1605 — First recorded contact between Australian Aboriginal people and Europeans when sailors of the Dutch ship *Duyfken* encountered Wik People on the west coast of Cape York Peninsular (far north Queensland)

1799 — Lieutenant Matthew Flinders lands inside the entry to the Clarence River, noting weatherproof huts of Yaegl People

1838 — Red cedar-getters arrive, and the first giant cedar logs leave the lower Clarence River, destined for market in Sydney

1840s — European settlers begin taking Yaegl traditional land

1860 — Harbour work on the lower Clarence River commences, making river bar crossings safer for shipping

1870s — Railway line built to move quarried rock from Iluka Bluff to build the Clarence River training wall

1904 — Aboriginal Protection Board establishes an Aboriginal Reserve on Ulgundahi Island near Maclean, removing Yaegl People from their traditional lands. They do not return to their Country until after 1945

1935 — Sandmining leases granted to extract rutile and zircon from areas of coastal forest at Iluka and Yamba

1950 — As a result of mining, Iluka is threatened by huge wind-blown sand drifts. South African bitou bush is planted to trial dune stabilisation

1960s — Widespread planting of bitou bush to control sand after mining. Local residents initiate action to stop sandmining

1964 — NSW Government announces Iluka's rainforest and adjoining beaches to be protected from sandmining

1976 — Iluka Nature Reserve created

1980 — Bundjalung National Park created to the north

1982 — All sandmining in the Iluka area ceases

Aluga Iluka

Darhuyay Yaygirr Wadyarr

Welcome to Yaegl Country

Artwork: Charlene Williams

The Yaygirr (Yaegl) People are the Traditional Owners of where you are standing today.

Their connection to this land is strong and enduring, and many areas within these reserves are of cultural and spiritual significance. This connection has been recognised through the Federal Court of Australia granting Native Title determination of Yaygirr Lands and Waters in 2015 and Sea Country Determination in 2017.

The Sea Country Determination came 2 years after the Yaygirr People won an 18-year battle to have their Native Title rights and interests recognised in the land-based part of their claim. The Federal Court granted the group their traditional rights over this area, in the longest running Native Title dispute before the court.

Aunty Della Walker (nee Laurie) and Aunty Joyce Clague were instrumental in the journey for recognition of Yaygirr People's Native Title rights.

Yaegl Wadyarr (Country):

- Extends from Black Rock in the north, down to Red Rock in the south.
- Extends west as far as Lawrence through to Ulmarra, then south-east toward Tucabia, then south to Red Rock.
- Sea Country extends east 200m offshore from the mean high water mark, then a further 900m east of the Dirrangun at the mouth of the Clarence River.
- There is a shared area agreement through Yaegl and Bandjalang Peoples to the north, and Yaegl and Gumbaynggirr Peoples to the south.

Yaygirr (Yaegl) land – always way, always will be

We acknowledge the Yaegl Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Yaegl Country
Acknowledgement of Country & Welcome
Bundjalung National Park & Iluka Nature Reserve
Yaegl Country
Yaegl Elders Aunty Patricia Laurie and Aunty Dierdre Randall, 2024
Yaegl Elders Aunty Della Walker and Aunty Joyce Clague
Acknowledgement of Country
Acknowledgement of Country
Acknowledgement of Country