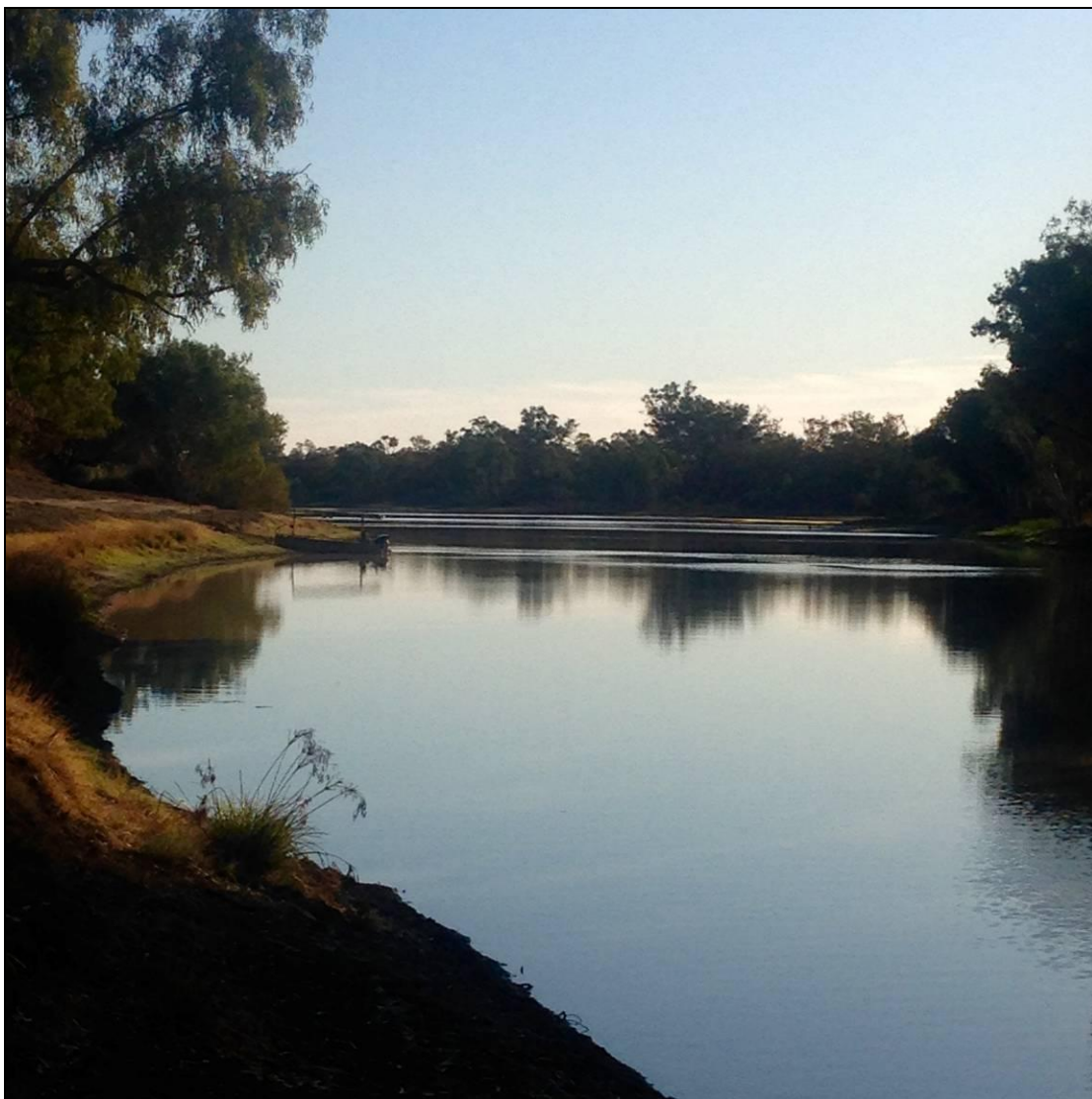


Aboriginal Cultural Water Values

– Cooper subregion

A report for the Bioregional Assessment Programme

Researched and prepared by Corporate Culcha for the Department of the Environment



Corporate Culcha

Corporate Culcha is an Aboriginal owned and operated consultancy practice specialising in engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities. Corporate Culcha works with a range of Indigenous and non-Indigenous consultants, many of whom are leaders in their individual fields. Access to this pool of expertise, allows Corporate Culcha to deliver a diverse range of services to their clients including research and evaluation, cultural capability programs and education, mentoring and capacity building.

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Cover photograph - Coopers Creek at Policeman's Waterhole, S.A. (Source: K.Love 2015)

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

Acknowledgement is paid to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples past, present and future. We acknowledge the unique relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with their traditional lands and waters, as well as their history and diverse cultures and customs. We thank all Aboriginal people who have shared their knowledge and time so generously, without their participation this report would not have been possible.

Terms for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

For the purposes of this report, the terms 'Aboriginal people', 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people' and 'Indigenous' are used interchangeably to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia. However, we recognise that this approach is not without contention. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people generally prefer the use of Aboriginal as opposed to Indigenous. Indigenous is deemed a formal term often used by governments as inclusive of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As this report is focussed on the relationship of Aboriginal people of the Cooper subregion, we will refer to either Aboriginal people or their distinct group i.e. Yandruwandha Yawarrarrka and Dieri. The report also employs the term Indigenous when referring to relevant government programmes, policies or resources.

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1. Introduction

Aboriginal water values is a term used to describe the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and water. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's relationship with water is intrinsic in nature, with water not only being fundamental for survival, but an indivisible, interwoven and intrinsic element of cultural and spiritual life.

Tom Calma, the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner wrote:¹

Indigenous peoples are connected to and responsible for our lands and waters and in turn, Indigenous peoples obtain and maintain our spiritual and cultural identity, life and livelihoods from our lands, waters and resources. These cultural and customary rights and responsibilities include:

- *a spiritual connection to lands, waters and natural resources associated with water places*
- *management of significant sites located along river banks, on and in the river beds, and sites and stories associated with the water and natural resources located in the rivers and their tributaries, and the sea*
- *protection of Indigenous cultural heritage and knowledge associated with water and water places*
- *access to cultural activities such as hunting and fishing, and ceremony.*

As the custodians of water resources on country, Aboriginal people have a significant interest in the way water is shared and used on country, and an important role in monitoring potential impacts of activities that may affect water quality and/or the health of flora and fauna that rely on specific water resources.

This report provides the data collected through community consultation for the Aboriginal Water Values Project, which will be used to inform the bioregional assessment for the Cooper bioregion. The report includes an overview of the Indigenous population of the Cooper bioregion and surrounds; description of the methodology employed; description of the data collected, including narratives associated with identified water assets. An Asset Register, providing asset characteristics, including spatial data accompanies this report.

The Australian Government is undertaking a programme of bioregional assessments in order to better understand the potential impacts of coal seam gas and large coal mining developments on water resources and water-dependent assets. The Bioregional Assessment Programme draws on the best available scientific information and knowledge from many sources, including government, industry and regional communities, to produce bioregional assessments that are independent, scientifically robust, relevant and meaningful at a regional scale.

The Programme is a collaboration between the Department of the Environment, the Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO and Geoscience Australia. The Programme is seeking input from the Aboriginal community on water-dependent cultural values (also referred to as assets). For more information, visit <http://www.bioregionalassessments.gov.au>.

¹ Calma T. (2008) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, Native Title Report 2008, Chapter 6 – Indigenous Peoples and Water, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Sydney.

