



**Yamatji Marlpa**  
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION  
ICN 2001



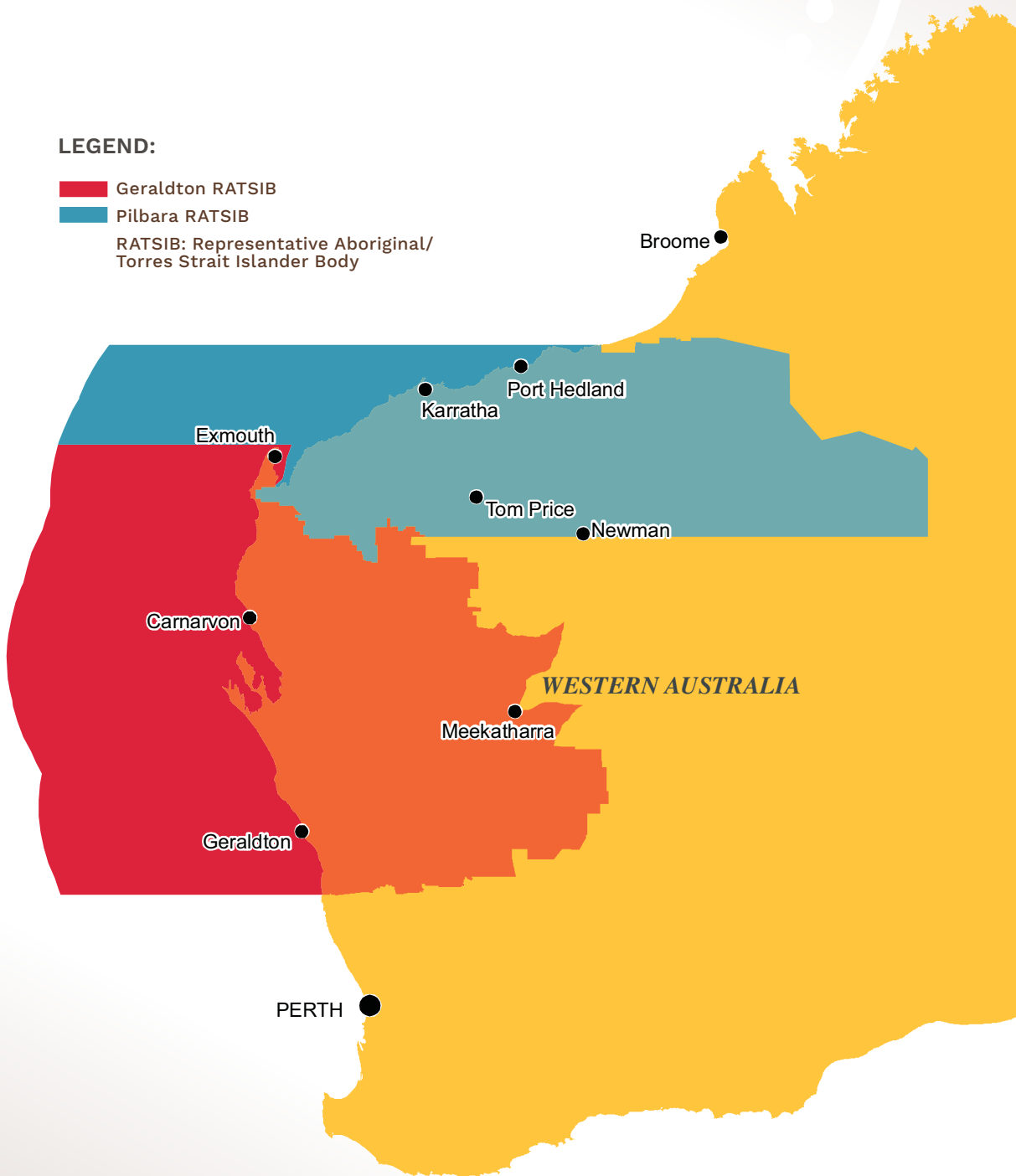
# Strategic Plan 2026–2030



# YMAC REPRESENTATIVE AREAS

## LEGEND:

- Geraldton RATSIB
  - Pilbara RATSIB
- RATSIB: Representative Aboriginal/  
Torres Strait Islander Body



Under the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), the Commonwealth Government recognises representative organisations for specific regions, referred to as “Representative Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander Body (RATSIB) areas”. YMAC is the Native Title Representative Body (NTRB) for the “Geraldton RATSIB area” (our Yamatji region: Mid West, Gascoyne, Murchison), and the “Pilbara RATSIB area” (our Marlpa region: Pilbara).

