



K FARMER  
**DUTJAHN  
FOUNDATION**

IMPACT REPORT 2021/2022

**BUILDING VIABLE FUTURES**





# K FARMER DUTJAHN FOUNDATION (KFDF) AIMS TO ENSURE THE PEOPLE AND BIODIVERSITY CONNECTED TO WILD SANDALWOOD COUNTRY THRIVE.

We are an Aboriginal-led not-for-profit foundation established in 2016 by Dutjahn Sandalwood Oils – a 50% Indigenous-owned Sandalwood distiller and winner of the UN Equator Prize for nature-based sustainable development.

By focusing on programs to support culture and Indigenous-led conservation and regeneration of Australian sandalwood and its ecosystems, we are **helping to empower the next generation of custodians to care for country.**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Martu people have a clear vision of how they can strengthen their culture and community. For years, they have voiced and showcased that nature is kin and that care of the planet's health cannot be separated from human health.**

**We actively champion self-determination for Aboriginal Australian communities as landowners, native title holders, traditional owners, custodians, land managers and rangers.**

For the last 60,000 years Aboriginal cultures and knowledge have thrived, dynamically adapting to the world, building a collective knowledge base around how to care for country. This expertise has yet to be mainstreamed at an operational level within regional, state or national landcare and natural asset management and direction, despite Indigenous people being increasingly called on to play their role in solving the challenges of the climate crisis. To urgently address climate change we must address not only the inequality that excludes Indigenous people from caring for country, but rights to manage country – allowing them to benefit from its lucrative natural assets such as wild sandalwood.

Part of the growing Indigenous Land Management (ILM) movement, the Dutjahn Foundation provides on the ground resources and support for Indigenous landowners, managers and current and future custodians - galvanising Indigenous knowledge and culture whilst providing targeted skills and training for the conservation and regeneration of wild sandalwood ecosystems. By merging new technologies, vocational skills and cultural knowledge, we aim to increase careers, employment and educational opportunities based upon Indigenous Land Management goals – healthy lands managed by healthy people.

This year saw us turn words into action, as we delivered tangible and meaningful community-led programs in Wiluna. Through close and continuous listening and yarning with Martu people, we are building equitable, trusting partnerships and co-designing programs with community to best meet Martu needs, ensuring culture is the starting point for all of our work.

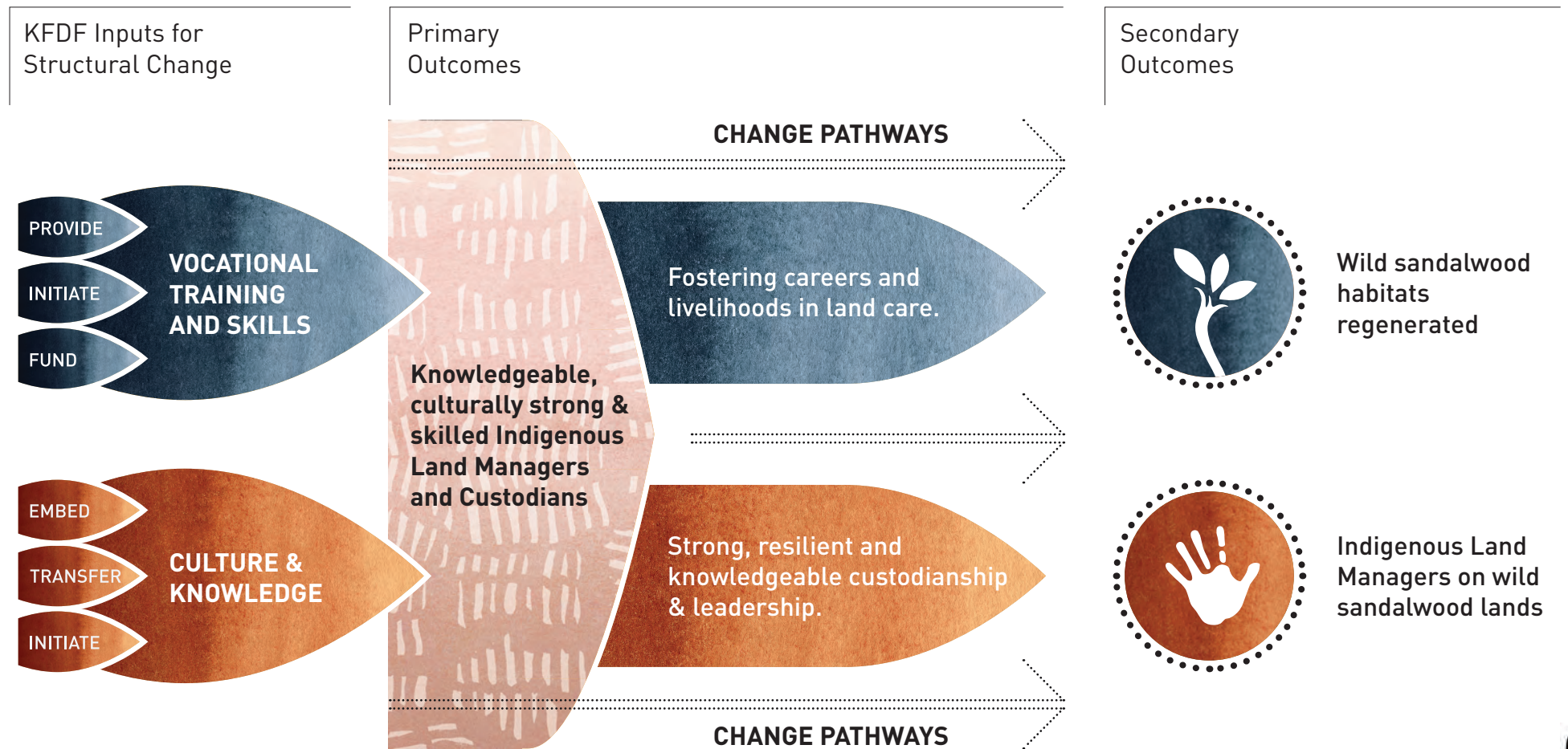
Our first program rolled out just in time for the summer school holidays of December 2021 and since then we have continued to work hard to meet the locals' expectations of us. We're pleased to share the highlights of these programs with you in this report.