1.1 The Cooper subregion region

The Cooper subregion is located in Queensland and South Australia and is defined by the extent of the geological Cooper Basin. The subregion spans an area of about 130,060 km² and is located entirely within the Lake Eyre drainage catchment. Most of the Cooper subregion is within the Cooper Creek – Bulloo river basin with a small portion of the north-west extending into the Diamantina-Georgina river basin.²

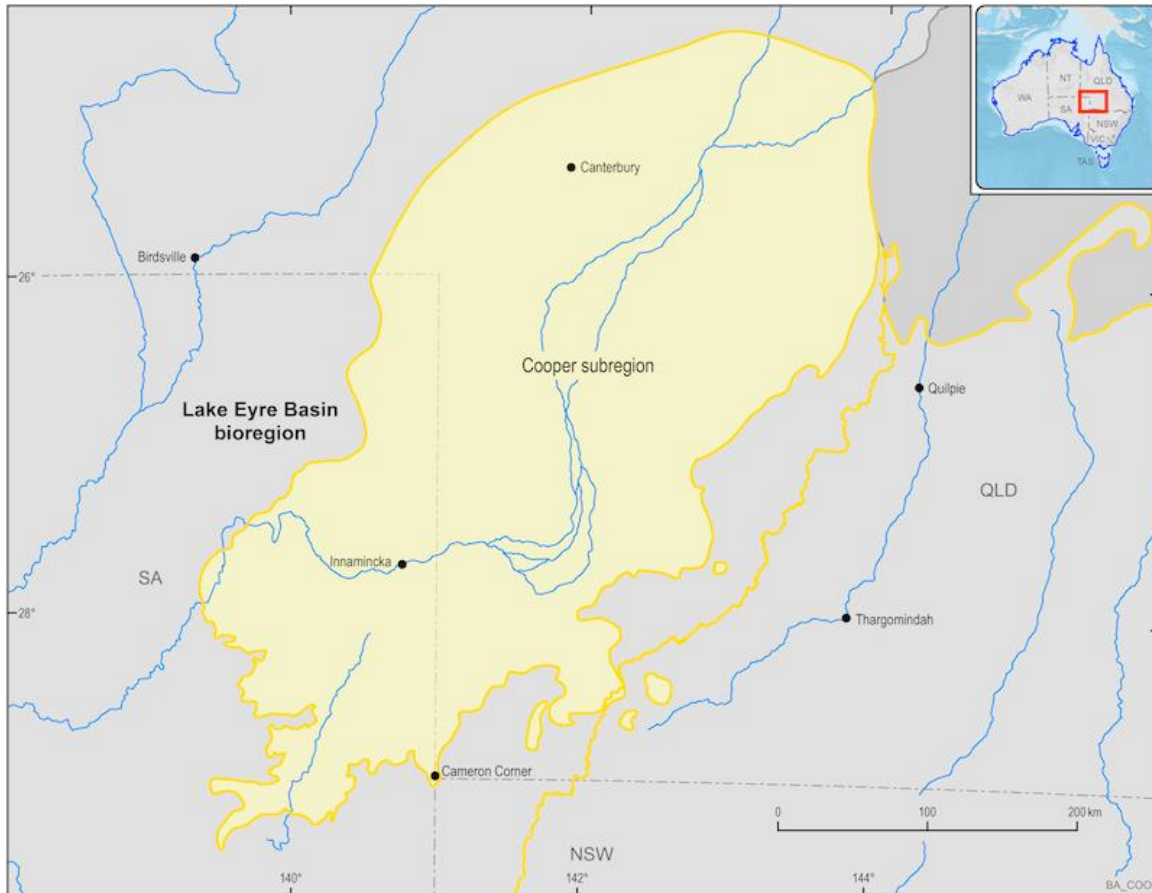


Figure 1: Cooper subregion map (Source: Department of the Environment 2015)

² <http://www.bioregionalassessments.gov.au/bioregions/leb.shtml>

2. Methodology

This section provides details on the following methodology employed throughout the project.

The methodology for this project included:

1. Desktop research:
 - a. Relevant reports
 - b. Investigate current discourse on Aboriginal Cultural Water Values
 - c. Identify relevant organisations
2. Contact by telephone individuals and organisations identified as being potential participants:
 - a. Introduce the project and the researchers
 - b. Discuss possibility of involvement in project
 - c. Arrange visit
3. Initial field visits:
 - a. Face to face discussions and provide information
 - b. Identify other potential participants (Elders, knowledge holders)
 - c. Arrange next visit
4. Second field visit:
 - a. Obtain consent
 - b. Commence data collection on site
 - i. Identifying locations of assets
 - ii. Record special data (GPS mapping)
 - iii. Interview knowledge holder
5. Third field visit:
 - a. Continue and finalise data collection on site
 - b. Record spatial data
6. Analyse data:
 - a. Record location data on asset register
 - b. Document associated narratives for assets
7. Write report and obtain endorsement from participants.

2.1 Desktop research

Desktop research was undertaken to gain an initial understanding of, and to identify:

- publically available data
- current discourse on Aboriginal cultural water values
- key stakeholders (organisations and individuals)

A range of publications were identified which assisted in understanding relevant issues pertinent to the region and Aboriginal cultural water values generally. The reports and websites sourced indicate significant activity in relation to Aboriginal communities and water – specifically in relation to conservation and water sharing plans.

2.2 Community Engagement

Traditional Owner groups of the Cooper subregion were identified and Elders and knowledge holders were contacted in the first instance by telephone, where a face-to-face meeting was arranged.³

Initial face-to-face meetings provided an opportunity to discuss the objectives of the project with key stakeholders. These meetings also provided an opportunity to obtain contact details for other significant community members, with face-to-face or telephone meetings being arranged with those people soon thereafter.

Stakeholders were assured the process for gathering the data would be undertaken respectfully and with cultural safety as a priority. Information about the impetus of the broader Bioregional Assessment Programme, and the proposed use of the data collected through it, including the Aboriginal cultural water values mapping, was described as forming but one layer, of many layers of baseline data that will be assembled, to develop a comprehensive map of the Cooper subregion. The results will enable improved decision making in relation to coal mining and coal seam gas. Stakeholders were advised that maps and reports developed, as a result of this research, would be available to them as a community resource.

Stakeholders were also advised their participation was voluntary and no adverse action would occur if the group chose not to participate, and they could withdraw consent at any stage of the research process.

Unstructured interviews were undertaken with participants, as well as note taking by the interviewer. In some instances photographs were taken, with permission, of the sites.

For the Cooper subregion the Traditional Owner groups organisations and communities consulted were:

- Wangkumara
- Boonthamurra
- Mithaka
- Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka
- Dieri

However, follow up consultations with the Mithaka, Wangkumara and Boothamurra peoples could not be arranged with the project's timeframe. Consent from these groups, was not obtained and therefore initial discussions cannot be published. Therefore, this report documents the Aboriginal cultural water values existing in the South Australian component of the Cooper subregion.

2.3 Mapping Methodology

In all instances mapping on country utilised Motion X-GPS and coordinates were cross-referenced with maps downloaded into the Avenza Maps PDF application. Maps used were Geoscience Australia maps with datum GDA94. Remote mapping was done using the same system with GPS coordinates obtained on country as the reference point.

³ List of consultation participants at Appendix 3.

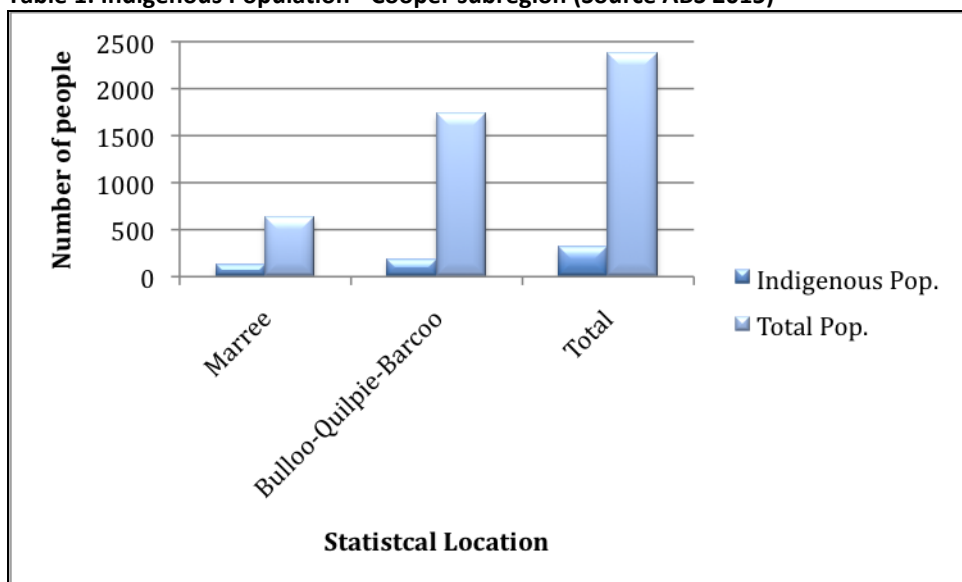
3. Aboriginal people of the Cooper subregion

The Indigenous population of the Cooper subregion (including surrounds) is approximately 316 people (Table 1) or 13.3 per cent of the regions total population. This figure is comprised of 129 Indigenous people in the South Australian side of the Cooper subregion and 187 on the Queensland side. However, caution needs to be taken when considering these figures as the remote location of the statistical regions means a highly mobile population, fluctuating depending on the seasons. Additionally, the diasporic nature of Aboriginal communities means not all members of Traditional Owner groups live on country and therefore census numbers are not reflective of the size of the Traditional Owner group.