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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Country is our mother, the provider and keeper of our cultural belongings.

**Culture and Country go together.**

You can't have one without the other.

Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians throughout Western Australia, and on whose Country we work.

We acknowledge and respect their deep connection to their lands and waterways. We honour and pay respect to Elders, and to their ancestors who survived and cared for Country. Our offices are located on Whadjuk Country, Southern Yamatji Country, Kariyarra Country, and Yawuru Country.

We recognise the continuing culture, traditions, stories and living cultures on these lands and commit to building a brighter future together.

# ABOUT THE ARTWORK

**We hope you enjoy the beautiful digital artwork - *Our Ancestors, Our Country* - created by artist Nicole Dickerson to celebrate YMAC's vision for 2026-2030 - featured on the front cover and throughout this plan.**

Nicole is a Yamaji Woman from Geraldton, Western Australia with connections to the Amangu, Naaguja, Wilunyu and Ngarluma People.

In creating this work, Nicole shared with YMAC the following Artist Statement:

*As the sun rises, the light of the new day is present as it warms the Country, from the Midwest to the Pilbara.*

*The enriched soil heals our people, from the sky, to the oceans, as the rains fall the water runs to the rivers, to the waterholes, as the water flows on country, the rivers connect to the sea, the day turns to night & the sky shows the stars, with stories of the past, our sky & stars connect the past, present, paving the way for the future, there is a connection to Country, you can feel from our ancestors, stories of Our Mother Earth, Our Country are important for our people.*

Within Nicole's artwork, four elements resonate with the four pillars of our *Strategic Plan 2026–2030*. Nicole has shared further insights into these on the pages describing our strategic pillars.



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## A note on terminology

Please note that, for simplicity, YMAC uses the term 'PBC' in this plan to refer to both Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs) and Registered Native Title Bodies Corporate (RNTBCs), in line with terminology regularly used in the native title sector.

## Image caution

Please be advised, this publication may contain the names, images and words of deceased persons. YMAC sincerely apologises for any distress this may cause.







Ngarlawangga Country

# MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

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We are proud to present the Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC) *Strategic Plan 2026–2030*. This plan reflects the voices, aspirations, and leadership of our members, Traditional Owners, and communities across the Yamatji and Pilbara (Marlpa) regions of Western Australia. It also reflects the views and aspirations of our staff and external stakeholders and builds upon three decades of hard work, resilience and advocacy for recognition, rights and responsibilities – and sets a strong direction for the years ahead.

The process to develop this plan has been shaped by listening. Through workshops, on-Country gatherings consultations, staff workshops, Regional Committee and Board reflections, we have ensured that the priorities in this Plan are directly informed by the lived experiences, cultural authority and aspirations of the First Nations’ people we serve as Co-Chairs of the YMAC Board of Directors.

Our strategic plan is anchored by four key pillars that represent our efforts to respond to the complex and evolving landscape we operate in – from native title and cultural heritage to climate change, economic empowerment and systemic reform. As a Board of Directors, we know that this new strategic plan is calling for us to show courage for new ways of working, for increased collaboration and positive, purposeful action. We are committed to walking alongside Traditional Owners, Prescribed Bodies Corporate (PBCs), and our many stakeholders to uphold our shared responsibilities to Country, culture and community.

