



## Climate change is here – Martuwarra Fitzroy River flood



Wildlife and cattle cling to the damaged bridge in Fitzroy Crossing as floodwaters reach 15.8m. Photo: Andrea Myers

Insert left: Wallabies seeking refuge from rising flood waters. Photo: Natalie Davey. Insert right: Floodwaters more than halfway up the door. Photo: Natalie Davey

**In January the wet season kicked in hard here in the Kimberley. Ex-tropical cyclone Ellie came inland and dumped massive quantities of water across the region. The Martuwarra Fitzroy River catchment copped a lot of it, which led to record-breaking floods; the river reached 15.8 metres in Fitzroy Crossing.**

Reported as the most devastating flood in WA's history, it destroyed homes and belongings, displaced hundreds of people, killed and injured many animals and obliterated infrastructure. The recovery will take years; the costs will be in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Fitzroy Crossing community came together, making sure no one was injured or died in the catastrophic flooding. Months on and the community is still feeling the devastating impact. Mould has made many homes unliveable, and people are still having difficulty accessing services across the river.

Both State and Federal Governments have known for years that this kind of extreme rainfall event would come with climate change.

In 2021, the McGowan Government put out its 'WA Climate Projections Report', based on the Climate Change in Australia projections produced by the CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology in 2015, saying, 'There is high confidence that the intensity of heavy rainfall events will increase' in the Kimberley and elsewhere in northern Australia.

There is now a global consensus that extreme weather events like the January Kimberley floods are happening because we

are continuing to extract and burn fossil fuels as if there were no tomorrow, and future generations don't matter.

The CSIRO and BoM have modelled temperatures in the Kimberley to 2090 under different fossil-fuel emissions policies. Fitzroy Crossing is already on a par with the hottest habitable places on Earth, with an average 67.8 days over 40°C a year. By 2090, under current emissions policies, the town will experience 225 days a year over 40°C. The Traditional Owners of the central Kimberley, after thousands of years of occupation, will find it very hard to continue to live there. The Albanese and McGowan Governments know this. Despite this knowledge, Premier McGowan and State Development Minister Roger Cook are supporting fracking, one of the dirtiest, most emissions-intensive industries in the world.

The Albanese Government's 'Safeguard Mechanism' potentially opens the Kimberley to gas fracking destruction, a climate change refugee exodus and a disaster for nature.

**We call on both levels of government to support a recovery led by local people and ban fracking in the Kimberley.**

**Martin Pritchard**





# Report from the Acting Chair

**Craig Phillips**

**What a crazy start to the year. It is generally a quiet time with many members of the Board and staff away on holiday. Our beloved wet season rains started out normal and ended up being ominous and daunting for many communities across the Kimberley in the first week of January.**

Our Chairperson Natalie Davey experienced the full force of the flooding when her home in Fitzroy Crossing went under. Natalie, along with many others in her community, still cannot return home.

I chatted with Natalie, who said, 'This flood crisis highlights the need to act on climate change. We have a perfect opportunity here in Fitzroy Crossing to show how we need to adapt for living on Country in this climate change affected world.' Natalie has stepped back as Chair for the time being, to focus on flood recovery. She has asked me to act on her behalf and I look forward to Natalie being able to return full time as Chair, when she is ready.

I take comfort in the fact that former Chair Kate Golson is still on the Board and provides a wealth of knowledge and experience. Please check out EK's website to see more details on our Board and staff.

We welcome Andrew Batt, who took on the new role of CEO in January. Andrew's background is in finance and business management, and he has many years of experience in Australia and overseas.

As we welcomed Andrew, we also celebrated Martin Pritchard's 14 years as Director. Martin led us through many environmental challenges, including James Price Point, the growing pressure from the fracking industry and continued threat of development along the Martuwarra Fitzroy River.

We look forward to seeing Martin in his new role as the Director of Strategy, where he can put all of his energy into fighting the campaign battles ahead of us. Protection of the Martuwarra Fitzroy River is still a major focus, as well as the many large-scale fracking and land-clearing projects that threaten the Kimberley.

We have grown substantially in the past 14 years and I want to say a big thank-you to all the EK staff, especially Louise, Malcolm and Christine in their team-leader roles. The Kimberley Nature Project has continued to be our flagship and we are all proud of its progress.

The year ahead will be an exciting challenge for the Board. We urgently need to find bigger premises to house our growing team. We have exciting new plans for adding to our services, and we will continue to improve our organizational skills and procedures.

The flooding in Fitzroy Crossing and across our country shows that climate change is harming nature and communities now. Not enough is being done, and EK is committed to being a catalyst for real change. We are at the forefront of saving the nature of the Kimberley.

I hope you all find time this year to enjoy our beautiful natural environment.

Craig



## Staff

**CEO:** Andrew Batt

**Director of Strategy:** Martin Pritchard

**Kimberley Nature Project Managers:** Louise Beames and Malcolm Lindsay

**Kimberley Nature Project:** Matthew Macdonald, Danielle Bain, Hamsini Bijlani, Victoria de Bruyn, Ayesha Moss, Tessa Mossop, Kylie Weatherall, Sam Younis, Michelle Pyke, Fiona West, Tahnee Carter and Phil Docherty

**Finance:** Christine Elsasser

**Frack Free Kimberley:** Shaun Clark

**Communications, Media and Digital Fundraising:** Anomie

**Community Engagement, Fundraising and Events:** Eliza Arnold

## Board

**Chairperson:** Natalie Davey

**Deputy Chair:** Craig Phillips

**Secretary:** Alexis Harper

**Treasurer:** Laurel Sutcliffe

**Members:** Kate Golson, Carmel Leahy, Kat Taylor and Sally Wilkinson

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## Letters To The Editor

Environs Kimberley welcomes letters to the Editor. We accept comment and criticism, and print all letters that are not obscene, offensive or libellous. If you have a bone to pick, pick it with us.

