

THE KIMBERLEY INSTITUTE LIMITED

BROOME, WA



**REPORT ON THE KIMBERLEY CONVERSATION  
10<sup>TH</sup> AND 11<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2009**

Goolarri Media Enterprises  
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Disclaimer: Since this report was published, the KLC and KALACC indicated they no longer wish to participate in future Kimberley Conversations (6 May 2009).



Kimberley Land Council



Kimberley Aboriginal Law  
and Culture Centre



Kimberley Language  
Resource Centre

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAAC	Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee
AAC	Aboriginal Advisory Council
ATSIC	The former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
CDEP	Community Development Employment Project
DEEWR	Department of Employment Education and Workplace Relations
ICC	Indigenous Coordination Centre
IIB	Indigenous Implementation Board
ILC	Indigenous Land Corporation
IBA	Indigenous Business Australia
KALACC	Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre
KI	Kimberley Institute
KLC	Kimberley Land Council
KLRC	Kimberley Language Resource Centre
MG Corp.	Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation
NAILSMA	North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Association
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
WA	Western Australia

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Kimberley Institute acknowledges the support of the Kimberley Land Council, the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre and the Kimberley Language Resource Centre in sponsoring *The Kimberley Conversation*.

The Kimberley Institute also acknowledges the financial support of the Department of State Development.

The Kimberley Institute also acknowledges Lt. General John Sanderson, the Chairman of the WA Indigenous Implementation Board, for his support and participation in the forum.

Special thanks to the participants, the people who gave up their time to travel across the Kimberley to discuss issues of common concern and advance thinking about regional cooperation and cohesiveness.

Thanks also to:

- Eunice Yu and Carol Tang Wei who managed this project on behalf of the Kimberley Institute;
- The team at Goolarri Media Enterprises who provided the venue and conference organisation and multi-media documentation services;
- Tom Birch, Frank Davey, Wayne Bergman and Robyn McPhee at the Kimberley Land Council for their organisational support.
- Our working group members Joe Ross, Peter Yu and Howard Pedersen, who helped plan the forum and draft background information papers.
- Brian Wyatt and Darryl Cronin of the Goldfields Land and Sea Council who facilitated this conversation and who contributed to the writing of this report; and
- The other special guests and observers who attended the Kimberley Conversation.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*The Kimberley Conversation* (TKC) held in Broome in February 2009 provided a forum for representatives from Aboriginal community organisations, NGOs and government agencies across to discuss how best to reform the relationship between government and Aboriginal people based on a regional approach. More than thirty community representatives from throughout the Kimberley participated in the forum. Also participating was the Chair of the WA Indigenous Implementation Board, Lt General John Sanderson, and the Director General of the Department of Indigenous Affairs, Mr Patrick Walker.

The forum was convened by the Kimberley Land Council, Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre and Kimberley Language Resource Centre and sponsored by the Department of State Development with administrative and strategic support provided by the Kimberley Institute.

A joined-up regional approach that recognises Aboriginal land ownership and cultural values across the Kimberley has been pursued by Aboriginal leaders over many years. A renewal of this position is seen as timely because the newly elected WA Barnett State Government has expressed interest in partnering Indigenous interests in social and economic development on a regional basis against a background of potential major impacts on Kimberley Aboriginal society by resource development and changes to government service delivery and community governance.

The forum discussion's overriding theme was the fundamental importance of challenging the existing paradigm of government policy and ways of doing business between government agencies and Aboriginal communities. The forum discussed how the current dysfunctional relationship is underlined by two critical elements. One is a culture of mediocrity within service delivery agencies, a lack of accountability for performance and outcomes and systemic abrogation of duty of care responsibilities for fundamental citizenship services such as education, health and child protection. The other element is about the failure of responsibility on the part of the Aboriginal community in general which has become conditioned to dependency on government and therefore accepts systemic dysfunction as part of every-day family and community life.

The forum discussion was considered, rigorous and determined to explore innovative but realistic pathways to break through the impasse of dysfunction and establish a new paradigm for sustainable development where Aboriginal cultural life is a fundamental pillar of a vibrant and healthy society. The forum was structured around break-out sessions of focussed discussions based on six

inter-related themes; economic development and environmental sustainability, education and training, health, cultural sustainability and regional development.

The report back sessions expressed a consistent theme of critique and innovative possibilities which are detailed in the body of the report. Ideas discussed at the forum (summarised in point form below) relating to wealth creation, improved health and education outcomes and effective coordination and decision making are considered and achievable. What is abundantly clear from the quality of the discussion and ideas articulated by participants is that the depth of insight and experience by Aboriginal people as community leaders and professional workers is an untapped reservoir of expertise available to government. The structural change required to produce outcomes that will seriously close the gap on the desperate state of Aboriginal disadvantage in the Kimberley will only be achieved through partnership between Aboriginal people and government. The debilitating rut of dependency will only be broken through genuine partnership with governments cooperating and responding to the ideas and aspirations of Aboriginal people. Imposed government policies and programs with token consultation, will simply produce the outcomes we all know so well: passive resistance and entrenched dependency.

The participants of the first Kimberley Conversation are committed to continuing this process and to meet again in two months time, not only to develop and refine ideas discussed at this forum but also to explore ways to develop a partnership with government. Building a partnership based on trust and shared vision will be an immense challenge and therefore it is critically important for there to be champions of structural reform at high levels of government to advance the notion of partnership. This is why key Aboriginal leaders have invested in building a relationship with Lt General Sanderson who has advocated for structural change involving Aboriginal decision making in new systems of regional governance. In his address to the Forum, Lt General Sanderson spoke about the imperative for change because “the burgeoning complexity” has made the relationship between government and Aboriginal people impossible for Australian governments to achieve the laudable objectives of overcoming Indigenous disadvantage.

The first is that the processes that Lt General Sanderson is himself involved; heading up the Indigenous Implementation Board that will sit alongside a proposed rekindled Aboriginal Advisory Council, simply adds to the “burden of complexity” and was seen by forum participants as a retreat to failed processes of community representation and engagement. The other is the challenge of community representation which, when mentioned by Lt General caused participants to focus on.

Lt General Sanderson's address caused participants to consider the inequitable position of mainstream Australian politics based on divergent views, debate and conflict resolution mechanisms compared to a widely held expectation that Aboriginal views should be unified and if they are not these views lack validity and can be ignored by governments. Participants at the forum recognise that the perception of conflict and disunity within the broad Aboriginal community is an entrenched aspect of the nature of government management of Indigenous Affairs and which diminishes the potential for partnership. The Kimberley Conversation is therefore an important forum for the expression and debate of community thinking and ideas as a process for agreement making for political positions that can be negotiated with government.

## LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Apart from raising a range of issues for further development, The Kimberley Conversation forum agreed on the following recommendations;

Continue the Kimberley Conversation through another round table forum of Kimberley leaders and community representatives in two months time,

Work towards establishing a regional forum to identify and discuss issues aimed at:

- developing an Aboriginal vision for the Kimberley (paradigm shift around community and systemic change)
- engaging with non Aboriginal Kimberley stakeholders about shared interests
- engaging with the State and the Commonwealth governments on policy and service delivery arrangements

Seek financial support to establish a secretariat to facilitate further community engagement, undertake research, provide policy advice, logistical support, and provide project management support as well as facilitate and manage partnerships.

Establish a knowledge broker organisation to undertake the following projects:

- A Kimberley economic gap analysis;
- A carbon economy project;
- A policy framework for Indigenous cultural and water rights including equity in water;
- An investment model for private home ownership.

Tackle education and training issues at a regional level by: creating collaboration between the three education sectors, improving employment and training outcomes through better coordination and collaboration, creating employment pathways for Indigenous people to become teachers and school principals, partnerships between the schools and the communities, and building residential education hostels in the main towns.

Undertake a regional study to identify issues and propose strategic directions for cultural sustainability.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

*The Kimberley Conversation* (TKC) is a joint initiative of the Kimberley Land Council (KLC), Kimberley Language Resource Centre (KLRC) and the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre (KALACC). The forum was held in Broome on the 10-11<sup>th</sup> February 2009. It was intended as an opportunity for Aboriginal leaders, stakeholders and organisations to plan and discuss ideas and strategies for working together in a more coordinated and strategic manner to address issues affecting Aboriginal peoples of the Kimberley.

Despite belonging to many different language and traditional land owning groups, Kimberley Aboriginal people have - over the past few decades - shown an innovative capacity to work together for the common good. In the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s regional action emphasised cultural protection and traditional land ownership highlighted by the establishment and work of the KLC, KLRC, KALACC and a range of other community based service delivery organisations. This period was characterised by conflict with mining companies, the land rights debate and re-occupation of traditional country through the outstation movement and acquisition of pastoral leases. In the 1990s and first decade of this century the emphasis shifted to the difficult work of negotiating how Indigenous rights and interests can co-exist with the mainstream governmental structures and economic forces. However the idea of building partnerships between Aboriginal people, governments and industry to develop a new relationship for the benefit of all parties has been stifled because of incessant litigation over native title and government policy changes which seem to increasingly devalue traditional culture and community engagement.

The Kimberley Conversation is an attempt to find a space for discussion between Kimberley Aboriginal people away from the relentless pressure of dealing with industry and government so that strategic ideas for structural reform can be brought to the negotiating table with governments. The need for urgent change in government policy and service delivery is beyond question. The recent Inquiry by the State Coroner into young Aboriginal people's deaths and the KLC commissioned study by ANU that shows some Kimberley communities to be the most disadvantaged in Australia paints a deplorable picture of suffering and grief that has been normalised within a government approach that fails to grasp a sense of urgency to act.

Most participants in the first Kimberley Conversation deal with community and individual despair on a daily basis. They have insights not only about community and family dysfunction but also into the ineptitude and incompetence of government systems in its delivery of fundamental citizenship services such as health, education and child protection. Their experience, insights and knowledge about what should be done will be critically important in developing a new paradigm of development and equity for the Kimberley region. In this respect the Kimberley Conversation is potentially an important avenue of community engagement for government.

The timing for *The Kimberley Conversation* is critical, occurring at a time of dramatic global changes which the Kimberley cannot escape. Whether it is the current global financial meltdown and deepening recession in much of the world or the impact of climate change in relation to energy and future use of Kimberley waters it is critically important for Kimberley people to engage in dialogue about the long-term impacts on this region and how best to participate in political negotiations over issues that will shape the Kimberley's future economic and social character.

There will be many stakeholders, not only from the resource sector, who will combine to change the Kimberley dramatically over the next decade and beyond. Their interests will need to be considered and negotiated. In this context Kimberley Aboriginal leaders are confronted with a two-fold challenge. One is the capacity to consider our own internal dilemmas and tensions about the meaning and importance of Indigenous cultural and social values and the inevitability of change in the face of relentless global forces.

The other challenge is understanding the motives and fascination that a range of non Aboriginal interests have for the Kimberley and exploring the potential for strategic connections that could result in positive and productive partnerships in a new political dynamic.

The Kimberley Conversation will also be the precursor in advancing the endeavours for a new Australian Dialogue. This forum could provide an opportunity for a regional focus of the Australian Dialogue, a national initiative lead by Patrick Dodson and Lt General John Sanderson involving a number of Indigenous and other Australian leaders who are committed to creating a new framework for engagement between Indigenous people and white Australia through strategic conversation.

### **Scope of the Report**

This report is based on presentations and report back sessions recorded at *The Kimberley Conversation*. It is a record of the discussion and recommendations

put forward at the forum. The report is informed by the principles of: (1) support for Indigenous self-determination, (2) serving and informing Indigenous aspirations, and (3) voicing the perspectives of Indigenous people.

The structure of the report is as follows:

- Chapter 1 outlines the background to *The Kimberley Conversation* and the methodology of the conversation.
- Chapter 2 documents the theme group discussions and the address of General John Sanderson. Issues and recommendations are identified and key messages are extracted from the group discussions.
- Chapter 3 discusses a number of issues and implications in regards to continuing the conversation.

## **The Kimberley Conversation**

The Kimberley Land Council, Kimberley Language Resource Centre and Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre consider it important that the Kimberley leadership group become structured, to more effectively engage and negotiate with governments on a regional basis.

*The Kimberley Conversation* aims to:

- engage key Kimberley Indigenous people, organisations and groups in a new dialogue with the Western Australian government.
- build capacity for strong, united and coordinated leadership in the region.
- promote government accountability to Aboriginal peoples for the citizenship services it delivers.
- promote forward thinking and planning for Aboriginal engagement in political negotiations on issues that will shape the Kimberley's future economic and social character.

*The Kimberley Conversation* also provides a regional focus for the Australian Dialogue, a national initiative lead by Patrick Dodson and Lt General John Sanderson involving a number of Indigenous and other Australian leaders.

