



First Nations Landcare Working Group Terms of Reference

February 2024

1. Introduction

Landcare Australia is a national not-for-profit organisation dedicated to environmental restoration and stewardship across agricultural landscapes and other geographic settings.

Australia's First Nations' Peoples hold the key to healing the damage from hundreds of years of poor land and sea management practices across Australia and unlocking agricultural and environmental benefits for future generations.

Landcare Australia is committed to listening to and amplifying the voices of First Nations' Peoples, and following the 2022 National Landcare Conference, Landcare Australia established the voluntary First Nations Landcare Working Group (the Working Group).

The Working Group is voluntary. Landcare Australia will seek to support members through activities and opportunities consistent with the role of the Working Group.

This partnership is a significant step towards integrating First Nations led Cultural land, sea and water management into landcare practices.

Landcare is a grassroots movement of groups and individuals across Australia with a shared vision to protect, enhance or restore the natural environment in their local community through sustainable land management and conservation activities. Landcare enables people, groups and organisations to actively care for the natural environment in their communities.

2. Purpose

The Working Group's purpose is to:

- provide leadership, along with both general and specific advice to the Landcare Australia Board (the Board) and to work practically with Landcare Australia Executives on developing targeted partnerships and achieving outcomes based on the vision and values of the Terms of Reference.
- provide an opportunity for the members of the Working Group to leverage Landcare Australia's standing within the agriculture, environmental and political sectors to increase the voice of First Nations Peoples, furthering the sharing and transfer of First Nations knowledge and wisdom.
- work respectfully with First Nations Peoples, establishing trusting relationships and clear expectations, building mutually beneficial relationships for the transfer of knowledge to the broader landcare community.
- further Landcare Australia's understanding of our First Nations' knowledge of land, sea and water management practices and its practical implementation across the Australian landscape.





3. The Working Group's Vision

Landcare is respectfully embracing ancient practices within contemporary caring for Country activities (inclusive of people, land, water, plants, animals, sea and sky). Through this we aim to facilitate knowledge sharing, elevate environmental stewardship, and promote the wellbeing of Country.

4. Scope

The Working Group will deal with matters and develop ideas that relate to:

- a) partnerships that enhance activities that improve the wellbeing of Country;
- b) the two-way exchange of knowledge, including land, sea and water management practices that restore land and sea-scape to, improve biodiversity and supporting sustainable agriculture, fisheries and tourism;
- c) initiatives that engage the landcare community;
- d) the roles Landcare Australia can play in supporting the sector in its general engagements with First Nations' organisations;
- e) a shared learning as we walk together through this journey.

5. Working Group Outcomes

The Working Group aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- a) Provide information and advice to the Board and Executive on Indigenous knowledge, including land, sea, and water management practices, with an emphasis on restoring land and sea-scapes, enhancing biodiversity, and supporting sustainable agriculture, fisheries, and tourism.
- b) Provide input to practical events and or programs Landcare Australia is delivering.
- c) Contribute expertise to help Landcare Australia identify its role in engaging with First Nations' organisations and assist in developing an organisational First Nations protocol.
- d) Participate, when possible, in events on behalf of Landcare Australia and provide valuable feedback to the organisation.
- e) Conduct periodic reviews to assess progress, challenges, and achievements.

6. Working Group Reflection

The Working Group will undertake an annual reflection, including personal reflections on events and activities undertaken throughout the year by members of the Working Group. This will be prepared by Working Group members with the support of the Landcare Australia team.





7. Function

The Working Group and the Board will operate in a respectful and reciprocal manner, undertaking activities including:

- a) Providing recommendations to the Board on matters related to the Working Group's purpose; and where requested.
- b) Taking actions to enable the Working Group to fulfil its purpose, including consulting where necessary and where resources permit.

8. Composition

The Working Group is appointed by the Board, with input from existing members of the Working Group.

The Working Group and the Board may make recommendations for new members, and any recommendations will be approved by the Board.

It is desirable that First Nations Landcare Australia Board Members will be members of the Working Group, and the Board Chair will also be invited to be a member.

The Working Group is comprised of individuals, with appropriate skills and expertise.

Appendix A provides details of the Working Group's membership.

