



Milingimbi Water

Djaka gapuw namathanj - Care properly for our water

Report to the Power and Water Corporation from

Charles Darwin University

Yolngu Aboriginal Consultancy Initiative

Schools of Australian Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Education



PowerWater

Contents

Executive Summary	1
Stage 1	
1 Acknowledgements	2
2 Summary of stage 1	3
3 Origins of the Project	5
4 The Scope of the Project	6
5 The Yolŋu Consultancy Initiative and the Consultancy Process	7
6 What We Did	9
7 Findings: The Milingimbi Yolŋu Story of Water	11
8 Findings: Listening to the Power and Water Story	15
9 Findings: Training for Yolŋu	19
10 Findings: Consultation for Water Management	20
11 Reflections on the Consultation Process	25
12 Some key Yolŋu terms	25
13 The Poster Resources	26
Stage 2	
14 Power and Water's Conclusions and Moving Forward	31
Appendices — Transcriptions and Translations	35

Christie, Michael 2010 *Milingimbi Water: A report to the Power and Water Corporation from the Yolju Consultancy Initiative*, Charles Darwin University, Darwin, Uniprint NT

Translations by Michael Christie

Report prepared and written by Michael Christie

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

Executive summary

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 Acknowledgements

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

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

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

2 Summary of Stage 1

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

What is ‘work’ in a Yolŋu context?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

3 Origins of the Project

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



Scoping meeting with stakeholders

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

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

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

4 The Scope of the Project

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5 The Yolŋu Consultancy Initiative and the Consultancy Process

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

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

- Yinjiya Guyula and Waymamba Gaykamarŋu – both senior

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Initial meeting with elders at Milingimbi CDEP meeting room

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



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

6 What We Did

Trevor and John went to Milingimbi on Tuesday 20th October and returned on Friday. Yinjiya and Wangurru went on the Wednesday and returned on the Saturday.

Wednesday:

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

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

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



A meeting at Bush camp

- parts of Milingimbi Island) and family at Namuyani discussed posters and water issues
- Interview with new plumber
- Further meeting with Marpiyawuy
- Visits with Balarrkpalarrk and Lily's family

Thursday:

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

Friday:

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

East Arnhem database system, assets recorded on database by the shire, people getting charged for repairs, 'head tax'

- Video interviews of John Morgan
- Yinjiya interviewed by John
- A coffin arrives and the community gather to meet and escort the cortege to Namuyani.
- Discussions with some of the Year 12 students
- Yinjiya video interviews Maralwuy (Year 12) after a meeting with students' families and other young people.
- Yinjiya interviews Djirarruy – on children's perspectives and responsibilities.
- Met with and interviewed Lapulurj at Middle Camp after the funeral had started
- Meeting with Bur'pur and family at Garden Camp.
- Following meeting: Interview with Guminda, Paula and Miranda



Yinjiya setting up an interview with Djirarrwuy

7 Findings: The Milingimbi Yolŋu Story of Water

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

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

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

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

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

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

take-aways, the people would just drink fresh water and then move from place to place. (2:6, 20:1). When they used to hunt they used to drink from the rivers and from wells, which they only used for drinking (6:6, 9:2). They would plan their hunting through their knowledge of where the water would be: 'Let's go hunting in that direction to get some crabs and sting rays. There'll be water there.' We still do that (18:2). They knew how to dig for water, and to make and use paperbark containers (11:1). We still know how to dig and find water, and we still drink it even if it looks a bit dirty (18.4). They looked after the water and had rules to abide by. They did not waste water (6:6, 9:2). They could tell which water was life-giving and which was polluted (11:1). Kids were kept away and told not to mess around with small water sources (9:3).

Yolŋu connections to water

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

Ceremonial connections

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



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

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

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

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

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



An old map of Milingimbi

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

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

Dhuwa Water

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

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



Old photo of Macassan well during the mission era

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

Yirritja Water

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

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

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

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

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

8 Listening to the Power and Water story

Some of the older people made clear that they didn't understand the Balanda side of the water, but they were very grateful for the work of Power and Water over the years (9:1) and for this project (7:1, 7:2). 'We don't know how much water there is in the ground (1:3), but we do know that Milingimbi is a small island, not the mainland (11:11). And we know how to look after it (1:3). We understand that the water comes out of a bore (1:6, 9:2) even if we don't know how many bores there are (1:6). We know about how some water turns salty, and while we don't understand the technologies used, we can see the skills Power and Water have to know where to look for water' (13.2).

History

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

Can you elaborate on your ideas around engagement?

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



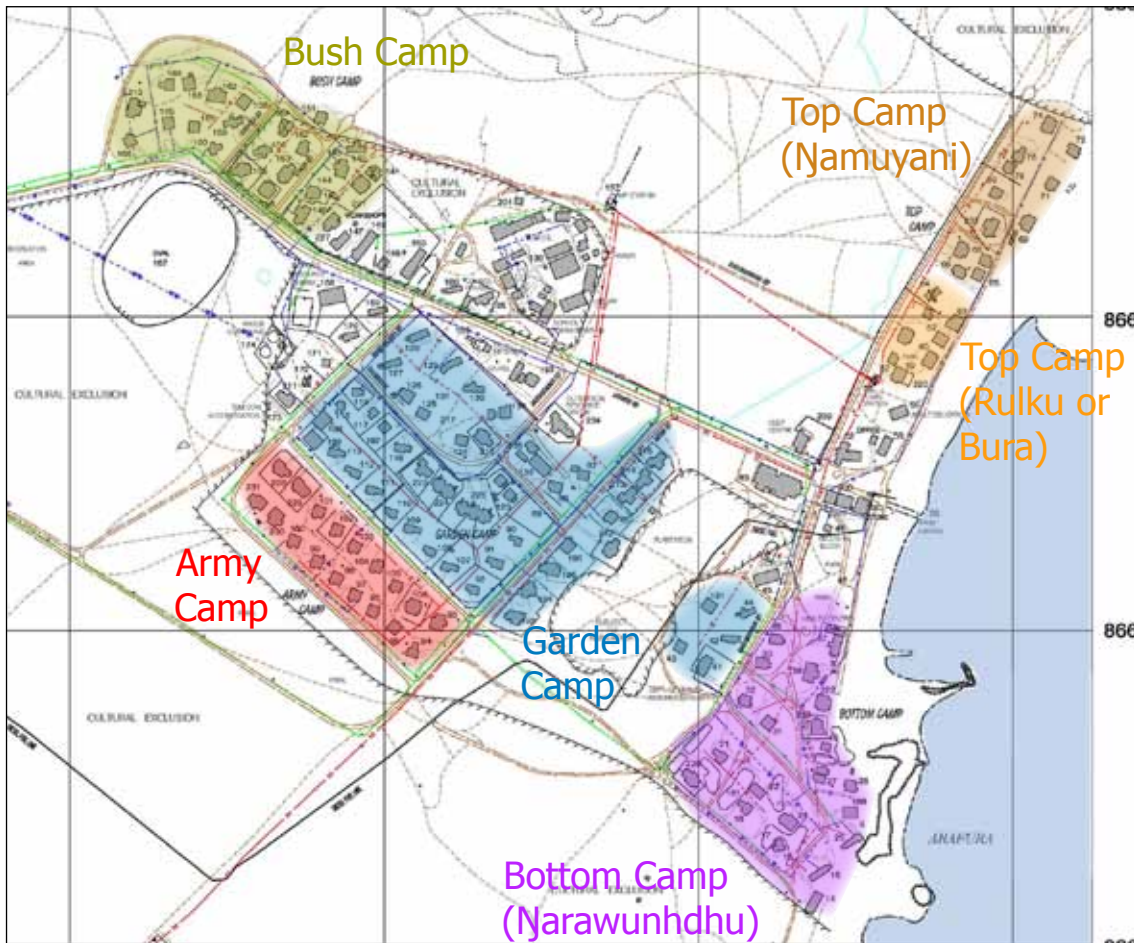
Old photo of a water tank being constructed (mission era)

Learning about the System

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



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



Milingimbi map showing Camp areas

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

The system for reporting and repairing faults.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The future

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



Community meeting at the Garden camp

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

9 Findings: Training for Yolŋu

Dharrgar

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

Training

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Balanda plumber

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

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

Community education framed through Yolŋu knowledge

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

Learn about Water and Health

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

10 Findings: Consultation for Water Management

This consultation about the Milingimbi water supply,

Why do you value cross cultural awareness?

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

What do you mean by 'close the gap'?

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

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

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



Front door of the Housing Office

Beginning with Yolŋu knowledge

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

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

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



Map drawn by Djäwa of the moiety divisions across Milingimbi



Marpiyawuy and John Cameron at the water tower

Balanda and Yolju working together

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

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

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

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

Community Capacity building

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

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

Measures to control usage

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

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



The Macassan well in the present day

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

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

There should be a better system, which is easier for Yolŋu so they don't have to report to the office and sign. In some cases there are relatives at home who can do it for them: Someone paid to get out of the office and visit people in their homes who can tell them of any problems they may have (20:8). We need someone in the middle like that (20:9), someone the people in the various camps feel confident and comfortable with. This person's job could be educational as well, reminding them about water management, and the infrastructure (20.13).

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

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

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

11 Yijiya's reflections on the Consultation Process

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

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

Yijiya is an elder of Liya-Dhalingimirr Djambarrpuyngu clan, a CDU Yolngu Studies lecturer, video producer, interpreter and consultant with the CDU Yolngu Aboriginal Consultants Initiative and has spent several years living in the Milingimbi community.

12 Some Yolngu terms

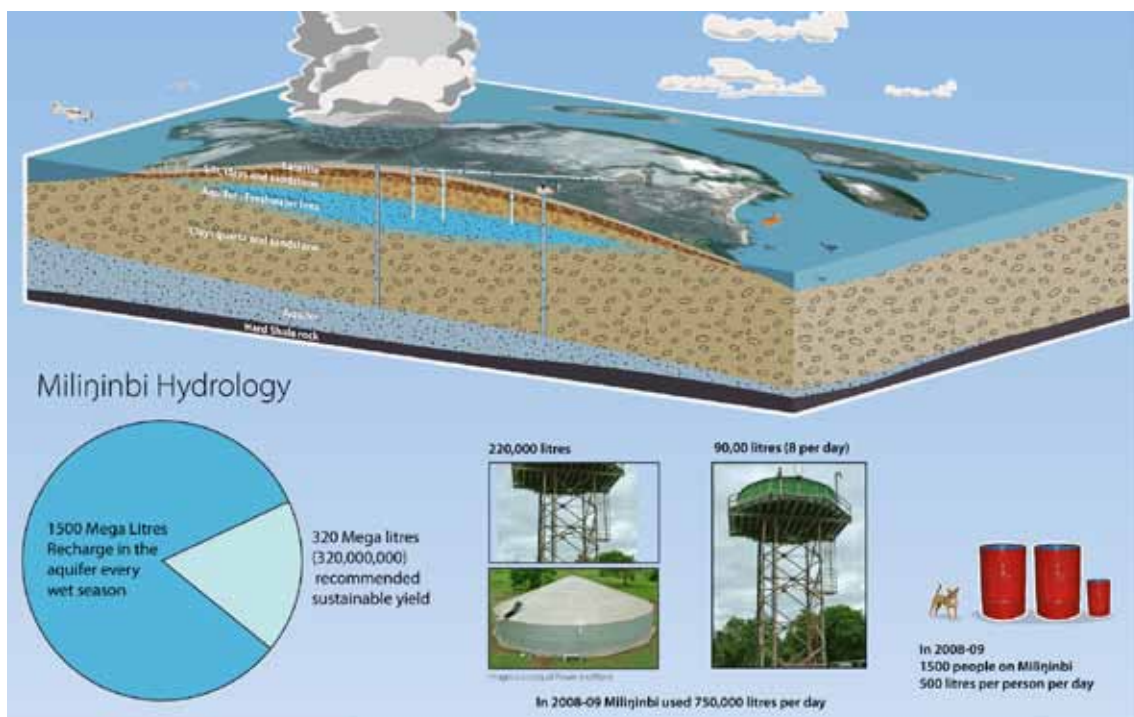
dalkarra	Yirritja ceremonial leader (who can call out the totemic water names)
dhaniya	water container made from paperbark
dhangiyun	care for, hold close
Dhuwa	One of the halves of Yolngu life. Some water is Dhuwa and some Yirritja
djirrikay	Dhuwa ceremonial leader (who can call out the totemic water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