There are a number of Aboriginal Traditional Owner groups in the Cooper subregion. Those groups are:

- Wangkumara (Qld)
- Boonthamurra (Qld)
- Mithaka (Qld)
- Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka (S.A)
- Dieri (S.A)

Table 1: Indigenous Population - Cooper subregion (Source ABS 2015)



The Marree statistical location covers the whole of the north-east corner of South Australia, which includes the South Australian component of the Cooper bioregion and surrounding populations. The Bulloo-Quilpie-Barcoo statistical region is a large area, which encompasses all of the Queensland side of the Cooper subregion.⁴ More definitive population⁵ data of the Cooper subregion were not available.

⁴These figures derived from ABS Census data for the Marree (SA) statistical area; and statistical area (see Appendix 2 for map of the statistical areas).

3.1 Governance

In Queensland, Native Title and Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) are managed by Traditional Owner (T.O.) organisations, represented by and for Traditional Owners themselves. The T.O. organisations are assisted in their native title and ILUAs negotiations by the Queensland South Native Title Services (QSNTS).

None of the T.O. groups in the Queensland section of the Cooper subregion have their Native Title claims formally determined. However, there are several ILUAs in place, mainly between Traditional Owner groups and mining companies and pastoralists. The map below indicates much of the Cooper subregion is subject to ILUAs.

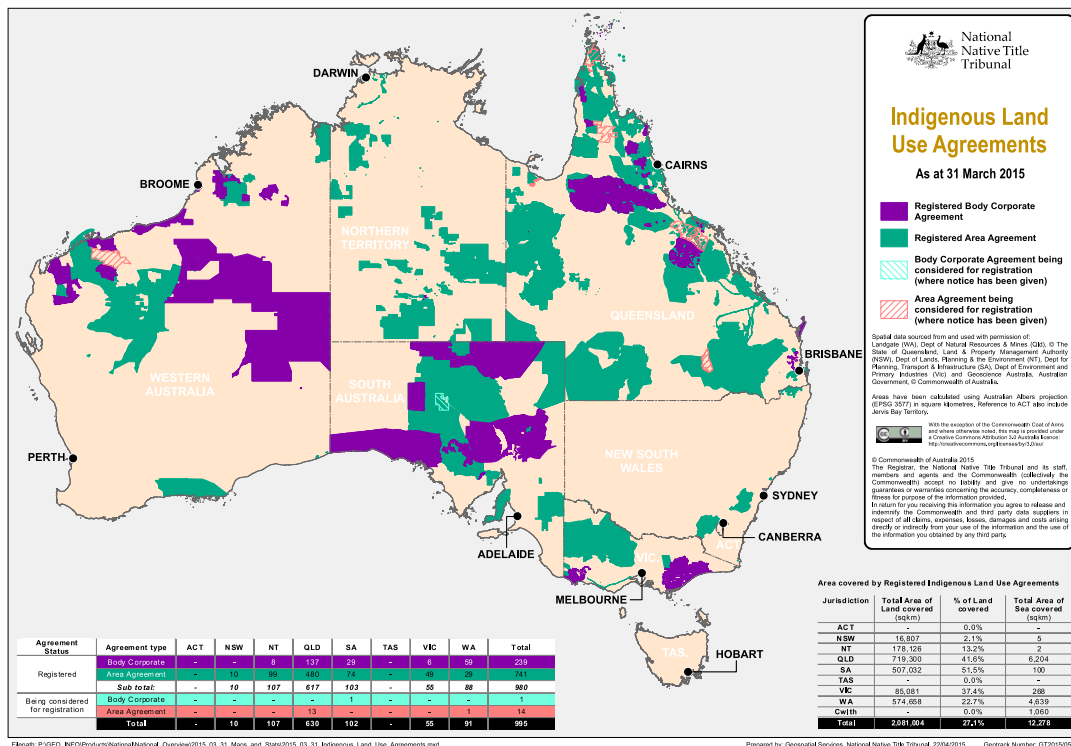


Figure 2: Map of Indigenous Land Use Agreements (Source: National Native Title Tribunal, 2015)

In February 2014, the Federal Court recognised the Dieri people as the Traditional Owners of the lands claimed under Dieri No. 2 Native Title Claim. Both the Dieri and the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka peoples still have claims processes before the Federal Courts.

Although Aboriginal owned land in the Cooper subregion is relatively small, in South Australia significant areas are managed and used by the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka and Dieri peoples. Holdings under Aboriginal management or co-management include Strzelecki Regional Reserve and Coongie Lakes National Park.

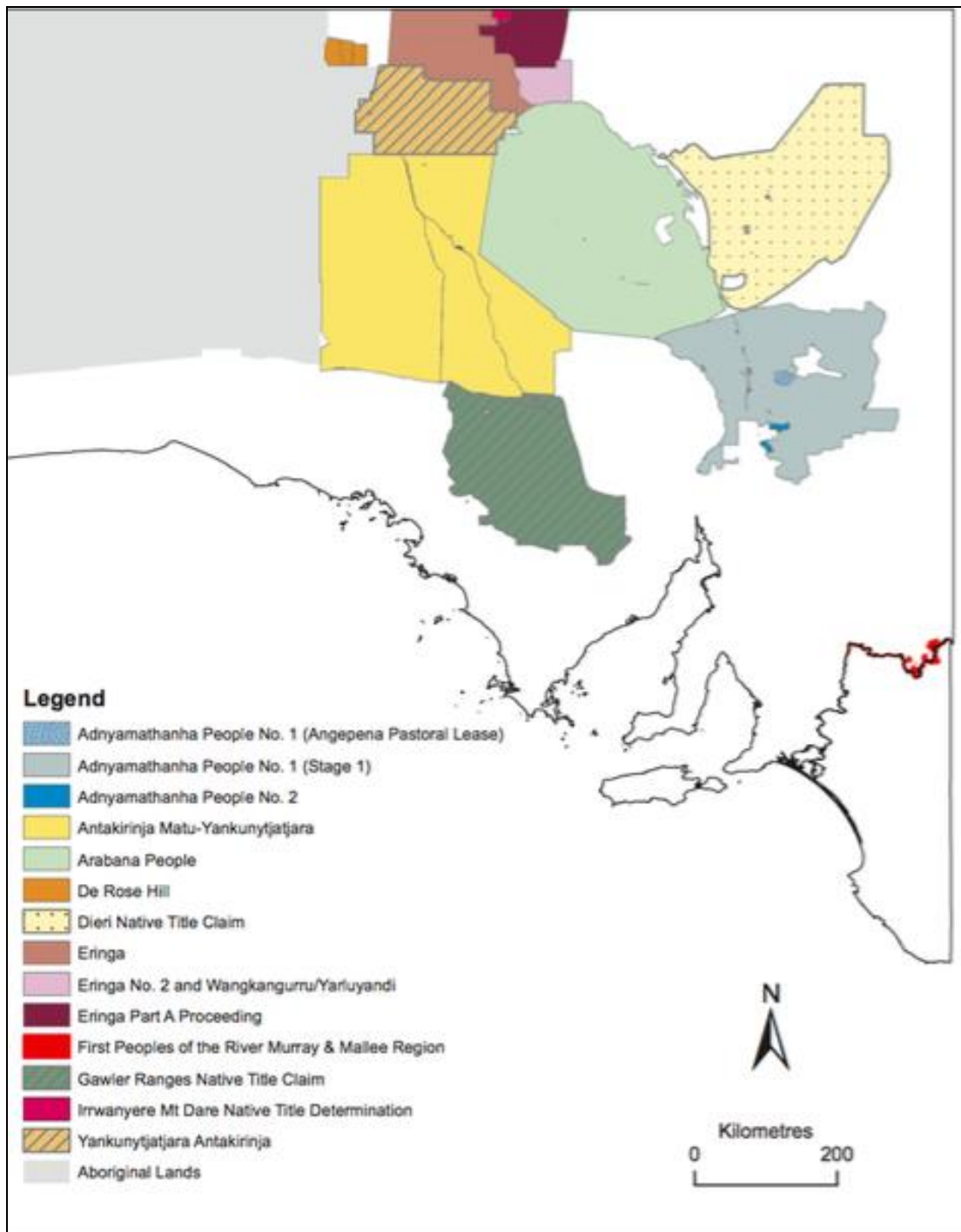


Figure 3: Native Title Determinations, South Australia as at June 2014 (Source: National Native Title Tribunal)

3.1.1. Ramsar Wetlands

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance holds the unique distinction of being the first modern treaty between nations aimed at conserving natural resources. The signing of the Convention on Wetlands took place in 1971 at the small Iranian town of Ramsar. Since then, the Convention on Wetlands has been known as the Ramsar Convention.

