



Senator Simon Birmingham

Chair

Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts

PO Box 6100

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

11<sup>th</sup> October 2009

Dear Senator

**Re: Inquiry into Tiwi forests industry – Submission by Tiwi Land Council received by you on 11<sup>th</sup> September**

I write to refute statements made by the Tiwi Land Council to your Committee with respect to the role of women in affairs of the Tiwi Islands. In particular page seven Part 2 in response to Question 8 "What capacity is there for women to be members of the Tiwi Land Council."

It is suggested that an organisation of "strong women" was formed at the instigation of an environmental lobby. This is not the case.

The organisation, Wangatunga Strong Women's Group, was formed as an outcome of an Eisteddfod held in December 2002 during which a call was made for support to establish a "women's centre" at Nguiu to conduct (interalia) services for young mothers and education for women wanting to improve their place in society. Never at any stage in the ensuing three years I was working with these women was there any suggestion that their role was to challenge decisions made by men. Never at any stage was the suggestion made that this group would have any other purpose than working towards improved social circumstances for all Tiwi people.

I was involved in the formation and registration of Wangatunga and am prepared to make this statement on Oath and have no problem with the contents of this letter being considered a Supplementary submission to the one I have already made to your Inquiry and listed as Submission Number 15.

I remain

Yours sincerely

ROLLO MANNING

Principal