

# NORTHERN TANAMI AGREEMENT

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Parties signing the agreement: Federal Government, Central Land Council, Lajamanu community

Location signed: Tanami, Northern Territory

Date signed: 30 April 2007

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The Lajamanu community in the Northern Territory has signed an agreement to create the Northern Territory's largest Indigenous Protected Area ('IPA'). The Northern Tanami agreement is Australia's 23rd IPA and the nation's second largest. The agreement covers 40,000 square kilometres of land from Yingualyalya, Purta and Mount Frederick in the west to the edge of Karlantijpa North in the east, and will be managed by the Lajamanu community of Tanami, 900km south of Darwin. IPAs are a way for Indigenous communities to manage the natural environment, protect endangered species, and create employment opportunities, whilst managing the land, including mining interests. Several mining leases, including the Groundrush and Tanami mines, fall within the IPA's borders.

The mines will be environmentally managed by the local Wulain rangers, whose jobs were recently created to manage the IPA. Historically, lack of employment opportunities has posed problems in remote areas such as Tanami, and it is hoped that this IPA will go some way to remedying that problem.

The Wulain rangers have specialist land management skills that stretch back tens of thousands of years. Combined with contemporary land management techniques, the land is now likely to be managed to its best potential. These techniques have already ensured the Wulain rangers government and regional mining industry contracts for the future. The rangers will also protect local fauna and flora in the region, including vulnerable species like the greater bilby, the great desert skink and the Gouldian finch.

IPAs are an important mechanism for Indigenous people to be involved in the management of their own lands, but will only have these positive effects if they are properly funded by the government. To date, the Federal Government has

invested \$17 million in IPAs. Central Land Council ('CLC') director David Ross has stated that the CLC is interested in more investment of this type in the region in the future.

***Full details of the IPA are available at the Federal Department of Environment website: <<http://www.environment.gov.au/indigenous/publications/pubs/northern-tanami-fs.pdf>>.***