



Galk-galk Dhelkunya: Forest Gardening Strategy

**Implementation | 2023 Presentation
Gold Coast**



Womindjitka, Wartaka Nyaka, Nyanga, Nyerna Galk Galk Dhelkunya Djimbayang Galk Galk Dja. Manya Djaa, Djuwima Galk Galk Djaa. Wuk Djaara Giyakiki, Batak

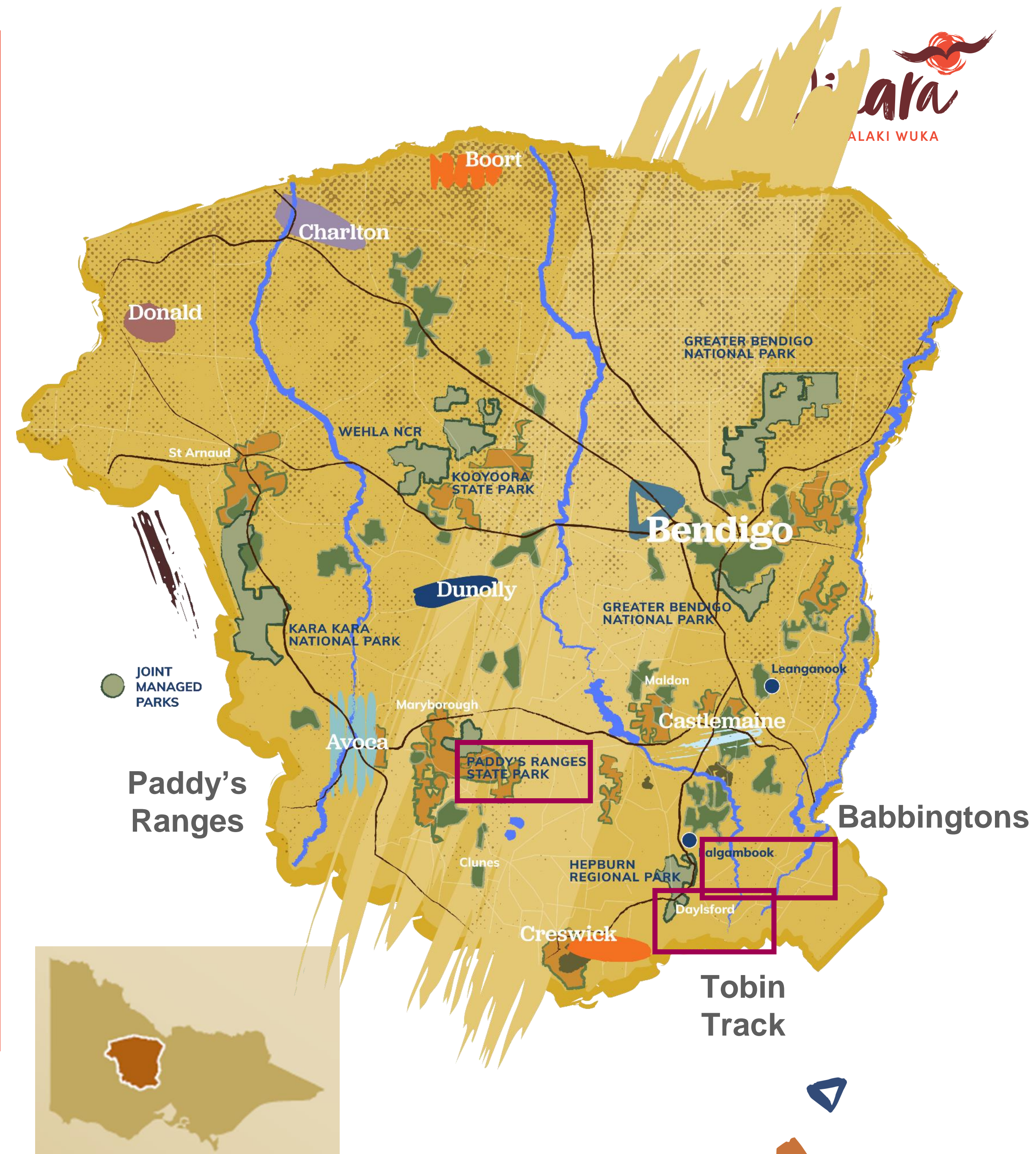
Welcome, come with purpose to see, to sit, to know and to care, heal many trees, Learning Forest Country. Meeting together with hands, to show, share forest country. To give Djaara Story, Thank you, Take care

Djaara – Dja Dja Wurrung People of Central Vic

**DJAARA – The Corporation that
represents and progress the rights
of *Djaara***

***Djandak – Dja Dja Wurrung
Country***

***Galk-galk Dhelkunya – to care and
heal to trees and forests***



Northern Djaara Country

Dry mallee, grasslands & rivers

Central Djaara Country

Dry Box-Ironbark forests

Southern Djaara Country

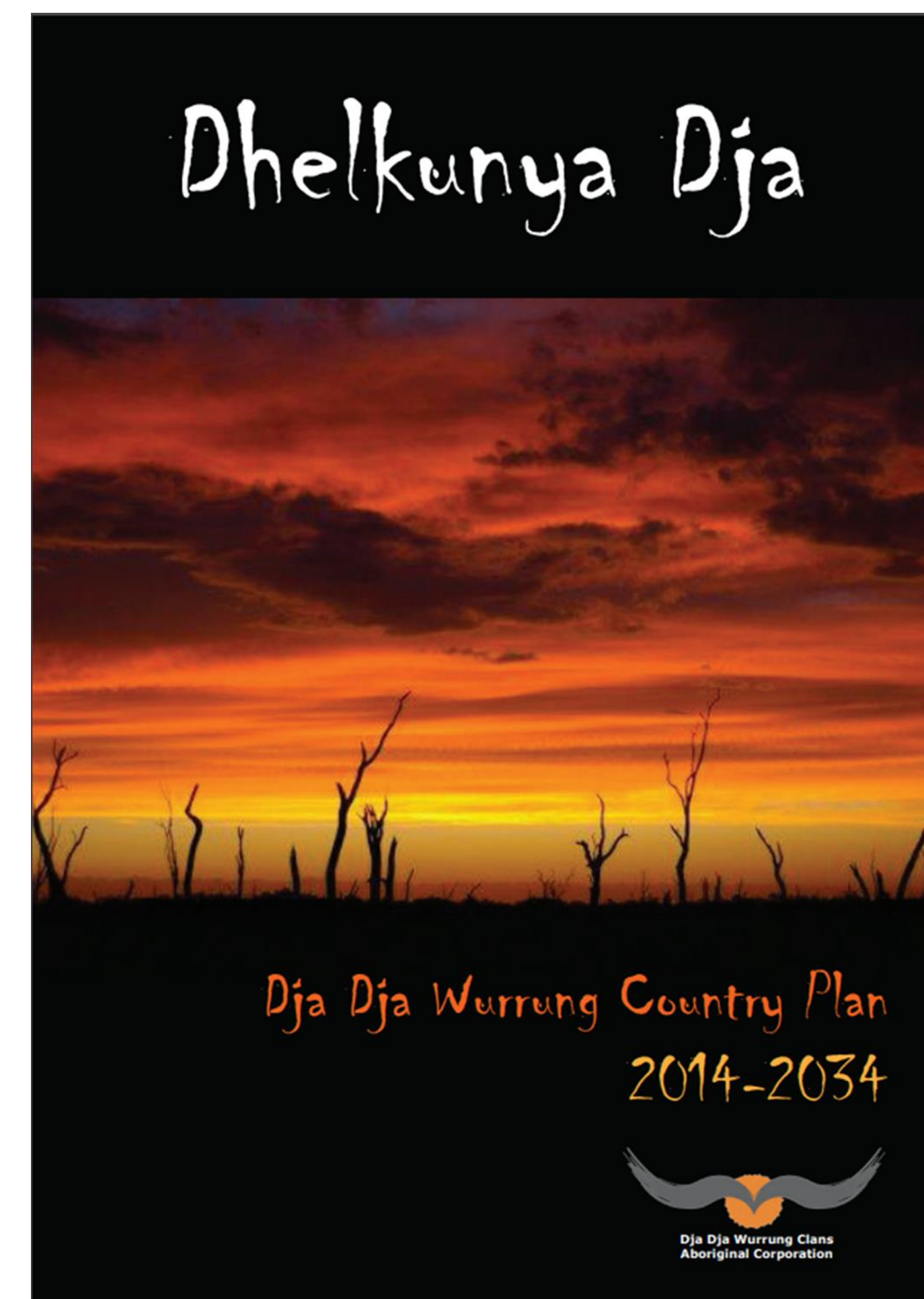
Wet sclerophyll forests



Policy Context – Alignment with Dhelkunya Dja

Forest Gardening:

- Core strategy to deliver Country Plan
- Aligns with each of the 9 goals



Forest Gardening Vision



Figure 2 Djandak is thriving, Djaara are thriving

Galk-galk Dhelkunya is *Djaara's* **holistic cultural landscape management philosophy and practice**. In implementing the Strategy, our vision is:

***Djandak's* landscapes are healing** through Forest Gardening, allowing for greater focus on interaction with Country in all its elements.

People living on ***Djandak*** are inspired to walk with ***Djaara*** to heal Country together, guided by *Djaara* custodial knowledge and *Galk-galk Dhelkunya* principles.

Djaara are empowered to practice and share culture with pride.

Healing *Djandak*, healing *Djaara*.

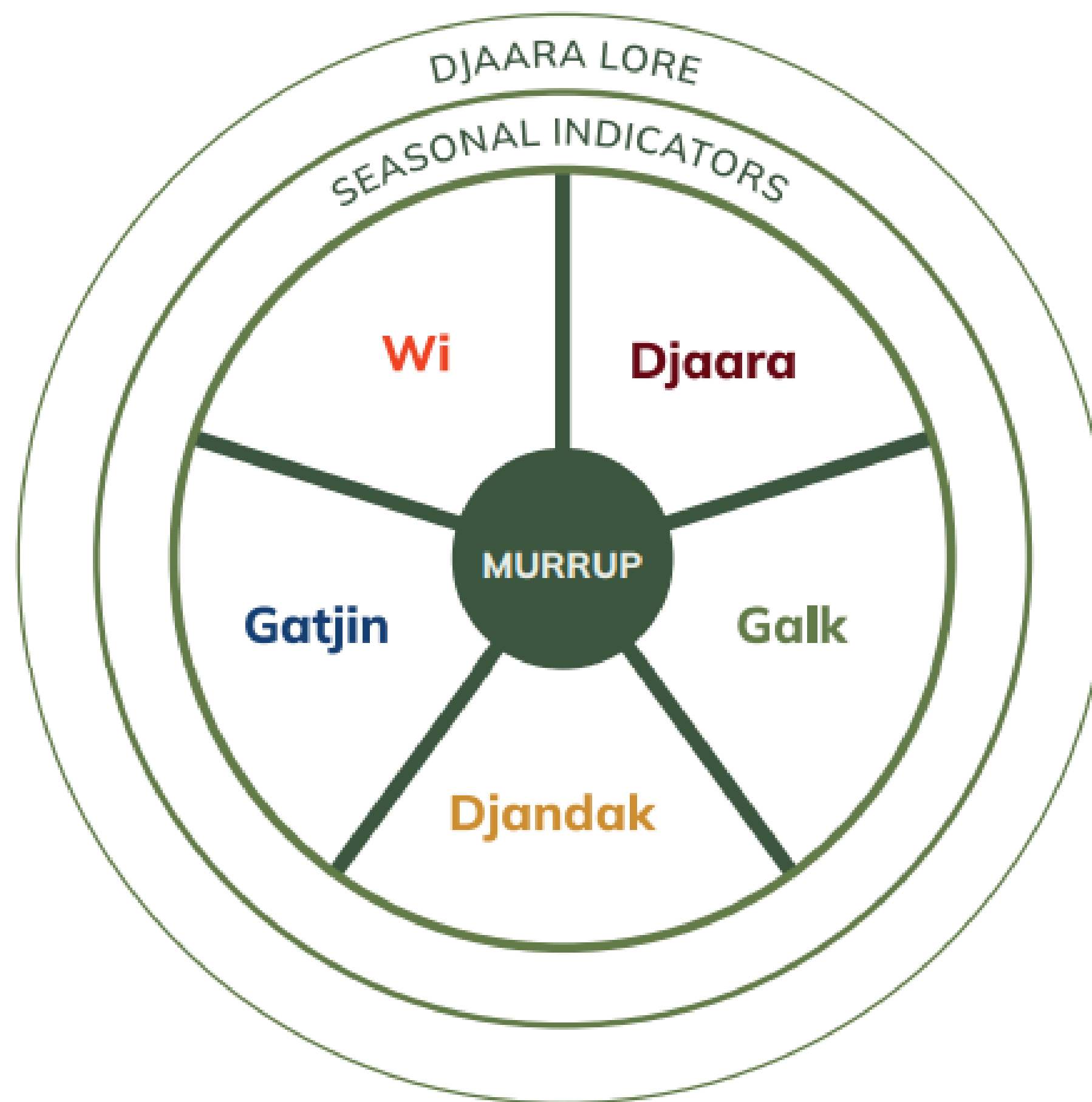


Figure 3 Forest Gardening in practice

*“Everything is required for the
lifecycle of the forest”*

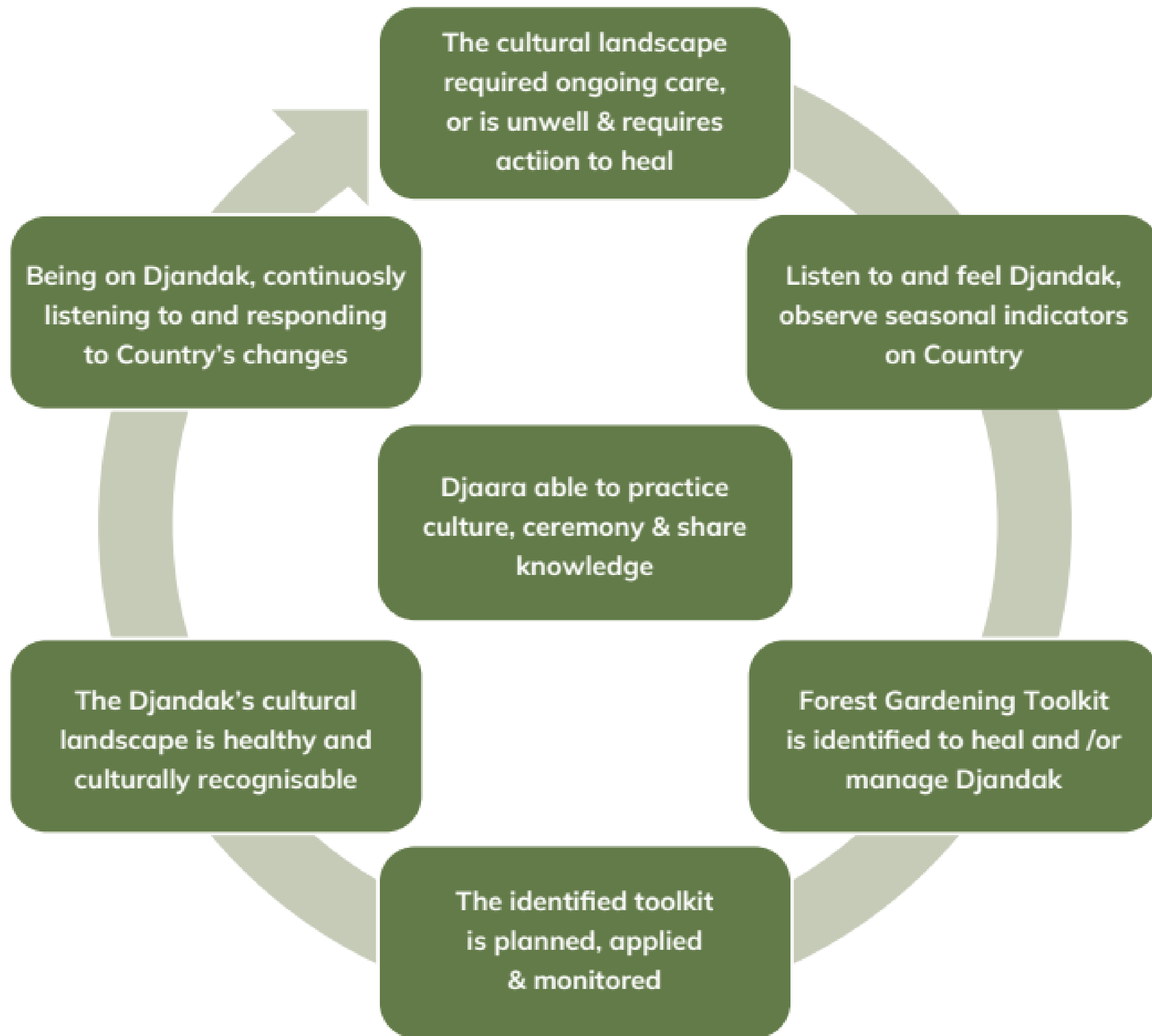


Figure 4 The Forest Gardening Cycle

“Where Country is healthy, it’s a light touch, don’t want to change too much... The Country is respected and acknowledged for it is doing and being. Where Country is sick, the extent and type of intervention might need to be greater until Country heals”

Djaara Forest Gardening Vision: *When Djandak is thriving, Djaara are thriving*



Forest Gardening Principles

Culture

Managing Country

Leadership and
Collaboration

Economic Empowerment

Forest Gardening Toolkit

Cultural thinning

- Increased space for older trees (galka).
- Utilisation for tools and artefacts.
- Restoring culturally recognisable structures to forests

Revegetation and rehabilitation

- Revegetation of trees, grasses
- Create habitat
- Improve soil health
- Improved water retention