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

13 The Poster Resources

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

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



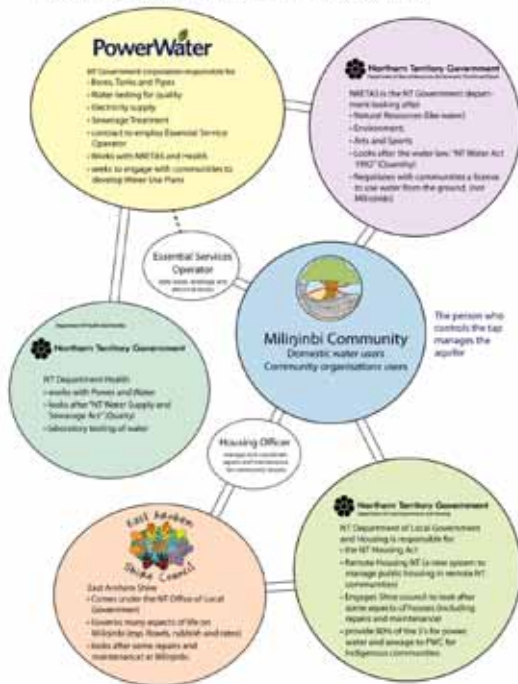


did not spark much interest, it was heavily text (English) based and probably too abstracted for people to make a real sense of it. It was helpful for the consultants in reminding them how the network operated.

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

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

Milingimbi Water - Stakeholder relationships, roles and responsibilities



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

Milingimbi water conservation

Djaka gapuw namathan

Care properly for our water

I am so glad we will work together from here and thank you for starting your ideas with us. *David*

Power and Water have committed to support that engagement with Milingimbi through:

- working closely with the Milingimbi community to conserve water
- sharing information and knowledge
- providing an education opportunity
- supporting opportunities for local employment

Thank you, John and the team to those who said with you, they asked you and you brought them here to learn. We were surprised of the water from when the old people were still. Now we use the new and remembering the water in the wells. So thank you. *John*

Milingimbi elders talking about working together

Long ago, Milingimbi was a town water which the Yaku would drink. The missionaries just a generator in its pump out the water, and it was only what they had to absorb it. *David*

We need to think about the future, how we are going to look after the water, so that later on children and their children and their children will have water. Because it's for water that we live, we still water and we are healthy. *John*

It has to be a culturally appropriate way as we then can be able to build of building the workforce capacity and perhaps so that we can draw of employing Milingimbi workforce to be based in their community, and to be able to use the local qualified. *John Morgan*

So we need to engage to build a partnership between those two professional knowledge, John and Bahaku. *John*

We really had a chance to talk from every different camp. Bush camp, Tiger camp, Army camp, Garden camp, Station camp, we need a place to look after it. *John*

There should be respect, and a mutual knowledge of how the Yaku, some ways and how the Australia system works. Bahaku need to come in and have some part of awareness of what we can both understand each other. When people are working on the ground at a Yaku community, we also need to understand where they come from. *John*

Photographs from a school excursion looking at tanks and dams, with over 11 students, John and the Essential Services Office, November 2009.

Power and Water & Milingimbi community will use a camp based approach in future engagement.

www.powerwater.com.au • www.cdu.edu.au/gapu

PowerWater

Acknowledgments:
 Charles Darwin University
 Wayne Gayda, John Gristwood, Wayamba Gaykama and Michael Christie
 The people of Milingimbi, especially Uju, Margareta, Lapulu, Ganygalpa, Bala Ngilawik, John Morgan, John Cameron, Dany Baker and Oshangri
 Sever van Wieren from World Creek Productions.

This poster is one of three produced as part of a Water Conservation Project by the Power and Water Corporation. Power and Water engaged the Charles Darwin University Indigenous Consultancy initiative to visit the Milingimbi community to talk with people about the Power and Water story of water, the Milingimbi story of water, and about ways of working together to manage water. This poster represents the main 'working together' outcomes of the project. For more information visit www.cdu.edu.au/gapu and www.powerwater.com.au.

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

Section 2

14: Power and Water's Conclusions and Moving Forward

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Working with the community:

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

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

Information/ Knowledge Sharing and awareness raising:

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

Focuses on School Based Education:

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



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

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

Local Employment

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

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

Appendices — Transcriptions and Translations



1. Bilanya Garawirtja

Interviewed by Yinija

1 Yuw manymak, njarra dhu nhawi. Njarranydja dhuwal Bilanya Garawirtja ga njarra dhawal-guyanja dhiyala. Dhawal-guyanja njarra, ga njuthar njarra, ga djäma njarra märranja. Djämaw njarra marngithina dhiyala, nhakuna. Early days, missionariesgalana marngithina dhäwuw malanjur ga walal gan lakaranja nhakuna.

2 Yan muka limurr dhu, nhaltjan limurr dhu njämany, lakaramany njarra dhu dhäwuny gapupuy, gapupuy dhäwu. Narkula dhuwala, narkula dhuwala, wänjanur ga njorra, wänjanur. Wänja nhakun Dhuwa ga Yirritja mala wänja, yuw limurrungu. Limurrungu wänja yäkumirri mala, ga naji gapu ga njorra nhakuna Dhuwa ga Yirritjanur wänjanur. Ga gapuny naji dhuwal märrnjur ga najanjanur limurrungal waljanur. Balanya nhakun njunha Dhuway ga najatham, njuruji ringitjhirri, ga Yirritjay njuli ga, ga ringitjhirridhi bili, gapu njuli ga lakarama. Ga gapuny dja naji dhuwala walnamirri, walanawa limurrungu limurru dhu ga luka.

3 Yuw, dhuwala gurririnjinur nhakuna wänjanur nhakuna dhiyala Yurrwi, Yurrwi nhakuna limurru dhu gyanja dhuwala nyumukuniny wänja, ga yaka limurru marngi nhakuna, gapu ga dharrwa njorra, wo lurrkun, Ga limurru marngi nhakuna how limurru dhu nhakuna bäki njunhi gapuny. Bäki limurru dhu use nhakun njathaw ga lupthunaraw, ga be nhaku limurr dhu nhakun bäki.

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

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

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

4 Yuw ringitjñur dhuwal limurrñur dhuwal ñarkulany mala, ringitjñur Yirritjawal, ga ringitjñur Dhuwawal, every wāñanjur ga mala lakaram. Dhuwanjur wāñanjur gapu ga ñorra, ga Yirritjawal wāñanjur gapu ga ñorra, ga limurr marñgi mirithirr nhakuna. But limurr dhu nhakun mirithirr nhāma ga guyaña, ga nhaltjan limurr dhu ga use dhuwali gapu nhakuna. Gapu limurr dhu use nhakun manyakkurr yān romgurr yuw. Ñunhi limurr nhaku nhakuna djäl gapuwa.

5 Manymak, first limurr dhu rom nhāma, yolku ñunhi wāña, wāña nhakun Dhuwa ga gapu ga ñorra Dhuwanjur wāñanjur. Ga they, walal nhakun ga ñunhidhi wāña-wañanjur nhakun ga guyaña gapu ga ñorra walalan ñuli walal ñuli ga ringitjthirr eh, Dhuwa. Ga ñunha Yirritja walal ñuli ga ringitjthirr, ga ñunhi ga Yirritjanjur wāñanjur gapu ñorra. Ga dhiyak limurr dhu mirithirr marñgithirr, yaka limurr dhu, yaka limurr nhakun dhu bitjana guyaña dhuwal, gapu ga yānan gānan dhārra, djāgamiriw dhārra, ga bāyñun gi yolñu living, bitjan limurr dhu yaka guyaña. Ñunha ga yolñuy guyaña djirrikayyu ga dalkarray ñunha gay' ga gapu nhāma, guyaña ga ñunha wāñanjur nhanukal ga ñorra ga yow. Ga, Yow dhāwu, nhawi limurr dhu bulu guyaña limurr dhu mirithirr limurr dhu yuta nhe ga yindi nhe yolñu Dhuwa, Yirritja. Yurr limurr dhu gapu mirithirr, dhuwal gapu dhuwal mirithirr important nhakuna limurrñungu lifegu. Important limurrñungu walñaw, ga limurr dhu use better way. Using yān dhu gapuny better way yana nhaku limurr djäl malanha. Yuw, ga yaka nhakun limurr dhu wasting water, bitjan ga rom waña gapuw.

6 Manymak warrpam limurr marñgi, gapu limurr ga dhiyan bala luka nhakuna borepuy. Bore ga ñula nhāmunha' dhārra dhuwala Yurrwi, limurr nhakun marñgi, ga bejurdhi limurr ga dhuwala lukanydja. Limurr ga luka ñathaw, ga gapuw limurr ga lukanydja gapu ñunhi, limurr dhu djāma gapuy, ga lupthun limurr dhu, ga bulu limurr dhu nhakun, limurr dhu nhakun washing girri' malanha rurrñuyun. Limurr dhu use ñunha bala washing machinelil gapu. Dhuwali mala limurr dhu nhāma mirithirr.

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

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

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

7 Yuw, ga gapu ga ngayatham romdhu yolju y nayanumirr ngayi, nayanumirr ngayi. Yaka dhu mananjirr gapu wo wasting dhu gapu ga njunha gapu limurr marrgi, whether ngayi ga gapu dharra yan, dharrwa yan ngayi ga buwalbuwalyun, wo baynun marrtji yir'yun bala gapu. Yir'yun marrtji bala, balanya nhakun dhuwala rarranhdharr dhuwala bala walu. Rarranhdharr walu ngayi dhu marrtji gapu gulgulyun nyumukuninydhirr. Limurr marrgi mirithirr dhuwal bili muka limurr gan marrgithin nhama. Yaka nhe dhu nhakun gapu mal'maram rarranhdharr eh, because gapuny njunha marrtji ngayi yir'yun balayi gulgulyun. Eh, dhuwal gormurthirr marrtji wanjany, wanja marrtji gormurthirr ngayiny marrtji gapuny ga gulgulyuna. Rawakthirra ngayi dhu drythirra, eh so limurr dhu guyanja nhakun. Guyanja ga nhama wisely. Mirithirr limurr dhu wisely nhama dhuwali gapu rom. Gapu is limurruj waljaw, limurruj waljakum limurruny ga, yal'maram limurruny ga, ga limurr marrgi nhakuna.

