beach Resort precinct functioning as a hub for activities including training, with the community-based centres as the spokes. The centre's design will be informed through further consultation with Traditional Owners.

The centres will also provide for the office requirements of the ALC and GEBIE. Staff – including linguistics, youth services coordination, anthropology, arts, culture and tourism development – will operate across the four facilities; enabling staff to be based close to the communities in which they work. The centres will operate in partnership with schools and provide programs and opportunities for early childhood development, schooling and promoting school attendance, as well as training and economic participation in a culture-

based economy. School programs will be linked to the Cultural Centres via a memorandum of understanding between the centres and schools.

GEBIE has previously substantially invested in building Dugong Beach Resort, which will become increasingly relevant to future plans. Currently due to an outdated accommodation stock that GEMCO is planning to replace, contractor pressures and an overall lack of any surplus accommodation on the island, Dugong Beach Resort has been and will continue to be fully occupied by contractor and mine workers until a planned 550-person fly-in/fly-out workers camp is completed within the townsite of Alyangula. Dugong Beach Resort had 95% occupancy in 2010/11, with profits being used to offset and rectify a poor standard of workmanship during construction. It is projected that the occupancy rate will decrease after the completion of GEMCO's Groote Eylandt Expansion Project Two. Thus, the current reinvestment of profit from high occupancy is also expected to drop off. In the spirit of the mining agreement between ALC and GEMCO, longer term contracts should be actively sought to sustain medium occupancy of the resort to allow the operational costs of Dugong to be met. Progressively, the tourism market for the Dugong Beach Resort must be sought to sustain occupancy post mining.

It is envisaged that the resort will remain a commercial venture but also utilised as the central base for the ALC/GEBIE administration and the training in cultural enterprises to occur. Additional office space, accommodation and training facilities will be created to be utilised by community members for specific training programs. This will mean the asset of Dugong Beach Resort will fulfil its original intent and become a community-accessed hub for all ALC/GEBIE related issues and in incubating cultural enterprises within each of the communities.

The centres in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra will be built close to the schools and will provide dedicated facilities for all community residents to access suitable spaces fitted out with media recording, devices (such as iPads, video cameras, PC's), "safe keeping" places, genealogy archiving facilities, language centres, visual art facilities, sound and film editing facilities, music recording studios and photographic display areas.

The Milyakburra centre will be established within the planned cyclone shelter to be constructed next to the school. The facility will be fitted out with cultural enterprise requirements internally, thus serving a multi-functional purpose. For the Umbakumba centre, land has been identified next to the school to build a dedicated structure with a cultural enterprise fit out. Land for the Angurugu Centre has been identified adjacent to the school to build a dedicated structure with a cultural enterprise fit out.

The underlying principles of the centres' operation are intrinsically linked to the vision of the ALC:

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

The concept of the centres comes from a strength-based approach to utilise the important and strong aspects of Anindilyakwa people; culture, language, history, customary practices and connection to country, to engage individuals in early childhood development, education, training and economic participation.

The functions and activities of the centres will complement the Stronger Futures priority area for action in school attendance and educational achievement. It will provide culture-based programs from early years through to employment. In particular, it complements the school attendance and enrolment welfare reform measures by providing avenues for re-engaging youth into the education system through the centres' programs. The centres will also provide visible pathways for youth to participate in training and employment, which will give weight and relevance to schooling.

The activities of the centre will target these four developmental stages, which are described in further detail below:

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

The centres will host a range of early childhood development programs and activities and work in partnership with early childhood service providers in engaging families in the development of 0 to 5 year olds. Linguistics activities of the ALC will operate as a part of the centres, with the view that current services are enriched and expanded particularly in Umbakumba and Milyakburra (currently the Linguistics Centre is based in Angurugu). The Early Childhood Language and Literacy course introduced under Stage 2 of the Regional Partnership Agreement would be further developed and delivered as part of the Centre's activities. The Early Childhood Language and Literacy course has been delivered by the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation working closely with parents, carers and teachers in Umbakumba, Angurugu and Milyakburra by delivering workshops that teach foundational pre-literacy and language learning platforms in Anindilyakwa and English that can be used to support the early learning of children. Partnerships with the Families as First Teachers program and playgroup will also see the centre being accessed by these and other early childhood service providers in engaging families in early childhood learning that is linked to first language and culture. These programs and activities will access the rich collection of the centres materials such as clan songs and stories to enrich the early development of children by grounding them in culture-based learning.

## **SCHOOLING**

The centres will be located adjacent to the schools in each community and will offer programs and activities specifically for school-aged children to engage with Anindilyakwa heritage and culture as part of the school curriculum and in after school activities. The centres will provide a first language education program delivered by Linguists and in partnership with schools as an embedded part of the curriculum. Every child will have the opportunity to develop a strong foundation in Anindilyakwa. Students will also be engaged in learning about Anindilyakwa history, kinship system and other subjects pertinent to a child's development and understanding of their heritage and identity as part of their clan and community. This program will form a part of every child's development and will be used as a tool to re-engage youth who have not been attending school back into a learning environment. Elders will be engaged in delivering this program.

A multimedia program will also be developed that engages youth in interacting with a range of media including filming and editing, radio programming and music with the aim of creating different mediums of sharing and promoting Anindilyakwa culture. The program will provide young people with technical skills in this field. The program will seek opportunities for young people to promote what they have developed to the wider world, building their skills to operate in both worlds and to potentially develop a local viable industry in this field. The schools, NT Libraries and MJD Foundation are already utilising iPads as a learning tool and the centres will partner with these agencies to broaden the application of new technology. A partnership with the Queensland University of Technology to explore digital interfaces will also complement the activities of the centres. The multimedia program will also enable youth to explore their individual interests and talents. This interactive and attractive multimedia program will be a natural drawcard for young people and will be linked to a school attendance incentive program. The above programs will align to the strategy that every child is engaged in learning or training every day.

## **TRAINING**

History has shown that most Anindilyakwa people grow up and choose to live their lives on the Groote archipelago due to their strong connection to family and land. It is also evident that many young people go through schooling without adequate opportunity to explore career pathways or to gain a genuine appreciation of the relevance of an education and how it will benefit them in their successful future economic participation in society. The centres will provide clear paths of training through to employment for young people and particularly focus on the engagement of teenagers who make up the cohort who are most at risk of disengaging from school but who are not making the transition to taking up training or employment.

The centre through its programs will provide for training in a range of areas related to cultural activities and enterprises which are discussed further in the next section.

## **EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION**

There is an inherent strength and interest from community members in engaging in economic participation opportunities that link back to country and culture. The successful Anindilyakwa Land and Sea Ranger (ALC Ranger) program, the Groote Eylandt Linguistics Centre and the Anindilyakwa Arts and Cultural Centre are evidence of this. The centres will provide the opportunities for economic participation and for culture-based enterprises to be developed. The centres will harness activities that have a strong connection to culture such as eco-tourism and cultural tours, aquaculture, trepang, shrimp and fishing industries, arts and manufacturing, media, film, radio, music, language services, sports and working on country. Real Aboriginal products, especially at the higher end of cultural industries, are sought after by consumers in the Australian and international market. Art, design, eco tourism and bush food production are uniquely positioned to benefit from genuine brands. Other potential job creation ventures include cultural tourism, re-energising Groote Eylandt art and linking iconic design aspects with the manufacturing sector. Opportunities will be sought to establishing sustainable enterprises and economic participation in these industries.

The ALC proposes to conduct a professional marketing review and plan to determine Groote Eylandt's competitive advantage and possible sustainable wealth generators. This will be essential for the purposes of economic development. Creating sustainable businesses is a challenge and requires commitment and hard work. Groote Eylandt needs expertise to determine what and the extent to which culture can be marketed, and what and how income streams can be generated. Pathways must be facilitated for people to take up business opportunities. Feasibility studies and business planning will be undertaken to assess viability. There are good examples of local organisations taking up opportunities to address community need including LAC, Groote Eylandt Car Hire and Aminjarrinja Enterprises. However, there are also lessons to be learnt from businesses that have not been so sustainable, for example, drawing learnings from Amuwarngka Tourism Enterprise will be valuable in the development of enterprises into the future.

The centre will also provide opportunities for Anindilyakwa people to take up positions in providing the early childhood development, education and training services, for example, by establishing Anindilyakwa language officers in each community. In partnership with the service provider for the Remote Jobs in Communities Program and with schools, opportunities for work placement and training will be developed.

**ACTIONS:**

97. Progress plans to continue using Dugong Beach Resort as a commercial venture but also utilise it as the central base for ALC/GEBIE administration and as a Cultural Centre hub. Establish Cultural Centres in the three communities of Milyakburra, Umbakumba and Angurugu.
98. Negotiate with GEMCO for ongoing accommodation contracts at Dugong Beach Resort over the mine life.
99. Develop a comprehensive tourism strategy to sustain high occupancy at the Dugong Beach Resort.
100. Establish the Cultural Centre buildings and deploy ALC and GEBIE staff into new offices.
101. Develop partnerships and programs for early childhood development, schooling and training and begin operation of the Cultural Centres.
102. Conduct a professional marketing review and plan to determine Groote Eylandt's competitive advantage and sustainable wealth generators.
103. Execute a tourism strategy, leveraging the developments of the culture-based economic strategy.

### **7.3 ENHANCE THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Access to new technology and opportunities to utilise and keep up-to-date with technology is a necessary requirement of living confidently in both worlds. New technology can enhance learning, facilitate interaction and communication between communities as well as support those with disabilities. Adoption of new technology can also enhance the development of sustainable economies and industry in the Groote archipelago. There are opportunities to enhance the adoption of technology in ways that can enrich people's lives. The ALC is developing a partnership with the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in this area and is exploring other partnerships with innovative technology companies. A crucial aspect of enhancing the adoption and use of technology in the Groote archipelago is in pursuing mobile connectivity for the townships of Umbakumba and Milyakburra.

#### **ESTABLISH CONNECTIVITY IN ALL COMMUNITIES**

Mobile coverage has been raised as a priority need for the townships of Umbakumba and Milyakburra by the community and in a number of agency/community representative forums. The limited mobile and internet services in these townships have broad implications for education, public health, community safety, economic and community development.



Installation of this essential service would provide Umbakumba and Milyakburra with improvements in health services, educational opportunities, safer communities, improved economic participation and real opportunity for members of these communities to be involved in the governance and leadership decisions of the Groote archipelago.

Police advise that the lack of mobile coverage is a safety issue as they do not have phone or radio contact on hand when an incident occurs. The Anindilyakwa Education and Training Board, the peak education forum on Groote Eylandt, has highlighted that the absence of adequate telecommunications and mobile coverage is hampering education activities. The lack of modern communication technology also exacerbates the educational disadvantages of isolation felt by remote communities. Students and community members are not able to engage with the latest technologies or to work creatively and to the full capacity with technology due to this limitation.

The Machado Joseph Disease (MJD) Foundation on Groote Eylandt is developing iPad applications in partnership with Apple Australia, designed to enhance the quality of life and the ability of MJD clients to communicate and interact with others, particularly as the symptoms of the disease escalate. MJD clients from Umbakumba and Milyakburra face an additional challenge when they are not able to communicate easily with family and relatives during their time away from the townships to receive treatment. Mobile coverage would improve the wellbeing of clients by enabling them greater use of new technologies and better connectivity with family and friends. Residents with other health issues also face similar challenges.

Further, mobile coverage would also greatly enhance the operation of small Indigenous businesses and government services operating in the region and would provide social connectivity for all residents and which most people take for granted but could not function without in other towns and cities.

The ALC has been successful in securing funding to carry out a feasibility study into providing mobile connectivity for Umbakumba and Milyakburra. The ALC intends to approach a range of organisations to support the next stages of getting mobile connectivity for the two townships.

**ACTIONS:**

104. Seek finance to establish mobile connectivity for the towns of Umbakumba and Milyakburra.

### **CREATE DIGITAL INTERFACES**

The ALC's partnership with Queensland University of Technology (QUT) over the past two years, through the Land and Sea Ranger program, has been focussed on scientific research and has fostered a collaborative and productive relationship with the university. The ALC is now embarking on a new partnership with QUT to investigate the use of innovative digital interfaces to create and share knowledge. This project will research, design, build and evaluate novel public communal technologies including touch screen noticeboards and tabletops harmonised to the traditional community on Groote Eylandt. This will enable communication in identified priority areas including health, education, environment and culture. Funding for the five-year project is now secured and will use a process of collaborative cross-cultural design and research. Outcomes of the project will include a network of open source prototype systems, new interaction design methodologies and improved communications within and outside the community. The project will dove-tail with the proposed development of the Cultural Centres.

The ALC will also work collaboratively with organisations on the island to coordinate and enhance the use of new technology in a range of areas including early childhood development, youth development, disability services, training and enterprise development. The ALC will take on a coordination role and facilitate the development of policies and strategies to assist in clarifying culturally appropriate approaches to the adoption and use of technology. Digitising historical and kinship information and providing an accessible interface for community to use and share cultural information will also be carried out as part of the development of the Cultural Centres and through partnerships with innovative technological organisations.

#### **ACTIONS:**

105. Work with Queensland University of Technology and other partners in establishing digital interfaces for community to access, create and share community knowledge.
106. Digitise and create user-friendly interfaces for community to access traditional and cultural knowledge and history through the Cultural Centres.
107. Develop policies for appropriate approaches to the adoption and use of technology, which satisfy cultural requirements (also see section on Intellectual Property).