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Thanks for helping us to protect the Kimberley environment



# Environs Kimberley has a new CEO

**We have transitioned from a volunteer organisation in 1996 to support Traditional Owners to protect the Martuwarra Fitzroy River from three dams, to a staff of 20 working on multiple projects and campaigns across the region. We recently entered an exciting new phase with a restructure and the creation of a Chief Executive Officer position.**

Maria Mann held the first Director position for 12 years, and Martin Pritchard recently celebrated 14 years as EK's second Director. Andrew Batt has been appointed as EK's first CEO, marking an exciting phase in our evolution.

The new CEO position increases EK's capacity, opening up more opportunities to protect the Kimberley.

Andrew comes from the corporate world, with a background as a consultant Chief Financial Officer and CEO with a strong environmental ethic.

Martin is now Director of Strategy, allowing him to focus on protecting the Kimberley's globally significant environment and landscapes from industrialisation.

Acting Chair Craig Phillips said: "These are exciting times for EK, giving us significantly increased capacity for our work to protect the Kimberley. After 14 years as Director, Martin has chosen to focus fully on advocacy and fundraising to protect the Kimberley's environment, which is under more threat than ever from the fossil-fuel and agribusiness industries."

"We've been very fortunate to be able to bring Andrew Batt on board, with his wealth of knowledge and skills in organisational and financial management and enterprise building, and a strong enthusiasm for environmental protection."

Of joining EK in the CEO role, Andrew says, "When I was growing up, the environment was an extremely meaningful part of life. I am honoured to be able to use

my broad professional knowledge base to support the great work EK has done for 26 plus years, and it is a rare chance to balance experience with a relevant, highly emotionally-connected organisation. To protect the nature of the Kimberley is a worthy purpose, and one that I am determined to live and breathe."

Director of Strategy Martin Pritchard said:

"It's been an incredible 14 years as the Director of EK. Along with campaign partners, Traditional Owners and the community, we've had some remarkable wins for conservation, thanks to all our dedicated staff, Board, volunteers and supporters. The support I've received has been inspiring, and I thank everyone for that. I'm also very happy that we've finally been able to implement a more sustainable structure, with a new CEO position. Andrew brings a range of new skills to EK and I look forward to working with him and the rest of the team to make sure the Kimberley's environment is protected and celebrated into the future."



Martin Pritchard and new CEO Andrew Batt. Photo: Damian Kelly

# CEO's Report

## Andrew Batt

**What an amazing first few months it has been in the newly created CEO role, thanks largely to the enthusiasm and generosity of the team.**

We have well and truly hit the ground running in 2023. Strategic planning has begun, managers participated in a two-day, face-to-face meeting in Perth, and we continue to work towards finding a property that can house us and the broader environmental community for many years to come. With such a strong culture in place, and values such as respect, integrity and cultural engagement embedded, it is a privilege to join the team. With the Kimberley being such a pristine part of the world, I am very pleased to be able to bring a complementary set of skills and experience to EK, and ensure we can work together to protect it.

At the same time, it has been confronting to hear first-hand experiences from the Fitzroy Valley after the devastating floods. With the increasing effects of climate change, these events seem to be happening with frightening regularity across the country. We wish the best for all communities affected as they move into the recovery phase and will do what we can to support them.

We continue to face the challenges of climate change, fracking, oil & gas, and big agribusiness, which have been present throughout the region since the EK adventure began.

It was once said, 'Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it'. Going back to the very first newsletters from early 1997, I was pleased to learn that membership forms were flowing in, and the founders found it 'heartening to know there are so many like-minded people out there'. I am encouraged that this is still true today, and mindful that we remain at heart a community organisation, and having engaged volunteers is key to our future success. It is inspiring to have met some of our long-term volunteers and supporters – we simply couldn't do what we do without you.

The Martuwarra Fitzroy River was under threat in '97 from damming, Traditional Owners weren't properly consulted by government and big business, and alternative development strategies were needed for the region. This regrettably remains true today.

Other things have certainly changed. The team has grown immensely and we no longer have 'an EK filing cabinet' in the Broome Library to store and share our information. As I review property options it occurs to me just how far EK has come.

Finally, a big shout-out to Martin, Louise, Mal and Christine. I am genuinely inspired to work with these strong, driven leaders, and while I am not at all trying to fill Martin's (very large) shoes, the fact that my role can free him up to drive campaigns, advocacy and strategy, is something I am very grateful for. Here's to protecting and preserving the Kimberley for many years to come.





## Between the Tides: Growing an intertidal community in Broome

Victoria De Bruyn

During the week of the February 21, Environs Kimberley's *Between the Tides* festival provided a busy four days for the Broome community to learn about, experience and celebrate the culturally and ecologically rich intertidal habitats of Broome.

The festival was presented in collaboration with WA Museum scientists, Traditional Owners, local artists and citizen scientists, and contained eleven events including:

- *Between the Tides: Discovering the Intertidal Marine Life of Broome* – public presentation by WA Museum scientists and traditional owners.
- *Identifying Broome's Invertebrate Life: the basics* – An introductory workshop looking into marine invertebrate taxonomy
- *Reef, Seagrass and Mangrove Walks* – with WA Museum scientists and local cultural experts exploring local intertidal habitats and the creatures that they sustain.
- *Between the Tides: Art and Photographic Exhibition* – an exhibition of local Broome artists portraying marine habitats and species
- *Marine Science in Schools* – WA Museum scientists and cultural experts providing two-way marine science learning in three Broome schools

Most events were over-subscribed, with more than three hundred people attending from all elements of the Broome community, including school students, science educators, Yawuru Traditional Owners, fishers, passionate citizen scientists, environmental managers and museum scientists.