8 Dhuwali limurruj living water ngayi yaku. Living water, limurr dhu living jurinjyi gapuy. Yuw, ga so limurr dhu nhakun use ga dhuwali gapu mirithirr manyakkurr dhukarrkurr. Gapu dhuwal yaka yanbi nhawi, yan free. Free dhuwal yaka gapu, bili limurr gan marrgithin early-day Missionariesgal, walal gan lakarañal. Njunha, njunha freenydja nhe dhu, ngayi dhu waltjan nyarryun, ga nhe dhu gapu dharrwa maram. Gapu nhuñu gardengu, gapu nhuñu everythinggu. Dhiyal napurr gan marrgithin walalañgal Missionariesgal early day. Yuw ga, walal gan lakarañal gapu limurr dhu yaka wasting. Wiripu walal gan djama bore. Nhawi dam, dam gapuw, eh raingu, so walal dhu ga yarraman'thu luka eh.

9 Balanya malany ideas njunhidhi, save the water njunha animalgu yolku, yoljuw warrpam'ku limurr dhu ga njunhidhi share water. Warrpam'thu nhakuna. Yuw, balanya napurr gan marrgithin nhakun Missionariesgal, walal gan napurruj rom lakarañal, ga yaka wasting nhakun gapu, tap dhu lapmaram, wandirma dhu ga, yaka Always dhal'maram dalkum, dhal'maram tap marr ga dhu ngayi ga gapu save, bitjan bili, ga that mean limurr dhu ga nhina nhakuna gapu mirithirr walja.

10 Bukmak yolju, warrakan, warrakan djaldhi, bu'thunamirr, gal'yunamirr. Warrpam gapuw limurr djäl. Ga balanya dhawu.

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

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

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

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



2. Djirarrwuy

Interviewed by Yinjiya

1 Y) Gatjuy mak dhäwu rraku lakaran ñarkulapuy, nhaltjan nhe ga ñarkula nhäma? Lukanhamirr dhuwal limurr li ga luka ga dilkurruwurr gan nhaltjarr nhinan. Nhä ñayi ga ñula dhäwu ñorra?

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

2 D) Eh, nhawi nhakun dhuwandja ga dhäwuny ñorra nhakun ñayi ñarkula, dhuwali wangany ñarra dhu lakaram dhuwal gularri.

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

3 Gularri ñarkula. Dhuwal ñarra ga Yurrwi nhina ga Yirritjanur wänjanur, ga gapu ñayi dhuwal marrtjin gularri dhä-mukthunawuy. Benjur bäruwal walalangal märipuluwal. Marrtjin ñayi ga--an ga ñunha bala rraku yapa Gumurrñur Burrwandji. Dur'yurr ñayi gan ñunha Gumu--urr, bäyñu, bäyñu ñayi watthuna gapuy. Guyay nyumukuniny'thu, luplupthurr gan gulun'ñur, guykthurr ñayi, lapnha Burrwandji gumurr, Lätharra, bala ñayi rirrakaymirriyanan. Wandjinan ñayi wanawananjur. Gurruparna marrtjin gularri, benjur, benjuri bili yan. Yorr ñayin nhakun watgiverny Burrwandjiyny, ñarraku yapa. Ga ñayiny benjurdja bala gan märi'mirriñuny rraku dhä-munmun marrtjin. Gurrupardja ñayi ñarkula rälin, bala bitjarra yarrupthurr dhunupan, ga bala bitjarna buku-miwatjililna. Bala ñayi Dhälinylil gurrupar ñoykurr ñarkula. Gurruparna ñayi Dhälinyinha bundurna Butjala number two, ñayiny number one Butjala Gumurrñurdja. Gularriny ñayi gan marrtjin benjur bili wangany yan, Burrwandji.

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

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

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

D) Bäjnu, Yaka njayi gi warkuyunaraw djälthi, njarkula dhuwali Gularri. Dhuwali ga njayatham, njäthil gan njayathanjal njarakal gurrunj'mirrinjuy walal märryu garay bili dhujamirr galkaw, njanydja yän märryu garay walal gan njayathanjal. Law njunhi walalanj dilkurruwurrg baman'. Gapu dhuwal njayi life giver bukmakku from beginningnjur how old people was living. Nhaltjarr gan old people living. Ga dhuwana marrtjin gan gapu--u, ga dhuwana ba_t Yurrwin, and now njarrany dhuwana Yurrwin ga nhina Makarrwala be_nur marrtjin yanpala, dhiyal njuthar miyalkmirriyin, djamarrkuli'mirriyin, dhuwana njarran. Gapuny dhuwal njorrany njayi ga, njarra yolju njarra dhu look after njarkulaw märr ga dhu njarra yaka bulu dhadhar'yun wanganynjur wänanjur ga wiripunjulil larrum njarkulaw.

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

5 Y) Njäthildja njunhi nhakun balanya bawalamir gan dilkurruwurr nhinan, wanhami gan gapu manjutji bandanydhin ga larr' wiripulil, guwa'kuwatjmar wänja mala?

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

D) Eh, bili once muka dhu njunhi njarkula'mirriyirr wänja, ga njunhi gan njayi nyimdhurr bala njarkula, ga larr' wiripunjw wänjaw njapar.

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

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

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

D) Dhuwa and Yirritja marrtji njorra nhakun

Yes of course, Dhuwa and Yirritja already there.

Y) Gurrutumirr mala?

With kin links?

D) Yuw gurrutumirr mala, Yothu Yindi, wo nhakun märi-gutharra, balanya mala njorrann marrtjin Dhuwa Yirritja mala njarkula. Ga njayiny nhakun dhuwal wänja a Yurrwi, wangany yan Milingimbi napurr li ga lakaram yäku. Ga njayi dhuwal wänany Dhuwa ga Yirritja, Yothu Yindi. Dhuwal njayi ga njarkula njorra, dhuwal limurr ga luka dhuwal Yurrwi, dhuwal wiripu njarkula Gularri.

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

6 Nunha bala ga ngorra Dhuwanjur nhawinjur, balanya nhakun nunha bala nunhi gulun'jur, ga nunhi wiripu, narkula Dhuwa. Ga bitjandhin, bitjanan walal li ganha marrtjinyany dhuwalatjany nunhi dilkurruwurdja. Yorr, nhakun walal gan nunhi yaka mak mirithin djoka' lukan balanyamirriy timedhu, ga take away, ga djoka. Nhawi take away ga njula nhä bänju. Nanydja fresh one walal gan lukan, bala walal gan movingna. Gapu dhuwal Yoljuwal termkurr, warku'yun nali dhu balanya nhakun Yoljuuy dhu lluka monuk narraku rannga, monuk yäkumiriw. "Krrrr" bitjan nhe dhu, nhe dhu burakirr, nunhiyi bala gan näthili dilkurruwurryu balanya using. Märromay' gan last nayathanjal narakala yapa'mirrinjuy manda dhiyal Warrawurr balanya rom. Balanya bili nayi narkulany yaka yän warku'yunaraw. Benjur bili gapuny nayi marrtjin, ga dhuwal bala. Narraku yapa'mirrinju Nangil, ga dhuwal bala naraku nändi'mirrinju nhawinjur Djilpin. Dhuwali mala narkula warrpam' dhuyu mala.

7 Ga nali dhu nanya yoljuuy nhäma dhuyukum yan gapu dhiyan bala tapmirriy waluy, ya balanya nhakun mit. Bitjandhi bili nanya treating nhakun dilkurruwurryu gan treating. Ga nhakun räliny ga wapthun new generationlildja nhakun, narrantya ga dhuwal nhäma.

8 If balan limurr outside tap mala djäma dhuwandja narakun gänan mulkurr, ga nhawi balan limurr njula locker nhirrpul. Nhawi balanya nunhi nayi dhu yalala birrirri'yun. Wo balanya nunhi tap mala nayi bitjan li lapmaram ga birrirri' ya balanya mala buku tap, ga nunhi yalala nanya rojanmaram, ga bitjan dhu djidup'maram holelil ga dap djamarrkuji'waldhi warku'yunanjur. Bili dhuwalidhin nayi nhakun nhawiny marr importanttja. Nunhi limurr dhu normal yän tap using balanya nhakun dhiyan bala limurr li ga using yan nunhi nayiny dhu ga djamarrkujiny nuriñi bul'yuna tapthu. Ga gätnimirriw mala djämaw, nhawiku gätni marrtji li yurr'yun, wo farm nhe dhu nyumukuniny djäma wänanjur, wo washing machinemirriy mala. Walal dhu njula nhä märram nhakun nyumukuniny nhawi tapethinya balanya nunhi numberkurr li ga wandirr gapu nayi dhu ga nunhi bili yan using. Ya' balanya mala

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

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

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

9 Yaka limurr djäl, using the djamarrkuliwal mirithirr gapu. Lupalup naji, "Lupalup dhiyali tapjur, Njara njathil nhawi njatha batha'pathan". Wo bul'yurr walal djamarrkuli dhiyali hose walal warryu'warryurr gi. Gapu dhuwali important limurruj, lifegiver naji dhuwali gapu, to help njatha, ga anybody limurr yolnyuy, please limurr dhiyanj bala look after njarkulaw.

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

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

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



3. Ganygulpa

interviewed by Yirjiya and Wangurru

1 Yuw dhuwal njarra dhu limurrun
wana njalimurr dhu njanjimirriyirra, ga
mulkurrmirriyirra, ga manjutjimirriyirra.

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

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

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

3 Njunhany njali dhu bala futurenny njali dhu
guyanja, nhatjan njali dhu gapu, gapuw djaka
ga.

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

4 Märr ga walal dhu yalalanjimirriy limurrun
djamarrkuli, ga walalan djamarckuli ga
njunhiwurryi djamarckuli walalan dhu ga njarkula
njorra

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

5 Bili njarkulay muka njalimurr njuli ga dhuwal
nhinany waljany, njarkula njali njuli ga luka njuli
ga waljany nhina.

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

6 Ga njali dhu gadaman'thirra njali dhu
responsibledhirra njali dhu, gonj-djarryun njali
dhu njuriki njarkulaw djakaw.

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

7 Balanya nhakun tap mala njunhi dhu
ga wandirr njarkula, njali dhu marrtji ga
mukmaram, nhäma njali dhu ga njanjimirriyir,
ga mukmaram njali dhu. Ga nhawi mala balanya
tap mala daw'yunawuy, mulkurr shower wo
nhawi tap mala njunhi laundrynjur nhawinjur.
Daw'taw mala njali dhu marrtji ga nhäma
walalany njunha Housingnjur ga job card
märram, ga wukirri job card walal dhu marrtji
ga fixing walal dhu njunhiyi. Yaka gi nhänu bay'
ga

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

7 Ga, manymak ñayi wanganydja idea balanyayi ñayi dhu ga, ñayi dhu limurr wana-nhirpan djäkamirr each houserjur djäkamirr, gapu-djäkamirr. Nhanju jurikiyi yoljuw nhawi nhanju djäma ñayi dhu ga djäka ñarkulaw mala. Check up ñayi dhu ga tap mala, ñarkula mala nhathinya ga nhawi, wo balanya nhakun, wänjakurr, wänjakurr nhakun nhawi gam.

