



The Healing Country Kwinana Gathering Summary Report

Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar

Djilba - August, 2026



WILYA JANTA



Kaarta Gar-up, Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar



We acknowledge that this gathering took place on the unceded lands of the Whadjuk Noongar people, Traditional Custodians of Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, culture and community, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

The Healing Country project is funded by the Australian Research Council (#IN220100084) and NSW Health.

This report and more information on the Healing Country Project is available online at:
www.ucrh.edu.au/project/healing-country

The Healing Country Project

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have cared for Country over millennia. Knowledges and caring practices have been impacted by colonisation and now further by our changing climate.

Healing Country is a community-led research project taking place across 3 diverse Aboriginal communities – Warumungu in NT, Bundjalung in NSW and Whadjuk Noongar in WA – and aims to weave together local Knowledges with environmental and health data to help communities develop solutions and advocate for climate actions.



Annual Gathering Report

The Healing Country Kwinana Gathering was held in August 2026 during **Djilba** (Second Rains / First Spring in the Whadjuk Noongar seasonal calendar). As the third and final in-person project gathering, it brought together representatives from all three community partners once again: **Jagun Alliance** on Bundjalung Country (Northern Rivers, NSW), **The Kids Research Institute Australia** on Whadjuk Noongar Boodja (Perth, WA), and **Wilya Janta** from Warumungu Country (Tennant Creek, NT). They were joined by team members from the University Centre for Rural Health and other partners, including the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), alongside the Kwinana community and Elders.

This Summary Report provides an overview of the yarns, discussions, and activities undertaken during our time together, as well as the outputs developed throughout the Gathering. These include the beautiful storytelling of our collective yarns through the lens of graphic artist and researcher **Talah Laurie** (*Gumbaynggirr & Yaegl*), who created the conversation maps featured throughout this report.

We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who attended and shared their knowledges, whether scientific, community-based, cultural, or all three. Special thanks to **Uncle Noel Nannup** for his Welcome to Country, as well as the students of **Gilmore College** and members of the **WA Healing Country Cultural Expert Group** for hosting us on Whadjuk Noongar Boodjar. Your generosity, guidance, and willingness to share knowledge of the region enriched the experience for all involved.

We encourage you to share this report across your communities and networks. We hope it offers valuable insight into the work, relationships, and achievements of the broader Healing Country team.

Bugalbeh (thank you),

Veronica Matthews and Kris Vine on behalf of the Healing Country team.

Day 1 - Monday 24th August



Preparing for the Launch of Community Resources

Members of the Healing Country project team and WA Cultural Expert Group (CEG) members reconnected and put the final touches on plans for the afternoon's resources launch.



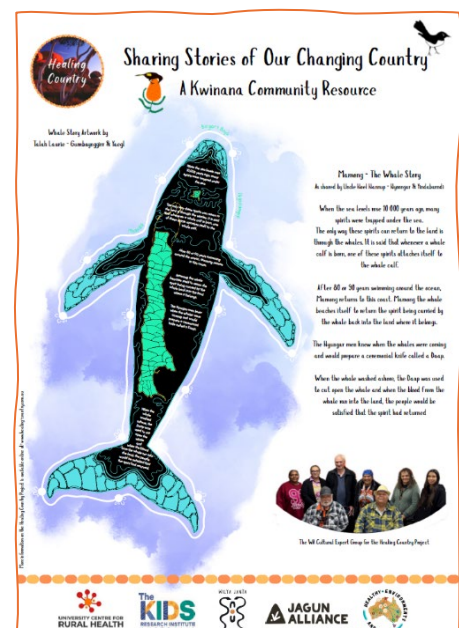
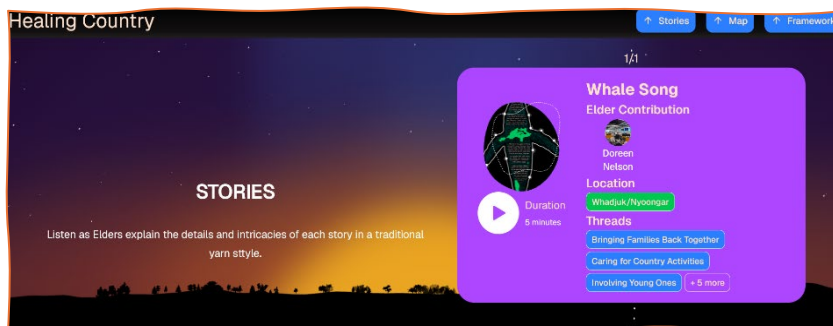
Welcome to Country & Smoking Ceremony