Roebuck Bay and its habitats are globally significant, integral to Yawuru culture, and an important source of food, recreation and inspiration for the wider community. Even so, these habitats are under threat as a result of a growing population and climate change. It is essential that Broome people are aware of the importance of the Bay and know what we can do to ensure it continues to thrive.

'Between the Tides' developed out of EK's Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project, a citizen science project that has been monitoring the seagrass of Broome for 17 years. The purpose of the festival, besides informing people about the treasures of the intertidal zone, was to expand the Seagrass Monitoring Project.

This new project broadens the focus to include the mangrove, reef, beaches and mud-flat habitats as well as seagrass meadows, and will culminate in the production of an Intertidal ID Guide Book.

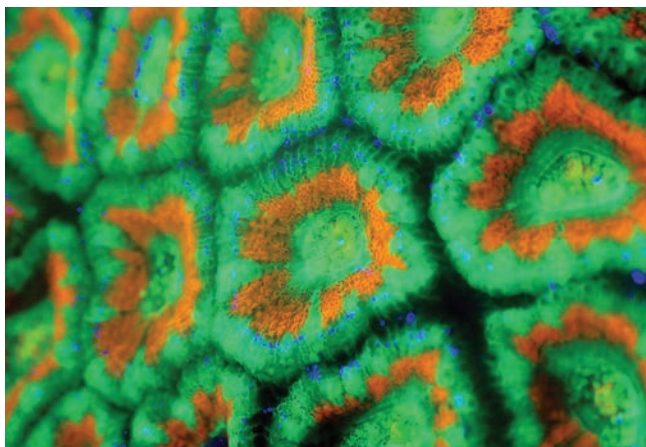
'Between the Tides' is funded by Coast West and supported by the WA Museum, the Mangrove Hotel, Tom Montgomery Art, Nyamba Buru Yawuru, the Broome Community Seagrass Monitoring Project, Narlijia Experiences Broome, the Roebuck Bay Working Group, the Department of Education's Two-Way Science project and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions.



Jed Bayley surrounded by Intertidal artwork by local artists Tom Montgomery and Cora Lou Bartholamue. Photo: Michael Torres



David Juskiewicz PhD student (Corals), Janelle Ritchie WAM Technical Officer (Fish), Corey S. Whisson Technical Officer (Molluscs). Photo: Michael Torres



One of the many fluorescing corals from Entrance Point Reef, *Acanthastrea* species. Photo: David Juskiewicz



## Ten years ago the community won the battle for Walmadany/ James Price Point

Martin Pritchard

Ten years ago, the world's oil and gas heavyweights including Woodside Energy, walked away from what would have been the largest gas refinery in the world. If the Barnett-Grylls government had its way, the refinery at Walmadany (James Price Point) would be belching out 50 million tonnes of climate-change-inducing carbon dioxide every year. The direct impact on the Kimberley coast would have been devastating.

According to the government and the Browse Joint Venture's own reports, 30km<sup>2</sup> of gas refineries would have covered in concrete a corridor of great botanical richness: ancient remnant rainforest containing bushfoods, and rare and endangered plants and animals. Despite this same area having been proposed in 1962 for a National Park, and having tremendous, well-documented cultural significance, the WA Premier Colin Barnett deemed it suitable for industrialisation. Traditional Custodians and knowledge holders, the Goolarabooloo and many other Aboriginal people stood defiant to defend this special place. The fight was taken to the courts and a camp was created to defend Country.

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Monsoon Vine Thicket - Threatened Ecological Community. Photo: Martin Pritchard

A port would have been cut into the sensitive dune system, and 50km<sup>2</sup> of surrounding ocean, brimming with sealife — fish, turtle, Dugong, Humpback Whales, corals, seagrasses — would, on the developers' own admission, have become a marine 'deadzone'. Oil from any spill would have reached Cable Beach in 10 days, according to modelling reports, and 30 billion litres of wastewater was to be pumped into the ocean every year. The refineries would have been the largest single source of poisonous benzene on the continent. According to Premier Barnett, it was just a 'pinprick' in the landscape, equivalent to 'one seat in the MCG stadium' on an 'unremarkable beach'.



Walmadany / James Price Point. Photo: Martin Pritchard

A government report from 2005, a blueprint for the industrial development of the whole Kimberley, put the case forward for gas refineries on the Dampier Peninsula. LNG could be exported to Asia. It would also:

- power an alumina refinery near Broome to process bauxite mined and shipped from the Mitchell Plateau, deep in the North Kimberley
- power a lead and zinc refinery, which would have been built, and the product exported through Broome
- Coal, uranium and other minerals would be mined and the Kimberley would become the next Pilbara.

Social impact assessments showed that the health and justice sectors were already at breaking point in Broome, yet the government admitted it couldn't prevent the expected 8,000 fly-in, fly-out (FIFO) workers from staying on in town at the end of their shifts. It also refused to commit to improving and expanding health and justice services in Broome. It seemed that all they wanted was the revenue.

It was clear that Broome was going to be transformed into a mining town.

The fear of the permanent residents, who loved Broome and the Kimberley, was palpable.

