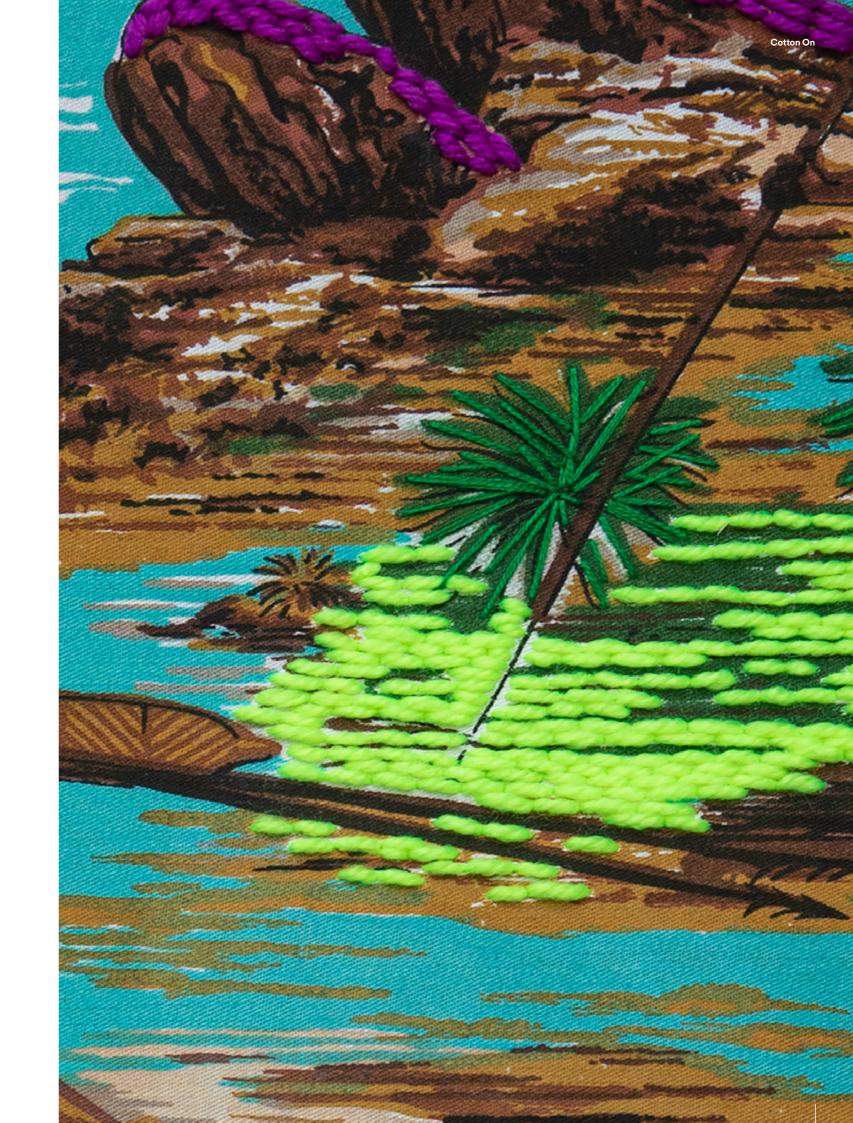


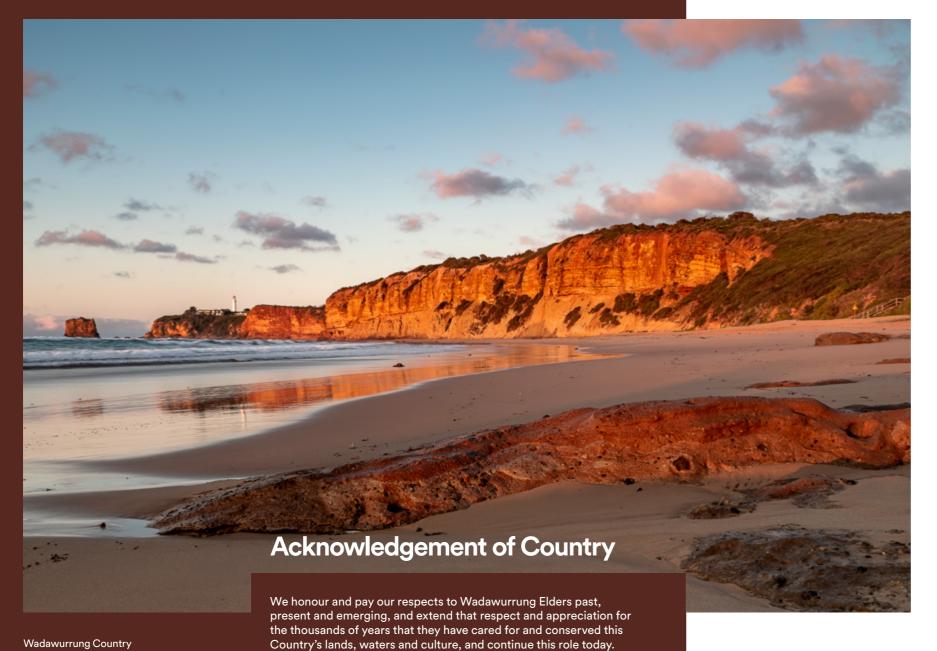




Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this Reconciliation Action Plan may contain images of people who have passed into the dreaming.



