



Save the Nature of the Kimberley

environs**KIMBERLEY INC**

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<http://www.green.net.au/environs-kimberley/>**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

• The long anticipated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the West Australian Government and Western Agricultural Industries Pty Ltd (WAI) has been signed. The MOU is a loosely worded document which does not have the force of a formal contract, but which grants WAI the right to conduct a 'feasibility study into the use of groundwater and a pre-feasibility study into the use of surface water for the Project'. The Project is for large-scale irrigated agriculture (mainly cotton) in the West Kimberley. During the feasibility study phase, no new groundwater or surface water licences which would conflict with WAI's proposal will be granted in the Canning Basin (site of the groundwater studies) or Fitzroy River areas.

• EK is worried about many aspects of the MOU. The proponent, WAI, is responsible for all aspects of the feasibility study, including environmental and social impacts. The potential for conflict of interest is obvious. The proponent is obliged to provide quarterly reports to the Department of Resources Development, a summary of which will be given to the public in the government's glossy 'Water and the West Kimberley'. EK is asking for copies of the full reports, in order to be able to monitor the quality of the studies planned and undertaken and the significance of the results.

• EK has received legal advice about the MOU. We are not planning to challenge its validity, but we do have a

number of questions and concerns which we plan to follow up with WAI and the State Government. Many thanks to our legal adviser.

• Any member who would like to read the full text of the MOU is encouraged to request a copy from the Department of Resources Development in Perth or from WAI. A copy can also be viewed in our office.

Environs Kimberley seeks to preserve and respect the intrinsic values and qualities of the Kimberley

Vision Statement

Bandaralngarri

Paperbark tree place

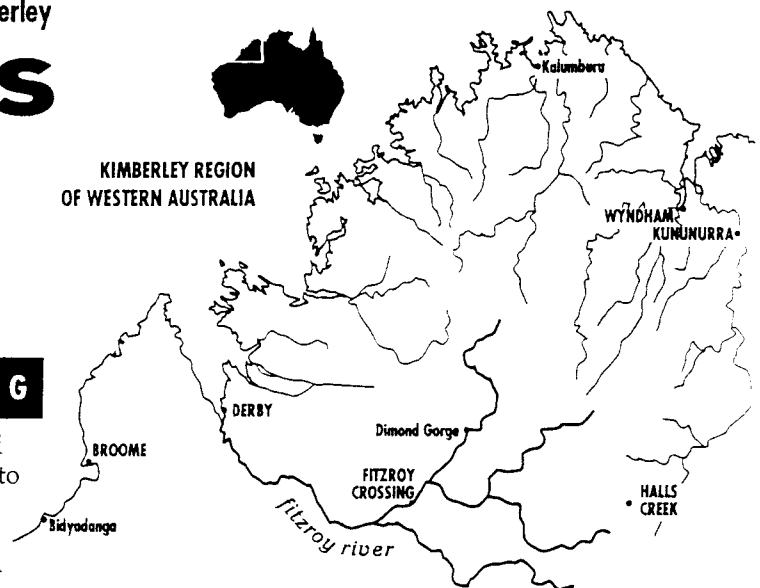
Bandaralngarri is a new organisation representing Aboriginal and environmental interests in the West Kimberley.

EK has been invited to be part of this group, and committee member Kali Balint travelled to Bidiyadanga Aboriginal Community recently for the group's second meeting. Here is his report.

• Bandaralngarri is made up of representatives from Aboriginal language groups ranging from the headwaters of the Fitzroy River down to Bidiyadanga. It incorporates all those groups that would be affected by the building of a dam, groundwater use or cotton farming.

• John Logan from Western Agricultural Industries Pty Ltd (WAI) was invited to give a talk. He expressed his desire to come to an agreement with the Karrajarrri people (mostly from Bidiyadanga) over land use.

• WAI wants to clear 250 hectares of bushland for cotton trials commencing next year, and a further 1000 hectares the year after. To do this, he will need to apply for land use zonings on both Shamrock and Shalamar Stations (south of Broome) to be changed from 'pastoral lease' to 'special lease'. In order to proceed, WAI will require permission from the area's traditional land owners, the Karrajarrri.



STOP PRESS Tues 16 June

ALP OPPOSES DAM

The WA and Federal Labor parties today issued a joint statement opposing any plan to dam the Fitzroy River, but supporting studies into the feasibility of a large scale irrigated agricultural industry in the West Kimberley.