Uncle Noel lead the group in a smoking ceremony and Welcome to Country, while young students from the local Gilmore College performed dances and shared the stories of them.



Launch of the Kwinana Community Climate Resources

The WA CEG led the afternoon's meeting and shared the community resources that have been co-designed over more than four years working together on this project.



Climate challenges and ways forward

Discussions looked at the findings of the project, what the Kwinana community have shared on their impacts of climate changes being felt now, and actions that can be taken locally to support the health and wellbeing of community and Country.



Day 2 - Tuesday 25th August



Reflections of Day 1

Talah led the reflections from Day 1 and introduced representatives from Wilya Janta and Jagun to the discussions of the day, using her arts-based conversations mapping process – shown throughout this summary report.



There was purposeful inclusion of jarjums to support intergenerational inclusion and learning, mob way.



Experiencing the Whale Song

Thank you to Jacob Martin from Curtin University for sharing and explaining this work to the group:

“Kooranyi Nyinning: Mammung’s Lost Song is a tactile listening experience developed with Indigenous Tours WA. It invites audiences to sit, listen and feel the deep sound of pygmy blue whale song through an infrasound chair or vibrating platform.

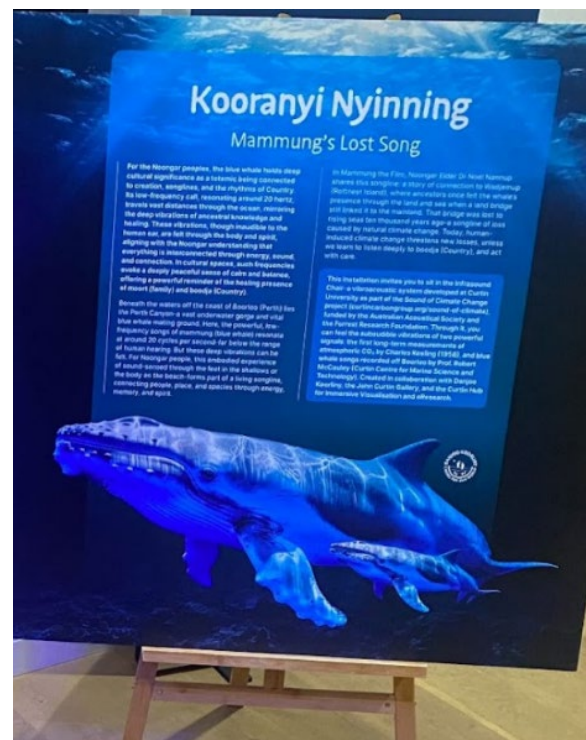
The work connects whale song, ocean life and climate change with Noongar storytelling and listening to Country. Visitors hear and feel low-frequency sound through the body, creating a quiet space to reflect on ecological loss, recovery and our changing relationship with whales.

The experience draws on the story of Mammung, the whale, and the shift from whale oil to whale song. Whales were once hunted as a source of industrial energy. Today, their songs help us understand ocean life, migration, recovery and the need to care for marine ecosystems.

In the installation, whale song is not only heard through headphones. It is also felt through vibration, allowing visitors to experience sound as something physical, environmental and relational. This supports a different kind of climate communication: slower, embodied and grounded in listening.