The overriding objective of the Australian Dialogue is to elevate the place of Indigenous people and culture as a fundamental plank in Australian nation building. The Australian Dialogue recognises that a new national philosophy based on Indigenous cultural recognition will occur only if change to the old relationship can happen at the local and regional level. It believes that the

Kimberley region can demonstrate how social and economic achievements can occur through recognition and respect for culture and traditions in a new relationship of partnership as opposed to imposition, domination and control.

## Methodology of the Conversation

Prior to the forum a paper was written to set the context of the conversation by discussing six core themes. See the context paper at Appendix I. The core themes are:

1. Environmental Sustainability
2. Economic Development
3. Cultural Sustainability
4. Health
5. Education and Training
6. Regional Development

Indigenous delegates from around the Kimberley were invited to the forum. Delegates comprise representatives with backgrounds in the designated theme areas, and included youth and elders.

The forum took place over two days and participants approved the proceedings to be video and audio recorded. The format of the forum included concurrent work sessions on the six core themes of which the economic development and environmental sustainability themes were combined as one group.

Issues arising from the forum will be utilised in a wider Kimberley dialogue involving a cross section of community, government and industry representatives, with the aim of promoting a more inclusive approach in addressing matters relevant to the future growth and development in the Kimberley.

Underlying each of the six designated themes are three fundamental propositions intertwined and linked to stimulate the discussion and debate. They are:

**Proposition 1:** Encourage the Kimberley community to lead and embrace the notion of an Australian Dialogue as a basis for an inclusive vision of what it is to be Australian in a globalised context, about the kind of society we want the Kimberley and Australia to become, and what it means for our people to develop their capabilities and realise their potential as both Kimberley and global Australians.

**Proposition 2:** Promote, encourage and develop a culture of aspiration, innovation and productivity that can help shape the regional and national

cultural, economic, social and environmental well being of Kimberley Aboriginal people.

**Proposition 3:** Establish and facilitate co operative dialogue with all tiers of governments, relevant community and industry stakeholders to develop mechanisms for effective regional Kimberley governance that has community confidence and support.

### Participants, Observers and Facilitators

The participants came from across the Kimberley. They represented various organisations, but there were also participants who were not attached to any organisation. Unfortunately there were many apologies due to the wet season conditions and other demands on people's time.

The following is a list of attendees:

No.	Name	Organisation/Community
1	Tom Birch	Kimberley Land Council
2	June Oscar	Kimberley Language Resource Centre
3	Ian Trust	Wunan Foundation
4	Mary Tarran	Yawuru Jarndu
5	Anthony Watson	JarImadangahburru Aboriginal Corporation
6	Des Hill	Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation
7	Cissy Gore-Birch Gault	
8	Edna O'Malley	Yawoorroong Miriuwung Gajerrong Yirrgeb Noong Dawang Aboriginal Corporation
9	Vicki Butters	Kimberley Language Resource Centre
10	George Lee/Wilson	Wirrimanu
11	Patrick Davies	Nindilingarri Cultural Health Service
12	Ian Perdrisat	Majala Kimberley Institute Advisory
13	Anne Poelina	Majala Kimberley Institute Advisory
14	Janine Hunter	West Kimberley Employment Services
15	Eddie Wright	Department of Education and Training, Aboriginal Education
16	Michael Albert	Kimberley Australian Sports Commission
17	Allan Lawford	Kurungal Inc - Wangkatjungka
18	Selena O'Meara	
19	Thomas King	Mamabulanjin Resource Centre, Karrajarri NTB
20	Peter Yu	
21	Maria Morgan	Gelganyem Trust
22	Joe Ross	Northern Australia Land and Water Taskforce

23	Harry Yungabun	Nindilingarri Cultural Health Service
24	Steve Kinnane	The University of Notre Dame
25	Henry Councillor	Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services
26	Cissy Djiagween	
27	Mary Manolis	
28	Di Appleby	WA Department of Corrective Services
29	Patrick Dodson	Kimberley Institute
30	Paul Lane	Lingiari Foundation
31	Teik Oh	Kimberley Institute
32	Kevin Fong	Goolarri Media Enterprises
33	Eunice Yu	Kimberley Institute
34	Carol Tang Wei	Kimberley Institute

The following observers attended the conversation:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
1	Barry Taylor	Ngarda Civil and Mining Pty Ltd
2	Donella Raye	Ngarda Civil and Mining Pty Ltd
3	Dean Collard	
4	John Sanderson	WA Indigenous Implementation Board
5	Benita Cattalini	Department of Indigenous Affairs
6	Patrick Walker	Department of Indigenous Affairs
7	Tony Walley	Department of Indigenous Affairs
8	Gary Powell	Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations
9	Richard Aspinall	Indigenous Coordination Centre
10	Dave Grigg	Monash University
11	Dan Walker	CSIRO
12	Alice Bedingfield	Monash University
13	Emily Gerrard	National Indigenous Climate Change Working Group

Independent facilitators were engaged from the Goldfields Land and Sea Council for the forum:

- Brian Wyatt – Chief Executive Officer
- Darryl Cronin – Economic Development Officer

The role of the facilitators was to provide facilitation services for the forum and in conjunction with the Kimberley Institute report on the conversation.

### The Kimberley Institute

The Kimberley Institute Limited is a Not-For-Profit organisation, limited by guarantee, and based in Broome, Western Australia.

As an independent, Indigenous Think Tank grounded in the oral cultural traditions of Kimberley Indigenous peoples, the Kimberley Institute strategically links Indigenous interests with governments, the private sector, and research organisations in order to promote positive change for the social, cultural, spiritual and economic well being of Kimberley Indigenous people.

The Kimberley Institute's core goal is to facilitate this change through strategic research and policy development resulting in practical enhancements for Kimberley Aboriginal people's well being.

The key priority areas for The Kimberley Institute are:-

- Education, training and work-readiness;
- Accommodation both in urban and in discrete community environments;
- Sustainable communities with an emphasis on employment and business opportunities; and
- Indigenous governance, particularly the management of native title responsibilities.

The Kimberley Institute is committed to working closely with the peak community organisations that have led the self-determination political struggle in the Kimberley over the past four decades. Its' organisational role in convening the Kimberley conversation is consistent with KI's mission.

## THE CONVERSATION

### The Agenda

The agenda was determined by the three sponsoring organisations, the KLC, KLRC and KALACC in conjunction with the Kimberley Institute. The two day program included introductory speeches, concurrent break-out group sessions and report back presentations. General John Sanderson also addressed the forum. See the agenda at Appendix II.

### Opening Addresses

#### ***(1) Welcome by Patrick Dodson***

The Victorian bushfires and tragic loss of life was at the forefront of Patrick Dodson's welcome to country. He asked all those in attendance to stand and reflect on the loss of lives and families in the bushfires. As senior Yawuru native title holder and Chairman of the Kimberley Institute he welcomed all participants for attending despite the trying and challenging conditions at this time of the year and the numerous requests on their time. He also welcomed and thanked:

- the observers and participants from the Noongar nation and Goldfields and Pilbara regions;
- Lt. General John Sanderson for making himself available to attend and listen to the forum deliberations;
- the observers from the Commonwealth and State Governments who may benefit from any new insights arising from the forum in regards to doing business with Aboriginal people;
- the chairs of the three major Kimberley Aboriginal organizations, KLC, KALACC and KLRC for their initiative and leadership in bringing the Kimberley Conversation together;
- the WA Government for providing the financial support for the Kimberley Conversation. The Government is encouraged to take seriously the capacity for regional solutions being found when key regional stakeholders are engaged respectfully and constructively.

Patrick Dodson spoke about how it is the tradition of the Yawuru to receive other tribes on their country for business dealings, trade and ceremonies and in that great tradition he welcomed everyone and asked them to feel at ease. He said it was a time to demonstrate our strength and respect for each other as Kimberley Indigenous people, a time to learn, a time to share knowledge, experience and wisdom as we develop solutions to the challenges and deepen

our commitment to sustain the unique cultural and social values that underpin our lives, people and country. He said it was time to take things forward and not wait for Government or Industry and to demonstrate to policy makers the need to engage with Kimberley Indigenous people and not direct us about their pre-ordained solutions for us.

### ***(2) Opening of Forum by Tom Birch***

Tom Birch, Chairman of the Kimberley Land Council opened the conference by acknowledging the Yawuru people and the three organisations that supported this forum. He apologised on behalf of Wayne Bergman the Director of the KLC who was not able to attend the forum. Tom said Indigenous people need to take control over their wellbeing and the important matters of land, law, language and culture otherwise we would remain dependent upon the goodwill of Government, private corporations and the Australian public.

Indigenous people in countries such as Canada have separate sovereign interests and they are able to deal with industry and Government on a commercial basis. This has resulted in increased Indigenous empowerment and improvement in the standard of peoples lives. Tom acknowledged that Kimberley Indigenous people and their organisations have been talking for some time about moving forward and he hoped the forum would generate broad based support for a regional organisation to deliver change.

### ***(3) Introduction by Lt. General John Sanderson***

In his introduction Lt. General John Sanderson said the Kimberley was a serious place with a serious leadership and the region is very important to the country. General Sanderson spoke about his travels through the Kimberley in 1974 which was a powerful eye opener for him not only because of the sheer beauty of the landscape but because he saw the impact of Indigenous people being pushed out of the landscape into regional centres with their lives were totally disrupted. He spoke of the disconnection of the Australian nation from the landscape and that Indigenous people are also becoming disconnected. Unless this is turned around and Indigenous people are connected back to the landscape with healthy lives and economic prosperity then there would be no hope for non-Indigenous people to become connected with the landscape. Indigenous people will play a vital role in leading Australians back to the landscape.

General Sanderson spoke of his pride for Australian soldiers when he commanded a United Nations peace keeping mission. The Australian soldiers were great ambassadors for their country yet when he came back to Australia he was filled with shame at the way Indigenous people were treated. Australia is capable of doing great things in the world but it is at war within itself because

it has not reconciled itself to its relationship with Indigenous people and to its landscape. General Sanderson emphasised the importance of the Kimberley Conversation because it is fundamental to empowering Indigenous people and connecting Australians to the landscape.

General Sanderson spoke about his advisory role with the previous Carpenter Labor Government, whereby the Labor Government did not accept his approach for a fundamental change to the Government paradigm by empowering Indigenous people on a regional basis to take responsibility for their own affairs. He was invited back by the new Liberal State Government, which has a strong regional development dimension to head up the Indigenous Implementation Board. He accepted his appointment on the basis that his approach is about empowerment of Indigenous people through regionalisation of power. He advised the Minister he would be bold and aggressive in doing this.

Running parallel to his role as chair of the Indigenous Implementation Board is the process of the Australian Dialogue, a national dialogue to change the philosophical framework of engagement between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The underlying principle behind Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationship has gone from pushing Indigenous people out of the landscape to assimilation. There has been no national commitment to preserve and love Indigenous culture or to understand that Indigenous culture is connected to the landscape. General Sanderson said he has taken his chairmanship of the Indigenous Implementation Board as a licence to run the Australian Dialogue in Western Australia.

General Sanderson stated that the power of the Indigenous Implementation Board stems from its capacity to engage effectively with Indigenous peoples and to build a relationship of trust. This means getting out engaging with people on country but at the same time Indigenous people have to engage with the Board. What the Board needs is a regional Indigenous mechanism that the Board can engage with and the best place to start that engagement is in the Kimberley. He said if we can make a success of this relationship in the Kimberley both with the Indigenous Implementation Board and the Australian Dialogue then we can make a success of it everywhere else.

### **The First Concurrent Session: Discussion on Issues**

In this session the participants in each group were asked to identify the key issues and priorities associated with their theme area. The selection and endorsement of major issues to be prioritised for action was the expected outcome.

### ***(1) Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability***

The economic development and environmental sustainability group emphasised that the Kimberley is the focus for major infrastructure projects as well as significant initiatives in housing, water allocation, and resource development across the region. Indigenous interests therefore need to engage with government and industry in a strategic and coordinated manner. However the group recognized there is a lack of integration and coordination in assessing these resource projects which impedes the Indigenous leadership's capacity to respond.

The group see key themes emerging in economic development and environmental sustainability in the Kimberley for Indigenous people, namely Indigenous empowerment in water policy planning and allocations; Indigenous initiatives in the emerging carbon economy; and Indigenous coordination across Northern Australia through a range of current strategic processes such as the Indigenous Water Policy Group and the work of NAILSMA in developing carbon economies. However the group recognised that the challenge for the big picture approach is to support the on-ground initiatives and this should be done through evidence based approaches.

