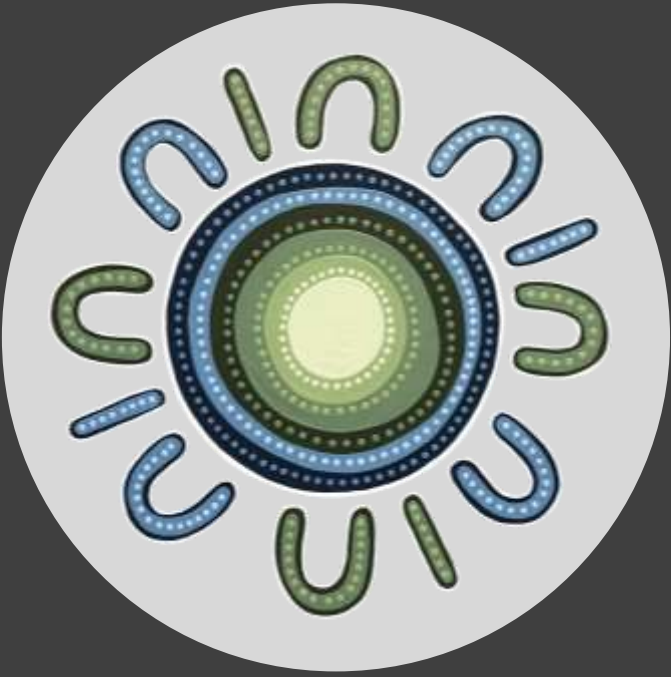




# Building Wellbeing Into Policy & Action In Australia

Professor Phil Duncan  
Galambany Professorial Fellow  
University of Canberra  
Centre of Applied Water Science



**Nothing About Us Without Us**

**If we are not leading the research, then how can the research benefit us**



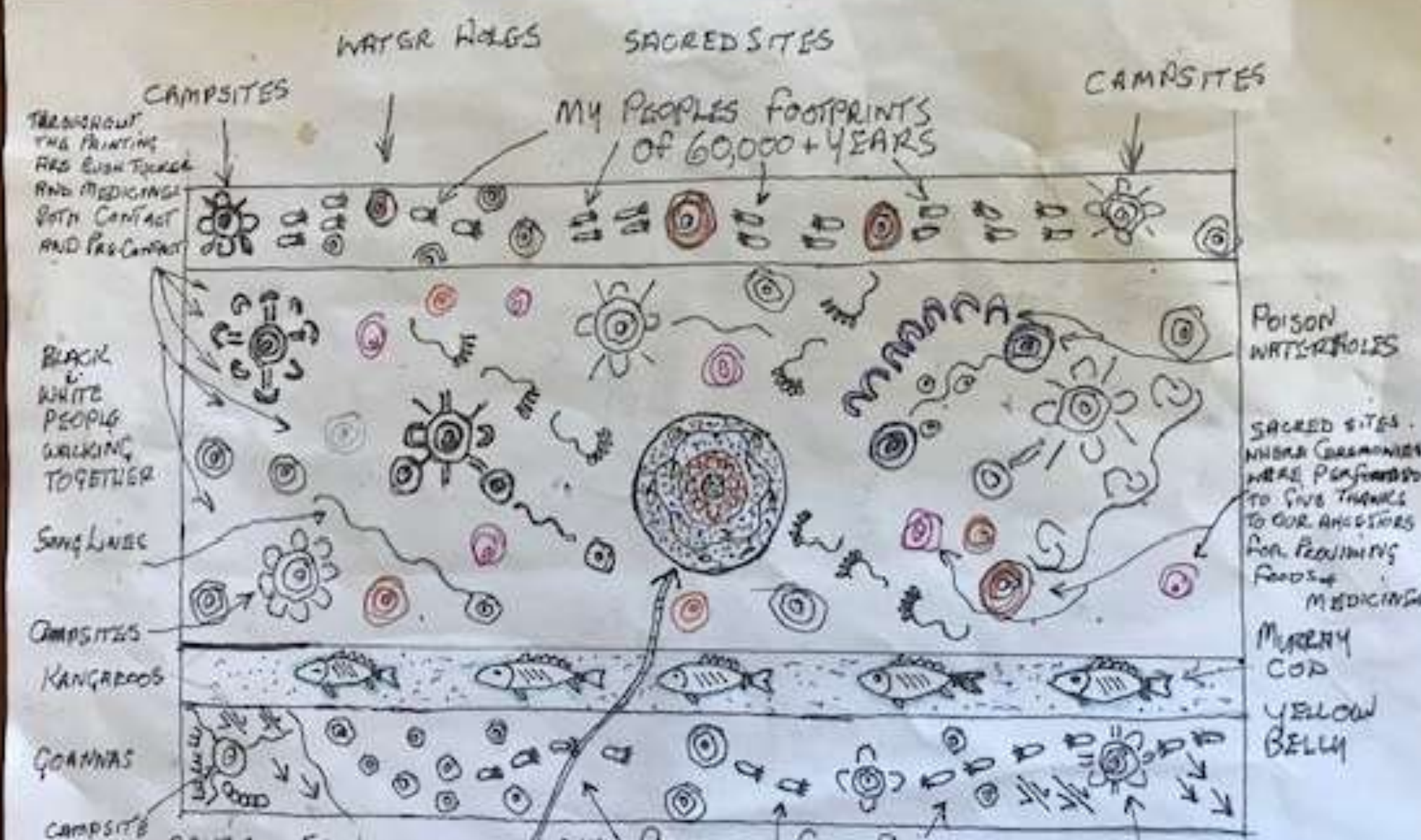
Small text caption below the black and white photograph of the elderly man, likely providing biographical information.