The Working Group is intended to have a national geographic spread and gender equality and the Board will invite new members to join the Working Group as needed. It is not intended nor expected that an individual member is expressing anything other than their own personal view unless otherwise indicated, and individuals are not selected as organisational representatives.

Process for Inviting New Members:

When new members are invited to join the Working Group, this decision will be made in consultation with existing members, ensuring diversity in geographic representation, gender equality and required skills.

Process for Adding or Removing Members:

The Board, in consultation with existing Working Group members, may invite new individuals to join the Working Group based on their expertise and alignment with the group's purpose.

A member wishing to resign their position on the Working Group will provide two weeks' notice in writing to the Board.

In cases where cessation of an individual's membership may be necessary, either due to non-alignment with the objectives of Landcare Australia and the Working Group, or other reasons, the Board (or its nominated representatives) and other members of the Working Group will consider the matter jointly. The resolution, ideally based on consensus, will be enacted by the Board.





9. Composition

The initial membership term of the Working Group will be two years, Appendix A provides details on Working Group terms. The term may be renewable or extended based on the mutual agreement of the Working Group members and the Board, with consideration given to Working Group members meeting regular attendance, responsiveness to communications, progress made, continued collaboration and other personal commitments.

Working Group members wishing to renew or extend their term will be required to reapply for their position.

10. Working Group Lead Yarner

The Working Group will rotate the position of Lead Yarner. The Lead Yarner will be identified at the start of each meeting.

11. Operation of the Working Group

- a) Meetings, held online, via teleconference or face-to-face, of 1-2 hours will aim to be held bi-monthly, but may be reviewed and adjusted according to progress to work through the scope of the Working Group.
- b) One face-to-face meeting to be held on Country each year. The location will be determined by the CEO in consultation with the working group.
- c) There will be male and female leaders in the Working Group for different areas of discussion.
- d) From time to time Working Group members will be invited to participate in particular activities by Landcare Australia as needed.
- e) The Working Group Lead Yarner is responsible for leading the Working Group in its duties, facilitating effective discussion at Working Group meetings and ensuring effective communication with the Board and Executive as required.
- f) A Landcare Australia delegate will undertake secretariat and convening duties for the Working Group and liaise with the Lead Yarner as appropriate to support meeting preparation and delivery.
- g) There will be the opportunity for the Working Group to meet in-person formally with the Board at least annually.
- h) If a Working Group member is unable to attend a meeting, it is desirable that efforts should be made to notify Landcare Australia Executive in advance of this meeting.
- i) If a Working Group member doesn't attend three consecutive meetings, the Landcare Australia Secretariat will have a discussion with the member to inform a recommendation to the Landcare Australia Chair about the individual's membership.
- j) Meeting dates for the following calendar year will be agreed by consensus by October 31st of the current calendar year based on Board meeting dates. Meetings need to occur one month prior to Board meetings to allow for the submission of minutes from Working Group meetings.





Conflict Resolution:

In the event of conflicts of interest or disagreements among members, the Working Group will employ a consensus-based approach to address and resolve such issues. Working Group members will work collaboratively to reach common ground.

If an agreement cannot be reached, the Working Group will follow Landcare Australia's grievance policy.

Conflict of Interest:

If any Working Group member perceives a potential conflict of interest concerning a matter under discussion, they are expected to promptly disclose the conflict to the group. The Working Group will then assess the situation and determine the appropriate course of action, which may include recusal from the discussion or the appointment of an impartial advisor to provide guidance.

If a resolution is unable to be achieved, the Working Group will follow the Board's conflict resolution policy.

12. Recommendations to the Board

- a) Recommendations by the Working Group to the Board will be made by consensus.
- b) Recommendations will be recorded in the minutes.
- c) Where input is sought from the Working Group outside of scheduled meetings this will be circulated in writing, or postponed to a future meeting as determined by the Working Group.
- d) It will be assumed that no response within the requested timeframe is approval of the proposed recommendation.
- e) The Board will refer to the Working Group when considering new First Nations appointments for Directors.
- f) Feedback from the Board will be provided to the Working Group on any recommendations.

13. Minutes of Meetings

A Landcare Australia delegate will perform secretariat and convening duties to the Working Group including meeting agenda, minutes of the proceedings and recommendations from meetings of the Working Group.