The Coongie Lakes Ramsar site is located in far north-east South Australia in the Cooper Creek subcatchment of the Lake Eyre Basin. It is a complex and extensive ephemeral and semi-permanent freshwater wetland system in an arid zone, comprising channels, waterholes, lakes, internal deltas and numerous shallow flood plains, interdune corridors and swamps.⁶

Eighty-three species of waterbirds, 18 species listed under international migratory bird agreements and 18 species of birds of prey have been recorded in Coongie Lakes. Other fauna includes 12 native fish, such as the Cooper Creek Catfish and the Lake Eyre Gallop, and 10 frog species including the Water-holding Frog, Grassland Collared Frog and Trilling Frog. Notable reptiles include Red-napped Snake, Black-headed Goanna and the Woma Python. The Plague Rat and the Water Rat, which are restricted to areas of permanent water, are also recorded at Coongie Lakes. Over 350 plant species are present at the site.⁷

⁶ Information sourced from <http://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/wetlands/ramsardetails.pl?refcode=27> (accessed 29 June 2015)

⁷ *ibid*

4. Consultation outcomes – values and assets

Overwhelmingly, the research was received with enthusiasm, and knowledge holders spent considerable time with the research team, discussing water values and taking the team on country to visit examples of water assets. While on-site, researchers recorded spatial coordinates of the assets, and documented the associated cultural values, which included dreamtime stories and songlines, and knowledge and uses of asset reliant flora and fauna.

The following section outlines discussions with Aboriginal people in relation to cultural water values. The water values identified largely pertain to customary and spiritual associations, ecological value - relating to fish and animal species, or economic value in terms of fishing and other water-reliant bush foods. However, there is an overarching value based on the principle that healthy water translates to overall wellbeing for everything – people, animals, plants, earth and air.

4.1 Categorising cultural assets

The assets identified here are of cultural significance to the Aboriginal people of the Cooper subregion, the values, purpose and meaning attached to each asset has been identified through consultation. Most assets have more than one value attached, for example a creek bed being a place of ceremony as well as a place where food can be harvested.

The purpose and meaning of cultural water assets have been categorised into the following groups:

- Customary – ceremony, meeting place, men’s business, women’s business, totems, dance, rites, song, birth, death)
- Spiritual (dreaming, stories, songlines)
- Ecological (flora and fauna)
- Economic (trade routes, food source – fishing/hunting, employment/income – tourism, farming)

As explained above at 2.2, consultation with all Traditional Owner groups in the Cooper region could not be arranged within the project’s timeframe, and although initial discussions with some groups were promising, in the end consent was not provided to publish the substance of those discussions. However, the Yandruwandha Yawarrarrka and the Dieri peoples did provide consent and therefore the focus of this report concentrates on the South Australian section of the Cooper subregion.

4.1.1 Cultural Heritage Register

The Queensland Government’s Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy (DATSIP) maintains an Indigenous Cultural Heritage Register, comprising data for over forty thousand cultural heritage assets across the state. Researchers approached the Cultural Heritage Registrar seeking assistance in identifying registered water dependent assets within the Cooper basin.

The four major water bodies (listed below) on the Queensland side of the Cooper basin were used to search for water dependent cultural heritage sites. For more details to be provided on each asset, consent is required from the registered parties. As consent has not been obtained

within the project's timeframe, the information provided below is limited to indicating the number of recorded Indigenous cultural heritage assets for each water body.

Cooper Creek 50km buffer

The Cooper Creek is the largest water body in the Cooper Basin and a 50km buffer was applied as the numerous channels incorporated into it can be over 30km wide. There are 2182 registered cultural heritage sites within the 50km buffer zone. Of these, eight are registered to the Mithaka people and include a burial, scar tree and midden as well as artefact scatters and stone arrangements. The 39 sites registered to the Boonthamurra people includes a dwelling, a resource area, painting and shell midden, 11 hearth ovens, three quarries and numerous artefact scatters.

The remaining 2135 cultural heritage sites are registered to the Wongkumara people of which 84 are burial sites. Over 1000 are simple artefact scatters, however the remainder are a mixture of contact sites, cultural sites, resource areas, paintings, engravings, scar trees, quarries, shell middens, dwellings, landscape features, stone arrangements, hearth ovens, pathways and important story places.

Lake Yamma Yamma 50km buffer

The largest lake in the basin recorded 70 registered cultural heritage sites with five registered to the Mithaka people with one engraving and the remainder simple artefact scatters. The remaining 65 sites are registered to the Wongkumara people and include a dwelling, a burial and five resource areas with a mixture of hearth ovens, quarries, stone arrangements, artefact scatters and a scar tree.

Wilson River 10km buffer

There are 123 registered cultural heritage sites within a 10km buffer of the Wilson River. The Boonthamurra people are the registered party for 29 sites which includes two burial sites and a mixture of artefact scatters, stone arrangements, hearth ovens and quarries. There are two sites registered to the Kullili people – a contact site and a hearth oven / artefact scatter. The remaining 92 sites, registered to the Wangkumara people, includes a contact site, six burial sites, four scar trees and a mixture of artefact scatters, hearth ovens, shell middens and quarries.

Graham Creek 5km buffer

All nine sites along Graham Creek are registered to the Wongkumara people with three hearth ovens and the remainder artefact scatters.

3.2 Cultural Water Assets Identified

The following tables contain the data collected through consultation with Aboriginal people with knowledge and connection to the Cooper subregion. The tables have been divided by group i.e. Customary (Table 1), Spiritual (Table 2), Economic and Recreation (Table 3) and Ecological (Table 4).

3.2.1 Customary values – Cooper subregion water dependent assets

ID	Name	Aboriginal name	Country	Value	Summary
CP1	Cullyamurra Waterhole	Kulgamaru	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Significant site /women's business, spiritual ceremonies/ entrance into the entire reserve creek system/resource site/permanent waterhole.
CP2	Cooper Creek		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	The Cooper Creek feeds the entire system in the reserve, all waterholes, swamps and lakes reliant on it.
CP3	Burke's Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Named after the explorer/grinding stones/burial place/Burke's grave/large Coolibahs and Bean trees/resource site
CP5	Policeman's Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Fishing waterhole/ important resource site/present day usage
CP6	Kings Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Fishing waterhole/ important resource site/present day usage
CP7	Minkie Waterhole	Minka yi	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Permanent waterhole /fishing waterhole/ important resource site/present day usage
CP8	Scrubby Camp		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Massacre site/food and resource site/camp site
CP9	Cooper Creek (North West Branch)		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	The north west branch is crucial to water feeding into Tirrawarra Swamp and on to Coongie Lake

CP10	Tirrawarra Swamp & Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Important resource site and camp sites/present day usage
CP11	Kudriemitchie Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Included in the Coongie Lakes National Park. Listed RAMSAR site with high cultural value.
CP12	Coongie Lake National Park	Kayityirru	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Important meeting place, campsite, artefacts, burials/resource site. Listed RAMSAR Wetland Site with significant birds
CP13	Gidgealpa Waterhole		Dieri	Customary	Very important sand dune ridgeline along the length of the waterhole with numerous artefacts, burials, tools and black dingo.
CP14	Parachirrinna Waterhole		Dieri	Customary	Entire area highly significant for spiritual reasons and used by all the different tribal groups for ceremony.
CP15	Deparanie Waterhole		Dieri	Customary	Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP16	Lake McKinlay		Dieri	Customary	Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP17	Mollichuta Waterhole		Dieri	Customary	Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP18	Kanowana Channel		Dieri	Customary	Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP19	MacDonnell Creek		Dieri	Customary	Massacre site/ food and resource site/Creation story (Gonanna Story)
CP20	Rocky Springs		Dieri	Customary	Artisian spring/ constant water source/included in the Goanna creation story
CP21	Reedy Springs		Dieri	Customary	Artisian spring/constant water source/ included in the Goanna creation story
CP22	Blanchewater Waterhole		Dieri	Customary	Artisian spring / constant water source/included in the Goanna creation story
CP23	St Mary Pool		Dieri	Customary	Three springs between Blanchewater and St Mary Pool that are included but have no names - all artisan/constant water source/ included in Goanna creation story
CP24	Lake Blanche		Dieri	Customary	Creation story of Goanna/part of the Strzelecki Regional Reserve