There is a need to change the existing paradigms that support the status quo. Government Agency acceptance of Indigenous disadvantage and Indigenous community acceptance of dependency needs to be broken through strategic evidence based policy and programs. Indigenous people must also assess their values and transform their expectations. This means overcoming the current pattern of community acceptance of low expectations and the rejection of welfare, mediocrity and poverty. Clearly there is value in working together in a larger group, but there is no agreed accord between the key Indigenous agencies within the Kimberley to achieve coordinated action on the ground.

There is no clear framework from which to engage governments at the Local, State and Federal level. There is no unified Indigenous or wider mainstream Kimberley framework that could allow for greater cooperation in service delivery, problem solving and development of policy. Evidence-based policy development is an essential element of any regional approach and all policies and programs must have direct benefit on the ground for Indigenous Peoples of the Kimberley. However outcomes must be evaluated against Indigenous community values as opposed to mainstream western values.

While there is talented Indigenous leadership in the Kimberly it is, however not linked up and lacks strategic focus. Young people are also not being engaged on issues - their welfare and opportunities should be central to any processes. There is a need for a regional process where leaders can act

collectively to develop better relationships, share information, and collaborate on common issues. However Governments must take responsibility for delivery of services to all citizens of the Kimberley. But this will not be achieved through incremental change to the current service delivery paradigm. What is required is a regional body vested with authority for community development within an Indigenous value framework. But it is essential that Indigenous values are retained and upheld in any system of governance so that the most effective and Indigenous owned strategic approach is maintained.

Indigenous communities should be assisted to realise the value of their assets. Further resource developers and government must accept that Indigenous communities require security and so royalties and services should be built into any development proposals and agreements.

## ***(2) Education and Training***

The education and training group looked at a range of issues and found that these same issues were no different to what was discussed ten years ago. In terms of achieving educational outcomes a range of issues were identified.

There is a need to recruit and retain quality teachers and principals to build sustainable leadership in schools to improve outcomes. School attendance is critical for learning, yet on any given day across the region thirty percent of the children can be absent, yet there are no attendance officers working in schools connecting with the community to improve attendance. Aboriginal kids are below the benchmark levels in terms of literacy and numeracy outcomes; however nothing will change without quality teachers in schools. There is no responsibility for preparing children (0-4 years) for school, yet all the evidence shows that the children will never improve if they lack this preparation. There are no high school opportunities for children in remote communities and in that regard parents should be encouraged to send their children away to high school.

Aboriginal children suffer a range of problems that affect learning such as foetal alcohol syndrome, otitis media, diabetes and trauma yet no-one is responsible in the school system for dealing with physical and emotional wellbeing. The only difference in trauma between Indigenous children and war torn refugee children is the absence of military and artillery.

There is no culture of involvement and engagement by the teachers with the community to understand community needs and to obtain community support. There is no capacity building for teachers and parents to improve engagement with the community. Teachers need to be engaged and involved in the community as this improves cultural understanding because there is very

limited organised cultural awareness for teachers. Also Indigenous language and history is not part of the education curricula.

Parents and the community do realise the importance of education and its link with employment although there is apathy from parents and the community in regards to children's education and the expectations are low. There is also the need to balance cultural obligation and educational outcomes to achieve the best of both worlds.

The lack of career development in high schools is noticeable when children leave school because many do not have dreams or goals in life and they lack confidence, self-esteem and motivation. Career development officers are required to work with years 8-12 to help them determine a career path for employment and mentor and nurture them to fulfil their dreams. The lack of confidence, self-esteem and motivation is a problem for many Aboriginal job seekers and so the focus is to build confidence before they undertake pre-employment training.

### ***(3) Cultural Sustainability***

The cultural sustainability group looked at how issues of cultural sustainability can be identified and addressed. According to the group, decision makers need to be informed about the issues and in that regard there is a need to understand needs and priorities. It was proposed that a method of doing this is to undertake a study or 'population survey' to understand communities, to examine issues, identify strategic directions and identify who should be involved. This type of study is happening in the Fitzroy Valley through the Fitzroy Futures Forum and it could be replicated at the regional level across the Kimberley in order to inform people at the State and National level of the issues and priorities and the method by which Indigenous people want to work with Governments on cultural sustainability. KALACC and KLRC are appropriate lead agencies to oversee such a project with support from the Kimberley Institute.

### ***(4) Health***

The health group saw no need to recap on the issues as most people are aware of the issues affecting Indigenous life expectancy. The group looked at what services are provided from a health industry perspective, namely WA Country Health Services, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services and Community Health Clinics. The Kimberley Aboriginal Health Regional Planning Forum which represents a number of agencies was established in 1999 and it looks at how agencies can work together to achieve coordination and transparency in terms of funding expenditure. State expenditure on health in the Kimberley is appalling. Much of the focus is around specific health issues rather than dealing

with other community factors that impinge on health. This regional planning forum is one way of getting into the complexity of Government and unravelling it to achieve more constructive and positive outputs. It is also a way of bringing transparency around funding and dealing with protocols and policies relating to health needs and impacts on the ground. It is inclusive of other areas such as housing, education, essential services and maintaining cultural integrity.

There are a number of other factors that impinge on health in both remote and urban Aboriginal communities. Housing and essential services are fundamental to people's health. Access to quality food, especially fresh fruit and vegetables is critical as communities require resources to maintain food supply and transportation is required to access healthy foods. Learning how to cook and eat good foods is also important. Lack of employment also impacts on health because employment is related to self-esteem and self-respect. Health education is required because there is a lack of health education in schools and for young parents. The Kimberley has high rates of sexually transmitted infections and sexually transmitted diseases. Community participation and looking after our health is vitally important, for example prostate cancer in men 40-55 years is increasing.

Health is not just about doctors and nurses, it is about health sustainability. Health Sustainability covers a range of issues from access to healthy food to education, transport, housing and essential services, employment, positive parenting, safety and security and so on. It is also about spirit, things that make us feel good and proud. Music and art are areas in which people get involved and Governments should be encouraging more Indigenous participation in those activities. There is a need for more nutritionist working in the community to provide information about healthy food and good eating. . Ongoing housing maintenance is an issue. There is also very little recognition of the skills of Environmental Health Workers who can undertake a range of tasks. Rubbish removal and maintenance of tips is essential but there is a lack of resources and regulation in communities of this basic citizenship requirement. There is no resources and machinery to clean up communities. The dissolution of ATISC has impacted on communities as they are now struggling for resources to implement community ideas.

There is a need to find new ways of doing things and these ideas will come from community people not from experts. Governments must keep funding community ideas and allow those ideas to grow instead of changing programs or cutting funds.

## ***(5) Regional Development***

The regional development group felt there is no shared regional vision for the Kimberley. They looked at issues relating to the current regional development approach to Indigenous communities and they also highlighted a number of issues that need to be dealt with by the Indigenous community. They interpreted regional development as having good sound governance to create the capacity for regional development. But governance in the Kimberley operates on the basis of Federal and State bureaucrats determining policies and programs and there is very little representation of Indigenous people in Local Government. There is a lack of acknowledgement by Government of Indigenous authority and therefore lack of Indigenous participation in Kimberley regional governance.

In terms of the Indigenous community there is a need to build trust and positive relationships to break the cycle of negativity within communities. There is a need to build strong identities in order to build strong communities and societies. This is a big issue for young people who are being influenced by American culture. The Indigenous community also needs to assist people especially young people balance law, culture and mainstream responsibilities.

In terms of regional development there is a lack of governance structure to distribute resources locally throughout the Kimberley in a coordinated way. There is inconsistency in the way services are delivered. Systemic and institutional racism creates tensions and stresses in the way business is done on the ground. Duplication of services and lack of information to communities is a major problem. Information is appallingly disseminated through Federal, State and regional processes resulting in confusion and poor relationships with government. There is a dysfunctional system of public funding – highlighted by submission driven annual grant funding involving countless agencies and organisations that are uncoordinated and lacking in policy cohesion. There needs to be a better way to coordinate resources on the ground because the present system of grant funding is inappropriate because it is not able to address needs on the ground. Governments fund portfolio areas and then allocate funds to bureaucracies who then divide the funds into bundles of grants. There needs to be a quicker process to fund projects which can have a long lead time and portfolio areas need to be brought together on the ground.

An alternative model of governance and funding can be seen in the Aboriginal Medical Services where there is already a solid health bureaucracy. This model could be replicated across the Kimberley in education for instance. At present the education department owns all the schools. There should be an opportunity to form an education portfolio within a regional governance arrangement to buy the school from the State Government so that there is a solid integrated Indigenous education network.

There is an expectation that Indigenous people must have a single unified approach and if there is not one then it is seen as a split or people are divided, yet the whole Australian way of governance and doing business is about debate, discussion and dispute resolution processes. In any case there is no forum in which Indigenous people can sort out their business and present unified approaches to the wider public. Government ways of doing business with Aboriginal people fosters competition and conflict within and between communities without formal dispute resolution mechanisms. There is a need for a forum in which Indigenous people can discuss issues in a bold way, negotiate agreed positions and create capacity for change and development. There is a need to build community capacity (skills and confidence) and community sustainability so we can step up and take responsibility and ownership.

### ***Key Messages: First Concurrent Session***

*The Kimberley is the focus of major infrastructure projects and there are some key themes emerging in economic development and environmental sustainability. However this presents a number of issues, such as:*

- *There is no integrated and coordinated approach to assess these projects and for Indigenous people to respond to them;*
- *Developers need to understand Indigenous communities require financial benefits from development projects;*
- *The existing paradigm must change – agencies should no longer accept Indigenous disadvantage and Indigenous people should no longer accept dependency;*
- *On the ground activities must be supported through evidence based approaches to change the existing paradigm and break dependency;*
- *There is no unified or wider mainstream Kimberley framework to allow for greater cooperation in service delivery, problem solving and policy development;*
- *There is need for a regional process for Kimberley Indigenous leaders to collectively develop relationships, share information, collaborate on common issues and engage Indigenous youth;*
- *Incremental reform of Government policies and programs will not be enough; a regional authority is required to develop communities;*
- *Indigenous values must be retained and upheld in any system of governance.*

*A range of issues need to be tackled to improve Indigenous learning and education outcomes and this includes:*

- *Recruiting and retaining quality teachers and school principals;*
- *Improving school attendance;*
- *Providing pre-school preparation;*

- *Dealing with physical and emotional needs of children;*
- *Providing high school opportunities for children in remote locations;*
- *Better engagement by schools and teachers with the community;*
- *Building the capacity of teachers and parents to improve cultural understanding;*
- *Including Indigenous language and culture into the teaching curriculum;*
- *Assisting children with career development; and*
- *Improving, confidence, self-esteem and motivation.*

*Decision makers need to be informed about cultural issues especially needs and priorities. A study to understand communities, to examine issues, identify strategic directions and identify who should be involved can inform people at the State and National level of the issues and priorities and the method by which Aboriginal people want to work with Governments on cultural sustainability.*

*Health is not about doctors and nurses, it is about health sustainability. There are still a number of issues in Indigenous communities that affect health sustainability, for example:*

- *Housing and essential services;*
- *Access to food and supply of food especially fresh fruit and vegetables;*
- *Transportation and food supply;*
- *Nutrition and healthy eating programs;*
- *Health education in schools and for young parents;*
- *Community participation in health and healthy lifestyles for individuals;*
- *Employment, self esteem and self-respect;*
- *Positive parenting;*
- *Community and individual safety and security;*
- *Social activities and social inclusion programs;*
- *Rubbish removal and maintenance;*
- *Health hardware and environmental health;*
- *Resources and support for community ideas.*

*Regional development is about having good sound governance to create the capacity for regional development. But in the Kimberley, Federal and State bureaucrats determine policies and programs and there is very little representation of Indigenous people in regional governance including Local Government. There are a number of issues in regards to regional development, including:*

- *Lack of acknowledgement of Indigenous authority and lack of an Indigenous role in governance in the Kimberley;*
- *The need to build trust, positive relationships and strong identities to break the cycle of negativity in communities;*

- *Need to assist people balance law, culture and mainstream responsibilities;*
- *Lack of governance structures to deliver resources locally in a coordinated manner;*
- *Lack of consistency in service delivery, duplication of services and lack of information;*
- *Dysfunctional system of sustainable community development funding – current system of grant funding is not able to address needs on the ground;*
- *Lack of collaboration between portfolio areas on the ground;*
- *The need for a robust Indigenous bureaucracy in portfolio areas within a regional governance arrangement;*
- *The expectation that Indigenous people should all be unified, yet the Australian way of governance is about debate, discussion and dispute resolution;*
- *No recognised government forums for Indigenous people to discuss issues in a bold way, present unified positions and create capacities for change and development.*

## **The Second Concurrent Session: Recommendations for Moving Forward**

In this session the participants in each group were asked to identify what Kimberley Aboriginal groups and/or organisations need to do about the issues identified and prioritized in session one. Core recommendations proposed and endorsed by the group in each theme area was the expected outcome.

