



[Good] [Tiwi News] Pupuni Ngirramini

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THE TIWI AND THE SEA >> P2-3

Tiwi Land Council Clan Group Meetings and Elections



Tiwi Land Council (TLC) elections will be held at the following venues on the following dates –

- Monday 4 December** – Mantiyupwi at Mantiyupwi Motel
- Tuesday 5 December** – Jikilaruwu (Tikilaru) at Mantiyupwi Motel
- Wednesday 6 December** – Wurankuwu (Ranku) at Mantiyupwi Motel
- Thursday 7 December** – Yimpinari at Milikapiti Sports Hall
- Friday 8 December** – Wulirankuwu at Milikapiti Sports Hall
- Monday 11 December** – Munupi at Pirlangimpi Sports Club
- Wednesday 13 December** – Malawu at Mantiyupwi Motel
- Thursday 14 December** – Mirrikawuyanga at Mantiyupwi Motel



GHOST NET SURVEY >> P4-5

THE TIWI AND THE SEA - SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT



**Message from the
Tiwi Land Council CEO
ROBERT GRAHAM**

The [TIWI] are very fond of sailing, and if they can secure anything that will serve as a sail, and in this boat [dugout canoe] the native brought himself and his wife across from Melville Island to the mainland – a distance of sixty miles across open water during the monsoon period.

WALTER BALDWIN SPENCER, 1912

Television viewers and readers of newspapers will have heard mention of Tiwi, Tiwi seas and Tiwi Sea-country lately. Some of this says things like, that in the past, and today Tiwi never went far out from the shore. That Tiwi practice was to stay close to shore. It was too 'risky', they say to go out any distance – to go out far. Tiwi stayed within sight of land, never going in a canoe between the islands and Darwin for example. And it has been said, Tiwi had no reason to go away from the shore. The Tiwi were more of a land people. I do not think this is correct.

It is not what I have heard while talking with Tiwi and it is not what is in the old records. The Tiwi are a Salt-Water People like all indigenous groups with coast country right across the Top End. Tiwi never had aircraft carriers, they are not the Australian Navy, but they did have craft able to get them out on the creeks, Apsley Strait AND on the Ocean out from the islands. Early white fellows visiting the Tiwi saw two types of canoe (in Tiwi Kupunyi or Tongulaka) being used on the Tiwi Islands (and also on the mainland). Those made

from bark (now called bark canoes) or Mampunga, and those from hollowed out logs (dugout or log canoes). These had paddles to move them, called Pajika and stone anchors or Tumpuka. These names I have taken from Charles Osbourne's 1974 book, *The Tiwi Language*. I know some older Tiwi remember Osborne and those who worked with him recording Tiwi language. Good stories can also be read from early days of how these canoes were made and used. Photographs and drawings show what they looked like.

In August 1911 Doctor Herbert Basedow, (he was a medical doctor) visited the Tiwi and later wrote about his trip. He told of the bark canoes. These are not the simple bent pieces of bark used elsewhere in Australia for crossing inland lakes. They were large canoes made from bark sewn and tied together with wooden stakes in place for reinforcing. These Dr Basedow said could be twenty feet long in the old measure, or six meters in the modern. They could carry a number of people and were used for what he said were turtle and dugong hunting expeditions and other trips. And, with good winds, weather and tides of course, Tiwi put out to sea in them. These canoes could be used, and it seems were used well away from land, just as you would expect by a Salt-water people. Here is Dr Basedow writing,

Although these canoes are mostly used for navigating the various rivers and estuaries of Melville and Bathurst Islands, and especially Apsley Straits, occasionally when wind and weather are favorable, the natives venture far out to sea, and not infrequently do they make the journey across to the mainland BASEDOW 1925

There are also accounts of bark canoes used in other parts of the Top End including in the Borroloola area where they were seen by Professor Baldwin Spencer from Melbourne University in 1900. Spencer saw a

sewn bark canoe that had come in from the Pellew Islands and then up the McArthur River to Borroloola, a distance he estimated to have been fifty miles, or about eighty kilometers. As one anthropologist put it, this is – 'an excellent example of the capacity of sewn bark canoes to absorb punishment'. Spencer also saw sewn bark canoes on the Tiwi Islands.



