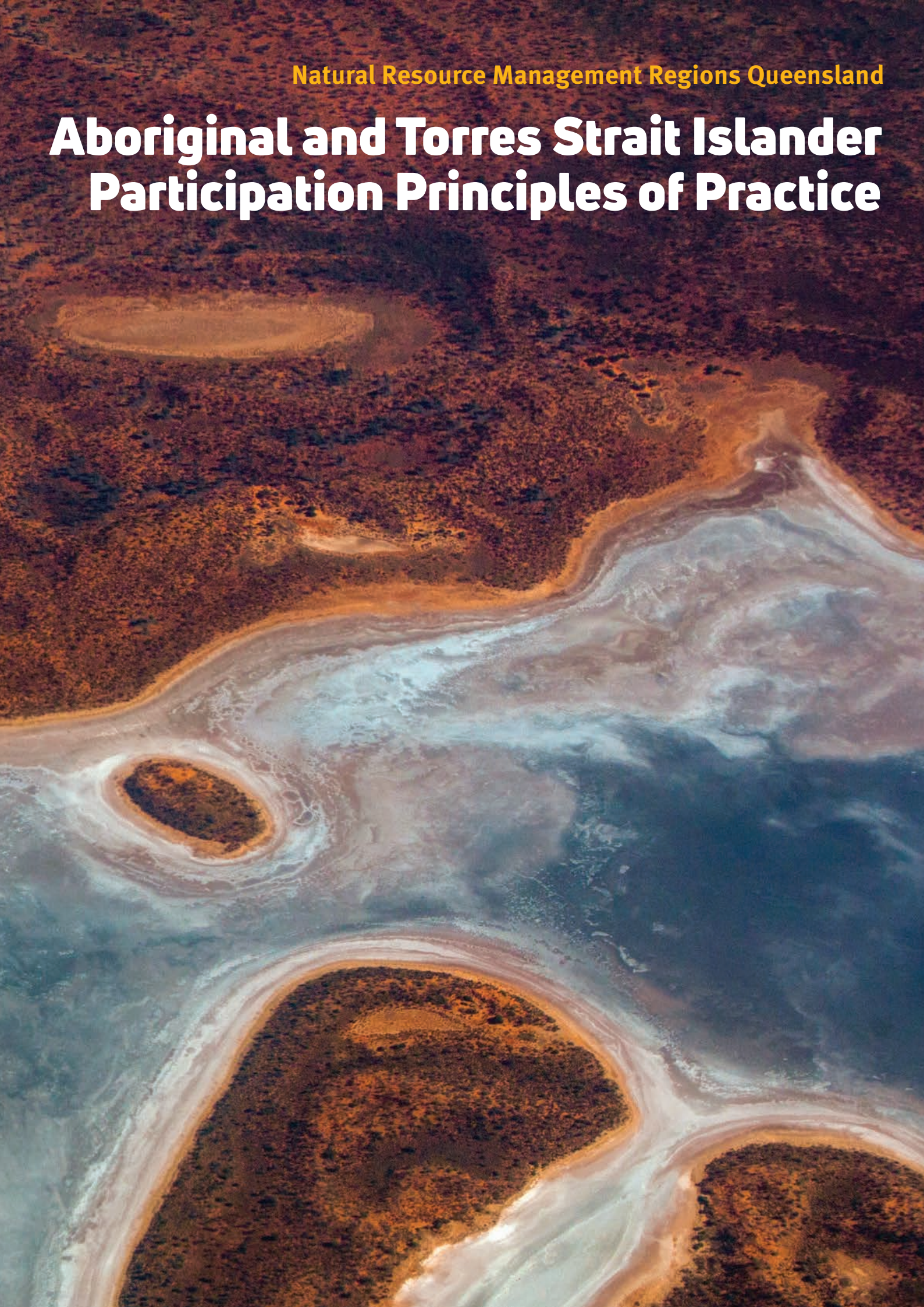


Natural Resource Management Regions Queensland

# Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation Principles of Practice



# Acknowledgement

Natural Resource Management Regions Queensland acknowledge and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Traditional Custodians of land and sea.

We recognise the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture within Queensland and Australia and the deep and varied connections Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with Queensland's land and sea. We acknowledge these connections are not dependent upon Native Title determination.

We recognise caring for country contributes to connection, participation and overall health of people and country.

We recognise the expertise, knowledge, historical and cultural connections Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with land and sea and are committed to partnering with, and following the lead of, Traditional Owners to improve outcomes for people, country and culture.