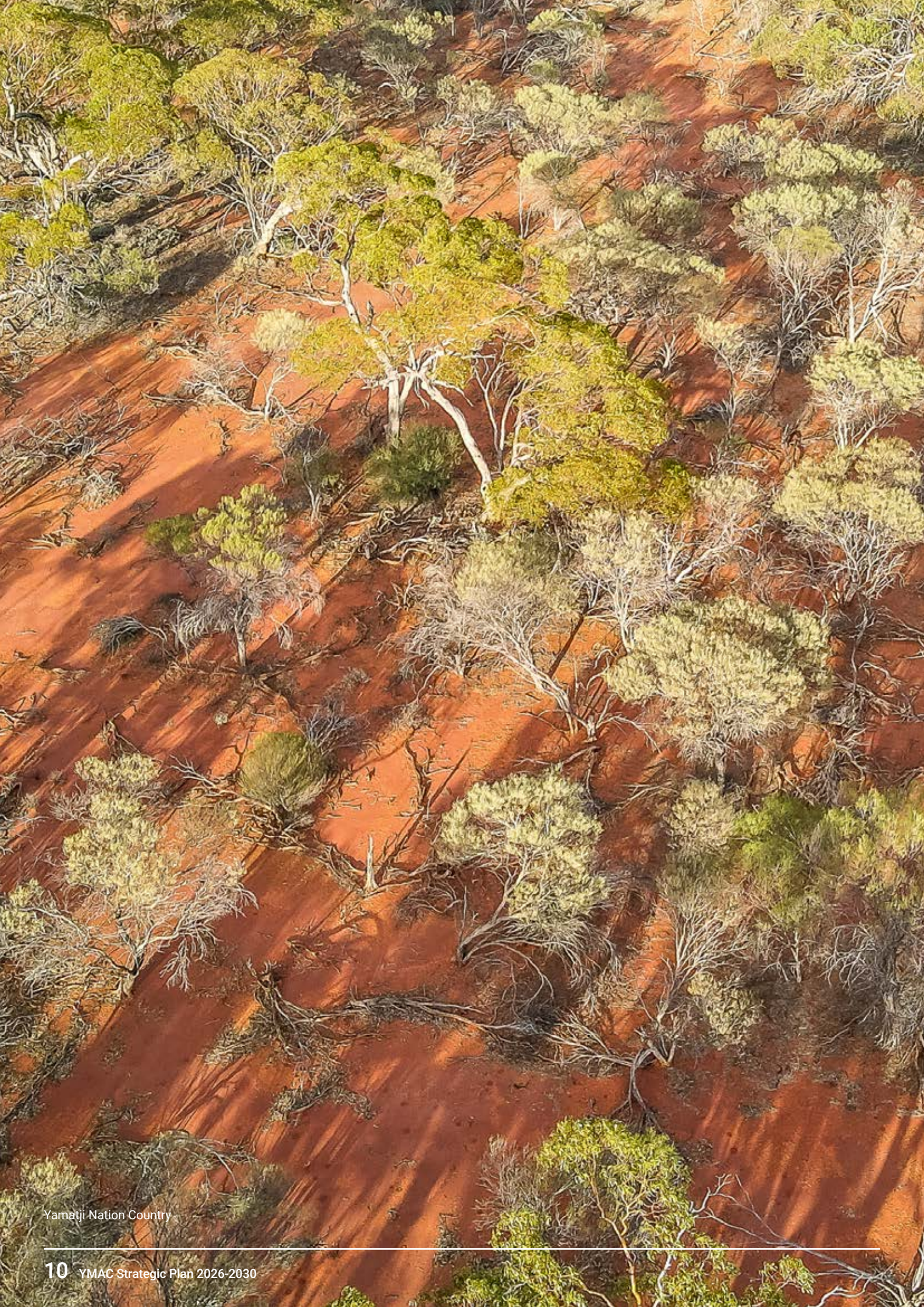
And finally, as Co-Chairs, we express our deep gratitude to our members, our CEO and staff, and all partners who have contributed to shaping this plan. It is a living document and one that will guide our efforts over the next five years, so that YMAC continues to deliver meaningful outcomes now and into the future.

