



Innovate

Reconciliation Action Plan

January 2021 – December 2022



Innovate RAP

Our *Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan* (RAP) progresses our reconciliation journey.

The FPC's reconciliation vision is to honour the First Nations Peoples and the lands on which we work by strengthening relationships and working collaboratively to build healthy forests and communities together. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the first custodians of the lands and forests; and as practitioners of sustainable forest management for millennia. Reconciliation is respecting and valuing First Nations Peoples' rights, diversity, cultures, knowledge, and customs by returning and maintaining cultural integrity to the management of forests and forest resources.

Through our reconciliation actions and deliverables, the FPC commits to learning and sharing knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures toward a wider understanding and appreciation by all Australians. We will strive to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, communities and businesses in economic opportunities and integrating cultural values into forest management for the benefit of future generations.



Warwick Scheghi
Tjupan artist

Warwick is the son of Tjupan Elder and long-time sandalwood harvester Keith Sceghi. The Tjupan People are of Western Desert lands and waters of the northeast Goldfields. This painting is for all the sandalwood harvesters working in the bush and living in the bush camps. The painting respects the live and dead sandalwood trees that provide for the harvesters as well as the fruit and seed that will grow new trees for later generations. The circles are the tumblers that process the wood into the pallets and bins in the bush camps.

Foreword



The McGowan Government is committed to working towards true reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal West Australians.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been the Custodians of Country for at least 60,000 years. Western Australia is Aboriginal Land and all of us are incredibly privileged to live amongst the oldest continuing culture on the planet.

As a State and as a Nation, we still have a long way to go to achieve a society where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are treated with the respect they deserve and where they have the same opportunities and life outcomes enjoyed by non-Indigenous Australians.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have an enduring connection to Country and to the forests and trees that are on it. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been using wood products and sustainably managing the forests on Country for tens of thousands of years. The FPC has a unique opportunity to support reconciliation and to provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

I therefore want to congratulate the FPC for this RAP. A robust RAP is an important tool to deliver practical actions which drive an organisation's contribution to reconciliation both internally and in the communities and industries in which it operates.

This is the FPC's second RAP and I look forward to working alongside the FPC to deliver this plan. In particular, I want to achieve greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the forestry industry, both through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and through the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. I also want to continue to build the understanding non-Indigenous peoples have of the connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have to trees and forests and the important role forests play in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Kelly'.

Hon. Dave Kelly MLA
Minister for Forestry
January 2021



The FPC recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures is enduring, has persisted for thousands of years, and is connected to the lands and natural environment where we operate. We pay our respects to the lore, language, cultures and Elders past, present and future.

In working through our 2019 Reflect RAP, our people have endeavoured to realise the concept of reconciliation and its importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Australian society. We better understand the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we operate and acknowledge their histories and cultures. As foresters we have an inherent relationship to; and passion for nature that perhaps hints to us insight and respect for the profound connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We have committed to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement vision to walk together for healthy forests and communities through collaborative Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander relationships. Through the leadership of our Reconciliation Working Group our goals are: to build trust with a genuine commitment to collaboration; welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to contribute to our policies and practices; and deliver opportunities where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples benefit and gain value from the relationship.

We strive to maintain and grow the State's timber industry to deliver positive social, economic and environmental outcomes for all Western Australians. Our Innovate RAP continues our commitment to reconciliation and progresses our commitments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We will also ensure FPC employees continue to learn and develop awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and nurture inclusiveness and respect.

I am proud to present the FPC's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan January 2021 - December 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart West'.

Stuart West
General Manager
January 2021



Our business

The FPC is the Western Australian Government's statutory authority for promoting the sustainable management and development of Western Australia's forest and wood products industry by harvesting and regenerating native forest, plantation and sandalwood products. We ensure the immediate and ongoing production of wood products today and into the future, while protecting other forest values such as biodiversity and water for generations to come. We employ 230 people in eight offices located between Carnarvon, Kalgoorlie, the South West and Esperance and at the start of 2021, five employees and one trainee identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. The Aboriginal Traineeship Program introduced during our Reflect RAP aims to develop the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander foresters and professionals.