Then Broome community members, old and new, mobilised to defend the town and the region from industrialisation, and support piled in from around the globe. The campaign steadily grew to a crescendo in February 2013, when 20,000 people rallied at a concert in Fremantle. John Butler, Missy Higgins, Bob Brown and Scott Ludlam, who all have long-term connections to the Kimberley, spoke to the crowd.

The Broome community made its message to the government and Woodside clear at the March state election. The WA Greens won the popular vote resoundingly in Broome, as the only party to oppose the refineries outright. A month later, Woodside and its partners were gone.



Concert for the Kimberley 2013 - Fremantle. Photo Adam Monk





## Hot and Sweaty in Minyirr Park

Sam Younis

March 2023 was hot and sweaty for EK staff, the Yawuru Country Managers and DBCA staff as we worked together to monitor Broome's priority and threatened ecological communities in Minyirr Park. It was great to collaborate with other organisations to make the work not only more enjoyable but of a higher quality. Everyone who joined brought fresh eyes and different perspectives, sharing knowledge and skills with one another.

We were completing very detailed vegetation surveys to help us better understand how the Minyjuru (*pouteria sericea*), Gunurru (Cable Beach Ghost Gum) and Monsoon Vine Thicket (MVT) communities change and recover after they have been burnt by very hot, late-season fires. These surveys are being conducted around Australia, to help CSIRO better understand how fires are changing ecosystems across the diverse Australian environment.

Annika Spiridis, the Flora Conservation operations officer at Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), was one of two DBCA staff who came and helped out on the surveys this year.

*"These vegetation surveys were a great way to better understand the Threatened and Priority Ecological communities that occur in Minyirr Park. It was interesting to see the difference in floristics between the burnt and unburnt areas. Adriana tomentosa was very dense in the burnt sites, whereas in the unburnt sites it was hard to find. The list of species from previous years also suggested a change in floristics, with some species not reappearing this survey, whilst new ones were discovered this year."*

*Working with the country managers, Environs Kimberley and other botanists was also very valuable. We not only had a chance to talk and learn about the surveys and flora, but also discuss collaboration on future flora projects."*

Phil Docherty, SKIPA founder, was the perfect person to come and help out with plant surveys in Minyirr Park as he is a walking plant dictionary when it comes to local ecosystems. Having him around at the start of the project really helped everyone pay close attention to the different plants in the area.

*"It was surprising how quickly the burnt Gunurru quadrats have recovered, especially the Gubinge trees (Terminalia ferdinandiana). It was also really interesting to see seedling recruitment in this very wet, wet season, including Hakea macrocarpa and Terminalia ferdinandiana. I will be trying to avoid these quadrats next year as the old body struggles to get in, around and under old scratchy Acacia monticola."*



Gaydar (left) and Romaniah (right) Yawuru Country Managers, learning the new complicated point intercept transect methodology to collect percentage cover data. CSIRO will use this data to understand how our three ecological communities respond to hot fire. Photo: Sam Younis



DBCA botanist Annika (right) and Country Manager Monica (left) checking over a plant on the species check list. Photo: Sam Younis



Ayesha Moss (left) and Phil Docherty (right) completing surveys, with spectacular view of Cable Beach. Photo: Sam Younis

## Growing the EK Social Enterprise Project



L-R: Ayesha Moss, Henarlia Rex, Natasha George, Vivien Hunter, Tamara Moore, Tessa Mossop and Tahnee Carter at the 2-day business planning workshop at Ardyaloon in March.

We are pleased to welcome our newest EK staff member, Tahnee Carter, an addition to our Sustainable Communities team. Tahnee will be working as a Project Trainee, assisting with the delivery of the Social Enterprise Project. Tahnee has experience working as a Marine Ranger with the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. She is also a writer and a small business owner, bringing many skills to this new role. You can read more about Tahnee in her bio. Please join us in welcoming her to the EK Family!

Congratulations to Tessa Mossop, who has received a scholarship to complete a Diploma of Governance with the Institute of Community Directors. The scholarship, designed to support people working in remote and regional areas, will pay a portion of the course fee and allow Tessa to increase her capacity to support other organisations through EK's social enterprise, Nature Projects Australia.

The Social Enterprise project is funded by Lotterywest and enables EK to deliver and support the development of social enterprise. Some initiatives we are working on this year include:

- Developing a Kimberley community-led Wattleseed Collective – designed to sustainably collect seed, access markets, and provide financial returns to Aboriginal rangers and community members.

- Assisting the Bardi Jawi Rangers develop the Bardi Jawi Gaanyji – a social enterprise that collects, processes, and sells native seeds.
- Growing Nature Projects Australia – Environs Kimberley's social enterprise consulting arm offering not for profit consulting services to Aboriginal organisations in the Kimberley and across Australia.

Ayesha Moss, Tahnee Cater and Tessa Mossop of the Sustainable Communities team facilitated a workshop for the Bardi Jawi Oorany Rangers in Ardyaloon in March. Together they established fundamentals of the Bardi Jawi Gaanyji business plan, including values, objectives, governance, and marketing. Tahnee led a session on small business development based on her own experience, and it is clear she is already making a great contribution to the project and our team.







# Buru Energy's Bulldozer

Shaun Clark

Last year, Buru Energy submitted plans for a seismic survey approximately 80km south of Derby, near the culturally and environmentally significant Martuwarra Fitzroy River and Mangel Creek. The Bilby, Grey Falcon, and Brushtail Possum, which are on the Federal Threatened Fauna list, have been recorded close to the area proposed for survey.

The plans include a massive 438 hectares or 1197 lineal km of land clearing. Buru Energy claims it uses a 'raised blade' technique, causing less harm to the environment, but evidence shows that the technique does little to reduce the impacts of land clearing.

