



ReconciliationWA

Place-based Reconciliation in the Great Southern: Our Statement of Commitment



Acknowledgement of Country

We, the undersigned, acknowledge the Goreng, Kaneang, Menang, Wudjari and Wirlomin peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of the Great Southern region. From the stunning coast-lines to the rolling hills, rivers, and ancient forests of this region, we honour the enduring connection of Noongar peoples to Country—past, present and emerging. Noongar culture is woven into the land, and we respect the stories, knowledge, and responsibilities that Noongar people continue to uphold and share.

Preamble

This Statement of Commitment is a key deliverable of the Relationships Horizon of the Great Southern Place-Based Reconciliation Pilot—a nationally significant initiative designed to demonstrate how place-based, community-led reconciliation commitments can be embedded and actioned in regions across Australia.

Originally scoped in 2022, the Pilot was developed through early engagement with Noongar Elders, community leaders, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs), and reconciliation allies. From those early conversations, emerged the Rising Program—a broader model for place-based reconciliation engagement, now active across regional Western Australia.

The Great Southern Region is the national lead for this innovative first - place-based reconciliation pilot, with the support and partnership from Reconciliation Australia and Reconciliation WA.

Respect Rising laid the groundwork. Surfacing the voices, values and priorities of Noongar peoples and locally based, reconciliation champions. Through Little Yarns, Big Yarns, and relentlessly showing up for each other, the foundations for our journey together were laid. Themes of Truth-Telling, Justice, and Healing—being the bedrock for genuine and sustained reconciliation in the Great Southern Region.

Through Relationships Rising, we give our Statement of Commitment, reflecting strengthened relationships, mutual respect, and reconciliation commitments throughout the Great Southern. This Statement affirms our shared cultural, ethical, and strategic commitments to substantive reconciliation, and our bond in connection to Country, culture, and community.

Importantly, this Statement also serves as the central external expression of the Pilot's purpose. We share this publicly to invite wider participation, extending partnership opportunities, and to deepen accountability to the work ahead of us.

Additionally, this statement will foreword the Great Southern Place-Based Reconciliation Action Plan, to be co-designed in the next horizon – Opportunity Rising. Our plan will outline the shared

actions, governance structures, and regional commitments required to bring this Statement to life.

This is more than a declaration. It is a living commitment—one that invites all people in the Great Southern to walk together, grounded in truth, guided by culture, and united in our shared care for Boodja.

Our Vision

United and belonging, we walk together on Boodja.

Our vision for the Great Southern is one of unity and shared pride, where the stories and strengths of all people are respected and celebrated. Culture and connection to Country will guide how we care for this place and each other. With honesty, mutual respect, and a commitment to healing, we strive to create a region where reconciliation lives in our relationships, our actions, and our shared future. The Great Southern is rich in culture, community and opportunity—and together, we commit to ensuring that everyone who calls this place home can thrive in partnership.

Our Commitment

As Noongar and non-Aboriginal peoples and organisations, we come together to honour the shared history of this region and to walk forward with care, courage, and respect. Here in the Great Southern—a place of deep cultural roots and layered histories—we commit to walking alongside one another in the spirit of reconciliation.

Through the Great Southern Place-Based Reconciliation Pilot, and beyond, we aim to listen deeply, act together, and reflect the strengths and aspirations of our communities. Our commitment is open and inclusive—inviting all who live, work or lead in this region to be part of shaping a future where, united and belonging, we walk together on Boodja.

Ways of Working: Our Guiding Principles

How we step forward defines the impact of what we do. As members of a purpose-driven Reconciliation Action Network, our work and relationships will be guided by the principles; *Culture is Front and Centre, Truth and Transparency and Walking Together.*

Our Journey

Across the Great Southern, we walk together with goodwill and in respectful partnership—not one ahead of the other—as a community with shared respect, trust and purpose on Boodja.

Regional conversations uncovered the bedrock for meaningful, place-based reconciliation: *Truth-Telling, Justice and Healing.*

When thoughtfully integrated into future reconciliation efforts, action planning and decision-making,

Truth-Telling, Justice and Healing provide our region the foundations for:

- Enduring and respectful reconciliation initiatives
- Better understanding of, and responses to, the aspirations and needs of Noongar communities
- Stronger, more connected relationships across the region
- Shared opportunities for growth and wellbeing, grounded in our collective connection to Country

Walk with Us

We offer this commitment openly to individuals and organisations across the Great Southern. Reconciliation is a journey that belongs to all of us—Noongar and non-Aboriginal alike. Wherever you live or work in this region, we welcome you to walk with us in shaping a future founded on belonging, respect, and shared care for Boodja.