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

8 Marngi-gurrupanmirr ga raypirri'yunmirr usinggu gapuw nhaliy waluy ñali dhu ga gapu bäki nhaku malañuw. Balanya nhakun wiripuny ñalimurr li ga dhuwal nha? Washing machine limurr li yuta märram bala ga every dayna be washingdja. Every dayna washing beñur Monday to Sundayna washing. Ñayi dhu ñali walu nhirpan washing day, washing daydja washing day once a week ñali dhu ga washing. Nunhi ñali ga once a week washing girri, ñunhiny ñali saving gapun, ga electricyn and plus ñali ga djäka dhiyak earthgu.

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

9 Every day ñali dhu gollil dju'yun yothuny, yalalanumirriw ñäyi dhu marr ga marngi. Gakal'-ñamathirr ñayi dhu. Yalalanumirriw nhaltjan ñayi dhu dhiyak mother naturew djäka, earthgu dhiyak. Bili dhuwal gam', ñunhi nhuñu yothu gi bäyñu gol, ñayi bongun monuñuyiny djamarrkuliwdja gapuw, jurikiyiny ñunhi gadaman'kuny mala.

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

10 So, bili, dhuwal ñayi ga balanya mala rom ñorra mulkurñur ga romñur ñäpakiwal guyananhanur. Ga litjalangal ga romñur ñorra yorr ñali dhu ñunhiyi märram bala ñali dhu dhä-manapana. Marr ga ñali dhu dharanjan ñulatjandhi litjalangiyinal.

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

11 Bitjan nhakun bambayyu gan gäthur lakarañal, ringitj mala litjalangal ga dhuwal ñorra. Raypiny ñarkula mala ringitj, ringitjthirr ñali ñuli bitjan burwurrun, wiripu ñali li ga giritjirr. Ñali dhu bitjandhiyi djäka gapuw dhiyan bala, bitjandhi ñali dhu marrkapthun, bitjandhi ñali dhu dhangiyun. Ga balanya.

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

12 Yuw, ga wanganydja, nha wanganyruny ga nhawi. Yolŋu mala dhu ga djäma njäpakiwal nŋunhi gapu djämamirriwal, yol ga djäma Power and Waterŋur. Yolŋu'yulŋuny mala ŋayi dhu märram, ŋayi dhu ga training nŋunhiyi yolŋuny. Märr ga dhu nŋurinjiyi yolŋuy educating wiripunŋunhan yolŋuny communitynhan. Nŋunhiyi wanganydja dhu malŋ'thun rom dhiyal. At the moment ŋayi gi bäyŋu nŋunhiyi rom malŋ'thur. Ga balanya.

13 Wiripuny, wiripuny napurr djäl, ŋayi dhu education program ga dhiyal malŋ'thun, marŋgi-gurrupan, educating yolŋun, djamarrkuliny, njalaplnha. Especially djamarrkuliny' märr ga walal dhu ga nŋunhiyi gurrukam gyaŋanhawuy ŋorra walalaŋgal dhu ga ŋayaŋunŋur ga mulkurŋur nhaltjan walal dhu djäka gapu, ga nhä ŋayi dhuwal gapu. Ga wanhanŋur ŋayi ŋuli ga marŋtji gapu ga nhaltjan ŋali dhu nŋunhiyi gapu walŋakum. Bitjarr nhakun bambayyu gan nŋunhi lakaraŋal dhäwu. Nŋunhiyi wetiy walŋakuŋal gapu, dhäwu limurrungal ga ŋorra yolŋuwal, wetiy walŋakuŋal gapu. Gadaman'thin ŋayi weti. Ga balanya

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

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

14 Balanya nhakun, wangany njarra dhu lakaram nhawi gämurru' dhuwandja healthkurr. Liya yanhi limurr li ga ririkthun Luŋ'thun limurr li marrtji. "Yakay liya njarany marrtji banttju'parrtjun". Limurrdja li nhän guyaŋa, wangany na yan Panadolna, yanbi nŋunhi Panadolyu dhu ŋali walŋathirr. Yaka! Nŋunhiny ŋali ga gapu lurrkun', lurrkun' ŋali ga gapu luka. Rumbal litjalaj dhuwal djäl gapuw, gapu ŋuli bandanydhirr litjalajgal rumbalŋur. Bala ŋuli nŋunhi liyan ŋalitjalany banttju'parrtjun. Nŋurikiyi wanganydja ŋali dhu djäka ga gapuw. Bili nŋunha ŋalitjalaj rumbal djälthirr ŋayi ga gapuw ga nŋunhi ŋali dhu ga gapu bäyŋu luka dharrwa, or ŋalitjalaj dhu dhawar'yurra gapu bandanydhin, Yurwiny dhuwal lurrkun'nha gapu, eei dhiyan ga lakaram. Dhuwal nhuma ga nhama wunŋili...eii dhuwal amount of gapu limurr ŋuli ga märram, ga nŋunhi bala ŋalimurr dhu, gapuw bäyŋu ga djäga, nŋunhi bala limurr gi Panadol nha yan luki.... Ga dhiŋunjun Panadolyun. Yuw ga ŋuruk nŋunhi wanganydja gam' gapuw, kidney nŋunha, burrgutjku, di'tiw nhawiku gu nŋunha rumbalŋur limurrungal nŋunha organs mala walal ŋuli lakaram, body organs mala litjalaj rumbalŋur, that's why ŋali ga ŋir'yun walŋa ŋali ga nhina, rerrimiriw ŋali ga nhina, wo nŋunha ŋarkulay ŋalitjalany ŋayi ga walŋakum. nŋunhi ga bäyŋu gapu dharrwa gapu luka, ŋayi ŋalitjalaj dhu kidney bandanythira bandanydhirra bandanydhirra bala dhu rerrin märram.

15 Wiripuny, guyaŋanhawuy nhawi, ŋula balaŋ limurr, birrka'yurr, metermirrayam nhawi gapu. Bili power limurruŋ metermirr ga nhä wrong gapuw dja. Bili wiripuny ŋayi Yolŋu dalwur ŋayi, ga dhuŋa ŋayi ga duŋduŋ ŋayi. Ga yurr ŋayi dhu nŋunhalatjan rrupiyagurr dharanjan, nŋunhi nhanju bill dhu du'yun gapupuy. ŋayi dhu ganyim'dhun, Way' dhanaj rrakal! Raypirr nŋunhiyiny raypirri guyaŋanhamaram ga ya' bitjan. Bili nŋunhan yan bala ga value nhäma nhawinurnha wiripunurnha mala ga bäyŋun ga nhäma value gapunurdja.

16 Recycle water walal dhu ga bäki. Wiripuny ga nhäwi, gamurru, kava (bulunga), nhe dhu kava lukanhamirriy ga, recycle water wadapmaram, bili nhe ga nŋunha gapu walŋamirr wasting, nŋunha walŋany gapu, ga nhe dhu ga recycle water bäki. Bijtan nŋunju walal dhu ga birri'yun, ŋula nhaliy, bala nhe dhu ga nŋunhiyin bäki.

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

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

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



4: Jessie Murarrgirarrgi

tells the story of 'Boḍuk, Yegali' and Weṭi' – 'Bush cockroach, painted gecko and the wallaby'

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

Dhuwandja dhu rra dhäwu lakaram
nhawipuy Boḍuk, Weṭi , ga Yigali
walal. Ga dhäwuny ṅunhi.

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

Yaka ṅunhi marṅgi, maṅda Boḍuk
ga nhawi, walal ṅunhi yaka marṅgi,
ga ṅayiny ṅunhi Wetiny marṅgi.

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

ṅunhi ṅayi gan gāṅal gapu
djakarunṅmirr ga gāṅaldja ṅayi
ṅunhi...

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

Maṅdany gan ṅunhi, waṅdinan walal
marṅtjin ṅunhi--i dhutna walal, ga
ṅayiny dhu yigaliny' ṅunhi ga waṅan
ṅayi dhu. "Yolnha ṅathil dhu rra
ṅämindja?"

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

"Nhawinha, nhuna ṅäthil Yigali,"
Boḍukthu.

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

ṅayiny Boḍukthuny ṅämirna ṅanya
manymakuṅalna, ga biḍi'yurr
marṅtji--n, ṅanya miny'tji-wapthurr
gan.

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

"Aa ma', ṅarranhany muka,
ṅarranhany muka, biḍi'yurr:"

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

ṅanyanhany muka ṅayi biḍi'yurr ga
miḍikumarna, bala ṅayi rur'yurr ga
nhänhamin ṅayi gapunur.

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



Ŋayi gan ŋunhi gapuny bānin raypiny warrpam', ga ŋunhi ŋayi rur'yurrdja ga nhānhaminany ŋayi gapunjur.

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



Bala ŋayi waŋan, "Go! Dhuwal ŋarra nhuna gan ŋamathanjal bidī'yurr, ga nheny ŋarrany dhuwal yātjkurrkuŋal bidī'yurr! Ga dhiyali galkurr!"

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



Bala ŋayi gapun waryurr, gapun ŋayi waryurr,

And so he urinated in the water,

Ŋayiny wetiny waŋdin ga dharrparnha gapu. Ŋunhiyidhi weti, yigali' ga boḍuk, ŋunhi ŋayi gapuny djalkuminydhin, waryurrdja ŋayi.

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



Bala ŋayi moŋukthinana, moŋukthinan, dhuwana limurr li ga ŋunhi luka dhākay manymak ga dhakay ḍamurrŋ.

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

Ga nhaltjan ŋaliny dhu dharray, bili ŋayiny gan ŋunhi wetiny'tja gāŋal yān gapu raypiny nhanŋuwuy ŋayi.

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



Ŋaliny dhu bitjandhi nhakun ŋunhayi weti? Ŋali dharrayna, gapuw litjalangalaŋaw.

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

Bitjarr ŋunhi weṭi marrkapthurr gapuw, ga limurr dhu bitjandhi bili marrkapthun gapuw.

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

Ŋaŋ'ŋaŋdhuna djamarrkuḷiny', ga dharraynha limurr dhu ga, gapuw.

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



5: Oscar Datjarranja
talking to John Greatorex

1 J) Wanha balanŋ ŋayi dhu ga Power and Watery ŋamatham djäma dhiyal, dhäwu malŋ'maram yolŋuwal, tapŋur, seweragenŋur, hotwaterŋur. Märr dhu yolŋu yaka weyin galkun ŋula nhaku, ga dhukarr manymak, märr dhu ŋayi. Marr dhu ŋayi yolŋu, nhuŋu ŋula, mak ŋapipi'mirriŋu, ŋändi'mirriŋu, wo yothu yan dhunupa marrtji dhäwu gurrupan ga yan walal dhu djäma. Wanha dhukarr manymak?

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

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

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

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

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

J) Balanday wo yolŋuy?

By a Balanda or Yolŋu

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

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

4 J) Ga nhaltjan limurr dhu dhiyali nhakun, wanha dhukarr manymak, limurr dhu ralpakum, or ŋula dhukarr ga ŋorra? ŋayiny dhu ga bondi malŋ'maram dhu dhäwu, ŋunhi ŋayi dhu ga gapu lurryun yan ?