To date, Buru Energy has cleared over 15,000 lineal km for seismic surveys.

Buru Energy used the top photo in its submission to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act Co-design process. The bottom photo shows the actual impacts of Buru Energy seismic-line clearing using raised blade technique.



Seismic-line clearing using raised blade technique. Photo: Buru Energy



Did Buru forget to raise the blade? Buru Energy's seismic survey lines 44kms from Broome. Photo: Damian Kelly

To our astonishment, the EPA decided not to assess this proposal by Buru Energy and we have lodged a formal appeal against the EPA's decision. Buru Energy states that it intends to propose another seismic survey, which would entail a further 550ha of land clearing.

## Rafael gas – The Fracking Enabler

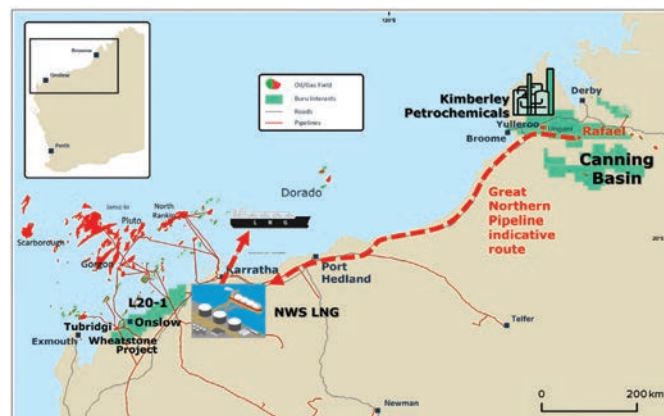
Buru Energy claims it has found a significant volume of gas and condensate (a type of light oil) at its Rafael well site close to Udialla and just south of Mangel Creek, which flows into the Martuwarra. Whilst this is not an unconventional gas find that would require fracking, exploiting it has the potential to cause significant environmental damage and could be an enabler to open up the Kimberley to large-scale oil and gas production that would include fracking.

In order to commercialise the gas, Buru Energy has slated the following options:

1. Build a pipeline to the Pilbara to supply gas to the domestic market and maybe Pilbara industry, whilst also exporting gas via an existing gas plant (North West Shelf or Pluto) for a much higher rate of return on the international market.
2. Pipe the gas to a floating gas plant (FLNG), where it would be processed and shipped to Japan. A pre-feasibility study is underway and we are yet to learn where this facility could be moored. Obvious choices would be King Sound, James Price Point or off the coast of Broome.
3. Build a petrochemical factory to produce Urea, Ammonia, or Blue Hydrogen.

Further, Buru Energy says it has significant volumes of gas at Yulleroo, where Micklo Corpus was camped to protect Country. This is unconventional gas and would require fracking and a commercialisation pathway such as one or more of the options above.

Buru Energy is continuing to search for oil and gas, with more seismic surveys in the pipeline, multiple drilling targets, and leases throughout the West Kimberley.



Buru Energy commercialisation pathways for Rafael gas



Buru Energy and Transborder's FLNG commercialisation pathway

## Mega drill rigs

A devastating class of drill rigs is about to enter Australia. In the NT's Beetaloo Basin, Tamboran Energy is importing a massive new drill rig, capable of drilling horizontal wells 5km long. This more than doubles water use, and increases chemical and proppant use for a greater number of fracks per well.

We know Black Mountain increased its proposed water use and number of fracks per well in its submission to the EPA, and we believe it has a similar plan underway to use these mega rigs in the Kimberley.

This fits with Black Mountain's concept of 'factory mode', whereby drilling and fracking would be continuous, to counter the fast depletion in the resource produced by fracking wells.

Get on board with the Get-up Mega Fracker campaign and petition, and stop these destructive machines from getting established in Australia.



Source: Helmerich Payne Website

# Broome's future is renewable

Martin Pritchard

The Kimberley is on the front line of climate change and we need to take action now to avoid its worsening effects. The transition away from fossil fuels can be done swiftly and will be much cheaper in the long run.

The energy supply contract at the Broome power station ends in 2027 and we need to ensure future supplies are as clean and cheap as possible. We commissioned Sustainable Energy Now (SEN) to assess the feasibility of shifting Broome's electricity generation to a renewable source.

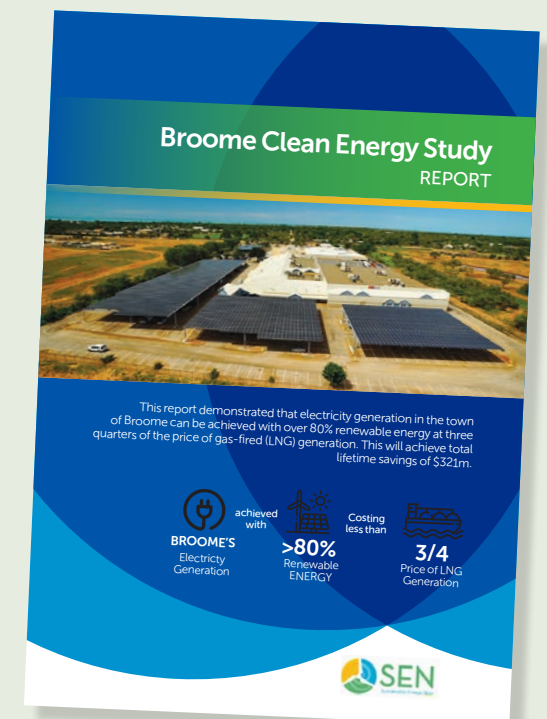
The new study demonstrates that :

- over 80% renewable energy in Broome is achievable
- renewable energy is three-quarters the cost of LNG
- the cost saving is \$321 million over 25 years

The Broome Clean Energy Study comes at a time when Australia is increasing its efforts to transition to renewable energy, with a target of net-zero emissions by 2050. The WA Government has committed to reducing its own emissions by 80% by 2030. This is a great opportunity for the McGowan Government to show that it is serious about the transition to clean energy.

