

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Traditional Owners to lead large-scale renewable energy development in WA's Pilbara region**

Traditional Owners have partnered with an experienced renewable energy business to develop, own, and operate large-scale renewable energy projects of up to 3GW in capacity on the traditional country of the Yindjibarndi people in Western Australia's Pilbara region.

In June, the Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation (**YAC**) and renewable energy company, ACEN CORPORATION (**ACEN**), formalised the partnership by signing an agreement and forming the Yindjibarndi Energy Corporation (**YEC**). YEC has been established to progress the development of major renewable energy projects on Yindjibarndi *Ngurra* (country), which is located in Western Australia's Pilbara region near to major industrial energy users. YEC efforts will be led by Yindjibarndi-appointed Director Craig Ricato and ACEN-appointed Director and Chairman Anton Rohner.

Representing one of the largest Indigenous-led renewable energy initiatives in Australia, YEC will see the Yindjibarndi people and ACEN work together to develop wind, solar, and renewable energy storage projects on Yindjibarndi *Ngurra* – an area covering approximately 13,000 km<sup>2</sup> within the Yindjibarndi Native Title Determination Areas.

The partnership agreement between the Yindjibarndi and ACEN includes principles ensuring Yindjibarndi approval of all proposed project sites on Yindjibarndi *Ngurra*, Yindjibarndi equity participation of 25% - 50% in all projects, preferred contracting for Yindjibarndi-owned businesses, and training and employment opportunities for Yindjibarndi people.

YEC's plans include an initial Stage 1 target of 750MW of combined wind, solar, and battery storage to be in construction within the next few years, representing an investment of more than \$1B. Stage 2 thereafter will target a further 2GW - 3GW of combined wind, solar, and battery storage. The renewable energy produced will be greater than what is currently being produced by WA's largest coal-fired power station.

YAC Chief Executive Michael Woodley said: "We know that our country is well located for renewable energy development, so we made the decision early to lead. We established a small team and set out to find a partner with the right capabilities and values, which led us to ACEN."

"The agreement with ACEN means that the Yindjibarndi people can actively participate in Australia's renewable energy transition in a significant way that provides long-term economic benefits to our community, whilst also ensuring that we can protect and preserve all areas within Yindjibarndi *Ngurra* which are of cultural, spiritual, and environmental significance to us. The partnership will also create sustainable, long-term training and employment opportunities on country for our people," he said.

ACEN International CEO Patrice Clausse said, “Our partnership with the Yindjibarndi is aligned on so many levels, and we’re incredibly grateful for the trust the Yindjibarndi community has put in ACEN to responsibly explore development opportunities in partnership with them on their country.”

“The Pilbara region is home to some of the largest industrial energy users globally, many of which have expressed their desire to participate in a transition to a carbon neutral future. Commercial discussions are in motion and we’re currently having encouraging conversations with potential offtake customers to purchase the renewable energy,” he said.

Clean Energy Council Chief Executive Officer Kane Thornton said, “The agreement between the Yindjibarndi People and ACEN sets a new benchmark for meaningful participation by Indigenous Australians in the country’s transition to a clean energy future.”

“It represents the kind of leadership and innovation that is needed to drive Australia’s equitable transition to becoming a renewable energy powerhouse,” he said.

Through YEC, technical studies are now underway to progress investigation, permitting, connection, and development activities.

Ends.

### **About the Yindjibarndi community**

The Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation (**YAC**) is a Registered Native Title Body Corporate of the Yindjibarndi People and the institution appointed by the Federal Court of Australia to represent Yindjibarndi native title rights and interests.

Yindjibarndi *Ngurra* (country) covers approx. 13,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the Pilbara region of Western Australia and includes numerous parcels of land with a variety of tenure/stakeholder interests, including the strongest form of native title, known as Exclusive Possession. In 1994, the Yindjibarndi people launched one of Australia's very first native title claims which was determined by the Full Federal Court in 2005. The High Court of Australia affirmed Yindjibarndi Exclusive Possession rights in a second determination claim in 2020.

### **About ACEN**

ACEN (PSE:ACEN) is the listed energy platform of the Ayala Group. The company has ~4,400MW of attributable capacity from owned facilities in the Philippines, Australia, Vietnam, Indonesia and India, with a renewable share of 98%, which is among the highest in the region.

ACEN's aspiration is to be the largest listed renewables platform in Southeast Asia, with a goal of reaching 20 GW of renewables capacity by 2030. ACEN is committed to transition the company's generation portfolio to 100% renewable energy by 2025 and to become a Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions company by 2050.

In Australia, ACEN has more than 1GW capacity in construction and more than 8GW capacity in the development pipeline. Its renewable energy assets include solar, wind, battery, and pumped hydro energy storage projects across Australia. The 400MWac (521MWdc) New England Solar (Stage 1) in NSW is ACEN's first operational project in Australia. It will be one of Australia's largest solar projects participating in the National Electricity Market (NEM) and is the largest solar project in Australia to be financed on a fully merchant basis. The 400MWac (520MWdc) Stubbo Solar in the NSW Central West Orana Renewable Energy Zone is ACEN Australia's second project, which commenced construction in late 2022.

[yindjibarndienergy.com.au](http://yindjibarndienergy.com.au)

## **Media and interviews**

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