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connections with land, sea and community are embedded in time and place and are intrinsic to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' identity and sense of place. It is vital we understand these systems and beliefs predate, and often operate outside, the scope of contemporary mainstream legal systems and protocols.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge and recognise the primacy of Traditional Owners' obligations, rights and responsibilities to use and care for their traditional lands and waters.

**N**atural Resource Management Regions Queensland work in partnership with regional communities to sustainably manage landscapes and their natural resources. This document sets out Natural Resource Management Regions Queensland’s commitment to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to build capacity and relationships, exchange knowledge, listen and learn and generate positive social, environmental and economic outcomes.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Participation Principles of Practice outlines Queensland’s Natural Resource Management bodies’ commitment, principles and actions which support transition from NRM-led activities to:

- a) A model where NRM and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies work together to plan and deliver activities which will in turn lead to
- b) An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led model where Traditional Owner agencies work with NRM bodies to plan and deliver activities

This document was developed by the Indigenous Participation Community of Practice: a collective designed to foster greater coordination and collaboration across the NRM sector and initiate and drive change at a state-wide level. Indigenous Participation Community of Practice members represent the Queensland Natural Resource Management sector.

The Principles of Practice articulate the sector’s commitment to collective, coordinated, cooperative and considered mechanisms for driving positive social, environment and economic change in Queensland.



*Mapoon Land and Sea Rangers, 2019. Kerri Woodcock, Cape York NRM*

### Alignment with National and International Agreements

Natural Resource Management Regions Queensland commit to engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in alignment with national and international agreements including:

- The Australian Government’s commitment as a signatory to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which includes a commitment to Free, Prior and Informed Consent as a best practice model for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement;
- Responsibilities set out in Australian and Queensland legislation and policy, including Traditional Owner agreements, Native Title, Aboriginal Heritage, the National Water Initiative, Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act as well as the Catchment and Land Protection Act;
- The Council of Australian Governments’ commitment to Closing the Gap in Indigenous Disadvantage;
- The Australian Government’s commitment to increasing Traditional Owner participation in natural resource management through the National Landcare Program and Regional Land Partnerships.

# Principles of Practice

## DEVELOP

Develop meaningful and long term partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to manage and improve the health of land and waters, and to build community capacity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' engagement and participation

## STRENGTHEN

Strengthen internal organisation - wide cultural competency

## SUPPORT

Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' aspirations; for recognition of rights, reconciliation, participation, employment and economic development through NRM

Support adaptive management to imagine and develop innovative and reflective responses to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement in NRM

# ESTABLISH

Establish partnerships with multi-disciplinary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies to support improved land, water and sea outcomes

Establish a state-wide approach for use by QNRM to respond to regional variations in cultural diversity, experience in working Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, and NRM priorities

Establish continuous improvement process for measuring, monitoring and advising on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation

# ENSURE

Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander opportunities to benefit from procurement, participation, engagement, capacity building and legacy at all stages of NRM project management including planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation

Ensure the full and effective involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in NRM across Queensland

# PROCURE

Procure, utilise, value and communicate Traditional Ecological Knowledge and culturally informed land and sea management practice

Procure, utilise, value and communicate culture and language

We commit to:

- Integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and participation in the planning, governance, implementation and review of our programs and projects
- Engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to build meaningful partnerships
- Providing meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to contribute to planning, strategies and initiatives
- Working transparently and respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and establishing clear roles and expectations for our involvement
- Interweaving cultural heritage with the outcomes and impact of each project
- Abiding by best practice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and Cultural Heritage and Intellectual Property protocols
- Developing induction procedures and training programs which build our cultural competency
- Developing workplace arrangements which support genuine engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Seeking advice from people with experience in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement
- Involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in programs and projects according to their interests
- Building Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' capacity to achieve NRM outcomes, both individually and organisationally
- Involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the outset in programs and projects where they have interests and capacity
- Being clear and open in our discussions about project deliverables, limitations and available resources
- Recognising and celebrating the mutual benefits of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities

## TRACKING AND MEASURING PROGRESS

We will develop monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and improvement (MERI) processes to improve our engagement skills so that we can increase our participation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in natural resource management

These processes must be participatory; in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, we will develop practical ways to assess our performance against agreed outcomes

We will develop culturally appropriate ways to share the results and successes of our partnerships and collaborations, and we will learn from our actions so that we continually improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in Natural Resource Management