Tiwi sewn bark canoe in Apsley Strait, 1911, photographed by Dr Basedow

But Tiwi didn't only have bark canoes, they had log canoes as well. It is likely that they got them from Macassan visitors coming down from Indonesia after trepang on their larger boats and then learned how to make them. Scientists are still arguing the point about when Macassans first began to come to the Top End of Australia but it seems to have been before 1700 so by the time the English began to sail by Tiwi had log canoes and would have been using them. They were using them when Basedow and Spencer visited early in the twentieth century. Like bark canoes they could be paddled but they could also be used with a sail to really get about. And there are early photographs of Tiwi canoes under sail. Spencer tells us of one man who along with his wife crossed from the islands to Darwin by going directly over – like the ferry does today. He did not travel using the Vernon Islands for stopover or safety

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stops. How far out did Tiwi go? Beyond where you can see in the old days! You can't see any land when half-way to Darwin.

The Predisposition of Tiwi people is with the sea...

In the 1980s there was a study of Aboriginal People and the Sea in the Northern Territory (1986, called, *Aboriginal Subsistence fishing and tenure in the sea in the Northern Territory*). What did Tiwi say then? What did the study find? The Tiwi said that their Sea-Country went a long way out, out to the horizon. It found that - "The Predisposition of Tiwi people is with the sea, as it is with most Aboriginal groups along the north coast of Australia." This study found that the Tiwi were indeed a Sea-People, the high-English word predisposition simply means prefer, that is, the Tiwi prefer to be on the sea, doing their hunting and fishing and travelling. How far can you see when you look out to sea? Well, it depends upon how high up you are when you are looking. If you are on ground behind a beach that is ten meters high, then you can see about eleven kilometers. Quite a distance and of course there is higher ground along



the Tiwi coast in places. This gives Tiwi a rather large area of Sea Country. And like all Salt-Water people, the same report agrees that Tiwi have other connections to the sea including those of Palaneri (dreamtime) ancestors, songs and ceremonies. Many involve the Sea and Sea-Country. These include the Creation woman Munungkala whose picture we can all see in the Patakijiyali Museum on Bathurst Island. As Chairman Gibson Illortaminni said,

We follow the Culture, where that old lady went in the Sea...

The TIWI People. Have a Strong Connection to the Sea. History, Culture, Resources for Fishing and Hunting. Tiwi are a Salt Water People. Tiwi must now consider a Native Title Application over seas around Bathurst and Melville Islands to make sure Tiwi interests are recognised and Tiwi Sea-Country protected by Tiwi.



AMAGULA, T

12 Oct 2023

CONDOLENCE

Mr T.Amagula

A strong and passionate leader of his people.

The Tiwi Land Council Chair, Council Members and staff wish to extend their sincere condolences to the Anindilyakwa People and the Anindilyakwa Land Council on the sudden passing of the ALC Deputy Chair.

Our thoughts are with Mr T.Amagula's family, friends and colleagues at this difficult time.

Rest in Peace

"Our thoughts and prayers are with you all"

Tiwi Land Council Elections – New method of choice approved by the Hon Linda Burney MP, Minister for Indigenous Australians on 15 November 2023

At a meeting of the full Tiwi Land Council on 23 October, 2023 it was agreed to change the method of choice. These are the most significant changes since the Land Council was formed on 18 August 1978. The **method of choice** refers to how the Land Council selects its members. The *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 (Cth)* ('ALRA') says that each Land Council must have a method of choice and the method of choice must be approved by the Minister for Indigenous Affairs.

The key changes mean:

- The Council must now include a dedicated number of positions for women.
- An independent third party must facilitate the elections.
- An increase in the total number of members to forty resulting in a greater representation of Tiwi people. There will now be four councillors and one trustee from each clan.

The ALRA requires, that Council members shall be:

- Aboriginals living in the area of the Council, or whose names are set out in the register of traditional Aboriginal owners as being traditional Aboriginal owners of Aboriginal land in the area of the Council.

- Chosen by Aboriginals living in the area of the Land Council in accordance with such method or methods of choice and holding office on such terms and conditions as is or are approved by the Minister from time to time.
- Not subject to a disqualifying event as defined at subsection 29(5) of the Act.

Tiwi people might consider the following when nominating a person (whether themselves or someone else) for Council:

- Council members must be at least 18 years of age at the time that they first hold office as a Land Council member.
- Council members will have a good knowledge of the land owning group, its land area and land rights matters.
- The person's character and reputation within the community.
- Any prior criminal charges and/or criminal record.
- Prior experience on boards and/or work experience in a role that required an understanding of good governance and accountability.
- Prior experience and conduct as a Council member or Land Trust member.
- Whether the nominated person agrees to accept the nomination.



Dr Bush-Blanasi

CONDOLENCE

It is with great sadness that the Tiwi Land Council notes the passing of the Northern Land Council Chairman.

He was a good friend of the Tiwi People and we remember and acknowledge the many joint works of our two Land Councils.

