

Building business in Blue Mud Bay

Investment partnerships with Traditional Owners
through the Djalkiripuyngu Aboriginal Corporation





Welcome!

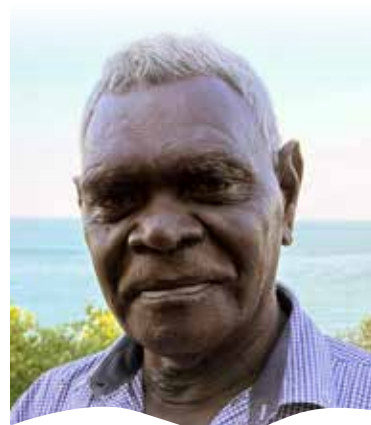
We are the Djalkiripuyngu, the Traditional Owners of Blue Mud Bay in Northeast Arnhem Land. We invite you to learn about us and the special place we call home. We seek partners, investors, and collaborators in building sustainable businesses that are founded on our unique landscapes and culture.

As Yolngu-speaking people, we have lived in and looked after our country for many, many thousands of years. We live on land and sea and where regional Aboriginal languages meet. We have established the Djalkiripuyngu Aboriginal Corporation (DAC) as a gateway to our region. We also established it to hold and manage the rights and interests we won as part of our famous Blue Mud Bay High Court case. 'Djalkiri' means 'foundation' or 'footprint' and this powerful word refers to our identity, our country, and our forward journey.

In this prospectus you can discover more about the partnership, investment, and enterprise opportunities we can offer.

**“Come and join us on
this journey of building
a sustainable social and
economic future together”**

— Waka Mununggurr
Chairperson, Djalkiripuyngu Aboriginal Corporation





Blue Mud Bay Highlights

- Ancient and dynamic culture
- Traditionally owned and managed pristine landscapes
- Rich biodiversity
- A famous name with a rich history
- Unique tourism potential
- Productive marine resource development opportunities



Our Vision for the Future

To strengthen rights, power, culture, resources, and economic opportunities in Blue Mud Bay, so that generations to come can live in safe and stable Djalkiripuyngu homelands.

Our Partnership Principles

Unity and reconciliation

Walking, working, and living together

Sustainability

Creating long term value for ourselves and our partners

Strengthening Traditional Ownership

Activating land and sea rights to create new opportunities

Quality over quantity

Focusing on a small number of strong partners

Effective governance

Using clear decision making processes that all Djalkiripuyngu can see and understand

Business innovation

Seeking economic growth that comes from our unique place in the world.





Introducing the Djalkiripuyngu Aboriginal Corporation

Senior Djalkiripuyngu elders and leaders established DAC in 2020 to be an easily accessible and well-resourced gateway to the people and places of Blue Mud Bay. In May 2024 DAC became a Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) holding native title rights determined in the Blue Mud Bay case.

DAC is focused on social and economic investment to support Traditional Owners, homeland life and the regional economy. It is not trying to compete with established service providers for direct service provision. Under the DAC Rulebook, DAC responsibilities may also include:

- Representing the Djalkiripuyngu and providing a point of contact
- Enabling strategic planning, and the development and implementation of visions for country and communities
- Advancing Yolngu self-determination, including through agreements and partnerships
- Developing sustainable community-based commercial development opportunities
- Performing functions under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976.
- Fostering and supporting other local clan-based or community-based organisations
- Providing for the development and maintenance of key infrastructure and services - communication, education, health, housing, training, transportation and other services

DAC's membership structure follows Djalkiripuyngu clan ownership principles. Each clan nominates members who then elect a board of Traditional Owner directors from within the membership. The board is supported by non-member independent directors with legal, corporate, and other important skills.

DAC has access to current and future support programs designed for PBCs, including training, business development support, and funding and co-investment opportunities. DAC's Rulebook also allows it to become a charitable organisation. DAC has signed a Local Decision Making Agreement with the Northern Territory Government (NTG) on behalf of Djalkiripuyngu homelands to coordinate NTG support for the region. DAC has a strong structure and is ready for growth.





