



Aboriginal Protocols and Guidelines

A guide for Council and
community

Eurobodalla
Shire Council

Acknowledgement of Country

Eurobodalla Shire Council recognises Aboriginal people as the original inhabitants and custodians of all land and water in the Eurobodalla and respects their enduring cultural and spiritual connection to it. Eurobodalla Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land in which we live. Council pays respect to Elders past, present and aspiring. We are on Yuin Country.

How to contact us

In person	Customer Service Centre 89 Vulcan Street, Moruya Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm
Phone	02 4474 1000 For after-hours emergencies call 1800 755 760
Mail	PO Box 99, Moruya NSW 2537
Email	council@esc.nsw.gov.au
Web	www.esc.nsw.gov.au
Councillors	See contact details on our website

We would like to acknowledge Eurobodalla Aboriginal Advisory Committee members for their continued support and advice in developing the Aboriginal Protocols and Guidelines document.

Council holds a ten-year licence on the art used in this document, which was designed and produced by Leanne Brook. We would like to acknowledge the story within the art belongs to the yuin people.

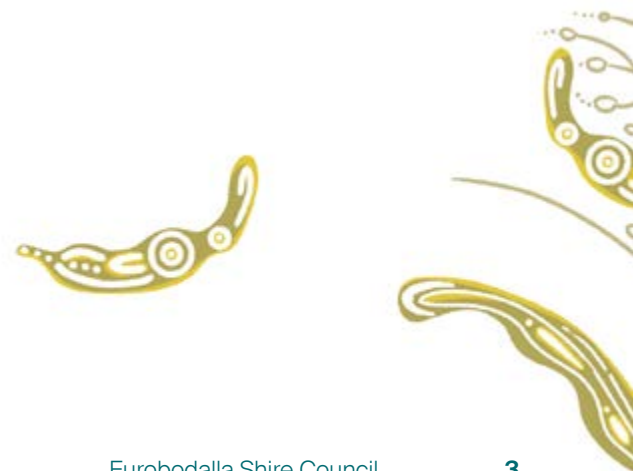


Cover image: "Mayawar-bara Gulaga-nggul" (Gulaga and her two sons) by Leanne Brook, May 2024.

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Green hues and gum leaves
represent the colours of Country.



Introduction

Overview

Eurobodalla Council acknowledges, respects and works with the Traditional Custodians of the land.

We regard our relationships with Aboriginal people as an important step in building community strength and resilience. Increasing respect for the Aboriginal community helps Council enhance relationships, embrace diversity, and promote harmony in the shire.

Purpose

This document provides Council staff with important protocols necessary for working, consulting, and acknowledging local Aboriginal communities. It is a resource that supports staff responding to inquiries from community members about cultural protocols.

It should be included as part of Councillor and Council employee inductions.

What are cultural protocols?

Cultural protocols describe historical and current customs, values, traditions and codes of acceptable behaviour for a specific cultural group. All cultures have protocols, which help ensure respectful conduct.

Following Aboriginal cultural protocols is a significant sign of respect and awareness. It demonstrates that you are taking the time to learn about Aboriginal cultural traditions and history and recognising that the protocols of this diverse community is as equally valid and worthy of respect as the cultural protocols of other communities.

Aboriginal cultural identity

Cultural identity provides Aboriginal people with a sense of belonging; their culture is the essence of who they are, where they come from and how they relate to one another. Fundamental to an Aboriginal person's identity is self-identification and identification by others as a member of a distinct cultural group, an indigenous language, or an identified member of an authorised Aboriginal organisation.

Culture, not colour, is the heart of Aboriginal identity. Ask how they would like to be described – for example, where they come from or the Country, community, or clan they identify with. Questioning their percentage of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander blood is offensive.

Message sticks being passed along campsites.



Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Indigenous terms

Using 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people' is an acceptable way to identify the two cultural groups that make up Australia's First People. Other acceptable contemporary terms are 'First Nations' and 'First Peoples'; plurality respectfully encompasses the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities. Some Aboriginal people dislike the compound noun 'Indigenous Australian', instead 'Aboriginal' is used in this document.

The yuin nation - Aboriginal cultural groups in Eurobodalla

The yuwinj (yuin) nation is a group of Australian Aboriginal peoples from the NSW south coast. Yuin people share ancestors who spoke as their first language, one or more of the yuin languages including dhurga, djirringanj and dharawal.

The 13 traditional groupings of yuin people – based on language and cultural difference – include:

- dharawal of Sydney
- allowrie of Wollongong
- wodi wodi of Nowra
- jerrinja of Orient Point
- wandiwandian of Wandandian
- murramurrang of Ulladulla
- walbunja of Batemans Bay/Mogo
- munkata-yuin of Braidwood
- brinja-yuin of Moruya, Tuross and Bodalla
- arralyin of Araluen
- djirringanj of Narooma, Wallaga and Bega
- watharagadarls/wallagadarns of Bermagui
- dhawa of Eden.

Eurobodalla is uniquely intersected by six Local Aboriginal Land Councils:

- the Batemans Bay Local Aboriginal Lands Council
- the Mogo Local Aboriginal Lands Council
- Cobowra Local Aboriginal Lands Council (Moruya)
- Bodalla Aboriginal Lands Council
- Wagonga Local Aboriginal Lands Council (Narooma)
- the Merrimans Local Aboriginal Lands Council (Wallaga Lake).

