



**Australian Government**  
**Department of the Environment**



**National  
Environmental  
Science  
Programme**

**National Environmental Science Programme**

# **Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategy Guidelines**



## NESP Indigenous Engagement Strategy Guidelines V.10

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**Cover image:** Top: Devil's Marbles south of Tennant Creek, Northern Territory. Bottom: Stratford Station property owner and the custodian of the original traditional owners looking at an old Indigenous fire site.

NESP Indigenous Engagement Strategy Guidelines v1.0  
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Australian Government Department of the Environment  
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[National Environmental Science Programme](#)

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## **Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Country**

The Department of the Environment acknowledges Australia's Traditional Owners and pays respect to the past and present Elders of the nation's Indigenous communities. The Department honours the deep spiritual, cultural and customary connections of Traditional Owners to the Australian landscape.

# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Drivers for Indigenous engagement</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Hub IEPS considerations</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Respect .....	4
Consultation .....	6
Engagement and participation .....	7
Adoption of Indigenous knowledge, intellectual property rights and closing the loop.....	8
Research outcomes to benefit Indigenous Australians.....	9
Appendix A: Contacts and resources.....	11
Appendix B: Aboriginal Land Councils .....	13

## Introduction

The *NESP Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategy Guidelines* (Guidelines) provide direction on the expectations of the Department of the Environment (Department) to ensure effective integration of Indigenous aspirations and outcomes in the National Environmental Science Programme (NESP). This document should be read in conjunction with the *NESP Programme Guidelines* and requirements of associated NESP funding agreements. It outlines principles to be considered and gives further referenced information for hubs to use when drafting individual Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategies (IEPS).

All research that is undertaken, irrespective of its nature, will have some sort of impact on Indigenous Australians. Indigenous engagement and participation is identified as a cross-cutting theme for all NESP hubs in the development of research priorities. The Indigenous engagement and participation strategies identified in the IEPS at programme inception, are expected to be realised in hub research plans and the broader reach of research activities across the life of NESP. Outcomes for Indigenous Australians form a key assessment component of the NESP Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy.

Indigenous people currently hold title over or manage 20 per cent of the land area of Australia, including 23 per cent of the National Reserve System (NRS)<sup>1</sup>, and the Department recognises and respects the knowledge Indigenous peoples have in managing Australia's land, fresh water and sea country and in conserving biodiversity and cultural heritage. We act on our respect by making Indigenous engagement a priority for our work. The Department's Indigenous Engagement Guidelines identify five pillars critical to successful Indigenous partnerships:

- Pillar 1: Building trust
- Pillar 2: Respectful interactions
- Pillar 3: Upholding rights
- Pillar 4: Mutual Understanding
- Pillar 5: Enduring Partnerships

Meaningful, thoughtful and appropriately resourced engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will result in benefits to Indigenous Australians and to Australian society. Genuine engagement, participation and communication strategies that are relevant to the culture and views of Indigenous Australians are essential to build strong, effective and mutually respectful relationships.

The Department recognises and values the experiences, perspectives and cultures of Indigenous Australians and supports Indigenous aspirations to maintain, protect and manage their culture, language, land and sea country and heritage. Engagement is an integral component of the service design and delivery processes and good engagement, is an ongoing process based on cultural understanding, relationships of trust and continuing, honest dialogue.

Everyone has a mutual responsibility to engage, consult, achieve and communicate shared outcomes.

## Drivers for Indigenous engagement

There are a number of international and national instruments and initiatives that direct engagement with Indigenous communities, and underpin Indigenous engagement and participation activity across the public and private sectors. They are also a sound basis and source of information for hub IEPS development.