### ***(1) Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability***

The economic development and environmental sustainability group looked at some key projects for moving forward, setting target to achieve outcomes by December 2009. The group recognized the need to create the space or forum to continue the conversation on economic development and the engagement of Indigenous people in protecting the environment and country. They put forward a proposal to continue the conversation, develop the knowledge and achieve outcomes in key areas. This proposal involved the creation of a knowledge broker organization to facilitate the discussion and the buy in of Indigenous economic entities and the community as well as manage projects. The Kimberley Institute is recommended as an appropriate knowledge broker and project manager.

The group identified a number of projects to continue the conversation and to begin a process which is driven by these conversations. The objective is to create a new model for Indigenous economic development and Indigenous engagement so that Indigenous people can take ownership of the processes and

determine a role for Indigenous people in economic development and environmental sustainability. These projects are as follows:

- Undertake a Kimberley economic gaps analysis to focus economic initiatives but also to be informed of any activities that may impact negatively on Indigenous communities.
- Establish a major carbon economy project involving all Indigenous land across the Kimberley including Trust lands, reserve lands, private Indigenous owned pastoral leases, and ILC owned pastoral leases.
- Establish a policy framework for Kimberley Indigenous people in relation to protection of cultural rights, Indigenous rights in water and equity within the consumptive pool.
- Examine an investment model for private home ownership building on the housing pilot model being developed in the east Kimberley.

These projects would begin and inform a series of conversations in 2009 to create synergies and partnerships across the projects. The conversations would also examine the broader economic development plans for the Kimberley, although this is a process to achieve Indigenous aspirations and to enable Indigenous ownership rather than be subservient to the broader processes of other agencies where Indigenous people have no control.

## ***(2) Education and Training***

The education and training group looked at how things could be done differently and recommended a range of initiatives to improve education and training outcomes for Indigenous people and to build Indigenous capacity for change.

The group articulated the lack of accountability between the education sectors and Indigenous community. To ensure accountability:

- Create partnerships and agreements with the community to develop creative ways to improve enrolment, engagement, attendance and educational outcomes.
- The education sectors must recruit and retain quality teachers and school principals and employment should be performance managed and contracts should be outcome based.
- The Indigenous community should be part of the recruitment and performance management processes.
- School principals must have links with the Indigenous community and must also be accountable to the community for education outcomes.
- District Education Directors are in their position to make a difference and to achieve results and must focus on achieving results and report to the community in that regard.

The education sector must also deal with the underlying issues in regards to learning and educational outcomes. Career development, school attendance and counselling are important to learning and so to achieve better educational outcomes:

- The education sectors must recruit career development officers to develop career pathways connected to employment opportunities for children in high school and as early as primary school.
- Attendance officers (not truant officers) must be recruited in every school to case manage children and families and broker support for them. Their role would be proactive not a punitive working with principals, teachers, parents and the whole community.
- Counsellors must also be employed to work with traumatised students and staff.
- Develop appropriate curriculum to include Aboriginal language and history.
- Engage Indigenous community members to deliver local cultural awareness training so that teachers understand the cultural context to develop the skills of children to operate within Indigenous and mainstream cultures.

The group recognized that parents are responsible for sending their children to school but many parents lack proper parenting skills to deal with their children and they lack the capabilities to deal with the school system. Building the capacity of parents and families is also important, but who will support parents and families in this regard? In many respects it is about community attitudes to improving their social and economic wellbeing, however many people have been conditioned into welfare dependency. This must be addressed, but by whom?

Acquiring skills and getting a job are an important step for societal change for Indigenous people, yet many Indigenous people have low self-esteem, lack of confidence and motivation and lack the necessary skills to secure a job. A range of initiatives were put forward by the group to improve training and employment outcomes:

- Assist Indigenous people to deal and adapt to change and develop confidence building programs before people go into job training
- Educate and encourage the community to support, encourage and praise individuals who are trying to change their lives to gain and retain mainstream employment.
- Improve coordination of training and employment courses/programs between service providers (CDEPs, RTOs & DEEWR).
- Ensure RTOs work readiness course modules include a focus on "balancing of lifestyle and work commitment".

- Develop appropriate motivational, goal setting, self esteem and confidence building programs and implement these programs prior to the work readiness courses.
- Address psychological issues that impact on the ability of Indigenous jobseekers in gaining and retaining employment through work ready programs.
- CDEPs to implement compulsory participation for illiterate jobseekers to attend literacy and numeracy programs and job readiness programs.
- Provide mentors to work with jobseekers to assist with personal skill development, job retention and to encourage and empower jobseekers to address their workplace, family and personal issues.
- Head hunt and provide training to develop the skills of potential community role models/leaders to become mentors.
- Service providers to coordinate an approach to working with families of the jobseekers to ensure families establish a quality lifestyle that meets and this includes financial counselling.
- The Government needs to establish hostels to provide remote community jobseekers with temporary accommodation so they have an opportunity to participate in training and employment.
- The Government needs to provide more drug and alcohol rehabilitation centres within the Kimberley region as drug and alcohol problems are major barriers to employment.
- Indigenous leaders need to educate youth to develop the next generation of leaders and this includes identifying youth who demonstrate leadership qualities and establishing youth forums to increase knowledge and skill and develop strategies.

### ***(3) Cultural Sustainability***

The cultural sustainability group recommended a number of principles for moving forward. These are:

- Recognise and demand that engagement and relationships with government and others be based on a fundamental respect and acceptance of Indigenous cultures.
- Customary law is the framework and foundation of Indigenous societies.
- Support for culturally determined structures – sustaining, maintaining, preserving and promoting.
- Language and traditional knowledge is to be recognised because it is vital to Indigenous people's lives.
- Support (including financial support) for families especially for men, to "re-build" their families.

#### ***(4) Health***

The health group recommended a structure for moving forward to take collective responsibility for issues. While noting past discussions about a regional authority, a representative body and joint venture arrangements, the health group recommended an independent representative body as an appropriate vehicle for moving forward. They also noted from a health perspective there is currently a Kimberley Aboriginal Health Planning Forum which is unfunded and independent of government, although it has Government decision makers represented on the forum.

The group recommended the establishment of the a representative body, called the Kimberley Aboriginal Body (this is only a working name) that would be independent of Government and would represent Kimberley Indigenous stakeholders and/or institutions – language, pastoral, economic development, media, education and training, land, health, law and culture, regional development. The Kimberley Aboriginal Body would meet four times per year to look at issues from a regional perspective but it would also take into consideration local issues through local advisory bodies that may be established if required.

A secretariat would be established to provide administration and management support. The Kimberley Institute could assist establish the Kimberley Aboriginal Body, undertake research on representation and structure of the body, raise funds and provide logistic support to the Kimberley Aboriginal Body.

Representatives on the Kimberley Aboriginal Body could be delegates from each of the stakeholders and/or institutions and they could be the chairpersons and chief executive officers. Stakeholder or member institutions would pay a membership fee. The Kimberley Aboriginal Body would respect the rights, responsibilities and autonomy of all stakeholders and institutions and this includes their right to negotiate agreements on their own behalf. The Kimberley Aboriginal Body will not supersede existing Indigenous structures but would be a forum to integrate Indigenous structures and articulate common matters of concern and interest.

#### ***(5) Regional Development***

The regional development group looked at the issue of regional development from a regional governance perspective. The group considered how Indigenous people can develop leadership, identity, empowerment, sustainable communities and develop infrastructure within communities. While the Kimberley Conversation forum is a step in that direction there is a need for further conversations to look at a collective shared vision and examine how

Indigenous people might influence development in the Kimberley from an Indigenous perspective.

The group made a number of recommendations to move forward. They are:

- There is a need for an agreement on a shared vision for development in the Kimberley and this should be developed through further conversations.
- A wide and equitable representation of Indigenous people across the Kimberley is required – consideration should be given to a system of proportional representation.
- Better collaboration and coordination of service delivery and service providers to improve service delivery and develop infrastructure in communities.
- Provide sustainable funding for regional areas and distribute more funds locally – royalties for regions funds are being distributed by the KDC which does not represent Indigenous interests.
- The development and implementation of policies regarding regional areas so that Indigenous people action policy thereby providing equality of services, funding to communities and building trust within communities and within the region.
- Build mainstream trust in Indigenous processes to secure broad Kimberley support but also build trust with State and federal Governments so that they trust Indigenous people to manage their own affairs and be accountable.
- Build positive partnerships with education and training providers so that Indigenous people can define education and training outcomes and take responsibility for those outcomes.
- More resources are required to better service delivery, community and regional development.
- Indigenous organisations must step-up to their responsibilities and take responsibility for issues and concerns of communities.
- Create wealth and investment funds within regional areas to build sustainable communities and so there is less reliance on government funding.
- Create a political structure and/or framework as a regional governance model (based on our Native Title/Traditional Owner boundaries) to disburse Federal, State and community funding.
- Build positive relationships with community people elders, youth and so on to create more opportunities.

### ***Key Messages: Second Concurrent Session***

*To continue the conversation in economic development and environmental sustainability, to ensure Indigenous people retain ownership of the processes*

*and to create partnerships across the broader economic development plans for the Kimberley the following is proposed:*

- *A Kimberley economic gap analysis to focus on economic opportunities;*
- *Establishment of a carbon economy project involving all Indigenous lands;*
- *The development of a policy framework to protect cultural rights, Indigenous water rights and equity in water;*
- *Examination of an investment model for private home ownership;*
- *Creation of a knowledge broker organization to facilitate discussions and manage projects.*

*There are a range of initiatives to improve education and training outcomes for Indigenous people, including:*

- *Improve accountability between schools and the community by performance based outcomes;*
- *Create partnerships and agreements between schools and the community to improve outcomes;*
- *Deal with underlying issues through the recruitment of attendance officers, career development officers and counsellors;*
- *Include Aboriginal language and history in school curriculum and provide cultural awareness training to teachers;*
- *Build capabilities of parents to deal with their children's education and to engage with the school system;*
- *Improve the skills, self-esteem, confidence and motivation of Indigenous people through training, work readiness and other initiatives so they can secure a job.*

*There are a number of principles that must be adhered to in regards to cultural sustainability - recognition that customary law is the framework and foundation of Indigenous societies; engagement and relationships must be based on respect and acceptance of Indigenous cultures; support for culturally determined structures; recognition that language and traditional knowledge is vital to people's lives; and supporting men to rebuild families.*

*A Kimberley Indigenous representative body, independent of Government and representing all Indigenous stakeholders and/or institutions is recommended. The representative body would meet to discuss issues from a regional perspective but also consider local issues. All stakeholders would retain their autonomy and the right to negotiate agreements on their own behalf. A secretariat would be established to provide administration and management support.*

*Regional development issues are linked to a regional governance perspective. To move forward a range of initiatives are recommended including:*

- The development of a shared vision for the Kimberley through further conversations;*
- Representation of Indigenous people across the Kimberley on proportional representative basis;*
- Creation of a structure as a regional governance model to disburse funding to communities;*
- Build mainstream trust in Indigenous processes, build Government trust in Indigenous management and build trust between within communities and the region;*
- Improve collaboration and coordination of service delivery and build partnerships between service providers and communities;*
- Provide more resources for service delivery, development of communities and for Indigenous organisations to take on responsibilities;*
- Create wealth and investment funds to create economic independence;*
- Build relationships with key groups in the communities.*

### **Address by Lt. General John Sanderson**

Lt. General John Sanderson addressed the forum at the commencement of day two. He set out the intention of the Western Australian Indigenous Implementation Board (IIB) and outlined its philosophical position. He commenced by referring to a press release and statement of the IIB released after the first meeting of the Board. The statement identified the intended action of the IIB for its first 100 days and this includes undertaking a series of regional dialogues commencing in the Kimberley; meeting with senior Aboriginal law men and women; developing and empowering Indigenous leaders; and commencing redesign of Government process and decision making in conjunction with the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee and Aboriginal Advisory Council.

A series of dialogues will happen across the State between the IIB and Indigenous people, commencing in March 2009 in the Kimberley. The objective of the dialogue is to empower Indigenous people through a regional approach. It is also IIB's objective to empower Indigenous people on a State basis and by that process empower Indigenous people on a national basis. From the IIB's perspective the important consideration is to have a voice in the region to which the IIB can engage. According to General Sanderson a state of 'burgeoning complexity' exists in Indigenous affairs in Australia and has so for a long time. Burgeoning complexity exists when mechanisms are put in place to treat symptoms rather than causes and in doing so the complexity is compounded adding to the inability to solve the problems. The result is that people get frustrated and totally alienated by the system.

