



Yamatji Marlpa ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

MEDIA RELEASE: EMBARGO UNTIL FRIDAY, 3 JUNE 2011

Pilbara native title groups reach agreement with Rio Tinto

Four Pilbara native title claim groups have announced they have signed Australia's most comprehensive native title agreements with Rio Tinto.

The agreements are a result of seven years of extensive negotiations between the four groups, represented by Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation (YMAC), and the Rio Tinto Iron Ore group.

The final agreements give Rio Tinto certainty for its existing and future operations in the areas covered by the four native title claim groups;

- Nyiyaparli
- Puutu Kunti Kurrama and Pinikura
- Kuruma and Marthudunera
- Ngarlawangga (northern part of claim area).

The total area involved in the agreement is about 70,000 square kilometres and includes existing mining operations at Brockman 4, Mesa A, Mesa J, Hope Downs, as well as any future Rio Tinto mines and operations in the native title claim areas.

Under the agreement, the four native title claim groups have negotiated a range of economic and non-economic benefits. These include an income stream from mining on their lands, training and job opportunities, access to contracts for services for Rio Tinto and support for environmental and heritage activities. The agreement also includes mining exclusion zones that recognise the importance of significant sites such as burial and ceremonial sites, as well as important water holes and ecologically sensitive areas.

YMAC's Chief Executive Officer, Simon Hawkins, said the four Aboriginal groups had worked tirelessly to reach agreement with Rio Tinto.

"The signing of these agreements is recognition of the professional way in which the parties have been able to work together to get the best outcomes," he said.

"Through the negotiations, the native title groups now have an established relationship with Rio Tinto that they can build on for their future.

"The real work starts now to implement the agreements and ensure the native title claim groups benefit from their commitment," he said.

Mr Hawkins said rigorous corporate governance and benefit management structures were being put in place to underpin the implementation of the agreements. This includes the establishment of four local Aboriginal corporations to manage the agreements for each group and a broader regional corporation to implement seven regional standards relating to Rio's operations.

Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAS) will be signed later this year between the four native title groups, Rio Tinto and the state government, with on-country celebrations planned for later in the year.

For more information including images and interviews, please contact:

Claire Muntinga | Communications Manager | Yamatji Marlpa Aboriginal Corporation

P 08 9268 7000 | **M** 0419 917 206 | **E** cmuntinga@ymac.org.au