



Threatened
Species
Recovery
Hub

National Environmental Science Programme



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Indigenous Engagement & Participation Strategy

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Threatened Species Recovery Hub

Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategy

Version 2.0

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Purpose of the Strategy

The overall goal of the Threatened Species Recovery (TSR) Hub's Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategy (IEPS) is to enable a meaningful two-way partnership to be developed between the NESP TSR Hub and Indigenous Australians that recognises the interests, rights and knowledge of Indigenous Australians in undertaking the Hub's research agenda.

This Strategy outlines the overarching principles for the Hub's IEP; the expected behaviours of Hub researchers; the processes or activities to be implemented to achieve the partnership between researchers and Indigenous communities; and how the Hub will monitor progress against these activities. This Strategy is designed to guide all TSR Hub personnel and to provide the Department of Environment, Indigenous peoples, and external stakeholders with transparency as to how the Hub proposes to interact with, and integrate Indigenous perspectives into the research agenda.

This Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategy has been developed through a number of workshops, interactions and reviews with a range of Hub and NESP-related personnel and Indigenous people. The Strategy will be reviewed annually by the Indigenous Reference Group and be viewed as a "living" document and updated concurrently with the Hub's annual Research Plans.

Introduction

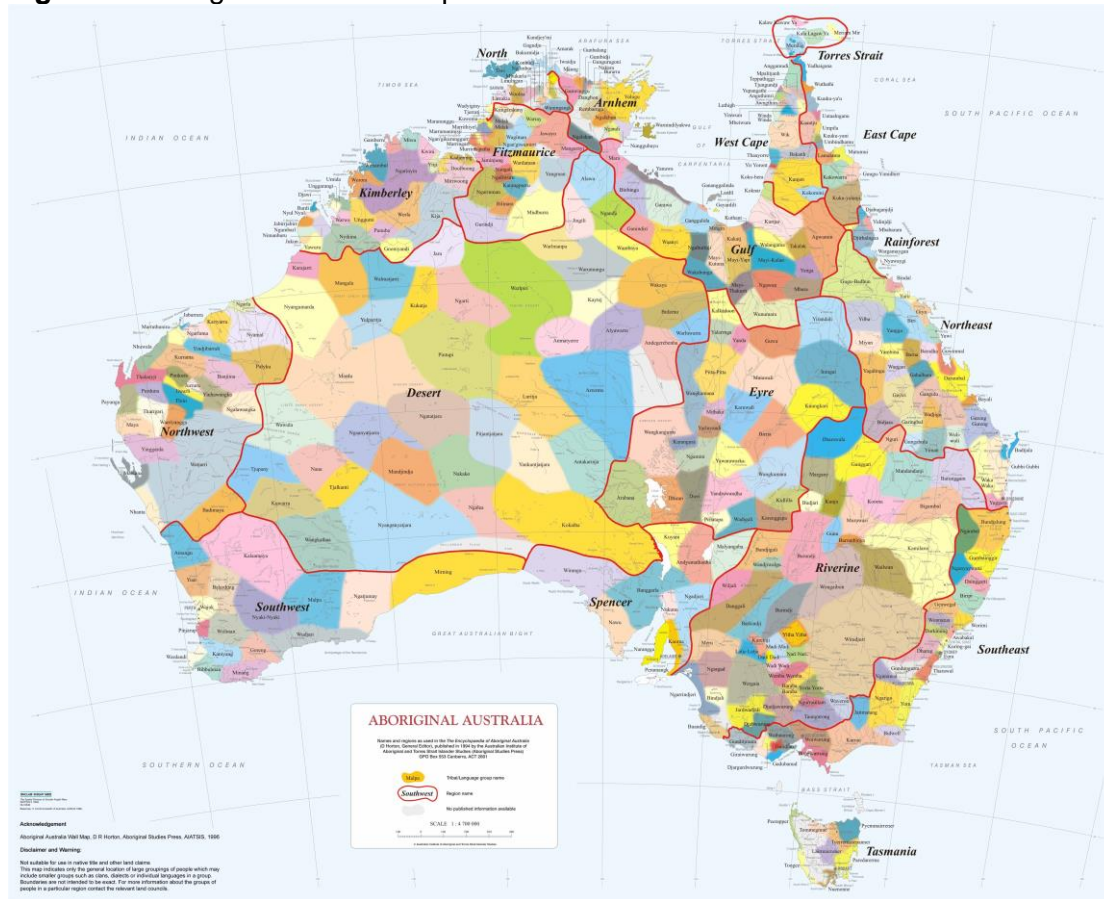
Indigenous Australians have a kinship and connection to country, which shapes land and species management practice. Indigenous peoples play a significant role in biodiversity conservation in Australia and are motivated to pursue on-country enterprises that can marry conservation with livelihood objectives. They hold title over a large and increasing proportion of Australia's land and waters, including areas important to endangered and vulnerable species.