Looking ahead, we will build on these foundations, increasing our physical presence in Wiluna and other wild sandalwood communities and well as building collaborative cross-sector partnerships to ensure structural change for the wild sandalwood communities.



# OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

## HOW K FARMER DUTJAHN FOUNDATION MAKES CHANGE HAPPEN



# ISSUE SPOTLIGHT

## CULTURE IN CRISIS

Martu people are traditional owners of a large part of the Central Deserts of Western Australia, where they have lived for more than 60,000 years, making them one of the oldest living cultures in the world.

After British bomb testing in the Central Desert during the 1950s, Martu fled in fear to nearby junction service towns such as Wiluna, Newman, Leonora, and Warburton, among others. As some of Australia's last Indigenous people to make contact with European Australians, the cultural shock is ongoing and deeply felt to this day.

Culture weaves together communities, giving people structure, meaning, purpose and belonging. Yet Martu's cultural fabric was violently torn through forced relocation to junction towns and the imposition of western ways leading to immense social upheaval, trauma and stress. Without the ongoing support from genuine partnerships, social breakdown will become entrenched instead of resilience and strength.



### WHAT'S NEEDED?

Initiatives that put Martu culture and knowledge at the centre of individual and community goals are urgently needed to grow the next generation of elders, land managers and leaders.

Programs like our Youth Rangers that shadow existing Martu ranger programs re-stitch the knowledge and cultural fabric back together – ensuring longevity of Martu culture in a dynamic, adaptable way.

# OUR IMPACT PILLARS

## REGENERATION OF LANDS AND PEOPLE

Investing in knowledgeable, skilled and culturally strong current and future traditional custodians of wild sandalwood lands.



# OUR IMPACT

AT A GLANCE --- 2021/22

WE CARRIED OUT

**7 PROJECTS**

IN COLLABORATION  
WITH OUR LOCAL AND  
GLOBAL PARTNERS

WE FUNDED OVER

**\$250,000**

TOWARDS MARTU  
CAPACITY BUILDING,  
TRAINING, SKILLS

**146 MARTU  
INDIVIDUALS**

WERE DIRECTLY SUPPORTED  
THROUGH OUR PROJECTS.

**250 MARTU  
INDIVIDUALS**

WERE INDIRECTLY  
IMPACTED BY  
OUR WORK.



# OUR IMPACT

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT --- 1

**IMPACT PILLAR:** Wild Sandalwood Regeneration & Cultural Regeneration

## TECHNOLOGY UPGRADE

### DIGITAL LITERACY FOR FUTURE CUSTODIANS

#### Digital tools to stay on country

Hours from the nearest town, Wiluna is a tranquil outpost with around 700 people, over half of whom are Martu. Technology can build a bridge to overcome this isolation - offering employment and career opportunities and tools that can allow young people to stay on country and stay connected to their families and their homelands.

#### Learning culture with the right technical tools

Less obvious yet vital, is how technology can be harnessed to explore, embed and promote Martu culture and knowledge.

