



National Environmental Science Program

# UNBROKEN WHISPERS

The Ripples Connecting Sea Kin

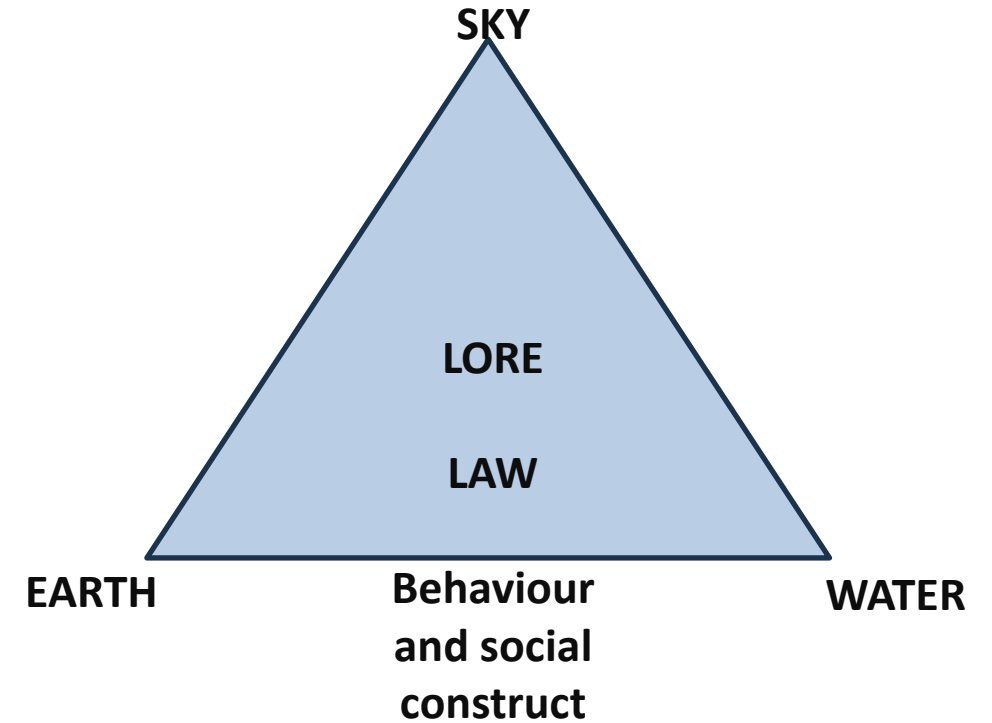
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# Connections between Land, Sea and Sky

- Aboriginal peoples have been responsible for the development of many innovations and technologies and have continued to substantially contribute to modern science.
- Science is the pursuit of knowledge. Approaches to gathering that knowledge are culturally relative. Indigenous science incorporates traditional knowledge and Indigenous perspectives,
- Together, they contribute substantially to modern science and understandings
- Aboriginal perspectives are holistic and founded upon interconnectedness, reciprocity and the utmost respect for nature. Both Western and First science approaches and perspectives have their strengths and can greatly complement one another.