## 7.4 STRENGTHEN THE ANINDILYAKWA LANGUAGE

### GROOTE EYLANDT LINGUISTICS

Groote Eylandt Linguistics (a section of the ALC) evolved from early missionary days and up until 2006 was run by the Church Missionary Society. It has a long-standing association within the community and is a respected organisation both on and off the island.

It forms an important cultural nucleus for the community and is instrumental in preserving and maintaining the local language, Anindilyakwa. In addition to this, it houses a significant collection of culture-based resources and materials relating to the Warnindilyakwa people. It also supports a broad range of stakeholders looking to increase their capacity to deliver projects and outcomes within the community, through its translation and affiliated services.

Groote Eylandt Linguistics consulted with communities in 2012 to find out what language and cultural services Anindilyakwa people want. In response to the survey, people called for DVDs about topics such as dance, the ALC, local stories, dreamtime stories from different clan groups and the role of Land and Sea Rangers. Respondents wanted religious education at school and Bible stories and gospel songs in Anindilyakwa on iPads and in books. There was discussion about having a museum or place to showcase culture. Respondents thought it was important to keep Anindilyakwa strong by learning to read and write it. While most Anindilyakwa people can speak the language very well, reading and writing the language is difficult for most. Only a small percentage of people can read and write Anindilyakwa and so transferring this knowledge and skill is critical. At school, respondents wanted students to be taught about the songlines, dance, how to paint up for the public and for ceremonies, bush medicine and bush tucker. They also wanted them to learn to make local items such as string from the red kurrajong plant (Miyarra), pandanus basket and mats, didgeridoos and shell necklaces. There is excitement and expectation in the communities about new resources being developed and made available on a digital platform.

*“What we really want in communities is teaching kids from a young age songlines, stories and totems. And the younger men learning to sing their cultural tribal songs. For younger women learning totems, dancing and stories. Also learning about bush and ecology, gathering bush tucker and bush medicines. Most Anindilyakwa can speak their language very well. In terms of reading and writing the language on paper, this is difficult for most. Only a small percentage of people can read and write Anindilyakwa. The findings have set the direction for the department’s work into the future.”* (Joaz Wurramara, Deputy CEO, ALC).

Groote Eylandt Linguistics will play a key role in the functions of the Cultural Centres, providing first language services and resources particularly for early childhood development and schooling. These services and resources will be established within the Cultural Centres. Groote Eylandt Linguistics’ primary focus will be to continue to ensure the community drives language and culture activities. This includes periodically communicating with communities to ensure the service is meeting the needs of the community and that activities reflect the

priorities of community. Language and culture will also be applied as an embedded component within the school curriculum. This will be discussed further in section 9.5.2 (Bilingual Education). Other areas of focus for the Linguistics department include increasing capacity to deliver language-based services including addressing operating space, archival and record keeping requirements and capacity to service Umbakumba and Milyakburra. Another priority will be increasing community access to culturally and historically significant records. Staffing will increase to allow material to be digitised, catalogued and archived. The viability of the department is also an area of focus. Efforts are being made to seek operational funding for Linguistics so that it is not solely reliant on royalty-generated monies to carry out its services. There are also opportunities for income generation through providing language-based services to government and other agencies, which could be further optimised.

**ACTIONS:**

**108.** Implement the Groote Eylandt Linguistics Action Plan 2012-2027.

**BILINGUAL EDUCATION**

Angurugu School was in 1973 among the first NT schools to have bilingual education, and Umbakumba followed in 1977, but both programs lasted only a few years. Children had Anindilyakwa language classes as part of the school curriculum. Boys and girls would go to the Linguistics building for lessons. There is a strong desire within community to see language taught within a structured program. There is a need to train up more male and female Anindilyakwa people who can tutor others in the language. Currently there are only a small number of people who have well developed reading and writing skills and who are able to transfer their knowledge to others. There is a need to provide some flexibility in engaging local people in teaching language, for example, bringing in retired elders who could come in for a few hours to support the Linguistics department.

There have been a number of studies, both in the NT and internationally, that provide evidence that bilingual education programs achieve higher levels of outcomes, including literacy outcomes in the mainstream language, than non-bilingual programs in similar settings. The research provides preliminary and provisional data to confirm that outcomes for students participating in bilingual education programs in the NT are better than for students in 'like' non-bilingual schools. A recent inquiry into language learning in Indigenous communities, tabled by a Federal Parliament committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs found clear evidence that school attendance rates would improve if Indigenous children were taught in their first language. The evidence collected during the inquiry was supportive of languages fostering a higher level of self esteem, developing an enthusiasm for learning and a better understanding of cultural identity. The report recommends that the Australian Government work with state and territory governments to

provide adequately resourced bilingual school education programs for Indigenous communities from the earliest years of learning, where the child's first language is in an Indigenous language. Notwithstanding the views about the benefits of bilingual education, there is a severe shortfall in funding, resources and support for the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages.

The ALC will advocate for the reintroduction of a rich bilingual education program in all Anindilyakwa communities. It is proposed that Groote Eylandt Linguistics will work with trainers in local schools to deliver bilingual education. Bilingual education programs in areas as diverse as employment, education, literacy and the arts should be made available for Anindilyakwa people right through adulthood.

**ACTIONS:**

109. Lobby for strong bilingual education programs in all Anindilyakwa communities.

110. Work in partnership with schools to develop and deliver first language programs and resources.

## **7.5 PROTECT LOCAL KNOWLEDGE**

As new culture-based industries are explored and developed and traditional information is transferred into digital formats, the ownership, distribution and use of traditional materials and knowledge must be protected.

By protecting this Intellectual Property (IP) with trademarks, design registrations, copyrighting and patents, Anindilyakwa goods and services become even more valuable. IP rights will be essential to growing cultural enterprise on Groote Eylandt. More importantly, IP also protects Anindilyakwa culture and products (including stories, dance, languages, symbols, crafts, cosmology, medicinal and environmental knowledge) and gives Anindilyakwa people the ability to profit from them. It is important that the ALC is at the vanguard to protect knowledge that is unique to the Anindilyakwa people.

There are several things the ALC needs to consider on behalf of the Anindilyakwa community if entering into a commercialisation arrangement. The person who has the knowledge within the community must give consent to the knowledge being utilised. It is therefore important that that person is identified. The next thing is to make ensure the consent that is given is an informed consent and that means that the person giving consent understands what they are giving consent about and what the consequences are. And then, the third plank is to ensure that there is a benefit sharing arrangement, which mean that

there is a clear understanding of what benefit is going to flow to the community from the commercialisation process.

**ACTIONS:**

111. Create an Intellectual Property and Traditional Knowledge Policy.
112. Investigate and report on potential for profit from Anindilyakwa intellectual property.
113. Establish ownership, where possible, and create a database of Anindilyakwa intellectual property.

## 7.6 MAP LOCAL ART SITES

To date no comprehensive mapping and recording of rock art across the Groote archipelago has been conducted. To link in with the overall protection, maintenance and promotion of Anindilyakwa culture, it is imperative that this should occur.

**ACTIONS:**

114. Map and record local rock art across the Groote archipelago.

## **8. GOAL D: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY CAPACITY**

This Strategic Plan provides a 15-year outlook for Anindilyakwa people to take greater control of the things that impact on their lives. Anindilyakwa people have expressed that they wish to determine what their future will be like and to lay the foundations for that now. The execution of this strategic plan will provide opportunities for Anindilyakwa people to strengthen capacity to take up training and economic participation opportunities in the two mainstreams of essential services delivery and in the building of a culture-based economy. The community has asked for more jobs and to be able to deliver its own essential services, to repair and maintain its own existing houses, develop a modest royalty-supported house building scheme, increase aged care and support services for our increasing Machado Joseph Disease (MJD) affected population and re-establish fresh food sources on the island. The Youth Steering Committee has done extensive consultation with youth and determined their main priority is to have their culture at the forefront of their education and employment.

However there are a number of challenges that must be addressed for Anindilyakwa people to optimise the realisation of the vision, goals and actions within this Plan. Substance misuse is a major challenge that has been highlighted by community and is impacting on engagement in training and employment. There are also other factors that hamper participation in employment including poor participation in schooling and training and a lack of exposure to mainstream workforce. A focussed employment strategy is required to achieve measurable outcomes in this area. There is also a need to build strong leadership and governance within organisations and to broaden the pool of Anindilyakwa people who can take up roles within these governance structures.

### **8.1 TACKLE SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

Substance abuse, particularly cannabis, has long been a problem in the Groote archipelago, causing havoc and pain. Substance abuse rips through the hearts of people and communities.

According to a recent report on substance misuse on Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island, a staggering six out of 10 Anindilyakwa people regularly smoke marijuana across both islands (Lee and Conigrave 2011). Around nine out of 10 people smoke tobacco, which is a significantly higher proportion compared with Indigenous people in other parts of Australia (where just under five in 10 are smokers). Many Anindilyakwa people are also starting smoking as young as 10 years old. When asked why people smoke, the most common reasons were because of: boredom, unemployment, lots of stress and because everyone else was doing it.

Alcohol is also a big problem for Anindilyakwa people when off island. It is estimated that up to any one time there are 100 to 150 Anindilyakwa people drinking in Darwin. During royalty,

rent or holiday time, many go to Darwin to drink. Drinking that happens on the mainland can cause considerable family problems and is also felt in the workplace as people are missing and a lot of money is wasted trying to bring them back (Lee and Conigrave, 2011).

Alcohol abuse on the island itself was a significant issue up until 2005, when Anindilyakwa people, through the ALC, made the courageous decision to ban alcohol on the islands, except under very tight regulation. At the request of the Anindilyakwa people, the Groote archipelago is now a Restricted Alcohol Area: a system of liquor permits enables possession and consumption of alcohol in selected localities. As a result, violence has diminished markedly—but a problem now replacing alcohol is the illegal consumption of cannabis which, rather than leading to violence, brings with it a dispirited lethargy that still prevents many of the local people from taking up education, training and employment opportunities that are now on offer.

Cannabis use produces significant social, psychological and psychiatric harms for Anindilyakwa people, and compounds negative effects from poverty, unemployment and disengagement from the community.

Witnesses also report an association between cannabis and, suicide and domestic violence in remote communities. It is expected that the serious long-term effects of cannabis use will become more evident over time, as effects take hold in populations currently engaged in habitual, heavy use.

The cost of obtaining cannabis on Groote Eylandt is estimated to be four times that of mainland Australia and the loss of income to communities to cannabis is in the scale of several million dollars each year.

Studies show that regular cannabis abuse arises from a deeper lack of purpose, and lack of clarity around options for the future. The ALC views the issue as an extremely complex one that requires a complex response; but at the core of the solution is developing a range of options that engage individuals and thereby, mental wellbeing.

The ALC believes strategies to tackle the issue will require a collaborative effort from community as well as involvement from relevant government agencies, GEMCO, ALC and GEBIE. It is proposed that a substance misuse strategy is developed which is holistic, guided by the meaningful engagement and participation of local people and involves a genuine long-term commitment by all relevant stakeholders.

The ALC proposes that the next step is to convene a two-day summit on Groote Eylandt with the aim of developing a comprehensive and holistic strategy and an action plan for addressing substance misuse. The core participants of the summit will be a cross section of community representatives from Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island. Representatives will also be invited from relevant government agencies (including senior NT police engaged in drug enforcement and intelligence, relevant Australian Government Health and Ageing and NT Health personnel), knowledgeable independent experts in the development and delivery of substance misuse strategies and relevant non-government agencies.



The summit's objective will be to identify a holistic action plan to substance misuse for the next five years.

**ACTIONS:**

115. Work with community and agencies to develop a holistic five-year action plan to address substance misuse.
116. Implement the substance misuse strategy and action plan.
117. Evaluate the substance misuse strategy include trends and status of substance use.
118. Develop appropriate response strategies for the following five years.

## **8.2 CREATE SAFE COMMUNITIES**

The ALC is working with the Australian, NT and local governments and communities to make communities safer as part of the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Service Delivery.

The development of a place-based plan and strategies that address community safety concerns are actions within the Agreement for Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra.

A Community Engagement Police Officer and Government Engagement Coordinators have consulted with Anindilyakwa people to identify issues impacting on Angurugu and Umbakumba's community safety. Conversations are beginning with Milyakburra residents on their community safety plan. The safety issues identified by the community may be able to be resolved through community action or they may relate to matters that are the responsibility of various levels of government. This information has been collected and was detailed in a draft Community Safety Plan for each community in 2012. The final plans are being reviewed and are expected to be released in late 2012.

Community safety plans are designed to tackle a range of safety issues including crime, disorder, anti-social behavior, the misuse of drugs and alcohol, reducing re-offending, family violence, and to provide public reassurance on issues affecting community safety. Community safety plans may also tackle issues associated with housing, homelessness, youth, children's safety or other environmental issues affecting safety as identified by the individual communities.

The ALC strongly advocates for the implementation of these Community Safety Plans in all three communities. The ALC views as valuable to community safety, police efforts to build relationships with community and in particular views the role of the Community

Engagement Police Officer as valuable in carrying out proactive policing strategies and in building positive engagement with community. The ALC will be advocating for the continuation of the funding for the Community Engagement Police Officer role post June 2013. Based on ongoing feedback from community members, additional police presence in all communities and police living in community would have a significant positive impact on community safety. The ALC would like to see incremental increases to police presence in communities and a progress towards police living in community. Increased visits to Umbakumba and Milyakburra, including overnight stays in these communities, would be beneficial first steps.