You can read the Broome Clean Energy Study on the EK website.

The report was commissioned by Environs Kimberley and Lock the Gate and supported by the Climate Action Network Australia.







# Feral Cat Symposium

Hamsini Bijlani

Last month, Sam and Hamsini attended the WA Feral Cat Symposium in Perth, alongside Nyangumarta and Ngururrpa Rangers, ecologists, land managers and other stakeholders from around Australia and New Zealand.

A wide range of experts, including researchers, government officials, Aboriginal rangers and local councils, gave presentations on their inspiring work addressing the increasing threat of feral cats. Topics were wide-ranging and included studies of cat ecology, diet and behaviour, work being done to eradicate cats on islands, feral-proof enclosures, the use of innovative technology, traditional hunting and the menace of free-roaming domestic cats.

The Nyangumarta and Ngururrpa Rangers talked about the feral cat populations on their desert Country, and the work the rangers are doing to monitor and protect threatened native species, such as night parrots, black-flanked rock-wallabies, bilbies, northern quolls and brushtail possums, from the severe threat posed by feral cats.

Feral cats are one of the biggest threats to Australian native wildlife, especially those animals within the 'Critical Weight Range' i.e. of a size that makes them easy for cats to prey on. All the threatened species mentioned above fall within this critical weight range.

Many Aboriginal rangers and Traditional Owners are increasingly concerned about the impact that feral cats have on the cultural and natural values of the Indigenous Protected Areas. The Gooniyandi Rangers, who could not attend the conference, have sensor camera evidence of feral cats threatening a well-established bilby colony on their Country, and have seen tracks of feral cats chasing bilbies in the area.

Environs Kimberley is working to assist the Nyangumarta and Gooniyandi Rangers to monitor and manage feral cats.

This work is funded by The Federal Government's Environment Restoration Fund, State NRM and Rangelands NRM. Thank you to the Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute (WABSI) and the WA Feral Cat Working Group for organising the Feral Cat Symposium and providing such a valuable platform for people to share their knowledge and concerns.



Feral cat with a goanna in its mouth, Nyangumarta Rocky outcrops



Bilby going into a burrow on Gooniyandi Country



Feral cat going into the same bilby burrow

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# Living Green – PAINLESSLY

More tips to improve the sustainability of our daily lives without too much effort.

## WASTE NOT

On March 16th I took a small pot of yoghurt out of my fridge and ate the contents. Knowing that the yoghurt had been in the fridge for a while, I casually looked at the use-by date. 'Best before 10.2.23', it said. I seriously doubt that it would have been any better a month ago than it was on March 16th. It was still perfect, and no doubt would have remained so for weeks to come, had I not demolished it.

I'm told there are people who slavishly discard food items as soon as the 'use-by' or 'better before' date comes around. This strikes me as a shameful waste. Wholesalers are obliged to attach an expiry date to 'perishable' products, some of which, like yoghurt and eggs and plenty more, can last for weeks, and they have to err on the side of caution, so they append an arbitrary date. No skin off their noses — if people are silly enough to throw away a perfectly good pot of yoghurt, the producer stands a good chance of selling them another one.

Use-by dates are a relatively recent requirement. I am old enough to remember a time when there was no such thing. Are you surprised that we didn't all die of food poisoning? Well, we had our own methods of self-preservation. When we found mould growing on our cheese or whatever, we cut it off and ate the good stuff underneath. When we were not sure about our milk, we smelt it. Milk that smells good is good. Meat that smelt off we didn't mess around with — we gave it to the dog (dogs, delightful as they are in so many ways, have a lamentable preference for vile-smelling meat) or discarded it. Emerging environmentalists buried such horrors in the ground; other people threw them in their bins.

'Waste not, want not' was a saying we often heard from adults, abhorring waste. Do people still say that? It seems almost quaint in this time of excess, with all the throw-away goods we have now — razors, cigarette lighters, unfixable gadgets and white goods, TV screens, computers, unfashionable phones, clothing — I wonder if young people even understand what the saying means.

'Want' used to mean need or lack, as in 'The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.' People in want were people in poverty. It still retains that meaning in some circumstances as in 'He wants for nothing' or 'For want of...' as in 'For want of a nail the horseshoe was lost', but it has predominantly come to mean 'desire' or 'covet', which is not the same thing at all.

But I digress. My point, in case you have missed it, is: submit food to the sniff test before you throw it out.

# Ruminating with MAD COW



## ON THE VERGE OF SOMETHING

Garden verges are wondrous places, where anything can happen. Some people turn them into lawns — but what's the point of a lawn you are unlikely ever to sit on? Lawns take a lot of water and maintenance, they attract weeds such as Caltrop with its double-gee prickles, and are not much use to insects. The fertiliser and other treatments they require get washed into our waterways. The unbroken green is pleasing to some eyes, but Mad Cow won't graze on them.

Other people grow trees. *Moringa oleifera* is a popular verge tree, which has numerous medicinal and comestible properties. People often refer to it as a Madagascan Boab, but it is neither Madagascan nor a boab. It is unrelated to the *Adansonia* (baobab) genus, and is native to India. Like the baobab, it is drought resistant and stores water in its swollen trunk, hence the confusion. Don't plant trees, even short ones, under powerlines. They are likely to be cut down without warning or suffer unsightly amputations.