- Enhanced biodiversity and variation in plants.

Regenerative practice

- Partnerships with private landholders
More trees, food and fibre plants on Country:
- increased tree cover
 - improved habitat
 - shared timber assets.

Djandak Wi (cultural burning)

- Cultural tool for ceremonial and landscape management.
- A low, cool fire applied in a mosaic. Improve the health of grassy understoreys and canopies.

Gatjin (water)

Holds culture through creation stories, trade routes, songlines and connection to cultural heritage. Provides nutrients, vital aspect of habitat.

Northern Djaara Country – Djandak Wi



Central Djaara Country – Gatjin & Galk Galk



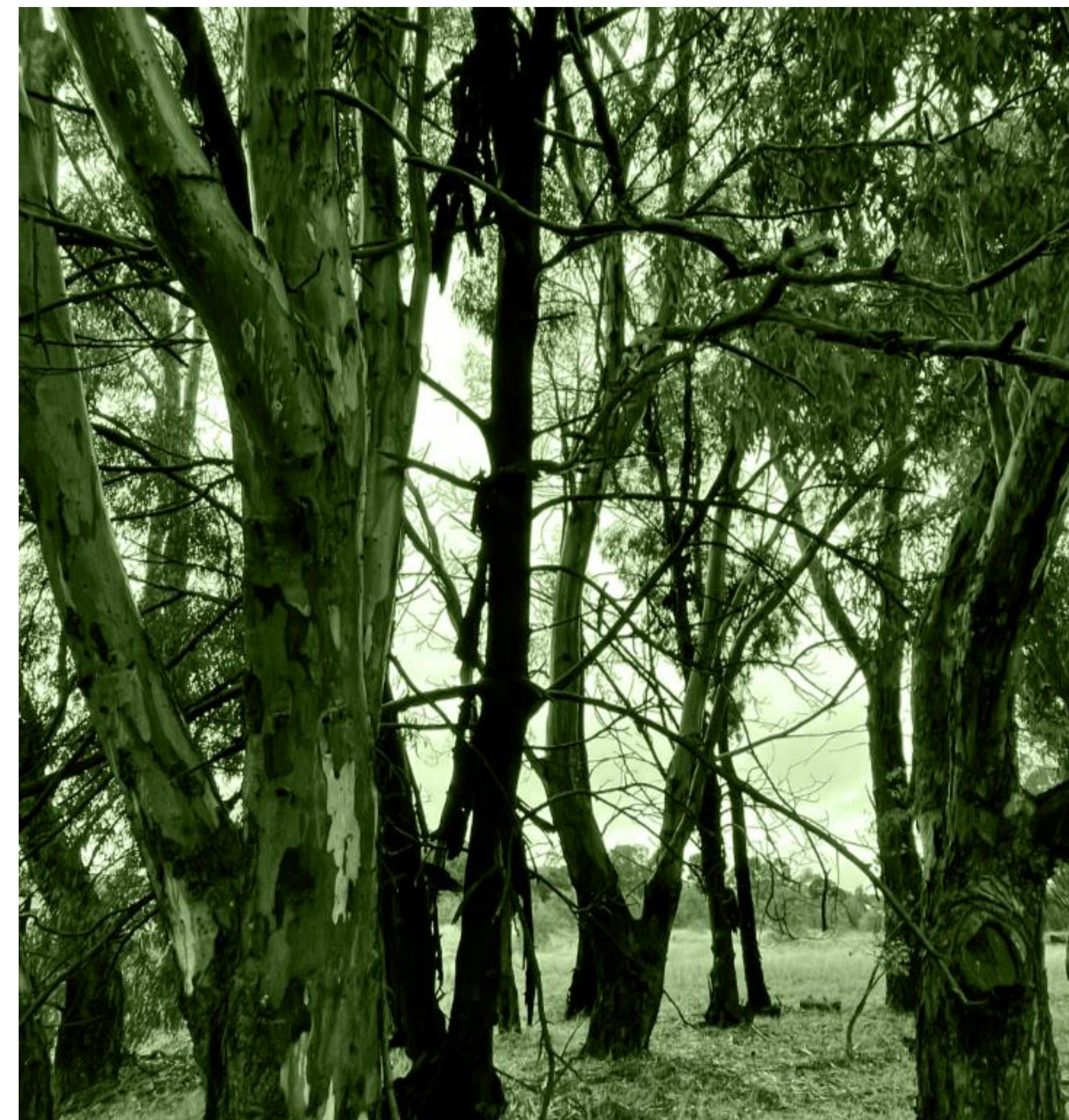
Southern Djaara Country – Galk Galk



Strategic Approach

33 Objectives and 87 Actions for implementing Forest Gardening, organized into the following themes:

- **Djaara Leadership**
- **Djaara Partnerships**
- **Djaara Knowledge and Capacity**
- **Djaara Economic Development**



Seven priority food & fiber species for *Djaara*

<i>Djaara name</i>	<i>Common name & scientific name</i>
<i>Buwatj</i>	Kangaroo grass - <i>Themeda triandra</i>
<i>Dhurung wurkuk</i>	Pale flax lily - <i>Dianella revoluta</i>
<i>Gitjawil matom</i>	Chocolate lily - <i>Arthropodium strictum</i>
<i>Murna / Murnong</i>	Yam daisy - <i>Microseris lanceolata</i>
<i>Witji</i>	Basket grass - <i>Lomandra longifolia</i>
Vanilla Lily	<i>Arthropodium milleflorum</i>
<i>Spreading flax lily</i>	<i>Dianella longifolia</i>



Seven priority food & fiber species for *Djaara*

Murnong, Pale Flax Lily, Vanilla Lily, Chocolate Lily - The tubers, growing just below the soil surface, are easy to harvest, and Indigenous collected great quantities with ease.