The forest and wood products industry in Western Australia contributes about 6,000 direct and indirect jobs to the State's economy. Employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the industry remained at one per cent from 2006 to 2016. These figures highlight the need for our agency and industry to increase participation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, particularly in regional communities.

We actively promote the WA Government's *Aboriginal Procurement Policy* and in financial years' 2018-19 and 2019-20, reported above target results.

Wherever possible, our contract procurement requires providers to outline their commitments to creating opportunities, investment, participation, and active involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This has resulted in several registered and non-registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses providing contract services, particularly in our sandalwood operations; as well as becoming customers for forest products.

¹Schirmer J., Mylek M., Magnusson A., Yabsley B., & Morison J., (2017). Socio-economic impacts of the forest industry Western Australia. University of Canberra.





Our RAP

The FPC RAP guides, measures, and reports the integration of reconciliation, respect and native title values into the FPC's vision, mission and strategic development plans. Our RAP sets out our actions and the contribution our agency will make towards reconciliation. A key element is the development and implementation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy to foster respectful relationships and create meaningful economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Western Australian timber industry.

The champions of the FPC's RAP are Forest Products Commissioners (Board) and actions are driven by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager. Governance for the RAP is the responsibility of the Reconciliation Working Group (RWG).

The FPC's RWG members are:

- John Tredinnick: FPC Director of New Business and Innovation (Chair)
- John Penny: Noongar Elder and Spokesperson (external consultant)
- Trevor Donaldson: FPC Sandalwood Operations Officer and Wongai Emerging Elder
- Benjamin Sawyer: FPC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
- Soni Lamond: FPC Community Engagement Leader
- Jade Riley: FPC Operations Officer and Noongar Woman
- Nikita Procter: FPC Communications and Customer Support Officer and Gurindji and Yadhagani Woman

Through 2019 the FPC progressed through the actions of its first Reflect RAP. This RAP introduced the concept of reconciliation to the FPC and many of its employees and increased the understanding of the real actions that organisations and individual can take toward this goal. The FPC has strived toward achieving reconciliation within its sphere of influence foremostly through increasing the economic participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the timber industry. We have introduced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural promotion through Welcome to Country at work events, via our Facebook page, our internal newsletter and through installation of welcome signage at all FPC offices that acknowledge Traditional Owners with their name for each location. The following case studies are reconciliation case studies the FPC has implemented in the early stages of our journey.

Left: Noongar foresters Karl Collard and Jade Riley assessing a forest harvesting operation for protection of retained crop trees.



Our actions

Aboriginal traineeship program

In November 2018, we welcomed four Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Trainees into the organisation. Two trainees learning in forest-based operations, one in communications and another in administration.

The trainee program is designed to attract and appoint enthusiastic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to develop to the level where they can be merit selected into permanent roles within the FPC, other government agencies and industry organisations. The FPC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander training program received nominations for the Team/Crew of the Year and Trainee of the Year categories at both the 2019 and 2020 Nudge Training Awards, winning in both categories in 2020. The FPC looks forward to welcoming more trainees in 2021.

Sandalwood

Sandalwood is a significant component of the State's timber industry and occurs throughout traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples from the Western deserts to the coast have a holistic connection to sandalwood in culture, healing and sustenance.

The FPC continues its contracted supply of high-grade sandalwood to registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Kalgoorlie based business: Dutjahn Sandalwood Oils. In addition to existing sandalwood sale contracts, since May 2019 the FPC has sought buyers to purchase sandalwood, with a quantity being reserved to encourage innovation and industry development, including objectives related to investment in regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Prospective buyers must detail the proposed number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander jobs their contract will create; and/or how training will be provided to regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Sandalwood Dreaming is an initiative of our Reflect RAP to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses and Traditional Owners to plant sandalwood seeds and collect dead sandalwood as part of our sustainable wild sandalwood operations. Two registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses were awarded contracts in 2019, with a further five in 2020 as the project expanded. Sandalwood Dreaming aims to continue the ancient Western Australian sandalwood story by providing economic opportunity today and regenerating the sandalwood resource for generations of Traditional Owners to come.

