

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

26 February 2014

**GOLDFIELDS LAND & SEA COUNCIL**  
**Aboriginal Corporation (Representative Body)**  
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### **Esperance Nyungar Determination – Here at Last!**

After an 18 year process, a group of traditional owners in Western Australia's Goldfields will have their native title recognised by the Federal Court of Australia at a consent determination in Esperance.

On 14 March 2014, the Federal Court will formally acknowledge native title over an area of almost 29,000sq km surrounding Esperance, 700 kilometres south-east of Perth.

The determination recognises the native title rights and interests of Aboriginal people of the area who are known as The Esperance Nyungar people – a landmark occasion identifying the first official recognition of right to country in the Goldfields and Esperance Region for Aboriginal people.

The CEO of the Goldfields Land and Sea Council, Mr Hans Bokelund, said “This determination is a positive step in affirming the Esperance Nyungars’ connection to country and Aboriginal people in general throughout this region, in allowing them to protect and enhance their traditions, culture and heritage over these lands. It has been a long hard struggle and I commend the Esperance Nyungars for the perseverance that they have shown to reach this milestone.”

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