Australia's threatened species strategy rightly acknowledges that Indigenous people have very significant interests in, knowledge of, and responsibilities for Australia's natural environment, including threatened species recovery and protection. The Australian Government's strategy outlines an evidence-based approach to guide on-ground action for threatened species conservation. Indigenous people are critical partners in this effort because many Indigenous communities own much of the land on which threatened species exist, have knowledge and connections to country that can inform context-appropriate and effective on-ground action and are motivated to engage in research, monitoring, management needed to meet Australia's threatened species strategy targets.

The Threatened Species Recovery Hub (TSR Hub) of the National Environmental Science Programme (NESP) acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. The TSR research hub aims to provide an evidence-base that will optimise the effectiveness of on-ground actions. This aim will be enhanced by working collaboratively with a range of partners, including local Indigenous communities.

This document charts the strategy that will guide the formation of effective partnerships between the TSR Hub and Indigenous communities.

Figure 1: Aboriginal Australia Map



(Source: David R Horton (creator), © Aboriginal Studies Press, AIATSIS, and Auslig/Sinclair, Knight, Merz, 1996)

Objectives

The objectives of the Threatened Species Recovery Hub's Indigenous Engagement and Participation Strategy are to:

1. TSR Hub research is conducted according to the highest ethical standards and respects Indigenous values.
2. TSR Hub research is relevant and of benefit to Indigenous communities and organisations.
3. Shape the development of TSR Hub research projects so that Indigenous culture, intellectual property, traditional knowledge, priorities and values are respected and valued.
4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery.
5. Effectively communicate research results and share knowledge with Indigenous people

As guidance to project leaders as to the expected level of involvement in planning and implementing against the Hub's Indigenous engagement and participation strategy, the Hub has followed the lead of the TWQ Hub in developing a set of categories aimed at assisting projects to assess the expectations in terms of Indigenous engagement and involvement.

The TSR Hub has three categories of involvement with Indigenous engagement and participation for the research projects:

1. **Tier One:** these research projects are anticipated to undertake direct collaboration with an Indigenous community, organisation or individuals. These projects are expected to develop project-level indigenous engagement and participation plans to identify how they will meet the IEP objectives outlined above.
2. **Tier Two:** these research projects have a field component but do not have a direct collaboration with an Indigenous community, organisation or individual. They will be required to develop fieldwork plans reflecting any Indigenous engagement at this level, and to review the objectives and determine how their project meets the objectives and key performance indicators.
3. **Tier Three:** these are research projects that are desktop or laboratory based, and do not have a direct collaboration with an Indigenous community, organisation or individual. Whilst there will be no direct links, the projects will be expected to work with the Communication and Engagement Coordinator and the Indigenous Liaison Officer, to ensure the information is packaged and communicated to Indigenous audiences.

Implementation of the Objectives

1. TSR Hub research is conducted according to the highest ethical standards and respects Indigenous values

All projects conducted under the TSR Hub will be required to adhere to the highest ethical standards. Researchers must respect the Intellectual Property rights of Indigenous peoples in relation to knowledge, ideas, cultural expressions and cultural materials. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies 2012* embodies the best standards of ethical research and human rights, and includes guidance on intellectual property laws, and rights in traditional knowledge and cultural expressions, and the establishment of agreements and protocols between Indigenous people and researchers.