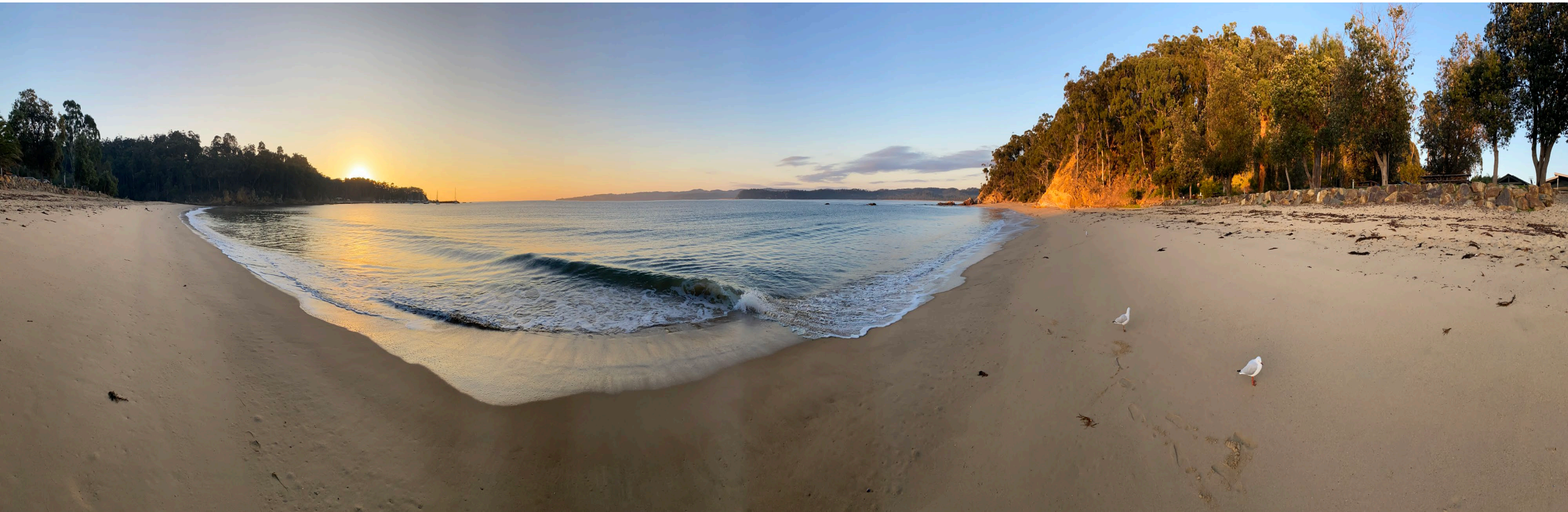


# Continuing Indigenous Connections and Interactions: The Current Day Context

- Spiritual and totemic values:
- Subsistence & cooperative hunting associations:
- Ecological cycles and cultural indicator species:
- Ceremonial / dance /art / cultural science
- Law /Lore
- Ancestors and re-incarnation (giving back to the cycle and respect to that species **Kinship**)
- Totemic Identity
- Inherent Cultural Responsibility
- Creation and decent
- Art and Symbolism (Historical and contemporary context)
- **Cultural keystone**
- **Part of Cultural Landscape**
- **Storylines**
- Interactions between modern indigenous people, the wider community and cetaceans
- From protected ancestors to apex predators under threat
- Cultural sustenance: Subsistence hunting and food resources for low socio-economic communities
- Economic benefit and value (e.g. special licenses to use parts of cetaceans for art, employment in research and monitoring and contemporary art)
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge and the its benefits to biodiversity conservation and nature positive initiatives
- **Subsistence & Cooperative hunting associations**



**This information library is existing in  
landscape, language, song, dance, species,  
storylines and people....**



# PRACTICE TO KEEP

- Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer
- Empowering Indigenous People
- Better decision making
- Opportunities
- Retaining knowledge
- Equity and Equality

[Baraya Barray - Whale Song | New Australian poetry, contemporary Australian writers & poetry education | Red Room Poetry](#)