Top right: Aboriginal Communications Officer Nikita Procter filming research for improving forest inventory using remote sensing tools.

Right: Sandalwood contractor Wyvern Dimer collecting dead sandalwood from the Rangelands.



Our actions

Plantations

We are a signatory to the South West Native Title Settlement and we are investigating opportunities stemming from the registration of six Indigenous Land Use Agreements and the establishment of regional corporations. Plantation establishment projects have the potential to provide a commercial option on the land managed by the regional corporations. This could include forestry and plantation management development and training for Traditional Owners.

The FPC currently has a pilot program for cooperative plantation management with the Southern Aboriginal Corporation. The Wandering farm is leased to the Corporation for the use and benefit of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This project will provide a share of crop revenue to the Corporation at harvest; and through a contract to a registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business awarded in October 2019, provide employment and training opportunities to Noongar Peoples in plantation, maintenance and harvest of timber products.

Native forests – Djarlma

The creation of the *Western Australian Forestry Industry Development Plan (Djarlma Plan)* was a Western Australian Government initiative. The plan was developed by an independent panel, which included an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representative, and its development included advice from senior Noongar leaders. It is a critical initiative to address the ongoing, complex challenges faced by the forestry industry; shape the direction of future investment and jobs; and provide opportunities for collaboration, innovation and growth. The plan provides for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to contribute to the management of forests and woodlands and promote an understanding of ecological and spiritual Djarlma values. Key strategies include creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led engagement and practices within the forestry industry, including the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander forest enterprises.

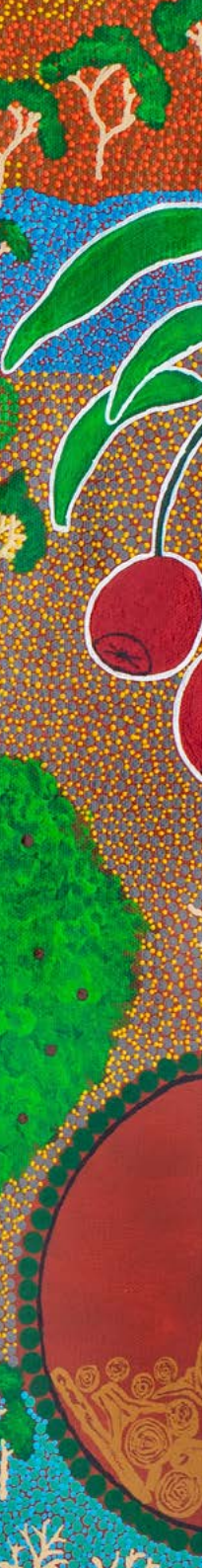
The Djarlma Plan was inspired by the Noongar concept of djarlma (forest) and reflects the interconnected relationship of peoples, forests and woodlands.

Top right: Aboriginal company Indigenous Work-about employees plan the thinning requirements of a 23 year-old pine plantation.

Right: Noongar foresters Jade and Karl discuss native forestry operations with an FPC contractor.

Next page: Sandalwood seeding contractor Ammbi Muir and Kado Muir.

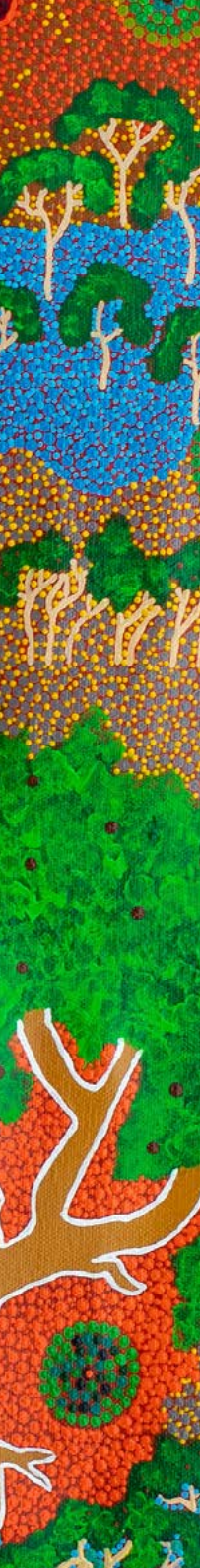




Innovate



Innovate



Reconciliation Action Plan

Relationships

Enshrined in the *Forest Products Act 2000* is the direction for the FPC to implement the principles of ecologically sustainable forest management. These principles are anchored on the concept that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations. The FPC recognises Aboriginal people's custodianship of Country since the Dreaming and therefore having an inherent and unrivalled understanding of this concept.

