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Friday 27 June, 2025

Strategic vision key to Dja Dja Wurrung success

DJAARA, the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, yesterday demonstrated its vision and leadership, with the launch of two strategic documents, the implementation of which will continue to benefit all who live, work and play on **Djandak** (Dja Dja Wurrung Country).

In a celebration attended by more than 100 people, including Elders and community members, and high-level representatives of government agencies and business, DJAARA unveiled the revised **Dhelkunya Dja**, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Country Plan (2014–2034), and **Wuktjarrang** – Trading Our Way, DJAARA’s first Economic Strategy.

Dhelkunya Dja (which means ‘healing Country’ in Dja Dja Wurrung language) was developed by **Djaara** (Dja Dja Wurrung People) over a decade ago as the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation signed a Recognition and Settlement Agreement (RSA) with the State of Victoria.

Interim Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Cassandra Lewis described the **Dhelkunya Dja** Country Plan as the foundational roadmap and 20-year vision for Dja Dja Wurrung People, Country and Culture.

“At the halfway mark, we’ve delivered on so many of the objectives we set out to achieve,” Ms Lewis said.

“Ten years ago, the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation was a small, single entity, with a modest team, focused primarily on securing rights and recognition for Dja Dja Wurrung People.

“Today, we are a large, thriving organisation with multiple enterprises that enable us to achieve more goals, across many fronts.

“We are a mob that gets things done,” Ms Lewis said.

The Dja Dja Wurrung Group (DJAARA and its enterprises) works in collaboration with partners to improve the health of our land and waterways by bringing Dja Dja Wurrung traditional knowledge and practices together with Western natural resource management methods; to share Dja Dja Wurrung Culture and language in public space and through tourism, cultural arts and education; to develop bush foods and bring bush tucker back to Country; and more.

Now with more than 200 staff, the Group has become one of Central Victoria’s large employers, stimulating significant economic activity across the region.

The Dja Dja Wurrung Group has demonstrated its capabilities across a broad range of areas, as equal partners.

In the implementation of **Dhelkunya Dja**, the Group has negotiated agreements and partnerships with many organisations including local government, natural resource management agencies, and business.

The **Dhelkunya Dja** Country Plan is important as a guiding document not only for DJAARA and its enterprises, but also for those engaging with us and walking together in collaboration.

What has not changed in the **Dhelkunya Dja** review is the nine goals at the heart of the plan, which remain just as relevant today.

“At the halfway mark of **Dhelkunya Dja**’s 20-year vision and schedule of actions, our aspirations remain steadfast: to uphold the health and wellbeing of **Djaara** and **Djandak**, and our living Culture,” Ms Lewis said.

“This refreshed **Dhelkunya Dja** is more than a look back; it’s a powerful step forward. It sets us up to continue to deliver for People and for Country, for now and for generations to come.”

The document is the foundation for a range of DJAARA strategies, which further guide the Group’s work.

Wuktjarrang – Trading Our Way, DJAARA’s new economic strategy builds on **Dhelkunya Dja** Goal 8: **Murrunayangu** (we all live, thrive) – We have a strong and diverse economic base to provide for our health and wellbeing, and strengthen our living Culture.

The Strategy outlines the way **Djaara** (Dja Dja Wurrung People) do business. It’s a statement of the intent to continue the Traditional Owner economy – an economy where the purpose of exchange is to uphold or improve the wellbeing of People, Country and Culture, and the relationships between them.

Wuktjarrang means ‘exchange belonging to us’ in Dja Dja Wurrung language, and **Wuktjarrang** – Trading Our Way explains how we’ll continue practising Cultural Ways in a contemporary setting: how the Traditional Owner economy can operate in today’s world.

Developed by **Djaara** Knowledge Holders and Dja Dja Wurrung Group staff, **Wuktjarrang** – Trading Our Way also demonstrates the significant contribution the Group makes to all communities and the broader economy. This includes creating environments that increase liveability, attracting families, businesses and investors seeking prosperity.

Wuktjarrang – Trading Our Way offers a positive cultural and economic framework to respond to the needs of today, and to again generate wealth without having to compromise on integrity of cultural values and obligations to Country.

“Both these documents will be instrumental to **Djaara** achieving self-determination – including economic self-determination. And the impact of our work is far-reaching, creating positive outcomes for all communities on Dja Dja Wurrung Country,” Ms Lewis said.

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Find the strategies on DJAARA’s Resources page:

Dhelkunya Dja, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Country Plan: [Dhelkunya-Dja-Refresh-2025_Digital.pdf](#)

Wuktjarrang – Trading Our Way: [Wuktjarrang-Trading-Our-Way_A4_Digital.pdf](#)