CP25	Strzelecki Creek		Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Reliant upon flow from the Cooper Creek System/ Waterhole for woman's business
CP26	Cartoonganie Waterhole		Dieri	Customary	Numerous artefacts and burial sites
CP27	Nappa Merrie Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Burke & Wills Dig tree site/Records of quarry, grindstones and stone flakes.
CP28	Parenjelly Creek		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Boundary of the Yandruwandha people/feeds into the Cooper Creek
CP29	<i>Eucalyptus coolabah</i> (Coolibah)	Kalpurru	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Entire tree is a resource for a range of uses including: water, fibre, wood, medicine, food source and implements
CP30	<i>Lysiphyllum gilvum</i> (Baily)	Moodlu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source and timber used for making weapons, tools and utensils
CP31	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis var. obtus</i> (Red River Gum)	Yulkuparlu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source and timber used for making weapons, tools and utensils/used medicinally for wounds, diarrhoea and sore throats
CP32	<i>Acacia cyperophylla</i> (Red Mulga/ Creekline Miniritchie)	Minni-ritchi	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Wood used for weapon making
CP33	<i>Owenia acidula</i> (Emu Apple)	Minyaru	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source
CP34	<i>Pittosporum angustifolium</i> (Weeping pittosporum, Butterbush, Cattle Bush, Native Apricot)	Gumbi Gumbi, Cumby Cumby, Meemeei and Berrigan.	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Plant used for a variety of ailments - a very important medicinal plant

CP35	<i>Santalum lanceolatum</i> (Desert Quandong, Northern Sandalwood, Sandalwood or True Sandalwood)	Mandawarra	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Resource used in ceremony and healing, also important source of fruit
CP36	<i>Marsilea drummondii</i> (Common Nardoo)	Ngadu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source
CP37	<i>Enchylaena tomentose</i> (Barrier Saltbush/Ruby Saltbush)		Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source
CP38	<i>Muehlenbeckia florulenta</i> (Tangled Lignum)	Pundrinya	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Resource for fibre used in net making
CP39	<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> (Pigweed, Purslane)	Munyeroo	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source / high in protein & fat / seeds & leaves edible
CP40	<i>Cynanchum viminalis</i> <i>subsp. Australe</i> (Caustic Bush)	Milky ngamma	Dieri	Customary	Important healing plant used for cuts, warts and sores
CP41	<i>Vesunio ambiguus</i> (Flood Plain Mussel)	Thuka	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks
CP42	<i>Macquaria sp.</i> (Lake Eyre Golden Perch/Yellowbelly)	Peru	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks
CP43	<i>Hephaestus fuliginosus</i> (Sooty Grunter/Black Bream)	Tharuwitji	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks
CP44	<i>Neosiluroides cooperensis</i> (Cooper Creek Catfish)	Capi	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks

CP45	<i>Emydura macquarii emmotti</i> (Cooper Creek Turtle)	Nharra	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks
CP46	<i>Cherax destructor</i> (Common Yabbie)	Marngani	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks
CP47	<i>Anus superciliosa</i> (Pacific Black Duck)	Dikarri	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source found in most wetlands & creeks
CP48	<i>Malacorhynchus membranaceus</i> (Pink Eared Duck)	Taralku	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Food source found in most wetlands & creeks
CP49	<i>Phaps chalcoptera</i> (Common Bronzewing)		Dieri	Customary	Creation story of the Bronze-wing pigeon
CP50	<i>Varanus sp.</i> (Monitor)	Mangali (Yellow) & Makapari (Black)	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Customary	Creation story of the Goanna/ food source

3.2.2 Spiritual values – Cooper subregion water dependent assets

ID	Name	Traditional name	Country	Value	Summary
CP1	Cullyamurra Waterhole	Kulgamarra	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Most significant site in the area/Women's business, spiritual ceremonies
CP2	Cooper Creek		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Creation story
CP3	Burkes Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Burial site place and Burke's grave
CP4	The Causeway		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	This is the site of the fish creation story near Queerbiddie Waterhole.
CP8	Scrubby Camp		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Massacre site
CP9	Cooper Creek (North West Branch)		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Creation story
CP11	Kudriemitchie Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Creation story
CP12	Coongie Lake National Park	Kayityirru	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Important meeting place, campsite, artefacts, burial site/resource site. Listed RAMSAR Wetland Site with significant birds
CP13	Gidgealpa Waterhole		Dieri	Spiritual	Very important sand dune ridgeline along the length of the waterhole with numerous artefacts, burials, tools and black dingo.
CP14	Parachirrinna Waterhole		Dieri	Spiritual	Entire area is spiritually significant and used by all tribal groups for ceremony.
CP15	Deperanie Waterhole		Dieri	Spiritual	Creation story
CP16	Lake McKinlay		Dieri	Spiritual	Creation story
CP17	Mollichuta Waterhole		Dieri	Spiritual	Creation story
CP18	Kanowana Channel		Dieri	Spiritual	Creation story
CP19	MacDonnell Creek		Dieri	Spiritual	Massacre site/ Creation story (Goanna Story)
CP20	Rocky Springs		Dieri	Spiritual	Goanna creation story

CP21	Reedy Springs		Dieri	Spiritual	Goanna creation story
CP22	Blanchewater Waterhole		Dieri	Spiritual	Goanna creation story
CP23	St Mary Pool		Dieri	Spiritual	Goanna creation story
CP24	Lake Blanche		Dieri	Spiritual	Goanna creation story
CP25	Strzelecki Creek		Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Waterhole for woman's business along this creek.
CP26	Cartoonganie Waterhole		Dieri	Spiritual	Burial site
CP27	Mappa Merrie Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Creation story
CP28	Parenjelly Creek		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Creation story
CP35	<i>Santalum lanceolatum</i> (Desert Quandong, Northern Sandalwood, Sandalwood or True Sandalwood)	Mandawarra	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Important resource tree used in ceremony
CP49	<i>Phaps chalcoptera</i>		Dieri	Spiritual	Creation story of the Bronze-wing pigeon
CP50	<i>Varanus sp.</i>	Mangali (Yellow) & Makapari (Black)	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Spiritual	Creation story of the Goanna also a staple resource

3.2.3 Economic values – Cooper subregion water dependent assets

ID	Name	Traditional name	Country	Value	Summary
CP1	Cullyamurra Waterhole	Kulgamarra	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Resource site/permanent waterhole.
CP2	Cooper Creek		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	The Cooper Creek feeds the entire system in the reserve, all waterholes, swamps and lakes rely on it.
CP3	Burkes Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Resource site - large Coolibahs and Bean trees
CP5	Policeman's Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Fishing waterhole/ important resource site/present day usage
CP6	Kings Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	fishing waterhole/ important resource site/present day usage
CP7	Minkie Waterhole	Minka yi	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Permanent waterhole /fishing waterhole/ important resource site/present day usage
CP9	Cooper Creek (North West Branch)		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food and resource site. The north west branch is crucial to the water feeding into Tirrawarra Swamp and on to Coongie Lake -
CP10	Tirrawarra Swamp & Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Resource site/Camp site present day usage
CP11	Kudriemitchie Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food and resource site. Included in the Coongie Lakes National Park. Listed RAMSAR site with high cultural value.
CP12	Coongie Lake National Park	Kayityirru	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food and resource site. Important meeting place, campsite, artefacts, burials. Listed RAMSAR Wetland Site with significant birds
CP13	Gidgealpa Waterhole		Dieri	Economic	Food and resource site. Important sand dune ridgeline along the length of the waterhole – site of artefacts, burials, tools and black dingo.

