

Cooperation Agreement

Between Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation and The Wilderness Society

June 2005

In forming this Cooperation Agreement, the Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation and the Wilderness Society acknowledge the Kaanju people, the traditional owners of Country centred on the Wenlock and Pascoe Rivers of Cape York Peninsula, and accept that we share a responsibility to preserve, protect and manage the environment for the benefit of future generations

Recognition

We, the parties to this Cooperation Agreement, recognise that –

- ❖ Kaanju Ngaachi, the homelands of the Kaanju people, hold social, cultural, spiritual, historical and ecological importance for Kaanju, and are part of the globally-significant landscapes of Cape York Peninsula
- ❖ Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation is at the forefront of the return of Kaanju to Country and the development of a Kaanju land and resource framework
- ❖ Kaanju Traditional Owners aim to create an Indigenous Protected Area on their homelands and to care for their country according to their traditions and customs
- ❖ The Wilderness Society is committed, through our WildCountry strategies, to the protection of the natural and cultural values of the Australian continent, including the high conservation values of the Cape York Peninsula region
- ❖ The Wilderness Society is at the forefront of public campaigns that aim to ensure protection of the natural and cultural heritage of Cape York Peninsula and to develop the Indigenous conservation estate in the region
- ❖ The Wilderness Society proposes Protected Areas and conservation management arrangements for the lands and waters of Cape York Peninsula, in a way compatible with the rights and customary title of the region's Indigenous Traditional Owners

Aims

The Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation and the Wilderness Society will work together voluntarily in support of the protection of the natural and cultural values of Kaanju Ngaachi by ensuring that –

- ❖ Kaanju Ngaachi are under the management of their Traditional Owners, allowing continuity and transmission of the Traditional Knowledge of natural and cultural values

- ❖ Kaanju Ngaachi are managed and maintained at the highest level of ecological and cultural integrity, and that there is public, community and philanthropic support for this environmental goal
- ❖ Kaanju Ngaachi form an important part in the mosaic of Protected Areas and Conservation Agreements that are or will be established to achieve high-level protection of the diverse and magnificent environments of Cape York Peninsula
- ❖ Kaanju people will have sufficient long term resources available to manage the natural and cultural values of the land, and sustain the livelihood of the families and communities that reside there

Mutual commitments

The Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation and the Wilderness Society are committed to respect each other's interests and to work cooperatively to advance -

- ❖ The Indigenous rights of Kaanju as Traditional Owners, and their right to speak for country
- ❖ Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation homelands development, within the Kaanju land and resource management framework
- ❖ A properly supported Traditional Owners governance structure for Kaanju Ngaachi, with Kaanju as primary land managers
- ❖ A properly supported conservation strategy for the management of the environments of Cape York Peninsula, including Kaanju lands and waters
- ❖ WildCountry objectives to understand and protect the natural and Indigenous cultural values of Northern Australia
- ❖ The sharing of ecological knowledge of Kaanju Ngaachi, developed through collaboration and respect for cultural and intellectual property rights

Responsibilities

The Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation and the Wilderness Society accept the responsibilities arising from this agreement to ensure that –

- ❖ Free and informed consent is given by both parties in relation to any matter covered by this agreement before it can be said to represent our shared position
- ❖ We each pursue the rights and interests we hold outside of the terms of this cooperation agreement, and independently of each other, in a way that is not harmful to this agreement
- ❖ We each properly represent, inform and involve the members of our groups in decision-making, communication and cooperation to give effect to the aims of this agreement
- ❖ We work with other individuals and organisations who can assist in advancing the intent of this agreement
- ❖ We will maintain openness, honesty and trust in our relationship

Areas of Cooperation

The Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation and the Wilderness Society will establish cooperative arrangements and action plans covering, but not limited to -

- ❖ Conservation of the high natural and cultural values of Kaanju Ngaachi in a manner consistent with Aboriginal title
- ❖ The recognition and protection of the Wild Rivers and the World Heritage values of Kaanju Ngaachi
- ❖ Financing of arrangements for the management of an Indigenous Protected Area on Kaanju lands, and to support environmental activities within the Kaanju land and resource framework
- ❖ The promotion of and access to the natural and cultural values of Kaanju Ngaachi
- ❖ Community and economic development compatible with the maintenance of the ecological values of Kaanju Ngaachi
- ❖ The development of shared ecological knowledge through co-research, scientific projects, case studies, and mutual education, knowledge sharing, workshops and forums
- ❖ Joint campaigns and presentations, the sharing of information and images for use in promotional and educational materials, and the use of our publications to promote the aims of this agreement
- ❖ Placement of volunteers, with both Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation and The Wilderness Society, in support of conservation research, management and development of Kaanju Ngaachi

Signed this 22nd day of June, 2005

At Wanlock Outstation, Chuula, Kaanju homelands

By David Claudie

Anthony Esposito

DAVID CLAUDIE

ANTHONY ESPOSITO

for Chuulangun Aboriginal Corporation

for The Wilderness Society

Witnessed by

Lynda Schneider