Cotton On



Cotton On is proud to be an Australian-born business on First Nations lands. We Acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original custodians of the lands upon which we live and work.

Wadawurrung Country. We pay our respects to Wadawurrung People and value their continuing connection to their lands, waters, Language and traditions. The Wadawurrung People were the first textile makers on this Country. Their heritage and skills are woven through these lands and have shaped their industries for generations. We share this common ground with the Wadawurrung People and are humbled to

We acknowledge our Global Support Centre is located on

follow in their footsteps.

Wadawurrung Country Aireys Inlet, Victoria

# **About the Cover Artist**

Kait James is a proud Wadawurrung woman, celebrated artist and imaginative storyteller.







Kait's work explores her identity as an Australian with both Anglo and Indigenous heritage. Her work asks questions relating to identity, perception and our knowledge of Australia's Indigenous communities.

Utilising punch needling techniques, she embroiders kitsch found materials, such as souvenir tea towels, that reference colonial settlements and histories, and subverts them with Indigenous imagery and familiar references.

Through the use of humour and vivid colours, Kait addresses the way white western culture has dominated Australia's history and her personal reflections on her Indigenous heritage.

### **Foreword**

Firstly, we would like to Acknowledge all Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, our Ancestors, and pay respect to our Elders past, present and emerging.

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation was appointed in May 2009 as a Registered Aboriginal Party under the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. The Corporation represents Wadawurrung Traditional Owners.

Our connection to Culture and Country continues to provide us with the obligation, responsibilities and strength to care, connect, practice and pass on tens of thousands of years of knowledge as Wadawurrung People. Our language is still evident today and is the intellectual property of our Wadawurrung Traditional Owners.

Cotton On was founded on the lands of Wadawurrung Country in Djilang, the original name of Geelong.

Our people were the first textile industry making sustainable clothing from elements of country, an example is the possum Skin Cloak, made from the fur of the possum, using the sinew from the Kangaroo, lining the skin with animal fat to water proof it, using our Papul (ochre) to dye and paint, burning designs of identity and journey for ownership. The cloak would last the life of a person's Journey. And still today we have many Wadawurrung artists across Country sharing their Art, Stories and Design.

Wadawurrung people lived with no greed or harm, caring for Country with their Cultural responsibility, knowledge and systems.

Caring for our Country, land, skies, and waters, is our continual cultural practice and core to our identity and connection as the Traditional Owners of Wadawurrung Country. Our People have endured trauma, violence and dispossession

since invasion and have demonstrated an innate ability of resilience to continue their cultural practices, which has provided the strength to ensure our survival.

We are spiritually connected to our land, our skies, our waterways, and our coastal areas this connection continues from our Ancestors, the many generations before us to Wadawurrung people of today.

In 2020 we released "Paleert Tjarra Dja" Let's make Country good together, our Wadawurrung Country plan. A 10-year vision, 2020-2030 of the aspirations and goals of Wadawurrung People.

This was achieved with Wadawurrung Elders and families of the many generations sharing knowledge through gatherings and collaboration together on Country.

Wadawurrung people are committed to working together with key stakeholders like Cotton On to ensure we have strong partnerships, engagement and collaboration to achieve our aspirations and goals, and that our Cultural heritage, language, traditions, stories and Cultural values are protected and conserved. Wadawurrung People and Country is respected, and Wadawurrung's Cultural Authority understood and valued.