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<sup>1</sup> Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2030 p.34

## International instruments

The [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (2007) (Declaration) is a key initiative that provides internationally recognised principles for the treatment of Indigenous peoples and to which Australia became a signatory in 2009. As an international instrument, the Declaration provides a blueprint for Indigenous peoples and governments around the world, based on the principles of self-determination and participation, to respect the rights and roles of Indigenous peoples within society. It is the instrument that contains the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of Indigenous peoples all over the world<sup>2</sup>. It explicitly provides for the rights of Indigenous peoples to participate in decision-making regarding matters which would affect them:

- **Article 18:** Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.
- **Article 25:** Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.
- **Article 19:** States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

## National Instruments

[Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage](#) is a key reform which commits the Commonwealth, States and Territories to unprecedented levels of investment to close the gap in Indigenous disadvantage. In 2008, the Council of Australian Governments agreed to six targets to address disadvantage faced by Indigenous Australians in life expectancy, child mortality, education and employment. The targets are set out in the [National Indigenous Reform Agreement](#) and establish a clear framework for reform activity. Closing the gap on Indigenous disadvantage is everybody's business.<sup>3</sup>

The Australian Government's [Indigenous Advancement Strategy](#) commenced on 1 July 2014 and provides direction on achieving results in the Government's key priority areas in Indigenous Affairs, including: Jobs, Land and Economy; Children and Schooling; Safety and Wellbeing; Culture and Capability; and Remote Australia Strategies.

The Australian Government, through the Auditor-General, is currently reviewing all its programmes against an [Whole of Government Indigenous Service Delivery Arrangements](#). The review is to ensure that all Commonwealth agencies:

- in delivering their programmes, cater for and respond to the needs of Indigenous people, and
- consistent with their broader responsibilities, reform their programmes and operations to maximise effort in achieving the Government priorities in Indigenous Affairs – getting children to school, adults into work, making communities safer, achieving the Closing the Gap targets and the Government's new engagement with Indigenous Australians.

Australia is a party to the [UN Convention on Biological Diversity](#) (CBD) and the Department of the Environment leads Australia's efforts to meet its obligations. The Convention provides an important

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<sup>2</sup> Mick Gooda, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner, [Human Rights Commission](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Council of Australian Governments](#) website, accessed 18 March 2015

framework for Australia's integration of natural resources and environment and biodiversity management policies. Article 8(j) commits Convention Parties to respect, preserve, maintain and promote the wider use of traditional knowledge with the approval and involvement of the users of such knowledge. Indigenous peoples and local communities have a direct interest and role in implementation of the Convention.

[Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2030](#), arising from the CBD, includes increased Indigenous engagement in biodiversity conservation and acknowledges and respects the culture, values, innovations, practices and knowledge of Indigenous peoples<sup>4</sup>. It will be reviewed during 2015.

Australia's [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#) (EPBC Act) recognises the role Indigenous people play in the conservation and sustainable use of Australia's natural environment and Indigenous heritage. The objectives of the EPBC Act include:

- to promote a co-operative approach to the protection and management of the environment involving governments, the community, landholders and Indigenous peoples,
- to recognise the role of Indigenous peoples in the conservation and ecologically sustainable use of Australia's biodiversity, and
- to promote the use of Indigenous peoples' traditional knowledge of biodiversity with the involvement of and in co-operation with, the owners of the knowledge.

Established under the EPBC Act, the [Indigenous Advisory Committee](#) (IAC) advises the Minister for the Environment (the Minister) on the operation of the EPBC Act, taking into account the significance of Indigenous peoples' knowledge of the management of land and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The IAC is an advisory and not a decision making body. It is not a consultative mechanism to seek the views of stakeholders and does not advocate on behalf of Indigenous communities, stakeholders or funded proponents, but does provide strategic advice at the request of the Minister. All Committee members are Indigenous Australians and are not appointed to represent particular regions or organisations. Members are ministerially appointed based on expertise in Indigenous land and sea management, conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and cultural heritage management.

The Australian Government requires that research is conducted to the highest ethical standards with respect for Indigenous priorities and values. The [Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies](#) were published by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) in 2000 and revised in 2011. The document guides research ethics, embodies the best standards of ethical research and human rights and provides principles on respect for the rights of Indigenous Australians, including their right to full and fair participation in any processes, projects and activities that impact on them. It identifies as essential that Indigenous people are full participants in research projects that concern them, share an understanding of the aims and methods of the research, and share the results of this work. At all stages, research with Indigenous peoples must be founded on a process of meaningful engagement and exchange between the researcher and Indigenous people. It also recognises there is no distinction between researchers and Indigenous people – Indigenous people are also researchers.