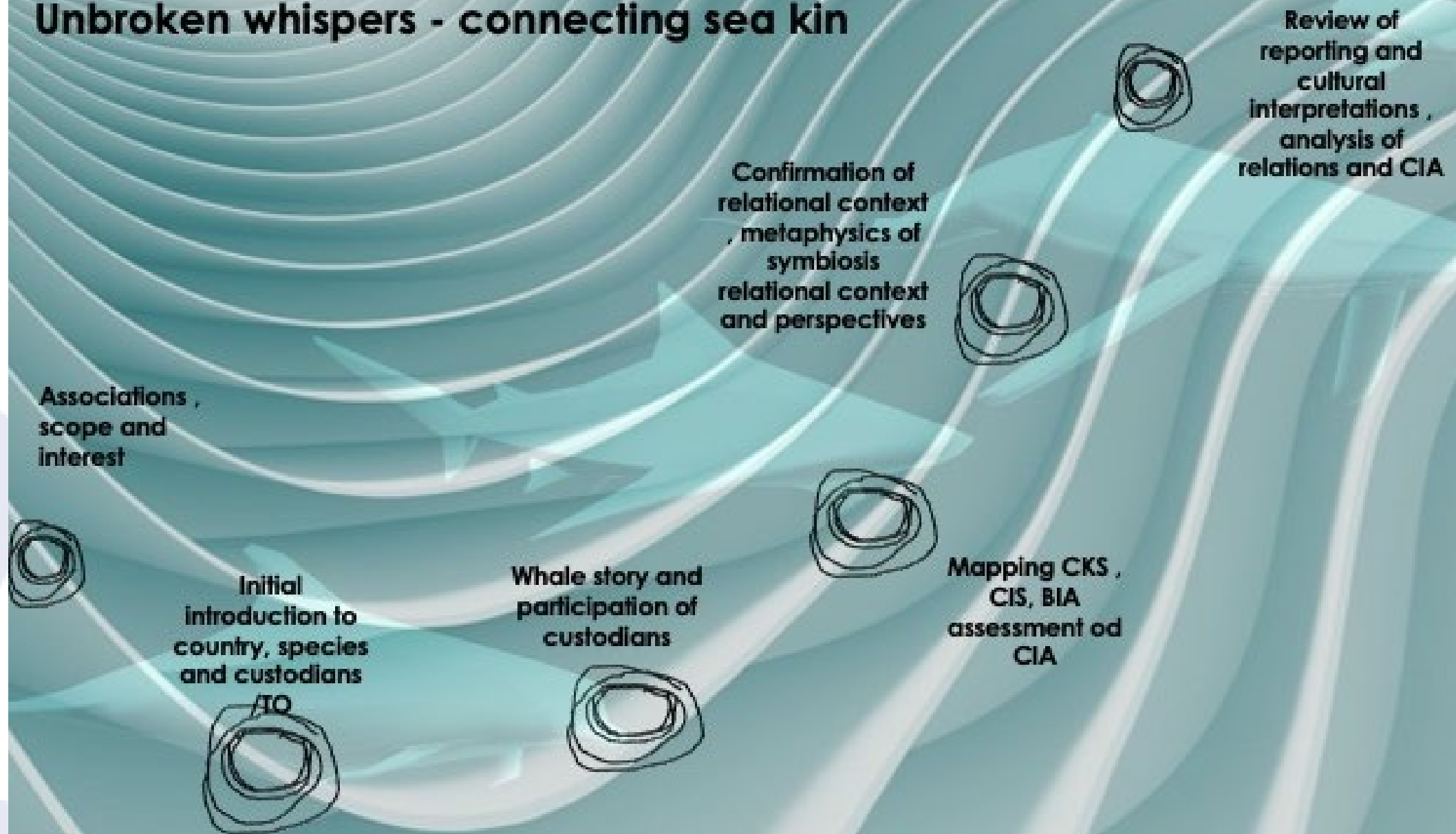
- [Djeera Gadhu \(Ocean Stories\) | New Australian poetry, contemporary Australian writers & poetry education | Red Room Poetry](#)

# What are we doing ?

Research will identify opportunities for applying Indigenous ecological knowledge for the protection and recovery of threatened and migratory species listed under the EPBC Act. More specifically, it will demonstrate how Indigenous ecological knowledge can be included into the nomination and review of Biologically Important Areas (BIAs) for protected species in south eastern Australia

- compilation of seven case studies focused on the relational complexities of cultural values; and consolidated Indigenous Ecological Knowledge to support improved understanding of Biologically Important Areas for culturally important marine species listed under the EPBC Act in south-eastern Australia
- Indigenous stories/art to inform ocean governance and promote awareness of cultural connection to species/Country
- Images/video to promote research

# Unbroken whispers - connecting sea kin





# How are we mapping the relational complexities and identifying CIA

- Indigenous perspectives on threatened and migratory cetaceans
- Identifying, collating and sharing (where appropriate) cultural knowledge
- Understanding connections between Indigenous people and cetaceans
- Identifying Indigenous research priorities for migratory cetaceans

It can assist with linking the Indigenous research priorities and gathered knowledge with environmental monitoring and management tools, policies and practices.