# Connection to Country



# Connection & Knowledge



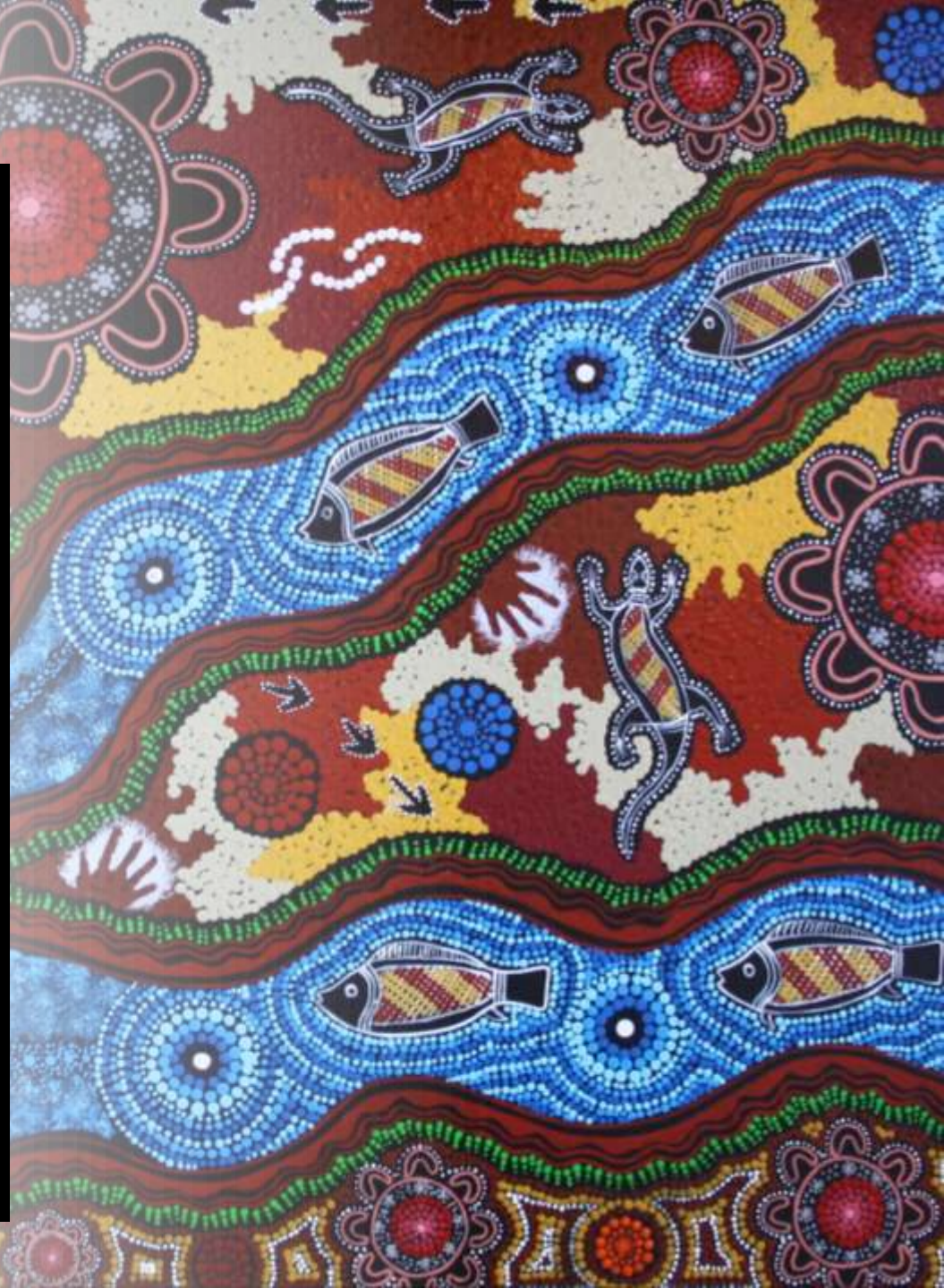
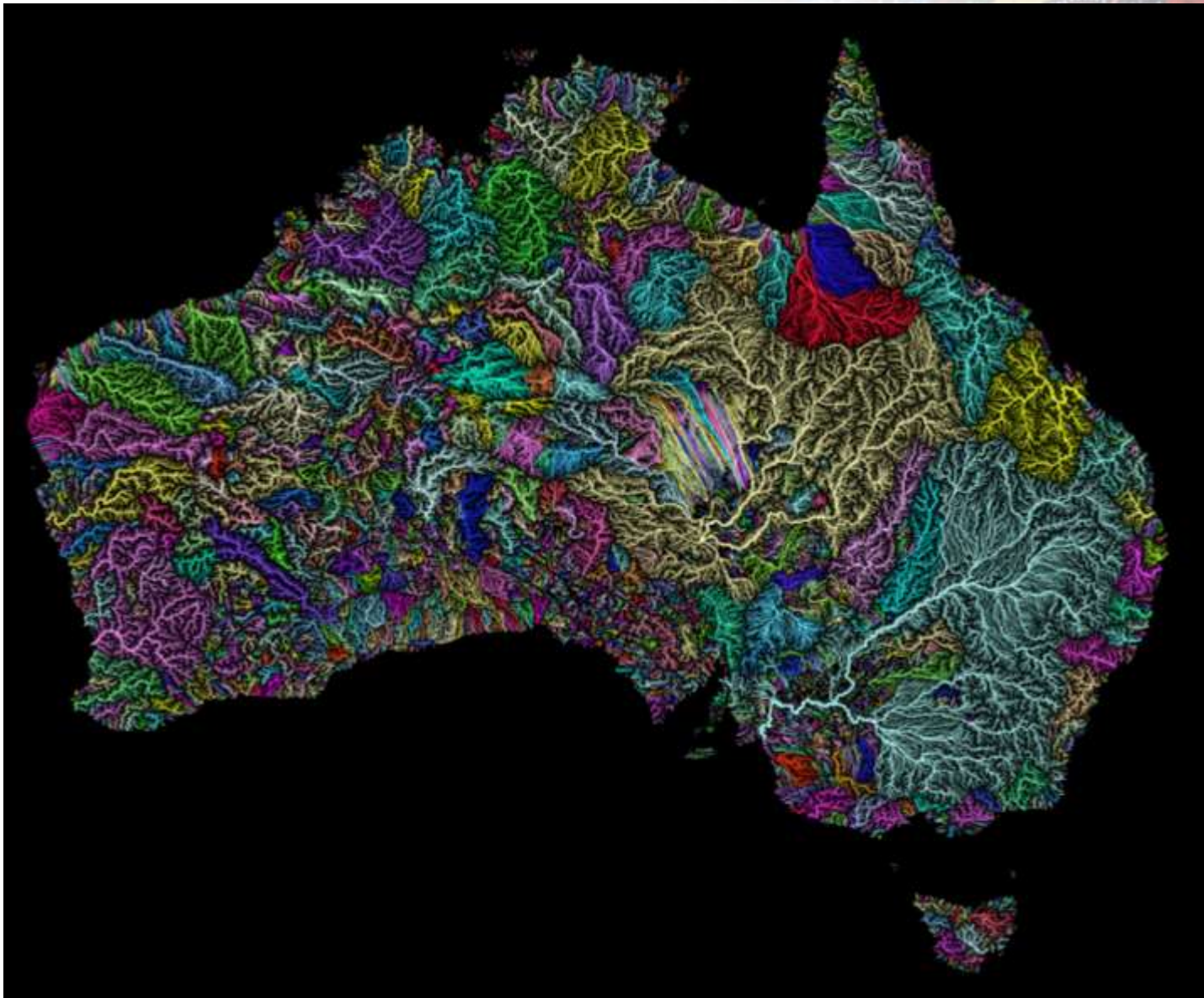




