



Kimberley Land Council

Key events in KLC history:

1978 – First meeting of the KLC at Noonkanbah.

1979 – Protests against AMAX drilling at Noonkanbah begin. KLC organises to send a delegation to the UN.

1980 – Police move in to allow the AMAX oil rig convoy access to Noonkanbah. Kimberley Aboriginal people blockade the road in an attempt to hold up the 20 trucks coming from Perth. Arrests are made and the story gets national and international attention.

1981 – During the 1980s a number of groups move from towns, missions and government settlements to small settlements on their traditional lands. This was called the outstation movement.

1984 – The Seaman Inquiry gets underway looking into WA land rights. KLC plays a key role spreading the word and making submissions to the inquiry.

1984 – Federal Government funds KLC for the first time. Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre and Kimberley Language Resource Centre established by the KLC.

1985 – Seaman Report released and recommends that land held by the Aboriginal Lands Trust be handed over to Aboriginal people. State Government Land Rights Bill does not follow recommendations of report.

1986 – Peter Yu, Pat Dodson, Bob Weatherall and Geoff Clark go to the UN and make a submission about the Federal Government's Land Rights Bill.

1991 – Historic Crocodile Hole meeting held at Rugeley. This meeting produces the Crocodile Hole report – a blueprint for economic development and regional agreements which continues to be referenced by Kimberley Aboriginal people today.

1992 – Mabo decision rejects terra nullius.

1993 – The KLC plays a role in negotiations regarding the Native Title Act and becomes a vehicle for self-determination for Kimberley Aboriginal people. The KLC is appointed under the Act to assist people to make native title claims in the Federal Court. The KLC meets with WA Premier Richard Court who refuses to accept the Mabo decision.

1994 – The WA State Government decides not to recognise the Federal Government's Native Title Act and passes its own law. The KLC takes the Premier to the High Court and successfully argues that the WA law is discriminatory and it is thrown out.

1994 – The KLC, KALACC and KLRC release the Yirra Statement calling for a regional authority for the Kimberley.

1996 – The Wik decision is handed down by the High Court with the majority of judges agreeing that native title should co-exist or sit side by side with cattle stations.

1998 – John Howard's 10 point plan, in response to Wik, becomes law significantly watering down native title rights for Aboriginal people.

1998 – First Indigenous land management facilitator employed at KLC, establishing the foundations for the KLC land and sea management unit.

1999 – The KLC organises for a group of Aboriginal leaders, Peter Yu, Pat Dodson, Marcia Langton, Dr G Yunupingu and Loowitja O'Donoghue, to travel to the UK and visit the Queen and others from the British Government to discuss the settlement of Australia and Indigenous rights.

2001 – The first positive determination of native title in the Kimberley is reached by consent with the Tjurabalan people in August 2001.

2008 – At the direction of elders from 13 different native title groups with country along the Kimberley coastline, the KLC convenes the Traditional Owner Taskforce to investigate possible sites for a single LNG hub. The taskforce is a significant development, recognising people's rights to free, prior and informed consent, as well as culturally correct decision making.

2008 – The birth of the Kimberley Ranger Network – Commonwealth funding secured.

2011 – The KLC drives the West Kimberley National Heritage Listing.

2013 – Kimberley Indigenous Projected Areas create one of the largest Indigenous conservation corridors in Australia.

2014 – The KLC assists four north Kimberley native title groups, Dambimangari, Wilinggin, Uunguu and Balanggarra, to become the first Indigenous groups in Australia to register carbon businesses across exclusive possession native title lands.

2015 – WA Premier Colin Barnett announces the planned closure of 150 remote Indigenous communities. KLC leads the fight against the closures and travels to the UN to raise attention and condemn the actions of the State Government.

2017 – The KLC hosts the Broome regional dialogue on constitutional reform. Sends delegation of Kimberley Aboriginal people to Uluru who play a role in developing the historic Uluru Statement from the Heart.

2017 – KLC hosts the biggest ever Indigenous ranger forum in northern Australia, supported by the Australian Government. KLC is announced as a key project partner in an international fire management initiative, which sees Indigenous fire knowledge exchanged with people in Botswana.

2018 – The KLC co-convenes the National Native Title Conference in Broome, bringing more than 800 people to the region. There have been 32 successful native title determinations in the Kimberley to date and approximately 80 per cent of the Kimberley is now native title determined.