The 13 traditional groupings of yuin people – based on language and cultural difference

dharawal

Sydney

allowrie

Wollongong

wodi wodi

Nowra

jerrinja

Orient Point

wandiwandian

Wandandian

murramurrang

Ulladulla

walbunja

Batemans Bay/Mogo

munkata-yuin

Braidwood

brinja-yuin

Moruya, Tuross and Bodalla

arralyin

Araluen

djirringanj

Narooma, Wallaga and Bega

watharagadarls/
wallagadarns

Bermagui

dhawa

Eden

Significant Aboriginal ceremonies

Welcome to Country

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture is rooted deep in respect. Respect for each other, for Lore, and for land and water. Lore is at the core of Aboriginal culture; unchanging, it is the traditional Aboriginal people's governance system by setting boundaries, guiding morals and values, and determining acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

The practice of Acknowledging Country is just as important as a Welcome to Country.

Traditionally, Aboriginal groups would seek permission before crossing neighbouring lands. If granted, travellers were given safe passage over that Country, with Lore – and the consequences for breaking it – explained. This practice has evolved into Welcome to Country.

A Welcome to Country is given only by a Traditional Custodian, Elder or Elder's delegate for the land, and signifies an invitation and safe passage. It is sometimes accompanied by a smoking ceremony to cleanse the visitor's energy and a warm and welcoming dance ceremony that may have music, singing or feasting.

The Local Aboriginal Land Council can recommend best placed Aboriginal Elders or a descendant of the land to perform the Welcome to Country.

Recommended practice

A Welcome to Country should be performed at all significant or major events, including but not limited to significant Aboriginal days of celebration and recognition, as well as openings, launches, or where it is otherwise appropriate to welcome people into the local community.

For an important event a Welcome to Country should be performed, an Acknowledgement is not sufficient.

There is no exact wording for a Welcome to Country and how it is performed is dependent upon the individual undertaking the role. A Welcome to Country should always occur in the opening ceremony of an event and should be the first item and may consist of a single speech or it can also include a performance, a traditional welcome song, a traditional dance, didgeridoo performance or a combination of any of the above.

As such, the content of the ceremony should be negotiated between the host organisation and the Elder or representative with reference to the nature of the event and community practices. The Elder or representative of the Aboriginal community performing the Welcome to Country should always be seated alongside other dignitaries and speakers at the event.

Traditional Aboriginal Elders should be asked how they would like to be referred to (for example Aunty or Uncle).

Acknowledgement of Country

An Acknowledgement of Country or Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners is how non-Aboriginal people or Aboriginal people from other lands show respect for the Traditional Custodians, their Country, and their history and is a thank you for being our host. When you acknowledge Country, it is also important to acknowledge the Elders of the land you are meeting on and their Lore, promising to respect them and their land while you're on it.

Acknowledgement or Welcome: What's the difference?

There's sometimes confusion as to the difference between a Welcome and an Acknowledgement, and which is appropriate. The key difference is the performer. A Welcome to Country declares custodianship. An Acknowledgement of Country recognises first peoples as custodians.

In general, a non-Aboriginal person, or an Aboriginal person from a different community, **can not** do a Welcome to Country. They should do an Acknowledgement of Country to pay respect to the Traditional Owners of the land on which the event is taking place.

Tips for nailing your next Acknowledgement

Know when to do it

An Acknowledgment of Country should occur before any general meeting or event such as a work meeting, school assembly or music gig. For major events, forums, or functions, or when the event has an impact on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community specifically, a Welcome should be included alongside an acknowledgment from each speaker.

Know the Country you're on

Make sure you've done the correct research about whose land you are on. If you don't know, continue to try to find out, and in the meantime say 'Traditional Custodians' or 'Traditional Owners'.

Recommended practice

The Acknowledgement to Country is a minimum requirement for events and significant meetings.

Acknowledgement of Country examples:

- I begin by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of this land on which we meet. I would also like to pay my respects to Elders both past and present and extend that respect to any Aboriginal people present here today.
- Before we commence, we wish to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, pay respects to their Elders past, present, and emerging and any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people here today. We recognise Aboriginal people as the original inhabitants of all land and water in the Eurobodalla and respect their enduring cultural and spiritual connection to it.
- I would like to begin by acknowledging and paying my respects to the [insert cultural/ language group name] people, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we are gathered today.
- I would like to pay my respects to Elders, past, present, and emerging, and acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders here today.

Written words of acknowledgement

The Eurobodalla Aboriginal Advisory committee has endorsed the following written words of acknowledgement.

Eurobodalla Shire Council recognises Aboriginal people as the original inhabitants and custodians of all land and water in the Eurobodalla and respects their enduring cultural and spiritual connection to it. Eurobodalla Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land in which we live. Council pays respect to Elders past, present and future. We are on yuin Country.

Smoking Ceremony

Smoking Ceremonies are a spiritual event conducted by Aboriginal people with specialised cultural knowledge, such as Elders, Aboriginal people with the spiritual knowledge, or cultural teachers. Most Aboriginal dance groups can provide Smoking Ceremonies as part of their services, but it is considered a separate cultural ceremony.