## **My Dreaming Dhinawan My Mother**

- *“The Dreaming is the dimension of sacred eternal time when Ancestors Spirits came up out of the earth & down from the sky to shape the land, rock, rivers, mountains, forests and deserts. The Spirit Ancestors created all the people, animals & plants that were to live in the country & laid down the laws, customs and codes of conduct that Aboriginal people lives were to follow”*

# Our Rivers



## Critical Lessons from Traditional Owners - The Past is Relevant Today



1857

160 years of progress in the Murray Darling



2017

A banner for CSIRO's Indigenous engagement program. The banner features the text "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – Australia's first scientists" in large, bold letters. Below this, it says "Contributing extraordinary insights to our national challenges" and provides the website "www.csiro.au/Indigenous-engagement". The banner is decorated with colorful, stylized fish or eel shapes in shades of blue, purple, and green, each containing intricate circular patterns. The CSIRO logo is visible in the top right corner. The banner is mounted on a wooden wall.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – Australia's first scientists



Contributing extraordinary insights to our national challenges

[www.csiro.au/Indigenous-engagement](http://www.csiro.au/Indigenous-engagement)

# CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

**Water is protected by Lore**, its in our songlines songs, dance, Dreaming stories and art

Must re-connect with our own **Traditional Water Knowledge and Our Methodologies**

- how the old people did science
- tell our stories our way
- Culturally safe
- validate our science

Dr Brad Moggridge



# Water Dependent Cultural Values

- **Creation sites** and cultural hero stories linking with spiritual significance along a song line / dreaming tracks (**Dreaming Sites**, Songlines, stories, songs);
- **Language** (connects culture to place with water);
- **Resource sites** for traditional bush foods and medicines;
- **Resource sites** for artefacts, tools, art and crafts; i.e. water for axe head preparation, aquatic reeds for weaving;
- **Gender specific sites** – men's and women's business;
- **Ceremonial sites**;
- **Burial places / sites** known and unknown;

# Water Dependent Cultural Values

## Continued values:

- **Surface water and groundwater specific values;**
- **Teaching sites;**
- **Massacre sites** where frontier battles occurred with traditional groups;
- Cultural specific environmental conditions to sustain **totemic species** or **Cultural Keystone Species;**
- Sustain a **cultural economy;**
- Sites that contain **physical/tangible evidence**: middens, campsites, scarred and carved trees, stone arrangements and fish or eel traps, tribal boundaries; and
- **Seasonal Indicators** and Indicators of the Health of Country and Water

