



Australian Government



AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE  
OF MARINE SCIENCE

# Traditional Owner Engagement and connection to Sea Country

**David Flagg**

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians and first Nations People of who's country we are meeting on today. The **Kaurna people** and pay our respects to their Country, Elders past, present and future.

I honour their continuing culture, knowledge, beliefs and spiritual connection to Country.

I also recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which we work, and as Australia's first scientists.

**Through collaboration and two-way knowledge sharing, we can learn from each other.**

# MY STORY



**Born 1984 –  
Geelong Victoria**

**Completed  
Schooling 2002**

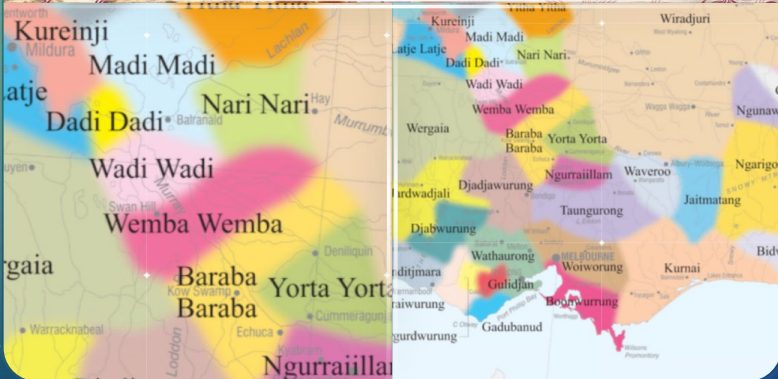
**Ford Motor  
Company 2003 -  
2007**

**Parks Victoria –  
Albert Parks,  
Melbourne 2007 -  
2009**

**Parks Victoria –  
You Yangs Regional  
Park 2009 - 2017**

**Parks Victoria –  
Aboriginal Heritage  
Coordinator 2017 -  
2023**

**AIMS Indigenous  
Partnerships  
Coordinator –  
September 2023**



# TOPIC 1:



## Traditional Owner engagement (talking to the right people)



Undertake a desktop on the region you are planning to work and who the Traditional Owners are. There might be more than one

Reach out via email or phone call to introduce yourself and the planned works. Ask about timeframes for meeting

During the meeting it is important you list all the work you want to do, ask TO's if they have done any similar works, ask if they have time to be involved and how they would like to be included (there is always some way to be involved).

Ensure you have the correct people in the room, people that can make decisions or are knowledge holders.

Before leaving the meeting ensure all parties understand what the plan is (follow up with an email).

Provide updates throughout the project and once complete follow up with a community newsletter or meeting.



Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies

2012



AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research

2016

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

BARDI JAWI INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN 2013-2023

Land and Sea Management Strategy for Torres Strait 2016-2036

YIRRGANYDJI KULPIL-WU MAMINGAL

YIRRGANYDJI SEA COUNTRY PLAN

### 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.”

Anindilyakwa Indigenous Protected Area Plan of Management 2016

Cirruwaa Seelon Indigenous Protected Area Management Plan 2013-2023

Northern Territory Marine Science

End-user Knowledge Needs Analysis

Djalk Healthy Country Plan 2016-2023

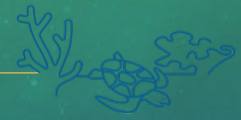
Traditional Owners of the Great Barrier Reef: The Next Generation of Reef 2050 Actions  
Final Report From The Reef 2050 Traditional Owner Aspirations Project  
December 2018

GUNDITJARA NYAMAT MIRRORING PLAN 2023-2033



Some ways to help identify the correct Aboriginal groups

- AIATSIS map – helpful to identify TO groups however it’s an old map and spelling of groups might have changed. - [Map of Indigenous Australia | AIATSIS corporate website](#)
- Native title web site – useful for most states but not all TO’s have native title - [Maps](#)
- Land council website – NSW - [Land Council - NSW Aboriginal Land Council](#)
- First Peoples state relations web site – Victoria - [First Peoples - State Relations | firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au](#)
- Northern Land Council web site – NT - [Northern Land Council NLC | Our Land, Our Sea, Our Life](#)
- South Australian Native Title Service – South Australia - [PBCs in SA - SA Native Title](#)
- Native Land Digital – Interactive map of Australia - [Native-Land.ca | Our home on native land](#)



Traditional Knowledge sharing

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Western science knowledge sharing





- Traditional teaching
- V
- Western teaching





- Taking time to talk





# TOPIC 2:

## Connection to Sea Country

Aboriginal people have been around for 65+ thousands years and have seen the landscape change as seas have risen. The image to the left is the Australian land mass today and the outer yellow area is where the land mass from 20 thousand years ago.

There are many groups that still have a strong connection to the sea floor or areas even though it might be covered by water. TO's might have other connections to animals and other sea life.

•For example – A lot of Tasmanian Aboriginal people's have a connection to the land bridge that the old people walked and joined Tas – Vic. During a desktop study I undertook for the NESP offshore wind farms planned around Australia. We looked into the Tasmanian region and during the research we found records talking about the land bridge.





Gunditjmara people have a strong connection to eels that travel from southwest Victoria to the Fiji region.



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AIMS: Australia's tropical marine research agency.

# Question Time

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