The Smoking Ceremony aims to spiritually cleanse the space in which the ceremony takes place, to allow peace and recognise the importance of a gathering. Given its significant nature, Smoking Ceremonies are usually performed only on special occasions, at major events, or places of spiritual significance. Smoking Ceremonies are better suited to outdoor occasions. Smoking Ceremonies should have the permission of the Traditional Custodians (Local Aboriginal Land Councils will have their contact details).

Recommended practice

A Smoking Ceremony should be performed on special occasions or at major outdoor events, such as Australia Day, and other culturally significant activities including Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week when permission has been approved by the Traditional Owners. A smoking ceremony can also be included in the opening of new buildings and public spaces.



Significant dates and events

26 January

Australia Day

21 March

Harmony Day (Elimination of Racial Discrimination Day)

25 April

Coloured Diggers Day

26 May

National Sorry Day

27 May to 3 June

National Reconciliation Week

3 June

Mabo Day (Torres Strait Islander celebration)

First week of July

National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Celebration (NAIDOC) Week

4 August

National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day

9 August

International Day of the World's Indigenous People

Australia Day/Survival Day

Australia Day is a day of celebration for most Australians, however, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people it is a day that represents invasion, dispossession and loss of culture and sovereign rights. For this reason, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people choose to refer to Australia Day as Survival Day. The Survival Day concept was born out of the 1988 Bicentenary Australia Day celebrations in Sydney. These celebrations were marked by a large gathering and protest march by the Aboriginal community, many of whom had travelled to Sydney from all over Australia. Significant numbers of non-Aboriginal people also participated in the march from Redfern Oval to Hyde Park, with an estimated crowd of around 40,000 people.

The first Survival concert was held in 1992 and reflected a major shift away from the traditionally named Australia Day to Invasion Day. The Survival Concerts, now one of the biggest of Aboriginal cultural events of the year, have been entirely initiated and coordinated by the Aboriginal community. La Pouse hosted the concerts for many years and now many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across New South Wales host their own local Australia/Survival Day ceremonies and celebrations.



Harmony Day

We come together to celebrate Harmony Day on 21 March. Created in 1999 to celebrate unity and diversity, Harmony Day was originally an Australian celebration but is now marked worldwide by conscientious citizens.

As the nation grew, Australia (like many countries) was a divided society. In the late 20th century, despite the legislation enshrining equal rights for all, many people still suffered from racist attacks.

In 1998, after activists condemned the country for persistently turning a blind eye to its racism, the Australian government commissioned a study into the nature of racism over the last decade. The study highlighted a greater need for people to 'live in harmony' and, as a result, Harmony Day was created to encourage everyone to respect each other and appreciate the country's multicultural background.

Coloured Diggers Day

Coloured Diggers Day is an annual event held on Anzac Day, the 25th of April. This event commemorates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who served Australia in overseas conflicts. This event was initiated in 2007 to acknowledge the service of Indigenous Australians in the military, whose stories have been overlooked, forgotten or covered up.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men were legally exempt from military service but over 1000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people served in World War 1 and around 70 fought at Gallipoli.

An estimated 3000 Aboriginal and 850 Torres Strait Islander people served in World War 2. Their Service was not segregated. They fought side-by-side with one another and with the true Aussie spirit of camaraderie and genuine mateship but returned home to a country that hadn't changed and were denied soldier settlement lands, RSL membership, Military Funerals, respect and the other benefits given to those they had fought alongside.

The Coloured Digger March is a celebration of both the Anzac memory and First Nations resilience. It aims to be a catalyst for truth-telling and recording important stories, giving fuller meaning to the Anzac spirit.

National Sorry Day

National Sorry Day, officially the National Day of Healing, is an event held annually in Australia on the 26th May commemorating the Stolen Generations. It is part of the ongoing effort towards reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

This day remembers and acknowledges the mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were forcibly removed from their families and communities, which we now know as 'The Stolen Generations'.

The first National Sorry Day was held on 26th May 1998, one year after the Bringing Them Home report was tabled in Parliament. This report is the result of a Government Inquiry into the past policies which caused children to be removed from their families and communities in the 20th century.

National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week is intended to celebrate Indigenous history and culture in Australia and foster reconciliation discussion and activities. Initially named the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation in 1993, developing into National Reconciliation Week in 1996.

National Reconciliation Week is held annually between the 27th of May and the 3rd of June; these dates were chosen for their historical significance; the former marks the anniversary of the 1967 referendum in Australia, and the latter date marks the anniversary of High Court of Australia judgement on the landmark Mabo v Queensland case of 1992, which recognised native title in Australia for the first time.

Reconciliation must live in the hearts, minds and action of all Australians as we move forward, creating a nation strengthened by respectful relationships between the wider Australia community, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

National Reconciliation Week is celebrated in workplaces, schools and early learning services, community organisations and groups, and by individuals Australia-wide.

Mabo Day

The Mabo decision acknowledged the traditional rights of Indigenous people to their land and waters and paved the way for native title in Australia.

For more than 200 years, the Australian governments acted under the presumption that Australia belonged to no-one before colonisation. That legal concept, known as 'terra nullius', stripped Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of their traditional rights to their lands and attempted to sever connection to cultures dating back 65,000 years.

Mabo Day is commemorated annually on the 3rd of June. This date marks the anniversary of the *Mabo v Queensland (No2)* decision by the High Court of Australia, which recognised the pre-colonial land interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with Australia's common Law. This day also commemorates Eddie Koiki Mabo a Torres Strait Islander man who campaigned for Indigenous land rights in Australia that led to the court's decision, which overturned the legal fiction of 'terra nullius' that had characterised Australian law regarding land and title since the voyage of James Cook in 1770.