Our sincerest wishes and condolences to his family and the Northern Land Council members and staff.

Rest In Peace

Gibson Farmer-Illortaminni Chair - Tiwi Land Council



Tiwi Islands

Ghost net survey

Crucial Battle for Coastal Conservation

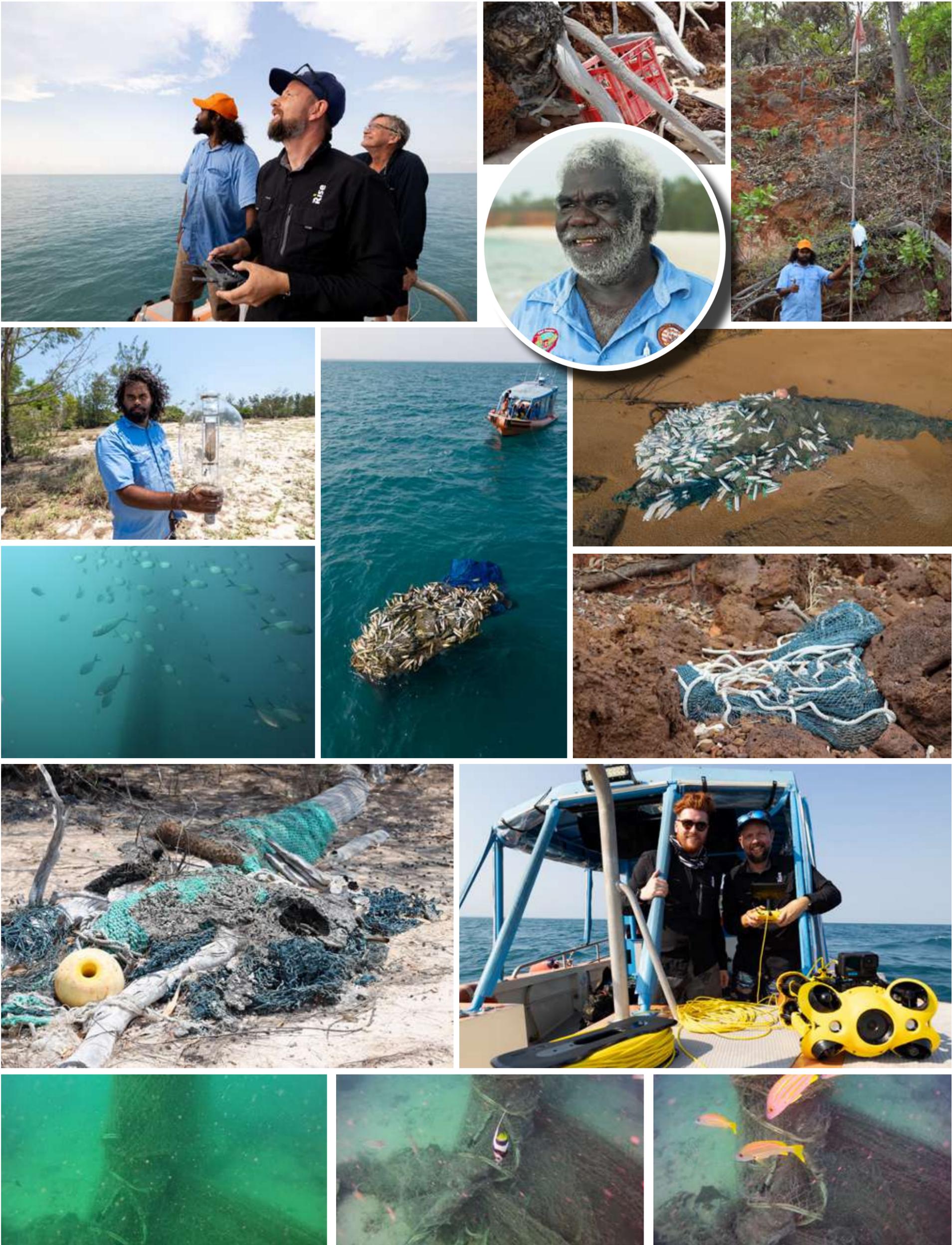
In a significant stride towards preserving the pristine beauty of the Tiwi Islands, the Tiwi Land Council recently embarked on a groundbreaking mission—a Ghost net mapping survey. This ambitious initiative aimed to identify and document the pervasive issue of ghost nets along the coastlines of the two islands. Working in tandem with local Tiwi Rangers, whose invaluable knowledge of the land and coastline proved instrumental to the project and Tiwi Enterprises, who recently purchased Sea Darwin / Sea Tiwi, were engaged to provide and crew the vessel Olive Ridley, a 12 m solid hull rib with 2 x 425hp Yamaha outboards. This vessel is fast, has a shallow draw and has steps for beach landings. Tiwi Land Council staff provided ground support.

