



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 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 scientists work effectively with Indigenous partners. 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
- a key resource for scientists and Indigenous people who seek to develop knowledge-sharing activities
- 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).

Scientists can move towards best practice in developing Indigenous partnerships for knowledge-sharing by taking the following actions.

1. 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

2. establish Indigenous governance of the knowledge-sharing activity

- establish Indigenous steering groups as decision-making bodies to guide the partnership activities
- co-develop terms of reference for such groups and support them to develop principles and protocols e.g. for co-design, free prior and informed consent
- support Indigenous people with time and resources to follow cultural protocols in making decisions about knowledge-sharing in the partnerships

3. share and weave knowledge through five key steps

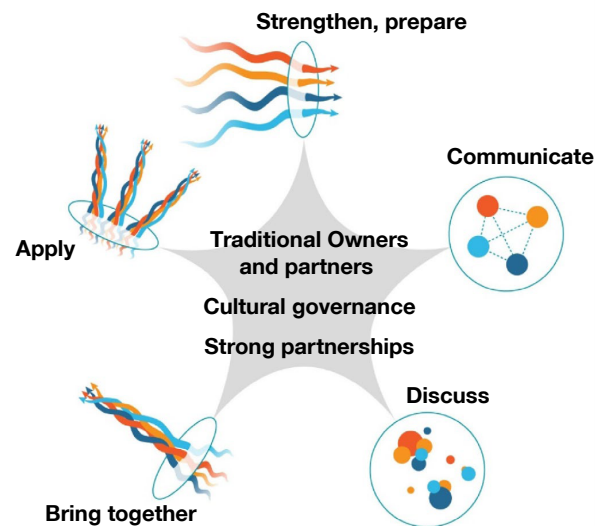
- *Strengthen and prepare* both Indigenous and scientific knowledge resources. Ensure Indigenous people have time, resources and a culturally safe space to prepare knowledge for sharing. Ensure scientists identify and prepare relevant, up-to-date information.
- *Communicate* through presenting knowledge in a form that can be understood by partners. This could involve co-creating tools that are highly visual and tactile, such as 3D maps and seasonal calendars.
- *Discuss* through bringing Indigenous peoples and partners together to talk about the ways their knowledges agree and are different.
- *Bring together* by producing a document, video, plan, performance or workshop that weaves Indigenous knowledge and science.

Make sure that publications, videos and other material from knowledge-sharing are returned to communities and provide any necessary training for their ongoing use.

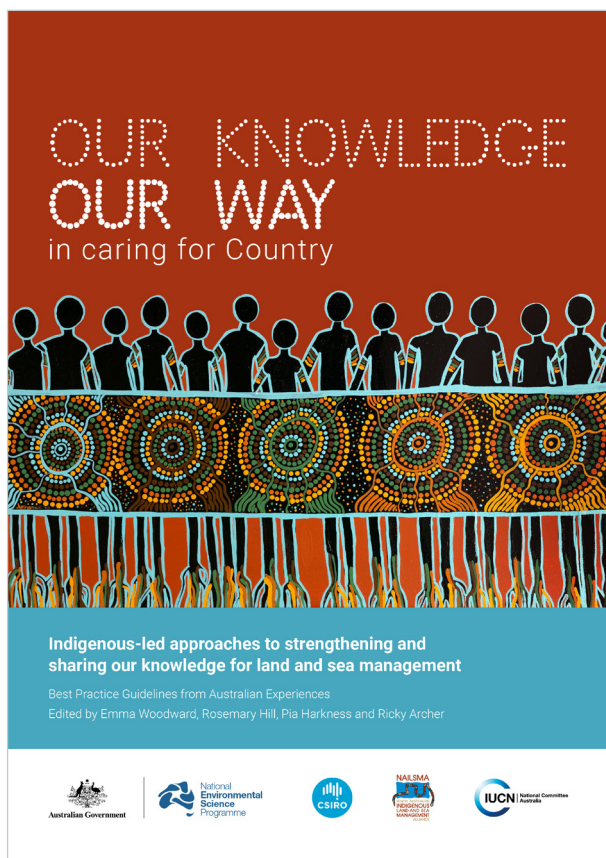
- Apply by using the new (partly) woven knowledge in caring for Country through new and improved policies and practices.

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.



Key steps that can help Traditional Owners and partners in sharing and weaving knowledge.



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.

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