- a) Minutes of the Working Group will be circulated to all members of the Working Group within two weeks of the meetings and subsequently made available to the Board.
- b) Delegates of the Working Group or Landcare Australia may from time to time present (verbal or written) to the Board any outcomes/recommendations or advice to the Board.





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14. Review of these Terms of Reference

The Working Group will review these terms of reference annually at the face-to-face Working Group gathering.

Procedure for Making Changes to the Terms of Reference:

Proposals for changes to the Terms of Reference may be introduced by any Working Group member. The proposed changes will be discussed within the Working Group to ensure alignment with the group's objectives. Any proposed changes will be subject to a vote within the Working Group. If the proposed changes are approved by a majority vote, they will be forwarded to the Board for final endorsement. This process ensures that modifications to the Terms of Reference are transparent and receive broad approval from the Working Group.

Appendix A will be updated as required to reflect group membership changes.

Cultural IP

The Working Group members will:

- Identify when work goes beyond voluntary commitment and consideration will be made by Landcare Australia for remuneration on particular subject knowledge.
- Identify through record of meetings when ICP has been referenced and requires consideration of a culturally appropriate response and/or management.
- Identify an agreed definition of ICP, with possible reference to Terri Janke/AMK Law.
- Be eligible for reimbursement, for services beyond voluntary input, as agreed with Landcare Australia. E.g., provision of cultural awareness training as part of a commercial engagement.

Policies and Procedures

The Working Group will adhere to Landcare Australia's policies and procedures.





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Appendix A – First Nations Landcare Working Group Members, Terms and Biography

Member Name	Working Group Term
Gail Adamson-Reynolds	First Term, appointed 2023, ending 31 October 2025
Ricky Archer	First Term, appointed 2023, ending 31 October 2025
Dhani Gilbert	First Term, appointed 2023, ending 31 October 2025
Barry Hunter	First Term, appointed 2023, ending 31 October 2025
Natalie Sommerville	First Term, appointed 2023, ending 31 October 2025
Victor Steffensen	First Term, appointed 2023, ending 31 October 2025
Suzanne Thompson	First Term, appointed 2023, ending 31 October 2025
Rene Woods	First Term, appointed 2023, ending 31 October 2025
Doug Humann AM	LA Board Chair, appointed 2023





Biographies

<p>Gail Adamson-Reynolds</p>	<p>Gail is a descendant of the Wadjuri peoples which is on the eastern boarder of the Nyungar Nation, (Esperance) she is also a descendant of the Mirrning People (“Whale people”) her mother’s country which stretches along the southern coast of WA to the South Australian border.</p> <p>Gail is the Chairperson of the Esperance Tjaltjraak Native Title Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC (ETNTAC), a position she has held since the Corporation’s establishment in 2015.</p> <p>She is also the Chairperson of Southeast Aboriginal Health Service, Board member on Horizon Power board, Indigenous Land and Sea Corporation, Board member on Indigenous Land and Sea Council, member of the South-west Marine Parks Advisory Committee and recently appointed to the First Nations Landcare Working Group.</p> <p>Gail was a previous board member of Indigenous Business Australia and a Chairperson of Goldfields Esperance Development Commission.</p> <p>She also runs her own business, a specialist training and consultancy company that works with Government, corporates, and mining companies such as Rio Tino and Woodside to engage with and work with first nations people.</p>
<p>Ricky Archer</p>	<p>Ricky Archer is a Djungan man from the Western Tablelands region of North Qld.</p> <p>Ricky has a strong network of on ground land and sea managers across northern Australia from which to draw from and has demonstrated an ability to connect on-ground work of Indigenous organisations with regional, state and commonwealth priorities.</p> <p>In his current role, Ricky is the Chief Executive Officer of the North Australian Indigenous Land & Sea Management Alliance (NAISMA). He is involved with numerous organisations and committees enabling strategic input across a diverse field, these include;</p> <p>Landcare Australia – Board Director CRC for Developing Northern Australia (CRCNA) - Board Director North Commonwealth Marine Park – Committee Member NT Aboriginal Land Management Advisory Group - Chairperson National Feral Pig Action Plan Implementation Committee – Chairperson National Forestry Stewardship Council, Indigenous Working Group – Member</p> <p>Previous engagements include: Australian Committee IUCN – Executive Member Minister for Environment, Indigenous Advisory Committee – Member</p>