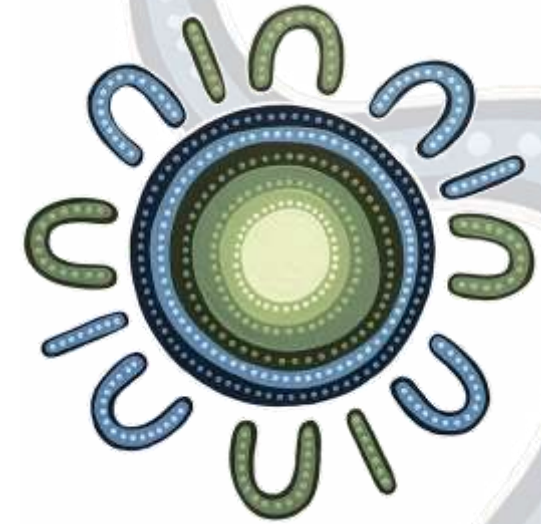
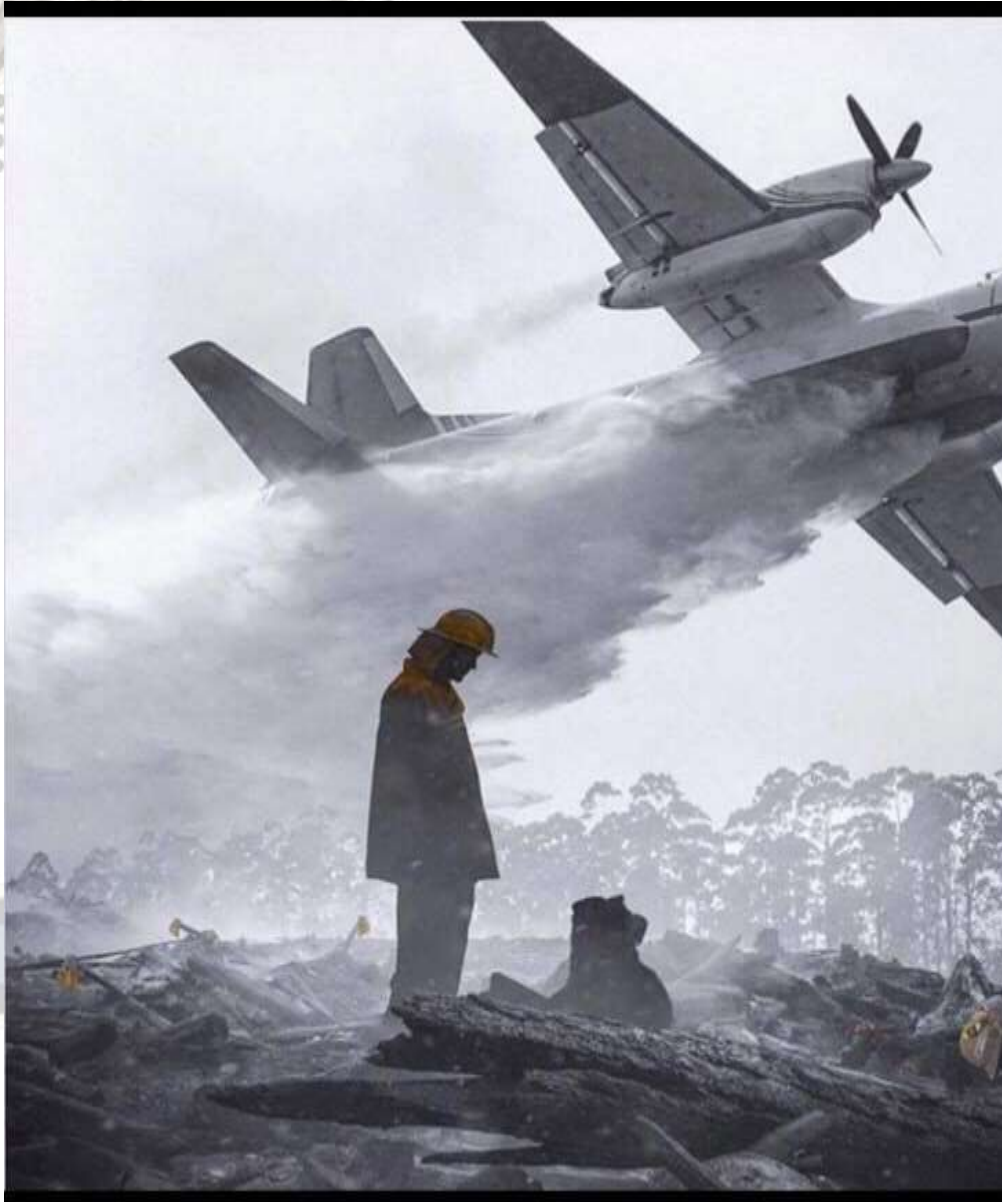


# Planning for the Future

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**Using Traditional Knowledge**

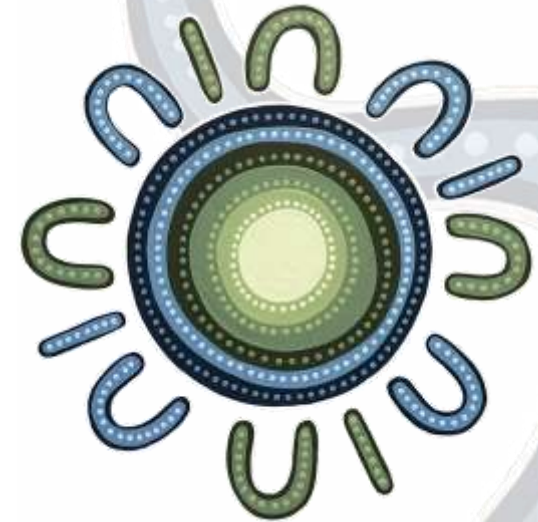
# ***“Climate Change is HERE”***





## Australia's First Climate Change Refugees – Saibai Islanders - 1947

**Indigenous food security must be protected,  
both freshwater & marine**





# Water Infrastructure – Quality Water for Quality of Life



Walhollow Aboriginal Community

Wallaga Lake Aboriginal Community



# Engagement Platforms & Mechanisms

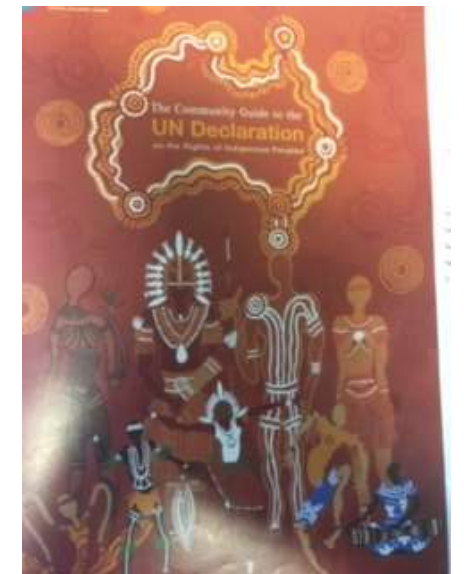
The “Right to be Engaged”