In his contract with the previous Carpenter Labor Government, General Sanderson said he had two types of conversations with Indigenous people. One part of the conversation related to the lack of say in policies and control over the way Government interacts with Indigenous people. However this is overwhelmed by the other part of the conversation which related to the service delivery and socio-economic problems in communities. There is a great demand to attend to those problems but they will not solve the burgeoning complexity.

The solution according to General Sanderson lay in getting the relationship right and getting the commitment and sentiment right and proper governance to take the nation into the future. It involves changing the mindset of Australians, but it must also be given expression in the way we relate to each other and how we govern ourselves. There is immediacy to this. This is where the IIB and also the Australian dialogue are coming from – it's about how to get the mechanisms and relationships right in the shorter term. In order to move away from the idea of non-Indigenous Australians inflicting their will on Indigenous Australians there has to be a powerful Indigenous voice which cannot be ignored and which becomes one of the key driving factors in the way the relationship emerges. This cannot be done in Perth or Canberra.

General Sanderson stated that we must have a system that is integrated with the non-Indigenous vision but is driven by Indigenous need. However the Indigenous component must have real potency. In the process, it must be driven by Indigenous people and there must be a clear understanding that this is the system through which Indigenous people are feeding their needs, ideas and priorities. The Indigenous voice must be informed and constant and Indigenous people must be committed to it on the basis that it meets their needs. It must take into account individual concerns and must also be dynamic and able to change as the needs change and new voices are heard. General Sanderson recognized this is a big task because in this conversation there are voices missing and they need to be brought into the process. However it is clear that Indigenous people see the need for change and to form a strong voice.

According to General Sanderson the critical dimension of all of this is identifying priorities – what are the issues that have to be dealt with first? There is a whole range of priorities and there needs to be agreement on priorities. At the same time the current work dealing with issues needs to continue, however there will be funding requirements for the new tasks that need to be done. The IIB has to advise the Government that seed funding is required in order to reflect the change in priorities and momentum. This seed funding can come from either the State or Federal Government, although the Federal Government has the bulk of the funding and responsibility. The Federal Government has to

acknowledge that priorities have to change and must agree with the shift in priorities. What is required is a mechanism that brings the Federal, State, non-Government and Indigenous peoples together on a regional basis and all other agencies have to assist Indigenous people shape their agenda and their priorities. A great deal of thought needs to be put into this because this goes to the heart of the type of country we want to live in and the sort of world we want to live in.

However on the other side of the equation is the question of how Indigenous people are going to make this change and to get people to commit to this new way of thinking. These ideas can only work if Indigenous people come together and form a coherent view and a cohesive joint vision. General Sanderson stated he is prepared to put a lot of effort into helping that view develop and for it to be sustained on a constant basis. This conversation must be constant, dynamic and linked into the State and Federal Governments. We need to be bold and aggressive as that is the only way things will happen.

The IIB will commence the dialogue in the Kimberley because the Kimberley people have in their power to lead a powerful change in the way it deals with these issues. It is not just about Indigenous people but about the whole nation and the landscape itself. Further the IIB has agreed that it is necessary to facilitate meetings of senior Aboriginal law men and women to advise the board as a parallel process. The IIB will also ensure the development and empowerment of Indigenous leaders not only through engagement processes, but through training and education to empower leaders. The IIB will also commence the redesign of Government process and decision making in partnership with the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee (AACC) and the Aboriginal Advisory Council (AAC) which does not exist as yet. The AAC is a parallel body which exists in legislation is being discussed at both the State and Federal level. It will be brought into the process hence the IIB is not the only voice for Indigenous people. The AAC is a moderating organisation to ensure priorities determined in the dialogue with the IIB reflect the need of Indigenous people and don't get out of balance. The critical component not mentioned in the IIB statement are the regional Indigenous bodies and their relationship with governance mechanisms in the region and that is where the IIB needs to get onto quickly.

***Key Messages: Lt. General John Sanderson Address***

*In its first 100 days of operation the Indigenous Implementation Board (IIB) will undertake a series of regional dialogues commencing in the Kimberley. It is important for the IIB to have a voice in the region to which it can engage.*

*The IIB action agenda includes meeting with senior Aboriginal law men and women; developing and empowering Indigenous leaders; and commencing redesign of Government process and decision making in conjunction with the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee and Aboriginal Advisory Council.*

*A state of 'burgeoning complexity' exists in Indigenous affairs in Australia and has so for a long time. Burgeoning complexity is when symptoms are treated rather than causes and this compounds the complexity adding to the inability to solve problems. The result is that people get frustrated and totally alienated by the system.*

*There is a great demand to deal with service delivery and socio-economic problems in communities, however attending to those problems will not solve the burgeoning complexity. The work of dealing with these issues needs to continue; however the solution is in developing a new relationship, getting the commitment and sentiment right and putting in place proper governance.*

*There must be a powerful Indigenous voice in the regions which cannot be ignored and which becomes one of the key driving factors in the way the relationship emerges. The Indigenous voice must be informed and constant and Indigenous people must be committed to it on the basis that it meets their needs. It must take into account individual concerns and must also be dynamic and able to change as the needs change and new voices are heard.*

*The critical dimension is identifying priorities. Indigenous people need to come together to form a coherent view and a cohesive joint vision. The critical component is the regional Indigenous organizations and their relationship with governance mechanisms in the region.*

*The current work needs to continue in dealing with problems; however at the same time there is a requirement to fund the new tasks that need to be done. Funding is required from the State and Federal Government. The Federal Government also has to acknowledge that priorities have to change and must agree with the shift in priorities.*

*The IIB is not the only voice for Indigenous people. The Aboriginal Advisory Council is a parallel body to the IIB and it will be a moderating organization to ensure priorities reflect the need of Indigenous people.*

## **Response to General John Sanderson**

In response to a question about concerns that there would be a clash of agendas and that the Aboriginal Advisory Council would not represent all Kimberley people, Patrick Walker (Director General, Department of Indigenous

Affairs) outlined the role and responsibilities of the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee (AACC) and the Aboriginal Advisory Council (AAC). Unlike the IIB chaired by General Sanderson both the AACC and AAC are bodies established under the *Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972* but both bodies have been inactive for a decade or more. The WA Government is re-activating these bodies.

The AACC is about the machinery of Government. The original intention of the legislators was to have a cut through mechanism. The AACC comprises the Director Generals of Government Departments – Premier and Cabinet, Treasury, Health, Education, Housing and Child Protection. The committee is chaired by the Department of Indigenous Affairs. This committee is unusual because there is provision for voting in regards to decision making. Patrick Walker explained that he saw the committee as a great mechanism to give effect to voices particularly in the regions and to cut through the myriad of bureaucracies.

The AAC is a body of 12 Indigenous people and their role is to advise the Minister and the Government on the issues relating to indigenous people, service provision, and policy development and so on. Membership is drawn from the State and nominations were invited a few weeks ago. A peer assessment panel comprising four Indigenous people will make recommendations to the Minister on the composition of the committee. There is a regional focus to the committee and the chair of the AAC has a permanent statutory position on the AACC.

A question directed at General Sanderson asked whether he had the authority to direct the Director-Generals, to direct the regional managers and have direct access to the Minister and the Premier to unblock the bureaucratic arteries because the Kimberley Indigenous community needed a guarantee that there is a level of serious commitment. Most Indigenous people have had experiences with advisory committees and their performance or lack of it and there is serious cause for concern if failed Government systems are now being brought back. Not only is there conflict in interest from a regional point of view but over the last 20 years Indigenous people have made a number statements in regards to regional governance. Advisory committees have been a major obstacle to regional governance because Governments have accepted the advice of the advisory committee for their own political expediency to avoid negotiating directly with the Indigenous community.

General Sanderson stated that moral authority is the key in this process and the IIB has moral authority but only if it is used boldly and aggressively. In regards to unblocking bureaucratic arteries he said there is a need to be properly

informed and in that regard there must be an effective secretariat and connection to Indigenous people in the regions to work out the priority issues, the commitment and desires of Indigenous people. If there is confusion the whole process will be undermined and moral authority will be weakened. So the IIB and Indigenous people are locked together to determine the success of this process. The challenge for the Indigenous community is to deliver a proper set of information and priorities that has agreement in the regions.

A further point was made that bringing back what was designed in legislation in 1972 created scepticism because those days are gone. It is now necessary to unblock the bureaucratic arteries. Indigenous people know what their issues are and can deliver what is being asked of the forum. General Sanderson commented that the Kimberley voice was not totally represented in the room.

A final comment and question related to the need for initiative from Government to develop a new strategy to challenge the existing policy environment in regards to economic development and whether the IIB would look at economic development issues. General Sanderson stated that it is difficult to develop a view on these issues if there is no regional vision. He said powerful outside forces already have a vision for the Kimberley and their vision has nothing to do with people in the Kimberley. They are able to get away with this because there is no vision for the Kimberley or for the nation. Indigenous people must shape their own vision and come together with non-Indigenous people in the Kimberley.

### ***Key Messages: Response to General Sanderson***

*The WA Government is reactivating the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee and the Aboriginal Advisory Council. The AAC is a body of 12 Indigenous nominees who advise the Minister and the Government on Indigenous issues. The AACC comprises the Director Generals of six Government agencies and their role is to coordinate services and assistance to Indigenous people.*

*There is concern about a possible clash of agendas between the Indigenous Implementation Board, Aboriginal Advisory Council and the Kimberley Indigenous agenda. There is further concern that the Indigenous Implementation Board does not have the authority to direct the bureaucracy or unblock bureaucratic arteries.*

*Indigenous advisory committees have failed in the past so to reinstate the Advisory Council is a cause for serious concern because Governments are more inclined to accept the advice of the advisory committee rather than deal directly*

*with Indigenous communities. The days of Indigenous advisory committees are gone.*

*According to General Sanderson moral authority is the key and it has to be used boldly and aggressively. Moral authority is dependent upon Indigenous people delivering a proper set of information and priorities that has the agreement of all Indigenous people in the region.*

*In regards to economic development issues, General Sanderson stated that Indigenous people must shape their own vision and then come together with non-Indigenous people to form a Kimberley vision.*

### **Response by Patrick Dodson**

In a separate response Patrick Dodson made a number of points in regards to Indigenous representation, perceptions of law and culture, systemic Government dominance and the Kimberley image and vision.

The issue of representation is a matter that arose in the exchange with General Sanderson. Patrick Dodson said he was comfortable about the level of representation at this conversation because those who had attended the forum were indicative and representative of Indigenous people in the Kimberley. Attendance at the conversation was broad based and cross sectional as it could be under the circumstances given the limited resources, the time of the year, the demands on people's time and the situation with roads in the Kimberley. He warned that some will say the forum does not represent certain people or that others feel they are not being represented, but this is part of the colonial game. The forum needed to move on and turn their energies into constructive directions. In any case statements that the Indigenous voice is not totally represented in this forum are not taken as identification with absolute uniformity and unanimity that is; everyone should be present in the room to make a decision. This is nonsense and is never going to work.

In regards to the matter of law and culture mentioned in the Indigenous Implementation Board statement, whereby the board is facilitating meetings of senior Aboriginal law men and women to advise the board. General Sanderson is to meet with the law and culture centre, however this should not mean that people attending this forum have no law and culture either. Patrick Dodson spoke of the Yawuru who had to go through an awful adversarial native title process to demonstrate that they had retained their law, culture and society after 200 years of oppression and destruction. The Yawuru won their claim and also won it on appeal. He said that some people have a view that law and culture is sitting out there, in some other place. This can create a sense of disempowerment. He stated that empowerment of Indigenous people is about

being cohesive and inclusive. It would be misleading if bureaucrats were given the perception that law and culture exists somewhere else because law and culture exists within people.

Systemic Government dominance is seen as the inertia, ineptitude and sloppiness of Government in serving Indigenous people. Patrick Dodson referred to the notion of 'mental constipation' a term coined by Oodgeroo Noonuccal a great Indigenous poet who referred to the mental constipation in the minds of non-Indigenous people in their relationships with Indigenous peoples. They are so mentally constipated as to how to deal with indigenous people that they are incapable of understanding the inherent faults within their own methodology and systems and their own ideology. This is a real problem and Government machinery has to change. He stated that Indigenous people belong to this region and our leadership is strong. Indigenous people will devise our own vision and we will interface with the Government on whatever front they wish to put forward. He stated there were serious leaders in the forum who were dedicated to achieving their long standing aspiration on behalf of the leaders who have passed on.