**ACTIONS:**

- 119. Finalise community safety plans for Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra.
- 120. Work with stakeholders to implement the Community Safety Plans for the three communities.
- 121. Advocate for the continuation of the Community Engagement Police Officer role.
- 122. Work with NT Police to incrementally increase police presence in communities, including police living in community.

**8.3 DEVELOP WORKERS: EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY**

Many Groote Eylandt families have been raised in an environment where education is not valued and inter-generational unemployment has provided few community role models. Only about 10 per cent of local adults on Groote Eylandt are employed. Many young people are disengaging from schooling before reaching senior years and are therefore not making the transition between schooling into training and employment. Some people are taking up jobs but before long stop going to work for various reasons.

The following factors can make it difficult for Indigenous people on Groote Eylandt to obtain and retain jobs:

- Lack of education
- Lack of training
- Lack of exposure to mainstream workforce
- Geographic isolation
- The challenge of balancing cultural obligations with employment demands
- Inadequate organisational support in retaining and developing staff
- Poor health

- Substance misuse
- Low literacy levels

Creating sustainable employment is believed to be the best way to ending disadvantage and the reliance on long-term welfare that is crippling communities. Pathways to sustainable employment need to be created for individuals through education and training that is directly tied to real jobs. These jobs need have direct benefits for individuals, families and the community as a whole.

With the current high unemployment level on Groote Eylandt, it is clear that the Anindilyakwa people need an employment strategy which addresses the barriers and increases the number of people taking up employment. The employment strategy will help build the local economy, affirm Indigenous identity and provide meaningful occupations for the next generation to replicate. The employment strategy will need to be holistic and must also address the transition from school to work. Building the skills for a workforce of the future requires focused and dedicated attention. Many, if not most, young people in community will go to school on Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island and will continue to live in their hometown into their adulthood and beyond. Young people who are starting out in the education system in 2012 will be at employment age during the last years of achieving this strategic plan. It is possible and necessary to build clear pathways of employment, facilitate better understanding and exposure to the possible areas of economic participation, and provide workforce capacity development for people on Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island.

Since it will take some time to build the skills for the future to lower unemployment, the strategy needs to provide short, medium and long-term actions. The community needs to support change both now and for future generations. This will be fundamental to achieving a positive future. There is no single solution to re-engage jobseekers and thus the employment strategy must be broad and inter-generational.

The two diagrams below provide a framework on which to develop the employment strategy. The first diagram below provides an overview of employment choices that will be available by 2027 for Anindilyakwa people. It outlines some of the main economic opportunities, building on the strengths of Anindilyakwa people, in the areas of land and sea management and enterprise development, cultural enterprises, arts, aged care and sports. The second diagram outlines the program and activities along the two main streams of essential service delivery and culture-based enterprises along the development stages from early childhood, schooling, training and employment.

Figure 10: Two stream economy.

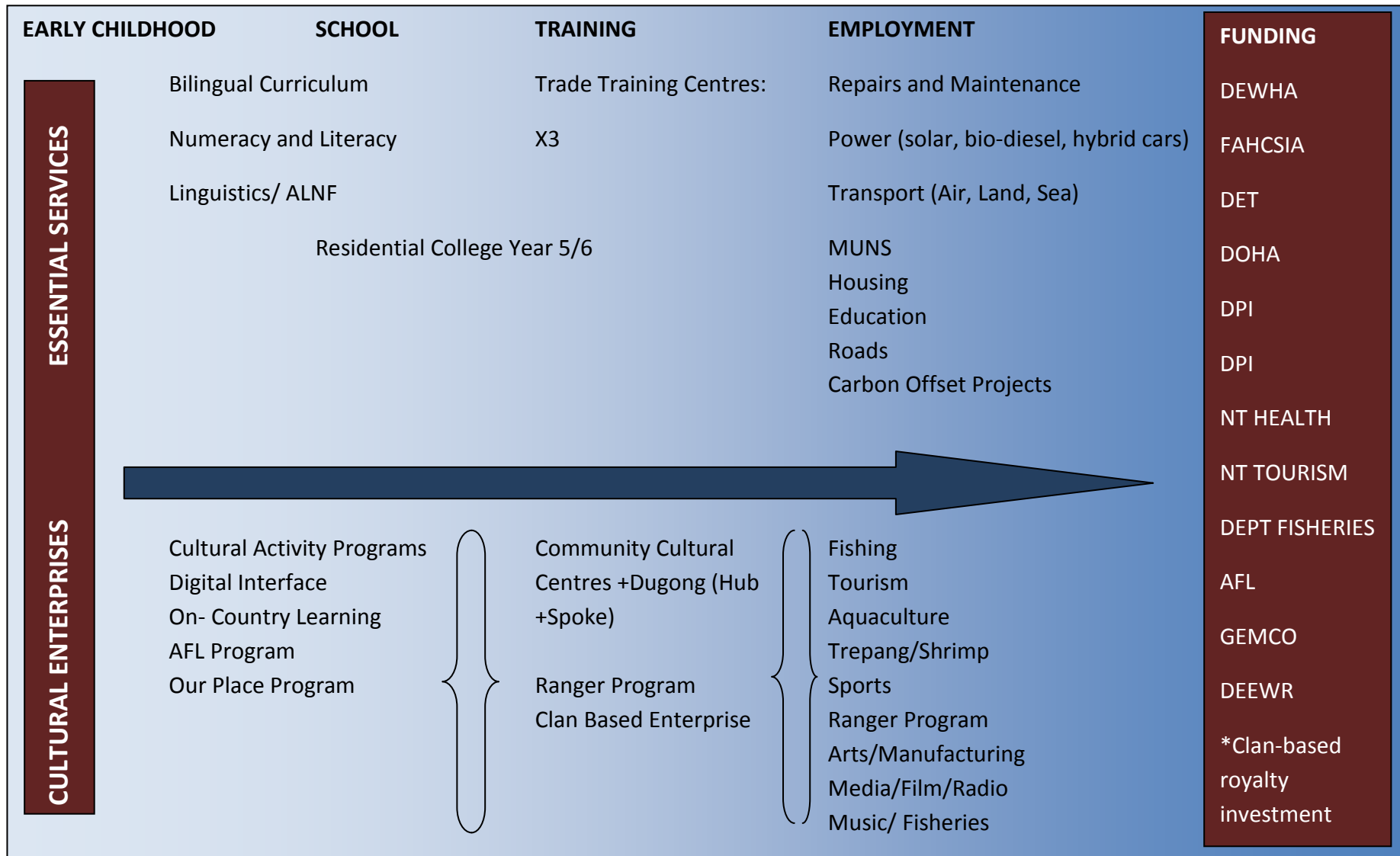
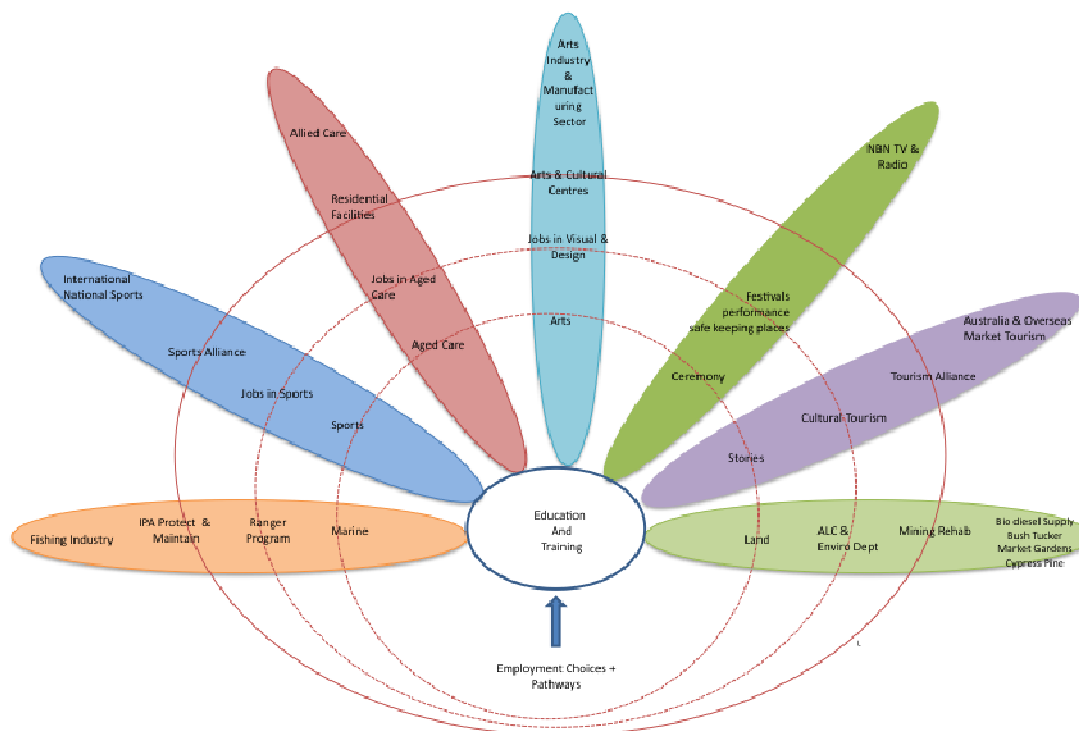


Figure 11: Education choices and pathways



In July 2013, the Australian Government will roll out the Remote Job Community Program (RJCP) across remote communities which will replace four main programs currently delivering employment and participation services, and community development in remote Australia – Job Services Australia, Direct Employment Services, Community Development Employment Projects and the Indigenous Employment Program (IEP). One service provider will be contracted to work directly with communities to create community action plans. For the Groote archipelago, this Strategic Plan will inform the community action plans.

A challenge faced currently is matching the labour workforce to jobs. This currently includes engaging unemployed jobseekers via the GEBIE Job shop or CDEP into projects that build skills employers are looking for on the island. The ‘identify, train, engage/employ, mentor’ model provides the framework (See Appendix). There is a need to further enhance these programs and for the RJCP provider to work with employers to build recruitment and retention programs.

Businesses can support and partner with programs that generate initiatives and employment. They can do this by:

- Promoting youth leadership and employment.
- Supporting other smaller businesses trying to entry the economic mainstream.
- Enabling progressive workplace changes.

- Build capacity within their own workforce of local employees.
- Promoting education and training by being part of the education system.

Further, education, training and capacity development opportunities need to be provided for jobs into the future. In particular, strategies for preparing youth for the workforce need to be developed and executed. A system must also be put in place to capture senior students at risk of disengaging with school to ensure that if they are not at school they are taking up training and/or employment.

The RJCP provider would need to consider the following needs and actions in carrying out the program including:

**ACTIONS:**

123. Consult with the community about the Remote Job Community Program (RJCP).
124. Build skills within the current workforces to match the jobs that are available currently and for those which will be required in the future including in mining, essential services delivery and to build a culture-based economy. Literacy and numeracy training underpins this.
125. Encourage employers to build recruitment programs that meet their immediate recruitment needs but allow for flexibility and change. For example, the new GEMCO eight-week pre-employment training package to be rolled out January 2013 combines lessons learned from past successes and addresses failures to better engage unemployed people.
126. Major employers to work together with the RJCP provider to increase awareness of employment, provide retention programs to support Indigenous staff, continue development of community networks with other service providers, promote cross cultural awareness among employers, and reverse cross culture among employees.
127. Education and training levels and secondary responses to labour market needs on island are to be improved. This can be achieved by linking with the Trade Training Centres, Cultural Centres and schools on island. The Culture Centres can offer projects which engage ongoing learning via different multimedia literacy activities through film making, digital storytelling and recording projects. This will need to include a school-based transition program into employment (work experience system).
128. Youth employment and skill development needs to be promoted via the RJCP Youth Corp program, including introducing a youth 'learnership' wage, a youth training subsidy, measures to avoid the displacement of existing workers when new young employees are taken on, and improved careers services in schools working in partnership with RJCP provider.
129. Partnering with medical professionals and governments to manage substance misuse is essential. If this initial issue has not been addressed, it will impact on completing training and retaining employment. Associated criminal convictions and prison time off island also impacts on future employment.
130. Skills need to be developed to meet the needs of Groote Eylandt after the mine has closed. The continued use of the Trade Training Centres and Cultural

Centres and engagement of the schools will support long-term goals of employment in the sectors.

131. Key programs or special employment programs will address the employment needs of the sectors: essential services (water, power, roads, building maintenances), food supply (market gardens), land management (rangers, control burning), transport (air services, barge supply), aged care (including services for MJD) and tourism (Dugong Beach Resort, Cultural Centres).

Cluster initiatives will be launched as part of the Cultural Centre to promote Groote Eylandt to a national and international tourism market. These cultural enterprise initiatives should continue the interface between labour skills needed and the education system.

#### **1.4 DEVELOP LEADERS**

There is a strong commitment within the ALC to provide the Traditional Owners with the capacity to take ownership of vital services for Groote Eylandt in preparedness of a future without mining.

It is proposed that a Leadership Program is developed, which is open to Aboriginal employees on Groote Eylandt, regardless of the organisation they work in. The Leadership Program will provide leadership training for Indigenous staff aspiring to take on leadership roles within organisations. The program will aim to give tailored learning for participants to gain skills and experience in management within a cross cultural environment.

This program would ensure that key positions on Groote Eylandt within the ALC, GEBIE, and its subsidiaries, East Arnhem Shire Council, Aminjarrinja, GEAT and any other organisation develops a succession plan for Aboriginal staff to move into leadership roles.