In strength and solidarity,

**Natalie Parker**  
Co-Chairperson  
Pilbara Region

**Peter Windie**  
Co-Chairperson  
Yamatji Region



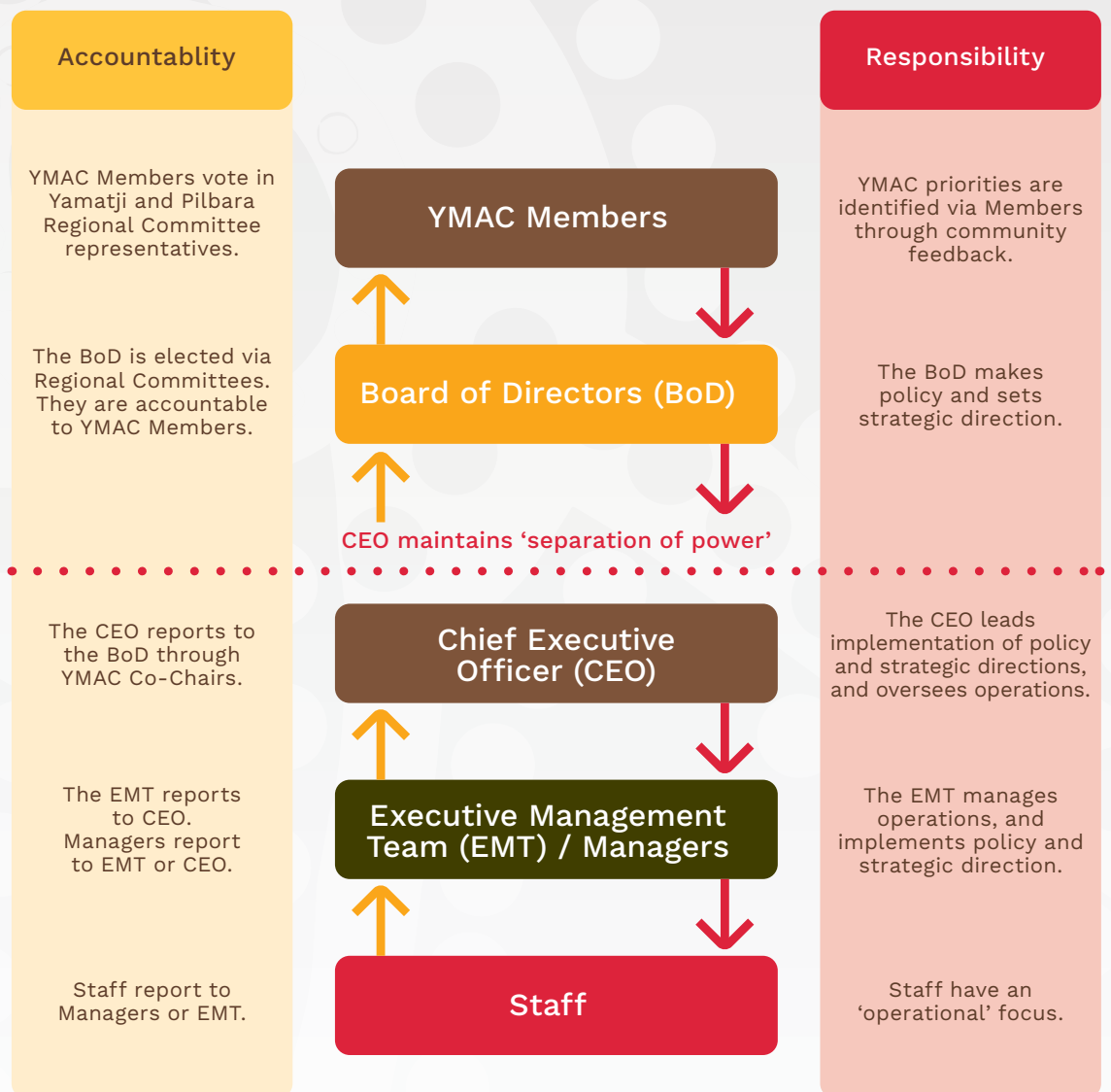


# INTRODUCTION

**YMAC's Strategic Plan 2026–2030 outlines our vision for the future – and the areas of focus we commit to – to deliver the best possible services, support and outcomes to our Members, clients, PBCs, Traditional Owner groups and many stakeholders.**

Our Board of Directors represent YMAC's Members. They provide the overarching guidance to all of YMAC's work across our representative regions.

Additional to being accountable to our members, YMAC as a Native Title Representative Body (NTRB) has specific functions and responsibilities under the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)* (NTA) towards native title clients and PBCs, alongside regular reporting requirements to the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). As an Aboriginal corporation, YMAC also has governance and reporting requirements under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act (CATSI Act)*.