Patrick Dodson urged forum participants to symbolize their vision for the Kimberley in an image before they put it into words. He spoke of the strategic conversations that happened in South Africa between blacks and whites after the appalling years of apartheid. These were called the Mont Fleur discussions. In those discussions they developed a number of images to imagine what they wanted their country to be like in going forward. They settled on the image of the flight of flamingos because they are a group of birds who are so graceful in the way they take off and land and how they automatically resonate with each other in their movement and activities. This was the image they wanted for their country because it reflected equity, equality, respect, grace, and beauty and so on. He spoke about the Kimberley Institute logo and how that was designed by a young non-Indigenous girl in the Broome Catholic High School. Her image of the Kimberley captured the Kimberley Institute's sense of what it was trying to do.

Patrick Dodson urged participants not to be despondent. He stated that the conversations will continue and Indigenous people would develop our own image to symbolize to other Indigenous nations and to the State and others as to what Kimberley Indigenous people are about. He urged participants to organise 'our own house' and to be prepared for a battle.

***Key Messages: Response by Patrick Dodson***

*Those participants who have attended the Kimberley Conversation are indicative and representative of Indigenous people in the Kimberley. Under the*

*circumstances attendance at the conversation was broad based and cross sectional.*

*Law and culture exists in all Indigenous people. The view that law and culture is sitting out there, in some other place can create a sense of disempowerment. Empowerment of Indigenous people is about being cohesive and inclusive.*

*The inertia, ineptitude and sloppiness of Government in serving Indigenous people reflects the 'mental constipation' in the minds of non-Indigenous people in their relationships with Indigenous peoples. Mental constipation is when the dominant system is incapable of dealing with Indigenous people and incapable of understanding the inherent faults within their own methodology and systems and their own ideology.*

*The conversations will continue, however the vision of the Kimberley needs to be imaged before it is put into words. In the formulation of the Kimberly vision, Indigenous people need to think of what it is they want to symbolize their vision.*

### **The Third Concurrent Session: Areas for Further Engagement**

In this session, having heard from Lt. General John Sanderson the groups were asked how and who they need to engage with to implement strategies and solutions. The nomination and endorsement of representatives to progress *The Kimberley Conversation* recommendations proposed in each of the six core areas was the expected outcome.

#### ***(1) Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability***

The economic development and environmental sustainability group said they are not waiting around for government. They are passionate about developing a framework for change, a paradigm shift and they want to move forward. The group outlined a process to develop a broad vision and they put forward a conceptual framework on how this process would happen on the ground. The group agreed to meet again in two months to shape the process and work with the Kimberley Institute.

The group explained that the paradigm shift is about better equity for Indigenous people in terms of commercial and community benefits and doing business differently with Indigenous people. Indigenous people should be the drivers for change not the after thought - it involves proper participation in development processes and it is about adding value to existing processes. For Indigenous people it is about creating community and systemic change, rejecting the welfare model of oppression, building models around freedom and

justice and based on human rights and moving to wealth creation and engaging with the capitalist process. Indigenous people are key partners in development.

The framework involves the notion of regional governance although that term is used in a generic sense as those discussions are ongoing. There is a view the Kimberley Institute should facilitate those discussions. The first aspect of the framework involves further conversations on the six core themes discussed at this forum by a peak regional body. The second aspect involves engagement with the Indigenous Implementation Board (IIB) on issues of regional governance, service delivery, institutional reform and building capacity. The third aspect is moral authority in that if there is to be fundamental systemic change then there should be a joint Kimberley taskforce with IIB to engage on an ongoing basis – there has to be some basis upon which there is a joint Kimberly approach. This relationship is via the Kimberley Institute in regards to facilitating further conversations with the peak Indigenous organisations, communities and Indigenous representatives on a regional basis or in individual areas or on a service delivery basis. This does not take away from the individual core areas to deal independently of this process. The fourth aspect is a dialogue with the broader stakeholders other than Indigenous interests and this includes local government, industry and other community stakeholders in the Kimberley.

The procedure for engagement is about growing a vision and implementing the vision. It includes evaluating existing Government processes which are dysfunctional and do not allow Indigenous people to get their issues on the table or do not provide feedback if issues are taken up. It also includes evaluating existing service delivery by both Government and Indigenous agencies to ensure service delivery is performance based, there are measurable outcome on the ground and there is accountability to the communities.

There needs to be space to contribute to this conversation and to develop a mechanism where economic development and environmental sustainability issues can be taken to a portfolio group which has particular expertise. This does not take away from community driven initiatives but is a way of looking at projects to start the change process. There needs to be a pool of funding that can be applied to resourcing a case study to develop a model which is outcome based and is able to measure where the investment is spent and what results are achieved on the ground. There is a need for sound evidence based approaches and evaluation bench marks, which could be replicated in other local contexts.

Partnerships are required with Government, private corporations, local government and non government organisations for sustainable economic and

environmental development in the Kimberley. Partnerships are also required with research bodies that are doing research on country. They need to be accountable because these types of partnerships can build community capacity - social, human, cultural and economic capital of Aboriginal people and communities.

## ***(2) Education and Training***

The education and training group put forward a model to advance the dialogue and conversation for Kimberly Indigenous people. The model involves service providers, representatives from the Kimberley representative group and representatives for elders and youth meeting on a monthly basis at a local level to identify and discuss issues. Recommendations would then be taken back to the Kimberley representative group for discussion within portfolio groups (as per the theme groups in the Kimberley Conversation), who would then make recommendations to the Indigenous Implementation Board (IIB). Two representatives from the Kimberley representative group would be represented on the IIB.

The model is a process for dialogue and identifying issues to put to Government but on the other hand it encourages Indigenous people to take responsibility at a local level to discuss issues with service providers so that the service providers deliver an appropriate service. It involves empowering people and giving them the confidence to advocate issues with service providers. This involves having the community take responsibility through leadership, working together, engaging the community, local involvement, and local direction setting. It is about getting service providers and local Indigenous people collaborating. This also ensures accountability on the part of service providers.

Indigenous people are still talking about issues today that have been discussed for the last 30 years, issues that our fathers and grandfathers talked about so there is a real need for change in the way business is done between Indigenous people and Governments. Governments need to change at all levels and need to be dealing with people in the Kimberley. For change to happen Governments need to deal with the right people and not hand pick representatives. Indigenous people must nominate who is represented on boards and committees. These people must know what is going on at the local and regional level.

There are too many mixed messages because of the number of committees around which are crossing over each other. It is becoming confusing with all these different bodies. There needs to be a body that can represent the interest of Indigenous people to all these other separate bodies. The group

expressed their confidence in those Indigenous people who are representing people today.

The group looked at some of the issues that could be dealt with at a regional level and which are achievable. These issues are:

- The three education sectors (Government, Catholic and Independent) need to work together to develop uniform learning and attendance strategies so that Indigenous children are not disadvantaged as a result of family mobility.
- For better employment outcomes and clear career opportunities leading to employment the training and employment sectors need to coordinate rather than compete with each other.
- Indigenous staff in the education sector need clear pathways for career opportunities so there are more indigenous teachers and school principals.
- Formal community and school partnership agreements setting out roles and responsibilities of the school, parents and students are a way forward. They must be based on mutual respect and not be token or the relationship is dictated by the school principal.
- Residential hostels built in main towns so that children can access quality education and training.

### ***(3) Cultural Sustainability***

The cultural sustainability group acknowledged that not everyone who can speak for culture were present, so they recommended smaller conversations with Kimberley Indigenous people to identify needs and future directions for cultural sustainability across the Kimberley. The State and Federal Government must financially support this process. Local areas will agree on the issues for the cultural sustainability plans and these plans would form a strategic plan for the Kimberley.

In regards to the regional representative model such as the Kimberley Aboriginal Body put forward by the health group, the group recommended that the membership should be identified through the KALAC, KLRC, KLC and smaller inclusive groups for example MG Corporation in Kununurra. Further if the representative body deals with an issue specific to a local area, then the organization or representatives from that area must be engaged in the process. The Kimberley Institute is recommended as the secretariat for the representative body and Patrick Dodson plus other nominated leaders would speak on behalf of the representative body.

### ***(4) Health***

The health group did not convene on the second day however the group had discussed a way for further engagement on day one.

### ***(5) Regional Development***

The regional development group noted that ideas about regional representation have been discussed previously and so they did not see the need to revisit what had been discussed before. However they talked about representation on a regional body. They recommended that a representative structure must have regional representation which is approved by community members and the body must have shared responsibility and vision at community, regional, state and federal levels.

The representative body must be inclusive of all Indigenous people in the Kimberley and representation had to come from native title groups and other sections of the community. The Kullarri Regional Indigenous Representative (KRIB) model was recommended as a model for consideration for a wider Kimberley representative body. This model has been developed in the Kullarri region with the support of the ICC. The consultant employed to develop the model spoke with a whole range of people including people from one mile and airport reserves.

The group noted there are a range of representative models around in the mainstream and some of these bodies rely on the separation of powers between elected representatives and bureaucracy. In this process the group saw service providers as separate from the representation and governance process. Peak Indigenous organizations, Government and other NGOs are the bureaucracies that provide service delivery to people within their portfolio areas. They would report to the regional representative body.

The group recommended a role for the Kimberley Institute as the primary policy development and evaluation think tank to capture the best idea, develop them into policy and evaluate policy. There is a need for critical evaluation of service delivery and policy implementation.

### ***Key Messages: Third Concurrent Session***

*A paradigm shift is required and that shift is about:*

- *Better equity for Indigenous people in terms of commercial and community benefits;*
- *Creating community and systemic change, rejecting the welfare model of oppression, building models around freedom and justice and based on human rights and moving to wealth creation;*
- *A framework for moving forward involving further conversations on the six core theme conducted by a peak regional body's, engagement with*

*the IIB, joint Kimberley and IIB taskforce to strengthen moral authority, and dialogue with broader stakeholders in the Kimberley;*

- *A procedure for engagement which includes growing and implementing a vision, evaluating existing service delivery, creating space to discuss economic development issues, developing a outcome based change process model, developing evidence based approaches and evaluation benchmarks, and creating partnerships for economic development and environmental sustainability.*

*A process of dialogue and change is required in regards to education and training and this includes:*

- *A model to advance dialogue involving representatives from the Kimberley Conversation, representatives from elders, youth and service providers who would meet monthly to identify issues. The issues would be discussed within the Kimberley conversation portfolio groups (i.e. theme groups) and recommendations would then be made to the IIB.*
- *Empowering Indigenous people to take responsibility, advocate issues with service providers, and collaborate with service providers;*
- *Change within Government at all levels and for change to happen, Government must deal with the right Indigenous people not hand pick representatives. Indigenous people must choose their representatives;*
- *Tackle issues at a regional level by: creating collaboration between the three education sectors, improving employment and training outcomes through better coordination and collaboration, creating employment pathways for Indigenous people to become teachers and school principals, partnerships between the schools and the communities, and building residential education hostels in the main towns.*

*There is a need for smaller conversations with Kimberley Indigenous people to identify needs and future directions for cultural sustainability. This process must be financially supported. Any regional representative body should have its membership identified through the KALAC, KLRC and KLC and smaller inclusive groups in local areas. The Kimberley Institute is recommended as the secretariat to the representative body.*

*Regional development requires a representative structure that has regional representation, is inclusive of all peoples, is approved by the community and has shared responsibility and vision. Service providers should be separated from the representation and governance process and they would report to the regional representative body. The Kullarri Regional Indigenous Representative model is recommended as a model for consideration. The Kimberley Institute is recommended as a policy development and evaluation think tank to the process.*

## ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

### Continuing the Conversation

All forum participants agreed there was a need to continue the conversation. Throughout the course of the forum a number of key reasons were advanced for the continuation of the conversation. These are:

- Undertake an inclusive process as not all Indigenous stakeholders were present;
- Develop a shared regional Indigenous vision for the Kimberley and examine how Indigenous people might influence development in the Kimberley;
- Engage with and continue discussions on the issues and obtain local and regional Indigenous input into the discussion;
- Create a forum to continue discussions and to create synergies and partnerships with the broader development agenda for the Kimberley;
- Develop a process to achieve Indigenous aspirations and enable Indigenous ownership of the processes;
- Build trust within communities and amongst communities and also build trust in the Indigenous process;
- Create an Indigenous representative voice or body, that is driven and supported by Indigenous people;
- Create a coherent Indigenous agenda and cohesive Indigenous voice to engage with the IIB;
- Ensure accountability for the provision of services to indigenous communities;
- Identify issues and agree on priorities that need to be dealt with;
- Create a paradigm shift around community and systemic change, rejection of welfare, freedom and justice, protection of human rights and wealth creation.