The program would be aimed at up-skilling Aboriginal employees in areas of literacy and numeracy, computer skills, report writing, understanding policies and procedures, cross cultural brokerage, specific skills to undertake their current roles and career development.

A memorandum of understanding would be developed between the ALC and participating employers, which includes agreement that the participant's employer would financially support their employees participation in the Anindilyakwa leadership program.



**ACTIONS:**

- 132.** Develop the Anindilyakwa Leadership Program and secure funding to deliver a pilot program.
- 133.** Monitor, evaluate the pilot program and implement improvements to the program.
- 134.** Implement the Anindilyakwa Leadership Program.

## **8.5 IMPROVE GOVERNANCE**

Organisations on Groote archipelago are consistently working towards adopting sound governance practices which are required to satisfy statutory requirements and which also satisfy cultural governance rules within which these organisation and their employees and stakeholders exist. There is a middle ground where organisational governance must meet cultural governance to create a system of governance that enables organisations and community to work together. The concept of working in two worlds is often used to capture this idea and is an everyday challenge faced by Anindilyakwa people who have taken up mainstream employment. The difficulties of balancing the requirements of both worlds becomes more so challenging when one takes up leadership and decision-making roles within organisations, boards and committees, particularly when decision making has implications on the greater community. Improving the rules and procedures by which organisations operate and embedding good governance practices that also allow Anindilyakwa people to operate effectively in both worlds in a necessary requirement of taking greater control of the things that impact on their lives.

### **ENCOURAGE CLANS TO INVEST RENT AND ROYALTIES INCOME**

Rent and royalties monies are distributed to the 14 Anindilyakwa clans every six months.

The ALC, at the request of its people, will encourage and support clans to invest their money into enterprise development. The ALC will investigate introducing initiatives to encourage this, i.e. providing additional support etc.

An example of this happening effectively is that of LAC which in 2012 built a business centre in Milyakburra. The clan received \$1.5 million in rent money, distributed \$300,000 and spent the remaining \$1.2 million on the centre, which includes accommodation and conference facilities. The ALC contributed \$130,000 to the project.

**ACTIONS:**

135. Increase initiatives that encourage clan groups invest rent/royalties income in enterprise.

**APPLY FOR INCREASED AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT ABA 64-1 FUNDING**

The ALC in 2012/13 has a total operational budget of \$6.5 million. Currently only \$1.47 million of this comes from the Commonwealth Government's ABA 64-1 Funding. The ALC intends to apply for an increase in the transition period between 2013 and when a fully functioning regional authority is set up to take over some of the non-core functions in which the ALC is currently engaged.

**ACTIONS:**

136. Apply for increased ABA 64-1 funding for the operational budget.

**IMPLEMENT THE ALC'S 5-YEAR GOVERNANCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

In late 2010, the ALC and GEBIE commissioned a consultation process with elected ALC Board members, GEBIE directors and staff from both organisations to assess the governance needs of both organisations. This project came after a period of time where both organisations had grown substantially to take on more responsibilities as a result of major agreements and partnerships that generated a lot of work for both organisations. The administrative systems, organisational structures and resourcing had not kept up with the changes in workload. In the rapidly changing environment, the elected leaders, management and staff of both organisations understand that they must be better informed about their governing responsibilities and accountabilities if they are to remain effective in undertaking their core and expanding activities. A Governance Development Plan was developed for both organisations to undertake a range of activities over a five-year period. The Governance Development Plan recommends a range of actions to improve governance including defining organisation staffing needs and establishing an appropriate organisational structure to meet demands, strategic planning, policy and procedure development, training in governance principles, succession planning, and, capacity and professional development for ALC Board members, GEBIE directors and staff. To manage the execution of the Governance Development Plan, the ALC has secured funding for a Governance Development Officer.

The governance development planning process and the appointment of a Governance Development Officer for ALC and GEBIE, brought about many other requests external from these two organisations for governance development training, for resources to provide development, and for capacity to be built in this area. Committees, boards and

organisations beyond the ALC and GEBIE will also benefit from governance development training. A focus, as organisations expand, should be on building good governance, to grow sustainably and viably and to build capacity of Anindilyakwa people to take on decision making and leadership roles within these organisations.

**ACTIONS:**

- 137. Implement the ALC and GEBIE's five-year Governance Development Plan.
- 138. Support governance development across other organisations, boards and committees.

**IMPROVE CONSULTATION**

The ALC is investigating the launch of a pilot on-island consultation service, called the Community Engagement/Consultation Project, to streamline consultation of local people and reduce 'over-consultation'.

The project is also designed to create an employment opportunity for local people. It will enable Anindilyakwa people to become active participants and directors of ongoing data collection and community consultation.

It has been discussed for many years that the ability of service providers to develop good programs and to make effective decisions is dependent on the quality of the data, both quantitative and qualitative that is obtained by the current process of using outside experts.

For some time the Anindilyakwa people have been concerned about the lack of respect and lack of understanding outsiders have demonstrated; this is likely to have an effect on the data they provide and the decisions outsiders make. While local people are often asked to help, they feel undervalued and in most cases, receive little or no monetary reward or recognition.

The ALC is keen to support local people in what they see as a genuine employment opportunity that may grow over time into a small enterprise. The current high demand for community consultation indicates that if properly resourced and supported, this initiative has a high chance of success with no requirement for ongoing funding support.

Under the structure being trialled, each service provider will commit to engaging with the local team who will be paid for their services at normal commercial rates and with the same expectations of professionalism that is demonstrated by the current providers. Their relationship with the people of the Groote archipelago will change from one in which the

community is passive to one in which the community is actively engaged and the service provider is building capacity.

The ALC will support this project through its Community Liaison Unit with the assistance of an Indigenous Employment Program (IEP) provider who will undertake to support the development of a core team of eight people and the ongoing support of the team for a period of 12 months. The provider will provide training and mentoring, and assist the ALC with negotiating with the various service providers to establish appropriate ethical protocols to ensure the local team and the outside agencies develop a professional relationship and best practice.

**ACTIONS:**

139. Monitor the Community Engagement/Consultation Project, an on-island consultation service to streamline local consultation of local people and reduce 'over-consultation'.

## **9. GOAL E: WORKING WITH ALL PARTNERS**

### **9.1 THE REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (RPA)**

Stage 1 of the Regional Partnership Agreement between the ALC, the Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government began in May 2008. In November 2009 the ALC, Australian Government, Northern Territory Government and additional partners East Arnhem Shire Council and the Groote Eylandt Mining Company signed Stage Two of the RPA. The RPA is significant and unique because it was made on the principals of partnership and collaboration between Anindilyakwa people, all levels of government and the mining business. The RPA represents a large commitment to carry out infrastructure development where there had previously been a backlog in addressing infrastructure needs. The RPA also includes commitments to improve a range of social development factors including schooling, early childhood development, governance and leadership, economic development and participation, support of youth, sport and recreation activities, and health and safety in communities. The RPA covers the entire Groote archipelago region, thus encompassing the priorities of the Anindilyakwa people as a whole. To date Anindilyakwa people have committed in excess of \$33 million from their own resources to RPA Projects.

#### **Achievements and challenges**

Through the RPA there has been delivery of significant infrastructure development. The road between Angurugu and Umbakumba has been sealed, houses in all three townships and in some of the outstations have been built or refurbished, as well as teacher housing built in Umbakumba. The significant investments in infrastructure development has enabled the establishment of a locally owned civil and construction company, GEBIE Civil and Construction (GCC), the expansion of construction services by another local business, Aminjarrinja Enterprises, and has provided increased opportunities for employment outside the mining operations. Fluoridation plants have been installed in both Angurugu and Umbakumba to improve dental health, the GEBIE Job Shop has been established, The Arts and Cultural Centre has been built and through the RPA MJD patients have received much needed support.

Governance structures have been established as part of stage two projects including the establishment of the Ngakawurrallanga College with an Education and Training Board, College Advisory Board and School Councils which includes majority Anindilyakwa representatives. The College structures were formed in response to the New Ownership, New Responsibility report calling for greater local control of education on Groote Eylandt. A Youth Steering Committee, Community Safety Committee (Community Tasking and Coordination Group) and Local Reference Groups have also been established. Strategies and plans are in various stages of development and implementation including community safety plans, a youth strategy and a substance misuse strategy. Governance and Leadership

development has also been an important agenda of the RPA, and the ALC and GEBIE have endorsed a five-year Governance Development Plan which is in the early stages of implementation.

While much has been achieved since the first signing of the RPA in 2008, what has taken place over the past four years has essentially created the foundations for change by starting to bring priority infrastructure developments to fruition. Further, extensive consultation processes and the establishment of governance structures have occurred to define priority needs of the townships as defined by Anindilyakwa people. A continued and consistent effort is required to continue this journey. In particular, the effectiveness of forums in enabling wishes of Anindilyakwa people to be heard and acted on needs to be monitored and evaluated periodically. Further, Groote Eylandt is yet to experience the step change of these improved governance structures, strategies and plans on sustained school attendance, numeracy and literacy standards, job readiness, employment and health and well-being. While the Youth Steering Committee has achieved through a strong consultative process the task of developing a comprehensive Youth Strategy for the region, implementation of the strategy is in its infancy and requires an injection of effort and resources to mobilise the actions of the strategy. The Community Safety Plans are currently under development following a lengthy community consultative process and which identifies the things community see as important to keeping their communities safe; this must be followed through with action. While the ALC and GEBIE have carried out governance improvement initiatives and are carrying out a five-year training and development program for GEBIE Directors, ALC Board members and staff, a structured governance and leadership development program has been identified as a need across other organisations and decision making groups operating in the region. Further some complex issues such as substance misuse, the prevalent incidence of suicide and self harm in the region and the health and aged care needs of Anindilyakwa people have not been adequately addressed.

In July 2012, an RPA Evaluation was finalised and endorsed by the Regional Partnership Agreement Committee. The Report found the RPA 'to be working strongly as a government, Indigenous Community and industry partnership.... [It] exhibits effective qualities of leadership, an ethos of collaboration and trust and effective management practice'. The evaluation highlights that 'the success of the RPA arrangements cannot be attributed to one factor or indeed several factors in isolation'. It is a combination of a number of key inputs and processes that has determined the overall success' of the RPA (Tempo Strategies, 2012, p.6). Notably, the needs and aspirations of Indigenous communities is the driving force for the partnership and that the community through the ALC have identified an overall vision, priority issues to be addressed and objectives for their community. The prominent role of the ALC, and its involvement in all stages of planning and implementation, has been a significant factor in ensuring effort is aligned to the will of the Anindilyakwa people. Commonwealth and territory ministerial, and senior-level department support for the work under the RPA has been vital in making progress. The

report also highlights pressing governance issues, one of which is the need to give some clarity about the duration of the RPA to support effective long term planning. The ALC recommends that this 15 year Strategic Plan forms the framework for the long term plan and that future iterations of the RPA are entered into as medium term action plans toward achieving the Strategic Plan. The ALC supports the findings of the RPA Evaluation and envisages that the recommendations of the report will be addressed in the development of Stage 3 of the RPA.

### Next steps

The ALC views the relationship with agreement partners as one which is progressively strengthening, inherently valuable and which allows for robust discussion and for issues to be addressed. The Australian Government, NT Government and GEMCO commitments to the partnership are crucial to achieving the long term plan. Further, other entities operating in the region should be brought in to the partnership, including Groote Eylandt Aboriginal Trust and Aminjarrinja Enterprises. The role of the East Arnhem Shire Council in the partnership must be assessed and determined; and carrying out this assessment is a recommendation of the RPA Evaluation.

The Regional Partnership Agreement Stage 2 is now in its third year and there are some commitments made under the RPA which are yet to be completed. The table below outlines the projects which are still continuing and these projects will be captured in the next iteration of the RPA. Note that some projects have been excluded on the premise that the projects will be resolved by January 2013. There are also many programs that were initiated under the RPA and while the time-bound commitment under the RPA has been met, it is crucial that what has been established is built on and continues. For example continuation of an early literacy and numeracy program is an essential part of early childhood development and is a priority post the DEEWR three year funding of the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation. This is similar for most other programs under the building blocks of schooling, youth, sport and recreation, safe communities, health, governance and leadership. Similarly, additional infrastructure needs exist, in particular over-crowding is still an issue in Angurugu. This strategic plan provides a proposal on next actions across the building blocks.