Digital channels can be used to exchange experience, learning and knowledge to a collective audience - to small Martu communities or even globally.

### FOSTERING FUTURE LEADERS

To equip young people for their roles as future custodians in the digital age, Martu Elders saw a need to weave together traditional knowledge with contemporary technologies.

Teachers at the Wiluna Remote Community School spoke of the hours spent retrofitting donated second-hand equipment to contemporary STEM curriculums - a time-consuming and near impossible task that ate into the community's limited resources and failed to offer the students' a rich experience. They could see that cutting-edge technologies could help them engage students in different ways, using digital tools like virtual reality (VR) to reimagine education and culture. For teachers battling to connect with disengaged youth, this was particularly pertinent.



**YOUTH CENTRE MANAGER**  
*Describing the feeling of having 40+ local kids and their families accessing the youth centre during the school holidays every day.*



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT --- 1

### IMPACT PILLAR: Wild Sandalwood Regeneration & Cultural Regeneration

#### Continued

But while the community had ideas of what young people needed, young Martu had their own ideas.

In a large, underequipped room that was the Youth Centre, they quietly spoke up, their voices growing with each request. A Youth Centre they could be proud of. The latest technology to enjoy. Somewhere to go after school and during the holidays. These simple requests were punctuated with laughter - their sheepish grins incredulous that anything would happen.



Within a few months, we installed brand new technology for both the Youth Centre and Wiluna Remote Community School - four Virtual Reality sets, seven gaming stations with headsets and multi-coloured swivel gaming chairs, and 30 brightly coloured beanbags. During school hours the 82 students in the adjacent School had access to the technology, as well as receiving 20 new laptops, 10 new iPads and two VR headsets from us.

*"More than half of the children have told us how much they appreciated being given a say, being heard, in what they needed."*

BEVAN NAPIJALO

The Youth Centre sprung to life. Around 50-60 people visited the centre each day over the summer holidays - some of the highest levels ever recorded. Children and teens were joined by their families to explore and enjoy games, music, videos, VR and cinema nights, supported by onsite IT specialists. In a town with no community centre, the young Martu had helped create an experience that brought families and the community together. School attendance also dramatically increased, with the immersive technologies sparking the interest of students who became more interested and engaged in learning.

Yet perhaps even more significant was the feedback reporting the young people finally felt heard and important enough to have new things, like kids in other places.



*"The experience with the Foundation has been very positive from the start. We look forward to continuing working together on programs that are going to have a positive impact on the community of Wiluna."*

BEVAN NAPIJALO  
Community Development Coordinator  
from the Shire of Wiluna.

# OUR IMPACT

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT --- 2

**IMPACT PILLAR:** Cultural Regeneration

**LEARNING ON COUNTRY IS THE TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE CLASSROOM**

### INDIGENOUS RANGER

Martu custodians have cared for their Country in Australia's Western Desert for more than 60,000 years. Precious and vast, the land forms part of the largest and most pristine desert landscape left on the planet – an area of globally significant biodiversity and cultural value.

For Martu people, like other Aboriginals, connection to Country is a source of individual and collective identity and strength. From generation to generation, knowledge and skills are passed down through being and working on Country.

The health and wellbeing of culture, knowledge, community and Country are inseparable from each other and grounded in a belief of the interdependence of all living things.

After yarning with Martu Elders, it was clear that they were concerned by the urgent need to prepare the young people to fulfil the role of future Traditional Owners – Martu future depends upon it. Yet to do this successfully, Martu youth need not only traditional knowledge and skills, but also up-to-date technical and business skills to care and manage their Country – Country that includes the wild sandalwood habitats.