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

5 O) Or, mak njarra ga thinkingdja easiest waydja, yuta limurr gan thinking ya njunhi njunhal, inspectiondja dhu ga ya bitjan through every houses. Märr ga dhu walal ga, njula nhämuny, mak fortnight walal li inspection, ya biyak, every housesgu. Nhärju'nhanju gi bala gurrupula walalangal. Bala walal li nhakun run throughn gi yolthu dhu njunhi inspecting.

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

6 J) Yolthu dhu inspecting?

Who will do the inspections?

O)Njula yolthu, njula yolnha walal dhu nhirpan.

Whoever they put in place

J) Wanganydhu bukmakku wänjaw wo berjuri linygu yan suburbjur?

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

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

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

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

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

So otherwise naji, sometimes naji dhu, um if there's a fault ya balanya. Nhakun njunhi naji ga yolju nhina yan, nhakun bush campjur, njula nhämunha' bunbu, naji dhu berjuri yolju marrtji ga check up walalanj. Yuw, ya balanya nhakun. Yuw njunhi latjuny, or get three from every camps ya balanya, to inspect or four.

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

8 J) Ga yol njunhi dirramu ga djäma dhiyan bala, John Camerongal?

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

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

Matthew Dharrgar.

J) Ga nhaltjan nhe ga guyaŋa, manymak nhakun dhu Yolŋuy djäma?

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

O) Manymak ŋayi li ga djämany njunhi, but bänju report coming in from the, nhawikupuy, nhawinjur, wäŋa-waŋaŋuy li gi bänju report to bala housinglil, nhawi Daisy Bakerwal.

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

9 J) Yuw, yuw, ya', ya' ma bilin manymak. Ga wanha balan baman', baman' ŋayi gan manymakkunjal martjin, wo balanya linygu yan?

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

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

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



6: Lapuluj

Interviewed by Yinjiya

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

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

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

4 Gapu dhuwal ŋayi yuwalktja, walŋa ŋayi walŋa ŋalapalmi gan ŋäthil gapu use nhawiyu romdhu, mak dhuwal gan gapu dhuwal ŋayi, wiripu ŋayi gapu dhuwali ŋayi dhuyu, ga dhiyanj djunama nhakun gämurru limurr ga nhäma, ŋunhi ŋayi ga affecting, global with source of water dhiyanj bala in today's modern balanya.

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

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

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

6 ... because baman'tja ŋayi walal gapu gan bäki dhuwal yolŋuy walal gapu ŋunha huntingmirrikurr walal gan marrtjin ga lukan walal gan gapu. Hunting walal gan yolj walal ga manimirriŋur gan gapu lukan. Ga wiripu ŋunhi gapu manjutji mala ŋunhi yän walal lukan walal, yolŋuy walal lukan bitjarr, ga dharray walal gan, rommirriyanjal gan bitjarr dharray.

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

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

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

8 Yow gapu naji dhuwalidhi, bili rra lakarañal, there's parts that bukma yolju ñalapalmirr mala gan nhinan romdhu, ñunhi rra martjin lakarañal, wangany naji dhuyu, ga dhuyu ñarkulaya, bãyñu gan yolju lukan, yudayuday, dhukitjñ ñurruk, ñalapalmirriy gan lukan, ga wiripu naji gan yãñ guñharran dhãrranan gapu malany. Yow. Ga dhuwali nhakun naji very important that limurr dhu valuing dhuwali, the source gapu naji waljamirri naji gapu, dhiyal Milingimbi limrru yolju limurr dhu dharray.

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

9 Ga dhuwaliny mala nhakun ñunha the Power and Water authoritiesthu mala ga nhãmadhi bili, ga ñunha bala ñunhi cultural terminology, ñunha ñalapalmirri gan knowledgerñur najathanal balanaya mala ñarkula dhuwal ñunhalatjarr bala wakir'yunamirriñur ga bãydhì muñmuñdhurr gan romdhu, ñunhaltjarra bala dhuyu malany ñarkula. Yow balanya.

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

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

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



7: Lily Gurambura

Interviewed by Yinjiya and John

1 Good morning my name is Lili Gurambura ga bāpurru ŋarra Gamal Walamaŋu ga thank for nhawi nhakun nhuma ga napurruny gungga'yun ga marŋgi-gurrupan djāmamirr mala, bili ŋāthil napurr gan wawu nhinan, ga ŋarra ga nhumalany buku-gurrpan.

2 Nhakun gapu barpuru limurr marrtji nhāma bāyŋu ŋāthil bitjana balanda dhuwal nhakun first time nhakun nhuma napurruny mel-gurrupan ga marŋgikuma mārŋ ga napurr dhu marŋgi nhina nhakun ŋarra dharraymirr walalaŋgal gumurrŋur Ŋurruwulu Walamaŋu yan ŋarra dharraymirr.

3 Ga nhawi nhakun gapu ŋarra gapu nhakun marrtjin nhuma nhāma ga ŋarra mārŋ-ŋamathirr gapuw, nhukun dilkurruwurr walal gan ŋāthil lukan gapu, bili gapu dhuwal nhawi nhakun bāpurru'mirr ga yolŋuy gan dharray ŋāthil.

4 Ga dhiyaŋ bala walal ga dharray yan ŋunha gapuw ŋunhal dhuwal wo nhakun nhawuŋur nhakun manda dhuwal wāwa'manydji wāŋa Yurwi ga Yilan. Ŋunha dharray walal ga gapu, yurr nhuwi napurr destroy gapu pigipigiy yow pigipigi dharrwathin.

5 Ga nhakun ŋarra dhu bitjan thank-you nhumalaŋ John ga Trevor ga Mark mirithin ŋarra mārŋ-ŋamathirr nhuma napurruny marŋgi-gurrupan gapu ga thank-you nhumalaŋ.

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

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

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

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

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

6 J) Ga mukul njula nhe ga idea njayathamyän nhakun nhaltjan walal dhu ga power and watery njula nhä dhu bulu nhakun bulu nhakun malnj'maram nhumalangal dhäwu wo djäma nhumalangal tap njula nha pipe mala njulanha nhakun. Wanha dhukarr manymak walal dhu ga badak wanjanhamirr dhäwu malnj'maram nhumalangal ga du'yun nhumalang wo nhuma dhu yan waña walalany yan wangany.

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

7 L) Yaka. Napurr dhu malnj'maram njunhal nhakun every camp njani Bush camp, Top camp, Army camp, Gatni camp, Bottom camp, every each nhakun yolnju dhu ga dharray every nhakun one week dhu ga dharray check up tap mala ga nhawi, ga gäma walal dhu report nhawikal mukulwal Djanydjay. Manyamak, manyamak yow ma.

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

8 J) Ga bulu njarra dhu waña nhunany yan English nhunju latju mirithirr wanha balanj nhe gi waña Englishgurr walalang Power and Waterw wo rum'rumdhum nhe ga?

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

9 L) Yaka rumrumthun njayi dhu translating, Gamarranj, njarra trust Gamarranj.

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

J) Yow. Manyamak

Okay

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

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

11 L) Yow, nhawi djäl napurr balanda Darwinbuy nhakun nhuma barpuru buna three, ga bulu napurr djäl Power and Water marrtji walal dhu marrtji walal dhu räli ga njarra märr-njathirr walalang Power and Water ga nhumalang manymakkum nhuma ga djäma, ga thank-you.

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



8: Visit to Macassar Well

Lily, Balarrkpalarrk and Marpiyawuy talking to John

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

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

3 L) Nhawi, Dreaming of rainbow snake, rainbow snake yow milŋ'thurr nhawinjur Worralnjur, Worralnjur ga rälin. Yow ga dhipunjur Madanangumu walalaj Balatjini. Yindi dhäwu. Ga dhuwal Njuruwulu wäŋa. Njuruwuluw. Walamanju. When they die, when they pass away, Njuruwulu, the Gamal Walamanju take over. Yow we look after it. Two clans.

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

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

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

L) Yuwalk mak whole island Gupalgadi.

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

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

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

That's what's happening today.

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

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

Yeah the real name for the whole island is Gupalgadi.

- M) the whole island you can see it on the map... *You can see the whole island on the map.*
- J) Ga Yurrwi nhäjur yäku *And where did the name Yurrwi come from?*
- B) Njunhi njayi dhuwali, nhawi, dhol, dhol balanya nhe marrgi, like ganu', guyay njayi njunhi ratjukthu mak garkuyiy dhu bitjan dhol-buma, ... yow Yurrwi dhuwal yäku just nhawi balanya *That's the dust or the cloudiness in the water, the barramundi or maybe a garkuyi came and stirred up the cloudiness in the water. That's what Yurrwi is named after.*
- L) Dusty water *Dusty water*
- 5 B) Ga yäku dhuwal Milingimbi land where we're standing it's Milingimbi, but the name changed to Macassar Well, Macassans were working here. Maybe they thought it was their well eh? They used to get trepang and they used to come here. They used to drink water here. And dharrwa yarraman' eh? Ga buliki used to come and drink here? ... *So the place where we're standing is actually called Milingimbi, but the name changed to Macassar Well because the Macassans were working here. They used to collect trepang and then come up here for water. And once there were also horses and cattle here.*
- 6 M) And old people used to put into here, gapu, is cycad nuts? Sucking out the poison one eh? You can't eat it straight away. Yakan nhe dhu you eat it you die straight away the cycads nut get nhawi dhu and everybody sing it yow and that's where they comes. The women that passed away put it to soak it into water for three days, *And they old people used to put cycad nuts into the water to leech out the poison. If you ate them straight away you would die straight away. It's something in the ancestral songs. They women who have now all passed away used to soak those nuts in the water here for three days.*
- 7 L) Yow they special place for different, different country like nhawi nha njunhi way Ginatpa they used to live living here can a have a the Ginatpa, ga Burarra, Nakara ye dharrwa bäpurru ye dharrwa bäpurru. Then they moved from here to Maningrida, Maningrida started Maningrida started 1957. *Yes it's a special place for people from all different areas, like the Ginatpa, the Burarra, the Nakara, lots of different clan groups. They they moved from here to Maningrida when it started in 1957.*
- 8 B) Yow dhuwal njunhi billabongdja nhawi gapu njäthil gapu itself bäynju Macassan there its clean water, so the clean water they been drinking yow they been small hole. *Yes, before the Macassans came it was just clean water which the Yolju would drink, the hole would have been smaller*
- But there they put generator listen to this yow try to get more water to gather now yow and after that they abandoned yow. *Then they put the generator in here to pump out the water, and then they had to abandon it.*

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

M) Yow yaka nhawi and like cutting out they reckon lightning happen here by rainbow snake, this one yirritja wāŋa yirritja dhuwa rainbow snake. This one python with yellow belly hey, harmless, they can't bite us. That Yirritja that Yirritja one this one, and dharrwa people from that area they sing Yirritja snake hey yow people I know not from here baydhi about that dhuwa snake. Warrbunuwa ŋani yow ga wiripu ŋayi dharrwa yāku ŋi dharrwa yāku ŋunha bili Wunhaŋu ŋe nha ŋunhi wiripuny mundukul walal ŋunhili bala yākuyam. Wanhaŋurtja nhaka Miwatj side yaka limurrurŋ dhuwali nhä limurrurŋ.