# OUR 2026-2030 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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## The Core of YMAC is COUNTRY.

YMAC knows that, for the First Nations peoples we support, Country and Culture underpins everything that we do:

Country is our mother, our provider and keeper of our cultural belongings.

### **Culture and Country go together.**

You can't have one without the other.

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## **Our VISION**

Protecting Country, language and culture, we come together as one, united and strong.

## **Our PURPOSE**

Walking together we champion rights, Country, language, and culture; provide education and awareness and create opportunities for a better tomorrow for First Nations peoples.

## **Our VALUES**

Our values drive the way YMAC members and staff want to, and are expected to, work and behave. We commit to these values in all that we do. They provide clarity on what behaviour is okay and acceptable, and what behaviour is not okay and unacceptable.

**JUSTICE** is our foundation. We advocate for truth telling, self-determination, empowerment, fairness, and equity for all.

**RESPECT AND UNDERSTANDING** is important. We are culturally responsive, listen deeply, seek to understand, value diverse perspectives, show empathy, and treat all with dignity and kindness.

Through **COLLABORATION**, we combine experience, knowledge and expertise, forming partnerships and building relationships to achieve our purpose.

We work with **INTEGRITY**, which means we are transparent, ethical, and courageous.

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# OUR STRATEGIC PILLARS

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These four Strategic Pillars - and the Priority Focus Areas for each of them described on the following pages - will guide YMAC's business and operational planning and work from 2026 through to 2030.

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## **RECOGNITION, RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITY**

Strengthening native title, cultural authority, and accountability.

## **ADVOCACY and REFORM**

Influencing systems to be more just, inclusive, and responsive to First Nations knowledge and leadership.

## **SUSTAINABILITY and RESILIENCE**

Supporting strong, culturally grounded communities and organisations for generations to come.

## **DIVERSIFICATION and GROWTH**

Building a future that is innovative, financially sustainable, and driven by First Nations opportunity.



Nanda Country

# RECOGNITION, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITY

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**The strategic pillar of Recognition, Rights and Responsibility is fundamental, and upholds YMAC's commitment to First Nations communities, Country and culture.**

Recognition acknowledges the rights of Traditional Owners to self-determination and cultural autonomy, and to manage and care for Country. It serves as a basis for nurturing and maintaining respectful partnerships and meaningful collaborations based on mutual understanding and trust.

Rights advocacy empowers First Nations communities by advocating for legal, political, and social rights that safeguard cultural identities and promote equitable opportunities, and responsibility underscores YMAC's obligation to uphold these, ensuring accountability in our service provision, engagement and initiatives.

By embedding recognition, rights, and responsibility into our strategic framework, YMAC reaffirms its NTRB role as a dedicated advocate and partner in native title and related interests, protecting Country, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting sustainable development for future generations.

**Our priority focus areas for Recognition, Rights and Responsibility are:**

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## 1.1

### **Obtain and advance legal and cultural recognition**

As an ongoing area of focus, support recognition through native title and compensation claims, treaty and other forms of recognition; promoting the cultural authority of post-determination groups in decision-making processes, in both legal frameworks and in broader public understanding.

## 1.2

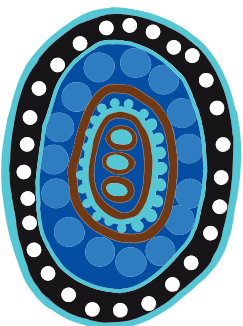
### **Support the role and authority of PBCs and cultural governance bodies**

As an ongoing area of focus, ensure that PBCs and other related Traditional Owner-led entities are recognised and empowered as key decision-makers and cultural authorities in land and sea management, future acts and development negotiations, and cultural heritage management.

## 1.3

### **Strengthen the defining and exercising of cultural responsibilities**

As an ongoing area of focus and growth, support Traditional Owners, Common Law Holders, and PBCs in communicating and exercising their native title and cultural obligations to Country, including through cultural governance models, return of materials processes, supported return-to-Country programs, cultural mapping, and land access for ceremony, law, and lore .