	<p>National Landcare Advisory Committee – Member Commonwealth Environmental Biosecurity Advisory Group - Member National Indigenous Innovation Alliance - Member</p> <p>Ricky has a background in geographical information systems, Indigenous knowledge management, and natural & cultural resource management and as a ranger. He is passionate about the advancement and improvement of Indigenous livelihoods across the north.</p>
<p>Dhani Gilbert</p> 	
<p>Barry Hunter</p> 	<p>Barry J Hunter is a descendant of the Djabugay speaking people of Cairns hinterland. He grew up besides the Barron River in the rainforest near Kuranda.</p> <p>Barry has over 30 years’ experience in Aboriginal affairs, particularly in areas of land, natural and cultural resource management. Barry’s employment includes appointments in government conservation agencies, mining and exploration industry, community and not-for-profit organisations, and more recently, managing Carbon projects and exploring new economies, biodiversity and offsets.</p> <p>He has run a successful consulting business for the past 10 years, working in areas including Indigenous economic, community and social development, Indigenous land management and cultural heritage, and reviews of government-funded programs.</p> <p>With a Bachelor of Applied Science from Charles Sturt University, Barry is passionate about building community capacity and planning that delivers sustainable social, cultural, and economic outcomes. He also has a real interest in the work community rangers do in looking after land, fire management, and cultural heritage.</p>





	<p>Barry is currently Executive Carbon Manager at Northern Australia Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance (NAISMA) where he is leading NAISMA's Carbon Portfolio. He is also Chairperson of the Aboriginal Carbon Foundation; on the board of Terrain NRM; Chairperson of Woongal Environmental services Company; and a member of Landcare Australia's newly established First Nations working group, providing advice to the Landcare Australia Board.</p> <p>Barry's other recent works include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Author, 'Indigenous Lands' for the State of the Environment Report, 2021 • Contracted by Jonathan Thurston Academy JT Believe Program to work with Vaxa group on the evaluation of the JT Believe Program • Acting CEO of Djabugay Aboriginal Corporations • Cultural heritage assessments, identification and recording working with Indigenous Ranger Groups • Healthy country planning - Facilitating consent and FIPC (Free and Informed Prior Consent) contract to Conservation Management Pty Ltd and Green Collar and their engagement with traditional owner groups • Sea Country planning with Jajikal Aboriginal Corporation Wujal Wujek • Writing the Barron Gorge National Park Bama Plan with Stuart Cowel from Conservation Management Pty Ltd. • Project Management Djabugay Bulmba Rangers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Including developing principles and protocols for engagement with researchers ○ Lillypond Cultural and vegetation assessment in partnerships with Kuranda Envirocare. ○ Bulmba Rangers Fire management plan and implementation.
<p>Natalie Sommerville</p> 	<p>Natalie Sommerville lives and works on Ngadjuri Country in South Australia's Mid North and is a farmer, grazier, business owner, mother and mentor. Nat's connections to Wagadagam clan of Mabuyag of the Torres Strait Islands through her father's side provides her with a cultural lens in all that she does.</p> <p>Nat with her husband Dane and 2 children manage their farming business Windjara Ag and have been farming in the mid north for almost 20 years, developing strong relationships with the local traditional owners over this time.</p> <p>Driven by her passion for sustainable agriculture, the environment and social justice, Nat's focus is on influencing positive change in rural Australia and seeing greater innovation, inclusion of gender and age, and respect for diverse backgrounds. She is passionate about sharing her farming, cultural and social knowledge and experiences to improve outcomes for both current and future generations.</p>






