

# THE TURTUNI STORY

## Representing Tiwi cultural values

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The Turtuni story is created using Tiwi narrative, that I have designed using the concept of Tiwi story telling through art. The Turtuni story is used as an engagement tool for our collaborative research project on the Tiwi Islands, to plan for biodiversity and sustainable development. The story of the painting explains the Tiwi perspective and the concept about caring for country and the importance of cultural values to be in place for the Tiwi future of Tiwi biodiversity and sustainable development on Murrakupuni (place, country).

The painting shows a turtuni (also known as pukumani poles or tutini), the famous art-form of the Tiwi Islands. On the right side of the Turtuni painting it tells a story about the journey. The footprints and the dots represents the Tiwi people and the stake-holders journey, walking and working together towards creating a better future for the next generations to come. The left side of the Turtuni represents and acknowledges the Past (Papaluwi), Present (Ningani) and Future (Palanginarri) as one whole concept towards the project and caring for country. The Katukuni leaves represents the smoking ceremony for healing and chasing bad spirits away as sometime the path it takes can be crooked and can sometime get lost in the transaction of the decision-making process. The Pamajini is an armband used in ceremony to represent the Tiwi pathway and identity, belonging, and connection to country, language, and the Tiwi heritage.

The circle within the Turtuni represents the Milimika and the 4 main clan groups. It represents individual person's role and responsibility to ceremony. And leadership of each Tiwi families and the responsibility we have to each other and in our home, workplace, community, and country. The spear known as Numurriyaka represents the crocodile tail (tuwarra) as it travels around the Tiwi Island protecting the sea and the land. The hands holding the Tiwi Islands represent the objectives towards Tiwi vision for today and the future generations with our ancestor's spirit still guiding us through and the oneness as Tiwi people caring for Murrakupuni.



Figure 1: Turtuni Story, painting by Fiona Kerinaiaua with Mavis Kerinaiaua

On the right side of the Turtuni painting it tells a story about the journey. The footprints and the dots (at the bottom of the painting) represents the Tiwi people and the stake-holders journey. Walking and working together towards creating a better future for the next generations to come.

Whilst the left side of the Turtuni represents and acknowledges the Past (Papaluwi), Present (Ningani) and Future (Palanginarri) as one whole concept towards the project and caring for country.

The Katukuni leaves represents the smoking ceremony for healing and chasing bad spirits away as sometime the path it takes can be crooked and can sometime get lost in the transaction of the decision-making process.

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