10 B) Nhāŋu bay limurr dhu ga nhawiŋurnha wanha ŋunhi gapumirr ŋunhi wana Bälma.

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

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

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



9: Marpiyawuy

final interview by John and Yinjiya

1 Yuw manymak, yan muka nhakun dhäwu gapupuy n̄unhi Power and Water Authority walal bitjan thinking walal dhu dhu räli communitywal roñiyirr ga mal̄maram dhäwu nhakun n̄haltjan limurr dhu ga gapuw djäka mala. Which is manymak nhakun dhiyañ bala walalañ, nhakun walal ga räli limurrungal roñiyirr ya bitjan, ga dhäwu nhakun li murrunguñ märram, n̄haltjan limurr dhu ga gapuw mala djäka,

2 Balanya nhakun nhuma mar̄ngi, every gapu mala limurr ga märram wäñan̄ur. Wäñan̄ur limurr ga gapu mala märram, ga n̄unha tap̄nur limurr ga djäka, ga hosegu limurr dhu ga djäka balanya nhakun nhuma mar̄ngi djamarrkuli. Walal li djamarrkuli ga bul̄yun warkūyun gapu, ga nhakun limurr mar̄ngi limurr dhu n̄unhi gapu save ya bitjan, ga limurr dhu djamarrkuliny gulmaram yaka walal dhu ga bitjan.

3 Bili nhawi limurruñ ga experience ga yindi mirithirr n̄orra, n̄unhi dil̄kurruwurr walal gan nhinan dil̄tjin̄ur baman̄. Ga walal gan nhakun gapu man̄utji mala, gapu man̄utji mala n̄unhi walal gan lukan n̄unhilidhi ga wanhami walal gan nhinan wäñan̄ur mala. Nhuma mar̄ngi n̄unhi nhakun gan dil̄kurruwurryu gapu lukan, ga djamarrkuliyañ ga n̄ayi gan dil̄kurruwurryu nhakun bitjarr, "Yaka nhuma dhu djamarrkuli gapu rarryun, warkūyun nhuma dhu ga bul̄yun" Bili n̄unhidhi nhakun gapu limurruñ manymak ya balanya, so nhakun limurr mar̄ngi djäkaw. Experience nhakun limurr ga n̄ayatham djäkaw gapuw, ga dhiyañ bala nhakun limurr n̄unhi bili ga bäki rom.

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

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

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

4 Yän muka limurr ga djäka ya bitjan, nhuma marŋgi, dhiyal nhakun Yurrwi communityw limurr ga djäka mala gapuw, bäyŋu nhakun limurr gi wasting. But some dhikayi mala lurrkun leaking ga tap mala, ga wandirr ga gapu, but nhakun limurr li djorra märram, marrtji limurr dhu ga housing officelil. Ga lakaram ŋunhili märr ga dhu plumber bondi ganydjarryu djäma balanya mala. But we're doing that already ya balanya. Balanya nhakun djämaw already limurr ga ŋayatham marŋgin nhakun mala limurr. Ga balanya. Yuw ok, ŋarra I'm David Marpiyawuy from Milingimbi.

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



10: Miranda and Maralwuy

Interviewed by Yinjiya

1 Y) Gapupuy n̄unhi bala nhuma yawungu marrtji borelil nh̄a nhuma ga n̄unhi marr̄githirr

Mi) Nhawiku, marrtji napurr barpuru n̄unhi borelil, marr̄githirr napurr ga gapuw nhaltjan napurr dhu ga nh̄ama gapu nhamunha' ga nhina nhawithu, John Camerondhu lakaram napurrungal ga nhaltjan dhu ga n̄unhi, gapu mala testing n̄unhal borenjur ga nh̄amunha' hours nhawi dhu ga gapu r̄ali marrtji dhupal townlil... bala napurr marrtjin balan bore napurr ga nh̄ama n̄unhi n̄unha nh̄amunha' ga bore dhiyal Milingimbi dh̄arra

2 Ma) Three n̄ani?

Mi) Five, yurr napurr̄tja marrtji threelilnha, threelilnha yan. Wangany airport galki m̄arrmany wanganydja n̄unha bala. Ga wanganydja napurr n̄unhi marrtji ga nhawidhun tape measurenha ya bitjan gapulil balayi djudupmaram nhawi balanya ga mal̄'maram n̄unhi gapu dhika n̄oȳnjur n̄orra ga. M̄arrma'n̄ur layer-n̄ur wanganyndja m̄arr gandarr̄jur, gandarr̄jur ga wanganyndja n̄ayi mirithirrnha n̄unhan bala dhuwana nhakun.

3 Y) Nh̄a n̄ayi dhuwali ȳaku ya dhuwali

Mi) Aquifer

Ma) Wanganydja, wanganydja napurr n̄unhi bitjan firsttja bitjan ga dhiyal n̄ayi gandarr̄jur bitjan gulyun, ga wanganȳurnydja band dhipalnha bala marrtji n̄oylilnha.

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

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

Were there three?

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

What's it called?

Aquifer

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

4 Ma) Ga bejuyi napurr njunhi marrtji ga dhipal nha nhawililha tank dhika dhärra ga nhawinjur dhuwal diltjinjur, diltjinjur njunhi basketball court galki.

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

Mi) Yow bala njayi lakaraman njunhi tank mandany märrma' green one mandany ga dhärra, balayin watharr mandany ga tank dhärra njunhiyin njunhi lakaraman njunhi napurrur nurruru mel-gurruapan nhawi nhawi napurr nurruru njunhi maln'maram nhamunha' gapu ga njunha njunhi märrma'njur märrma'njur nhawinjur norra njunhi dhärra gapu bejuyin li ga borejur marrtji balayin.

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

M) Ga bejuyin li ga marrtji borejurnydja ga bala tanklilha garrwarlil njunhi green one li ga dhärra wala'walarr njunhi weyi'weyin njunhi. Ga bejurdhi li ga pumpingtja ga räliny marrtji townlilnydja gapu mala.

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

5 Y) Yow ga studykurnydja nhuma dhuwal project nhuma ga djäma midiku nhuma, nhäthinya nhumalan nhatjinya nhuma maln'maram studyjurnydja. Nhawi nhaltjan njayi ga dhiyan global warmingdhu njayi ga njunha affecting marrtjin nhawi njayi? Gapu marrtji lurrkun'thirr limurruj wo manymak dharrwa.

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

M) Lurrkun'thirmha gapu marrtji dhuwanydja Milingimbiny bili nhakun napurr njäma bili ga fifty wänja marrtji bulu räli njan, bili bäynun gapun nhakun näp Milingimbi yolnu'yulnuw walal dhu ga luka.

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

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

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

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

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

Y) Njunhi dhu ga yätjirr njayi tap wiryun dhu ga njunhi tap daw'yunawuy nhumany dhu nhäma bäynha nhanju wo nhuma dhu njula yolkal lakaram.

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

M) Lakaram muka plumberwal njayi dhu djäma bondi.

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

7 Y) Plummer nhakun li ga wiripun balanda nhina ga ngayi li ga rum'rumdhun yoljuw. Nhuma ga djalthirr ngayi dhu njula Yolju wiripun plumber, limurrungal areanjur gäna mala.

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

M) Yow napurr ga djalthirr ngayi dhu Yoljuy ga djäma plumber, bili nhakun yow lingu if ngayi balanj' njunhi balanda marrtji nhakun holidaygu ga yolnha balanj gi djäka dhiyakuny gapuw mala, napurr djäl yolju'yuljuw mala dhu marrgithir balanyaraw plumminggu njula nhaku mala märr ga dhu gäna dhu marrgithirr ya witjan ga djäma dhiyak.

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



11: Marritja

Interviewed by Yinjiya

Y) Yow. Njarra nhawi, biyak.

1 M) Yow njarra nhawi. Nhä muka? Sorry, njarra Djami. Yaka muka Djamitjany, Sammy njarra, Marritja njarra yäku. Djamin yän dhuwal wakal balanya. Dilkurruwurr gan nãthil marrtjin gapuy nhinan walal gan. Diltjinur walal gan marrtjin ga ganañathala walal gana djarrany'tjurr walal gan, malñ'marañal gan dhukunmirr gapu. Ga nhãñal walal gan bay', ga wiripu walal gan djarrany'tjurr ga manymak gan dhawatthurr, bala gan nyan'thurr. Rakalay walal gan nyan'thurr rakalay. Njunhilidhiny timedhu walal gan marrtjin rarranhdharryu walal gan malñ'marañal gapu mañutji yän. Ga during nhakun waltjan gan nyärryurr, waltjan gan nyärryurr, ga walal gan anywhere gapu nyan'thurr.

2 Yän marrtjin ñayi mitjin yindithinan, yindithinan, bala marrtjin ñayi ñäpakiytja garrarrakthurnha bala barrtju'parrtjurnha wãña larru'larruñal nha gapuwnha. Larruñal nha walal, malñ'marañal nha, ga djarrany'tjurr, "Dhuwal limurr dhu ga gapu nyan'thun yan guwarr". Ñayi bulu yindithin marrtjin, townthin, ñayi marrtjin lurrthu'lurrthunmarañala bala tanknha marrtjin ñayi djäma, yindin tanknha, gulunnha ñayi. Yurr rarranhdharr nhanju yätjkurr ñayi gan rarranhdharr gapu gan tapñur leaking ya' dhuwalawurru, ga ñayi gan ñunhi tankñur gapu yupthurr. Yupthurr ñayi gan yupthurr yän. Ga bulu dhu nhakun ñunhi bonñuñ bala' ñal'yurr ga ñayi ga balanda still dhu marrtji yan ga drilling ñayi dhu, djarrany'tjurr ñayi dhu, gapu ñayi dhu malñ'marañ.

Say yes I am so and so.

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

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

3 Dhiyal bandji Yurrwi. Nhakun n̄unha diltjikurr, nhakun nhawi n̄unha Djäraw, nhä mak n̄unha Bodiya. Bili n̄unhidhi marrtji dhärra'tharra mark. Ga nhawinur Gulambañ, Dhudi-garrtjambal -nhirpanmin, n̄unhi mala marrtji mark mala dhärra n̄arra li ganha nhänha, hunting n̄arra li gana n̄ulatjanayi.

N̄unhi walalañ mark yalalan̄umirri bala' dhu yindi djäma, dharrwathirr dhu bala' walal dhu marrtji n̄unhi yalala nhirpa'nhirpana mala gapuw. Ga dhiyanu bala nhakun n̄ayi ga yupthun, rarranhdharmnydja n̄ayi lik ga gapu yupthurr tankn̄ur. Ga gunmul n̄ayi li baladhi n̄al'yun. Yurr mak ten years time mak dhu dhuwal gapu lumurrun̄ dhawar'yurr. Yän nhakun Power and Water-y ga lakaram n̄äthil, n̄arra dhäwu dhuwal märram.

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

M) Tap dhu ga dhärra nhakun n̄unha wänakurr mala every campmirr mala, either inside n̄ayi, or shower room, or outside garden tap, on dhu ga leaking, djululu'yun dhu ga bitjan n̄arkula djululu'yun, walal dhu ga djäma. Wandirr napurr dhu ga n̄än'thun n̄äpakiny mala. "Plumber, djäma rraku n̄unha nhawi ga leaking." Napurr yaka djäl napurrun̄ dhu ga leaking dharrwa gapu. Napurr djäl n̄ayi dhu ga gapu normal yan dhärra n̄unhali bili yän markn̄ur.