## YOUTH RANGER PROGRAMS



PROJECT HIGHLIGHT --- 2

IMPACT PILLAR: Cultural Regeneration

*Continued*

**FORTIFYING MARTU KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURE INFRASTRUCTURES**

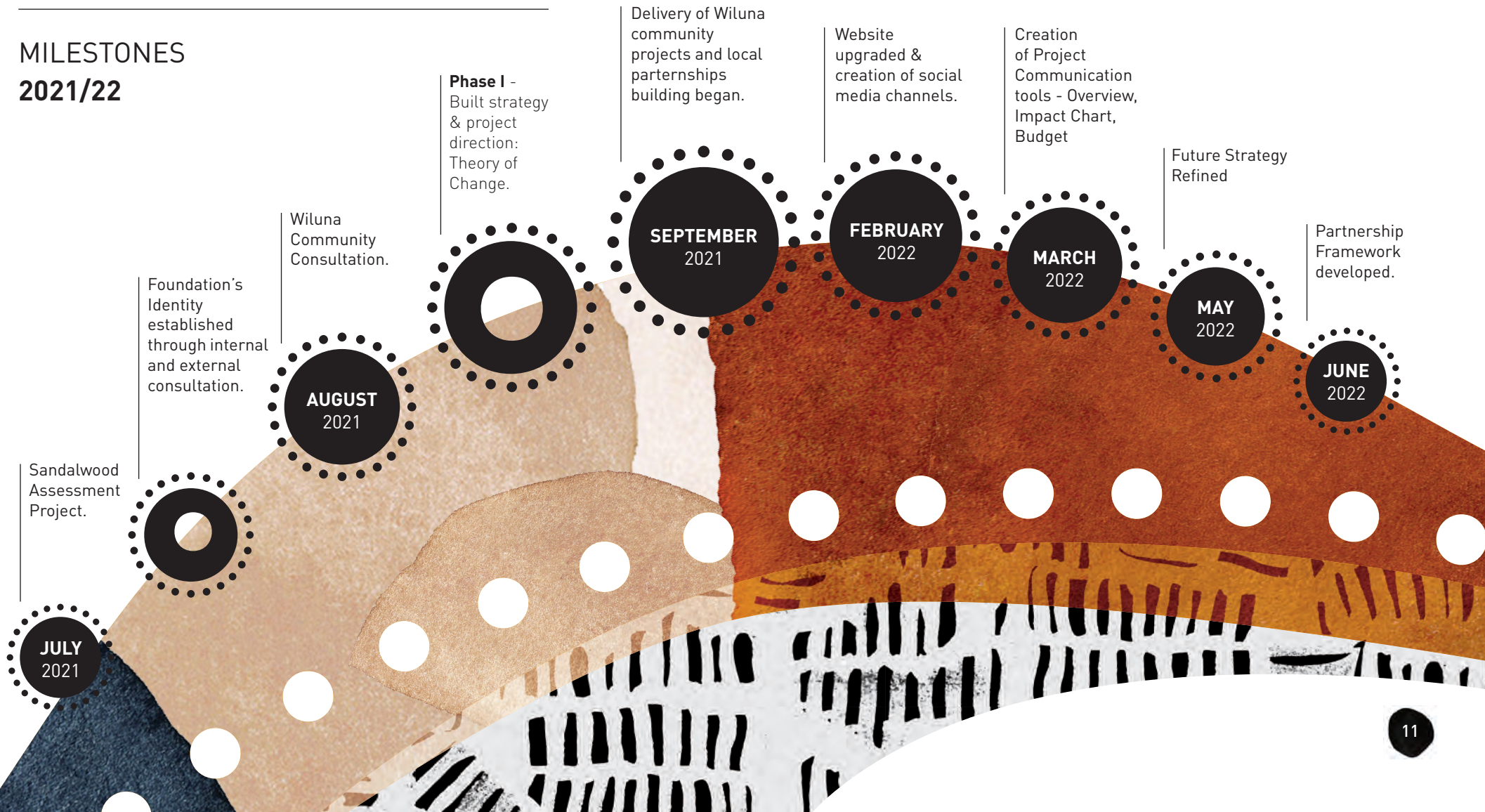
The Youth Ranger program funded by the Dutjahn Foundation and coordinated by Remote Development Services fortifies the transfer of knowledge and culture from Elders and seniors to juniors and youth. By close shadowing of existing Martu ranger programs, the Youth Rangers receive real life on-the-job training about planting, managing invasive pests and species and protecting native animals and plants. They can see what using ecological knowledge with modern technologies to regenerate lands looks like in practice.

Phase 1 of this program has begun, recruiting six girls and boys in total ranging from 11 – 17 years, and targeting disengaged and at-risk youth. It will also focus on building personal skills as well as technical and digital skills so the next generation of custodians are well prepared to not only care for their lands but also manage and lead broader Indigenous Land Management initiatives. This is one of the key building blocks to Martu economic and cultural wellbeing and health.



# TIMELINE

## MILESTONES 2021/22



# OUR PROJECTS SUMMARY

2021/22

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Technology upgraded for Wiluna Remote Community School

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Youth Centre upgraded with furniture and gaming/learning stations installed

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Woodwork tools and materials purchased for Wiluna Remote Community School's woodwork program with students

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Youth Ranger Program: Initiated and ongoing

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Sandalwood Assessment Project: Initiated and ongoing

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Martu Mothers Community Video: Initiated and ongoing

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Virtual Martu Seasonal Calendar skills and training program: Initiated and ongoing

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