The work has been developed and presented with Indigenous Tours WA and shared through National Science Week and Aboriginal community events.”

Source: <https://www.curtincarbongroup.org/sound-of-climate/mammungs-lost-song>



Sharing our Healing Country stories

Stories were shared by all three research projects sites on their work and progress: Whadjuk Noongar; Bundjalung; and the Warumungu teams.



Day 3 - Wednesday 26th August

DAY 3: EVALUATION DAY!
WITH REFLECTIONS FIRST FROM DAYS 1 & 2...

A lot of pride shared by Elders and the young people when yarning about their cultural practices to welcome us 'off Country' mob.

The launch!
(congratulations mob)

On day two we heard a lot about gumtrees being just as important to the Whadjuk site story as the whale story is... And through supported leadership models, it was discussed in the room that advocating for Country and community would become more effective!

Help to heal Country faster!

Planting more trees for shade, medicine and food sources.

Help to unite us as Aboriginal people... Gov will listen to a united people!

Shared Site Sentiments:

- Native title is a cause of division and tensions.
- Competing for funding is a big barrier in the way of healthier peoples and Country.
- There is so much value in sharing yarns, meeting and problem solving together face-to-face!
- Finding ways to include young people in Country & community health that is just as exciting as their own tech!

Dedicated to Kwinana

These resources have been created in collaboration to document the many years of climate change through the eyes of local Noongar people living on Whadjuk Boodja bordered with Binjareb Country.

Thank you to those who made this possible!