### The Structure for Moving Forward

A number of models were suggested to the forum as the means to take the process forward in terms of advancing the development of a regional representative body and continuing the conversation throughout the Kimberley. There was no agreement on or endorsement of any one body.

These models are described as follows:

- (1) A representative body independent of Government representing all Indigenous stakeholders and/or institutions and members would pay a membership fee. Representatives would come from each of the stakeholders and/or institutions and they could be chairpersons and chief executive officers. A secretariat would be established to provide policy, administration, management and logistical support. The Kimberley Institute was recommended as the secretariat.
- (2) A regional governance framework formed by peak Indigenous organizations for engagement to further the conversations on the six themes; engage with the IIB on issues of regional governance, service delivery, institutional reform and capacity building; strengthen moral authority by a joint taskforce approach with the IIB; and undertake a dialogue with broader stakeholders in the Kimberley. The Kimberley Institute would provide policy advice, facilitate the conversations and manage the relationships with the IIB and mainstream stakeholders.
- (3) Local representatives groups involving all service providers, representatives from a regional Kimberley representative group and representatives for elderly and youth would identify local issues and forward them to the Kimberley representative group for further discussion within portfolio groups (as per the six themes). Recommendations would then be made to the IIB. The Kimberley representative group would also sit on the IIB.
- (4) The Kullarri Regional Indigenous Representative model developed in the Kullarri region and discussed by a large cross section of Indigenous people in the region. The details of the model were not presented to the forum.

It is clear from the key reasons advanced to continue the conversation (see above at continuing the conversation) there is need for a structure or framework to take the conversation forward to develop a clear and strong Indigenous vision and agenda for the Kimberley. The urgent need for a regional decision making forum has certainly been highlighted since the dissolution of ATSIC, which has seen many communities and organizations struggle because of a lack of resources and political support.

But the focus of the forum participants on developing a regional governance model is not something new as united regional approaches have been documented as part of Indigenous discussions in the Kimberley for at least 30 years. The key focus at this stage is to establish a framework for engagement and dialogue to move forward, not necessarily to establish a regional

governance model. Any model for governance will evolve from this process. In that regard to framework should be built around the following immediate tasks:

- Establish an inclusive engagement process to continue the conversation with Indigenous people;
- Establish a regional forum to identify and discuss issues as well as set Indigenous priorities for the region;
- Engage with and develop a conversation with mainstream Kimberley stakeholders;
- Develop an Indigenous vision for the Kimberley with a view to shaping a Kimberley vision that is built on Indigenous values;
- Establish an engagement framework to engage Indigenous communities, to work cooperatively with the Indigenous Implementation Board, the Aboriginal Advisory Council and the federal Government and to engage service providers to solve problems.
- Establish a secretariat to facilitate further engagement and conversations, undertake research, provide policy advice, logistical support, and project management support, facilitate and manage partnerships.
- Seek financial support for the establishment of a regional engagement framework and a secretariat.

The establishment of a Kimberley regional Indigenous representative body has to evolve from a process of engagement and discussion. This involves the establishment of an interim arrangement to build the process, engage communities and stakeholders and manage relationships. The interim arrangement would be dynamic with an ability to change and over time it would evolve into an established governance arrangement that is supported by Indigenous people and recognized by Governments. The interim arrangement may initially involve all peak Indigenous organizations to commence the process; however as the engagement proceeds and the process evolves the role of peak Indigenous organizations will become more clearly defined and that role may be limited to service delivery and not representation and governance.

### **The Issue of Representation**

The issue of representation received considerable comment from two perspectives. The first, related to having a unified Indigenous representative voice before Indigenous people can be taken seriously and the second, related to ensuring that all sectors of the Indigenous community are represented in any regional governance arrangement.

Indigenous people regard themselves as one people but they also recognize that they have differences in language, culture, law and socio-economic priorities. Unfortunately there has been a practice of 'one size fits all' in

Indigenous affairs and this also includes replicating programs, project outcomes and models across the board in Indigenous communities.

The notion that Indigenous people must have a unified voice before they can receive Government assistance or be considered as a worthy and serious group to deal with is a misnomer. Mainstream Australia is not expected to have a unified voice to receive Government assistance or to be considered worthy stakeholders. Some main stream lobby groups for instance may only have a small support base yet they can exert considerable influence over Government. Indeed the whole Australian democratic system of governance is based on adversarial debate but with formal mechanisms for resolving disputes.

Patrick Dodson addressed this issue clearly on the second day of the forum where he said that it is nonsense to expect absolute uniformity and unanimity in making a decision because it is never going to work. In many ways the Kimberley Conversation participants are indicative of Kimberley Indigenous people and they are a representation of Kimberley Indigenous people.

The comments in regards to Indigenous representation on any Kimberley representative body reflected a variety of views such as the need to have:

- A wide and equitable representation across the Kimberley, consideration should be given to portfolio representation.
- Representation from Kimberley indigenous stakeholders and/or institutions.
- A regional governance structure based on native title and/or traditional owner boundaries.
- Local Indigenous representation to deal with service provision issues and regional Indigenous representation to engage with Government.
- Membership to any regional representative body to be identified through the KALAC, KLC and KLRC and smaller inclusive groups and local representative groups.
- Indigenous people nominate their representatives and not for those representatives to be hand picked by Government.
- Separation of service providers from the representation and governance process.

### **Actions for Moving Forward**

It is clear all forum participants agreed with two key actions to move forward. They are:

- (1) The establishment of a regional forum and framework to develop an Indigenous vision, to identify and discuss issues, set Indigenous priorities for the region and engage with the Indigenous Implementation Board and mainstream Kimberley stakeholders.

- (2) Establishment of a secretariat to facilitate further engagement and conversations, undertake research, provide policy advice, logistical support, and project management support, facilitate and manage partnerships.

The health group was the first to propose a Kimberley regional representative body to move forward. Health sustainability is a key objective.

The regional development group linked regional development issues with regional governance. They also stressed the importance of developing a regional vision for the Kimberley.

Three of the forum groups proposed specific actions to move forward.

The economic development and environmental sustainability group proposed a number of projects to inform the ongoing conversation. This also includes the establishment of a knowledge broker organization. The projects include:

- A Kimberley economic gap analysis;
- A carbon economy project;
- A policy framework for Indigenous cultural and water rights including equity in water;
- An investment model for private home ownership.

The education and training group proposed a number of issues that could be worked on at the regional level. They are:

- Collaboration between the three education sectors to develop uniform learning strategies for Indigenous children;
- Coordination between the employment and training sectors to achieve better employment outcomes;
- Development of clear employment pathways for Indigenous staff in schools;
- Formal community and school partnership agreements;
- Building of residential education hostels in main towns.

The cultural sustainability group proposed a regional study to identify issues and propose strategic directions. The study would be overseen by the KALAC and KLRC with guidance from the Kimberley Institute.

## **Resources for Moving Forward**

The matter of resources was alluded to in General Sanderson's address to the forum whereby he stated there will be funding requirements for the new tasks and this funding should come from both the State and federal Government, although the Federal Government has the bulk of the funding and responsibility.

Resources will be required for the above mentioned key actions and associated projects. Sustaining the continuing conversation is not something that can be done on the cheap. If it is a requirement that all Kimberley Indigenous people should be involved in the process of developing a vision, identifying issues and prioritizing those issues then financial resources need to be committed to the process.

It is Indigenous people who must be resourced to undertake the conversation because it is they who must create their vision, identify issues and prioritise issues. This cannot be done by the Indigenous Implementation Board or for that matter the Aboriginal Advisory Council. If resources are not committed then the bold and aggressive statement of the Indigenous Implementation Board is merely talk without delivering sustainable outcomes.

### **Evidence Based Policy**

The need for evidence based approaches/policy and evaluation of existing service delivery were two persistent issues throughout the conversation. The forum participants are calling for major change both within Government and within Indigenous communities. This change process is to be backed up by approaches that are rigorously analysed and are based on evidence and by rigorous evaluation of existing policy and practical approaches to service delivery. Indigenous policy and service delivery should no longer be dictated by the political expediency of Governments. Further bad policy and bad service delivery should not be retained for the sake of political consistency.

### **The Indigenous Implementation Board and the Aboriginal Advisory Council**

Concern was expressed that the Indigenous Implementation Board (IIB) did not have the political clout to direct the Director-Generals or for that matter direct regional managers of Government agencies. Nor does it have the authority to unblock bureaucratic arteries. The IIB does not have legislative authority. Although the Aboriginal Advisory Council (AAC) is considered an outdated concept, it however has legislative authority and its chairperson has a seat on the Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee.

A jostle for political authority and turf may well be looming between the IIB and the AAC. Participants at the conversation want to cooperate and work with both bodies in part because they have no choice but also because they want change. But the problem with having two Indigenous bodies to advise Government and take action on Indigenous issues is that they both may become gate keepers and filters for their respective areas of responsibility causing major bottle necks and blockages.

## Conclusion

The Kimberley Conversation is part of a tradition of Kimberley Aboriginal people seeking to develop a united regional approach. These efforts over the years have been articulated in such forums and subsequent publications as, the *“Rockhole Meeting”, (Noonkanbah station 1978)*, the first Kimberley Law and Culture Festival establishing the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre, Kimberley Language Resource Centre and Magabala Books (Ngumpun 1984); *The Crocodile Hole Report (1991)*; *the Yirra Statement (1994)*; *the Ardiyoolon Statement (1997)*; to Governor General Sir William Deane *The Kimberley; Our Place; Our Future Conference (Broome 1998)*; and more recently *the Mount Barnett Statement (2008)*.

The Kimberley Aboriginal people and their organisations are seeking partnership with Government and Industry to address the key policy aspirations that framed the first Kimberley Conversation forum

1. Cultural Sustainability
2. Environmental Sustainability
3. Economic Development
4. Health
5. Education and Training
6. Regional Development

These partnerships must be based on the principles of cultural match, inclusion and accountability to the Kimberley Community.

The delegates in the Kimberley Conversation believe by engaging with Government and regional Industries in such a way will:

- Build capacity for strong, united and coordinated leadership in the region.
- Promote capacity for coordinated and strategic directions of service delivery to Indigenous people in the Kimberley.
- Promote forward thinking and planning on how to engage in political negotiations that will shape the Kimberley's future economic and social character.

There is strength in our collective contribution to highlight and advance our needs to cause the change we all so desperately seek in the Kimberley.

All Governments need to recognise this conversation and work with us to ensure all voices contribute to this process.

# APPENDIX 1



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## THE KIMBERLEY CONVERSATION

10-11 FEBRUARY 2009, BROOME

## FORUM THEMES – CONTEXT PAPER

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### GENERAL DISCUSSION AIMS

Underlying each of the six designated theme areas will be three fundamental propositions intertwined and linked to stimulating the discussion and debate. They are:

#### **Proposition 1:**

Encourage the Kimberley community to lead and embrace the notion of an Australian Dialogue as a basis for an inclusive vision of what it is to be Australian in a globalised context, about the kind of society we want the Kimberley and Australia to become, and what it means for our people to develop their capabilities and realise their potential as both Kimberley and global Australians.

#### **Proposition 2:**

Promote, encourage and develop a culture of aspiration, innovation and productivity that can help shape the regional and national cultural, economic, social and environmental well being.

#### **Proposition 3:**

Establish and facilitate co operative dialogue with all tiers of governments, relevant community and industry stakeholders to develop mechanisms for effective regional Kimberley governance that has community confidence and support.

### THEME 1: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

#### (i) Climate Change

This is a major issue of our time, impacting on the environment, economy, international and domestic law and regulatory arrangements and developing new protocols and standard of behaviour for government, industry and community. The Kimberley with its rich Aboriginal cultures,

renowned natural environment, unique biodiversity and abundant natural resources is poised to become a region of national and international focus as debates and tensions increase over competing interest. Central to these debates about the future of the Kimberley will be the meaning of the concept of the “national interest”.

How should traditional owners of the Kimberley respond to such tensions and participate in the debate? As custodians of the natural estate, how should Traditional Owners influence the defining of the “national interest”? What are the management framework and the protocols to be considered in the engagement with government and third party interests seeking to influence and affect change to the natural estate?

(ii) Water Rights and Interests.

Climate change will have major consequences for food and other horticulture production with an inevitable focus on northern Australia’s water and land use. The Kimberley with its abundant water resources is already being viewed for significant future development. The current negotiations over allocation of water rights for commercial, domestic and cultural needs, signals that conflicting interest over water use will be a major political issues in the not too distant future

Given the fundamental cultural importance of water how should Kimberley Traditional Owners assert their interests and pursue their economic position?