**Artist statement: Waterholes, rivers, water on Country**

*These are our water places – where life starts, where stories live. They connect us to Country and to each other. We care for these places as our people before us, water is healing & life.*

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## 1.4

### **Uphold and strengthen rights through advocating for accountability and reform**

As an ongoing area of focus, hold governments, future act proponents and corporate partners accountable for acknowledging and respecting native title rights, cultural heritage responsibilities, and free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) in all dealings, particularly in agreement making.

## 1.5

### **Expand knowledge and expertise in recognition and rights management**

As an ongoing area of focus and growth, through information-sharing, transparency, education and training, building networks and strategic projects, ensure our staff are equipped to deliver informed and appropriate services and support; and that the people and groups we work with are empowered to effectively exercise, manage and leverage their legal rights and responsibilities.

# ADVOCACY AND REFORM

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**Advocacy and Reform emerge as key strategies to drive positive change and equitable outcomes for YMAC's members, Traditional Owners, and First Nations peoples and communities more broadly. Advocacy amplifies voices, advocating for policies and practices that uphold First Nations rights, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. It serves as a catalyst for reform, challenging systemic barriers and fostering inclusive governance frameworks.**

By prioritising advocacy and reform in both the law and the ways in which governments work, YMAC champions justice and equity, striving to create a future where First Nations voices are heard, respected, and integral to decision-making processes. Where possible, we will form alliances and collaborate with others to maximise impact.

The priority focus areas that will underpin our approach in Advocacy and Reform are:

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## 2.1

### Strengthen cultural heritage protection and legal empowerment

As an ongoing area of focus, monitor the intersection of native title rights with State and Federal heritage and other laws to drive reform of legislation, regulations, policies and frameworks to ensure Traditional Owners and Common Law Holders have enforceable, decision-making rights regarding cultural heritage - with cultural and spiritual significance embedded into those processes.

## 2.2

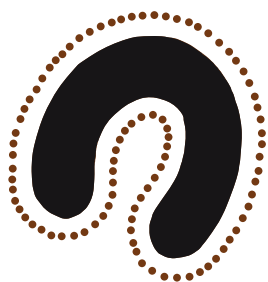
### Drive recognition of cultural authority in planning and system reform

As an ongoing area of focus and growth, advocate for systems respecting and embedding customary law, language, and intergenerational cultural knowledge as foundational to identity and rights - including in native title, cultural heritage, environmental, development, and resource extraction laws, as well as government policies and in land and sea management contexts. This embeds self-determined decision-making and cultural authority as essential elements in assessing impacts to Country and culture and ensures ongoing recognition of customary law/lore and cultural knowledge.

## 2.3

### Champion First Nations leadership in national and regional reforms

As an ongoing area of focus, amplify First Nations voices through activity such as forums, on-Country meetings and calls to action addressing State and national policy agendas, ensuring reforms reflect lived realities and cultural authority, and are relevant to community in our Yamatji and Marlpa (Pilbara) regions.



**Artist statement: People meeting on Country, coming together**

*This element represents our people coming together on Country – for traditions, for decisions, for sharing knowledge. These places are where voices are heard, and where change starts, it's a respect of each other.*

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## 2.4

### **Extend and expand land and water rights**

As a new area of focus, advocate for policy and legal reforms that extend and expand Traditional Owner rights over land and waters, including through environmental management, tenure reform, cultural water rights, joint management, and equitable involvement in carbon, biodiversity, and renewable energy initiatives.

## 2.5

### **Promote recognition of First Nations-led governance**

As a developing area of focus, advocate for resourcing, and support the development of capacity, capability building, and investment opportunities for community-controlled governance structures, including for PBCs and regional alliances.

## 2.6

### **Empower communities through challenging structural unfairness and inequity**

As an ongoing area of focus and growth, actively challenge racism, disempowerment, and the exclusion of First Nations peoples from relevant statutory/legal processes. Support capacity-building, community representation, and informed consent in all future acts and negotiations, and through First Nations representation and advocacy in social policy areas across government to achieve long-term benefits and deliver on outcomes that impact Country, language, culture, and social and community wellbeing.

## 2.7

### **Drive public awareness and evidence-based advocacy on First Nations-led land and sea management**

As an ongoing area of focus and growth, elevate and strengthen First Nations land and sea management demonstrating the social, cultural, and environmental benefits to be gained through elevating this kind of approach to stakeholders and the general public.