## Hub IEPS considerations

The following topics provide guidance for the development of hub IEPS' for NESP. The Department has engaged a consultant to assist with the development of a NESP Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy.

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<sup>4</sup> [Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2030](#), p18,

Specialist advice will be sought to integrate meaningful and measurable performance indicators for Indigenous engagement and participation in NESP research. Hubs are required to include robust and quantifiable indicators in their IEPS'.

Appropriate performance indicators would be information on which Indigenous groups or individuals were consulted including details on the mechanism for engagement, how their views and knowledge have been incorporated in research, identifying the co-benefit of that knowledge exchange, what employment opportunities have been realised and how research outcomes will benefit Indigenous people and communities.

Performance indicators (not limited to):

**Engagement:** Identifying Indigenous communities, individuals and organisations for the purposes of collaboration and engagement. Specifically undertaking that engagement in a manner applicable to communities and individuals, in a way that is respectful, understood by the target audience and that enables them to respond and interact.

**Views and knowledge:** Identifying where Indigenous views and knowledge are incorporated into research activity. This could be related to cultural or on-ground biophysical information gained through a citizen science approach, it may be data sourced through the I-Tracker or other Indigenous-specific tools or more formally contributed by Indigenous researchers.

**Co-benefits:** Identifying where Indigenous knowledge has contributed to research and how interactions with researchers has benefitted Indigenous communities. Our science benefits from the unique perspectives and knowledge of Indigenous Australians – it is more fully informed and as a result, more holistic leading to better outcomes and adoption. The Bureau of Meteorology's [Indigenous Weather Knowledge](#) project is a good example of this. Indigenous communities also benefit from their interaction with researchers. They gain information, are brought closer together through a shared purpose, are open to greater knowledge brokering roles and have the opportunity to build their knowledge capacity – a key element of Closing the Gap.

**Employment:** Identify the number of jobs created for Indigenous people in undertaking NESP research. This may be as researchers, contractors, consultants, knowledge brokers, post docs, graduates or any number of paid employment that supports NESP research.

**Research Outcomes:** Identify where research outcomes specifically benefit Indigenous Australians. Through participative opportunities, integration of Indigenous knowledge and collaboration with Indigenous people, research planning can be shaped to deliver outcomes back to those communities. An example would be where greater species specific knowledge might be required – not only will research outcomes intrinsically support species sustainability but provide additional food or cultural resources for Indigenous communities.

In line with best practice principles, hub IEPS' should be developed in collaboration and partnership with Indigenous stakeholders.

## Respect

Establishment of effective and respectful relationships are fundamental to achieving successful outcomes. Understanding and actioning Indigenous cultural protocols is a key principle of that respect.

Protocols for Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country in the case of large gatherings, should form part of the IEPs. These are respectful acknowledgements of Australia's traditional owners and further information can be found on the [Reconciliation Australia](#) website. Note that an appropriate fee is charged for a Welcome to Country and this should be factored into budgets accordingly.

Many organisations have developed a formal Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and these are also a good source of guidance and information.

Cultural sensitivity is key to successful Indigenous partnerships. Some points of clarification:

- **In Indigenous culture, an individual may not necessarily be able to speak on behalf of others.** It is important to identify Indigenous people with rights and interests in a place, especially Indigenous people authorised to speak for a place, taking into account that Indigenous people will have differing degrees of knowledge about heritage places and their importance.
- **Men and women's business is separate in Indigenous culture.** Both men and women with rights and interests in an area should be identified because men and women may be responsible for different places and values.
- **Identify interests of surrounding Indigenous communities.** Activities that affect water flows for example, will require consultation with upstream/downstream Indigenous communities.
- **Understand the rules.** It is critical to identify, understand and adhere to any processes or protocols that Indigenous people have established for consultation to ensure relationships are trusted and enduring.
- **New project = new consultation.** Consultation should be undertaken for each new project unless Traditional Owners and other interested indigenous communities agree that this is not necessary.
- **Be flexible and allow enough time.** The business of family, community and country is a priority for Indigenous communities and meetings may be cancelled with little or no notice. Flexibility and enough time to engage must be factored in.