Building relationships with Traditional Owners and providing opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work on Country brings their cultures and heritage of enhancing the environment for future generations to the FPC. Through collaboration we will encourage two-way knowledge sharing to become more accessible to the community and business partners.

FOCUS AREA: Stakeholder confidence: build trust with a genuine commitment to collaboration.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	— Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2021	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	— Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2021, 2022	Communications Manager
	— RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	June 2021, 2022	RWG Chair
	— Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2021, 2022	General Manager
	— Organise at least one NRW event each year.	May 2021, 2022	RWG Chair
	— Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2021, 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager

Reconciliation Action Plan

FOCUS AREA: Stakeholder confidence: build trust with a genuine commitment to collaboration.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	— Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	March 2021	Communications Manager
	— Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	December 2022	RWG Chair
	— Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
4. Promote positive race relations through equal opportunity strategies.	— Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to diversity and cultural sensitivity.	December 2021	Director People and Culture
	— Develop, implement and communicate an equal opportunity policy for our organisation.	December 2021	Director People and Culture
	— Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our equal opportunity policy.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager

Reconciliation Action Plan

Respect

The FPC acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are the Traditional Owners of the forests and woodlands in which we work. Our success is dependent on respecting and protecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and having awareness and appreciation of diversity and history. The FPC will strive for a greater understanding of traditional forestry practices to weave into our procedures and practices.

FOCUS AREA: Stakeholder inclusivity: Aboriginal people contribute to our policies and practices.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	– Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	July 2021	Director People and Culture
	– Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	July 2021	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	– Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	July 2021	Director People and Culture
	– Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	July 2021	General Manager
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	– Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	July 2021	RWG Chair
	– Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	July 2021	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	– Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	December 2022	General Manager
	– Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	July 2021	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager

Reconciliation Action Plan

7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	— RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2021, 2022	RWG Chair
	— Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	July 2021, 2022	General Manager
	— Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	July 2021, 2022	General Manager
8. Protect Aboriginal cultures and heritage.	— Review procedures to reflect the value of protecting cultures and respecting Aboriginal natural resource lore (rather than just a process to exclude sites from operations).	June 2021	Manager Forest Management

Opportunities

The FPC recognises the longstanding aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to manage Country. A foundation of our RAP is to create more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic participation in the timber industry. We will implement innovative procurement practices to encourage, develop and retain the services of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People and businesses. We will also promote and develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander forest product industries.

FOCUS AREA: Stakeholder value: Aboriginal people benefit and gain value from the relationship