## 2.8

### **Grow stakeholder knowledge and understanding of native title**

As a new area of focus, create opportunities to expand the knowledge base and understanding of those stakeholders engaging with Traditional Owners on native title and related matters.

# SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

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**The strategic pillar of Sustainability and Resilience will hold YMAC and the groups we work with in good stead for long-term success and positive community impact.**

Prioritising sustainability ensures that what we do – and how we do it – will uphold environmental, social, and cultural values, and inform the way we work to support the communities we serve. It will also mean we can meet current needs and strengthen future generations.

By building resilience into our approach YMAC can successfully navigate future challenges; adapting and maintaining our approach to reach the best possible outcomes for our members, clients and their communities.

**This pillar will drive operational planning for Sustainability and Resilience in the following priority focus areas:**

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## 3.1

### **Support First Nations-led sustainable economic development**

As an ongoing area of focus and growth, support PBCs and associated Traditional Owner entities to identify and grow sustainable business opportunities that align with cultural values and contribute to long-term economic independence.

## 3.2

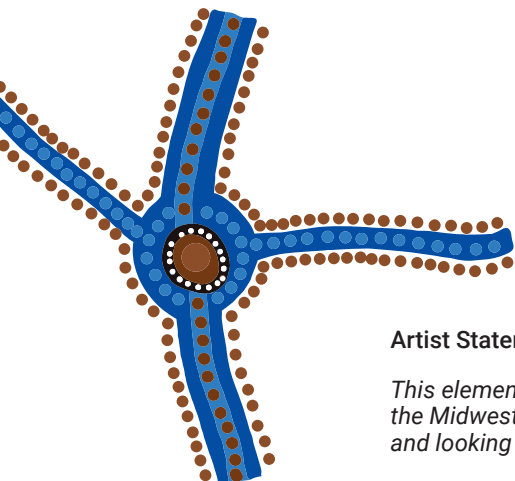
### **Support to strengthen governance and long-term capacity**

As an ongoing area of focus and growth, invest in governance training, succession planning, and organisational systems to ensure the resilience of PBCs and associated Traditional Owner entities beyond initial determination, with a focus on local leadership and community control.

## 3.3

### **Promote cultural resilience through cultural practise and connection**

As an ongoing area of focus and growth, support and advocate for initiatives that maintain and renew cultural practices tied to Country, language and culture, recognising these as key pillars of identity, wellbeing and other associated social, cultural, and environmental considerations.



**Artist Statement: Connection locations from Midwest to Pilbara**

*This element shows the old pathways – how we move through Country, from the Midwest to the Pilbara. It's about staying connected, sharing knowledge, and looking after each other and the land.*

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## 3.4

### **Advocate for continued support and capacity-building for land and sea management**

As an ongoing area of focus, push for stable, long-term investment in initiatives recognising, empowering, and resourcing Traditional Owners as primary custodians of land and sea Country, such as ranger programs, heritage protection, environmental and climate resilience projects.

## 3.5

### **Deliver strategies supporting sustainable development, climate adaptation and environmental protection**

As a new area of focus, work with PBCs and their communities to develop new climate strategies informed by cultural knowledge and connection to Country. Advocate for PBC leadership in shaping local and regional planning and development, and responses to climate impacts, biodiversity loss, and water security. This includes the areas of water access and management, cultural heritage protection, and cumulative impact assessment through policy influence and agreement-making processes.

# DIVERSIFICATION AND GROWTH

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**To remain relevant and contemporary in a rapidly changing native title landscape, YMAC recognises the need to draw on our expertise as a sound foundation for continued innovation, Diversification and Growth.**

Diversification of YMAC’s services and programs will build capacity to adapt to changing environments and reduce dependency on existing revenue streams and focus areas. It will encourage innovation, enable the exploration of new opportunities, and work to reduce risks associated with over-reliance on specific funding, sectors, or resources.

Through this approach YMAC can expand our impact, reach, and effectiveness of services offered to First Nations peoples, while ensuring our foundations and resource base remains strong.