Kangaroo Grass - Making Bread, flour or porridge. The stems are also used for String, mainly for fishing nets or if kangaroo Sinew is not available for tools.

Basket Grass - Women gathered the smooth strap-shaped leaves from the water's edge to make baskets. They split each rush, tied them in bundles to be soaked allowing the fibres to become pliable for weaving. Spiny-headed Mat-rush. Flowers provided nectar.



Some important trees for Djaara

Blackwood - The fine hard wood of this wattle made strong spear-throwers, boomerangs, clubs and shields in parts of Victoria. People soaked the bark in water to bathe painful joints. The inner bark was used to make string.

Cherry Bollart - Similar usage to Blackwood but also was used for food (when the cherry blooms) and ceremonial smokings or initiations.

Wattle - Wood used to make stone axe handles. Gum dissolved in water to make a mild sweet drink and also mixed with ash for use as resin

Sheoak - Wood used for Shields, Bark use for bowls to transport food, store/eat food or to store material; Furs, Resins, Sinew, Stone for tools or Stone tools/blades/scrapers.





Galk Galk Cultural Research

Djaara cultural research within our forest to recover and to reimagine what was lost.

- How Djaara utilised Forest.
- Djaara Land use of Forest.
- Flora and Fauna uses and farming.
- Incorporate Djaara Cultural Knowledge and methodologies into Country.
- Land History and impact on Country.

Djaara Within Wombat

- In the 1830s, European settlers began arriving in the region during the period of colonization. They saw the fertile lands and abundant natural resources, leading to the establishment of farms, logging activities, and various settlements. The European presence had a significant impact on the Traditional Owners, as their traditional way of life was disrupted and displaced.
- Djaara, Dja Dja Wurrung Peoples had had a deep connection with the land, and their way of life revolved around sustainable land use and resource management. DJAARA land use within the Wombat State Forest was characterised by a close relationship with nature and a profound understanding of the local environment.



Djaara Within Wombat

- **Hunting and Gathering:** The Wombat State Forest provided abundant resources for food, medicine, and tools. Djaara hunted native animals such as kangaroos, wallabies, possums, and emus for fat, meat, and fur. They also gathered edible plants, seeds, nuts, and tubers found in the forest, supplementing their diet with a diverse range of natural produce.
- **Cultural Practices:** The forest held significant cultural and spiritual importance for the Djaara. Ceremonial sites, rock art, and other cultural markers would be present in the area, demonstrating the deep spiritual connection that Djaara had with the land. These sites served as places for storytelling, initiation rituals, and other sacred practices.
- **Resource Management:** Djaara management practices involved controlled burning of the undergrowth to promote the growth of certain plants, encourage the return of certain animal species, and reduce the risk of more severe wildfires. These traditional burns were essential in maintaining a balanced and healthy ecosystem.
- **Shelter and Tools:** The forest provided materials for constructing shelters, such as bark and branches from trees, as well as materials for crafting tools and weapons.
- **Seasonal Movement:** Djaara moved within their borders throughout the year in response to seasonal changes and resource availability. This movement allowed them to make the most of the various resources available in different parts of the forest during different times of the year.



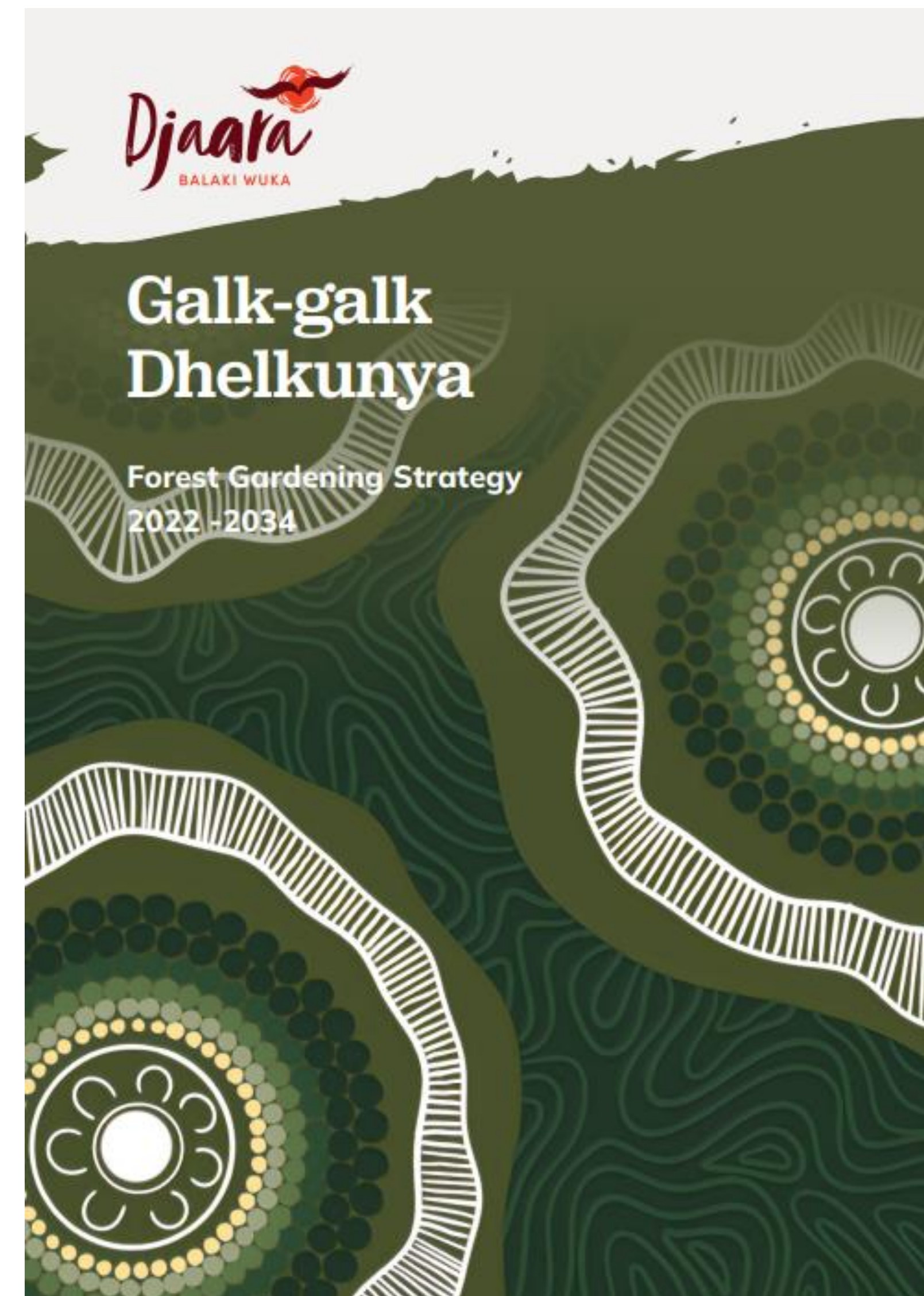
Identifying trial sites & partnerships

Short term priority to trial Forest Gardening tools across Djandak:

- Different types of Country
- Different land tenure arrangements
- Different levels of health (cultural & ecological)
- Different threats (e.g. climate change)
- Different combinations of tools and interventions

Forest Gardening Vision for *Djandak*

1. **Djaara on Country**
2. **Cultural thinning** across forests on *Djandak*
3. ***Djandak Wi*** burns ongoing
4. Protecting **cultural heritage**
5. Protecting & restoring **rivers/waterways**
6. Restoring **upside Country** - from mining & forestry
7. **Revegetation**, plantings of culturally important trees and plants (e.g. grasses and wattles)
8. **Storytelling** (signage, events, community engagement)
9. **Monitoring**, learning & adaptive management