Native Title Act

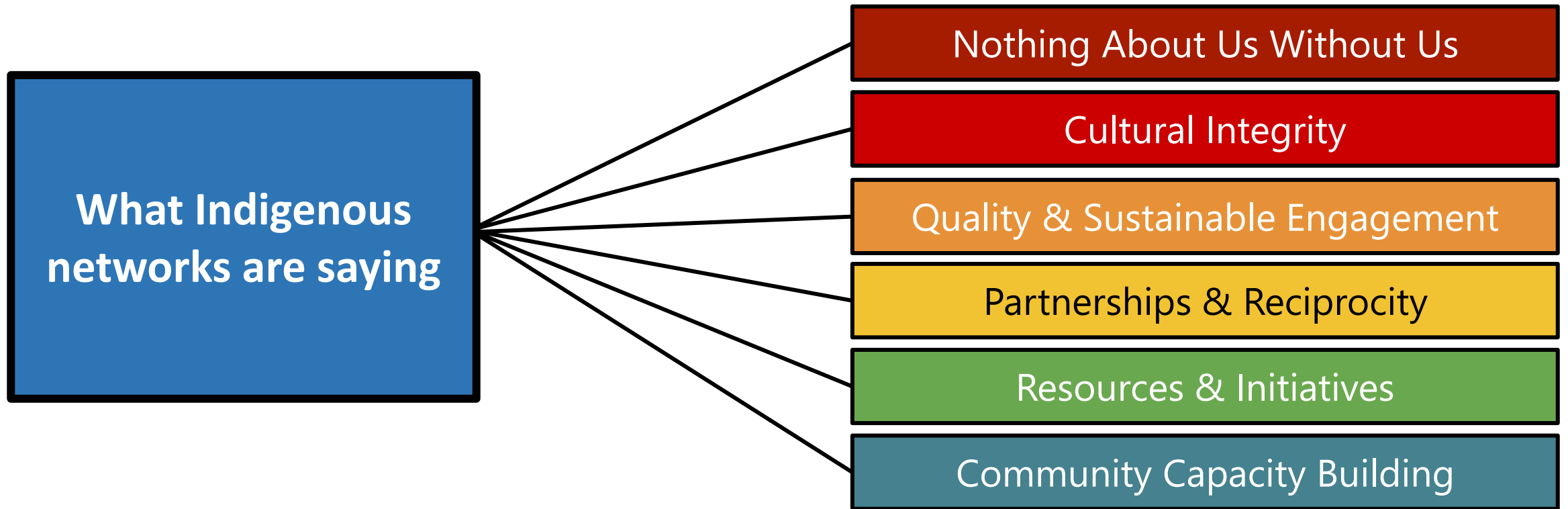
NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983

Water Act

UNDRIP – *Free, Prior & Informed Consent*



# INDIGENOUS OUTLOOK



- Distinct challenges
- Establish, enhance, maintain & respectful relationships and partnerships
- Reciprocity - outcomes / processes that are beneficial for all Stakeholder groups & communities

# Example – Working with Aboriginal Communities

## Education

school programs  
meetings  
demonstration reaches  
attend community field days and festivals  
language programs