Australia now has 50 declared Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs). These are actively managed by Indigenous owners and mark an important contribution to Australia's nation-wide network of parks and reserves. It is not only essential but a mark of respect to find out whose country you are entering and to engage appropriately (and early) as research is being developed. Be mindful that many Indigenous communities or lands require permits to enter to ensure people's privacy and these will need to be organised with land or community councils in advance. Many areas are restricted because of their cultural significance and permission will need to be sought to enter. The guiding principle to undertaking research in these culturally sensitive areas or engaging with any Indigenous community, is ASK FIRST.

#### **Indigenous Protected Areas Case Study: South Australia's Antara-Sandy Bore**

Covering more than 846,000 hectares of South Australia's arid *Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara* Lands, the Antara-Sandy Bore Indigenous Protected Area is dominated by the Everard Ranges to the north and sandplain country to the south. The area's traditional owners known as *Nguraritja* declared the Indigenous Protected Area in June 2011

Traditional ecological knowledge is the basis for the management of Antara-Sandy Bore. It is used alongside western scientific techniques to conserve the natural and cultural values of the landscape. *Nguraritja* are keen to explore economic opportunities that are consistent with sustainable land management, such as small-scale tourism ventures and the harvesting of feral animals.

[Read more about Antara-Sandy Bore Indigenous Protected Area](#)

Further IPA case studies for each state and territory can be found on the [Department's](#) website.

Excellent resources have been developed by the [Department of the Environment](#) and the [Queensland Government](#) on a range of Indigenous engagement topics including protocols for entering IPAs and restricted areas and engaging Indigenous communities in an urban setting.

## Consultation

The views and knowledge of Indigenous communities and people form a valuable contribution to all areas of research development. It is critical that problems and issues are jointly framed between researchers and Indigenous Australians so there is a common understanding of the challenges, so solutions are able to be appropriately tailored and so that research is holistically developed and enriched as a result. It will also enhance ownership of the outcomes and support increased on-ground adoption of research results.

Consultation with Indigenous people and communities must be conducted at the same time as other stakeholder engagement in order to inform research at appropriate phases.

Research with Indigenous people requires consultation, negotiation and consent and there must be an understanding of and mutual agreement to, the research to be undertaken. Indigenous communities must be well informed of the aims, methods, implications and potential outcomes so they are able to determine their interest in the project and provide appropriate contribution. The intended uses of collected data and resulting products that will be developed from this data should be clearly conveyed. Appropriate consideration should be given to IP and permission for data use.

There are many Indigenous representative organisations that can help facilitate broader community connections. It must be remembered that culturally, often one group or individual may not be able to represent the broader interests of Indigenous communities outside their traditional lands, so it is important to ensure all communities are consulted appropriately. The cost of consulting face-face with Indigenous communities should be factored into budgets where this is required, in addition to appropriate timelines for doing so.

A well informed understanding of the local Indigenous history and current issues in the area of proposed work will be an advantage in Indigenous consultation and engagement activities.

In conducting research hubs should ensure:

- Prior, free and informed consent is obtained in a culturally appropriate manner from all research participants and stakeholders before undertaking research with and about Indigenous peoples and communities. For further information see the AIATSIS guidelines above.
- All information on the intended and actual aims, processes, activities, uses and outcomes of the research should be clearly communicated to promote open and honest exchange between researchers and Indigenous peoples and communities.
- Participants should be made aware that consent given by them regarding their participation in the research may be withdrawn at any time during the life of the project.
- There will be ongoing consultation and negotiation with participants at research commencement, during the life of the programme and following its completion.