1. Forests on *Djandak* – mining & forestry legacy

2. *Djaara* conducts cultural thinning of forest Country & revegetation of cleared and upside-down Country

3. *Djaara* cultural burns

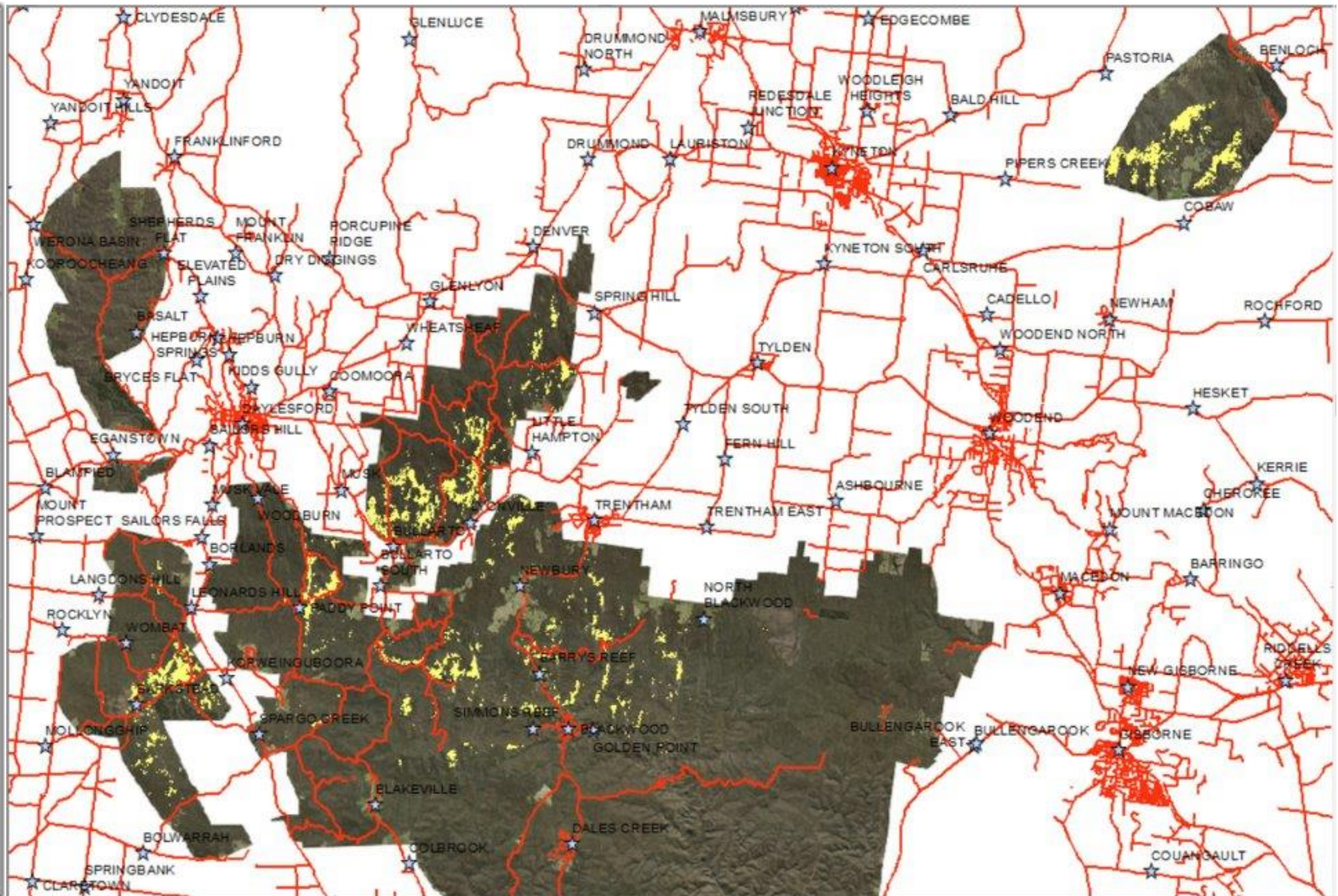
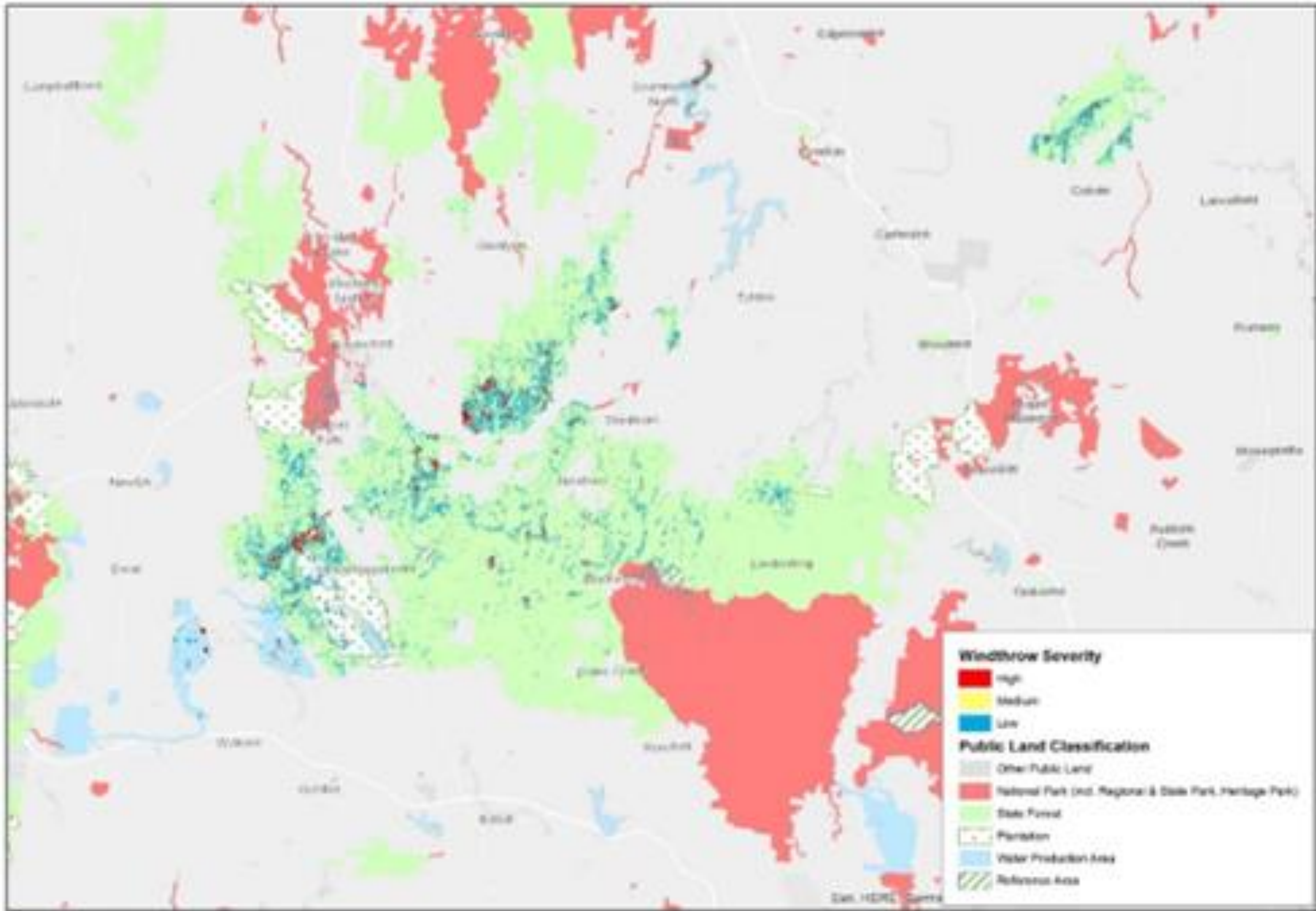