June 3 marks the momentous victory to overturn that precedent in the High Court and honours the legacy of the man behind it – Eddie Mabo.



Men arriving at Nadjunuga,
the youngest son.

National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Celebration (NAIDOC) Week

NAIDOC Week occurs annually in July and celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Before and during the 1920's and 1930's Aboriginal rights groups boycotted Australia Day (26th January) in protest of the status and treatment of Indigenous Australians, if the movement were to make progress, it would need to be active. Several organisations emerged and on Australia Day 1938 protestors marched through the streets of Sydney, followed by a congress attended by over a thousand people; this gathering was one of the world's first major civil rights gatherings, it was known as the Day of Mourning. In 1955 Aborigine Day was shifted to the first Sunday in July after it was decided the day should become not simply a protest day but also a celebration of Aboriginal culture. At the same time, major Aboriginal organisations, state and federal governments all supported the formation of the National Aborigines Day Observance Committee (NADOC) which secured the second Sunday in July as a day of remembrance for Aboriginal people and their heritage.

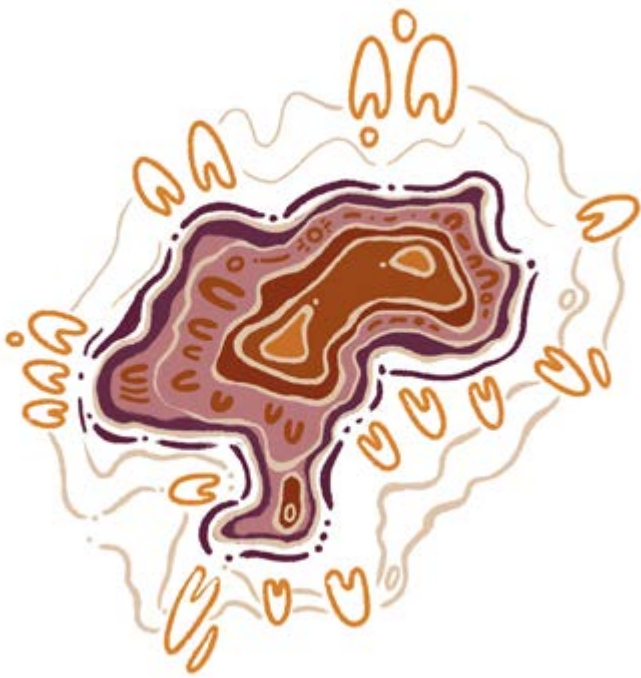
A growing awareness of the distinct cultural histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, NADOC was expanded to recognise the Torres Strait Islander people and culture. The committee then became known as the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC). This new name has become the title for the whole week, not just the day.

National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day

National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day is celebrated across Australia each year on 4 August.

Children's Day, and the week leading up to it, is a time for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to celebrate the strengths and culture of their children. The day is an opportunity for all Australians to show their support for Aboriginal children, as well as learn about the crucial impact that community, culture and family play in the life of every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child.

The date 4 August was historically used to communally celebrate the birthdays of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were taken from their families at a young age, without knowing their birthday – the Stolen Generations. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples felt a day was needed to celebrate the children, to give them confidence and make them feel special and included.



Women ascending on Gulaga.

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

The International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples is observed on 9 August each year to raise awareness and protect the rights of the world's Indigenous population.

There are an estimated 476 million Indigenous peoples in the world living across 90 countries. They make up less than 5 per cent of the world's population, but account for 15 per cent of the poorest. They speak an overwhelming majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages and represent 5,000 different cultures. Indigenous peoples are inheritors and practitioners of unique cultures and ways of relating to people and the environment. They have retained social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Despite their cultural differences, Indigenous peoples from around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples.

Indigenous peoples have sought recognition of their identities, their way of life and their right to traditional lands, territories and natural resources for years. Yet, throughout history, their rights have been violated. Indigenous peoples today are arguably among the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of people in the world. The international community now recognizes that special measures are required to protect their rights and maintain their distinct cultures and way of life.

To raise awareness of the needs of these population groups, every 9 August commemorates the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, chosen in recognition of the first meeting of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations held in Geneva in 1982.

Australian Aboriginal flag

The Australian Aboriginal flag represents Aboriginal Australians. It is one of the officially proclaimed flags of Australia, by which it has special legal and political status together with the national flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag, with which it is often flown.

The flag is horizontally and equally divided into a black region (above) and a red region (below); a yellow disc is superimposed over the centre of the flag.

The symbolic meaning of the flag colours, as stated by Harold Thomas, the Aboriginal Artist who designed the flag in 1971 for the land rights movement, is:

- Black represents the Aboriginal people of Australia.
- Yellow circle represents the sun, the giver of life and protector.
- Red the red representing the red earth, the red ochre used in ceremonies and Aboriginal peoples' spiritual relation to the land. Later, activists referred to the red as representing the blood of the Aboriginal people.

