

RECORD INFORMATION ABOUT COUNTRY



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PUBLICATION NOTES

BHP Billiton Iron Ore is proud to support Greening Australia to provide valuable conservation and land management training to communities throughout the Pilbara through the Indigenous Training Program.

This Learning Guide series has been developed as part of our partnership of the program.

Gavin Price, Head of Environment, BHP Billiton Iron Ore

Greening Australia is proud to produce and provide the comprehensive suite of new ALEP Learning Guides. The guides are compatible with the new horticulture and conservation industries training package and suited to developing skills in Indigenous communities within remote areas of the country where employment opportunities are limited. We would like to thank BHPBIO for their generous support in the development of the guides.

Brendan Foran, National CEO Greening Australia

The second series of ALEP Guides is aligned with a number of units of competence from the *Training Package AHC10 – Agriculture, Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management* (Release 8.0). The units selected are frequently used within Certificates I to III in Horticulture and Conservation and Land Management. As such they cover, where possible, the elements, performance criteria and required skills and knowledge of each unit.

The principal goal of these resources is to support the learning process; the learning activities may complement a trainer's assessment plan. The intent is that they will be used in an interactive manner with learners rather than as self-paced study guides. The structure and sequence have been designed to follow the logical steps of the practical tasks wherever possible. Concepts are introduced and then consolidated with discussion and/or practical activities.

The writers consider that these guides can provide a sound technical foundation but also strongly encourage trainers to complement the guides with additional, authentic resources from relevant industry texts and websites. The guides can be used in part or in their entirety but should always be linked to practical activities to strengthen the teaching and learning.

Genuine consideration was given to the level of language used in the guides. The goal has been to find a balance between simplifying the language to an accessible level and ensuring that the vocational concepts are addressed. The writers contend that with appropriate support these texts can provide an opportunity for students to strengthen their language, literacy and numeracy skills, which may be required for pathway progression.

A number of Aboriginal people have been involved in developing this ALEP Guide, which is considered suitable for use within a program based on Aboriginal pedagogies.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Record information about Country*. This learning guide will support you to write down information about the area you are working on. You will collect information about:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history
- Plant and animal species
- Environmental changes and trends

You will also consider how you may use this information.

This unit may be studied alone or with other relevant units. Suggested relevant ALEP Guides that may support this delivery are:

- Recognise fauna
- Recognise plants
- Observe and report plants and/or animals
- Conduct erosion control and sediment activities
- Participate in environmentally sustainable work practices
- Carry out natural area restoration works



RESOURCES REQUIRED

To complete this training you will need the following:

1. Access to information about the area being studied
2. Permission from the custodians of the information
3. Management plans for the area
4. Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
5. Vehicles, if required, to visit sites on Country

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

There are two kinds of activities to complete. These activities may go toward your final assessment.

SECTION	ACTIVITY	SATISFACTORY (Y/N)	DATE
DISCUSSION ACTIVITIES			
1.2	Landownership		
1.3	Management plans and practices		
2.1	Uses for information		
3.1	Workplace health and safety		
3.2	Heritage and environment legislation		
4.3	Management practices		
PROJECT			
2	Section 1 – Landownership and history Note: Includes two research activities		
3	Section 2 – Plant and animal species		
4	Section 3 – Environmental changes		

"For us, Country is a word for all the values, places, resources, stories and cultural obligations associated with that area and its features. It describes the entirety of our ancestral domains."

"Country underpins and gives meaning to our creation beliefs – the stories of creation form the basis of our laws and explain the origins of the natural world to us – all things natural can be explained."