4. Culturally recognisable open grassy woodland

Wombat Forest – Managing Country after a Storm



Wombat Forest – Managing Country after a Storm



Wombat Forest – Managing Country after a Storm



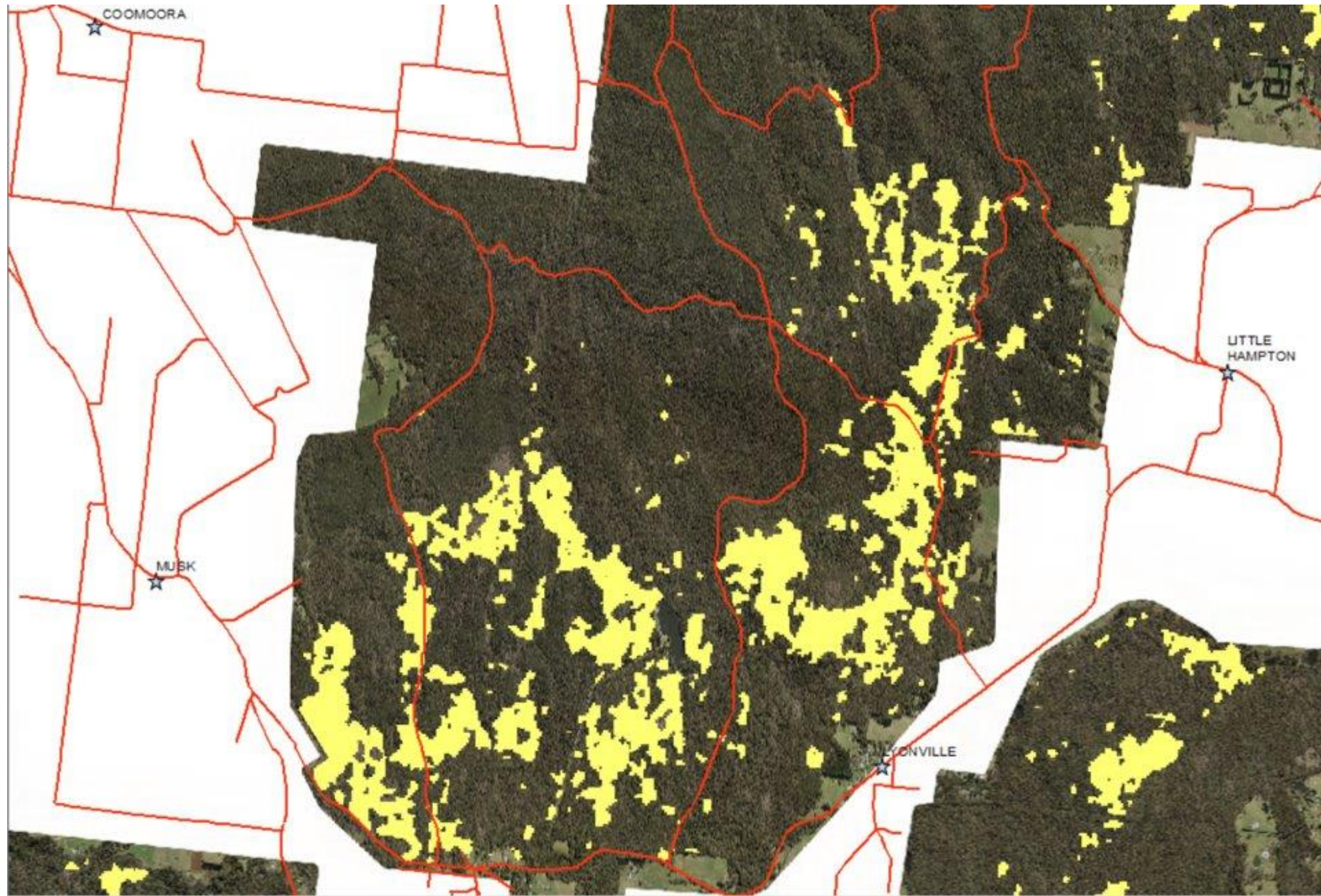
Site 1 – Babbingtons Hill, Wombat Forest



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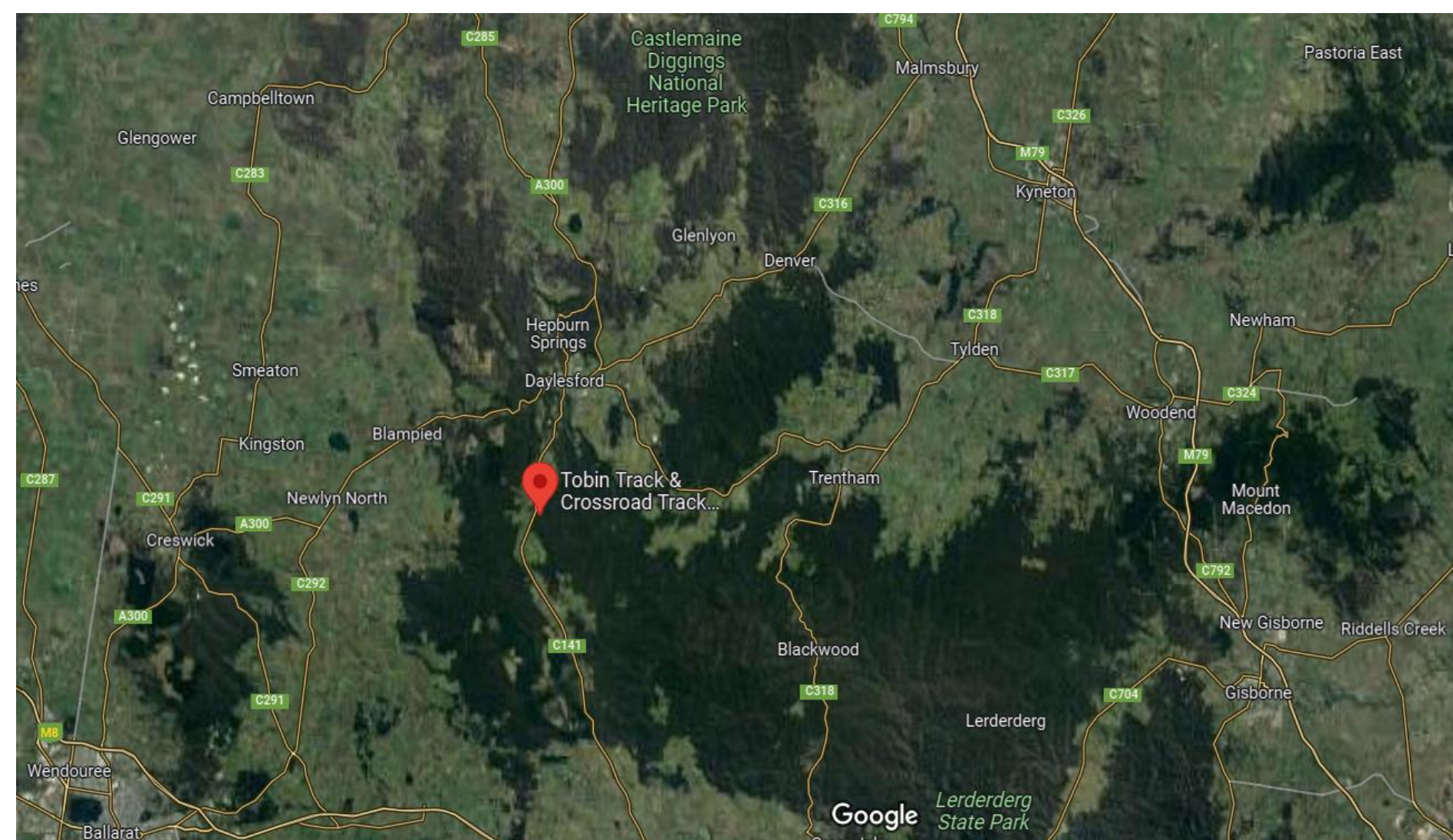
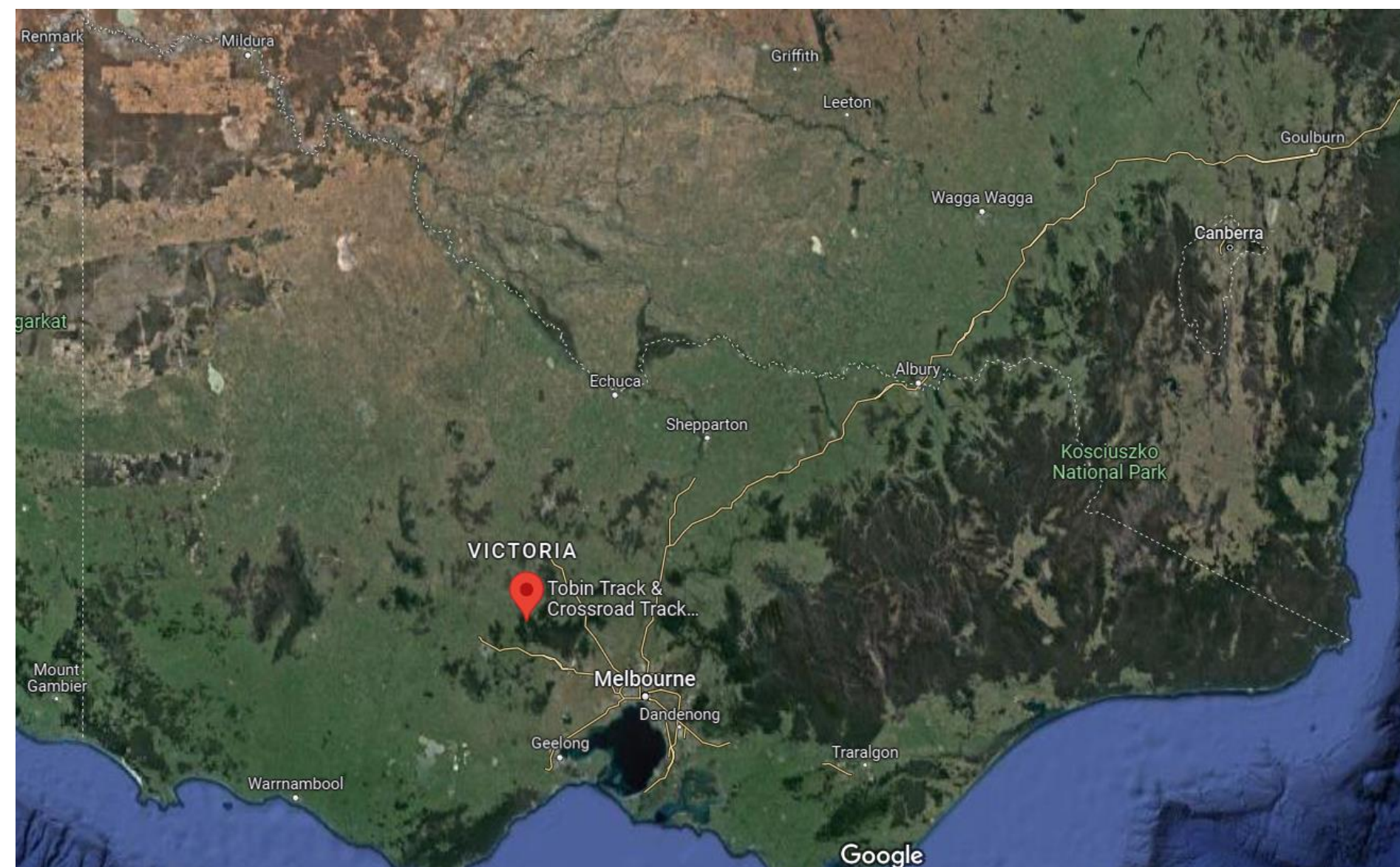