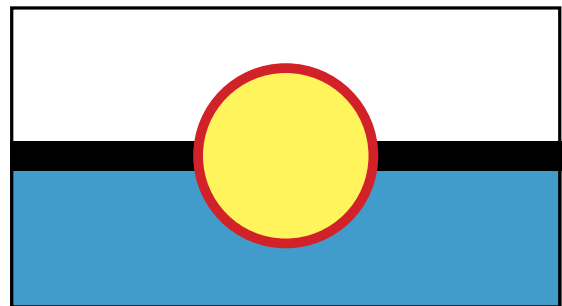
Our journey so far

Our songs, stories, patterns and designs tell us that our ancestors created our country and that they still live there. These deep cultural foundations keep us strong, powerful, and united.

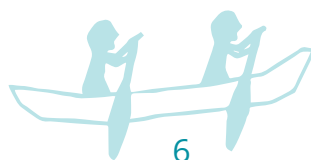
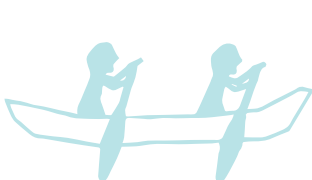
Our history says that we have hundreds of years of experience of asserting our rights and doing business with outsiders wanting to live and work on our country. For many years before Europeans came, Macassan trepang fishermen lived on our coastlines and fished our waters with our permission. Keeping activity by others safe, sustainable and of benefit to Yolngu people is a key part of our role as Traditional Owners.

Arnhem Land was made a protected Aboriginal reserve in 1931, but this did not stop mining at Nhulunbuy (Gove) and on Groote Eylandt from starting in the 1960s. In the early 1970s, our Djalkiripuyngu elders began to establish clan-based homeland communities on traditional country to help people get away from the problems created by these mines. The elders created key homelands in northern Blue Mud Bay as hubs for healthy, safe, and productive community life.

Our law says that land and sea are one connected whole – Djalkiripuyngu country. Yet when land rights came, it did not give us the power to protect our sea country properly. We saw many boats travelling through our sacred areas and taking our fish without recognising or compensating us. We decided to fight in court and in 2008 we won a famous victory in the High Court, recognising our right to protect our intertidal waters under the Land Rights Act. This, together with our first native title determination, gives us key foundations for a better future.



We Djalkiripuyngu work together with many partners and service providers from government, industry, and research to strengthen ourselves. The homeland corporation for Baniyala community, Baniyala Garrangali Aboriginal Corporation (BGAC) developed a partnership with the national science agency, CSIRO that has helped us to build DAC as a regional governance and enterprise development platform. CSIRO has also provided scientific advice to help us understand and prioritise our future industry options for Blue Mud Bay. The opportunities we highlight in this prospectus fit well together and make use of our unique country, homelands, and established public profile.

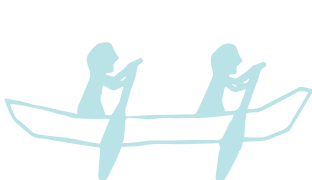


Blue Mud Bay



LEGEND

- Bays
- Roads
- 📍 Homeland communities
- 🌊 Rivers
- Land Rights and Native Title Information**
 - 🟡 Aboriginal land under Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act (ALRA) 1976
 - 🟢 Exclusive native title exists under the Native Title Act (1993) and land is also held under the ALRA (1976)
 - 🟠 Non-exclusive native title exists under the Native Title Act (1993)
- Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority Information**
 - 🟠 Extent of recorded site
 - 🔴 Extent of registered site
 - Recorded sacred site
 - Registered sacred site





Opportunity 1

Blue Mud Bay Fishing Tourism

Our country is a special part of Australia. We have by far the largest bay opening onto the Gulf of Carpentaria and it contains many islands of different sizes. This gives us diverse habitats for fish and other marine species. It also provides many options for boats to find shelter from the wind. Land access is only possible through Aboriginal land requiring a permit. Recreational boat travel is unusual because there are no major towns or ports close by. Commercial fishing is limited and the rights we won in the Blue Mud Bay case enable us to further control commercial fishing in the future. Our country is high-profile, distinctive, exclusive and pristine.