## Technical advice

distribute material  
strategic planning  
legislative reviews

## On-ground works

biodiversity hotspots  
drought management  
tree planting  
site assessments

## Developing projects

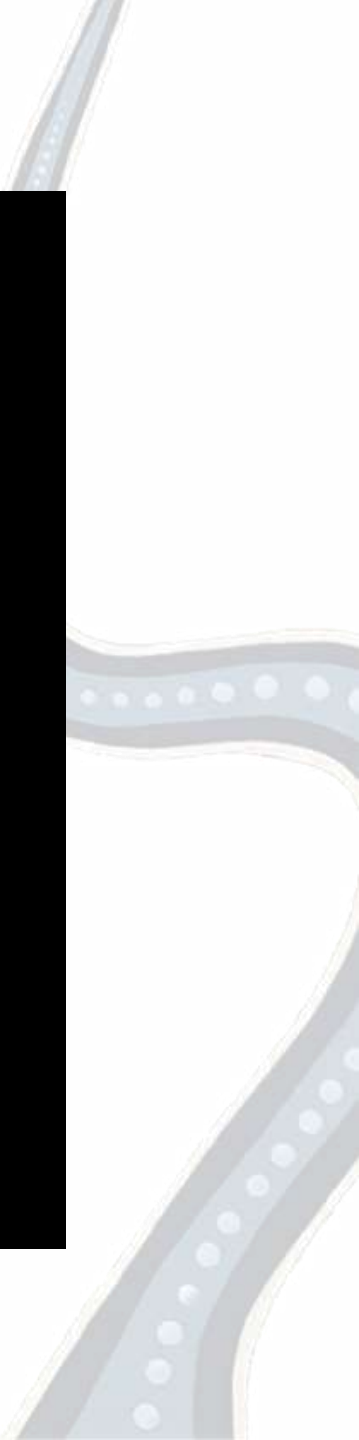
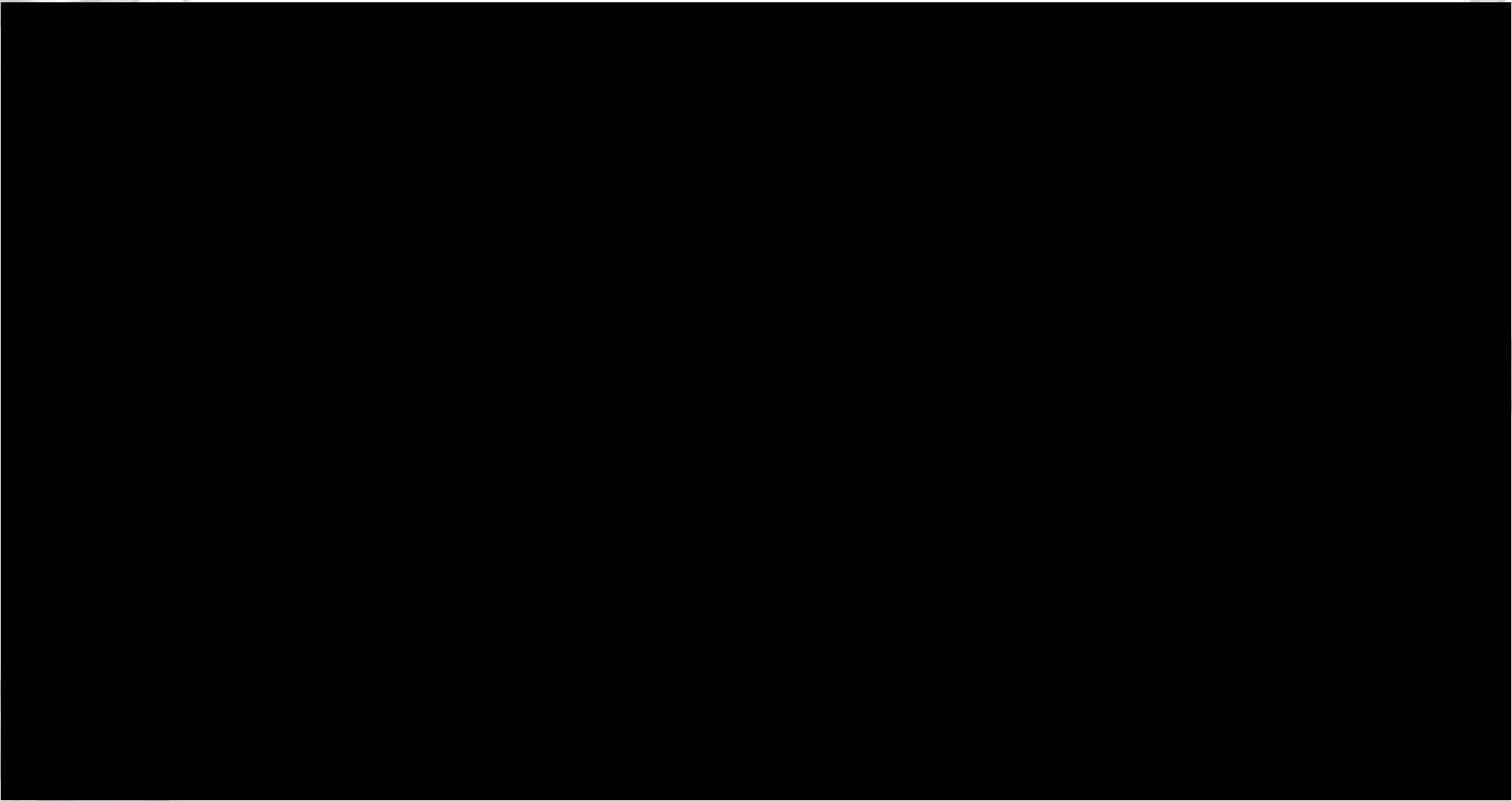
monitoring programs  
cultural surveying & mapping  
strategies and plans  
project proposals  
threatened species