The Guidelines comprise the following 14 principles, which the TSR Hub will incorporate into the research standards.

Table 1: Principles of ethical research

<i>Rights, respect and recognition</i>	
Principle 1	Recognition of the diversity and uniqueness of peoples, as well as of individuals, is essential.
Principle 2	The rights of Indigenous peoples to self-determination must be recognised.
Principle 3	The rights of Indigenous peoples to their intangible heritage must be recognised.
Principle 4	Rights in the traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions of Indigenous peoples must be respected, protected and maintained.
Principle 5	Indigenous knowledge, practices and innovations must be respected, protected and maintained.
<i>Negotiation, consultation, agreement and mutual understanding</i>	
Principle 6	Consultation, negotiation and free, prior and informed consent are the foundations for research with or about Indigenous peoples.
Principle 7	Responsibility for consultation and negotiation is ongoing.
Principle 8	Consultation and negotiation should achieve mutual understanding about the proposed research.

Principle 9	Negotiation should result in a formal agreement for the conduct of a research project.
Participation, collaboration and partnership	
Principle 10	Indigenous people have the right to full participation appropriate to their skills and experiences in research projects and processes.
Benefits, outcomes and giving back	
Principle 11	Indigenous people involved in research, or who may be affected by research, should benefit from, and not be disadvantaged by, the research project.
Principle 12	Research outcomes should include specific results that respond to the needs and interests of Indigenous people.
Managing research: use, storage and access	
Principle 13	Plans should be agreed for managing use of, and access to, research results.
Reporting and compliance	
Principle 14	Research projects should include appropriate mechanisms and procedures for reporting on ethical aspects of the research and complying with these guidelines.

(Source: *Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies* (AIATSIS 2012))

2. TSR Hub research is relevant and of benefit to Indigenous communities and organisations

The TSR Hub recognises the value of Indigenous participation in the research projects, particularly in relation to planning and on-ground management components of threatened species research. Opportunities for Indigenous engagement will be available at all levels of Hub governance and operations, and will include not only membership on the Hub Steering Committee and the Indigenous Reference Group, but also participation in those projects which involve an IEP component. Wherever possible, existing Indigenous governance structures will be engaged to provide guidance to TSR Hub activities.

The TSR Hub will encourage and support Indigenous engagement and participation in the TSR Hub through the following mechanisms:

- Participation in the planning and implementation of research projects which involve Indigenous knowledge.
- Participation in knowledge exchanges and stakeholder events and opportunities.
- Participation in individual project steering committees.
- Provision of scholarships (e.g Honours, Masters, PhD, Postdoctoral Fellows) to undertake research with the project teams.
- Provision of employment on project teams.

3. Shape the development of TSR Hub research projects so that Indigenous culture, intellectual property, traditional knowledge, priorities and values are respected and valued

The Indigenous Liaison Officer will be responsible for guiding researchers in their interactions with Indigenous communities, and to increase Indigenous cultural awareness, cultural induction and cultural exchange processes as appropriate for each project.

The Hub will ensure all Hub personnel adhere to the following standards and are provided with the support necessary to undertake implementation:

- a. **Research Ethics:** each researcher will comply with their home institute's research ethics codes of conduct and will be responsible for ensuring they have Human Ethics approval where appropriate, prior to commencing activities with Indigenous communities.
- b. **Cultural awareness:** The TSR Hub will ensure the Hub researchers obtain an understanding of local Indigenous history, language groups and culturally appropriate behaviour when meeting and working with the Indigenous communities. Each Hub researcher will be required to participate in appropriate cultural awareness training through either their own institution or through other forums as appropriate.
- c. **Indigenous culture and intellectual property:** the TSR Hub will be sensitive to Indigenous culture and intellectual property in the design, implementation and communication of projects. The Hub, in developing and implementing research projects, will undertake appropriate mechanisms to collate traditional knowledge and build this into the project design. Each project will be required to note requirements for how engagement and communication will be managed within the project and by the Hub level on a broader scale.
- d. **Participation:** the Hub is committed to encouraging Indigenous participation in both the planning and implementation of projects where this would be appropriate. The Hub has allocated funding towards community and Indigenous participation that can be accessed by projects as required.