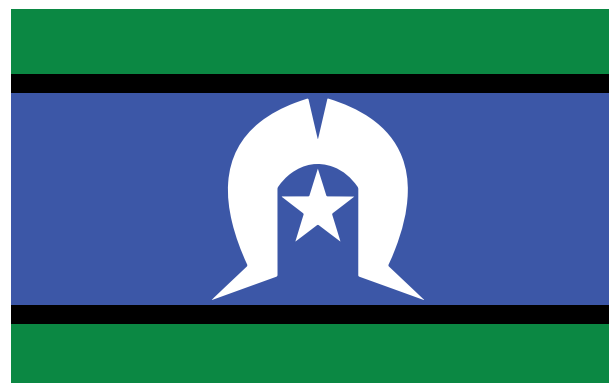


Torres Strait Islander flag

The Torres Strait Islander flag was designed by the late Bernard Namok of Thursday Island. The flag symbolises the unity and identity of all Torres Strait Islanders.

The flag is emblazoned with a white Dhari (headdress) which is a symbol of Torres Strait Islanders. The white five-pointed star beneath it symbolises peace, the five major island groups and the navigational importance of stars to the seafaring people of the Torres Strait.

- The green stripes represent the land.
- The black stripes represent the people.
- The blue represents the sea.
- White Dhari (headdress), symbol of Torres Strait Islander people.
- The five-pointed star symbolises peace, recognising the astrology techniques used for the seafaring people of the Torres Strait and the five major islands.
 - Northern Division (Boigu, Dauan, Saibai)
 - Eastern Islands (Erub, Mer, Ugar)
 - Western Division (St. Pauls, Kubin, Badu, Mabuig)
 - Central Division (Masig, Poruma, Warraber, Iama)
 - Southern Division (Thursday, Horn, Prince of Wales and Hammond Islands, NPA and Mainland Australia)



Aboriginal cultural practices and considerations

Respect for cultural protocols and practices

Since colonisation, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have faced extreme prejudice, discrimination and misunderstanding, and their interests, rights and concerns have been dismissed or ignored.

The introduction of cultural protocols represents an important step towards understanding, respecting and representing Aboriginal world views. Engaging in culturally appropriate working practices and valuing the rich, cultural diversity of Aboriginal peoples promotes interaction based on good faith and mutual respect.

Gender protocols – men's and women's business

Within Aboriginal cultural groups some knowledge is segregated to specific genders and is commonly referred to as 'men's business' and 'women's business'. This knowledge may include stories, ceremonies and rituals. There may be places linked to ceremonial activity such as men's and women's business, or to spiritual beliefs. These may not be sign posted, accidentally or intentionally entering such area may offend Aboriginal people, please respect the wishes of the traditional owners by avoiding and respecting these areas.

Aboriginal cultural and intellectual property

Aboriginal people have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions. Australian intellectual property laws focus on individual ownership of knowledge and the production of people's creations or ideas in a physical form. They generally don't protect group or community rights or protect the passing on of knowledge, such as through story. Therefore, it is important that ethical standards, such as protocols, support the rights of Aboriginal people to control, protect and develop their cultural intellectual property.

Some examples of situations where issues concerning Aboriginal cultural and intellectual property may arise include:

- during a community forum or event where an Aboriginal person tells a story which reveals cultural knowledge or information.
- personal stories or photos of Aboriginal people that may be collected to present a narrative of a collective experience for a community.
- the showing of Aboriginal artwork that incorporates cultural knowledge.

Communication and consent: Informed consent should be sought from Aboriginal peoples and communities prior to the use or application of Aboriginal cultural intellectual property.