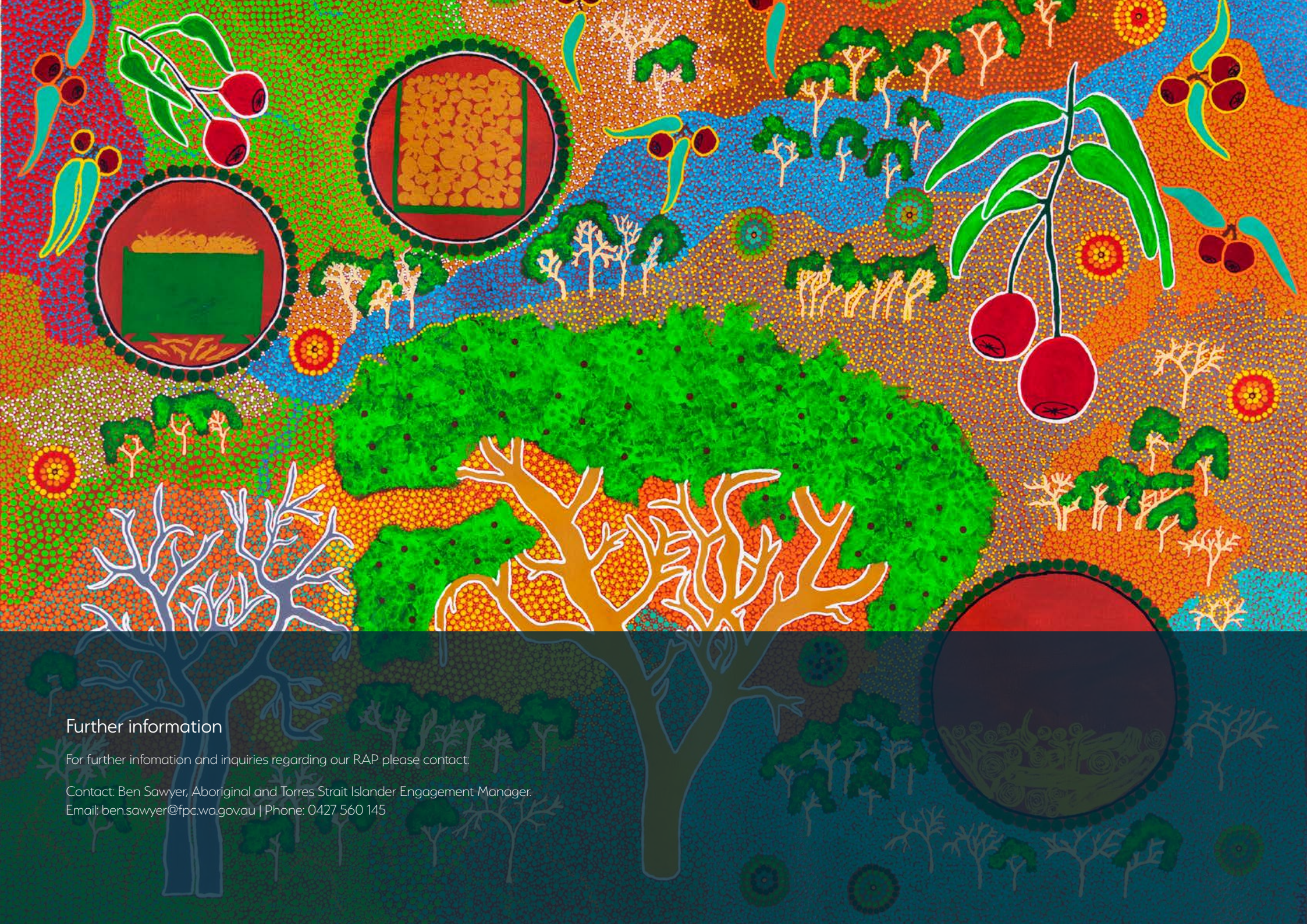
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	— Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development strategies.	December 2022	Director People and Culture
	— Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	December 2022	Director People and Culture

Reconciliation Action

FOCUS AREA: Stakeholder value: Aboriginal people benefit and gain value from the relationship			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	— Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	June 2021	Director People and Culture
	— Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	December 2021	Director People and Culture
	— Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce.	December 2022	General Manager
	— Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	March 2021	Contracts Manager
	— Investigate Supply Nation membership.	March 2021	Contracts Manager
11. Create more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in the timber industry.	— Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	March 2021	Contracts Manager
	— Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	March 2021	Contracts Manager
	— Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	March 2021	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Investigate the opportunity and timeframe for cooperative plantation establishment on Noongar Settlement Lands.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Determine Sandalwood Dreaming potential for Aboriginal certification, branding and tertiary processing.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Increase the number and value of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander contracts.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager

Reconciliation Action Plan

GOVERNANCE			
ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	— Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	December 2020, 2021, 2022	RWG Chair
	— Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	March 2021	RWG Chair
	— Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	January, April, July, October 2021 & 2022	RWG Chair
13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	— Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	July 2021	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	December 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	March 2021	RWG Chair
	— Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	December 2022	General Manager
14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	— Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2021, 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
	— Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	December 2022	Communications Manager
	— Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually.	September 2021, 2022	Communications Manager
	— Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager
15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	— Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2022	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager



Further information

For further information and inquiries regarding our RAP please contact:

Contact: Ben Sawyer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Manager.

Email: bensawyer@fpc.wa.gov.au | Phone: 0427 560 145