



More than 100 Indigenous contributors created Australia's first Indigenous-led guidelines – Our Knowledge Our Way – on how to best strengthen and share Indigenous knowledge in land and sea management. Twenty-three best-practice case studies identify ways partners can support knowledge practice through strong partnership agreements, support for cultural governance arrangements, and protocols.

### **Indigenous knowledge of land and sea**

**management**, based on millennia of caring for Country, is helping to rejuvenate Australian environments. Almost half of Australia's protected areas are Indigenous-managed and cultural burns are proving vital across the continent in the face of climate change.

But there is a history of theft and misappropriation of Indigenous knowledge, and of people with good intentions causing problems from the perspective of their Indigenous partners.

The Our Knowledge Our Way in caring for Country guidelines can help! They are:

- the first Indigenous-led guidelines on strengthening and sharing knowledge for land and sea management
- created by more than 100 Indigenous contributors including through 23 case studies
- rapidly being adopted by government, industry, research and community partners as a key resource for current challenges
- produced by a partnership among Indigenous contributors, the Australian Government's National Environmental Science Program (NESP), CSIRO, the North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAILSMA), and the Australian Committee for IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature).

### **Policy-makers can move towards best practice**

in working with Indigenous knowledge for land and sea management by taking the following actions.

#### **1. strengthen Indigenous knowledge**

- support and resource art, language and cultural activities, including multi-generational trips onto Country

- recognise, support and resource Indigenous collective decision-making and cultural governance of knowledge
- promote a new story of Australia's history that includes how Indigenous management of and connections to Country have protected environments over millennia

#### **2. build strong partnerships**

- commit to ethical partnerships through agreements that are transparent, ensure mutual benefit, protect Indigenous cultural and intellectual property and meet other ethical standards
- invest enough time and care to ensure partnerships are based on long-term relationships of trust and respect
- support Indigenous people with time and resources to follow their own cultural protocols in making decisions about knowledge-sharing partnerships

#### **3. share and weave knowledge**

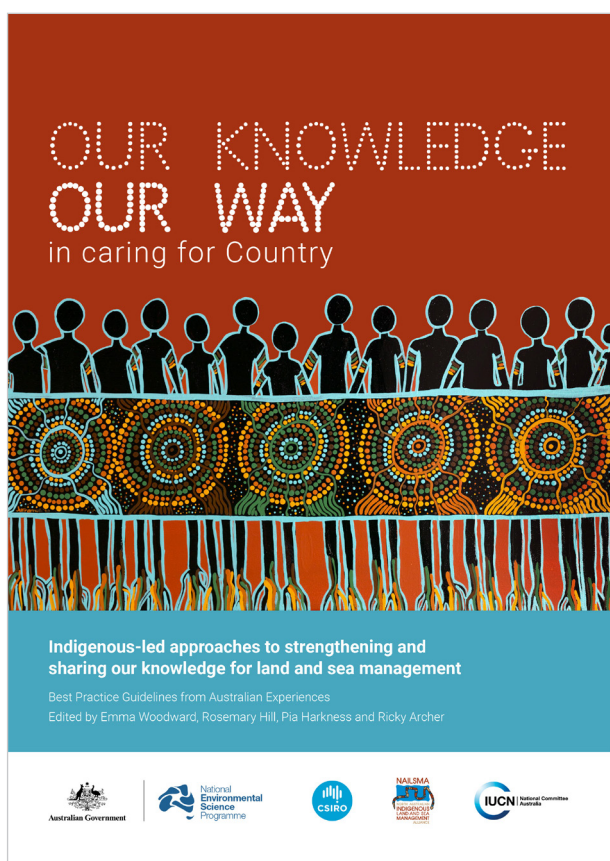
- bring Indigenous and scientific knowledge together through strong partnerships that recognise cultural governance and are based on relationships of trust and respect
- give key steps that can assist weaving knowledge: prepare, communicate, discuss, bring together and apply
- co-create tools that are highly visual and tactile, such as 3D maps and seasonal calendars
- make sure that publications, videos and other material from knowledge-sharing are returned to communities, and provide any necessary training for their ongoing use

#### **4. support Indigenous networks for sharing knowledge**

- support peer-to-peer learning opportunities as Indigenous people learn best from one another
- support pan-regional, pan-national and international Indigenous networks for sharing of land and sea knowledge to improve environmental management.



The launch webinar for the guidelines reached 1,100 people. In this screenshot from the launch webinar, Louisa Warren, CSIRO's Executive Manager, Office of Indigenous Engagement, welcomes people to the launch.



Front cover artwork: Sharing the knowledge for caring for our Land © Emma Burchill, 2020.

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## Further information

Project leaders Ro Hill (CSIRO) and Ricky Archer (NAILSMA), along with Emma Woodward and Pia Harkness from CSIRO, edited Our Knowledge Our Way.

100+ Indigenous authors contributed 23 case studies and led the 5 chapters.

The Our Knowledge Our Way guidelines and summary are available from the project webpage at [nespnorthern.edu.au/projects/nesp/knowledge-brokering-indigenous-land-management](https://nespnorthern.edu.au/projects/nesp/knowledge-brokering-indigenous-land-management).

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