CP14	Parachirrinna Waterhole		Dieri	Economic	Food and resource site. Entire area is highly significant for spiritual reasons and used by all the different tribal groups for ceremony.
CP15	Deparanie Waterhole		Dieri	Economic	Food and resource site. Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP16	Lake McKinlay		Dieri	Economic	Food and resource site. Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP17	Mollichuta Waterhole		Dieri	Economic	Food and resource site. Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP18	Kanowana Channel		Dieri	Economic	Food and resource site. Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP27	Nappa Merrie Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Important cultural site/ Burke & Wills Dig tree site /records of quarry, grindstones and stone flakes
CP29	<i>Eucalyptus coolabah</i> (Coolibah)	Kalpurru	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Tree was used for many different things including: water, fibre, wood, medicine, fishing, food source and implements
CP30	<i>Lysiphyllum gilvum</i> (Bean tree)	Moodlu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Source of food and timber used for making weapons, tools and utensils
CP31	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis var. obtusa</i> (Red River Gum)	Yulkuparlu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Source of food and timber used for making weapons, tools and utensils/used medicinally for wounds, diarrhoea and sore throats
CP32	<i>Acacia cyperophylla</i> (Red Mulga/ Creekline Miniritchie)	Minni-ritchi	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Hardwood used for weapons
CP33	<i>Owenia acidula</i> (Emu Apple)	Minyarlu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source

CP34	<i>Pittosporum angustifolium</i> (Weeping pittosporum, Butterbush, Cattle Bush, Native Apricot)		Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Known throughout arid zones/used for a variety of ailments – important medicinal plant
CP35	<i>Santalum lanceolatum</i> (Desert Quandong, Northern Sandalwood, Sandalwood or True Sandalwood)	Mandawarra	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Resource used for ceremony and healing, also important source of fruit
CP36	<i>Marsilea drummondii</i> (Common Nardoo)	Ngadu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Staple to the diet of all in the area/made famous by Burke
CP37	<i>Enchylaena tomentose</i> (Barrier Saltbush or Ruby Saltbush)		Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source
CP38	<i>Muehlenbeckia florulenta</i> (Tangled Lignum)	Pundrinya	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Resource for fibre used in net making
CP39	<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> (verdolaga, pigweed, little hogweed, red root, pursley, and moss rose)	Munyeroo	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source, high in protein & fat, seeds & leaves edible
CP40	<i>Cynanchum viminalis</i> subsp. <i>Australe</i> (Caustic bush)	Milky ngamma	Dieri	Economic	Plant used for healing cuts, warts and sores
CP41	<i>Velesunio ambiguus</i> (Freshwater Mussel)	Thuka	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks

CP42	<i>Macquaria sp.</i> (Lake Eyre Golden perch/Yellowbelly)	Peru	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks - sought after today
CP43	<i>Hephaestus fuliginosus</i> (Sooty Grunter/Black Bream)	Tharuwitji	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks - sought after today
CP44	<i>Neosiluroides cooperensis</i> (Cooper Creek Catfish)	Capi	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks - sought after today
CP45	<i>Emydura macquarii emmotti</i> (Cooper Creek Turtle)	Nharra	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks - sought after today
CP46	<i>Cherax destructor</i> (Common Yabby)	Marngani	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks - sought after today
CP47	<i>Anus superciliosa</i> (Pacific Black Duck)	Dikarri	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source found in most wetlands & creeks
CP48	<i>Malacorhynchus membranaceus</i> (Pink-eared Duck)	Taralku	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source found in most wetlands & creeks
CP49	<i>Phaps chalcoptera</i> (Common Bronzewing)		Dieri	Economic	Food source
CP50	<i>Varanus sp.</i> (Monitor)	Mangali (Yellow) & Makapari (Black)	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Economic	Food source

3.2.4 Ecological values – Cooper subregion water dependent assets

ID	Name	Traditional name	Country	Value	Summary
CP1	Cullyamurra Waterhole	Kulgamarra	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Resource site/permanent waterhole.
CP2	Cooper Creek		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	The Cooper Creek feeds the entire system in the reserve
CP3	Burkes Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Resource site - large Coolibahs and Bean trees
CP5	Policeman's Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source/present day usage
CP6	Kings Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source /present day usage
CP7	Minkie Waterhole	Minka yi	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Permanent waterhole /fishing waterhole/ important resource site/present day usage
CP9	Cooper Creek (North West Branch)		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food and resource site. The north west branch is crucial to the water feeding into Tirrawarra Swamp and on to Coongie Lake -
CP10	Tirrawarra Swamp & Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Resource site
CP11	Kudriemitchie Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food and resource site. Included in the Coongie Lakes National Park. Listed RAMSAR site with high cultural value.
CP12	Coongie Lake National Park	Kayityirru	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food and resource site. Important meeting place, campsite, artefacts, burials. Listed RAMSAR Wetland Site with significant birds
CP13	Gidgealpa Waterhole		Dieri	Ecological	Food and resource site. Important sand dune ridgeline along the length of the waterhole – site of artefacts, burials, tools and black dingo.
CP14	Parachirrinna Waterhole		Dieri	Ecological	Food and resource site. Entire area is highly significant for spiritual reasons and used by different tribal groups for ceremony.

CP15	Deparanie Waterhole		Dieri	Ecological	Food and resource site. Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP16	Lake McKinlay		Dieri	Ecological	Food and resource site. Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP17	Mollichuta Waterhole		Dieri	Ecological	Food and resource site. Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP18	Kanowana Channel		Dieri	Ecological	Food and resource site. Connected to the Parachirrinna Waterhole
CP27	Nappa Merrie Waterhole		Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Important cultural site/ Burke & Wills Dig tree site /records of quarry, grindstones and stone flakes
CP29	<i>Eucalyptus coolabah</i> (Coolibah)	Kalpurru	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Range of uses including: water, fibre, wood, medicine, fishing, food source and implements
CP30	<i>Lysiphyllum gilvum</i> (Bean tree)	Moodlu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Source of food and timber
CP31	<i>Eucalyptus camaldulensis</i> var. <i>obtusa</i> (Red River Gum)	Yulkuparlu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Source of food and timber
CP32	<i>Acacia cyperophylla</i> (Red Mulga/ Creekline Miniritchie)	Minni-ritchi	Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Hardwood used for weapons
CP33	<i>Owenia acidula</i> (Emu Apple)	Minyaru	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source
CP34	<i>Pittosporum angustifolium</i> (Weeping pittosporum, Butterbush, Cattle Bush, Native Apricot)		Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Medicinal plant, used for a variety of ailments

CP35	<i>Santalum lanceolatum</i> (Desert Quandong, Northern Sandalwood, Sandalwood or True Sandalwood)	Mandawarra	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Resource used for ceremony and healing, also important source of fruit
CP36	<i>Marsilea drummondii</i> (Common Nardoo)	Ngadu	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source
CP37	<i>Enchylaena tomentose</i> (Barrier Saltbush or Ruby Saltbush)		Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source
CP38	<i>Muehlenbeckia florulenta</i> (Tangled Lignum)	Pundrinya	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Fibre used in net making
CP39	<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> (verdolaga, pigweed, little hogweed, red root, pursley, and moss rose)	Munyeroo	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source, high in protein & fat, seeds & leaves edible
CP40	<i>Cynanchum viminale subsp. Australe</i> (Caustic bush)	Milky ngamma	Dieri	Ecological	Medicinal plant, used for healing cuts, warts and sores
CP41	<i>Vesunio ambigus</i> (Freshwater Mussell)	Thuka	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source, found in most waterholes & creeks
CP42	<i>Macquaria sp.</i> (Lake Eyre Golden perch/Yellowbelly)	Peru	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source, found in most waterholes & creeks
CP43	<i>Hephaestus fuliginosus</i> (Sooty Grunter/Black Bream)	Tharuwitji	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks

CP44	<i>Neosiluroides cooperensis</i> (Cooper Creek Catfish)	Capi	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks
CP45	<i>Emydura macquarii emmotti</i> (Cooper Creek Turtle)	Nharra	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks
CP46	<i>Cherax destructor</i> (Common Yabby)	Marngani	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source found in most waterholes & creeks
CP47	<i>Anus superciliosa</i> (Pacific Black Duck)	Dikarri	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source found in most wetlands & creeks
CP48	<i>Malacorhynchus membranaceus</i> (Pink-eared Duck)	Taralku	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source found in most wetlands & creeks
CP49	<i>Phaps chalcoptera</i> (Common Bronzewing)		Dieri	Ecological	Food source
CP50	<i>Varanas sp</i> (Monitor)	Mangali (Yellow) & Makapari (Black)	Dieri & Yandrwandha/Yawarrawarrka	Ecological	Food source

3.3 Accompanying narratives

The following stories were provided by community members when describing each asset. Each story is aligned with an identification number cited in the above tables.

Kulgamarra/Cullyamurra Waterhole (CP1)

Significant for both the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka and Dieri peoples, the Cullyamurra Water Hole is the largest permanent waterhole in the reserve. It was a gathering place between the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka and the Dieri people. It is the main source of water around the Cooper as it is very deep and very long. This waterhole is roughly 52 metres deep. Even in drought the waterhole still managed to hold a lot of water. It is the entrance of the Cooper Creek into the Innamincka Regional Reserve, feeding all the lakes and flowing into Kati Thanda/Lake Eyre.