	<p>Nat creates time to mentor Aboriginal students in local schools and ensures she volunteers for community and industry boards at local, state and national levels. This includes National Farmers Federation, Australian Women in Agriculture, SA Ag Excellence Alliance, Landcare Australia First Nations Landcare Working Group, and the local NAIDOC committee just to name a few.</p>
<p>Victor Steffensen</p> 	<p>Victor is an Indigenous writer, filmmaker, musician and a traditional knowledge practitioner. He is a descendant of the Tagalaka clan from North Queensland. Much of Victor's work is based on the arts and reviving practical traditional knowledge values, particularly Aboriginal fire management, with Aboriginal and non-indigenous communities. He is a co-founder of the Firesticks Alliance which involves a large community network across Australia. Victor holds an Honorary Doctor of Science through James Cook University. He is the author of the book, <i>Fire Country</i> and the children's book, "Looking After Country With Fire." Through his artistic label Mulong, Victor has published music tracks and videos such as <i>Great Land</i>, and <i>Cool Burning</i>.</p>
<p>Suzanne Thompson</p> 	<p>Suzanne was born and raised in Barcardine. Her custodial connection to Country has been continuous and carries on the work of her father, the late David Thompson, and Great Grandparents David and Clara, all of whom had traditional custodial links to the lands of the Kunngerri/Iningai & Bidjera peoples.</p> <p>With 20 years of experience in government and community sectors, she has become a pioneer for social and economic empowerment, trade and Indigenous self-determination and is passionate about finding innovative ways to create partnerships between indigenous and non-indigenous cultures.</p> <p>As the Founder and Managing Director of Yambangku Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Tourism Development Aboriginal Corporation (YACHATDAC) – which manages a 22,000-acre Property in Outback Central Western Queensland – Suzanne is redefining the very idea of social enterprise and appropriate cultural trading methods that will ensure a safe and transparent economic future for Indigenous people.</p> <p>She volunteers her time as the Chair of the Australian Native Foods and Botanicals (ANFAB) National Peak body and is working directly to secure Indigenous interests and right in this rapidly expanding global marketplace.</p> <p>She also serves as Indigenous advisor to the Tourism & Events Queensland board (TEQ), and interim secretary for the newly</p>





	<p>formed Queensland First Nations Tourism Council, the peak body for First Nations Tourism in Queensland.</p> <p>Suzanne is currently fostering support and investment for nature-based economies, including Indigenous Land Management, Carbon Farming and First Foods and Medicines, and the recognition, protection, and remuneration of Indigenous intellectual knowledge by industry.</p> <p>More recently, Suzanne was appointed to the Central Western Queensland Ministerial Round Table for her invaluable insights and connections to Regional Outback Queensland, and is very proud to be a member of Landcare Australia’s newly established First Nations working group, providing advice to the Landcare Australia Board.</p>
<p>Rene Woods</p> 	<p>Rene Woods is a Nari Nari man from southwest New South Wales. He has had a long involvement Gayini (water) for Aboriginal people across the Basin. He grew up on the Murrumbidgee River where the river was always central to his family, his community, and their way of life.</p> <p>Rene is a strong advocate for First Nation people in the Basin and has worked in communities in both the public and non-government organisation sectors of the Basin. He is currently employed by the Nature Conservancy Australia as a Conservation Officer and has seen what can happen for communities that have Gayini and land under their ownership and control.</p> <p>He believes that together we can achieve a strong healthy river system and healthier communities. He works with his Nari Nari Elders to make sure their views are incorporated into Gayini (water) planning within the state and Basin</p> <p>He previously held the position of chairperson of the Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations (2018 to 2020). He has also been vice-chair of the Nari Nari Tribal Council. He has also held several other positions including with New South Wales Department of Primary Industries Aboriginal Water Initiative (2013 to 2016) and Murrumbidgee Valley Water NSW Customer Advisory Group (2018 to 2020).</p> <p>Rene was also a member of the National Cultural Flows Research Committee (2013 to 2018) and was a panel member of Former Minister Littleproud’s Independent Panel for the Assessment of Social and Economic Conditions of Murray–Darling Basin communities.</p> <p>Rene was the first Aboriginal person appointed to the Murray Darling Basin Authority Board Member in December 2020.</p>
<p>Doug Humann AM</p>	<p>Doug Humann AM, GAICD, BA (Hons), Dip ED, was appointed chairman of Landcare Australia in 2016. With more than 40 years involvement in regional Australia, including 30 years leadership</p>





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experience in the environmental sector, Doug led Bush Heritage Australia (1997–2011) to national prominence before establishing his own consultancy. Doug is primarily engaged with non-government organisations, Indigenous groups and natural resource management/catchment management authorities. Doug provides advice and support on a range of strategic, investment, project and governance matters, and is particularly involved in building partnerships, collaborations and mentoring.