Research should be how to apply the Indigenous knowledge for the protection and recovery of threatened and migratory species but also empowers Aboriginal people to be able to provide Free Prior Informed consent and to be holders of their own knowledge





This approach proposes to introduce the concept of Culturally Important Areas (CIA) that can be defined as culturally significant locations relevant to specific species for various reasons and based on value sets from community, tradition or landscape and species. The purpose of CIA's is to consolidate BIAs that are designated using the best available scientific evidence with CIA's that use Indigenous ecological knowledge (IEK).

A cultural relations baseline is a first step in CIA assessment. The CIA is a method that spatially identifies species, places and the relational complexities that are equally important and interwoven from the land, sea and sky. It establishes a value rational to species and land/sea scape by the relevant Aboriginal people, the locations, then when in time they are relevant and to whom, additionally which places, features or areas are particularly significant as they pertain to storylines/ song lines and spatially explicit cultural components. These attributes are both tangible and intangible cultural connections and heritage.

**Mapping is an essential part of the baseline study, starting with documented existing information (such as designated heritage sites or cultural locations, environmental research data).**

## APPROACH TO CIA and case studies

Significance in this context is no absolute measure, but intimately linked to the cultural narrative and connection of a community to a given area, landscape, story place or activity. CIAs must therefore be identified in a participative process based on locally relevant classifications and assessments, bearing in mind there may be issues of scale (e.g. national significance vs. local significance).

The first steps towards identifying CIAs is through a **baseline assessment** to determine the species, secondary or associated species, range (type) and spatial (and temporal) extent of cultural relations in the area concerned. The first component was determining "what is known" where existing information was/is mapped, documented and reviewed, followed by confirmation with informants (local TO's, knowledge holders/custodians) to involve the local community and communities of interest specific views. This is also inclusive of validation of information already in the public domain

