



# AMBOORINY BURRU FOUNDATION 1991 - JOURNEY & STORY 2018

*Nyikina Mangala, Karajarri, Tjurabalan, Bardi Jawi, Koongie-Elvire, Ngurrara, Yi-martuwarra Ngurrara and Jaru*







Aboriginal people's fight for our rights in the Kimberley has come about differently than in other regions in Australia ... Aboriginal community organisations have developed from the grass roots with little but their own energy and commitment to support them. The Kimberley today is different because it is made up of a network of community-controlled organisations that have not been set up by government laws. They have a long history of meeting the needs of their members with very basic facilities."

*- Excerpt from the 1994 Yirra Statement presented to the Hon. Robert Tickner on the Fitzroy River at the joint meetings of the Kimberley Land Council (KLC), Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre and Kimberley Language Resource Centre.*





## The vision

Kimberley Traditional Owners had a vision to control their land and to develop businesses on the land that would benefit Aboriginal communities through cash flow and jobs. Photo: KLC Board Meeting 2002



*Peter Murray: Chair of KRED Enterprises  
Aboriginal Charitable Trust*



*Gordon Marshall: Chair of the Ambooriny  
Burru Foundation*

# The issues, the need

Kimberley Traditional Owners identified a need to create jobs and develop businesses on our land so that we would no longer have to be reliant on government funding. There was a need for a unified organisation, powerful enough to insist that governments and big companies must consider long-term planning, controlled development, and the protection of Aboriginal cultural and environmental heritage. Now, all eight native title groups that are members of the Ambooriny Burru Foundation, are working together toward a sustainable future where our people have the opportunity to walk in two worlds: both as strong cultural leaders and as participants in the modern economy.





*Kimberley Traditional Owners worked  
hard and over many years to set up Ambooriny Burru.*



# How Ambooriny Burru was formed

The issues & the vision for independent Aboriginal economic development were discussed at Crocodile Hole in 1991, a Kimberley Land Council (KLC) workshop at Bungarun in 2002, a KLC workshop at Gulan in 2002 and the Kimberley Appropriate Economies Roundtable Forum Proceedings in 2005. In 2010, the KLC commissioned a report on how the Foundation should be set up. It was decided that the Foundation would take care of the social benefits of development, and KRED Enterprises Charitable Trust would drive business development. The Ambooriny Burru Foundation was officially established in December 2010 and we began operations in 2011.







# Crocodile Hole, 1991

In 1991, a significant meeting was conducted at Crocodile Hole in the East Kimberley. Traditional Owners emphasised the fact that Aboriginal organisations needed to work together and not let external forces divide and rule them. Business opportunities were discussed, with Kimberley leaders stressing that Aboriginal people wanted to run our own businesses and

interests. In regards to negotiations with outside stakeholders, all relevant Traditional Owners and Custodians were to be present on matters of concern, and stakeholders were not to contact or negotiate through one individual. These principles now form the bedrock of the work we do through the Ambooriny Burru Foundation.





*Land planning meetings*

# Bungarun, 2002

In 2002, the Kimberley Land Council held a two-day workshop for its board members at Bungarun. At the workshop, members spoke of how land was a fundamental element from which to maintain cultural responsibility, as well as an economic base to grow healthy communities. It was understood that control of land would result in economic development and jobs for Aboriginal communities. One of the recommendations from this workshop, was to develop models of alternative funding for Traditional Owners and Prescribed Body Corporates.





*Wayne Bergmann presenting at KLC AGM at Gulan, 2002.*

# Gulan, 2002

Following the Bungarun workshop of 2002, the Kimberley Land Council passed a resolution at Gulan to set up an independent Aboriginal business foundation. This would become the Ambooriny Burru Foundation.



# Ambooriny Burru, 2010 - 2018

Establishing the Ambooriny Burru Foundation fulfilled the long-term vision of Kimberley Aboriginal people to get control of our future through increased opportunities and economic independence. We currently have eight native title groups that are members, and they benefit from legal services, book-keeping services, Nipper Tabagee Scholarships and media services. KRED Enterprises (the economic development arm of the Foundation) and its subsidiaries have made a huge contribution to the regional economy. In 2014 / 2015 we employed 216 Aboriginal people. We established the first legal company owned by native title groups, run a heritage and logistics company, and are supporting the development of the Kimberley Agriculture and Pastoral Company (KAPCO).









We've been waiting for this for a long time and now it's finally happening. It's making us feel real good that we've finally got something that our people want to better ourselves and our young children. We want for our people to have better jobs in their own towns, not having to move away. And we want for our people to be able to run their own businesses. I'm really confident that some of these things will happen through KRED. Hopefully one day Aboriginal people will be benefiting from this organisation, without having to go to government for anything."

*- Excerpt from video interview with Yvonne Birrell, Jaru Traditional Owner, shortly after the establishment of KRED in 2012.*





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