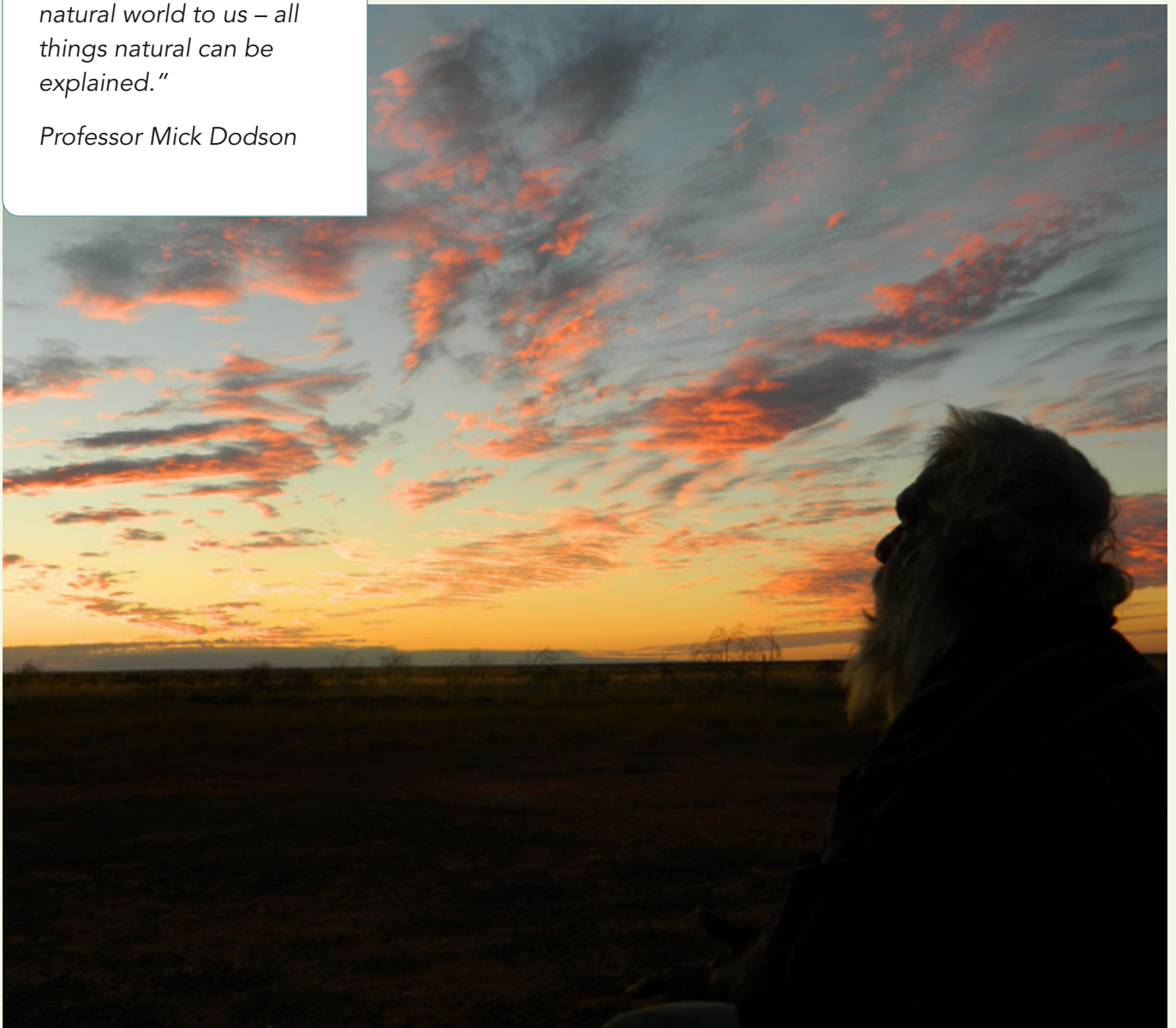
Professor Mick Dodson

1.1 WHAT IS COUNTRY?

Many Aboriginal people use the word 'Country' to refer to the land and sea. In non-Aboriginal terms, Country is the place and its landscape, as well as the history, geography, science, arts and religion of that place. It says who a person is through language, relationships and law. Belonging to Country is quintessential for many Aboriginal people. Country provides for people and in return demands responsible care.

This meaning of Country is very different from the general use of the term because it has a cultural and social meaning. The European idea of country is of a commodity: something that can be bought and sold.

In this learner guide you will focus on an area and record some of the information that makes it Country, more than just a place. This can be the whole region where you work, or it might be a specific site.



1.2 LANDOWNERSHIP

Before English colonisation, Aboriginal people used a system of landownership with natural boundaries such as rivers, mountains and lakes. Sea-based areas were defined by borders such as reefs and coral cays. Areas of land were 'owned' by communities of people sharing language and culture. Landownership was as much about caring for the land and sea as it was about using the resources from the land and sea.

The European landownership system is different because it maps out boundaries by measuring the area. When land is owned this stops other people from accessing that land. We say the owner has the 'title' to that land. Accessing land you don't own is called trespassing.

When the English colonised Australia they did not recognise the Aboriginal landownership system and believed the land was not owned by anyone. Aboriginal people were dispossessed of their land, and it was owned by the government of the time. People were removed from their land at different times in different locations. Land was then sold, given or leased to people or corporations.