# Where and Who

## The Kin Species

- Southern Whale
- Orca
- Humpback
- Dolphins
- Shark
- Indicator Species

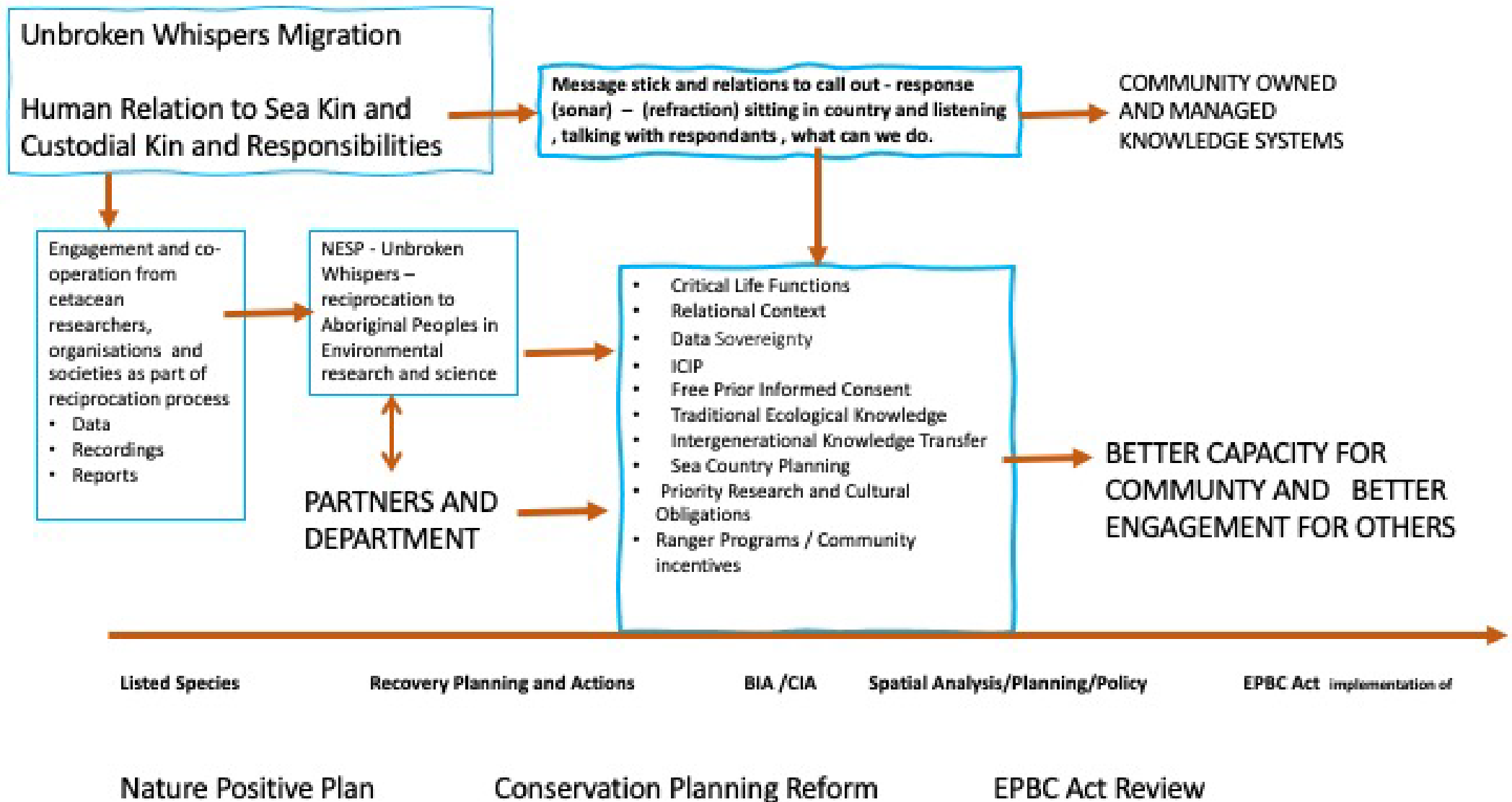
## CONSIDERATIONS

- Indigenous perspectives on threatened and migratory cetaceans
- Identifying, collating and sharing (where appropriate) cultural knowledge
- Understanding connections between Indigenous people and cetaceans
- Identifying Indigenous research priorities for migratory cetaceans
- It can assist with linking the Indigenous research priorities and gathered knowledge with environmental monitoring and management tools, policies and practices.
- The research should be how to apply the Indigenous knowledge for the protection and recovery of threatened and migratory species.
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Name	Species	Location	Language Groups /country
Parrabah	Humpback/Orca/ Sth Whale	Bruny Island /SE Tasmaina	Nuenonne people
Kondoli	Southern Whale	Encounter Bay /Victor Harbour	Ngarrindjeri /Boandik
Koontoopool	Southern Whale	Portland - Warnombool	Gunditjmara/Gunditjmirring,
Beowa/Gurawal	Orca /Humpback	Two Fold Bay /Eden	Yuin
Guruja / Yuggirr	Humpback /Dolphins / Sthn Whale	Clarence - Nambucca River	Gumbaynggirr /Yeagal /Ngambaa
Yalingbila/ Buangan	Humpback/Dolphin	Morton Bay	Quandamooka /Ngugi people
Boothu, Yul'u, or Djamarmee	Humpback/Dolphin	Harvey Bay	Butchulla/Batjala and Kabi Kabi
Cultural Indicator Species			