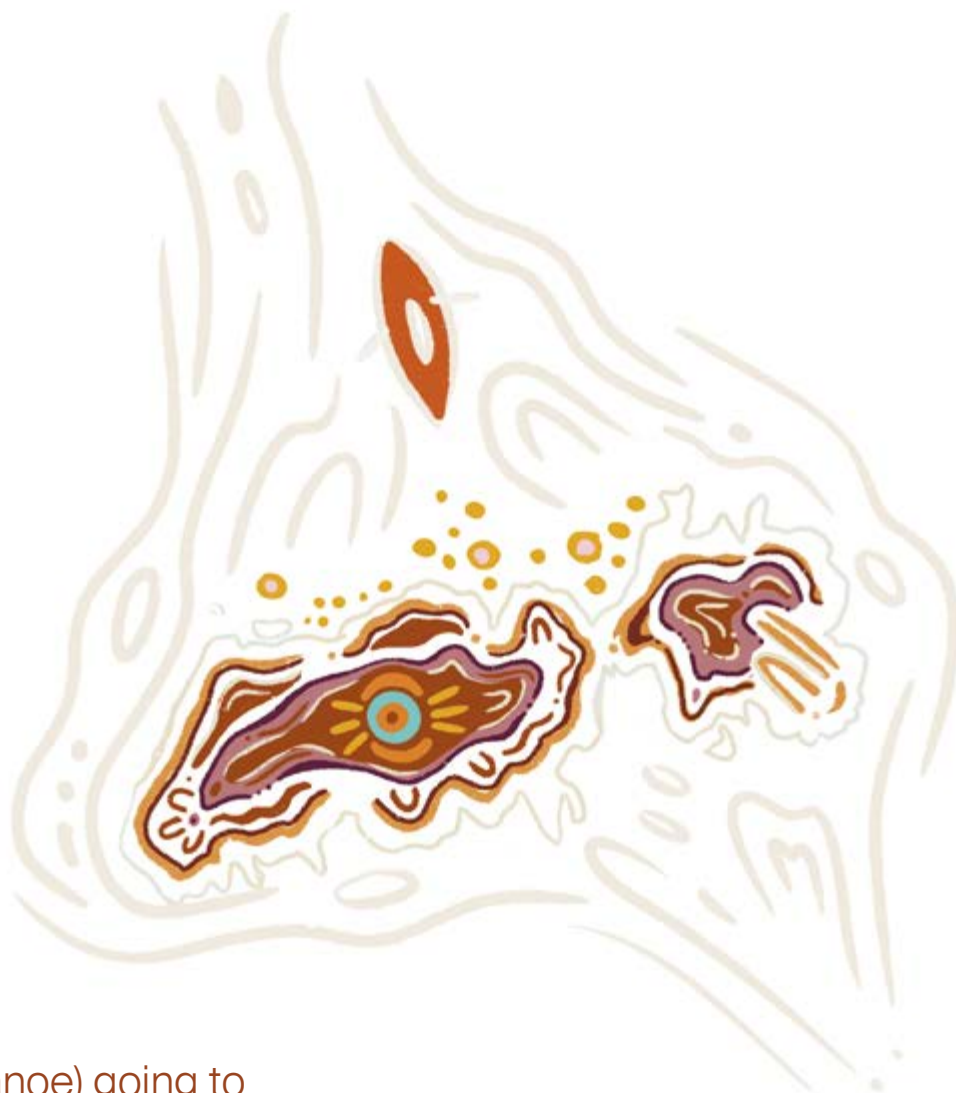
Sacred sites

Sacred sites are places within the landscape that have a special meaning or significance under Aboriginal tradition. Mountains, rocks, waterholes, trees, lakes, and other natural features can be sacred sites.

Sacred sites derive their status from their association with particular aspects of Aboriginal social and cultural tradition. This body of tradition includes association with the activities of ancestral beings, collectively known as 'Dreaming', whose travels across the land and sea created the physical and social world that people now inhabit.

Aboriginal sacred sites are recognised and protected as an integral part of the Eurobodalla's and Australia's' cultural heritage. There are numerous significant (the Broulee Scar Tree) and sacred (Gulaga Mountain) Aboriginal sites in the Eurobodalla.

It is against the law to remove items or artifacts from the land, these items represent a continuation of Aboriginal culture and a connection to the past. Removal is subject to heavy fines. To learn more about sacred sites contact the Local Aboriginal Lands Council for that area.



Madjari (canoe) going to Barunguba where ceremony is taking place.

Community engagement

Consultation is essential to building meaningful relationships with Aboriginal communities. Relationships with Aboriginal people, organisations and communities need to be based on mutual respect and understanding. It is essential that Aboriginal people are involved in decisions that may impact or affect them, and on any occasion where cultural or traditional knowledge, information, pictures, artwork, or graphics are going to be displayed, exhibited, published, or used for educational purposes.

Consultation and engagement with Aboriginal communities supports the development and delivery of services that are timely, meaningful, relevant, and inclusive. Regular and ongoing consultation helps to ensure community guidance on increasing accessibility to information, services and opportunities in a way that is culturally appropriate and respectful to Aboriginal people.



Consultation and engagement with Aboriginal communities supports the development and delivery of services ...

Eurobodalla Aboriginal Advisory Committee

The role of the Eurobodalla Aboriginal Advisory Committee (EAAC) is to promote Aboriginal Culture within the Eurobodalla Shire and to advise and make recommendations to Council on matters relating to Aboriginal people. Whenever a consultation process is underway or Indigenous engagement is needed within any project or plan, the EAAC should be consulted and advice provided by the EAAC should be considered. The EAA committee is made up of:

- Local Aboriginal Land Council (LALC) nominees, one from each group (six), plus one alternate designated representative from each LALC.
- One Gulaga Joint Board Management Chairperson or nominee.
- One Eurobodalla Indigenous Interagency chairperson or nominee
- Up to seven community members will be selected by Council that will ensure all sectors and geographic regions of the Aboriginal community are represented.
- Aboriginal youth representative/s drawn from Eurobodalla Shire Council's Youth Committee and/or other sources.
- One Councillor representative, plus one designated alternate (selected by Council).
- Director, Community Arts and Recreation Services or nominee/s (non-voting).

Contact in community

When contacting community, it is important you speak to the right person, ensuring that you engage with the most appropriate person that has the authority to represent or speak on behalf of the community. One of the most appropriate places to make first contact with a community is through their Local Aboriginal Land Council. A list of Land Councils and their contact details has been provided in this document.

The following groups, services and agencies can also assist in contacting the right community representatives.

Aboriginal Affairs South East Region (NSW Government)

Level 1 Baylink, 3 Flora Crescent, Batemans Bay
T: 4478 2678
E: enquiries@aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au
www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au

Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers (NSW Police)

South Coast Police District Local Area Command
Beach Road, Batemans Bay
T: 4476 2444
M: 0404 446 159

Aboriginal Legal Service

8 Mirrabooka Avenue, Moruya
T: 4474 8600
www.alsnswact.org.au

Boomerang Meeting Place

2 Church Street, Mogo
T: 4474 3138
E: boomerangmeetingplace@gmail.com

Eurobodalla Aboriginal Advisory Committee

c/o Eurobodalla Shire Council, corner Vulcan and Campbell streets, Moruya. Contact Council's Community Development and Participation team
T: 4474 1000
E: council@esc.nsw.gov.au
www.esc.nsw.gov.au