The waterhole is a source of food and tool making resources, and evidence of such activity can be found at the waterhole today. The waterhole is also a site for women's business and other ceremonies.

There are a few sites that surround the waterhole which are relevant to the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka People. This waterhole was also a record keeping place. As there are a lot of engravings, painting in the rocks that surround this waterhole. Some individuals would have their own specific rocks where they would mark what they had been catching by way of engravings and rock art.

There was a lot of bird life around the water hole and a lot of feathers were collected there which were used for ceremonial purposes.



Figure 4: Cullyamurra Water Hole (Source: K. Love 2015)

The Choke (as above)

Cullyamurra waterhole is also the site of the Choke. The Choke has been given this name as it is the place where water when running, comes to a stop. It is at the Choke where the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka would seek out hidden frogs in the sand, when water was scarce. The Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka would squeeze the frog to obtain drinking water, and then cook the frog for a nutritious meal.

The Choke was also a place of trade for Aboriginal people of the region.

Cooper Creek (CP2)

The Cooper Creek runs from Queensland all the way down to the Lake Ayre. Cooper Creek enters South Australia slightly east of the Cullyamurra Water Hole, and feeds the entire reserve system, making its way south to Kati Thanda (Lake Eyre). Near Windorah, when it rains, the Cooper runs between sand dunes across plains and into wetlands and waterholes. In times when the creek is running it fills up the surrounding water holes. When the water holes were full it allowed tribes members to travel around to different waterholes, which led to a very nomadic life for the Indigenous people of the area.

Also known for travelling business such as trading and ceremonies, the waterholes define walking and trade routes for the Aboriginal people of the region, allowing goods to be traded in times of abundance. The water holes also play an important role in ceremony.

There are a lot of dreamtime stories that connect along the Cooper. When neighbouring tribes, such as the Dieri and the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka, would walk along the course of the Cooper, the leaders of the tribe would meet. Depending on whose country they were

on, the Traditional Owners would give the leader of the visiting tribe a 'permission stick', which was given to grant safe travel on country.

However, before neighbouring tribes were given the permission stick, they would have to camp in the area for days or even months to prove they were there for peaceful reasons and not cause harm to anyone.

Burke's Waterhole (CP3)

The burial site of the explorer Burke, the waterhole is also an important food source (eg. fish and turtles) and tool making resource site for local Aboriginal people. The water hole is critical to the local ecology including many species of birds such as pelicans, cranes, ibis, bush turkeys, eagles and hawks. Basically, all the animals relied on the waterholes.



Figure 5: Burke's Waterhole (Source: K. Love 2015)

The waterhole is also an important source for bean trees and coolibahs, both an important food source for local Aboriginal people. Some of the area's oldest bean trees and coolibahs can be found here.



Figure 6: Bean tree at Burke's Waterhole (Source: K. Love 2015)

Kings Waterhole (CP6)

A popular fishing spot, still in use today, Kings Waterhole is a site where a variety of fish can be found including golden perch, catfish, and yellow belly. Mussels can also be found in abundance here. Evidence of use for many generations exists in the surrounding scar trees and middens.

Scrubby Camp (CP8)

Recently closed by Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka people, the camp was the site of a massacre. Its location near cattle yards means the campsite was well used by the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka.



Figure 7: Scrubby Camp waterhole (Source: K. Love 2015)

Tirrawarra Swamp and Waterhole (CP10)

Tirrawarra is an important resource site. It has an abundance of food sources where local tribes collect food and is especially good for mussels. The area surrounding the swamp and waterhole is sacred as there are burial sites, some of which have been uncovered as a result of this area being prone to flooding. Tirrawarra is surrounded by human skulls and bones and, as such, the Dieri People wishes this and many other sites along the Cooper region and Cooper basin to remain untouched.

Tirrawarra was a member of a local Dieri tribe.



Figure 8: Tirrawarra Swamp and Waterhole (Source: K. Love 2015)



Figure 9: Mussel, Tirrawarra Waterhole (Source: K. Love 2015)

Malkumba/Coongie Lakes Wetlands (CP11)

Malkumba/Coongie Lakes Wetlands are important to the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka peoples, as a site for food, medicine, tool making and recreation. The historical importance

of the lakes to the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka people is evidenced by the many middens and other artefacts that can be found in the area.

The RAMSAR listed Coongie wetland system as a critical ecosystem of high ecological value and home to many species of flora and fauna, some protected and rare, including the Freckled Duck (one of the 10 rarest waterfowl in the world), Barking Owl and the Grey Falcon.⁸ The wetlands are also home to nearly five hundred plant species, some rare, as well as mammals, fish, and at least ten frog species.

Numerous midden sites, artefacts, mussels, waterbirds. Because Coongie Lakes is a large water-site people spent a lot of time in this area, which shows why there is a lot of midden sites. Everything surrounding Coongie Lake was reliant on Cooper creek and its water flow. Because of its size it attracted a lot of tribes and was a place where there was also travelling business, trading and ceremonies held. You can identify different sites by the tools and painting materials that were left behind. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)



Figure 10: Coongie Lakes (Source: K. Love 2015)

⁸ Wilderness Society of Australia <https://www.wilderness.org.au/coongie-lakes>



Figure 11: Coongie Wetlands (Source: K. Love 2015)

Gidgealpa Waterhole (CP13)

Gidgealpa Waterhole is an ephemeral waterhole with an extensive sand dune ridge on its southern side. Its use as a resource site is evident by the many artefacts that can be found in along the ridge.



Figure 12: Gidgealpa Waterhole (Source: K.Love 2015)

Parachirrinna Waterhole (CP14)

Parachirrinna Waterhole is abundant with wildlife including fish, turtles and lots of birdlife and therefore a well-known food resource for Aboriginal people of the region. This particular waterhole was artesian fed so the waterhole comes from that basin.



Figure 13: Parachirrinna Waterhole (Source: K. Love 2015)



Figure 14: Parachirrinna Waterhole (Source: K. Love 2015)

Reedy Springs (CP21)

The waterholes at Reedy Springs are part of the Seven Sisters creation story.

All of these places are significant as water is the essence of life. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)

All of these waterholes are significant and have stories attached to them. Like the Seven Sisters Dreaming for example. There was 7 Sister down near the waterhole. Then one day a man from another area came along and he took one of these girls for his wife. He run off with her and took her back to his country and kept her there. Then one day he went out hunting and the 6 sisters came along as they tracked him to where he was camping. Then they spotted their missing sister down at the waterhole they then went down and grabbed their sister. Ever since then he has been trying to find her and get her back, as he gets closer to them they would run away again traveling to all of the waterholes across this country (Australia). To this very day he is still chasing after them to get his wife back. Now you can see this story in the stars up in the sky the big dipper (Man) and the little dipper (6 Sisters). When the sun goes down and the moon and stars come up you can see him still chasing them across the sky. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)

Eucalyptus coolabah (Coolibah) (CP29)

Known as Kalpurru by the Dieri and Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka people, this tree is a important resource as it has a range of uses including: water, fibre, wood, medicine, food source and its wood is used for making implements.

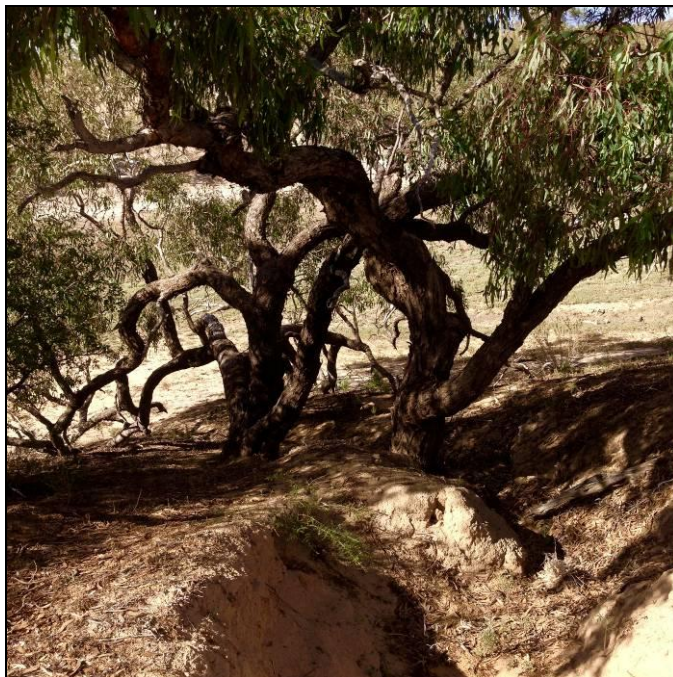


Figure 15: Coolibah Tree, Cooper Creek (Source: K. Love 2015)

Milky ngamma/Caustic Bush (CP40)

This plant is used throughout the region as a healing plant for cuts and sores.