4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery

A reasonable expectation for Indigenous Australians is that research involving them or their traditional land and sea will appropriately involve them, provide benefit to them, and wherever possible address issues of relevance to them. Increasing Indigenous engagement through partnership, employment and participation and promoting the two-way transfer of knowledge will lead to both increased opportunities for Indigenous peoples and improved outcomes for biodiversity. A mutual and cooperative approach to nature conservation and species protection is critical to success.

To nurture the involvement of Indigenous people the Hub will undertake the following:

- a. The TSR Hub will work collaboratively with other NESP Hubs to ensure a coordinated approach to the engagement and participation of Indigenous communities where projects and activities overlap.
- b. The TSR Hub will follow the Indigenous Research Protocols which are currently being developed following the recent Clean Air and Urban Landscapes (CAUL) Indigenous Research Protocols Workshop (8-9 November)¹.
- c. The Hub will employ an Indigenous liaison officer to provide advice and assist the research teams to build and maintain relationships with Indigenous communities and ensure the research and activities are mutually beneficial. The position will act as a liaison between the Indigenous communities, other Hubs (where appropriate), and researchers.

¹ These protocols may be adapted to better suit the TSR Hub if required

- d. The Hub is establishing an Indigenous Reference Group to provide expertise, input, advice and guidance on the Hub's Indigenous engagement and participation activities.
- e. Working with the NESP Indigenous Communities of Practice², the Hub will develop a mentoring and capacity building program, which will provide opportunities for mentoring from experienced researchers and Indigenous people to be made available to Hub personnel.
- f. Provision of funding support for participation and engagement: the Hub has established an Indigenous support fund for the specific involvement of Indigenous people in the research projects and Hub activities.

5. Effectively communicate research results and share knowledge with Indigenous people

The TSR Hub will provide synthesised and integrated information in a range of formats for the effective transfer of knowledge and findings for specific audiences. Consultation and engagement with Indigenous audiences will be critical to ensuring successful uptake of the information and in developing appropriate informational outputs. Working closely together, the Communication & Engagement Coordinator and the Indigenous Liaison Officer will collaborate with researchers and Indigenous stakeholders to develop and deliver materials, which are culturally appropriate and suitable for Indigenous audiences. Such activities will not be limited to products or informational publications, but also involve a range of engagement-style methods including one-on-one discussions with researchers, gatherings, and other appropriate formats and fora.

As part of the ongoing cross-cultural mentoring and training, researchers will also be fostering a clear understanding of how to improve the communication of their research outputs to an Indigenous audience. Much of this will also focus on the synthesis or integration of research results for dissemination.

Key Performance Indicators

The following performance indicators are proposed to measure the extent the Threatened Species Recovery Hub is meeting its objectives and delivering on the projected outcomes. The first set of indicators direct relate to the Annual Reporting processes (highlighted in grey), whilst the second set of indicators are Hub-level indicators.

² The Communities of Practice and mentoring program was discussed at the CAUL Indigenous Research Protocols Workshop (Nov 2015) and is still progressing