Gadhu Elders (Local Elders Group)

E: gadu.elders@bigpond.com

Gulaga Board of Management

Central Tilba
T: 4476 0841
E: Roslyn-field@hotmail.com
E: npws.gulagaBOM@environment.nsw.gov.au

Katungul Aboriginal Health Services

E: reception@katungul.org.au
www.katungul.com.au

Batemans Bay

1-3 Old Princes Highway Road, Batemans Bay
T: 4488 4050

Narooma

26 Princes Highway, Narooma NSW 2546
T: 4476 2155

New Careers for Aboriginal People (NCAP)

c/o Campbell Page, 47 Vulcan Street, Moruya
T: 4411 8520
E: hello@campbellpage.org.au
www.campbellpage.com.au

Reconnect Aboriginal Youth Support

47 Vulcan Street Moruya NSW 2537
T: 4411 8520
E: hello@campbellpage.org.au
www.campbellpage.com.au

South Eastern Aboriginal Regional Management Services (SEARMS) (Local housing service)

3 Museum Place, Batemans Bay NSW 2536
T: 4472 2644, 1800 138 425
E: admin@searms.com.au
www.searms.com.au

South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation

Unit 4, 5 Orient Street, Batemans Bay NSW 2536
T: 4448 0200, 1800 215 099
E: admin@southcoastams.org.au
www.southcoastams.org.au

Walbanga Elders Group

E: irisj.white@gmail.com



When contacting community,
it is important you speak to
the right person ...

Differences between communities

When contacting Aboriginal communities, it is important to remember that each community has unique needs and different histories and the approach you take may need to be different with each community.

Consider local politics

Consider local politics when planning an activity or event. Ensure you are not planning a function or event in a disputed location or with the incorrect representative. Consult on appropriate content for all planned activities.