**Priority focus areas under this strategic pillar to support YMAC to achieve Diversification and Growth are:**

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## 4.1

### **Develop and scale capacity-building programs for First Nations enterprises**

As a new area of focus, support business development, governance, and economic literacy to First Nations groups and individuals to incubate and grow First Nations-led enterprises that leverage native title rights and connection to Country, language and culture.

## 4.2

### **Support and strengthen commercial partnerships**

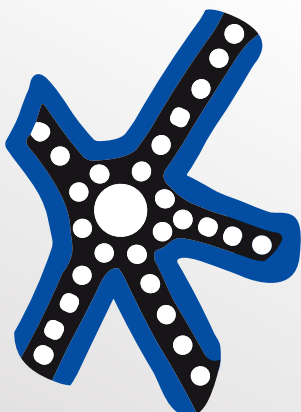
As an ongoing area of focus and growth, facilitate joint ventures and partnership models where First Nations peoples retain equity, intellectual property, and decision-making power to achieve economic outcomes through connection to Country, particularly in resource, land development, tourism, and broader environmental services sectors.

## 4.3

### **Pursue strategic investment in people, property, infrastructure, and technology**

As a refreshed area of focus, identify opportunities for investments that diversify income sources for YMAC, for our clients and for our subsidiaries across a range of areas, including (but not limited to) office facilities, co-working hubs, or digital platforms that support service delivery and/or create new revenue streams.

To achieve this, YMAC will continue to strategically invest in their people, supporting YMAC in achieving their aims.



**Artist Statement: Sky Stars**

*The stars guide us. They're our ancestors, our stories, and how we find our way. Each one is part of something bigger – connected, like our communities.*

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## 4.4

### **Position YMAC as a regional leader in innovation for Country, language, and culture**

As a new area of focus, establish pilot projects and innovation hubs (e.g. climate resilience labs, cultural technology initiatives, social procurement models) that explore new ways of achieving self-determination and intergenerational wealth for First Nations peoples.

## 4.5

### **Expand fee-for-service offerings**

As an ongoing area of focus and growth, expand fee for-service activity to offer culturally grounded expertise to industry, government, and other stakeholders that will improve their knowledge and engagement with First Nations peoples. This provision of knowledge and expertise would need to ensure cultural data sovereignty and protection of intellectual property (IP) and be undertaken with FPIC.

## 4.6

### **Enhance existing services through drawing on our deep knowledge base**

Where appropriate, explore how we draw on data and research, and other in-house knowledge to value-add to our work with PBCs and related entities across the areas of heritage, research, mapping, tenure analysis, membership, client support, and other areas. This provision of knowledge and expertise would need to ensure cultural data sovereignty and protection of IP and be undertaken with FPIC.

# IMPLEMENTATION

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**YMAC's BoD provide regular feedback and receive regular updates on both the planning and implementation of YMAC's work.**

This strategic plan will inform annual business planning for teams across YMAC, as well as operational plans linked to our responsibilities to the Commonwealth Government through our status as a NTRB. These plans include key performance indicators and are reviewed and endorsed annually by both the EMT and the BoD.

To further support strong outcomes, our annual business plans also address the administrative and operational needs of both staff and clients.

Progress and key achievements against the four strategic pillars will be shared with YMAC Members, PBCs and others in various ways, including annual reports sent to all YMAC members and PBCs, and available on our website.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BoD	YMAC's Board of Directors
CATSI Act (Cth)	<i>Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006</i>
CEO	YMAC's Chief Executive Officer
EMT	YMAC's Executive Management Team
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
IP	Intellectual Property
NTRB	Native Title Representative Body
NTA	<i>Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)</i>
NIAA	National Indigenous Australians Agency
PBC	Prescribed Body Corporate
PBCs	Prescribed Bodies Corporate
RATSIB	Representative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Body
State	State Government of Western Australia
YMAC	Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation

Images contained within this document are taken by José Kalpers and Jacob Loughridge.





**Yamatji Marlpa**  
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION



**YMAC has offices located in Perth, Geraldton, Hedland and Broome**

Head Office: Level 8, 12 The Esplanade, Perth WA 6000

PO Box 3072, 249 Hay Street, Perth WA 6892

Freecall: 1800 270 709 [ymac.org.au](http://ymac.org.au)

country  
**culture**  
people  
**future**