NATIVE TITLE

In 1992 a long struggle by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their supporters reached an important point. In the Mabo case, the judgement of the High Court of Australia acknowledged that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had a unique connection with the land. This led to the Australian Parliament passing the *Native Title Act 1993*.

Native title laws mean that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the chance to establish, in the eyes of non-Aboriginal law, their connection to Country. If they can prove a continuous connection to the land they may, as a group, be given native title for that land.

Native title doesn't necessarily mean that the land is given back to the native title owners completely. It can be recognised in different ways. Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) are written documents that list the rights the native title holders have over the land. An ILUA may include one or more of the following rights to:

- Live on the land
- Access the area for traditional purposes
- Visit and protect important places and sites
- Hunt, fish or gather traditional food or resources on the land
- Teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander laws and customs on the land
- Own and occupy an area of land or water to the exclusion of all others





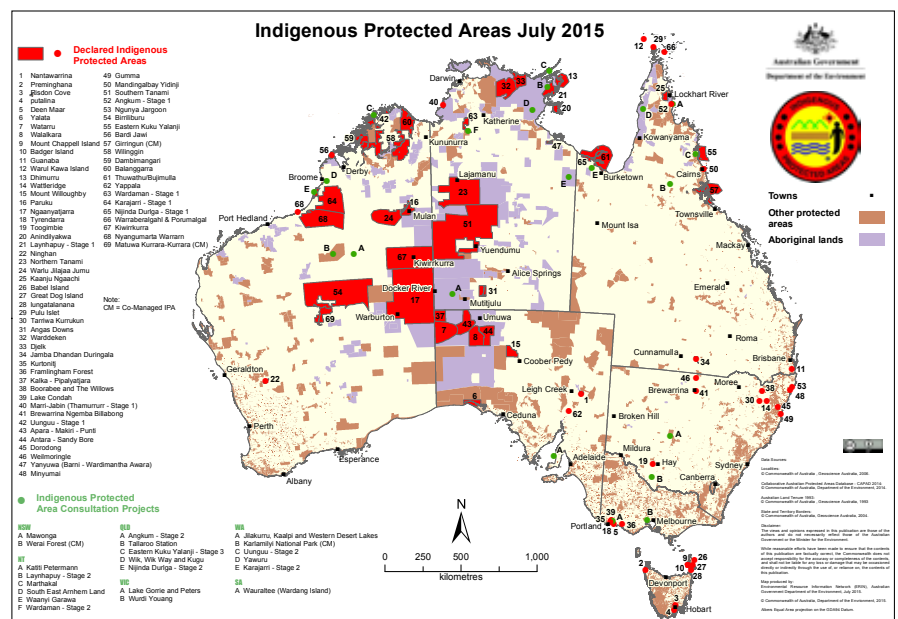
PASTORAL LEASES

Some land in Australia is owned by a state government or the Australian Government and is leased out for grazing stock. This is known as a pastoral lease.

In 1996 the High Court made a judgement in the Wik case that allowed native title claims to be made over land with a pastoral lease. This means the grazier will still be able to operate, but native title holders may have some rights to access their traditional lands. If native title is granted over a pastoral lease, there is often little room for the native title holders to negotiate. The pastoralist will have a greater say over the use of the land.

INDIGENOUS PROTECTED AREAS

Indigenous Protected Areas (IPAs) are areas of land or sea owned by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. The traditional owners have entered into an agreement with the Australian Government to promote biodiversity and cultural resource conservation. The government funds the traditional owners to manage the land or sea in these regions. Ranger groups are often part of the management of these areas.



DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

Who owns the land you are working on?

Are there any native title holders, or is there a current native title claim?

If there is native title, what rights do the traditional owners have over their land?

Are there any pastoral leases?

Is the area part of an IPA?

You can include this information in the first part of your project.

1.3 MANAGEMENT PLANS & PRACTICES

Management practices are the things you do to look after Country, such as managing weeds and feral animals and preventing fires.

A management plan is often written so everyone is clear about what management practices should be used. All relevant people have a say in what the management plan should include, and then everyone agrees to follow the plan.

The people involved in planning will depend on the ownership of the land and the kind of assets to be protected. The plan might be the responsibility of:

- Your community
- A native title holder group
- A government department
- A pastoral station owner
- A mining company or
- A combination of any of these

Examples of plans are:

- IPA plans
- Community heritage plans
- Park management plans



NOTE

An asset is something of value. Cultural sites, water sources, geology, and native plant and animal species are examples of assets on Country.



DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

With your workplace supervisor, find any existing management plans for the site you are studying. You will use these in the first and last stages of your project.