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

M) Wiripuny yol̄nu napurr li wadapthun nhakun detun̄ bitjan. Ga washing machinemirr mala. Ga washing machinemirr napurr. Ga bitjan bili nhakun dhu ga washing, washing, washing. N̄ayi li gapu nhakun wandirrn̄ha li ga dhawatthuna, n̄ayi lika n̄unhi gapuny yupthuna, yupthuna, yupthuna. Wiripuny n̄ayi n̄unha bala power-ny li marrtji n̄al'yun. Wiripuny napurrun̄ li power dhawar'yun. Larruman napurr li ga. Gapuy li ga lakaram, gapuy. Balanya.

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

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

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

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

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

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

6 Y) Ga dhiyaṅuny bala dhuwal same ṅunhi wo yätjkurrnha?

Is today the same or worse?

M) Bäyṅun yätjkurrnha. ṅunhi dhu yalalaṅumirri dhawar'yun, gapuy muka limurr lika nhinany. Ga ṅathany nyanṅ'thun gapuy. Ga gänany bäyṅun. Yakan limurr dhu monuk nyanṅ'thun, muṅun limurr dhu rirrikthuna gulunnha, rumbalnha. Monuktja gapu yätjkurr.

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

7 Näp ṅayi ga dhuwal bulyundja gapuny Yurrwiny? Yurr nhakun djägan limurr dhu manyakkuman? Manyakkuman dharray nhanṅu, ṅurukun tankkun ga communitywnha dhuwal ga nhina Yurrwi.

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

8 Bili ṅayiny ga mala bunhamirr, dharrwa, bulu. Bulu ga ṅuthan, bulu ga ṅuthan. Yalalaṅumirriw, generation, generation. Yurr nhälil gapulil, ya-bitjan. Yakan napurr dhu buluny beṅur pipe bala monukliinydja. Bäyṅun wrongdhirnha dhu. Ga ṅunhi bili yän gapu raypiny, living waterny ṅayi.

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

9 ṅayi dhu ṅula Power and Waterydja nhaltjan? Guṅga'yun ṅayi dhu limurruny räli? ṅula giningarr mala manyamak guṅga'yunamirr nhirpanhirpan?

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

Nhirpan ṅayi dhu giningarr mala latjukum märr ṅayi dhu ga metregurr yan wandirr gapu metregurr yan. Dhuwali nhakun wanganydja report ṅayi nhakun dhu ga metregurr wandirr, every campgurr. Märr ṅayi dhu ga level mala lakaram, level mala ṅuruk mala tankku mala. Gulungu nhanṅu.

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

10 Plumber limurrunṅ yolṅu. Marṅgithirr dhu bulu? Dharrwa? Mirithirr dhu marṅgithirr dharrwa yolṅu yaka wangany, märrma, dharrwa märr ga dhuka every wänja check up mala. ṅayi dhu ga buṅgawa'mirriṅu wandirr ṅayi dhu ga check up. Djalkiriy walal dhu ga marrtji, mutikay.

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

11 Märr dhu ga nhina yan limurr bitjana bili, ṅurinjidhi gapuy limurr dhu nhina. Limurr dhu yalalaṅumirriinydja ṅunhi ṅayi dhu yätjirnydja bäyṅu, limurr dhu ga larruman.

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

Dhuwal ṅayi dhakal, ṅunha ṅayi makarr- yindi.

This is an island the mainland is over there.



12: John Morgan

Interviewed by Yinjiya

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



13: Bodiya visit

Lily, Balarrkpalarrk, Marpiyawuy, Oscar, John and Trevor

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

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

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

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



14: Maralwuy

Interviewed by Yinjiya

1 Yindikum ngayi nguli dhanangum bitjan Yolngu'yulngu dharrwa marrtji rali ngayi dhu ngunhi yindikum marr number. Yolngu'yulngu dharrwa marrtji rali, nhakun visitors mala, ngayi dhu dhanang gapu nhakun dhu ga using dhiyal. Nhakun bapurru li dhiyal nhakun dhanang visitor nguli marrtji'marrtji rali.

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



15: Wurrulŋa

Interview by Yinjiya

1 Nhawi ŋayi dhuwal wanganydja gapu limurruŋ gurruṯumirr. Dhuwa dhuwal gapu ga Yirrtja. Limurr dhu ŋamatham dharray.

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

2 Nhawi limurr wiripuny ŋuli dhuwal tap birriŋri'yun baynha ŋayi ŋuli ga gānan bala wandirr djuŋ'yun gapu. Ga ŋuli limurr dhu nhāma balanyapuy ŋayi dhu ga wandirr gapu tapŋur, limurrnydja dhu mukmaram, wo ŋuli ŋayi yaka manymak ga limurr dhu bala plumberwala gāma mārŋ walal dhu dhuwali mukmaram.

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

3 Djamarrkuli, ŋuli ŋayi djäl, ŋayi dhu marrtji nhäkurr damurruŋ'il ŋunhiyi ga yindiny nhawi bulyun. Ga dhuwandja banydji wāŋaŋurnydja mala yakan dhu ŋayi warku'yun.

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

4 Yolŋuw muka napurr djäl ŋayi dhu marrŋgithirr balandawal balanyaraw malaŋuw. Yalalaŋumirriw ŋayi dhu marrtji ŋula nhäkurr ga ŋayi dhu ga yolŋu nhina dhiyal mārŋ ga ŋayi marrgi ŋayi dhu yalala balanya happen ŋayi dhu marrtji ga mukmaram ŋunhidhi mala giningarr, tapŋur mala dhuwal. Wo ŋayi dhu ŋula nhä mukmaram.

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

5 Lupthurr lirra ga mukmaran gapu. Nhumā dhu ga mitthunmirr ŋunhi dhawarrak yaka walal gapu birriŋri'yurr bay'. Gapu ŋunhi limurruŋ save.

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



16: Guminda

Interviewed by Yinjiya

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

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

2 (from second interview) Nñarrany ga djälthirr ñayi dhu djamarrkuñi ñirramurruwurr mirithirr ga marrtji wo miyalk marrtji walal dhu ga gollil mirithirr, ga marrgithirr nhawiku mala gapuw, power and waterw' walal dhu ga mirithirr yan marrgithirr. Graduate nhakun walal dhu bala traininglilha walal dhu marrtji. Training walal dhu power and waterw' ga plumbingu wiripuny.

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

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

Because we Yolñu don't want to be relying on Balanda.

4 Nñunhi dhu ga tap leaking nhakun wänakurr mala, ga yolñu'yulñu mala dhu ga djuñkthun, yaka walal dhu ga nhäma bay ñjunhiyithi. Mukmaram walal dhu gunga'yun. Ganga yan marrtji ñupthun bilin.

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

Let's have quick showers,

5 Golñur napurr ga marrgithirr, Nñunhi dhu bäyñun gapuny, bäynha dhu dhawar'yuna gapu limurruydja dhu startnha balanyaray buma'puma. Balanyaray napurr dhu washing girri ga ñupthun ga ñuñkthun. Ga sharingmirr gapu.

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



17: Matthew Dharrgar

Yolngu plumber, Interviewed by Yinjiya and John

1 Y) Nhä mala nhe ga djäma?

What are the different things you do?

D) Dharrwa mirithirr. Gapuw njuli wandir tap dhu ga leaking. Djämaw narra ga marngithirr. Yolngu njuli lazythirr djämaw djorraw'. nhakun narra njuli dhawatthun, djäma djorra' narra dhu wandir baladhi ga njunhi djäma nhawi tap njunhi wanha ga gapu leaking, yo balanya mala. Dhiyanjy balanya mala djäma mala.

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

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

You get the car and do the work by yourself?

D) Ne! Näthildja, linyu li ga djäma John. Bili narra marngi-gurrupar John dhu. Yolthu? Cameronthu. Nayi narra marngi-gurrupar ga bulu nhaku mala ...

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

3 Balanya munatha ga bore nhämunha dhu marrtj gapu ga metre. Nunhi dhu njupan mal' maraŋal.

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

4 Nunhiny gan nayin John Camerondhun djäma. Nayin njuli sign djorra' malany bala djuy'yuna nhawilia PAWA lila. Ne narra ga bäyju.

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

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

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

D) Ne. Yan nhakun dhuwandja nayi yindijura djämanjura PAWA nurnha ga narra nhakun dhuwal yutawalnha balandawal.

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

5 Nhakun buluny dhu wänja djarrwathirr ñayiny dhu gapuny bulu bäynjun dhärra gapuny. Bili wänja dhuwal nhakun island. Ñunyi dhu wänjany dharrwathirr napurr dhu yaka gapu wasting. Napurr dhu ga yan luka timegurr.

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

6 Ñunha nhakun wänja makarr yindi nhakun Wärrknur manymak ñayi balan wänja yindi.

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

7 J) Ga ñunhi nhakun nhe li ga marrtji djäma mak ñayi li ga djul'yun gapu tapñur wo ñula nhä garrwarñur waterñur nhe li ga djäma balanya mala?

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

D) Ñe hot waterñur, ñarra li mukmaram ga nhirpan yuça, pipe ya balanya Ga ñunhi latiritj, ñunhi nhangju latiritja, bili ñunhi latiritja ñunhi dhu ga djäma licencemirriynha yan mala.

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

8 J) Ñula nhe gan yan formal ñäthil warkthurr yan nhakun apprenticeship ñula nha? Ñe. Djäma nhe gan?

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

D) Djäma ñarra gan yurr yaka ñunha Darwinñurdja. Ñarra gan dhiyal bili course dhiyal bili Yurrwi.

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

J) Walal gan benur marrtjin räli?

Did they come out from Darwin?

D) Yan walal gan gurrupar djorra' malany ñarra gan nhänjal ga djäma ga ñayi gan ñunhi tick ñunhi djorra'ñur.

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

9 J) Ga ñula nhe ga guyaña ñula nhe certificate märrañal.

And did you get any sort of certificate?

D) Dhuwal ñarraku djorra PAWA puy ñunhi ñarra djulkmarañaldja ñarra Darwinlia marrtjin ñarra märrañala djorran.

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

10 Ñunhi ñarra wapthurr shirelila ñayi bungawany mala larruñala ñarraku bäynjun recognise ñarrany yanbi yaka marnji.

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

11 J) Ga nhe ga djälthirr bulu?

Do you want more training?

D) Yow. Johndhu ñarrany dharrwa marnji-gurrupar pumpgu ñunhi ñuli blocked ñarra ñuli lapmaram ga djalkthun dhukun mala.

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

12 Bili njarra ten years djäma. Ga wañan njarra yolñuny yolthu dhu djäma njarra kal märr njayi dhu marngithirr.

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

13 Walal nuli tap birri'yun ga bay'nha, bäyñun walal nuli mukmaram. Njarra li dharrwamirr waña walany. Walal nuli natha djinawa wäñanur natha djalkthun baynha sinkñur. Ga njarra li marrtji ga waña, 'Way yaka nhuma dhu ga sinkliil natha nurrkam ñunha nhuma dhu garbage bagliil galkan'.

