



Kimberley Land Council

MEDIA RELEASE

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Green Army uncertainty for Kimberley Indigenous rangers

The Kimberley Land Council is calling for clarification on the future of Green Army, following reports the program may be axed.

The Green Army program currently funds 30 Indigenous participants working alongside rangers, as well as three ranger development positions in the Kimberley Ranger Network.

KLC Chief Executive Officer Nolan Hunter is concerned that if Green Army is removed, and funding is not reinvested into a program with similar outcomes, then there will be significant consequences for young people transitioning into environmental and cultural management work.

“The Green Army program currently employs 30 Indigenous participants,” Mr Hunter said. “Half of these are women and the Green Army program has enabled the development of specific women’s ranger groups.

“For many of our young rangers, this program has provided them with their first opportunity to work on country and care for country.

“The program has increased the professionalism of our ranger network and has improved our capacity to deliver important biodiversity work in some of the remotest parts of the Kimberley.

“The value of the current Indigenous Ranger Program is well known, particularly in areas where there is a lack of availability of jobs in other industries, as well as a downturn in different industry sectors.”

Mr Hunter said while the intent behind the establishment of Green Army was positive, the highly restrictive nature of the program and complex administrative red tape has required significant effort to make work in the Kimberley.

He said the KLC would welcome any moves to make the program simpler and less onerous.

“What we don’t want to see is this funding being abolished or used for an unrelated purpose,” he said.

“This program has acted as a pathway for young people where there is a deficiency in job readiness, linked to limited education outcomes in remote areas.

“The removal of this funding could have enormous consequences for the Kimberley Ranger Network, from loss of individual jobs to potentially losing entire ranger teams.

“There must be a commitment to reinvest the funding into a program that delivers environmental and cultural services, while equally providing highly valued and professional employment and training opportunities for Indigenous rangers.”