RPA Commitment	Status	Note
AFL Club rooms Angurugu and Umbakumba	Underway	The facilities have been built and placed on site but remained uncommissioned and unusable. The EASC has taken steps to clarify the cost of completion works but may not have capacity to cover those costs. There is risk of damage to the facilities if not secured before onset of the

		2012 wet season.
Health Care Centre Umbakumba	Underway	Project timelines have been much delayed due to negotiations around economic rate of return for GEBIE's \$3m investment. Discussion now focussed on design. GCC will construct during 2013, currently no clear completion date.
Trade Training Centre Angurugu	Underway	Tender awarded to GCC, completion date TBC. Will function as community cyclone shelter.
Trade Training Centre Umbakumba	Underway	Tender awarded to GCC, completion date TBC. Will function as community cyclone shelter.
Trade Training Centre Alyangula	Stalled	Insufficient funds currently available to progress this project. Intention to combine with cyclone shelter.
Cyclone Shelter Milyakburra	Stalled	Funding shortfall of \$250,000 to progress this project. Intention to develop as multi-purpose centre and shelter.
Government Employee Housing Angurugu	Underway	Planning and approvals well advanced, construction by GEBIE to commence late 2012, early 2013.
Government Employee Housing Umbakumba	Underway	Requires rezoning decision from NTG. Further planning and approvals required, construction should commence 2013.
Public Jetty Alyangula	Stalled	Land and sea tenure issues still under negotiation. Materials stockpiled by GEMCO. GEMCO still committed to the project.
Home Ownership on Indigenous Land (HOIL)	Stalled	RPA action is for people to have access to the HOIL program with the target being to have the first home loans issued in 2010. To date people have had access to HOIL and money management training but the home loan target is unmet. Simplification of the end-to-end process and clarity around policy are



		required. Issues around the motivation to seek home ownership remain as an inhibiting factor.
Independent Evaluation of the RPA	Action complete, work ongoing	The evaluation has been conducted and the report finalised, so the RPA action is complete. Work is ongoing to consider how to implement the findings and recommendations of the evaluation.
Develop a Youth Strategy	Action complete, work ongoing	A 'Youth Strategy' report was completed but further work has been undertaken to develop a comprehensive Youth Strategy with clear actions. Implementation of the strategy is ongoing.
Develop a Substance Misuse Strategy	Underway	A Substance Misuse study was conducted and a report finalised. Further work is required to develop a strategy with the community and service providers which links to community safety planning.
Local Employment and Economic Development Board	Stalled	Board established but has not continued to meet due to lack of clarity around focus. The purpose of this Board may have been superseded by establishment of GEBIE JobShop and other work placement initiatives.
Introduce a basketball program	Underway	Attempts to establish a basketball league for women and girls has been unsuccessful to date but efforts are ongoing. There is community and individual interest which does not manifest in actual participation, possibly due to social or cultural factors.
Polly Farmer	Underway	The action is for GEMCO to provide sponsorship of \$150,000 for Polly Farmer Foundation or a similar program. GEMCO funding still committed but not yet

		expended for alternative program.
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<b>ACTIONS:</b>
140. Implement the recommendations of the RPA Evaluation.
141. Negotiate with partners stage 3 of the RPA.

## 9.2 GEAT

The Groote Eylandt Aboriginal Trust (GEAT) was established in the 1960s through the governance of the Church Missionary Society to manage and distribute mining royalties and to negotiate with the mining company that resulted in the CMS Agreement. This activity was taken over by the ALC when it was formed in 1991 but GEAT continues to receive funds to allow it to provide services to Anindilyakwa people. The independent and well-resourced GEAT has however over the years run independently to the strategic and well-governed agenda of the ALC and its economic arm of GEBIE. Recent reforms to GEAT have provided an opportunity to develop greater collaboration and coordination with GEAT. The ALC is committed to strengthening its relationship with GEAT for the benefit of Anindilyakwa people as a whole. The following areas are recommended as a beginning point of such an increased level of collaboration:

### FUNERALS

There have been issues around duplication of funding of funerals by the ALC and GEAT from royalty monies.

<b>ACTIONS:</b>
142. Work with GEAT to put in place a simple knowledge management accounting system that allows the two organisations to share information on where funeral funding is being provided.
143. Support GEAT to conduct the funerals.

### PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH

The new administration of GEAT has indicated it would like to see a particular focus on increasing opportunities and outcomes for Anindilyakwa youth. The Youth Strategy is an initiative of the Regional Partnership Agreement (Stage 2). In early 2010 a Youth Steering Committee was established as a sub-committee of the Regional Partnership Committee, to guide consultations and the development of a five-year Youth Strategy for the Anindilyakwa communities of Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island. The Youth Strategy targets young people from the ages of eight to 25 years old. This document outlines the vision, goals,

strategies and actions of the Youth Strategy. The next stage will involve allocating resources, determining roles and responsibilities, and timelines to deliver the Youth Strategy. The implementation of this Youth Strategy will be aligned to the long-term strategic plan for Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island currently under development and led by the Anindilyakwa Land Council in consultation with Traditional Owners. GEAT would therefore logically be brought into this collaboration.

**ACTION**

- 144. Collaborate with and identify gaps and opportunities for GEAT to work in partnership with the ALC and the RPA to increase services and programs across the Groote archipelago for Anindilyakwa youth.

**FESTIVALS**

The ALC acknowledges the value of working with GEAT to help the Anindilyakwa people to celebrate cultural life on the island.

The success of the ALC’s 20-year anniversary celebrations showed the potential of continuing to collaborate on funding and organisation of events.

**ACTIONS:**

- 145. Collaborate to build strategic alliances with GEAT for future celebrations for the benefit of Traditional Owners.

**CANE TOADS**

Cane toad entry to Groote Eylandt continues to be a risk. The ALC is therefore committed to collaborating with all stakeholders, including GEAT, to manage cane toad entry. It is particularly important that ALC rangers collaborate with GEAT on GEAT’s barge deliveries.

**ACTIONS:**

- 146. Work with the Darwin GEAT office to establish procedures for the ALC rangers being informed of barge arrivals on Groote Eylandt.
- 147. Ensure ALC Rangers have adequate resources to service barge landings.

**SECTION 19S**

GEAT planning will inevitably involve land and infrastructure works which will require Section 19 Land Use Agreements. The Section 19 process gives Traditional Owners an opportunity to consider, develop terms and conditions and the right to consent to or reject proposals on their land.

The ALC's Aboriginal Land Trust (ALT) carries out consultations and negotiations on behalf of Traditional Owners with those interested in carrying out commercial activities on this land to ensure that any land use proposal is fair and equitable.

The ALC is committed to supporting GEAT in its proposals, where appropriate.

**ACTIONS:**

148. The ALC's Aboriginal Land Trust (ALT) to support GEAT proposals to provide community infrastructure, with traditional owner support.

## **10. GOAL F: MOVING TOWARDS AN ANINDILYAKWA REGIONAL AUTHORITY**

### **10.1 THE GROWTH OF THE ANINDILYAKWA LAND COUNCIL**

The ALC was established in 1991 under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act (1976), and is under the auspices of the Commonwealth Authorities and Corporation Act and as such is a Commonwealth Statutory Body. Operational funding for the ALC is provided for out of the Aboriginal Benefit Account (Section 64-1). Under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act it is empowered and funded operationally to act on behalf of the Traditional Owners for all land ownership and management activities within the Groote archipelago. At the time of its establishment, it had an operational budget of \$390,000 and was run by a proportionately small team of people.

Since 2007-08, the statutory responsibilities and related workload of the ALC have increased beyond all expectations and planning. On the 20 May 2008, Stage One of the RPA was signed and required the ALC to undertake and coordinate a significant number of major projects in the Anindilyakwa region. Stage Two of the RPA was signed in November 2009 and included additional stakeholders; with the East Arnhem Shire Council and the Groote Eylandt Mining Company (GEMCO) joining the partnership.

More than 60 local projects (including those brought forward from Stage One) have been initiated as a result of RPA Stage Two (which also includes township leases). These projects cover a broad spectrum of community life ranging from extensive capital works programs (housing and road works), community development projects, health, education and training, youth strategies, economic development, safe communities, youth diversion and development, substance misuse as well as overall partnership support. While signed onto by the ALC, much of this activity has been and continues to be delivered by ALC's business arm GEBIE. More than \$31 million of GEBIE funds (royalties handed on by ALC) are now allocated to deliver commitments under the RPA over the next few years.

It should be noted that of the \$6.2 million annual budget that ALC now operates on, only \$1.5 million is sourced from Section 64-1 under the *ALRA*. The balance is comprised of grants to the ALC Ranger program (a major employer of Anindilyakwa people) and a \$2.1 million charge to its business arm GEBIE for advocacy and administration to deliver key commitments under the RPA and other non-core ALC responsibilities such as protection of the Groote sea country.

The reality is that the ALC has been performing duties outside of the legislation that underpins it and it is the view of this Plan that it is timely to question the sustainability of this arrangement, from a legislative, financial and governance point of view.

## **10.2 GROOTE EYLANDT AND BICKERTON ISLAND ENTERPRISES ABORIGINAL CORPORATION (GEBIE)**

In compliance with the ALRA the ALC established its business arm GEBIE to invest traditional owner royalties into business and sustainable economic return opportunities. While GEBIE businesses have grown rapidly under the influence of the RPA, the focus of GEBIE has been stretched away from the core realm of business into the arena of delivering social welfare programs at its own expense. There is an inherent tension in this arrangement for both directors and staff. What was expressly established as a business has moved to become an organisation that distributes ALC royalties, runs a substantial social-welfare program and is delivers mainstream government services.

The following table attempts to provide some detail of perceived current overall tension that currently exist within the existing ALC/GEBIE roles and responsibilities utilising a SWOT analysis.

It is followed with an overview of how royalties sourced from the GEMCO mine are distributed back to the Traditional Owners via various channels.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p><b>ALC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Defined under legislation (ALRA)</li> <li>-Peak governance body for all clans</li> <li>-Commonwealth Statutory Authority</li>   <li>-Stable entity with proven track record</li> <li>- Ongoing GEMCO royalty stream</li> <li>- Existing organisation and management focused on planning ahead</li> <li>-Intent/support of key stakeholders</li> <li>-RPA in place</li> <li>- Strong links with senior levels of Government</li>   <p><b>GEBIE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Good governance</li> <li>-Good “line of sight” with ALC Executive Board and Management</li> <li>-Social Program rules</li> <li>-Can make economic profit from royalties</li> <li>-Has set up numerous businesses and investments for the future</li> <li>-Delivering on key infrastructure projects</li> </ul> </ul>	<p><b>ALC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Overstretched operationally and exceeding its core Land Council functions</li> <li>-Reliant upon royalties to carry out current responsibilities</li> <li>-Management historically too closely intertwined with GEBIE</li>   <p><b>GEBIE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Set up to do business, but running welfare programs – different operational and management skill sets</li> <li>-Has to be “all things to all people”</li> <li>-Primary businesses not making profits to date</li> <li>-Communication with clients</li> <li>-Has not adequately supported cultural based enterprises</li> </ul> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Regional Partnership Agreement Stage 3</li> <li>-Provide safety net over mining damage to sea country</li> <li>-Work more closely with GEAT</li> <li>-New NT Government indicating it will devolve more autonomy to remote Indigenous communities</li> <li>-Establish a Regional Authority to deliver more efficient and effective local mainstream services and employment</li> <li>-Phase out royalty support for delivering mainstream government funded services</li> </ul>	<p><b>ALC</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Threats from mining industry over sea country (shortcomings of ALRA Act and Native Title Act)</li>   <p><b>GEBIE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Non-delivery of the following core aspirations:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Widespread local employment</li> <li>2. Local capacity to run the Archipelago</li> <li>3. Economic return on royalty investment</li> </ol> </li>   <p><b>Threats to both organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Diminishing royalty income</li> <li>-A culture of dependency on rents/royalties and Centrelink</li> <li>-Unresolved low school attendance</li> <li>-Low levels of local employment</li> <li>-High levels of cannabis use</li> <li>-Impending increase in MJD and Aged Care numbers</li> </ul> </ul> </ul>

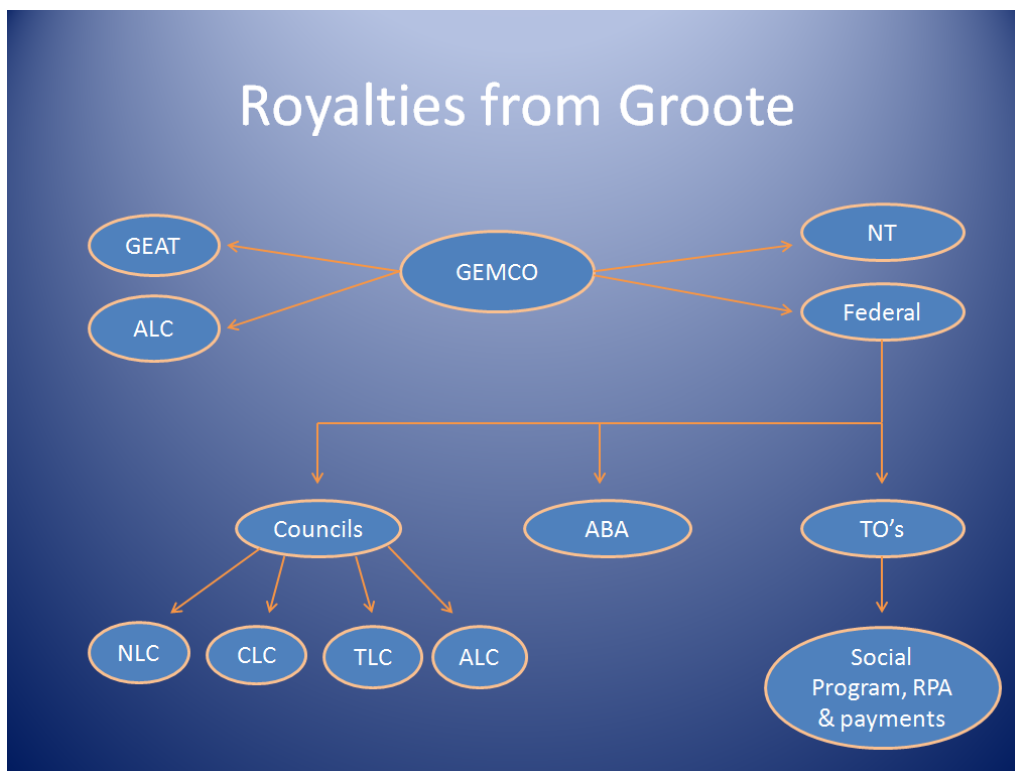
### 10.3 ROYALTY INCOME

Over the last few years, the ALC has received annual royalty income in excess of \$20 million, mostly distributed to GEBIE to honour commitments under the RPA and to maintain its social program. Recent world events, including the global financial crisis affecting consumer demand in Europe, contractions to the US and a corresponding contraction to demand for commodities in China economy have translated into an end to the mining boom and a slowing down of demand for iron ore and as such, for manganese sourced from Groote Eylandt.