Who to contact

Batemans Bay Local Aboriginal Land Council

T: 02 44727390

E: bblalc@bigpond.com

Bodalla Local Aboriginal Land Council

T: 02 44735404

E: bodallalalc@bodalla15.com

Cobowra Local Aboriginal Land Council

Moruya

T: 02 44744188

E: ceo@clalc.com.au

Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Council

Wallaga Lake

T: 02 44737288

E: admin@merrimanslalc.org.au

Mogo Local Aboriginal Land Council

T: 02 44745229

E: mogolalc1@bigpond.com

Wagonga Local Aboriginal Land Council

Narooma

T: 02 44761144

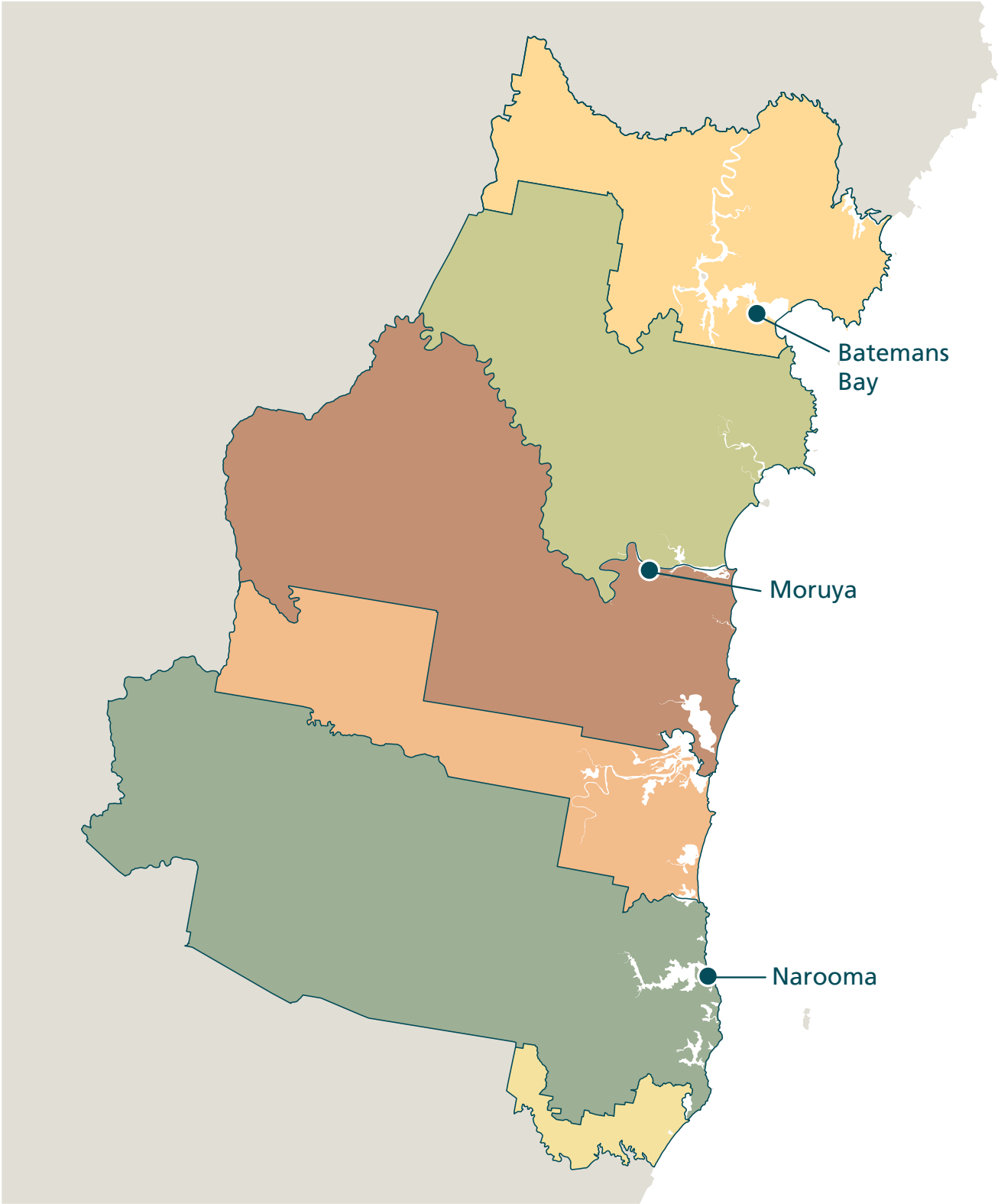
E: wlalc@bigpond.net.au



Duck feet remind us of the yuin totem, umbarra/wambaara the black duck.

Map of Local Aboriginal Land Council boundaries

- Batemans Bay
- Mogo
- Cobowra
- Bodalla
- Wagonga
- Merrimans



Definition of terms

Aboriginal

Usually refers to the First Peoples of Australia but can also include those of the Torres Strait region.

Aboriginality

Sometimes used to refer to Aboriginal people's identity, or the combination of cultural heritage, spirituality, and relationship with the land.

Community

Important elements of a community are country, family ties and shared experiences. Community is about connection and belonging and is central to Aboriginality. Aboriginal people may belong to more than one community.

Country

When Aboriginal peoples talk about 'Country' they describe the lands, waterways, and seas to which they are connected. The term is complex and encompasses ideas about place, custom, language, spiritual belief and Dreaming. The word is often capitalised.

Culture

The accepted and traditionally patterned ways of behaving, and a set of common understandings shared by members of a group or community. Includes land, language, spirituality, ways of living and working, artistic expression, relationships, and identity.

Custodian

A person charged with maintaining and passing on particular elements of cultural significance (e.g., knowledge, stories, songs, dances, language, ritual and imagery). A custodian is also referred to as someone who has a cultural responsibility to the land.



Dreaming

The Dreaming has different meanings for different Aboriginal groups. The Dreaming can be seen as an embodiment of Aboriginal creation which gives meaning to everything. It establishes the rules governing relationships between the people, the land, and all things for Aboriginal people.

Elder

Key go-to person within Aboriginal communities who is respected and consulted due to their experience, wisdom, knowledge, background, and insight. Often described as the “custodians of knowledge” or the “libraries” of a community. Elder does not necessarily equate with age.

First Peoples

The term First Peoples is often used synonymously for Aboriginal people or Indigenous people.

Indigenous Australians

Term used to refer to the original inhabitants of Australia; always capitalised. Includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Many Aboriginal people don't like to be referred to with this term.

Mob

Colloquial term used by Aboriginal people to refer to a group of people they belong to.

Nation

A nation is a group of Aboriginal tribal groups who share the same area of land, river and sea that is their traditional land. They may also share the same customs and lore.

Traditional custodians / owners

‘Traditional owners’ is an English term from the Northern Territory Land Rights Act and refers to Aboriginal decision-making. It refers to a group of Aboriginal people who belong to a certain area of land (‘country’) and have the cultural obligation to maintain it.

The term ‘custodians’ considers that in Aboriginal culture the land owns its people (and not vice versa), while ‘owners’ gives credit to the fact that it is Aboriginal land (both terms are in use).

People at Central Tilba.



Mystery Bay campground.

Fee for service guide (2024)

This is a guide only and fees are subject to variation depending on level of experience, location, time and type of event.

Cultural practice	Example of range of fees
Welcome to Country	
Level 1 – Welcome and explanation (2 minutes)	\$200
Level 2 – Welcome, explanation and short speech (5 to 10 minutes)	\$300 to \$500
Smoking Ceremony	
Ceremony only	\$150 to \$200
Didgeridoo/music performance	
Didgeridoo/music performance	\$300
Traditional dance performance	
Category 1 (basic)	
Inexperienced dancers (1 to 2 dances)	\$200
Category 2 (professional)	
Professional dancers with national/international experience	\$500
Experienced dancers with dance interpretation	Up to \$5000
Guest speaker	
Guest speaker knowledge based	\$300 to \$500

Information sources

- Aboriginal Affairs NSW, www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au
- Aboriginal Areas Protection Authority, www.aapant.org.au
- Bega Council, www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au
- Eurobodalla Council's Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- Glossary of First Nations terms - Creative Spirits, www.creativespirits.info
- NSW Government, Department of Commerce, www.nsw.gov.au
- NSW Health, www.health.nsw.gov.au
- Oxfam Australia, www.oxfam.org.au
- Reconciliation Australia, www.reconciliation.org.au
- *The Dhurga Dictionary and Learner's Grammar: A south-east coast, NSW Aboriginal language*
- Eurobodalla Aboriginal Advisory Committee page, www.esc.nsw.gov.au
- Eurobodalla Shire Councils Culture page, www.esc.nsw.gov.au
- Eurobodalla Shire Council's *Aboriginal Action Plan 202-2024*

