



## Native title agreement sets new benchmark

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A unique deal signed today between the Njamal native title claim group and Atlas Iron Limited sets a new precedent for mining companies throughout Western Australia.

The agreement, that covers Atlas Iron's Abydos project and allows for vast tracts of tenements within the Pilbara region, combines strong protection of Njamal country with a mining compensation package well above the current benchmark for native title commercial agreements in the Pilbara.\*

The agreement establishes an innovative heritage framework under which Atlas Iron can accelerate the heritage survey process, thereby accessing country faster than its competitors, while at the same time recognising the importance to Njamal people of their cultural sites through ethnographic "exclusion zones".

The agreement also sets up systems for Njamal people and Atlas Iron to develop joint business initiatives. As an alternative to a signature payment, Atlas Iron has agreed to help capitalise a Njamal business that will then enter into a service contract with Atlas Iron.

Simon Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer, Pilbara Native Title Service, said that the agreement was negotiated in three meetings over a six week period.

"The speed at which this agreement was reached was very much due to Atlas's long-term relationship with the Njamal people. They came to the negotiating table with respect for the Njamal people's rights to culture and country, a willingness to make a good offer and a commitment to following the correct process. When companies have this approach, things can happen very quickly."

Today's agreement is the tenth significant mining deal reached by Njamal, confirming their status as one of the leading native title negotiators in the country.

Njamal Traditional Owner Rodney Monaghan said that the community was happy the agreement managed to balance the protection of their country with commercial realities.

"Atlas presented us with an agreement that not only supports the protection of our cultural sites, but offered us an opportunity to enter into an enterprise business with the company. As a community it's important that we build a strong future from commercial agreements, and maintain and protect our heritage, laws and customs," said Mr Monaghan.

David Flanagan, Managing Director of Atlas Iron said, "Both the Njamal People and Pilbara Native Title Service showed a willingness to do a good deal and that is what this is. It is great for all parties and we are sure it is going to work for in the long term.

This agreement is a major step forward for Atlas as we deliver the greater Abydos Projects in conjunction with and in partnership with the Njamal People." **ENDS**

*\* Native title compensation is currently estimated to average at less than one quarter of a percent (0.25%) of overall mining profits from iron ore in WA.*



# Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

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## Notes for Editors

Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation is the native title representative body for native title claims in the resource-rich Pilbara, Murchison and Gascoyne representative areas of Western Australia.

The organisation has two divisions: the **Pilbara Native Title Service (PNTS)** and the **Yamatji Land and Sea Council (YLSC)**. YMBBMAC has a representative area of almost one million square kilometres and represents over 25 native title claims, all with their own language, culture and traditions.

YMBBMAC provides a range of services to its members including claim and future-act representation, heritage protection services, community and economic development and natural resource management.

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## For further information and interviews contact:

Amy Cargill, Public Relations and Communications Specialist

P 08 9268 7014 | M 0407 645 646 | [acargill@yamatji.org.au](mailto:acargill@yamatji.org.au) | [www.yamatji.org.au](http://www.yamatji.org.au)