GEMCO royalties reduced 50% over the six months to November 2012 during which this Plan was formulated. It is the advice of GEMCO that the current royalty incomes will likely plateau at this level for the life of the mine, which is currently set for a minimum of 15 years depending on whether Traditional Owners allow more access to deposits. The community has understood this and encouraged the ALC to prepare for a future without a dependence upon royalties to underpin its economy and wellbeing.

The organisational dependence upon royalties must correspondingly slow down and eventually cease. Simultaneously there is a growing acknowledgement among Traditional Owners that the current economy of royalty and welfare dependence is not sustainable and changes must be made in how “business is run”.

Figure 12: Royalties from Groote





**ACTIONS:**

149. Build on strengths, maximise opportunities, minimise weaknesses and address threats faced by ALC and GEBIE.

## **10.4 MOVING TOWARDS IMPROVED GOVERNANCE – THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL AUTHORITY**

At the ALC Executive Board meeting held on 28 September 2012, there was an in-principle agreement to explore the transition of a number of current responsibilities to the management of a regional authority, properly mandated by NT Government legislation, staffed and funded to deliver a range of essential services across the Groote archipelago. It is viewed that this would be a natural progression of maturity in the current partnership arrangements under the RPA. It would deliver current and projected core mainstream service needs by Anindilyakwa people and create a sustainable long-term economy. It would also allow the ALC to focus on its core legislated responsibilities – to act on behalf of the Traditional Owners for all land ownership and management activities, and allow GEBIE and other local businesses to deliver economic return on investment of royalties to the Traditional Owners through business activities delivering services to the regional authority.

Features of the regional authority could include:

- A Board derived from all traditional owner clans across the Groote archipelago as a result of the ALC tri-annual elections (14 representatives) plus general managers of each area of core responsibility.
- The establishment of independent schools delivering bilingual education and pathways from early childhood through to full employment working collaboratively with the establishment of Trade Training Centres and Cultural Centres in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra.
- The delivery of core health services on the Groote archipelago to cater for increasing demand for aged, disability and MJD patients utilising a core local workforce.
- Delivering core municipal services by direct contract to the NT Government, reducing current bureaucracy and increasing efficiency utilising locally established Indigenous businesses.
- Responsibility for delivery of services to outstations, social program, and employment services, leaving it to focus on building core business capacity to
  1. create local capacity to deliver local services in the communities;
  2. employ Anindilyakwa people; and
  3. generate return of royalty investment for the Traditional Owners.

- Develop a capacity to build houses and infrastructure utilising local materials and local labour, subsidised by a modest royalty banking scheme.
- Deliver the ALC Strategic Plan two principle streams of options to integrate early childhood, education, training and employment for Anindilyakwa people:
  1. Essential Service delivery;
  2. Culture-based enterprises.
- Contract services to Anindilyakwa owned business providers.

**ACTIONS:**

150. Further investigate and develop the Regional Authority model.

151. Establish the new model and structure for operations of services on Groote archipelago.

Figure 13: Proposed new structure (1)

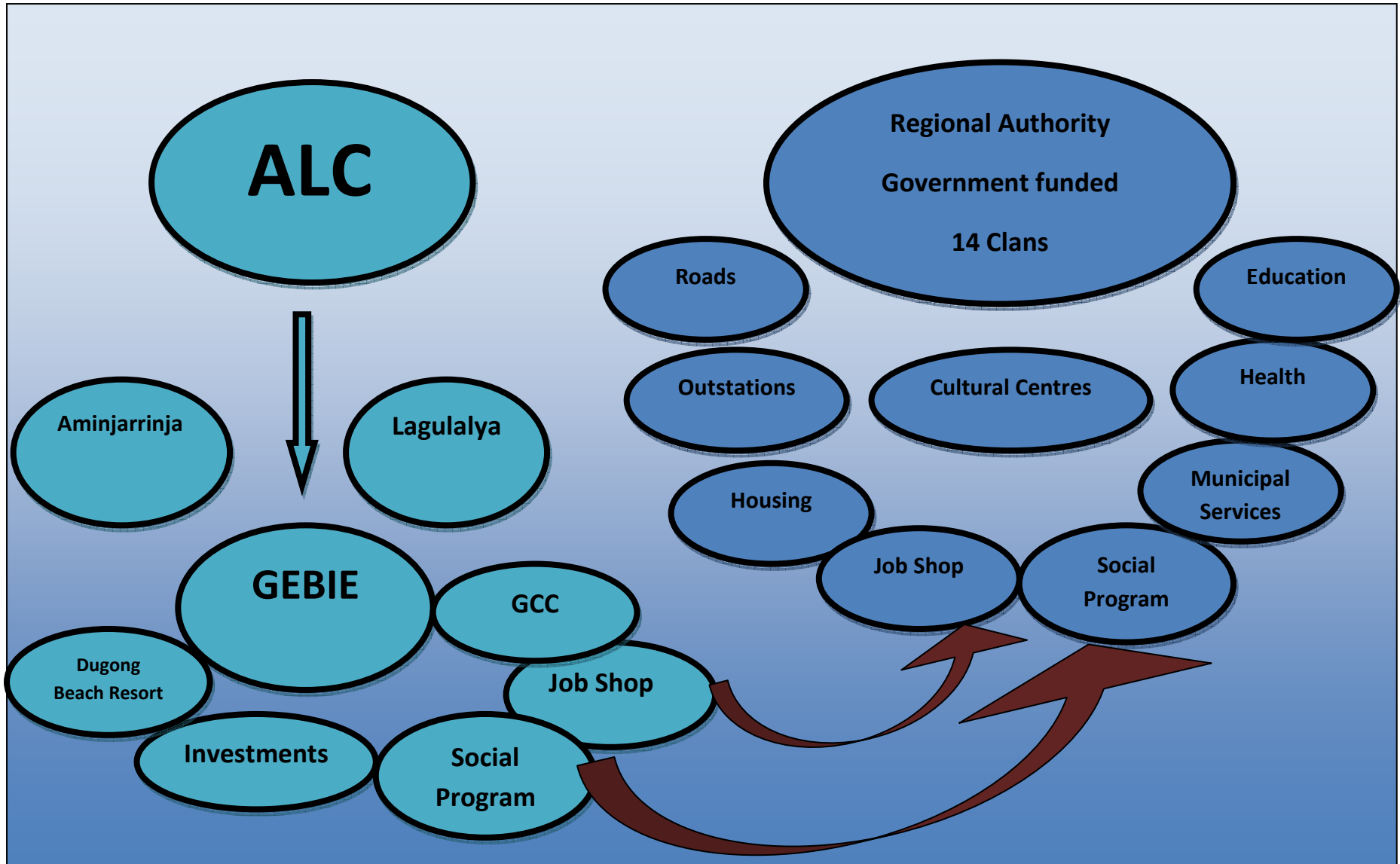
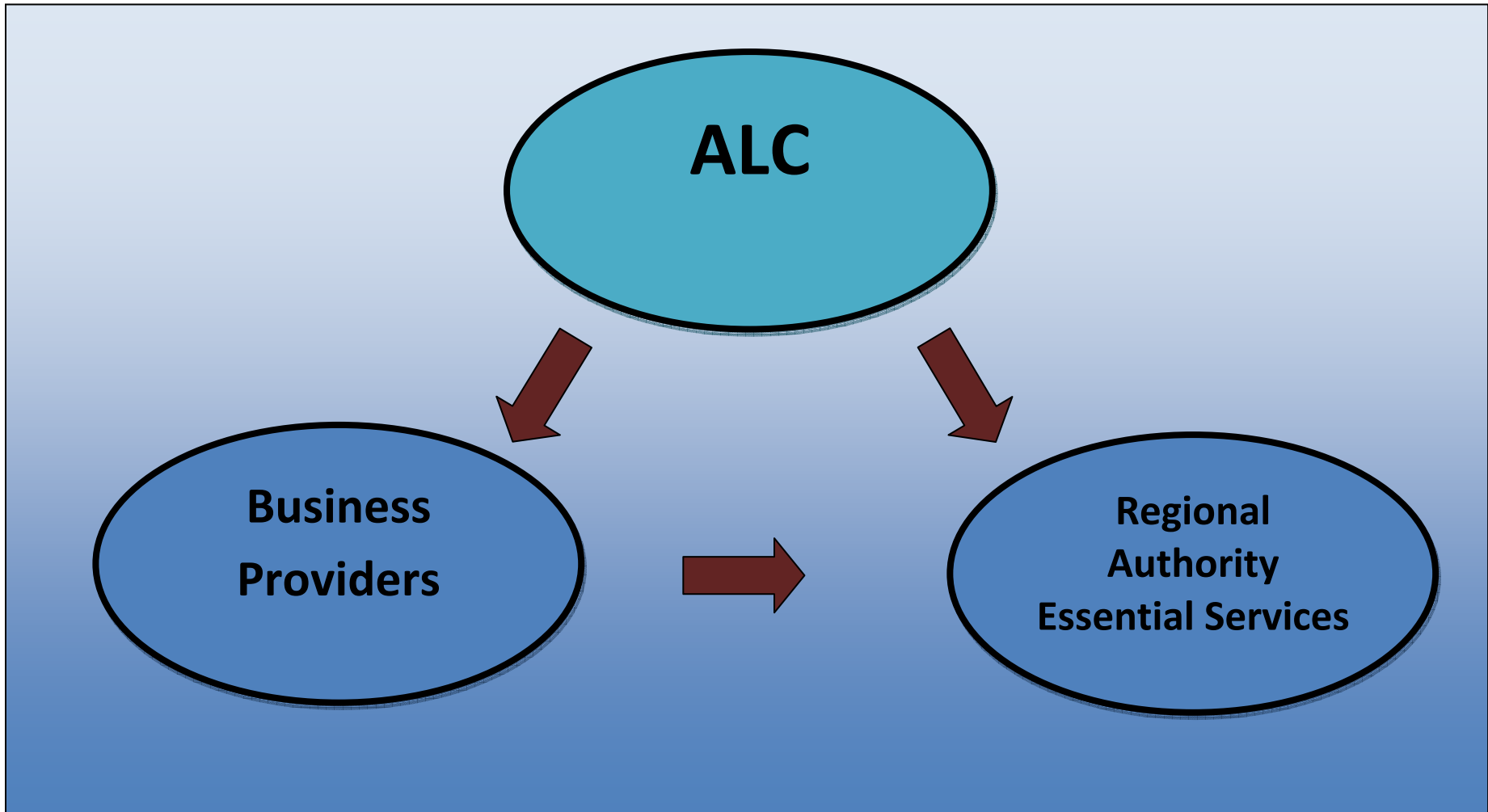


Figure 14: Proposed new structure (2)



