



Traditional Owners host Uranium Conference

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This week Yamatji Marlpa Barna Baba Maaja Aboriginal Corporation (YMBBMAC) hosted its *Uranium and Native Title* conference, to discuss issues surrounding uranium mining and native title rights.

The Perth conference attracted over 100 delegates; including representatives from uranium affected native title claim groups, the uranium mining industry, government departments, environmental groups and other representative bodies.

The event was held in response to the WA State Government's recent decision to lift the ban on uranium mining, and aimed to inform Traditional Owners and industry on uranium issues and the native title implications for country.

Roy Bellotti, Chairperson, Yamatji Land and Sea Council said, "Today has been important for us to get information about the pros and cons of uranium mining, but we still need to learn more to make the best decisions for our people."

Mrs Doris Eaton, Chairperson of Pilbara Native Title Service said, "I want to meet other people who have had uranium mining on their country. I want to know how they have felt, and what they have had to do. What has been the impact on the land, the trees and birds? We need to learn things before we sign things, to make sure we can protect our country for the future."

Simon Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer of YMBBMAC said, "The land council has taken the first step. Now we call upon the State Government and industry to proactively engage with us in what is an important and complex issue."

Presentations were delivered by:

- Mr Phil Narkle, Noongar Traditional Owner;
- Simon Hawkins, Chief Executive Officer, YMBBMAC;
- Peter Watts, Arabanna Traditional Owner from South Australia;
- Michael Angwin, Executive Director, Australian Uranium Association;
- Dave Sweeney, Nuclear Free Campaigner, Australian Conservation Foundation;
- Nick Tsurikov, Calytrix Consulting; *and*
- Michael Meegan, Principal Legal Officer, YMBBMAC.

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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