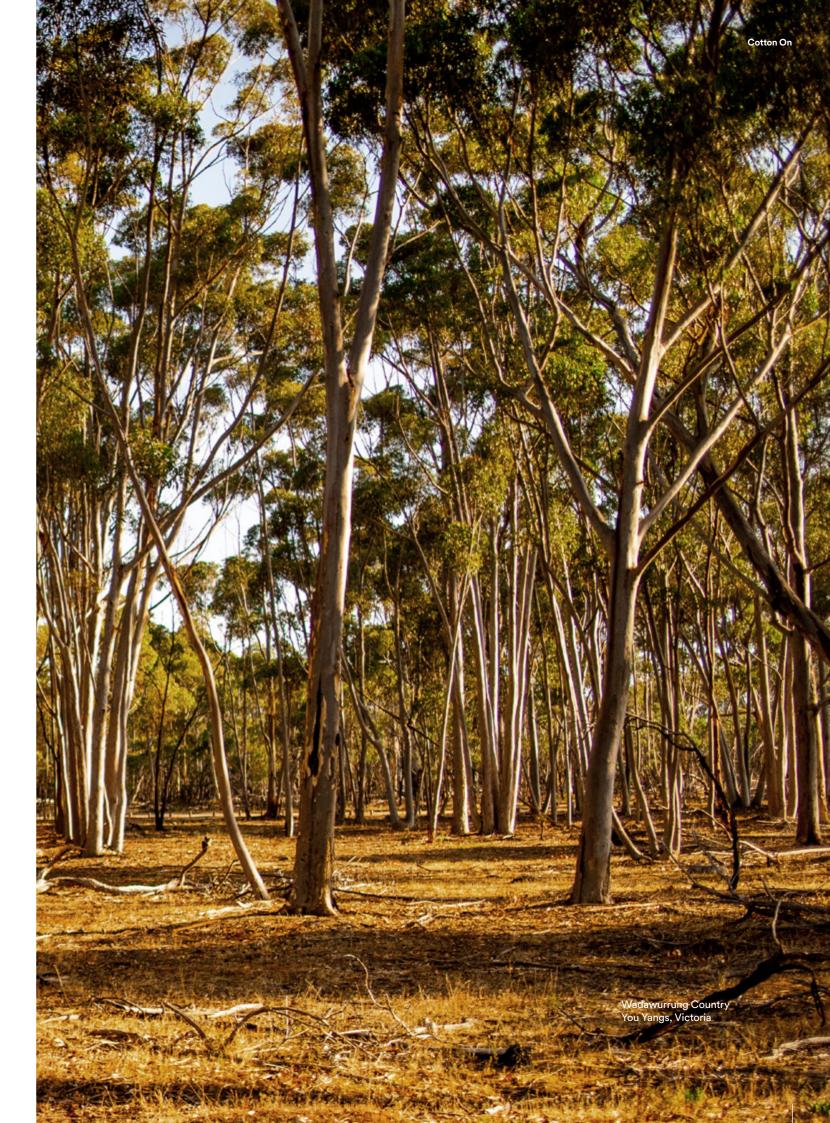
# Wurrgurrwilwa gupma begadak Wadawurrung wurring-wurring baa dja

All people working together to make Wadawurrung Country and Culture strong

### Koling wada-ngal Let's walk together

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation







## A Note From Our CEO

We're proud to share our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan and our formal commitment to reconciliation.

As a business born in regional Australia, reconciliation is a critical step in creating cultural safety, deep appreciation and Acknowledgment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We make this commitment to every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person and to our team, our customers, and for the communities where we live and work.

Though today marks a significant moment for us as a business as we continue to fulfil our purpose to make a positive difference in people's lives, reconciliation is something we've been working toward for many years, and it's something we're committed to for the long run.

For us, it's about bringing more voices, experiences and views to the table, enabling a greater positive impact for those around us, and going on the journey knowing that we have much to learn. I'm extremely proud of our people for coming together and inspiring collective change.

Guided by our Ethical Framework, we'll achieve our Reconciliation Action Plan by embedding ideals of belonging across every aspect of our business and empowering each other to speak up for what's right. By walking alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we're creating a future that's brighter for each of us because we know that together, we're stronger.

We'd like to thank those who have helped us along the way:
Reconciliation Australia, for its support throughout our reconciliation
journey; Marsha Uppill, proud Adnyamathanha Woman, co-founder
of Arranyinha Pty Ltd and reconciliation advisor to Cotton On, for her
constant guidance and sharing as we listen and learn; our Reconciliation
Action Plan Working Group for making our plans a reality; and each of
our team members and customers for playing their part.



Peter Johnson CEO Cotton On Group



Cotton On joins a network of more than 1,100 corporate, government and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to three million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types, Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate, allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