(iii) LNG Development

The first major test of the environmental sustainability issues has arrived in the Kimberley through the proposed LNG Gas Hub development. Engagement and negotiations have been proceeding with Traditional Owners, State Government and corporate interests. What has been the baseline proposition adopted from a collective Traditional Owner’s position in regards to environment sustainability issues?

How will this set the precedence in dealing with future developments ?What authority and capacity can be asserted by Traditional Owners to influence future planning and management of this and any other future projects that will shape the future of the Kimberley?

<b>THEME 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY</b>
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(i) Cultural Integrity

In a global context, other indigenous societies threatened with cultural destruction by external forces have utilised iconic representations, ritual practices and protocols in galvanising cultural unity and rallying political support in defence of their societies and traditional rights. The Tibetans and Inuit people of Alaska, North Canada and Arctic Russia are examples of effective Indigenous resistance using their own cultural integrity as methods of creative political action.

How are our cultural and social values demonstrated in the manner in which we live our lives? Is there a recognizable and familiar form in our behaviour in us and as displayed in our relationship with others in our community?

(ii) Welfare Reform

The current policy reforms and public debate focuses on Indigenous people changing behaviour under a new paternalism of so called “hard love”. In this political environment traditional Aboriginal culture is not only devalued, it is demonised. Violence against women is said to be embedded in Aboriginal traditions: customary law is equated with child sex abuse; adherence to traditional languages is seen as a barrier to education and economic development and small residential settlements on traditional owned lands are treated as mendicant “cultural museums”. In this context the Australian nation cherry picks what it values from Indigenous society – traditional art and celebrated song and dance – and then participates in a rapid dismantling of the pillars that hold traditional society together.

What is the nature of reform required internally in our own families and communities that demonstrates the richness and enjoyment of our traditional cultural and social? How should anti social behaviour and its consequences in our community be managed? What are our responsibilities to ensure our families are protected?

### (iii) Political Empowerment

Cultural sustainability is meaningless and rhetorical ether if community leaders do not assert their authority guided by their customs and traditions.

The maintenance of social order as a basis for cultural sustainability should be the prime responsibility for leaders with cultural and family authority rather than external forces who seek to impose and assimilate.

How should this authority be exercised? How are Traditional Owners to facilitate, exercise and sustain such an authority that is derived from the laws and customs, and how is this manifested and represented in today’s modern society while still maintaining the cultural uniqueness in all its diversity. What of the discipline in the manner in which succession interests are adhered to and practiced?

What protocols should be considered to establish partnerships between communities, police, child protection authorities and courts in the maintenance of social order in communities?

## THEME 3: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### (i) Ownership and Equity Versus Passive participants

Historically Aboriginal rights and interests have been ignored in a development paradigm where government grants titles to third party interests for economic development. Under this paradigm Aboriginal interests have been consigned to welfare policy considerations. This position can no longer be sustained. Today Aboriginal people own, control, manage or have a strong legal stake in practically the whole of the Kimberley.

What land reform measures are required to facilitate our participation in the mainstream economy? And what compromises are we prepared to consider ensuring sustainable development?

Agreement making and strategic investment has occurred in a number of cultural areas, however continuing reliance on government transfers in housing, infrastructure and welfare payments remain the dominant Aboriginal economy.

How and what value can Aboriginal interests bring to development in the Kimberley? How can we proceed beyond the grand scale dreams and plans for “wot if” and participate in the real economy? Is there an alternative economy and if there is what is it and how can it be developed?

#### (ii) Alternative and Innovative Investment Options

There has been a lack of significant public investment in community capital and social infrastructure over the last forty years or so in the Kimberley. In the past Aboriginal issues such as land access and heritage protection along with high capital and service costs are seen as considerable risk factors for private investment.

However, the evidence suggests that The Kimberley is being targeted for major private investment particularly in the resource development and tourism sectors.

Where should TO’s interest be pitched at in terms of planning, negotiations and capacity building? How can Government and the private sector assist in the development of measures that would ensure practical outcomes across all need areas? Such an area might require consideration of tax reform proposals engendering an innovative environment.

#### (iii) Benefit Structure and Beneficiaries

Given the common and collective Aboriginal interests in reform and development in the Kimberley, there will need to be urgent structural and operation reform to “doing business in a different way”.

This is particularly pertinent to ensuring appropriate and transparency in who represents who and under what authority in regards to benefits derived from negotiated outcome and/or from future government investment. Institutional reform to service and facilitate rights of beneficiaries is a fundamental component of any such reform

<b>THEME 4: HEALTH</b>
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#### (i) Health as a Political Tool for Change

Generally improvement in health standards in Kimberley communities is based on relativity; relative to the level of capital and recurrent investment and relative to the level of professional standard of care available.

Kimberley Aboriginal health status remains appallingly low comparative to the broader community. Indigenous health is a major national issue and dominates much of the current government’s “closing the gap” strategy. What consideration should be given to the political nature of health issues and its relationship with more comprehensive reform dealing with health and quality of life policy matters?

#### (ii) Alcohol, Substance Abuse and Addiction

Recent trials in Fitzroy Crossing limiting full strength alcohol takeaways have demonstrated a significant reversal in quality of life matters for the residents in that community. Recent and early reports of a total alcohol ban in Oombulgurri by the police indicate a major positive impact on the quality of life in that community.

The devastating impact of alcohol and drug abuse on the physical and mental health of people in our communities is beyond dispute; it more than likely affects some if not many in each of our respective families. Drastic and often coercive action is required to manage the demand and supply of grog but the key question is what is the role and responsibility of community leadership in this action given the evidence that externally imposed interventions do not produce sustainable results?

Is there a growing consensus from Kimberley community that need to be articulated in a formal manner to government and relayed to the broader community about further alcohol reform on a regional basis in the Kimberley?

(iii) Individual and Community responsibility

Healthy minds make healthy bodies.

What is required to ensure greater responsibility by individuals for better health care outcomes in their families?

What reforms should take place in the primary health service delivery areas to ensure better outcomes?

## **THEME 5: EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

(i) Getting a Meaningful Education in the Kimberley

Many parents continue to face the dilemma about sending their children to school in faraway places like Perth or Darwin to get a better education than what is available in the Kimberley.

Recent studies by Dr John Taylor show that there is an education systems failure in the Kimberley involving all levels of schooling and pre-schooling. Dr Taylor's 2006 West Kimberley Labour market study show that 40% of compulsory school aged Aboriginal children are either not attending or not enrolled in school.

There are two key issues for Kimberley Aboriginal people to consider with respect to education. Firstly, what should be the demands of the community and parents on the State Government to provide a decent education for Kimberley children? Secondly, given that school attendance is compulsory until aged 15, what should be the consequences for parents and families who do not ensure that their children attend school?

(ii) Getting a meaningful Job in the Kimberley

While CDEP has provided a labour force to maintain the bare functioning of many Kimberley communities there needs to be serious community consideration about reforming CDEP so that it provides a pathway to capacity development for individuals and communities with an integration of the education and training system and employment.

How can we turn this around in a relatively short space of time to allow a more comprehensive process which can produce the labour force required for the upcoming opportunities over the next few years?

(iii) Productivity

Current policy development is developing linking, preschool to school to training to a job under the thrust of and objective of getting greater productivity or output from individuals and the system they are in.

What are the circumstances operating here in the Kimberley that might allow us to take advantage of this shift and what should that direction be in developing on the ground infrastructure and service to support such a linkage?

## **THEME 6: REGIONAL GOVERNANCE**

The Mount Barnett Statement in September 2008 called on the State Government to negotiate with Kimberley Aboriginal people about the establishment of a Kimberley Regional Authority as a cornerstone of structural reform of Kimberley regional governance.

The appointment of Lt General Sanderson as special advisor to the Barnett Government and the strong support for regional governance reform by the Ministers for Indigenous Affairs and Regional Development provides a sense of urgency for Kimberley Aboriginal people to consider the broad conceptual design of a Kimberley Regional Authority in preparation for negotiation with the State and Commonwealth Governments.

Three options are outlined here as a basis for discussion.

### **Option One – Integration of Indigenous Development Services**

This option involves a pooling of Commonwealth and State discrete Indigenous funding under the management of a regional authority that could integrate housing and essential services, CDEP and municipal services.

This could also involve native title, law and culture and language, health, education, training and other development funding that would aim to integrate Kimberley Indigenous development within a regional approach and provide a basis of accountability that cannot be achieved under the current system of multiple agency funding arrangements which was highlighted in the February 2008 WA State Coroner's report.

This option could be relatively easy to achieve because it deals with Indigenous discrete funding however it could also be seen as a backward step because it locks in the separate development approach and does not deal with mainstream funding and policy development.

### **Option Two – Integrated Regional Coordination Approach**

This option deals with Indigenous development within a mainstream framework. Under this option a proposed Kimberley Regional Authority would not have responsibility for funding directly but would be responsible for negotiating a strategic framework with agreed objectives and provide a system of accountability for the achievement of those objectives by community organisations and government agencies.

Under this option the Kimberley Regional Authority would be comprised of the established regional governmental institutions involving the peak Indigenous bodies, local governments and the Kimberley Development Commission.

### **Option Three – Regional Subsidiary Model**

This option follows the European model of regional subsidiary where political power and governmental responsibility is devolved from the centre to regions. This would be the most radical of the options but possibly the most effective in terms of addressing the current social crisis and dealing with the enormity of the challenges that have been outlined above. In essence this model would involve a comprehensive overhaul of Kimberley regional governance involving direct funding under a COAG mandated National Partnership Payment for all services to the region – health, education, public housing, police and justice, child protection, local government, land and culture, environmental management, social services, early child hood development, roads etc.

The Regional Authority which would involve a statutory amalgamation of the KDC and local governments and recognise the cultural basis of Indigenous inclusion. Under this model the Regional Authority could purchase services from the State government such as health, education, housing etc under contract involving negotiated deliverables and performance standards. Such a system would provide a far more effective system of accountability than the current system of State and Federal Treasuries providing funding to line agencies who in turn deliver services in an inefficient and non accountable manner.

These options are not necessarily mutually exclusive and could involve crossovers with other structures. The key questions for Kimberley leaders is what should be the process to consider a future governance arrangement that should be negotiated with the State and Commonwealth governments and how should Indigenous representation be structured in the decision making process.

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# APPENDIX 2

## THE KIMBERLEY CONVERSATION Goolarri Media Enterprises – 7 Blackman St Broome

### PROGRAM

#### DAY ONE – TUESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009

8am	Registration		
8.30am	Welcome to Country – Yawuru Traditional Owners		MC Patrick Dodson
8.40am	Conference Opened – Tom Birch on behalf of KLC, KALACC, KLRC		Tom Birch KLC
8.50am	Introduction by Lt. General John Sanderson		John Sanderson
9.30am	Concurrent Session one – Objectives outlined Broad discussion on theme group issues		Brian Wyatt
	1. Environmental Sustainability	4. Cultural Sustainability	Group Facilitators
	2. Education and Training	5. Health	
	3. Economic Development	6. Regional Development	
10.15am	<i>Morning Tea</i>		
10.30am	Continue Concurrent Session One		Brian Wyatt Group Facilitators
12.00pm	Plenary Session Report back from Session One Theme Workshops		Brian Wyatt
12.30pm	Lunch		
1.30pm	Concurrent Session Two – Objectives Outlined Recommendations and Procedures for moving forward		Brian Wyatt Theme Group Facilitators
3.15pm	Plenary Session Report back from Session Two Theme Workshops		Brian Wyatt
4.15pm	Summary – Recommendations and Procedures for moving forward		Brian Wyatt
4.30pm	Day 1 Close		
5.00pm	Taste of Broome - Sundowners		

## THE KIMBERLEY CONVERSATION

### PROGRAM

#### DAY TWO – WEDNESDAY 11<sup>th</sup> February 2009

8.30am	Day Two objectives outlined	Brian Wyatt
8.45am	“Opportunities and Challenges for the Kimberley region”	John Sanderson
9.15am	“Questions and Answer Session for the Kimberley region”	John Sanderson
9.30am	Concurrent Session Three Objectives outlined and areas for further engagement  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Indigenous Implementation Board</li> <li>- Kimberley Dialogue</li> <li>- Service Provision involvement</li> </ul>	Brian Wyatt Group Facilitators
10.15am	<i>Morning Tea</i>	
10.30am	Continue Concurrent Three	Brian Wyatt Group Facilitators
11.00am	Closing Plenary Session Summary of Outcomes and Comments	Brian Wyatt Group Facilitators
12.00pm	Final Comments – June Oscar on behalf of KLC, KALACC, KLRC	June Oscar
12.30pm	Conference Closed	