Figure 16: Milky ngamma/Caustic Bush (Source: K. Love 2015)

There are a lot of dreamtime stories that connect all along the Cooper Creek and surrounding areas. That connected people to country and places and everywhere in between. When neighbouring tribes would come along to the Cooper such as the Dieri and the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka people the leader of the tribes would meet, then they have to show their connection to country in ceremony only then was it safe to travel across the country. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)

These places listed but not mapped are equally significant as those written about above:

The Causeway

My Daughter's Grandmother on her mother's side was born right near the causeway near the Lignum Bush. It was her family members who were responsible for saving the life of King in the Burke and Wills expedition. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)

Policeman's Waterhole

This waterhole has been and still is a very popular fishing spot. There is fish here all the time. I have taken my fiancé Brooke and my Daughter's out there and along the cooper as a way to educate my Daughter's that this is very sacred cultural ground. It is good to walk on the country with my daughter's.

There is yellow belly, catfish, speckled perch, Barcoo grunter (Black Bream). There is always fish in the Policeman's waterhole and a lot of big fish at that. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)

Minkie Waterhole

There is always water in the Minkie waterhole no matter how dry it gets. There is always a little bit of water there. When the waterhole goes down really low it's more of an opportunity to get fish.

This place has got some burial sites surrounding it. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)

Cooper Creek – North West Branch

This place has some significant burial sites around it. Artefacts and fireplaces can also be found around here. This is very significant to the Yandruwandha, Yawarrawarrka, Dieri people. There are a lot of sites that have been damaged along the North West Branch and along various areas of the Cooper due to the impact of mining companies. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)

Kudriemitchie Waterhole

This is the main creek channel that feeds the Coongie Lakes. There are a lot of midden, burial sites and artefacts. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)

Kanowana Channel

There is a lot of fish, artefacts, burial sites and carvings, fire places at all of the site in and around the Dieri Native Title Areas all of the sites are to be Mapped and protected. (William J Dawson, Dieri Elder)

Other significant sites include the Deeparanie Waterhole, Lake Mckinlay, Mollichuta Waterhole, MacDonnell Creek, Rocky Springs, Blanche Water Waterhole, St Mary's Pool, Lake Blanche, Strzelecki Creek, Cartoongannie Waterhole, Mappamerrie Waterhole and Parenjelly Creek.

4. Summary

This report provides an overview of the relationship the Aboriginal peoples of the Cooper subregion have with water and water depended assets, in what is an extremely arid environment. There are water resources, known to only a few, that continue to nourish and provide Aboriginal people with an ongoing connection to their cultural traditions. Water is also an intrinsic part of creation stories such as the Seven Sisters story.

Although all Traditional Owner groups of the Cooper subregion were approached to participate in the research project, some were not available throughout the project's timeframe, while others declined to participate as they did not want to share their stories. The researchers respect this decision. The two groups that did participate, the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka and Dieri peoples, spent considerable time on country with researchers, and sharing their extensive knowledge about water and its intrinsic connection to existence.

The Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka and Dieri shared their knowledge of the abundant wildlife; birds, reptiles, fish and mammals, and its function to the broader ecosystem and how water, even in its scarcity, manages to replenish all life in the desert. Then participants showed examples of medicinal flora, such as Milky Gnamma (Caustic Bush), as well as where important botanic food sources, such as Ngadu and the Ruby saltbush are located.

The Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka and Dieri people also discussed the complex system of waterholes in the region, and the stories they hold in the spiritual life of Aboriginal people, including being the sites for customary rituals including women's business. The Traditional Owners also spoke about how some of the waterholes were the sites of massacres, where their ancestors continue to rest.

One of the main concerns expressed by the Traditional Owners was being able to keep sites of high cultural value protected. One participant was concerned that the increased attention paid to region (for mining or recreation purposes), increases the potential for sacred sites to be exploited and/or damaged. Although the researchers were afforded the great privilege of being shown these sites, we were not given permission to map or document the sites.

This report provides rich examples of Aboriginal water values existing in the Cooper subregion. The information was collated with the generous assistance of the Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka and Dieri knowledge holders. However it is not exhaustive, as documenting water values for the entire subregion will require more time than was permitted for this research project. It is the expressed hope of the Traditional Owners of the subregion, that the project will be continued, and an extensive study of the region can be undertaken identifying water resources and their associated cultural values.

5. References

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6. Appendices

Appendix 1: 2011 Census data maps

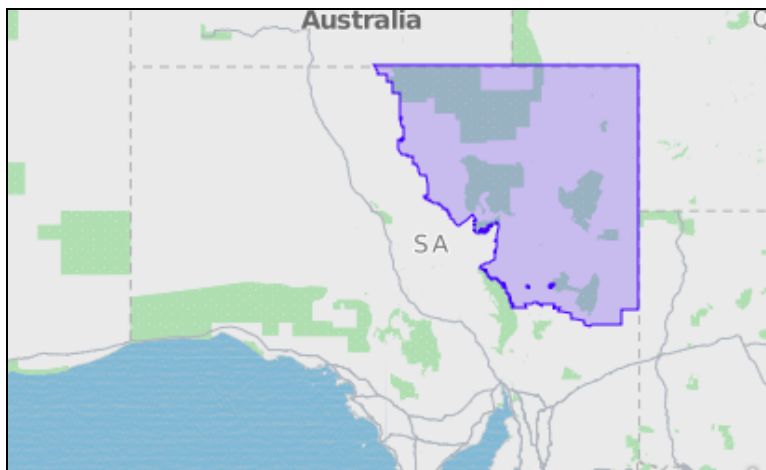


Figure 17: Map of Marree statistical area (Source: ABS 2011 Census data, Community Profiles)

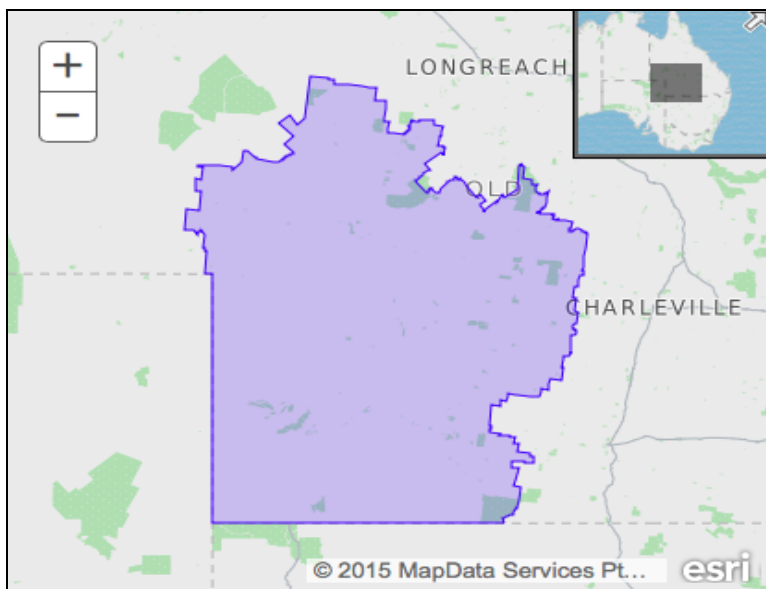


Figure 18: Map of Bulloo-Quilpie-Barcoo Indigenous statistical area (Source: ABS 2011 Census data)

Appendix 2 – Consultation participants

Name	Organisation / Group
Scott Gorringe	Mithaka
Dot Gorringe	Mithaka
Rhonda Gorringe	Mithaka
George Gorringe	Mithaka
Katheryn Litherland	Yandruwandha Yawarrawarrka Traditional Land Owners Aboriginal Corporation (YYTLOAC)
Natalie Mogg	Wangkumara People
Hope Ebsworth	Wangkumara People
Glen Andrews	Dieri People
William J Dawson	Dieri People
Mark Wallace	Boonthamurra People
Barbara Olsen	Boonthamurra People
Marissa Deshong	Senior Ranger - Lake Eyre
Ron Beezley	Ranger Co-ordinator (Lake Eyre Diamantina)
Erik Dahl	Ranger Co-ordinator Innamincka