## Communication

Aboriginal engagement  
project reports  
newsletters  
factsheets  
interviews  
media articles  
signs  
posters  
presentations to community groups

## Workshops

water resource plans  
wetland management  
emergency response



Don't let the sun set without the effort

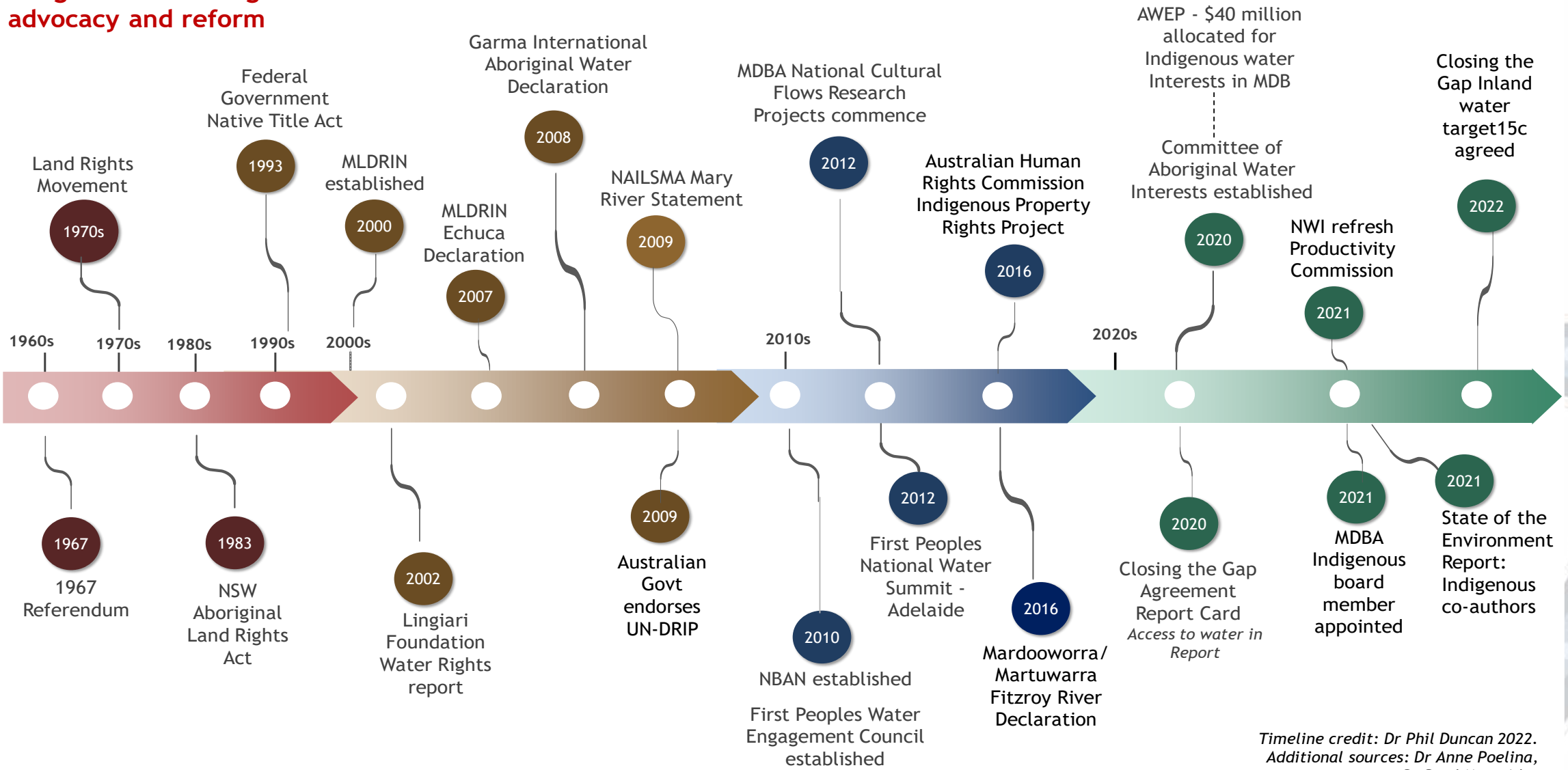




# Yanaay

Professor Phil Duncan

## Indigenous water rights - a timeline of advocacy and reform



Timeline credit: Dr Phil Duncan 2022.  
 Additional sources: Dr Anne Poelina,  
 Dr Brad Moggridge