



## Kimberley Land Council

### MEDIA STATEMENT

July 24, 2019

#### **Kimberley Land Council Board of Directors issues response – Yakka Munga clearing**

The Kimberley Land Council Board is shocked and dismayed at recent comments made by the head of Western Australia's Pastoralists and Graziers Association about land clearing at Yakka Munga Station.

The land clearing that has occurred is a violation of the Indigenous Land Use Agreement. Cultural sites have been destroyed and environmental values have been damaged.

Mr Seabrook says that the land clearing has "been done and can't be undone". This shows a complete disregard for the laws of current day Western Australia, including the law of native title.

The comments, as well as claims of "obstructionism", demonstrate an attitude remnant of the colonialist era when there was a complete disregard for the existence of Aboriginal people and development took precedent over all other interests.

Mr Seabrook's comments also appear to condone the actions of companies who flout the regulatory requirements of government and industry. This approach can only place companies in precarious positions, with implications for approval processes in the future.

Native title should be seen as an opportunity and not a barrier. We are not living in the 1800s. Western Australia has progressed as a state and the majority of companies, proponents, and industry leaders seek to undertake best practice when working with native title holders.

The KLC stands in support of the Nyikina Mangala Traditional Owners and the Walalakoo Aboriginal Corporation in their opposition to any further work and we commend the State Government for taking action on this matter.

The clearing at Yakka Munga was done in secrecy and in complete disregard for all of the measures and processes in place that are meant to ensure action like this does not occur without proper approval or agreement. This further highlights the need to strengthen the Aboriginal Heritage Act to protect Aboriginal culture and heritage areas across the Kimberley and all over Western Australia.