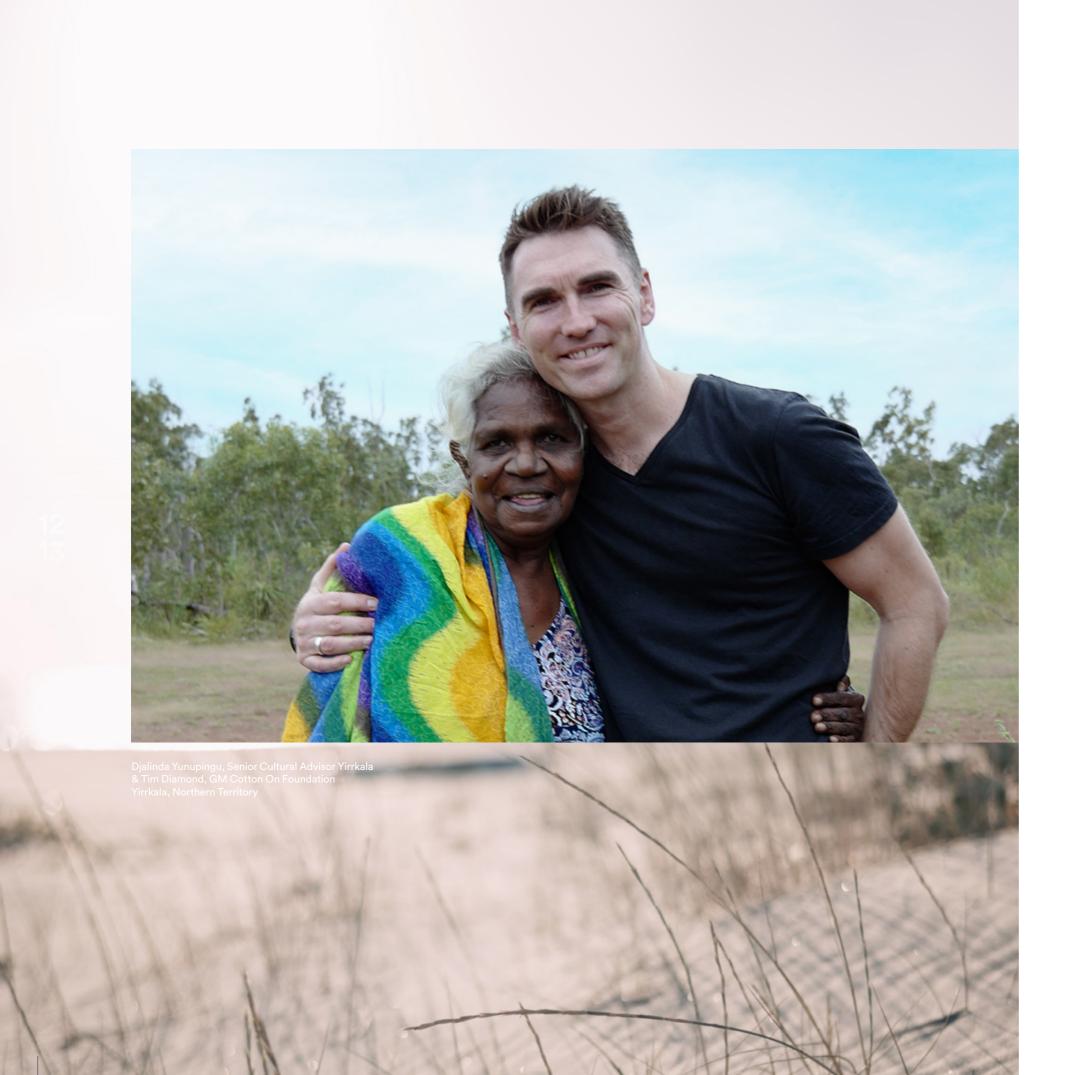
It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Cotton On to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Cotton On, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.



Karen Mundine Chief Executive Officer Reconciliation Australia



Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

# **Our Story**

In 1991, our founder set out with an epic vision in mind: to take our Aussie lifestyle brands to the world, delivering Good along the way.

Our first 'shop' was the boot of a Ford Bronco filled with denim jackets. It doesn't sound like much, but it was the start of something big – and it's what set us on the path to fulfilling our purpose to make a positive difference in people's lives.

More than 30 years on, this purpose-driven approach still guides our every move. As our business has grown, so too has our desire to do more Good. We know our responsibility as a global fashion and lifestyle retailer extends far beyond selling the products our customers love, and we have a critical role to play in creating an equitable and sustainable future for people and the planet.

Today, we operate in-store and online in 22 countries. We have eight brands and 1,500 stores powered by 18,000 dedicated team members, backed up by 27 wholesale partners, four retail license partners and more than 150 suppliers. Our Australian team is made up of more than 11,000 individuals who passionately operate our 650+retail stores, Global Support Centre and Avalon Distribution Centre.

Our philanthropic arm, the Cotton On Foundation, was established in 2007. The not-for-profit organisation partners with our team and customers to raise funds for projects in Australia, Uganda, South Africa and Thailand across three key pillars: holistic education, mental health and the environment.

While this Reconciliation Action Plan shares our commitments between September 2022 and September 2023, we are committed to reconciliation for the long run.

# Purpose, Vision, Values

### **OUR PURPOSE:**

We exist to make a positive difference in people's lives.

## **OUR VISION:**

Take our Aussie lifestyle brands to the world, Doing Good along the way.

### **OUR VALUES:**

Ever Better
Personal Leadership
People First
Keeping It Real
Fun
Integrity





Sarah Spiker, Head of Global Projects Cotton On Foundation, with community members Dhambaliya, Northern Territory

## **Our Reconciliation Vision**

As an Australian-born business, our Reconciliation Action Plan is an important step in working towards our purpose. We also know that just acknowledging First Nations peoples is not enough. Reconciliation for us must be authentic and underpinned by growth, connection, justice and respect. It's a journey of many footprints, and we're approaching that journey with curiosity, humility and heart.

