

## MEDIA RELEASE

Brisbane, 11 July 2022

### **Indigenous insight central to environment management at Upper Burdekin Wind Farm under new ILUA**

A new partnership between Windlab's Upper Burdekin Wind Farm and Native Title holders the Gugu Badhun will see Indigenous stewardship at the fore of the project's environmental management strategy.

Under the agreement, the Gugu Badhun will take a leading role in delivering conservation and improvement initiatives for the project incorporating traditional land management techniques.

The Gugu Badhun-Windlab Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) is the culmination of almost three years' collaborative work and will support the delivery of meaningful environmental protection, employment, education and enterprise outcomes for the region's Traditional Owners.

The Gugu Badhun will also give the project a new name in their traditional language under the agreement.

Located on pastoral land near the rural locality of Mount Fox south-west of Ingham in north Queensland, the 600MW Wind Farm will have the capacity to provide clean, renewable energy for up to 300,000 Australian homes once operational.

The region is home to some of Australia's most abundant and strategically critical renewable wind resource, is rich in cultural significance to Traditional Owners and is in proximity to some of the state's most valuable bioregions.

A spokesperson for the Gugu Badhun said the agreement will ensure Windlab and all contractors work closely with Traditional Owners throughout the life of the project to mitigate or minimise impacts.

"Gugu Badhun People consider the environment to be very closely aligned with our cultural heritage and the ILUA with Windlab provides for robust environmental provisions and the sharing of information which is critical for Gugu Badhun People to be informed about what is happening on our country," the spokesperson said.

"Gugu Badhun People's cultural heritage was forefront of negotiations and early on a comprehensive Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Agreement was negotiated which provides for surveys, monitoring and mitigation measures to best protect Gugu Badhun People's cultural heritage."

"The agreement also sets out a strong framework for Gugu Badhun People to be involved in the project through employment, contracting and then on an ongoing basis through cadetships so that Gugu Badhun People have opportunities into the future to shape the direction of renewable energy developments on country."

Windlab's CEO, John Martin said the ILUA represented an important step in delivering a responsibly-managed project informed by leading practice, local knowledge and expert insight.

"For us, producing renewable energy alone isn't enough – we recognise the potential for any new development to have an impact and we are committed to being proactive and working with all our stakeholders to ensure a balanced, positive outcome.



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“This ILUA honours the deep and enduring connection of the Gugu Badhun to their traditional lands and we are looking forward to working with the Gugu Badhun on environmental management as well as cultural, employment and enterprise outcomes that deliver sustainable benefits to Traditional Owners, building a lasting legacy in north Queensland.”

## **ENDS**

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## **About Gugu Badhun Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC and the Gugu Badhun People**

The Gugu Badhun Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (GBAC) is the Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) registered under the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act (Cth) (2006)* (CATSI), and holds the Native Title rights, interests and assets as agent of the Gugu Badhun people. GBAC was incorporated with the Office of Registrar of Indigenous Corporation (ORIC) on May 3, 2012 and was registered as a Registered Native Title Body Corporate on August 23, 2012.

The Gugu Badhun People are the native title holders of country around the upper reaches of the Burdekin River, surrounding the Township of Greenvale that is approximately 220 km north-west of Townsville, Northern Queensland.

Gugu Badhun oral histories link its people to ancient geological events which western scientists estimate to have occurred approximately 7,000 years ago.

The first European contact with Gugu Badhun people was Ludwig Leichhardt's exploratory party in 1845, making Gugu Badhun the first inland Aboriginal nations in Northern Australia to encounter Europeans.

Gugu Badhun people have experienced colonisation and dispossession from land, but their story is a story of achievement in the face of adversity. The Gugu Badhun people have maintained an ongoing connection to the land known as *yarygugubadhungu*.

Today, members of the Gugu Badhun community live on Gugu Badhun country and the surrounding regional towns and cities. Gugu Badhun people gather on country annually for a Culture Camp which reinforces community ties, connection to country, and cultural values. Like all identities, the Gugu Badhun identity has evolved since before contact with Europeans, but Gugu Badhun people strongly identify with their culture, country, and community.

For more information, visit [www.gugubadhun.com](http://www.gugubadhun.com).

## **About Windlab**

Windlab is a 100% Australian company supporting Australia's clean energy transition.

For almost 20 years, Windlab has applied Australian-developed, world-leading atmospheric science, modelling and wind energy assessment technology to find, construct and operate the nation's top wind energy projects.

The communities that host Windlab's projects are long-term stakeholders. Windlab respects the needs and wishes of Traditional Owners and communities and prides itself on driving positive socio-economic outcomes for local people in regional Australia.



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Windlab takes its environmental obligations seriously, and we work with experts, communities and partners to minimise our impact and protect environmental values.

Headquartered in Canberra, Windlab has offices in Brisbane, Queensland and Ararat, Victoria, as well as in South Africa, Kenya and Tanzania, Africa.

For more information about Windlab, visit [www.windlab.com](http://www.windlab.com).

### **About Upper Burdekin Wind Farm**

Upper Burdekin Wind Farm is a proposed wind energy project that will generate up to 600MW of power, located on pastoral land within Gugu Badhun country, about 65km south-west of Ingham, Queensland.

The project is currently in the development phase, during which the focus is on collaboration with community and stakeholders to inform and refine a balanced wind farm design that effectively manages potential impacts and meets stakeholder expectations.

Once operational, Upper Burdekin Wind Farm will have the capacity to provide clean, renewable energy to up to 300,000 Australian homes every day.

The proposed site provides access to a suitable wind resource and is ideally located near existing infrastructure. The project is compatible with the existing land use of the area, and Windlab is confident potential project impacts can be managed in a way that meets community and stakeholder expectations.

Windlab will continue working closely with the community and regional stakeholders to understand their needs in relation to the project and its benefits. Windlab will prioritise keeping the community informed and providing opportunities for input as we progress through the development approvals process.

For more information visit [www.upperburdekinwindfarm.com](http://www.upperburdekinwindfarm.com).



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