Through BGAC and with the support of Yirralka Rangers, Banyala has operated a seasonal recreational campground with beach boat launching facilities at Duluwuy for a number of years. Many campground users have been from the mining town of Nhulunbuy, 200km to the north. Duluwuy has given us important experience in organising tourists on our country and shown us that our country is valuable to fishing tourists. Yet camping does not provide high income and the mine is closing so we are not certain about future local demand. We want to make sure that we are getting the best long term value from our fishing resources.



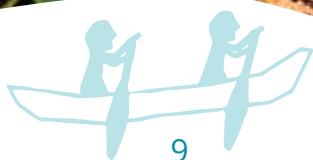


We organised fishing tourism industry research through a partnership between CSIRO, Tourism NT, and the Northern Land Council. We found that there is potential for high value Blue Mud Bay fishing experiences to suit both national and international customers. These new and valued visitors would need:

- fishing options suitable for different weather conditions
- good boats and maritime infrastructure
- guides trained in local information that interests fishing tourists
- appropriate accommodation
- access to special fishing zones

Using local knowledge of the area and its cultural authority, DAC has begun identifying and shortlisting coastal sites that can meet these requirements and identifying potential supporters of infrastructure development.

Guided by our partnership principles and market demand, we are open to different models for owning and operating a future fishing tourism business on our country. To take this opportunity to the next stage of development, DAC invites experienced fishing tourism investors, partners, and collaborators for further conversations.





Opportunity 2

Blue Mud Bay Trepang

DAC is prioritising coastal business ideas that fit well together rather than cross-cutting one another. The main fish species in the area are to be reserved for tourists and for our own use, but we have other valuable marine resources available. Trepang, known to us as darritpa, is a sea cucumber that drew Macassans to our coastlines for centuries before Europeans arrived. Now, the trepang business has been reborn for the 21st century.

Through a pioneering partnership with BGAC, Tasmanian Seafoods has successfully trialled trepang ranching in the waters around Baniyala. Young trepang produced elsewhere were placed in nearshore waters and once they had grown to commercial size, they were harvested with the support of Djalkiripuyngu labour. These animals are valuable in overseas markets and can create economic opportunities with far less impacts than occurs with commercial fishing like netting for barramundi. This successful BGAC-led trial supports a wider partnership between DAC and Tasmanian Seafoods to grow the trepang project further. We want to strengthen our current activity, open new areas for ranching and trial how to create the young trepang fingerlings locally.

We are looking for supporters to enable us to understand the sustainable limits of trepang ranching. We also want to gain skills as a trepang business partner. The support we need includes research and development, assistance with business and market knowledge, training, maritime infrastructure and road, air and internet connectivity.





Opportunity 3

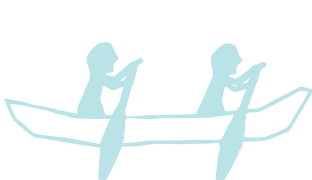
Blue Mud Bay Mud Crabs

Mud crabs are a small but commercially valuable fishery in the Northern Territory. Blue Mud Bay has been an important area for commercial operations in the past. Through the NLC, we have had agreements with mud crab fishery operators to permit land access, guide fishing effort, and support operator safety. These access agreements gave us the chance to talk directly with operators and learn how their industry worked.