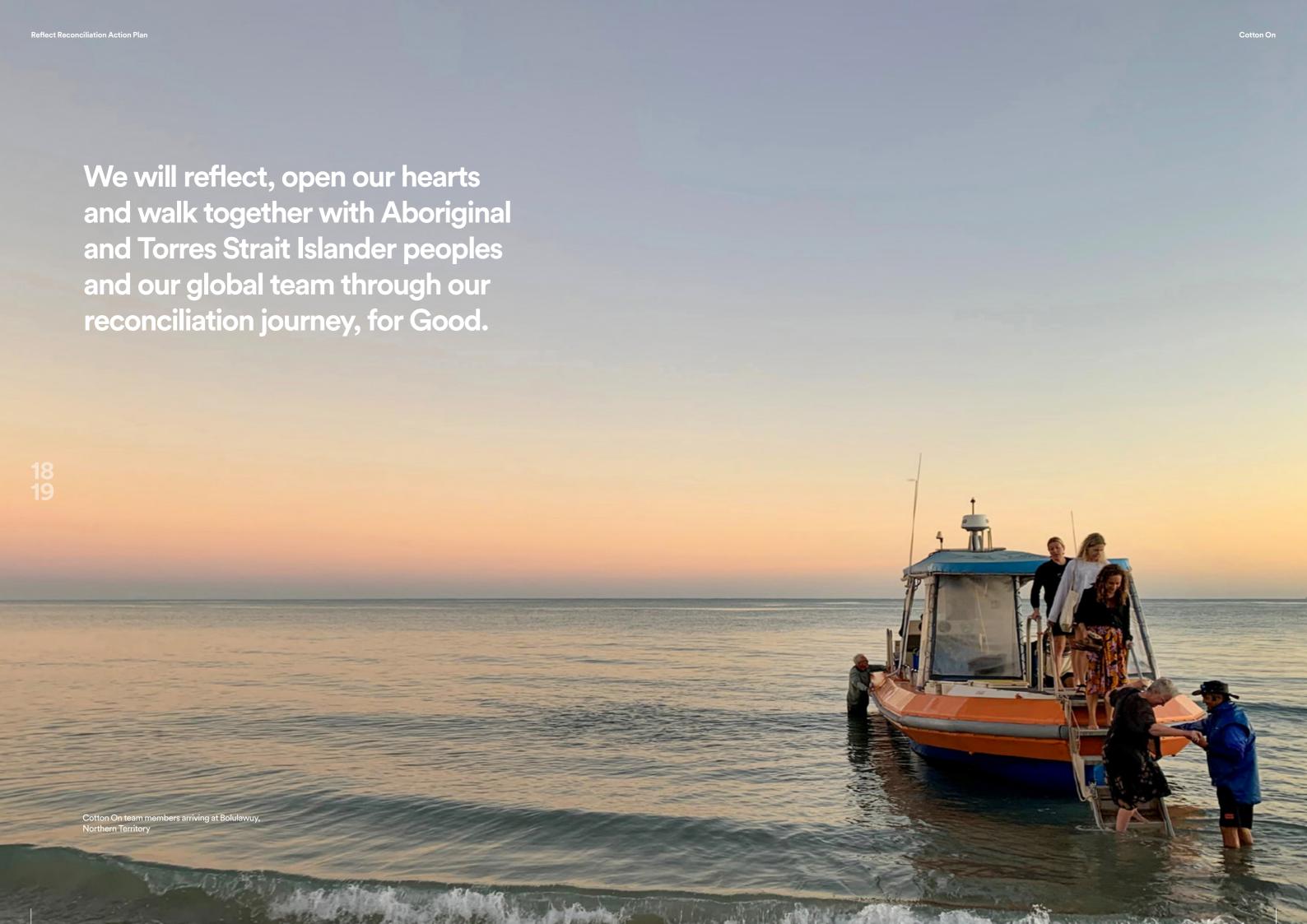
We know we must listen, learn and come together with a genuine desire to create a future that supports cultural safety, diversity and inclusion. For us, it's all about building a culture of belonging and self-expression where everyone has a voice and every voice is heard.

We will celebrate First Nations peoples, including their continuous survival on their unceded lands – the same lands where our business was born.

We will reflect, open our hearts and walk together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and our global team through our reconciliation journey, for Good. In doing so, we're reshaping our identity as we continue to fulfill our purpose to make a positive difference in people's lives.



Student receiving Cotton On Foundation back-to-school pack
Garrthalala, Northern Territory





Guided by our Ethical Framework, we're here to create meaningful change and channel our focus on the things that matter most. We call it The Good. It's our work in building sustainable futures and supporting and protecting our people and the planet. It's about celebrating differences while strengthening connections, because we know we're stronger together.

Reconciliation is an important part of our journey to enable positive change for current and future generations - for our people, our customers, and the communities we live and work in.

We will embed our Reconciliation Action Plan across our internal business and for our customers, building relationships and developing a shared understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' values, cultures and everyday challenges.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan will also further support the Cotton On Foundation to strengthen our partnerships with organisations owned and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

For us, it's a continuous journey where we strive for a more unified and equitable future for every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person.

To read more about the Good we do, click <u>here</u> to read our impact report, *The Good Report*.

# As we continue on our reconciliation journey, we will:

- Embed initiatives that support reconciliation across our business and for our customers, using our voice to enable positive change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Build new relationships with and create meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Educate and raise awareness through our RAP, turning intention into meaningful action for our team members, customers, and in the communities we live and work in.
- Continue building a culture of Belonging, where every team member can thrive through self-expression, cultural safety and be celebrated for who they are.
- Partner with and consult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as an integral part of our RAP development and process.
   We will do this through respectful and appropriate consultation within Cotton On and with our external partners.
- Be transparent about our RAP journey with our people and our customers as we enable long-term and meaningful change.
- Improve policies to recruit and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our business.





Students at Cotton On Foundation support school Garrthalala, Northern Territory

While this may be our first formal Reconciliation Action Plan, we've been working to embed reconciliation in our business for many years and we're proud of our journey so far.

