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Jangga local government agreement provides certainty about rights

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The Jangga People have been recognised as traditional custodians of their land in an indigenous land use agreement (ILUA) with three north Queensland regional councils that protects cultural heritage and establishes how development will go ahead.

On 19 July, representatives of the Jangga People, the Charters Towers Regional Council, Isaac Regional Council and Whitsunday Regional Council gathered to celebrate the registration of the ILUA over 20,700sq km of land surrounding Mt Coolon, 120km west of Mackay and 150km south of Townsville.

Whitsunday Regional Council Acting Mayor, Rogin Taylor, said the ILUA would make planning and approvals easier.

"I believe it will streamline the process and the parties involved will benefit from meaningful discussions and negotiations with the workable procedures that have been developed in this agreement," he said.

"This agreement ensures that the title rights of the Jangga People's cultural heritage are considered before council undertakes various works."

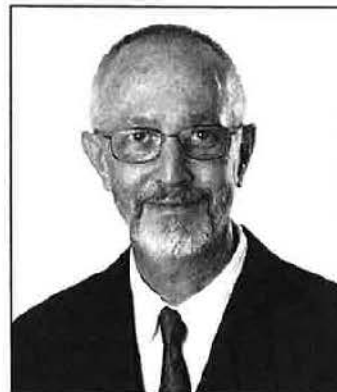
Elder and spokesperson for the Jangga People, Jim Gaston, said the Jangga People had a great working relationship with the councils and the recognition of their traditional custodianship meant a lot to them.

"There was a lot of cooperation on both sides but it [the agreement] didn't happen overnight," Mr Gaston said.

"It's been a long process and a lot of good will was put in on both sides and it has come through with the signing of the ILUA."

The National Native Title Tribunal registered the ILUA on 11 February. Tribunal Member Graham Fletcher, who mediated between the groups, said the ILUA clarified how native title rights and interests would coexist with local government interests.

"The ILUA establishes how future activities by the councils, such as the construction of buildings and roads, will comply with the Native Title Act and the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act," he said.



Tribunal Member Graham Fletcher



Celebrating the ILUA registration were Whitsunday Regional Council acting mayor Rogin Taylor (left); project manager Colin McLennan; Jangga elders Jim Gaston, Marie McLennan and Dorothy Hustler; Isaac Regional Council Mayor Cedric Marshall; and Charters Towers Regional Council Mayor Ben Callcott.

<http://www.nntt.gov.au/News-and-Communications/Newsletters/Talking-Native-Title...> 18/01/2013

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The agreement was based on a template ILUA developed by the Local Government Association of Queensland and representatives of several native title claimant groups.

Mr Taylor said the template was a good starting point that brought the parties together and fostered a good working relationship that was a benefit to all concerned.

"I would recommend this open and transparent agreement that removes the confusion and complexity of planning and developments that existed before this agreement was made."

Nicolette Kormendy [REDACTED]

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