The Tiwi Lands Council collaborated with Rise Project Consulting (Rise), a Darwin based consulting firm specializing in environmental projects. Rise deployed a dedicated team of three experts, armed with state-of-the-art technology including airborne

drones, Digital Single-Lens Reflex (DSLR) cameras, and a submersible Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV). This arsenal of tools enabled the team to capture visual data both above and below the water's surface, providing a comprehensive overview of the extent of the ghost net issue. This approach not only highlighted the severity of the issue but also uncovered previously undiscovered nets and associated debris, underscoring the urgency of addressing this environmental threat.

Armed with this comprehensive dataset, the Tiwi Land Council plans to work with the Tiwi Islands Rangers to develop informed strategies for the removal and disposal of ghost nets. The visual documentation provides a roadmap for targeted interventions, allowing the rangers to prioritise areas most affected by this environmental menace. Additionally, the data serves as a foundation for ongoing monitoring efforts, enabling the rangers to track changes in the prevalence of ghost nets over time and assess the effectiveness of conservation initiatives.





PHOTOS: Rise Project Consulting, Helen Daiyi – Tiwi Land Council, Alan James – Tiwi Land Council, Scott Simpson – Tiwi Enterprises (Sea Darwin / Sea Tiwi)

Tuwurrampila Cultural Heritage Forum

Where has this project come from?

It was a recommendation put forth by Tiwi Land Council Members at Full Council on Thursday 13th July 2023.

Purpose

The Tuwurrampila Cultural Heritage Forum has been established to facilitate and oversee the implementation of Tiwi cultural heritage projects and events that support, strengthen, and sustain Tiwi culture.

Why is the forum important?

The Tiwi Land Council acknowledges the intrinsic value of Tiwi culture for all Tiwi people as a nation. Language and ceremony form a large part of culture and are essential to the wellbeing and identity of Tiwi people.

Our fear is knowledge may become distant, inaccessible, and perhaps ultimately a matter of heritage rather than a culture of living traditions.

Why should we do this project now?

Cultural activities and projects assisting Tiwi people to express, preserve, maintain, and celebrate their culture play an integral role in maintaining the sustainability, vitality, and strength of Tiwi people. When people are proud of their culture, they protect it. Pride grows through a strong connection to culture.

Scope of activities and projects?

- Utilising digital technology in an innovative and culturally sensitive manner to record ceremony and songs (Story, Dreaming and Song recording).
- Infrastructure to support ceremony at the Wurrumiyanga cemetery.
- Establishing a Tiwi Festival Committee for each community.
- Develop, produce, present, exhibit or perform a diverse range of traditional and contemporary Tiwi arts.
- Support new and innovative forms of Tiwi expression through art (music, paint, sculpture, weaving etc.)
- Support the transmission and development of Tiwi cultural heritage and knowledge through languages and arts projects.
- Repatriation: objects at museums
- Engagement with SA and NT Museums: Reviewing Tiwi Islander collections
- Knowledge Transfer: teaching on country about country
- Dancing: teaching dance and cultural protocol when dancing at ceremonies i.e., following the order of dances according to kinship relationship, totem and skin group etc.
- Ceremony assistance for Pukamani
- Liaising with schools to see what sort of programs or projects that can be supported.
- Regular visits to traditional country

The members of the forum (committee)

The committee had to be formed under the Aboriginal Land Rights Act and it has to have at least seven Land Council Members. Consultations have taken place in Wurrumiyanga, Pirlangimpi and Milikapiti.



Non-Council Members voted to the Committee on 19/10/2023.

Milikapiti

1. Michelle Bush
2. Mary Moreen
3. Raylene Miller
4. Pius Tipungwuti
5. Patrick Puruntatameri

Proxies

1. Pedro Wonaemirri
2. Michelle Woody

Nguiu

Men

1. Virgil Kerinaiaua
2. Richard 'Hadley' Tungutulum
3. Wayne Joseph Pilakui
4. Bernard Tipiloura

Women

1. Francillia Puruntatameri
2. Karen Tipiloura
3. Molly Munkara
4. Calista Kantilla

Pirlangimpi

1. Maningawu Pirrawayingi
2. Tony Pilakui
3. Therese Bourke 'Wakay'
4. Carol Puruntatameri
5. Marie Tipaumantimirri

Proxies

1. Andrew Orsto
2. Pauline 'Jeddah' Puruntatameri

Proxies

1. Francis Orsto
2. Bonita Tipiloura
3. Jacinta Tipungwuti

Nguiu / Warrumiyanga Nominees

Men

1. John Wilson
2. Walter Kerinaiaua
3. Craig Wilson
4. Virgil Kerinaiaua
5. Francis Orsto
6. Richard 'Hadley' Tungutulum

Women

1. Marilyn Kerinaiaua
2. Jacinta Tipungwuti
3. Banita Ullungura
4. Francilla Puruntatameri
5. Calista Kantilla
6. Agnes Kantilla