### We have:

- Since 2013, the Cotton On Foundation has contributed \$2.1 million AUD to projects designed, owned and implemented with Aboriginalcontrolled organisations in North East Arnhem Land and, most recently, a local partnership on Wadawurrung Land. These projects have involved team members visiting partners On Country and participating in both-ways learning to build an understanding of First Nations histories, culture, language and how our organisation can be an ally.
- In 2019, the Aboriginal flag was raised at our Global Support Centre in North Geelong, Victoria with a ceremony led by proud Wadawurrung Woman Corrina Eccles.
- Cotton On Foundation has participated in three Cultural Education workshops with proud Wadawurrung Woman Corrina Eccles (late 2019, mid-2020 and 2022) through Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.
- Cotton On and Cotton On Kids hosted three Cultural Education workshops in March 2021, facilitated by Agency Projects with members of Strong Brother Strong Sister and House of Darwin. The sessions covered topics such as how we could improve opportunities for First Nations peoples, current barriers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples see in working for or with Cotton On, best practice in partnering with First Nations businesses and how we can support each other more.
- Since 2017, partnered with First Nations artists to design Guernseys for the Geelong Football Club and for the AFLW since 2018.
- Since 2021, our Supré brand has partnered with Stars Foundation, committing \$500,000 to support 200 education places for Indigenous girls and young women in Stars Foundation in-school mentoring programs in the Northern Territory.

# **First Nations Partnerships**

Investing in meaningful partnerships that build strong, resilient and equitable communities is another way we can empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our current partnerships include:

- Northern Territory partnership with Yirrkala and Homelands communities since 2013, including The Mulka Project, which runs creative arts and music workshops for young people.
- Learning on Country Galtha Rom Workshops twice a year, through a partnership with Dhimurru Aboriginal Corporation since 2016.
- Community-Based Aboriginal Teacher Education (C-BATE) program, a \$1 million AUD, three-year partnership with Yirrkala School and Laynhapuy Homelands School since 2020.
- Wellbeing workshops through Yirrkala School each school term.
- Early career mentoring and leadership pathways program with Djalkiri Foundation since 2021.
- Community partnership with Strong Brother Strong Sister on Wadawurrung Country, Victoria (Geelong, Surf Coast and Greater Melbourne) to support young people with youth mental health services, Koorie Youth Group, mentoring and workforce programs.



Wadawurrung Country

North Geelong, Victoria

### **Internal Activities and Brand Activations**

Supporting advocates for change across our entire organisation is critical to raising awareness about reconciliation with our internal team and our customers.

- NAIDOC Week celebrations including First Nations-led campaigns, storytelling, retail engagement and celebrating Cotton On Foundation partnerships.
- Cotton On Foundation has handed over their social media channels during NAIDOC Week and other significant times to First Nations individuals, providing a platform for storytelling from their perspectives.
- Internal cultural awareness sessions with proud Adnyamathanha
   Woman Marsha Uppill, who is the co-founder of Arranyinha Pty Ltd and reconciliation advisor to Cotton On.
- Developed a 365-engagement activity plan at our Global Support Centre, inviting members of First Nations communities to speak about their life, culture and experiences as a First Nations person, with a lens on what is most critical in the reconciliation process. The aim of this is to ensure our RAP is reflecting meaningful and everyday change.
- Brand leadership team trips to Yirrkala in the Northern Territory to build on cultural awareness and future partnerships.
- Cotton On worked with Yirrkala band King Stingray, developing an apparel collection which raises funds for the band's recordings and supports their efforts in growing their fan base and reach.
- Cotton On's commitment to a RAP announced in 2021.
- The Cotton On Group quarterly team 'mingles' and other on-campus speeches now include an Acknowledgement of Country.
- Cotton On added an Acknowledgement of Country on the shop website, corporate website and internal intranet prior to NAIDOC Week 2021.
- Brand participation in Indigenous Collaboration Workshops with First Nations designers and mentors, to help guide potential product partnership conversations and the cultural learning journey (commenced December 2020).
- Cotton On Foundation has changed its email signatures to include an Acknowledgement of Country.
- Cotton On Foundation has acknowledged and circulated information to our team during National Reconciliation Week since 2019.
- Cotton On hosted Yolngu Elder Djalinda Yunupingu during NAIDOC Week 2018 at our Global Support Centre, with several intimate talks with our team members which were very well received.



Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

# Our Reconciliation Action Plan

NAIDOC Week at Cotton On Global Support Centre Wadawurrung Country North Geelong, Victoria

# Relationships

### Action

Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.

### **Deliverables**

- Evolve our current network of First Nations stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence as per our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnership Action Plan.
- Continue to engage with First Nations stakeholders and organisations to identify how we form culturally safe and productive partnerships.
- Capture what it means to be a great partner with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.

Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).

- Research appropriate ways to acknowledge NRW throughout our operations.
- Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our team members including context.
- Encourage and support team members and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.
- Acknowledge NRW through activity decided on from research.
- RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.

Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.

- Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all team members.
- Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to our partners and our customers through *The Good Report*.
- Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with, connecting with a new RAP organisation every six months that we can collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.

Promote positive race relations through antidiscrimination strategies.

- Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.
- Continue to evolve best practice in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination as part of our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion strategy of Belonging.

Timeline	Responsibility
November 2022	RAP Working Group Chairperson
February 2023	First Nations Partnerships Lead
September 2022	First Nations Partnerships Lead
March 2023	General Manager Communications, Workplace & Wellness
May 2023	General Manager Communications, Workplace & Wellness
May 2023	General Manager Communications, Workplace & Wellness
May 2023	General Manager Communications, Workplace & Wellness
May 2023	RAP Working Group Chairperson
September 2022	General Manager Communications, Workplace & Wellness
November 2022	General Manager Communications, Workplace & Wellness
March 2023	RAP Working Group Chairperson
March 2023	General Manager People & Performance

General Manager
People & Performance

April 2023



### Action

Increase understanding, value and recognition of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.

### **Deliverables**

- Develop a business case and strategy for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.
- Formalise the plan in the Group Communications calendar.
- Build awareness through the amplification of experiences, Acknowledgement of Country, cultural events, education, storytelling and our Group partnerships.
- Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation as part of our Belonging learning framework.

Demonstrate respect to First Nations people by observing cultural protocols.

- Capture an understanding of the Traditional Owners of the Country on which our Global Support Centre, Avalon Distribution Centre and Chadstone Supre Office are located.
- Increase team members' understanding by developing and promoting Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols for use at all events and in email signatures.
- Consider updating existing Acknowledgement of Country through consultation and formalise within our operating rhythm.

Build respect for First Nations cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.

- Educate and celebrate with all our team members globally about the meaning and importance of NAIDOC Week.
- Run our own events and communicate external events to our team members around NAIDOC Week.
- RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.

Timeline	Responsibility
November 2022	General Manager
	People & Performance
December 2022	General Manager Communications,
	Workplace & Wellness
March 2023	General Manager Communications,
	Workplace & Wellness
March 2023	General Manager
	People & Performance
September 2022	First Nations Partnerships Lead
February 2023	General Manager Communications, Workplace & Wellness
February 2023	General Manager Communications, Workplace & Wellness
July 2023	General Manager Communications,
	Workplace & Wellness
July 2023	General Manager Communications, Workplace & Wellness
	DADW 11 0 01 1

**RAP Working Group Chairperson** 

July 2023



# **Opportunities**

### Action

Improve employment outcomes by increasing First Nations recruitment, retention and professional development.

### **Deliverables**

- Develop a culturally appropriate engagement, selection and recruitment strategy.
- Engage with current First Nations team members to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.
- Create a culturally safe way to capture First Nations team members' data in You Hub, our people data management system, as part of our diversity data collection. To date, 38 team members have identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Increase First Nations supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

- Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses and create a document listing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses for teams to refer to as needs arise.
- Investigate Supply Nation membership and consider whether suitable for our business.
- Apply a Cotton On Group approach of leveraging our brands and our reach to showcase First Nations artists and creators through product, campaigns, partnerships, design, employment and training programs.

Investigate opportunities to increase Cotton On Foundation's work with First Nations communities.

 Continue to develop our Cotton On Foundation work and extend our reach to deliver more opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through our focuses on education, mental health and the environment.

Responsibility
General Manager People & Performance
General Manager People & Performance
General Manager People & Performance
General Manager Risk & Sustainability
General Manager Risk & Sustainability
Head of Product Licensing

General Manager

Cotton On Foundation

April 2023



# Governance

### Action

Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.

Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.

Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.

Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.

### Deliverables

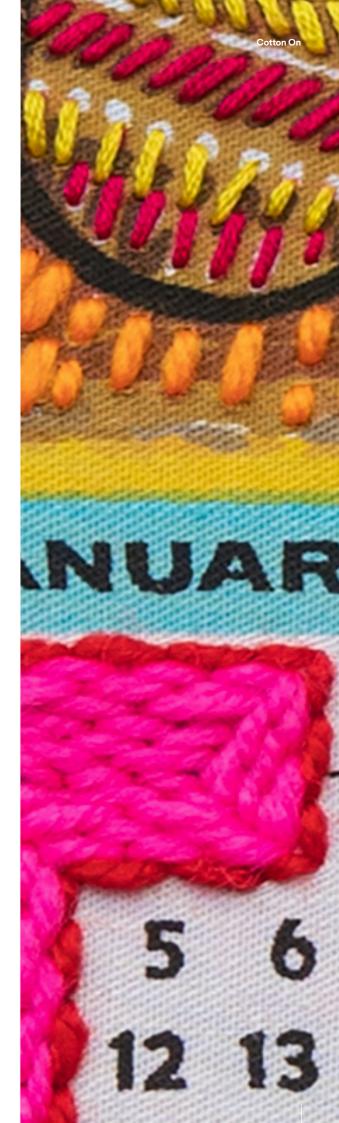
- Define resource needs for RAP implementation.
- Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG including objective, roles and responsibilities.
- Engage team member/s who identify as First Nations to be on the RWG and help advise on an ongoing basis.
- · Maintain First Nations representation on the RWG.
- Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.
- Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.
- Engage the Board and General Manager Leadership team in the delivery of RAP commitments.
- Incorporate into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships Action Plan continual consultation with external stakeholders such as Strong Brother Strong Sister.
- RAP Working Group Chairperson to connect regularly with RWG to track, measure and report on RAP commitments ready to include in The Good Report in November.
- Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.
- Incorporate RAP updates into General Managers' Conference to ensure all our leaders are across the RAP and are being champions of change.
- Report to Board regularly on progress, along with an outline of support needed to cascade through the business.
- Publish updates in the annual Good Report.