In recent years, mud crab fishing has declined and the agreements stopped. The creation of DAC and of the Aboriginal Sea Company in Darwin as part of the Blue Mud Bay settlement gives us the chance to think again about the potential of mud crabs. We can fish for crabs for most of the year, can use simple equipment, and there is not much bycatch in the process. Our pristine river catchments and the currently limited pressure from other crab fishery operators in Blue Mud Bay give us further advantages. A good crab operation will not affect the other marine and coastal resource uses we are prioritising.

From the industry side, mud crabs have good market value in Australia and internationally, with demand usually exceeding supply. Importing crabs from overseas is not allowed and crab aquaculture is not extensive in Australia. This makes the existing wild crabs rarer and more valuable. The Blue Mud Bay name and location may allow for a branded commercial product of higher value that can assist a business operating in a remote area.

Future DAC mud crab and trepang activities may benefit from planning common infrastructure. DAC seeks partners in investigating and supporting our long term participation in the mud crab fishery and how it could fit together with other projects.





Opportunity 4

Keeping country healthy

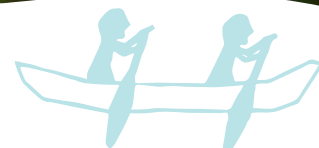
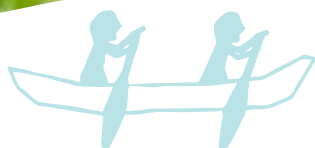
We have sustainably managed our country for many, many generations. Our landscapes and our management actions are important for problems like climate change and maintaining biodiversity. In recent times, governments have supported our work through Indigenous ranger programs and Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA). Now, new forms of accounting like natural capital, ecosystem services, and environmental economic accounting can make our contribution more easy to see and value.

Over 20 years ago, Blue Mud Bay people started the Yirralka Ranger program. The Laynhapuy IPA was declared soon after and the rapid growth of the program provided welcome employment and land management opportunities. The changes to program leadership and consultation structures that were needed to properly manage this growth were delayed until mid-2020, following the formation of DAC. These changes enabled Yirralka Rangers to continue to be supported in providing land and sea management services for our country.

As the native title holder for Djalkiripuyngu country, DAC expects to play a key role in governance oversight of Indigenous ranger activities in the future. It is looking for partners and collaborators to assist it with this journey.

In partnership with current providers, DAC seeks the further development of Blue Mud Bay rangers, including through a dedicated coastal and sea ranger program. This program will need additional resources and needs to complement wider DAC activities and objectives.

DAC also seeks partners and collaborators with experience in the new environmental accounting systems that can showcase the unique role that Traditional Owners play. This may provide new income streams for native title holders.





Opportunity 5

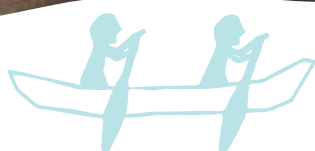
Culture on country

Our culture has given us our most successful existing industry – Djalkiripuyngu art. Our people produce most of the art that supports the internationally famous Buku Larrnggay Mulka Arts Centre, and our work hangs in galleries all over the world. The Centre is a crucially successful business for the Yolngu regional economy.

Art comes from the country, and we want to make it easier for artists to produce their art in homelands. We also want to assist those people who appreciate our art to see it being produced in the places that it comes from. Taking these two steps will increase the overall benefits to our homelands that come from us creating art and from others appreciating it.

BGAC is building an art studio at Baniyala from 2025 to provide a comfortable place for art to be produced, and for national and international tourists to come and see it being produced. The project is designed to add additional services and bring additional value to the region, not to redirect existing resources away from Buku Larrnggay Mulka Arts Centre.

BGAC's trial of this model at Baniyala will provide DAC with guidance about high-value cultural tourism to Blue Mud Bay. This includes what such tourism can offer, as well as what it requires of local people and communities. Early experience of the Baniyala art studio will also help DAC understand how art production aligned with cultural tourism may be done in other Djalkiripuyngu homelands. DAC seeks partners and collaborators to grow art and cultural tourism in our Blue Mud Bay homelands





Building strength and managing risk

DAC has a good governance structure and growing strength to implement future plans. Our PBC status gives us further powers to act and creates another pathway for key government relationships. It also gives us direct access to financial and other resources available to native title organisations across Australia. We are the first organisation in Arnhem Land to hold major native title rights. This makes us special.