Key Performance Indicators			
Key Results Indicators	Data Source/ Methodology	Respons. for Data Collection	TSR Hub IEP Objectives
1. Co-benefits arising from Indigenous engagement and participation - with reference to <i>Appendix E of the NESP Monitoring and Evaluation Plan</i> , please report against all relevant indicators to quantify:			
a. The extent to which Indigenous engagement has contributed positively to NESP research activity;	Project reports	Project Leaders	2. TSR Hub research is relevant and of benefit to Indigenous communities and organisations
b. The extent to which NESP supported Indigenous communities to work on, and care for, Country;	Project reports	Project Leaders	4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery
c. The extent to which Indigenous people have derived professional development and knowledge sharing from engagement and participation in NESP;	Project reports	Project Leaders	2. TSR Hub research is relevant and of benefit to Indigenous communities and organisations 4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery. 5. Effectively communicate research results and share knowledge with Indigenous people
d. The extent to which NESP has delivered outcomes that supports Indigenous land and sea managers/owners to care for Country;	Project reports	Project Leaders	2. TSR Hub research is relevant and of benefit to Indigenous communities and organisations 4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery
e. The extent to which hub Knowledge and Communication Broker Strategies effectively address Indigenous knowledge sharing and communication needs; and	Communication products, workshops, collaborative activities	C&E Coord, ILO, Project Leaders	5. Effectively communicate research results and share knowledge with Indigenous people
f. The extent to which understanding of Australia's environment has been improved through a collaborative approach that delivers accessible results and informs decisions;	Project reports, Hub reports	Project Leaders, Leadership Group	3. Shape the development of TSR Hub research projects so that Indigenous culture, intellectual property, traditional knowledge, priorities and values are respected and valued. 4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery. 5. Effectively communicate research results and share knowledge with Indigenous people
g. The extent to which hubs and Indigenous communities have developed partnerships to undertake NESP research.	Project reports, Hub reports	Project Leaders, Leadership Group	3. Shape the development of TSR Hub research projects so that Indigenous culture, intellectual property, traditional knowledge, priorities and values are respected and valued. 4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery.

100 percent of Hub personnel under Tier One projects have completed cultural awareness training	Certificate or letter of completion of cultural awareness training	ILO	1. TSR Hub research is conducted according to the highest ethical standards and respects Indigenous values
Number of projects with Indigenous involvement	Research Plans Annual Reports	Project Leaders / researchers	2. TSR Hub research is relevant and of benefit to Indigenous communities and organisations 3. Shape the development of TSR Hub research projects so that Indigenous culture, intellectual property, traditional knowledge, priorities and values are respected and valued. 4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery
Number of Indigenous people engaged with Hub activities, Committees and projects	Annual Reports	Project Leaders / ILO / COO	4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery
Number of Indigenous people employed in research projects	Project reports Annual Reports	Project Leaders / ILO	4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery
Number and type of activities or projects with Indigenous involvement in the design, planning and implementation	Research Plans Annual Reports Workshop Reports	Project Leaders / ILO	3. Shape the development of TSR Hub research projects so that Indigenous culture, intellectual property, traditional knowledge, priorities and values are respected and valued. 4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery
Number of traditional owners who have participated in workshops, meetings and fieldwork	Annual Reports Workshop Reports	Project Leaders	2. TSR Hub research is relevant and of benefit to Indigenous communities and organisations. 3. Shape the development of TSR Hub research projects so that Indigenous culture, intellectual property, traditional knowledge, priorities and values are respected and valued. 4. Nurture the effective involvement of Indigenous people in addressing on-ground needs for threatened species recovery.
Number and type of communication products or activities which are used to communicate to an Indigenous audience	Communication outputs	C&E Coordinator	5. Effectively communicate research results and share knowledge with Indigenous people



Funding partners:



Collaborating organisations:

ACT Government, Environment and Planning
Arid Recovery
BirdLife Australia
Bush Heritage Australia
CSIRO Publishing
Department of Environment and Energy
Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (QLD)
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (VIC)
Department of Environment, Water & Natural Resources (SA)
Department of Land Resource Management (NT)
Department of Parks and Wildlife (WA)
Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (TAS)
Greening Australia
Local Land Services NSW
Melbourne Zoo

NSW Office of Environment and Heritage
Parks Australia
Parks Victoria
Perth Zoo
Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne
Royal Zoological Society of SA Inc
Taronga Conservation Society Australia
Tasmanian Land Conservancy
Threatened Plants Tasmania (Wildcare Inc)
The Nature Conservancy
The PEW Charitable Trusts
Threatened Species Commissioner
Woodlands and Wetlands Trust
WWF Australia

Further information:

<http://www.nespthreatenedspecies.edu.au/>

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