- Prior free and informed consent must be sought when required regarding publications (electronic, print or other forms), media and recording that result from or form part of the research.
- Clear information must be available to all participants about where and how to raise concerns or complaints about the conduct of the research.

Traditional owner groups may vary from place to place and represent a breadth of cultural practices, languages, histories and spiritual belief. As such, hubs may need to undertake multiple consultations and obtain consent or undertake agreements with multiple groups. The appointment of an interpreter, cultural broker or cultural mentor may be beneficial at the commencement of discussion as well as during the research process, and should be budgeted for accordingly.

A cultural broker can play a crucial role at the start of the research process to bridge and facilitate a smooth introduction and interaction between the researcher and Indigenous communities. They can provide a valuable service throughout the research process especially if there is need for negotiation or mediation. A cultural broker may be a person from the community or a professional person who has an understanding of the views, cultural values, beliefs and practices of both parties. The person will have contact with both the researchers and the participant group or community.

A cultural mentor is someone who can teach you about local customs and norms and is involved throughout the research process providing advice about views and cultural values, beliefs and practices and associated protocols which need to be followed. They will have a general understanding of the views, cultural values, beliefs and practices of the participants but might not have contact with Indigenous communities during research processes. A cultural mentor may be a person from the participating group or community or a professional/academic person and the role may overlap with that of cultural broker, with one person carrying out both tasks.

## **Engagement and participation**

The contribution of Indigenous people to research doesn't stop at consultation. A critical component is the deeper engagement and participation activities which help embed cultural perspectives, build Indigenous capacity and establish partnerships between researchers and Indigenous communities.

Opportunities for Indigenous engagement and participation should be available at all levels of hub governance, including membership of the hub Steering Committee. Wherever possible, existing external Indigenous governance structures, such as community steering groups or committees should participate to provide Indigenous perspectives and aspirations for inclusion in NESP hub project activities.

Consideration should be given to the mechanism for engagement – formal meeting situations may prove intimidating for Indigenous Australians and not conducive to their equitable participation. Where possible, Indigenous communities and people should be consulted on how they wish to engage with specified hub activities.

Indigenous people should also be considered for a role in the knowledge brokering process. The hub IEPS' and Communication and Knowledge Brokering Strategy should reflect this opportunity and could assist in identifying areas for further Indigenous involvement in hub research.

Effective communication is a key activity that underpins trusted relationships and good will. Communication material must be appropriate to the Indigenous audience being engaged – literacy levels, the level of understanding of scientific concepts and cultural appropriateness should be considered.

Indigenous participation as collaborators and partners in research activities is to be encouraged and rewarded. Direct involvement as collaborators and employees is often the most effective means of incorporating Indigenous perspectives in research activity in all programme phases. Hubs should seek the employment of Indigenous people in a range of research, technical, field support and administrative positions. Where possible, Indigenous employment should be undertaken through organisations that have appropriate institutional arrangements.

Hub IEPS should include the development of employment pathways that provide professional development opportunities and capacity building for Indigenous people including through post doc and graduate programmes.

To enhance capacity development, opportunity should be provided for Indigenous participants to represent and promote research work and findings at conferences and other fora, including joint authorship and public presentations. Similarly, provision should be made for researchers to increase their Indigenous cultural awareness and competence through formal and informal means.

## **Adoption of Indigenous knowledge, intellectual property rights and closing the loop**

The deep connection of Aboriginal Australians' with land and water and their enduring history with the landscape means they are able to bring unique and valuable perspectives and knowledge to enrich and holistically inform a range of scientific research.

Outstanding examples of the adoption and integration of traditional knowledge into research can be found in the Bureau of Meteorology's [Indigenous Weather Knowledge](#) project, a number of [Tropical Research and Coastal Knowledge](#) initiatives and work undertaken by the [North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance](#).