Site 1 – Babbingtons Hill, Wombat Forest

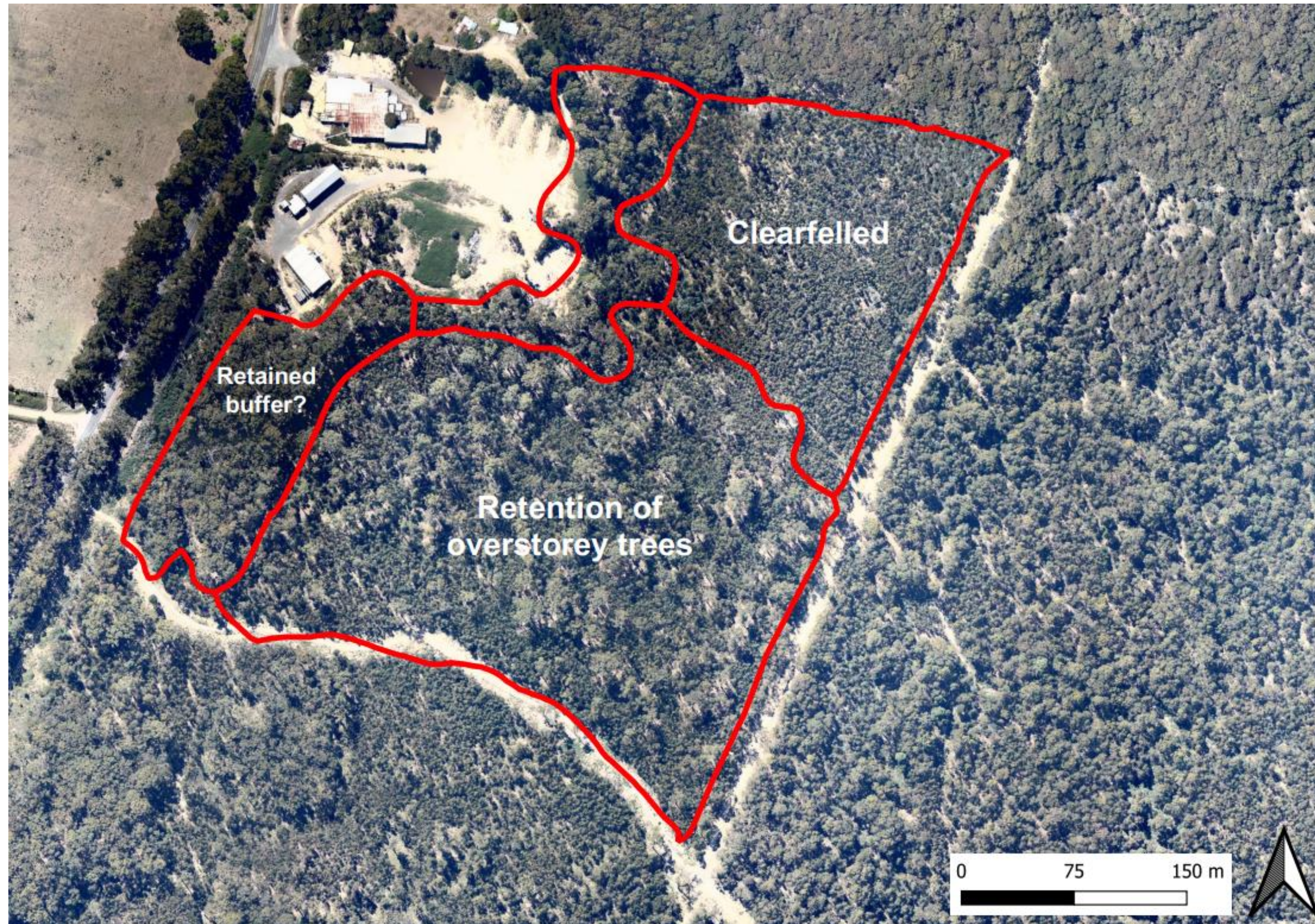




Site 2 Tobin Track - Leonards Hill



Site 2 Tobin Track - Leonards Hill



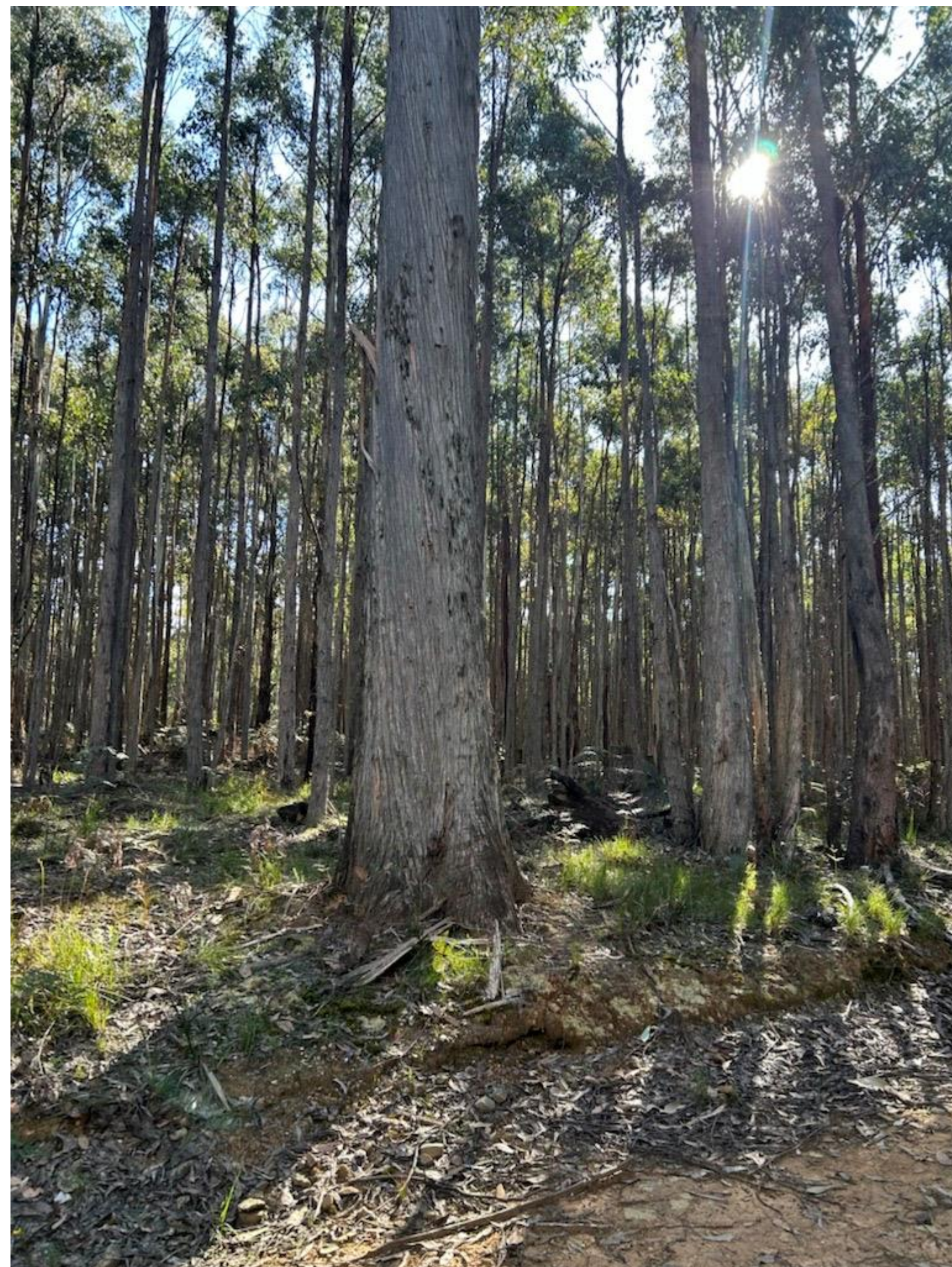
Site 2 Tobin Track - Leonards Hill



Site 2 Tobin Track – Monitoring



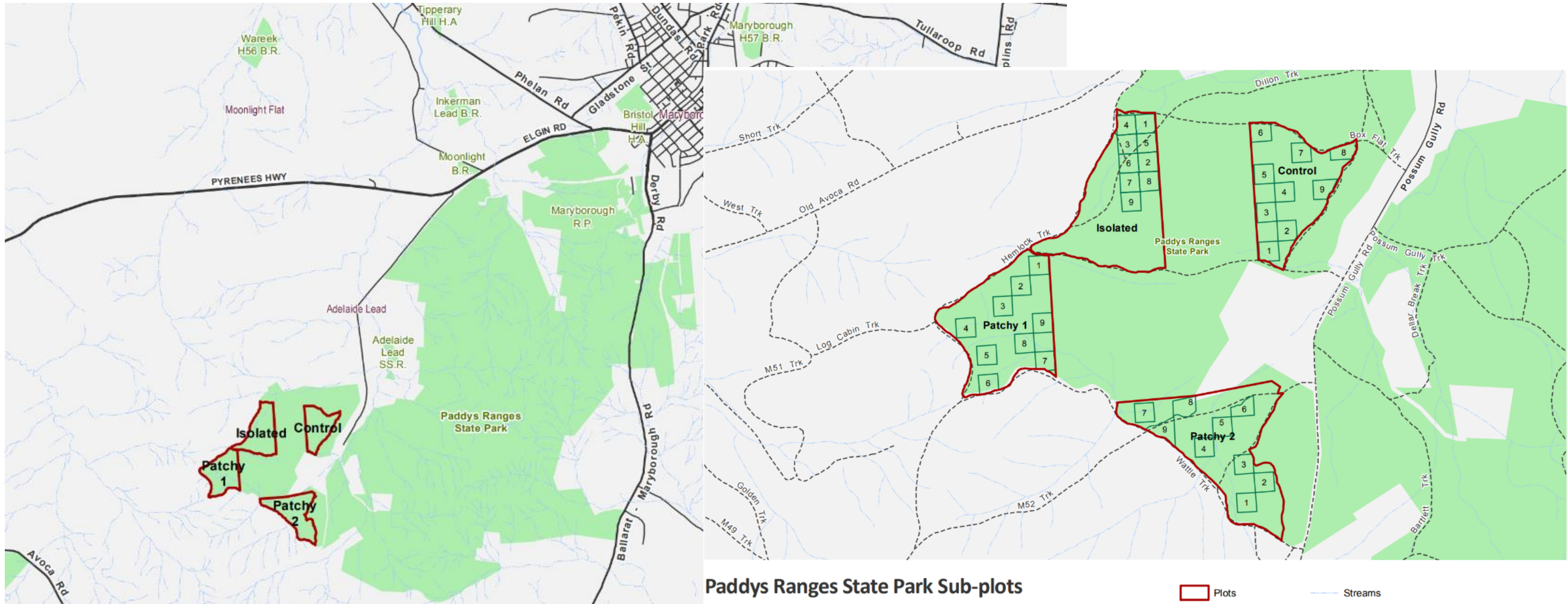
Site 2 Tobin Track – Cultural Thinning



Community Engagement



Site 2 Paddy's Ranges State Park - Maryborough



Paddys Ranges State Park Trial Plots

Thinning Plots

Paddys Ranges State Park Sub-plots

07/02/2018

Coordinate System: GDA 1994 MGA Zone 55
Projection: Transverse Mercator



- Plots
- Sub-plots
- Parks and Reserves
- Streams
- Sealed road
- Unsealed road

Disclaimer: Parks Victoria does not guarantee that this data is without flaw of any kind and therefore disclaims all liability which may arise from you relying on this information.
Data source acknowledgements: State Digital Mapbase, The State of Victoria and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.



Site 2 Paddy's Ranges State Park – Implementation





Dumarr (Thank you)!

Managing forest Country Yarn

-Sharing challenges

-Sharing successes

-How can the forestry sector support

First Nations management