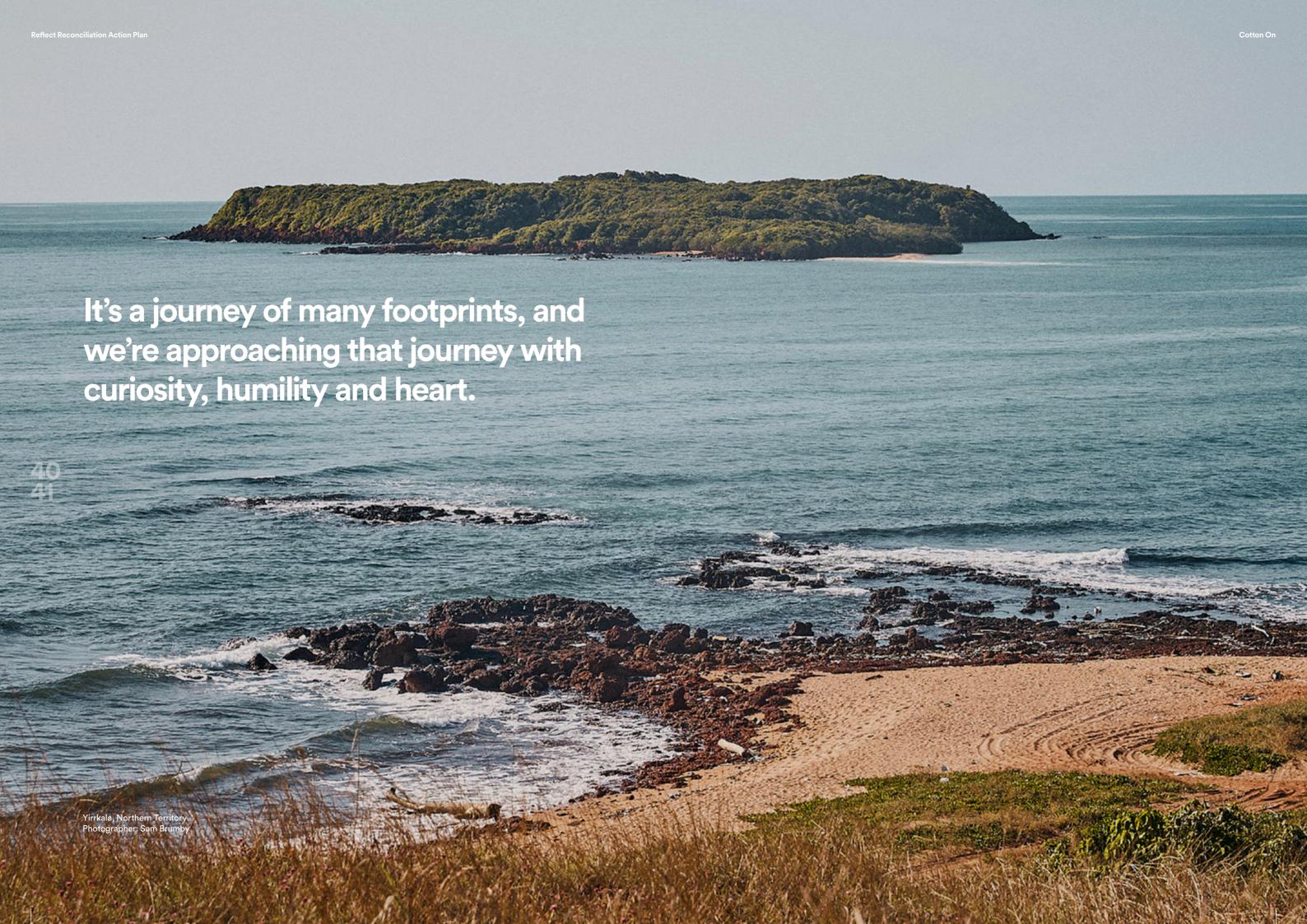
 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.

Timeline	Responsibility
September 2022	RAP Working Group Chairperson
September 2022	RAP Working Group Chairperson
October 2022	RAP Working Group Chairperson
October 2022	RAP Working Group Chairperson
August 2023	RAP Working Group Chairperson
October 2022	General Manager Risk & Sustainability
August 2023	RAP Working Group Chairperson
September 2022	General Manager Cotton On Foundation
November 2022	RAP Working Group Chairperson
September 2023	RAP Working Group Chairperson
February 2023	RAP Working Group Chairperson
September 2022	RAP Working Group Chairperson
November 2022	General Manager Communications, Workplace and Wellness

**RAP Working Group Chairperson** 

June 2023





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