### **NERP Case Study: Cape York sea turtles helped by Indigenous management**

The beach, on Southern Wik homelands between the Kirke and Knox rivers, is managed by Aak Puul Ngantam (APN) Cape York, an organisation owned and run by the Traditional Owners. APN has been working with partners Balkanu Cape York Development Corporation, Cape York Sustainable Futures and CSIRO since 2010 to develop environmental management strategies to care for their country. Although intensive feral pig culls were undertaken in 2011 and 2012, turtle nest predation remained unchanged. Pigs were still eating almost all the eggs from the nests.

Two years of monitoring beaches allowed the APN rangers, Traditional Owners and scientists to review the effectiveness of the methods used in their management activities and in 2013 they decided to trial a 'chemical fence' of poisoned grain bait behind a selected nesting beach area. The chemical fence was applied in a very targeted and controlled way along the beach during the nesting period. Motion sensing cameras were set up on each bait station to monitor their use by pigs, while the nests were monitored by surveys on foot throughout the trial.

The new method resulted in a 90 per cent reduction in turtle nest predation in the ten kilometre trial area, which is good news for the species that were monitored.

The recently developed Nagoya Protocol gives some guidance on the intellectual property rights of Indigenous knowledge that is used in scientific research. The [Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation](#) (the Protocol) is a global agreement that implements access and benefit sharing obligations of the Convention on Biological

Diversity. It is a multilateral treaty with 193 parties including Australia and has the objectives of biological diversity conservation, the sustainable use of its components and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. The Australian Government is consulting with a range of stakeholders, including the research community and Indigenous people on the best way to implement the protocol in Australia.

The Protocol states:

Where scientific research and development on genetic resources uses Indigenous traditional knowledge, countries have to make sure that the knowledge was acquired in accordance with the rules of the country where those Indigenous people live. The knowledge should be accessed with the prior informed consent of the Indigenous community providing the knowledge, and on mutually agreed terms.

In developing the IEPS and undertaking research, hubs must ensure that:

- The contribution of resources, knowledge and access to other information made by Indigenous peoples is acknowledged by way of rights in the research outputs and/or access to research results.
- Research outcomes are made available to the Indigenous persons or community in a form that is useful and understandable.
- Indigenous co-researchers are recognised in publications to which their knowledge and endeavours have contributed.
- Researchers are aware of and commit to the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the utilisation of Indigenous knowledge.

Publicly funded research is bound by Australian laws governing intellectual property rights and these are discussed in the [NESP Data and Accessibility Guidelines](#). Australian intellectual property laws do not currently grant property rights to the custodians, guardians and stewards of knowledge. However hubs should commit to recognising Indigenous knowledge that contributes to intellectual property developed through NESP research to enable mutual benefit to Indigenous peoples, communities and researchers.

It is a key responsibility of the hub to communicate the outcomes and research results to participating Indigenous people and communities. This is not only respectful but will maintain good will and strong partnerships. Communication of scientific outcomes must be undertaken in a form that is acceptable to the intended audience and in a manner that engages them on their terms. It is also the responsibility of researchers to understand what the desirable reporting and communication products are for Indigenous communities and to become familiar with other research activities so new work can build on previous research and consultation/engagement activities can be coordinated.

## **Research outcomes to benefit Indigenous Australians**

There are a number of ways in which Indigenous communities and individuals can benefit through research undertakings.

An important aspect of Australia's *Closing the Gap* policy is building the capacity of Indigenous Australians. Trusted relationships and meaningful engagement that promotes knowledge exchange benefits the capabilities of all parties. Capacity building can occur in a number of ways from workshops to communicate the intended benefits of research for Indigenous communities, to participative opportunities that will provide a sense of ownership and enhance individual and community knowledge.

Indigenous people have a reasonable expectation that research involving them or their traditional land and sea country will provide benefit to them. Depending on the nature of the research, benefits might include payment for research work, capacity building, knowledge sharing, training, and the development of livelihoods, opportunities and joint publications.

