



Save the Nature of the Kimberley

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INC

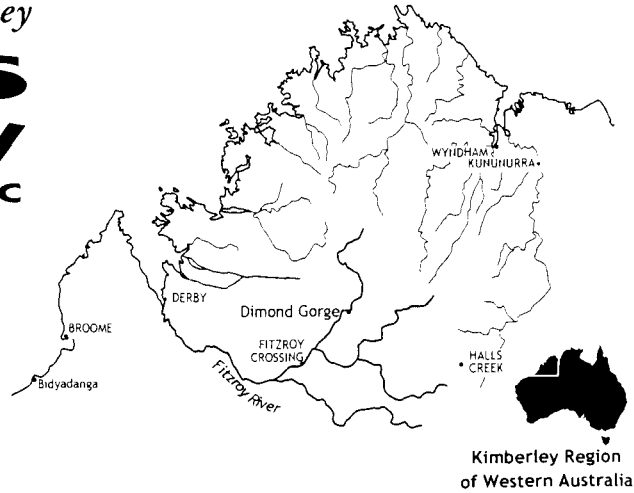
PO Box 309 Broome WA 6725

ph:(08) 9192 1922 fax:(08) 9192 5538

after hours ph/fax: (08) 9193 5079 or ph: (08) 9193 5052

<http://www.green.net.au/environs-kimberley/>

e-mail: envrkimb@broome.wt.com.au

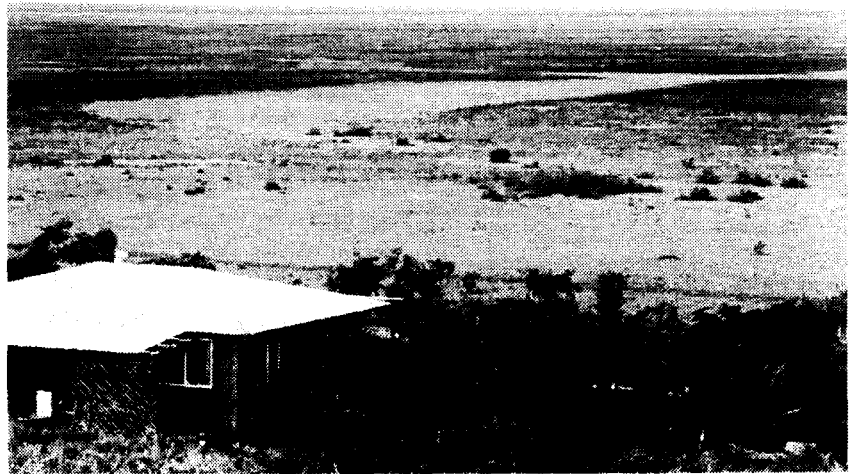


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International day of action at **Thangoo**

EK members and supporters have celebrated the International Day of Action (IDA) against Dams and for Rivers Waters and Life (14th March) for the past few years. Previously we have held picnic BBQs at Willare Bridge on the Fitzroy River.

As the main threat to the ecological values of the Kimberley has moved from the proposed damming of the Fitzroy to the exploitation of the groundwater of the La Grange basin, we decided to hold this year's IDA event on Thangoo Station, shifting focus from threatened surface waters to threatened underground water and its dependent ecosystems and cultural values. The irrigated agriculture proposal has recently been joined by a proposed open cut kaolin mine as another serious threat to the ecological values of the coastal pindan woodland and desert fringe country south of Broome.



Kaolin minesite (proposed) on the grasslands in front of Thangoo homestead.

We held our event a fortnight later than usual, on 1 April. The delay was beneficial, as the Kimberley weather in March is guaranteed to be hot and sticky and this Sunday turned out dry and breezy. About 40 EK members and supporters, and 10 representatives of the land's traditional owners, led by Gadjai (Frank Sebastian), travelled by car to Barn Hill at the southern end of the Thangoo pastoral lease. A relaxed BBQ lunch was held under the shadehouse, and many people chose to swim and fish at the nearby beach. After the lunch EK deputy chair Peter Mitchell opened formalities with an overview of the proposed irrigated agriculture project for the benefit of new members and outlined EK's concerns. Then Gadjai detailed the traditional owners' concerns about the future development of the land, and some of his own history and connections with the surrounding countryside. Leslie Thiele represented the station leaseholders' viewpoint by reiterating their consistent opposition to the proposed cotton project, and explaining their concerns

about the open cut kaolin mine proposed for the northern end of their property.

Most of the group then drove 30 km north to Leslie's homestead to look at the country threatened by the kaolin mine proposal. The surrounding coastal flats were lush green after the Wet, while the adjacent jigal (*Lysiphillum cunninghami*) and paperbark (*Melaleuca* sp) groves were still recovering from the devastation of Cyclone Rosita. On the coastal side of the nearby relict beach sand dune, now more than a kilometre from the coast, the fearful power of the cyclone was evidenced by the long pile of driftwood that had been dumped by the tidal surge and huge waves.

A beautiful sunset was enjoyed by all, including attendant mosquitoes, then it was back to the homestead for a final cuppa before driving home. Thanks to Leslie Thiele and the Grey family for hosting the event, Gadjai and family for providing the indigenous Yawuru perspective, and Peter, Kali and Wade for organising and publicising the event.