Close neighbours of mine started turning their bare patch of weeds into an exotic garden within the first weeks of moving in, including the verge in their design. I have to admire the industry and creativity that went into this one, which is quite lovely in its way. One must live and let live.

Then there are the coarsely mulched verges, which bear the signature of a keen environmentalist but upset more conventional gardeners' sense of aesthetics. Weeds abhor them too, which is their *raison d'être*.

Some verges become beds of yellow flowers during the wet season — the dreaded Caltrop — and beds of vicious prickles in the dry. One marvels that the occupants can bear to live with all those prickles, which are bound to spread beyond the confines of the verge. A friend and I attacked such a verge early one morning, believing the house to be unoccupied. It was when we trundled out the bin to fill it with armfuls of proliferating weeds that the surprised occupant came to the door. He thanked us for our efforts.

My vote goes to the native garden, full of local plants. Native gardens can be colourful and use little water but they do need some care. Few people have killed more plants through neglect than the present writer.

Perhaps the queen of all verges is the veggie verge. Some householders are generous enough to grow a variety of vegetables on their verges, to which passers-by are welcome, even encouraged, to help themselves. These are a domestic example of the Community Garden, versions of which are found across the world, often on patches of public 'wasteland', on railway stations, school grounds — anywhere with space, soil, sunshine and water.

Broome and Kununurra have active community gardens and Halls Creek had one, which doesn't seem to have been active since Covid. Derby and Wyndham need one each and Fitzroy Crossing has other priorities right now. We haven't forgotten.





## Participate in our annual Art Auction

Eliza Arnold

### EK fundraising raffle

Purchase a ticket online for this stunning raffle piece at [www.environskimberley.org.au/shop](http://www.environskimberley.org.au/shop).

Tickets are \$30.

Winner will be drawn at our Live Auction, Saturday 24 June 2023.

Prize:  
Mina Mina, 2022  
Nancy Tjungupi  
Carnegie  
Acrylic on canvas  
(76 x 38 cm)



### Save the date



Environs Kimberley's premier fundraising event and a highlight of Broome's social calendar.

This year's Auction will again be both live and online, to ensure everyone can take part.

- **Online Art Auction:**  
22 June–2 July
- **Live Art Auction:**  
Saturday 24 June at the Broome Convention Centre.

Artwork submissions open until May 15.

More details and Art Entry forms can be found online at [www.environskimberley.org.au/events](http://www.environskimberley.org.au/events).



Pat sits alongside her portrait by local artist Amelia Jajko while it is being auctioned. Photo: Anna Mardling



Stunning artwork on display at Live Auction. Photo: Don Bacon

## Volunteer with us

### Volunteers ARE THE HEART OF ENVIRONS KIMBERLEY

Each person contributes in their own way. Whether you are a local or someone visiting, we have plenty of opportunities for you to give. Join us to care for and protect the Kimberley.

**SOCIETY FOR KIMBERLEY INDIGENOUS PLANTS AND ANIMALS (SKIPPA)**  
SKIPPA is a group of dedicated and enthusiastic naturalists. Get involved in the collection and cleaning of seeds, the propagation and planting of Kimberley plants, and help with weed control.

**BROOME COMMUNITY SEAGRASS MONITORING PROJECT**  
Become a citizen scientist with us. Spend time with fascinating intertidal creatures, collect data and monitor the health of seagrass meadows in Nagulagun Roebuck Bay.

**EK MARKET STALL**  
Each fortnight, we run a community information stall and shop at the Broome Courthouse markets. Join us to share our campaigns and projects with the community and raise funds to continue our advocacy work.

**EK EVENTS**  
Each year we host an art auction, fundraising concerts and campaign events. If you love connecting with community and celebrating music and arts, there are many volunteer opportunities for you!

[environskimberley.org.au](http://environskimberley.org.au)

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## Design artwork for our Kimberley Life T-shirt Collection

The first of our Kimberley Life Collection T-shirts, 'The Bower Bird', was designed by EK legend, Jeanné Browne. Jeanné is a Melbourne art-maker. Since 1992, her artwork has been significantly shaped by extended time spent north of Broome, with the Goolarabooloo Aboriginal community. Her design, a celebration of the Bowerbird, has been a wonderful addition to our T-shirt range.

We are inviting you, our EK community members, to submit artwork you think could be the design for our second Kimberley Life Collection T-shirt. We welcome designs featuring a threatened or endangered species of the Kimberley.

The winning design will be printed on Fair Wear t-shirts, certified carbon neutral and made from 100% Organic cotton. The T-shirts will be sold to raise funds for our projects and campaigns. The winner will receive an EK mug and T-shirt and exposure via our website and market stall.

Artwork submissions open until July 31 2023.

Please contact [community@environskimberley.org.au](mailto:community@environskimberley.org.au) for more information.



Jeanné Browne in her Bower Bird Design. Courtesy: Jeanné Browne.



# Five Questions for new EK Staff and Interns

## Shilpa Adhikari

### What were you doing before you joined EK?

I have just finished Master's degree in Disaster Resilience and Sustainable Development at the University of Newcastle. Before that, I was in Nepal working in disaster recovery and human-wildlife conflict, and studying the long-snouted crocodile at Chitwan National Park.

### What is your role at EK?

I am currently assisting with project activities including wattleseed collection and fire-scar mapping as an Intern for the Kimberley Nature Project.

### What excites you about this role?

I get to learn so many new things every day from all the researchers and become involved in various projects, which helps me to improve my knowledge and skills.