MAPPING CULTURALLY IMPORTANT AREAS

Totemic and kin connections

Culturally important species

Ceremonial

Rest/migration

Burial

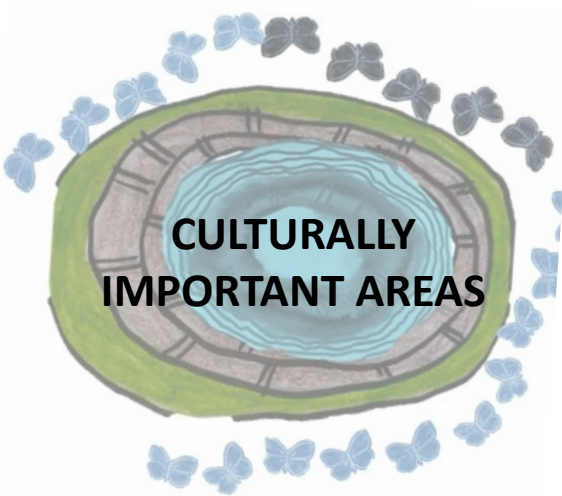
Cultural sites

Cultural resources and use

Cultural practice

Ranger groups actively undertaking research

Marine Bioregions



Massacre Burial

Breeding

Food source

Story currents

Strandings

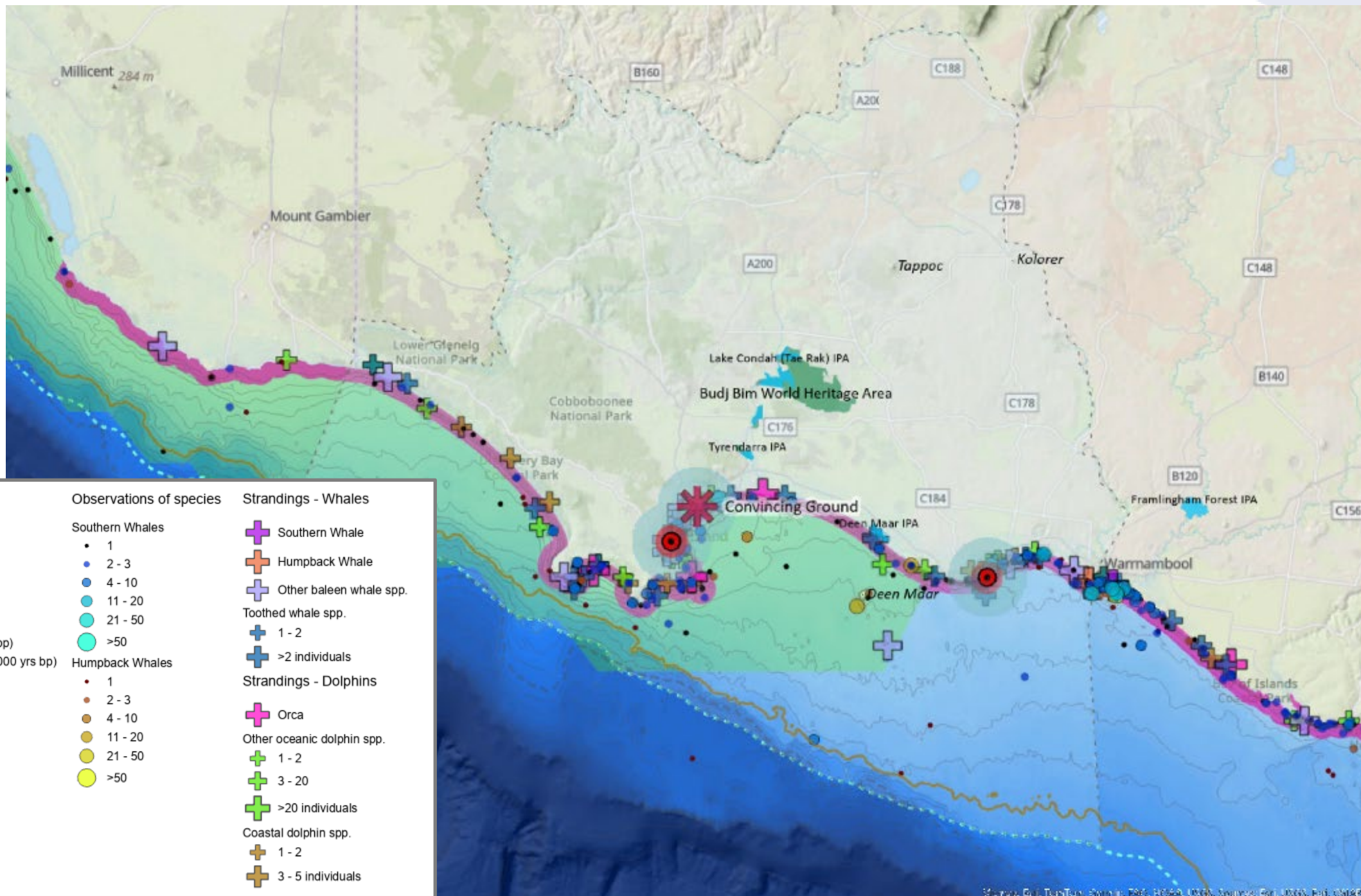
Gender specific

Species language

Cultural language

Symbiotic relationships

Geological formations





# Thank you

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