

Laynhapuy

Arnhem Land, Northern Territory



We want to protect our country and pass it on to our children in good shape but we also want to be able to live on it and to be nurtured by it as our ancestors always have done.

Laynhapuy Homelands Association Inc.

Located in north-east Arnhem Land in northern Australia, Laynhapuy's natural environment and rare flora and fauna are virtually intact. With internationally significant wetlands and coastal landforms, the coast and seas are also home to endangered turtles and dugong.

These important environments are cared for by their Traditional Owners, who declared Laynhapuy to be an Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) in September 2006. Laynhapuy IPA now covers 6,900 square kilometres of land and 630 kilometres of coastline.

Laynhapuy lies near two other IPAs – Anindilyakwa which was also established in 2006 and Dhimurru which was declared in 2001. Together the three IPAs protect an important part of the Arnhem Coast Bioregion.

The Traditional Owners of these IPAs are linked by family, ceremonial and other cultural connections. Members of the three land management groups share information and cooperate on management and training programs. Laynhapuy IPA is administered by the Laynhapuy Homelands Association Incorporated.

The culture of the local Yolngu people is one of the oldest living cultures in the world. It is believed that interactions with outsiders first occurred around the sixteenth century through trade relations with Macassan fishermen. Many of the sites central to this relationship are protected under IPA activities.

Despite intense economic and social pressures associated with white settlement in the late 1800s, Yolngu managed to maintain physical and ceremonial connections to country, including traditional land management practices. In 1972, after years of being removed from the land, the Laynhapuy homeland movement was formed and assisted the return of Yolngu to their country.

The importance of the IPA lies in the coming together of natural values and the fact that we continue to live on our lands and keep strong our culture, our traditional knowledge and our use and management of our country. Our country continues to nurture us as it did our ancestors and this we also wish for our children. This is our home.

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The work of Laynhapuy IPA is guided by senior traditional owners and carried out by the local Yirralka Rangers and the community. *Yirralka* describes the attachment relationship, and associated responsibilities, between a Yolngu person and their country.

IPA activities include:

- Managing visitor activities
- Protecting cultural sites
- Controlling weeds, pigs and buffalo
- Managing fire through traditional burning techniques
- Looking after the coastline and the sea country, including removing marine debris such as ghost nets and monitoring turtle habitats.

Like all of Australia's IPAs, Laynhapuy is part of the National Reserve System, a nationwide network of reserves especially set up to protect examples of Australia's unique landscapes, flora and fauna for current and future generations.



The Australian Government supports the work of Laynhapuy IPA through the Indigenous Protected Areas and Working on Country elements of the Caring for our Country initiative.

Laynhapuy IPA is managed in accordance with World Conservation Union (IUCN) *Category VI – A Protected Area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems.*

For more information about Indigenous Protected Areas, visit www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/ipa or contact the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts' Community Information Unit on Freecall 1800 803 772

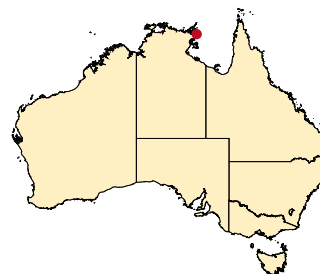


Photo Credits: All photos taken by Yirralka Rangers. Front – Gaywaratja River near Dhuruputjipi. Back – (Left) Wararrpa near Yilpara. (Right) Fire Management training near Gurrumurru. (Bottom) Removal of marine debris and ghost nets, Laynhapuy coast. **Art Credit:** Taken from original artwork ©Eunice Nungarayi Woods.



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