### What is most important to you?

For me, the most important thing is to give myself some time and space in between the hustle of work and other stuff; so that I can do things I love and enjoy myself.

### What is your favourite place in the Kimberley?

Cable Beach is my favourite place here in Broome, but I love camping around the Kimberley, so all the places I've been camping are also my favourites.



## Andrew Batt

### What were you doing before you joined EK?

Around 10 years ago, I left the corporate world to start my own virtual Consultancy business, supporting small businesses and not-for-profits with all things financial and commercial. While giving me the opportunity to use my skills with a cross-section of business types, it also led me to several longer-term partnerships. These included being CEO of a Melbourne-based subscription beauty products supplier and the financial and business development advisor for an international commodity-trading business for the past four years. I also spent six years serving on the Board of The Thin Green Line Foundation, supporting rangers and conservation globally.

### What is your role at EK?

Chief Executive Officer. It's a grand title, but in reality, my role is simply to empower the team to continue to do the important work they have been doing for many years. That includes the campaigning and advocacy we will always do, but also the remarkable work that the Kimberly Nature Project team delivers on the ground. The Kimberley is a place that deserves to be protected, and I am excited to bring my skills to EK, and to lead the next phase of our journey.

### What excites you about this role?

Words influence. Actions matter. Decisions have lasting impact. I left the corporate world for lack of ethical alignment and have enjoyed spending the past decade helping small businesses and NGOs achieve their goals. But something was missing. Advising from the outside lacks that true engagement with the team and community, and I can think of no better an organisation to join than EK. To be able to use the financial and organisation skills that I have acquired for an organisation with such an experienced and capable team, is incredibly exciting. To be given the space to develop the organisation further while ensuring our campaigning and nature projects continue to support Traditional Owners to manage and protect Country — well, this is almost literally my dream job!

### What is most important to you?

My partner (whose conservation role bought us to Broome in 2020), our two crazy, lovable rescue dogs, my family and friends are the important things. Honesty, hard work, ethics, loyalty, 'mateship', respect — these are probably old-fashioned, but are the values that are important to me. Working with and learning from people who are on their own journey is also important to me. And taking up the fight against the coming climate and environmental challenges we have ahead of us has drawn me to EK.

### What is your favourite place in the Kimberley?

This is the toughest question. My partner and I spent a week in Purnululu at the start of last dry season and it is mind-blowingly beautiful over there. But the same can be said of so many places we have seen in the past couple of years. If I need to pick one, I have to say that sailing (very slowly) on my little vintage catamaran along the coast from Gantheaume Point is probably my favourite experience. And that's with friends from near and afar, slow conversation about meaningful and sometimes hilarious things, maybe even a couple of quiet drinks, and the sound of sail in a light wind as we meander up the coast of this beautiful peninsula we are fortunate to call home.



## Michelle Pyke

### What were you doing before you joined EK?

I joined Environs Kimberley back in 2019 and re-joined EK again this year after some time away with my second child. For the past year I've also been working on an EK-UWA project (primarily funded by the University of Western Australia). This project is helping the Bardi Jawi Rangers and community to set up a freshwater-place monitoring program.



Before joining EK in 2019 I enjoyed two important times in my life. One was living in Ardiyooloon (One Arm Point) for four years, where I conducted a PhD looking into Bardi Jawi and Nyul Nyul ways of understanding what wetlands are and how they should be managed. The other was the arrival of our first child.

### What is your role at EK?

Now that I'm back at EK I'm continuing to work on the joint EK-UWA Bardi Jawi freshwater monitoring project. This is one of the case studies under the Kimberley Wetlands Project. I'm also assisting with the broader Kimberley Wetlands Project (EK-UWA).

### What excites you about this role?

I enjoy both my roles at EK — supporting Bardi Jawi to set up a freshwater monitoring program and working on the bigger picture with the Kimberley Wetlands Project. In all my work, my passion is investigating, at every step, how to ensure Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing are applied to direct project objectives and activities.

### What is most important to you?

Family, nature and learning.

### What is your favourite place in the Kimberley?

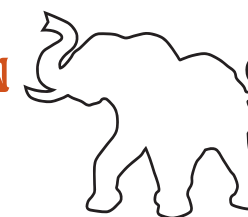
The northern part of the Dampier Peninsula, Bardi Jawi Country!

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## Tahnee Carter

### What were you doing before you joined EK?

I was running my small microgreens business here in town, growing and delivering fresh greens to people's houses. I also worked at the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), creating promotional artwork and educational content for the Bardi Jawi and Mayala Marine Park on the peninsula. I'm still doing both activities while at EK.



### What is your role at EK?

At EK I am a trainee project officer working within the Kimberley Nature Project Team and Social Enterprise Project. I'll be helping local Kimberley businesses develop their ideas into a social enterprise that gives back to projects that benefit the community and natural environment.

### What excites you about this role?

I get to work with like-minded people who share the same values and interests as I do. It's also very exciting to work for an organisation whose key beneficiary is the earth itself, to have the opportunity to protect and nurture this planet, hands on, is a dream come true for me.

### What is most important to you?

The most important thing to me is living a happy and fulfilling life, whether that be through getting out into nature or bingeing a show on Netflix. This means being able to slow down and appreciate the beauty of everyday life and give back to the earth.

### What is your favourite place in the Kimberley?

Anywhere where there is ocean. I love a good snorkel or chilled float in the water, and I also love exploring the reefs on low tides. But if I had to pick a favourite place to do that, it would have to be Ardyaloon (One Arm Point).

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The EK gift fund is a public fund and is listed in the register of Environmental Organisations under item 6.1.1 subsection 30-35 (1) of the income Tax Assessment Act 1997.



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