This benefit also extends to real, on-ground outcomes for Indigenous Australians arising from publicly funded research. Building strong partnerships and facilitating positive knowledge exchange in the NESP implementation phase enables identification of areas and issues of social, economic, cultural and spiritual significance to Indigenous communities. Early and meaningful engagement removes the need for assumption and improves opportunity for appropriate consideration and integration of Indigenous benefit in research development.

## Appendix A: Contacts and resources

### In the Department

**Science Partnerships Section:** the team within the Department having carriage of the NESP.

Anthea Brecknell is responsible for NESP's Indigenous engagement and can be contacted for advice.

[Anthea.Brecknell@environment.gov.au](mailto:Anthea.Brecknell@environment.gov.au) Ph: 6274 1971

**Indigenous Advisory Committee:** is a statutory committee established in 2000 under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The role of the Committee is to provide advice, as requested by the Minister, to the Minister or Department of the Environment (the Department) on environment and heritage programmes, policy and consultation strategies, to ensure better access and engagement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The IAC can be contacted through the Department's NESP officers.

### Externally

**Aboriginal Water Initiative:** being undertaken by the NSW Office of Water, the AWI identifies key water-related environmental, social, cultural and economic priorities and opportunities for Aboriginal communities. It hosts a database of culturally significant sites and information.

**Ask First: A guide to respecting Indigenous heritage places and values:** this publication provides a practical guide for organisations working in the area of Indigenous heritage. Consultation and negotiation with Indigenous stakeholders is the best means of addressing Indigenous heritage issues and is the first and simplest step people need to take.

**Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre:** AILC provided accredited Indigenous leadership education programs in Indigenous Leadership, and non-accredited short courses in specific leadership skills and diversity mentoring.

**Conducting research with Indigenous people and communities:** whilst targeted at the justice system, this paper provides a good overview of principles, ethical conduct and good practice examples on involving Indigenous people in research.

**CSIRO Indigenous Engagement Strategy:** provides a framework for Indigenous engagement in the research context.

**Department of the Environment:** has developed a range of advice on cultural sensitivities and engaging with communities in IPAs and restricted areas.

**Facilitators' Guide to Indigenous Water Planning 2012:** developed by TRaCK, this resource although water focussed, provides some valuable insights into Indigenous consultation and engagement.

**Indigenous Biodiversity Management:** resources and project information from NERP.

**Kakadu National Park:** The Australian Government Department of the Environment is charged with the responsibility of developing and implementing national policy, programs and legislation to protect and conserve Australia's environment and heritage. Parks Australia is part of the federal environment portfolio

and supports the Director of National Parks who has responsibility under federal environment law for Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park.

**Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ):** is a Martu controlled organisation based in Newman that seeks to build strong, sustainable communities based on Martu culture and knowledge. KJ operates a range of programs based upon Martu culture and aspirations including the Martu Ranger program, the Caring for Country program, Return to Country trips, preservation of culture and heritage materials and cultural awareness training.

**[Kimberley to Cape:](#)** The Kimberley to Cape (KtC) initiative aims to safeguard the unique, multiple and globally important values of Northern Australia by supporting appropriate development and conservation. It supports development and conservation that enhances natural and cultural values, and strengthens communities, from the Kimberley to Cape York.

**[NERP Northern Australia Hub Indigenous Engagement Plan:](#)** the National Environmental Research Program Northern Australia Hub developed this plan to guide Hub policy, protocols, practice and internal performance measures as related to Indigenous engagement.

**[NAILSMA:](#)** North Australian Indigenous Land & Sea Management Alliance Ltd (NAILSMA) is an Indigenous led not-for-profit company operating across north Australia. They work to assist Indigenous people manage their country sustainably for future generations. Their focus is on large-scale and complex projects that combine science and research, Indigenous knowledge and practical support to achieve results that meet, cultural, environmental and economic benefits for Indigenous people.

**United Ngunnawal Elders Council (UNEC):** ACT based, the United Ngunnawal Elders Council (UNEC) is an Aboriginal body providing advice to the ACT Government in relation to heritage and connection to land matters for the Ngunnawal people. UNEC also provides advice to the ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body.