## 11. ACTIONS IN SUMMARY

GOALS	ACTIONS
<p><b>Protect the Land and Sea</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Educate Traditional Owners of the value of areas within the Southern Leases.</li> <li>2. Conduct comprehensive anthropological and archaeological studies in the Southern Leases area.</li> <li>3. Negotiate with Traditional Owners if posed with a request for an Exploration License by GEMCO (BHP Billiton) after January 2013.</li> <li>4. Seek advice on an ALC position to future exploration/mining of the Southern Leases area.</li> <li>5. Lobby for significant environmental assessment before proceeding with any new Mining Agreements in the Eastern Leases area.</li> <li>6. Consult with the Anindilyakwa community on any requirements to be included in a new Mining Agreement, including cultural area restrictions, environmental obligations, and financial compensation and community benefits.</li> <li>7. Conduct regular negotiations with GEMCO around mine closure planning.</li> <li>8. Liaise with GEMCO in creation of an official mine closure plan.</li> <li>9. Investigate optimal use of current land management and rehabilitation practises for long term sustainable economic development.</li> <li>10. Build capacity in local people to take over the operation of GEMCO facilities such as roads, power and water supply, and port facilities.</li> <li>11. Secure a contract with a large corporation or government institution to offset its carbon emissions.</li> <li>12. Design, manage and operate a savannah fire management program on Groote Eylandt/Bickerton Island utilising the ALC Ranger program.</li> <li>13. Investigate setting up solar farms to supply power for Angurugu and potentially Alyangula, as an alternative source to GEMCO's diesel generators.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>14. Investigate setting up solar farms in collaboration with Power and Water in both Milyakburra and Umbakumba.</li><li>15. Investigate soil creation techniques suitable for Groote Eylandt and apply to GEMCO mine rehabilitation areas in preparation for food production.</li><li>16. Investigate the viability of growing bio-mass through rehabilitation as a claimable carbon credit activity, with a cultivation component to provide low-cost diesel (bio-diesel).</li><li>17. Establish the viability of a methane capture scheme for a new consolidated landfill site to be located on GEMCO's mining leases in collaboration with Indigenous enterprise companies.</li><li>18. Seek support from the new NT Government, Country Liberal Party to develop permanent protection from exploration and mining in the Groote archipelago coastal waters.</li><li>19. Apply for National Heritage Listing for sea-country of the Groote archipelago.</li><li>20. Register a Native Title Claim over Anindilyakwa sea country.</li><li>21. Seek a consent determination with the NT Government for a Native Title Claim over Groote archipelago seas.</li><li>22. Formally invite politicians and TOs to a meeting to dedicate the revised IPA, which includes the seas around Bickerton Island and Groote Eylandt.</li><li>23. Continue negotiations with the NT Government around access to the inter-tidal zone as in the Groote archipelago.</li><li>24. ALC Rangers to carry out the roles and activities spelled out in the Anindilyakwa IPA's Management Plan and review this plan annually.</li><li>25. Conduct extensive anthropological research with traditional and ceremonial Elders to document sacred sites and songlines across the Sea Country.</li><li>26. Investigate setting up a Land &amp; Sea Management Trust Fund.</li></ol>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>27. Pursue the establishment of large-scale aquaculture ventures to augment and eventually replace the dependency on royalty income.</li> <li>28. Support the joint venture between Aminjarrinja Enterprise Aboriginal Corporation, NT Fisheries and Tasmanian Seafoods to trial growing trepang.</li> <li>29. Provide seed funding of \$375,000 to help Traditional Trepang Traders Joint Venture set-up a sustainable trepang farming business at Bartalumba Bay.</li> <li>30. Investigate various fish species for their commercial viability and help local fishing people to set up small businesses in commercial fishing.</li> <li>31. Investigate the feasibility of establishing a large-scale shrimp farm to export product internationally.</li> <li>32. Explore funding and resources available for pilot programs and establishing costs.</li> <li>33. Approach existing operations in places including Berri Springs, Nhulunbuy and Humpty Doo for insights and information.</li> <li>34. Explore existing commercial Spanish Mackerel and wild Barramundi operations in East Arnhem with the view to cooperate on freight and distribution lines.</li> <li>35. Continue a trial to grow giant clams on Groote Eylandt and if successful find an overseas market and set up a commercially viable business.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Develop Best Practice Service Delivery</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>36. Closely review and monitor education data on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>37. Establish improved governance including the possible creation of independent schools</li> <li>38. Establish a bilingual-based learning curriculum</li> <li>39. Build on the strong start already provided in the ALNF Early Literacy and Language Program and link this in with an enhanced Groote Eylandt Linguistics Centre capacity to develop community-based capacity in bilingual educational and pre-employment support programs</li> </ul>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>40. Establish a link with community cultural centres and school learning curriculum</li><li>41. Implement the ALC Strategic Plan school-training-employment strategy</li><li>42. Work with community health centres and schools to address the difficulties associated with hearing impairment and learning</li><li>43. Investigate and learn from the success of residential school facilities across Australia, with the view to establishing an on-island residential school for Year 5 and 6 Anindilyakwa students</li><li>44. Lobby for a rebuild of Angurugu School</li><li>45. Complete school teacher houses in Angurugu</li><li>46. Conduct a summit on Substance Misuse and carry out identified actions.</li><li>47. It is recommended to immediately upgrade the dialysis unit in Angurugu with mainstream health funding.</li><li>48. Lobby for an immediate upgrade of the dialysis unit in Angurugu.</li><li>49. Conduct a review of exact projected needs for additional aged, disability and MJD patients over the next 15 years.</li><li>50. Apply for government funding for additional infrastructure.</li><li>51. Depending upon community support, expand the current aged care facility in Angurugu over the next five to 10 years.</li><li>52. Work to increase community engagement with the current aged and disability care services.</li><li>53. Continue to work with MJD Foundation on appropriate support and care for MJD clients.</li><li>54. Advocate for more extensive lifestyle programs integrated with the residential care facility which distinguish and target 'aged needs' versus 'disability needs'.</li></ol>
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	<p>55. Advocate for increased capacity for health services to provide weekly home visits for wheelchair users who are unable to access appropriate transport in order to physically get to these services.</p> <p>56. Advocate for programs which build a care workforce of local community members.</p> <p>57. Advocate for an analysis to determine the best means to support Certificate III/IV aged/disability care education.</p> <p>58. Look into possible pre-vocational training and VET programs to support aged/disability care education (i.e. Certificate II in Community Services).</p> <p>59. Look at providing disability employment opportunities for those people living with disabilities in the community.</p> <p>60. Advocate for the following proposed infrastructure for Groote Eylandt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Angurugu Flexible Aged Care Centre to become a multi-functional 24/7 residential care facility.</li><li>• Plan for the expansion of the number of beds required in the future.</li><li>• Ensure adherence to Australian Standards building codes for accessibility (AS1428.1-2009), which must be met as part of any form of negotiations (GEMCO, EASC, NTG, FAHCSIA) to ensure that all new and upgraded community buildings are fully accessible.</li><li>• Audit existing community buildings to determine accessibility, and put plans into place with service providers for agreement that all buildings/offices must be upgraded to become accessible.</li><li>• Staff accommodation for a 24/7 residential care facility in Angurugu.</li><li>• Construct a specialist training/education and resources centre (including provision of genetic education services/digital technology, etc) to support people with MJD and their families and to train/educate carers and the wider community.</li><li>• Footpaths in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra so that wheelchair users are not forced to be on the road, and to allow access to the community in the wet season.</li><li>• Accessible driveways leading to footpaths in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awnings over pathways, ramps and carports to houses where people in wheelchairs live.</li> <li>• Lighting/awnings on public walkways and footpaths.</li> <li>• Shelter/accessibility at light aircraft terminal.</li> <li>• Wheelchair accessible taxi/bus service.</li> <li>• Wheelchair accessible vehicles for clinics/health services</li> <li>• Hydrotherapy pool</li> <li>• Accessible fishing wharf</li> </ul> <p>61. Under a Regional Authority Structure provide a locally managed Health Service (Aboriginal Medical Service “AMS”) funded by Federal and Territory Governments (OR)</p> <p>62. Form a strong partnership with the existing service provider (NT Health and East Arnhem Shire) (OR)</p> <p>63. Lead a partnership with a new/alternate aged/disability service provider (eg Miwatj Health Aboriginal Corporation)</p> <p>64. Explore renewable energy options for Groote Eylandt.</p> <p>65. Investigate the feasibility of building and operating a solar power station on Groote Eylandt. If feasible, sign a power purchase agreement with Power and Water and/or the corporate investment sector to build and operate large- scale solar power farms on Groote Eylandt.</p> <p>66. Investigate a carbon offset scheme in collaboration with GEMCO and other carbon emitting private sector partners.</p> <p>67. Work with other stakeholders to develop a plan to resolve outdated water and sewerage infrastructure and to cater for the expansions of Angurugu and Umbakumba.</p> <p>68. Sign an MoU with all business, service providers and key organisations on the island to jointly create a comprehensive waste management system for the Groote archipelago.</p> <p>69. Introduce a policy to charge a levy for all vehicles, sea containers and boats brought onto Groote</p>
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	<p>Eylandt.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>70. Coordinate regular crushing of car bodies and removal off Groote Eylandt by barge as scrap metal.</li><li>71. Work with stakeholders to resurface Angurugu roads with proper drainage, footpaths and curbing.</li><li>72. Conduct a comprehensive hydrology master plan for Angurugu.</li><li>73. Seek on-island capacity to service all sealed and gazetted roads on Groote Eylandt.</li><li>74. Maintain ongoing support for ranger outstation road maintenance program.</li><li>75. Discuss with ALC and GEBIE Boards, consult with clan groups, and conduct a financial analysis of running a house building scheme in which individual clan-based royalties might be used to pay off construction of new homes.</li><li>76. Explore building techniques suitable for new Groote Eylandt houses.</li><li>77. Trial the use of locally-produced concrete and rammed earth through the current building program scheduled for Groote Eylandt.</li><li>78. Investigate the viability, pros and cons and community interest for a local scheme versus a government-sponsored scheme.</li><li>79. Provide opportunities for financial education of Groote Eylandt people.</li><li>80. Negotiate a contract with Department of Housing to directly contract Aboriginal businesses on Groote Eylandt to carry out local housing repair and maintenance works with the aim of reducing response times.</li><li>81. Negotiate a contract with Department of Housing to directly contract a Tenancy Support program .</li><li>82. Set up shop fronts in Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra to administer housing repairs and maintenance and Tenancy Support.</li><li>83. Support GEAT in improving productivity of the market garden in Angurugu and work towards a community management partnership.</li></ol>
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	<p>84. Conduct a full assessment of the Four Mile Outstation area as a market garden location and a review of other potential sites if they are available.</p> <p>85. Determine a suitable site and establish a market garden in Milyakburra.</p> <p>86. Make plans to operate community market gardens in a sustainable manner with low energy inputs.</p> <p>87. Ensure Anindilyakwa people take ownership in any market garden enterprise.</p> <p>88. Hold regular mine closure planning meetings with GEMCO to discuss what assets should be made available into the future and how to ensure these are well-maintained and ready for future use.</p> <p>89. Conduct a financial analysis to consider appropriate facilities to be developed within Alyangula versus current Anindilyakwa communities to be utilised by Anindilyakwa people after the mine closes.</p> <p>90. Construct a major new jetty at the town beach picnic area (Old Boat Ramp) to service a local fishing, aquaculture and tourism industry post mining.</p>
<p><b>Develop a Living Cultural Economy</b></p>	<p>91. Establish the Youth Services Coordination Unit, made up of a Youth Services Team Leader and Mentor and a Youth Service Coordinator, reserved for an Anindilyakwa person and with a strong focus on training and development.</p> <p>92. Further develop the action plan for the Youth Strategy with timelines for delivery, key performance indicators, funding and responsible areas determined.</p> <p>93. Implement the Youth Strategy.</p> <p>94. Confirm longer term funding for the Youth Services Coordination Unit past June 2014 when current funding ceases.</p> <p>95. Evaluate the Youth Strategy.</p>

	<p>96. Develop a Youth Strategy for 2018 onwards.</p> <p>97. Progress plans to continue using Dugong Beach Resort as a commercial venture but also utilise it as the central base for ALC/GEBIE administration and as a Cultural Centre hub. Establish Cultural Centres in the three communities of Milyakburra, Umbakumba and Angurugu.</p> <p>98. Negotiate with GEMCO for ongoing accommodation contracts at Dugong Beach Resort over the mine life.</p> <p>99. Develop a comprehensive tourism strategy to sustain high occupancy at the Dugong Beach Resort.</p> <p>100. Establish the Cultural Centre buildings and deploy ALC and GEBIE staff into new offices.</p> <p>101. Develop partnerships and programs for early childhood development, schooling and training and begin operation of the Cultural Centres.</p> <p>102. Conduct a professional marketing review and plan to determine Groote Eylandt's competitive advantage and sustainable wealth generators.</p> <p>103. Execute a tourism strategy, leveraging the developments of the culture-based economic strategy.</p> <p>104. Seek finance to establish mobile connectivity for the towns of Umbakumba and Milyakburra.</p> <p>105. Work with Queensland University of Technology and other partners in establishing digital interfaces for community to access, create and share community knowledge.</p> <p>106. Digitise and create user-friendly interfaces for community to access traditional and cultural knowledge and history through the Cultural Centres.</p> <p>107. Develop policies for appropriate approaches to the adoption and use of technology, which satisfy cultural requirements (also see section on Intellectual Property).</p> <p>108. Implement the Groote Eylandt Linguistics Action Plan 2012-2027.</p>
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	<p>109. Lobby for strong bilingual education programs in all Anindilyakwa communities.</p> <p>110. Work in partnership with schools to develop and deliver first language programs and resources.</p> <p>111. Create an Intellectual Property and Traditional Knowledge Policy.</p> <p>112. Investigate and report on potential for profit from Anindilyakwa intellectual property.</p> <p>113. Establish ownership, where possible, and create a database of Anindilyakwa intellectual property.</p> <p>114. Map and record local rock art across the Groote archipelago.</p>
<p><b>Strengthen Community Capacity</b></p>	<p>115. Work with community and agencies to develop a holistic five-year action plan to address substance misuse.</p> <p>116. Implement the substance misuse strategy and action plan.</p> <p>117. Evaluate the substance misuse strategy include trends and status of substance use.</p> <p>118. Develop appropriate response strategies for the following five years.</p> <p>119. Finalise community safety plans for Angurugu, Umbakumba and Milyakburra.</p> <p>120. Work with stakeholders to implement the Community Safety Plans for the three communities.</p> <p>121. Advocate for the continuation of the Community Engagement Police Officer role.</p> <p>122. Work with NT Police to incrementally increase police presence in communities, including police living in community.</p> <p>123. Consult with the community about the Remote Job Community Program (RJCP).</p>