We have decided on our five partnership and investment opportunities after consulting industry experts. These opportunities are at different stages and can move at different speeds. This is a further way in which they can fit together. We are open to diverse models of partnership and investment guided by professional legal and commercial advice. We will choose the model that best fits that opportunity. Managing risk is very important in building a sustainable future. We are excited about our opportunity, but have learned to be patient, trial different options at smaller scales, and go step by step.

The opportunities we identify will both need and enable important infrastructure changes. This includes housing and road, air, maritime, and digital connectivity. Our Local Decision Making Agreement with the Northern Territory Government guides and supports this new infrastructure investment.

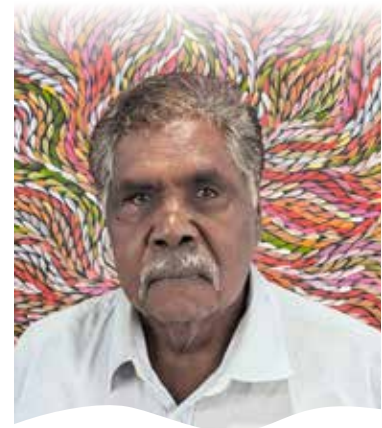




Joining Our Journey

“As an elder of this country, I welcome you to join us in building for the future of this country. We have an important role to play for our young people and for all of Australia.”

— Djambawa Marawili



Blue Mud Bay has many exciting assets and opportunities. Supported by our existing partners, we have mapped out some key options to help us navigate the path ahead. We have already taken some important steps to strengthen ourselves and become a good partner. We invite you to come and talk with us about how we can work together for a common future.

Disclaimer

The information in this document is general in nature and not exhaustive; is not intended to be professional or other advice (including legal, financial, financial product advice, or otherwise); and must not be relied upon as a basis for taking or not taking any particular action. The project partners DAC, BGAC, and CSIRO give no warranty or make any representation as to the completeness or accuracy of the information contained in or in connection with this document, and to the extent permitted by law, neither they nor any of their officers, employees, contractors or advisers will in any way be liable to any person or body for any loss, damage, cost and expense of any nature, howsoever caused (including by negligence) arising in any way out of or in connection with this guide. You must seek your own professional advice and undertake your own enquiries and satisfy yourself in respect of all matters contained in this report. Further information and qualifications on how this guide was developed is available from DAC and CSIRO.





Blue Mud Bay people are ready to partner

Are you ready to join our journey?

Contact Details

Djalkiripuyngu Aboriginal Corporation

PO Box 454 Nhulunbuy NT 0881

Email: Djalkiripuyngu@gmail.com

Website: www.djalkiripuyngu.au



Australian Government
National Indigenous
Australians Agency



NIAA

Citation information

Djalkiripuyngu Aboriginal Corporation, 2024. Building business in Blue Mud Bay: 'Investment partnerships with Traditional Owners through the Djalkiripuyngu Aboriginal Corporation.' 16 pages

Copyright and holders of copyright releases: Djalkiripuyngu Aboriginal Corporation 2024

This guide is based on research partnerships with Indigenous Traditional Owners and custodians who keep ownership and copyright over their shared information. They have given their consent for this document to be publicly released under a Creative Commons Attribution – NonCommercial- NoDerivatives Licence 4.0 Australia. This means people can share the information provided they do not use it commercially, and they acknowledge the source. If they mix, transform or change the material, it cannot be shared with others. This guide is licensed by DAC for use under a Creative Commons Attribution – Non-Commercial-No Derivatives Licence 4.0 Australia.