Pirlangimpi Nominees

Women

1. Paulina Jeddah
2. Carol Puruntatameri
3. Marie Tipaumantimirri

Men

1. Tony Pilakui
2. Pirrawayingi
3. Andrew Orsto
4. John-Jay Tipungwuti

Milikapiti Nominees

Men

1. Pius Tipungwuti
2. Pedro Wonaemirri
3. Edward Puruntatameri
4. Patrick Puruntatameri
5. Wally Brooks
6. Fogarty Wilson

Women

1. Doriana Bush
2. Mary Moreen
3. Michelle Bush
4. Michelle Woods
5. Pamela Brooks
6. Raylene Miller

Council Members voted to the committee on 19/10/2023.

1. Brian Tipungwuti (Chair Trustees) Wurankuwu
2. Walter Kerinaiaua Jnr Mantiyupwi
3. John Wilson Yimpinari
4. Leslie Tungatalum Munupi
5. Valentine Intalui Tikalaru
6. Jeffrey Puruntatameri (Miller) (Trustee) Wulirankuwu
7. Richard Puruntatameri (Trustee) Malawu
8. Adonis Wormmatakimmi Mirrikawuyanga

COUNCIL MEMBERS.
 WALTER Jnr
 JOHN WILSON
 BRIAN T.
 LESLIE. Tungatalum.
 VALENTINE INTALUI
 RICHARD Puruntatameri
 JEFFERY MILLER.
 Aldous W.



Tiwi Land Council Clan Group Meetings and Elections



Tiwi Land Council (TLC) elections will be held at the following venues on the following dates –

Monday 4 December – Mantiyupwi at Mantiyupwi Motel

Tuesday 5 December – Jikilaruwu (Tikilaru) at Mantiyupwi Motel

Wednesday 6 December – Wurankuwu (Ranku) at Mantiyupwi Motel

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Monday 11 December – Munupi at Pirlangimpi Sports Club

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Thursday 14 December – Mirrikawuyanga at Mantiyupwi Motel

Officers from the Northern Territory Electoral Commission (NTEC) will be receiving Nominations for the positions from 9am until 11am on the day of each election (as above). If more than four (4) nominations are received an election will be held. Voting will take place at the venues listed above from 11:30am until 2:00pm. At the close of voting the votes will be counted and the results will be declared.

To be eligible to nominate for the Council position you must satisfy the following –

- Be at least 18 years of age,
- Be on the relevant Clan Group register. TLC Anthropologists will be present with current register (additions to the register close at 11am),
- To be eligible under s29 of ALRA
- Present the nomination signed by two (2) eligible Clan members, at the time and place as above.

To be eligible to vote for the Council position you must satisfy the following –

- Be at least 18 years of age,
- Be on the relevant Clan Group register. TLC Anthropologists will be present with current register (additions to the register close at 11am),
- Be present at the time and place as above

**TLC staff will be in the community to assist with any questions.
If further information is required, please call the TLC office on (08) 8997 0797.**

Paraphrased s29 follows:

You are not eligible to be a member of the Tiwi Land Council if:

1. You are convicted of an offence (not involving dishonesty) and sentenced to a period of imprisonment of 12 months or more.
2. You are convicted of an offence involving dishonesty and are sentenced to a period of imprisonment of 3 months or more.
3. You are convicted of two or more offences and you:
 - a. Are required to serve a term of imprisonment of 12 months or more; or
 - b. Would have been required to serve a term of imprisonment of 12 months or more if the sentence had not been suspended.
4. You are convicted of two or more offences involving dishonesty and you:
 - a. Are required to serve a term of imprisonment of three months or more; or
 - b. Would have been required to serve a term of imprisonment of 12 months or more if the sentence had not been suspended.

If you fall into one of the categories listed above, you are not eligible to be a member of the Tiwi Land Council for:

- A. 2 years beginning on the day that you were released from prison if you were sentenced to spend time in prison.
- B. 2 years beginning on the day that you were convicted if you did not serve a term of imprisonment.