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

14 Y) Wanha balan gi wiripu yolñu nhini njayi dhu ga nhäma gapu djul'yunawuy?

Are there other people who can repair taps?

D) Bäyñu. Yaka njarra marngi. Dhiyal banydjji djäma djorra. Yolñuw ñunhi nuli ga tap leaking walal nuli gyaña marrtji officelil ga djäma djorra report. Wiripuny walal nuli njarra ku buna yolñu mala, 'Way tap njarra ku ga leaking'. Njarra li waña 'Yaka, bala nhe dhu marrtji officelil ga nhe dhu djäma report'.

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

15 Djäma njarra first balanyayi Johngal, njarra ga djorra' gäma, njayi dhu nula yol waña, njayi dhu learn sign, bitjandhi njarra waña first time, yurr bäyñu. Wiripuny nuli yolñu walal napurrur djämamirriw marikuman, madakarritjhirra.

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



18: Bälma Visit

Lily, Balarrkpalarrk, Marpiyawuy, Oscar, John and Trevor

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

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

2 B) Wet seasongu dhuwal gapu, and there's Dry one yaka. Walalarj Dhuwakunditjku. Gorryindi, Gamalangaw, walalarj. Walalarj wäna Dhuwakunditjku. Maliwar. Dhuwana njunhi wäna^{ng} walalarj.

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

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

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

4 B. Ne njulkthunaraw ga maranydjalk dhu njoman. Dhiyarj bala njayi dhuwali easy yolnju. Malnj'maram gapu, tapnjur wo bawalamirrijur, townnjur. Njäthilnydja bäynju napurr malnj'maranha tapnjur gapu bäynju. Nhawinjur napurr balanya wellnjur nhänjal.

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

Napurrunguwuynyndja, yän napurr dhu djarrany'tjun gapu njunha dirtmirr bäydhi luka.

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

5 B. Njayanumirr muka napurrnj gapu. Rraku njayanumirr dhuwal gapu, nhakun rraku njändi'mirrinju.

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

6 L. Yaka yan dhuwal bili. Nhakun njunha, limurrunggal wänanjur. Napurr dhu guyanjanhamirra, wayirri-wa^{ng}anjur, njamini-wa^{ng}anjur, guyanjanhamirra.

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



19: Paula

Interviewed by Yinjiya

1 Dhuwal gapu raypiny dhuwal nhawi njunha borenjur limurrurj ga njorra.

We have fresh water here through the bores.

2 Njarr marngi njarra gan nhäjäl mitjinmirriy. Njaji gan ten o'clockthin bala gan mukthurnha power ga gapu rrambanji.

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

3 Njaji dhu PAWA –y gurrupan tank mala wäjakurr. Dhärra dhu marrtji, märr ga dhu ga waltjan njunhi, nyärryun, njaji dhu ga njunhi baladhi buma gapu. Märr dhu ga tap - puynyndja gapu dhärra gänan yan mukmuknha. Limurr dhu ga njunha bala tankpuy using. Nhakun njunhi njäthil marrtjin educationgurr dhärran tank mala. Waltjan gapu gan baladhi, nyärryurr gan baladhi tankliil.

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

4 At the momenttja dhiyanjony bala njaji ga meter mala ga dhärra njunha Education housesjur. What about yoljwalnyndja? Napurr djäl marr ga napurr dhu ga nhäma njunhidhi. Nhämunha' gapu dhu ga njunhi lakaram njaji.

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

5 Traininggu napurr djäl yoljuw. Yolju dhu training balandawal, njaji dhu marngithirr ga. Yalala njaji dhu balanday limurruny gunharrayun njaji dhu njunhi njunhiyi yolju dhärra dhiyal, permanent resident. Balanyaraw, njaji dhu fixing marrtji. Yalala limurrurj tap mala bakthun wo leaking dhu ga gapu njaji dhu ganydjarryu fixing.

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

Balanya nhakun walal dhu marrtji njunha traininggurr, apprenticeshipgurr. Yoljuw napurr djäl njaji dhu start trainingnha.

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

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

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



20: Yinjiya

Interviewed by John

1 Yo. Dhuwal idea napurr yawungu nhawi djäma dhuwal, nhawipuy Milingimbi Yolŋu gapu. Nhawi dhäwu märra'marram, ga dhukarr malŋ'malŋ'maram nhaltjarr ŋayi gan ŋathil rom ŋorran. Yolŋu walal gan nhinan, ŋarkula ŋayi gapu, yolŋuw nhinanharaw. Dhäwu ŋayi ga gapuw ŋorra ga ringitj ŋayi, ga gurrutu ŋayi. Näthil ŋuli ganha yolŋu marrtjinya Yolŋu bala räli liw'maranha gapu manŋutji guwatjmana, wiripunŋur nhinanha. Ga nhinanha ga yän ŋayi ŋuli dhawar'yuna ga larr wiripulili gapu guwatjmana.

Nhinanharaw balanya yolŋuw, walŋa ŋayi dhu nhina gapuy. Ga lupthun ga djäga nhanŋuwuy ŋayi, watjimmirr ga djamarrkuliw djäga ŋayatham walalany, warrakan lukanha ŋula nhä ŋatha. Gapu nhakun walŋamirr, nhinanha walal ganha, wänakurr liw'maram.

2 Bulu ŋayi ga ringitjkurr mala gapu ŋorra. Dhuwal napurr yawungu malŋ'malŋ'maram ga dhäwu dhuwalaŋuwuy gapupuy, dhäwu. Dhudi ŋayi dhäwu gapu, ringitjkurr, manikay dalkarra nhaltjan ga ŋorra ringitj mala. Märmmirr ŋayi gapu, ŋayanŋumirr yolŋuw, ga märryua dap'maram.

Yaka ŋanya dhu warku'yun, bili ŋayi gurrutumirr. Ga yaka ŋanya dhu djänŋdhirr gapu, bitjan djalkthun bawalamirr, warku'yun ŋanya.

Walŋakum ŋanya djäga, yolŋukum gurrutumirriyam ga bäki ŋanya dhunupawurr dhukarrkurr, beŋur bili ŋayi ga rom ŋorra. Ga manymak.

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

Water has a story, it has ringitj, kinship,

Previously the old people would travel to and from wells. Stayed there until the water finished, then up and off to another water.

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

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

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

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

3 Dhuwal yawungu dhiyan bala napurr dhukarr djarr'yun nanyi dhu. Dhiyanjany bala nhakun yindin dhuwal wänja, nhakun mainly dhiyal Milingimbi. Wänja marrtji njathan mala, ga Yolju ga mala bunhamirr dharrwa mirithirr, bala' marrtji dharrwathirr.

Nyani dhu giningarr bakthun tapenur mala. Njali dhu either dälkum ga guŋga'yun njalipi djäma, wo marrtji njali dhu ga njunhal walalan officerur buna. Walal dhu, walalawuy njula djäma. Djorra' nhakun njunhili fillingup, ga job card balanya, walalangal märram njuruki tapku djämaw gapuw. Ga njunhili nyai ga dhukarr rom balanya bili njorra, bili wiripu yolju nyai, manymak nyai dhu guwatjman balandawal, ga wänja walalangal gapupuy, "ga njunha tap rraku yätjin, bakthurr njunhal wänjanur". Wiripuny njäyi njalapal yolju. yaka nyai gumurr marrgi nyai marrtji dhu ga bunan balandaw.

4 Wiripuny nyai gora-dumurr. Nhaltjan njali dhu njunhiliyiny guŋga'yun yoljuny? Gapu nyai dhu yalala nhanju wänjanur yätjirr, ga marrtji dhu nyai, ga djämaw nyai dhu njän'thun njuruki, tapku, ya bitjan. Ga nyai dhu nhakun, wiripu-wiripu mala limurru, gana'kana nhina yoljuwal, wiripuny gora-dumurru, wiripuny dhuja nyai balayi wupitjlili marrtjinyaraw. Ga wiripuny nyai njalapal, njunhi nyai dhu rum'rumdhun, bili nyai njalapal litjalan yolju. Njali dhu nhanju djäma. Ga nyai dhu ga nhina officerur mak balanda ga yaka njäyi marrgi mirithirr romgu limurru. Ga dhuwali limurr ga djäma dhiyan bala märr ga njäyi dhu njunhal bala dharanan yolju nhaltjan ga nhina wiripu yolju gora dumurr, wiripuny nyai njalapal, wiripuny nyai rur'rumdhun, wiripu dhuja Englishku. (6.00)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



21: Njamuyani Visit

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

1 Balandagurr dhu rra ga waŋa? Dhuwal gapu maŋutji dhuwanydja. Yolŋukurr, balandagurr. Märrma'yirr ŋayi dhu.

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

2 B) Dhuwal wäŋa, dhuwal gapu maŋutji gapu maŋutji dhuwandja Gurruruwa wäŋany yäku, ga nhawuku Walamaŋuw gapu dhuwandja, drinking water. Dhuwal nhawi li gan dhuwal communityw nhawi water dhiyal walal ŋuli gana drinking. Yow ga nhakun nhawi business area walal ŋuli gan use dhuwal gapu walalaŋ.

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

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

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

4 B) Bäyŋu walal gan wasting gapu, yän dhuwal walal gan drinking nhawi walalaŋ lifeku, use walal gan. Dhuwal (Gamalaŋga nhawi gu dhuwal Gamalaŋaw), nhawigu Walamaŋuw napurrŋ gapu, ga yalala napurr dhu ŋunha bala Barruŋgaŋur nhäma gapu walalaŋ gapu.

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

5 W) Ga dhuwandja ŋäthildja yän ŋayi gapu ŋayi gan dhärran well, yurr gapu maŋutji. Yurr dhiyaŋ bala mak mutikay munygum mak nhawiyu gabundaynha mala yow contractaynha mala. Njarrany yäku ga nhawi Walandi ŋanydja ?

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

6 J) Ga manymak nhumalangal n̄ayi ga bitjadhi n̄orra dhiyaᅇ bala?

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

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

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

B) Godarr napurr dhu djäma baladhi roᅇanmaraᅇ napurr dhu yaka limurr marᅇgi mak bäy, ya balanya. Bili yolᅇu dhuwal napurr mak ap duᅇduᅇ mala balanya nhakun bulu roᅇanmaram balayi

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

O) But dhiyaᅇ bala nhakun Bulany walal nhawi n̄unha bala bore gapu drinking water n̄unha bala which is manymak. But n̄äthil clean water ya balanya peolegu yow clean water n̄äthil ga dhiyaᅇuny bala nowadays bäyᅇu.

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

7 L) Nhawi Bulany guyaᅇa napurr ga dhuwal gapu bili n̄arra waᅇan walalaᅇ last year yow bitjan n̄arra. "Dhuwali nhawi nhä n̄unhi gunga mel-lakaram ga gapu", ga n̄arra djäl walal dhu nhawi warkthun mark walal dhu warkthun, n̄arra walalaᅇ bitjarr waᅇan yapa miny'tji yow, yow last year. Ga dhuwal nhakun gapu marᅇtji nhawi living water dhuwal gapu. Anyhow nhawi n̄arra, n̄arra Gamal Walamaᅇu ga wäᅇa dhuwal Njuruwulu Walamaᅇu yow.

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