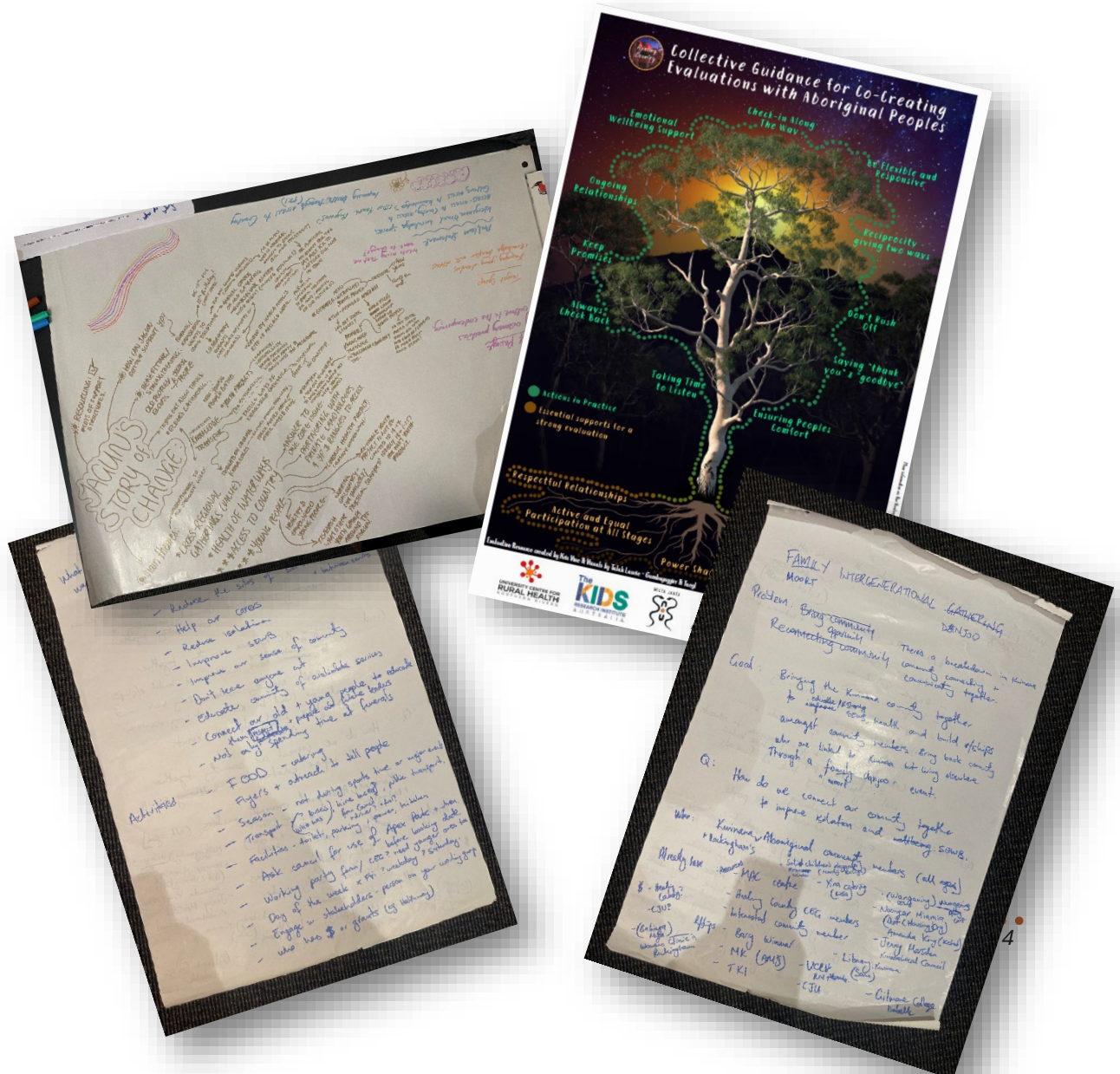
HEARING #26 COUNTRY

WE ARE FAMILY!

Group Reflections and Actions

Our third day together involved:

- Group reflections on the gathering so far
- Progressing each communities' Climate Action planning
- Adaptation Strategy Evaluation planning



Site visit to Kwinana Beach

A visit to the Kwinana coast allowed the group to learn more about and experience the considerable impact of industrial development has had to the local community and access and health of the Country.



A special thank you to the deadly **Yira** catering team, who kept us
feed and happy over the days together.



And finally, THANK YOU to everyone who joined us for the 2026 Healing Country Kwinana Gathering and made it a special time together.



Participant Information - Helping to stay connected with each other

- The WA Healing Country Cultural Expert Group (CEG): Aunties Lynn Coomer & Roslyn Indich, Uncles Noel Nannup & Roger Turvey *Whadjuk Noongar Boodja*
- Kwinana and Whadjuk Community Members - Aunty Doreen Nelson and Grant Nelson, Rebecca Indich, Uncle Charlie Kickett, Aunty Helen Kickett, Vivienne Councillor, Raelene Indich and Valmae Walley *Whadjuk Noongar Boodja*
- Aunty Lynette Dimer, Joanne Taylor, Aunty Mara West and Professor Brad Farrant - The Kids Research Institute Australia & Kulunga Aboriginal Unit *Whadjuk Noongar Boodja*
- Veronica Matthews, Kris Vine, Talah Laurie & Josie Evans - University Centre of Rural Health, *Bundjalung*
- Aunty Patricia Frank Nurururla, Shona Alum & Kat Williams - Wilya Janta *Warumungu*
- Carl Broman, Ava Jarrett & Stevie Wappett - Jagun Alliance *Bundjalung*
- Kate Thompson - Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Viser team *Meeanjin*
- Erika Fernandez – Local Indigenous Artist *Whadjuk Noongar Boodja*
- Jaime Farrant - Climate Justice Union *Whadjuk Noongar Boodja*
- Students and staff of the Gilmore College *Whadjuk Noongar Boodja*
- Samantha Hayes – Kwinana Library and Council *Whadjuk Noongar Boodja*
- Jacob Martin – Curtin Carbon Group, Curtin University *Whadjuk Noongar Boodja*

