

# LAYNHAPUY HOMELANDS ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

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Dear Dr Paul Vogel,

I am writing on behalf of Yirrkala Rangers to express the concerns of the Yirrkala Rangers and Traditional Owners in regards to seabed mining in the waters surrounding the Laynhapuy IPA.

The *Laynhapuy Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) Management Plan (2017-2022)* states very clearly that “land and sea are one” and that “Sea country is an integral part of Yolngu culture and dreaming.”

Yolngu clans from the Blue Mud Bay region initiated a native title determination over sea country leading to a declaration by the High Court of Australia recognising the ownership of intertidal waters over Aboriginal land.

The connection between Yolngu People and sea country is cultural but also essential for hunting and gathering. Any activity in the impacts sediment in adjacent waters to the IPA could have an impact on food security for people who rely upon these resources. The impacts on cultural sites are also of great concern.

Other concerns include the impact on existing and future Yolngu operated economic activities, such as cultural tours and Indigenous fisheries adjacent to Blue Mud Bay and in and around Arnhem Bay

Any decision to lift the moratorium on Seabed mining must consult properly and extensively with the Traditional Owners, who are deeply committed to caring for sea country.

The *Laynhapuy Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) Management Plan (p.22-23)* specifically identifies the expiration of the moratorium on seabed mining as a “significant potential threat to sea country” and a major danger to “our interests in the marine environment and our cultural integrity” and calls for these to be “properly protected in relation to proposed new developments, and included in government policy”

We call for the Government to maintain the moratorium on seabed mining in NT waters to protect sea country, and the people and culture who rely upon it.

Please accept this submission to the Review of Seabed Mining in the Northern Territory - Environmental Impacts and Management.

Regards,

Yirrkala Rangers

***DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS FOR ABORIGINAL PEOPLE***