	<p>124. Build skills within the current workforces to match the jobs that are available currently and for those which will be required in the future including in mining, essential services delivery and to build a culture-based economy. Literacy and numeracy training underpins this.</p> <p>125. Encourage employers to build recruitment programs that meet their immediate recruitment needs but allow for flexibility and change. For example, the new GEMCO eight-week pre-employment training package to be rolled out January 2013 combines lessons learned from past successes and addresses failures to better engage unemployed people.</p> <p>126. Major employers to work together with the RJCP provider to increase awareness of employment, provide retention programs to support Indigenous staff, continue development of community networks with other service providers, promote cross cultural awareness among employers, and reverse cross culture among employees.</p> <p>127. Education and training levels and secondary responses to labour market needs on island are to be improved. This can be achieved by linking with the Trade Training Centres, Cultural Centres and schools on island. The Culture Centres can offer projects which engage ongoing learning via different multimedia literacy activities through film making, digital storytelling and recording projects. This will need to include a school-based transition program into employment (work experience system).</p> <p>128. Youth employment and skill development needs to be promoted via the RJCP Youth Corp program, including introducing a youth 'learnership' wage, a youth training subsidy, measures to avoid the displacement of existing workers when new young employees are taken on, and improved careers services in schools working in partnership with RJCP provider.</p> <p>129. Partnering with medical professionals and governments to manage substance misuse is essential. If this initial issue has not been addressed, it will impact on completing training and retaining employment. Associated criminal convictions and prison time off island also impacts on future employment.</p> <p>130. Skills need to be developed to meet the needs of Groote Eylandt after the mine has closed. The continued use of the Trade Training Centres and Cultural Centres and engagement of the schools will support long-term goals of employment in the sectors.</p>
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	<p>131. Key programs or special employment programs will address the employment needs of the sectors: essential services (water, power, roads, building maintenances), food supply (market gardens), land management (rangers, control burning), transport (air services, barge supply), aged care (including services for MJD) and tourism (Dugong Beach Resort, Cultural Centres).</p> <p>132. Develop the Anindilyakwa Leadership Program and secure funding to deliver a pilot program.</p> <p>133. Monitor, evaluate the pilot program and implement improvements to the program.</p> <p>134. Implement the Anindilyakwa Leadership Program.</p> <p>135. Increase initiatives that encourage clan groups invest rent/royalties income in enterprise.</p> <p>136. Apply for increased ABA 64-1 funding for the operational budget.</p> <p>137. Implement the ALC and GEBIE’s five-year Governance Development Plan.</p> <p>138. Support governance development across other organisations, boards and committees.</p> <p>139. Monitor the Community Engagement/Consultation Project, an on-island consultation service to streamline local consultation of local people and reduce ‘over-consultation’.</p> <p>140.</p>
<p><b>Working with all Partners</b></p>	<p>141. Implement the recommendations of the RPA Evaluation.</p> <p>142. Negotiate with partners stage 3 of the RPA.</p> <p>143. Work with GEAT to put in place a simple knowledge management accounting system that allows the two organisations to share information on where funeral funding is being provided.</p> <p>144. Support GEAT to conduct the funerals.</p> <p>145. Collaborate with and identify gaps and opportunities for GEAT to work in partnership with the ALC and the RPA to increase services and programs across the Groote archipelago for</p>



	<p>Anindilyakwa youth.</p> <p>146. Collaborate to build strategic alliances with GEAT for future celebrations for the benefit of Traditional Owners.</p> <p>147. Work with the Darwin GEAT office to establish procedures for the ALC rangers being informed of barge arrivals on Groote Eylandt.</p> <p>148. Ensure ALC Rangers have adequate resources to service barge landings.</p> <p>149. The ALC’s Aboriginal Land Trust (ALT) to support GEAT proposals to provide community infrastructure, with traditional owner support.</p> <p>150.</p>
<p><b>Move towards an Anindilyakwa Regional Authority</b></p>	<p>151. Build on strengths, maximise opportunities, minimise weaknesses and address threats faced by ALC and GEBIE.</p> <p>152. Further investigate and develop the Regional Authority model.</p> <p>153. Establish the new model and structure for operations of services on Groote archipelago.</p>

## **12. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **12.1 ABOUT THE ALC**

The ALC is a statutory authority formed within the provisions of Section 21 of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976.

In 2012, the ALC had 23 members, formally elected under the supervision of the Australian Electoral Commission for a three-year term. The members are spread across 14 clan groups plus representatives from the three communities. Collectively this group is referred to as the Executive Council or ALC Executive.

The ALC currently comprises members from each Indigenous clan within the Land Council's area.

### **12.2 ABOUT GEBIE**

In order to complement better support and sustain the economic benefits of the Anindilyakwa people, the ALC established its business arm, the Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island Enterprises Aboriginal Corporation (GEBIE) in 2001. From small beginnings, this has now grown to be a significant operation engaged in a broad range of activities.

Most importantly, it provides a reliable and well-governed vehicle for royalties paid by GEMCO to be distributed to Traditional Owners over the age of 18 years bi-annually. GEBIE runs a social program that provides community support in the areas of health, education, social participation and sport. It also has a large investment in businesses and joint ventures to pursue long-term sustainable employment and profit for the traditional owner members.

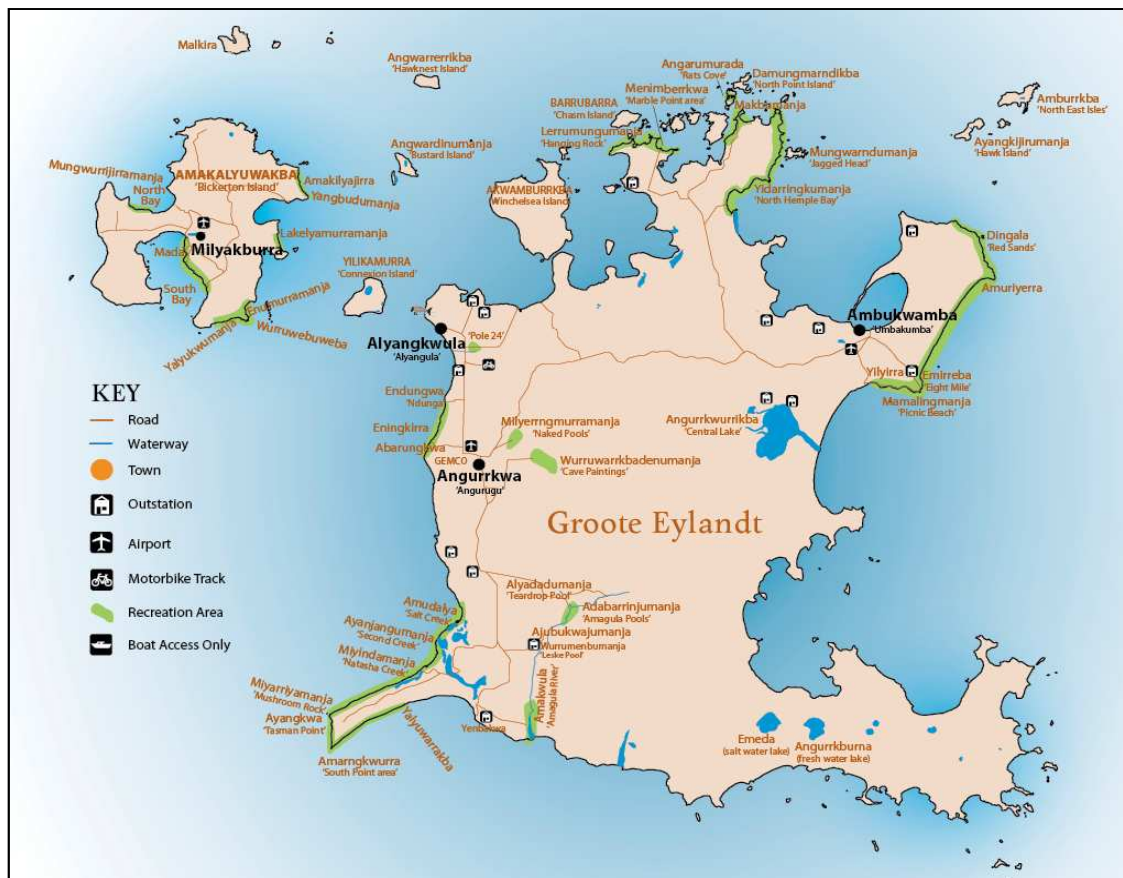
A large part of GEBIE's business activity is in delivering major infrastructure projects across all the communities of the Groote archipelago.

### **12.3 THE REGION**

#### **LOCATION**

Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island are situated in the NT on the western side of Arnhem Land in the Gulf of Carpentaria; approximately 640km east south east of Darwin and 50km off the Arnhem Land coast. Groote Eylandt is Australia's third largest island; named by explorer Abel Tasman in 1644 and is Dutch for "Large Island".

Figure 15: Map of the Groote archipelago region.



### CLIMATE

The weather is tropical with hot humid and wet summers marked by thunderstorms. Summer temperatures range from 25 to 40 degrees Celsius. The winters are dry and mild with temperatures from a rare 10 to 30 degrees.

### VEGETATION

The vegetation is mostly tropical savannah woodland (stringy-bark eucalypts and Darwin woolly-butt), with patches of monsoon vine forest, areas of pandanus and paperbark wetland and stands of cypress pine. Casuarina and banyan trees give shade along sandy beaches. Animal life is prolific. The land is not used for primary production and there are no cattle on the islands.

### SEA

The marine environment around Groote Eylandt is close to pristine. The environment features clear waters, abundant marine life, easy access, large animals such as dugong, crocodiles, turtles, and manta rays. The area is particularly well known for its fishing and a number of charter boats operate around the islands and the Groote archipelago. There is commercial fishing in the waters adjacent to Groote Eylandt however there is no economic

impact on the island as this commercial fishermen and their operations are based elsewhere.

### **HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICES**

There are major health clinics at Alyangula and Angurugu.

### **HOUSING**

According to the 2006 Census there were a total of 497 private dwellings across the region, with 436 of these occupied. These dwellings are primarily located in:

- Alyangula: 304 dwellings, of which 42 are dwellings with Indigenous occupants;
- Angurugu: 100 dwellings with Indigenous occupants;
- Milyakbara (Bickerton Island) and outstations: 69 dwellings with
- Indigenous occupants;
- Umbakumba and outstations: 51 dwellings with Indigenous occupants.
- Note that not all households are individual dwellings, but includes caravans, sheds, boats and other improvised dwellings. All Indigenous-occupied dwellings are rented.

## **12.4 MAIN COMMUNITIES**

### **ANGURUGU COMMUNITY**

Population: app. 1385

Location: On the banks of the Angurugu River on Groote's mid-west coast.

There are seven homeland centers (or "outstations") associated with Angurugu: - Ananja, Bartalumba, Emerald River, Leske Pools, Little Paradise, Malkala and Yenbakwa. While the dominant language is Anindilyakwa, most residents of the community speak English as a second language.

### **UMBAKUMBA**

Population: app. 562

Location: 65 kilometers from Alyangula by road. It can be reached by barge into Port Langdon on the Eylandt's east coast or, at times, by an unsealed airstrip.

Clans living at Umbakumba include Bara, Barabara, Jaragba, Maminyamanja, Wurrawilya, and Yantarranga.

### **MILYAKBURRA**

Population: app. 158 permanent residents.

Location: Central eastern part of Bickerton Island; east of the mainland, between Groote Eylandt and Blue Mud Bay, and west of Groote Eylandt.

Milyakburra is usually accessed by air, and has had a sealed airstrip since. Milyakburra has no sealed roads but has a primary school, a community store and a newly incorporated local service provider named LAC.

### **12.5 A BRIEF MODERN HISTORY OF GROOTE EYLANDT**

The Anindilyakwa people have inhabited Groote Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria with an unbroken human tradition extending over an estimated 40,000 years. The 14 clans now represented on the Eylandt are therefore among the most ancient and authentic remaining living cultures remaining on earth today. The Anindilyakwa people were brought to Groote Eylandt on a series of songlines which created the land, rivers, animals and people and which named everything pertaining to the region. The language, Anindilyakwa, is spoken by all the clan groups that make up the two moieties on Groote Eylandt.

The island also has a rich non-Indigenous history. The first non-traditional visitors were the Macassans who travelled to this region for hundreds of years in search of trepang. The earliest formally recorded visitor was a Dutchman named William Van Coolstrurdts on the ship "The Arnhem" in 1623. Van Coolstrurdts was followed by Abel Tasman in 1644 and then by Matthew Flinders in 1803 during his circumnavigation of Australia.

The first major modern impact on the Anindilyakwa people came from the arrival of the missionaries of the Church Missionary Society (the "CMS") in 1916. After frequent visits from the CMS, the Society eventually established a mission at Emerald River in 1921. Subsequent to the flooding effects of a cyclone during the monsoonal season of 1943 and the RAAF's requirements for the use of the airstrip during World War II, the mission was moved inland to what is now known as the Township of Angurugu.

The GEMCO mine, established in the 1960's, employs many local Indigenous people and brings a range of economic benefits to the Indigenous residents of the region. In order to complement better support and sustain the economic benefits of the Anindilyakwa people, the ALC established its business arm, the Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island Enterprises Aboriginal Corporation (GEBIE) in 2001.

Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island is Indigenous-held freehold land and, on 6 June 2006, the Groote archipelago was declared as an Indigenous Protected Area. In March 2012 the NT Government agreed to protect the seas between Groote Eylandt and the mainland from exploration by placing a mining moratorium for a period of three years.

## 13. ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AACC	Anindilyakwa Arts and Cultural Centre
ABA	Aboriginals Benefit Account
ALC	Anindilyakwa Land Council
ALRA	Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976
Aminjarrinja	Aminjarrinja Enterprises Aboriginal Corporation
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
AQIS	Australian Quarantine Inspection Service
CAC Act	Commonwealth Authorities and Companies Act 1997
CDU	Charles Darwin University
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
EASC	East Arnhem Shire Council
EDTL	Executive Director of Township Leasing
ESD	Ecologically Sustainable Development
FAHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
GEAT	Groote Eylandt Aboriginal Trust
GEBIE	Groote Eylandt and Bickerton Island Enterprises Aboriginal Corporation
GEEP	Groote Eylandt Expansion Project
GEMCO	Groote Eylandt Mining Company
IPA	Indigenous Protected Area
LIP	Local Implementation Plan
MJD	Machado Joseph Disease
OTL	Office of Township Leasing
RPA	Regional Partnership Agreement
SIHIP	Strategic Indigenous Housing and Infrastructure Program

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