**Victorian Indigenous NRM Facilitator Network:** Richard McTernan, Indigenous Liaison officer (Richard.mcternan@necma.vic.gov.au)

**[Ways to improve Community Engagement:](#)** a report arising from the Indigenous Knowledge Forum suggesting ways to improve community engagement and adopt Indigenous knowledge.

## Appendix B: Aboriginal Land Councils<sup>5</sup>

Land Councils give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples a voice on issues affecting their lands, seas and communities. Some Land Councils operate as a prescribed body corporate for Native Title determinations and also progress Native Title claims on behalf of Traditional Owners.

### When should you contact Land Councils?

Land Councils are important organisations to engage with and can help put you in contact with key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and people who you may need to consult during programme or policy development. They may also be able to provide advice on land and water management policies and programmes, as many Land Councils have a role in running natural and cultural resource management programmes and providing policy advice.

Land Councils vary significantly across the country in terms of the work they do, their size and their links with Traditional Owners. As such, it is important to research the Land Council(s) in the area you are engaging in to determine if they are a suitable contact.

For more information about Land Councils, visit: <http://alc.org.au/>

A list is also provided below; this list is not exhaustive and it is best to check for relevant Land Councils in the area you are engaging in.

### Western Australia

South-West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council: <http://www.noongar.org.au>

Yamatji Marpla Aboriginal Corporation: <http://ymac.org.au>

Goldfields Land and Sea Council, covering land from Wiluna (on the edge of the Great Central Desert) to Esperance on Australia's southern coast: [www.glsc.com.au](http://www.glsc.com.au)

Kimberley Land Council: <http://klc.org.au/>

Ngaanyatjarra Council, covering communities in the east of Western Australia:  
<http://www.ngaanyatjarra.org.au/>

### Australian Capital Territory

United Ngunnawal Elders Council:  
[http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/atsia/committees/ngunnawal\\_issues](http://www.communityservices.act.gov.au/atsia/committees/ngunnawal_issues)

### Northern Territory

Central Land Council, covering the southern part of the mainland Northern Territory: [www.clc.org.au](http://www.clc.org.au)

Northern Land Council, covering the Top End, the northern part of the mainland Northern Territory:  
[www.nlc.org.au](http://www.nlc.org.au)

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<sup>5</sup> Information extracted from Department of the Environment Fact Sheet: Aboriginal Land Council

Tiwi Land Council, covering Bathurst and Melville Islands north of Darwin: [www.tiwilandcouncil.com](http://www.tiwilandcouncil.com)

Anindilyakwa Land Council, covering Groote Eylandt in the Gulf of Carpentaria: [www.anindilyakwa.com.au](http://www.anindilyakwa.com.au)

The four Land Councils in the Northern Territory are Australian Government statutory authorities.

## **Queensland**

North Queensland Aboriginal land Council: <https://www.nqlc.com.au/>

Torres Strait Regional Authority: <http://www.tsra.gov.au>

Cape York Land Council: [www.cylc.org.au](http://www.cylc.org.au)

## **New South Wales**

New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council: [www.alc.org.au](http://www.alc.org.au)

Sydney Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council: [www.metrolalc.org.au](http://www.metrolalc.org.au)

The New South Wales (NSW) Aboriginal Land Council, formed in 1982, is the peak representative Aboriginal body in NSW. It is responsible to statutory requirements and supports the administration of 119 local Land Councils. The NSW Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs) are autonomous bodies, governed by boards elected by local Aboriginal community members. They assist in community matters relating to managing claimed lands, cultural heritage protection, economic development, housing, legal issues, employment and other day-to-day matters involving Aboriginal people, in accordance with functions detailed under the *Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1982*.

## **Victoria**

Barengi Gadjin Land Council: [www.bglc.com.au](http://www.bglc.com.au)

## **Tasmania**

Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania: [Alct@intas.net.au](mailto:Alct@intas.net.au)

## **South Australia**

South Australian Native Title Services: <http://www.nativetitlesa.org>

Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara: <http://www.anangu.com.au>