

# Strong People, Strong Country

## The Co-management of National Parks in South Australia



National  
Parks  
South  
Australia

# Connection to Country

---

Acknowledgement to Country , Elders & Youth





# Connection to Country

---

## Acknowledgement to Yarta

**I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge I am a visitor to this country**

**My people are Adnyamathanha of the Northern Flinders Ranges. One of the Oldest Mountain Ranges in the World.**

**I would like to Acknowledge the teachings of my Adnyamathanha Ancestors, Elders, including the Land, my Grandparents and Parents, Brothers & Sisters, Husband and Children.**

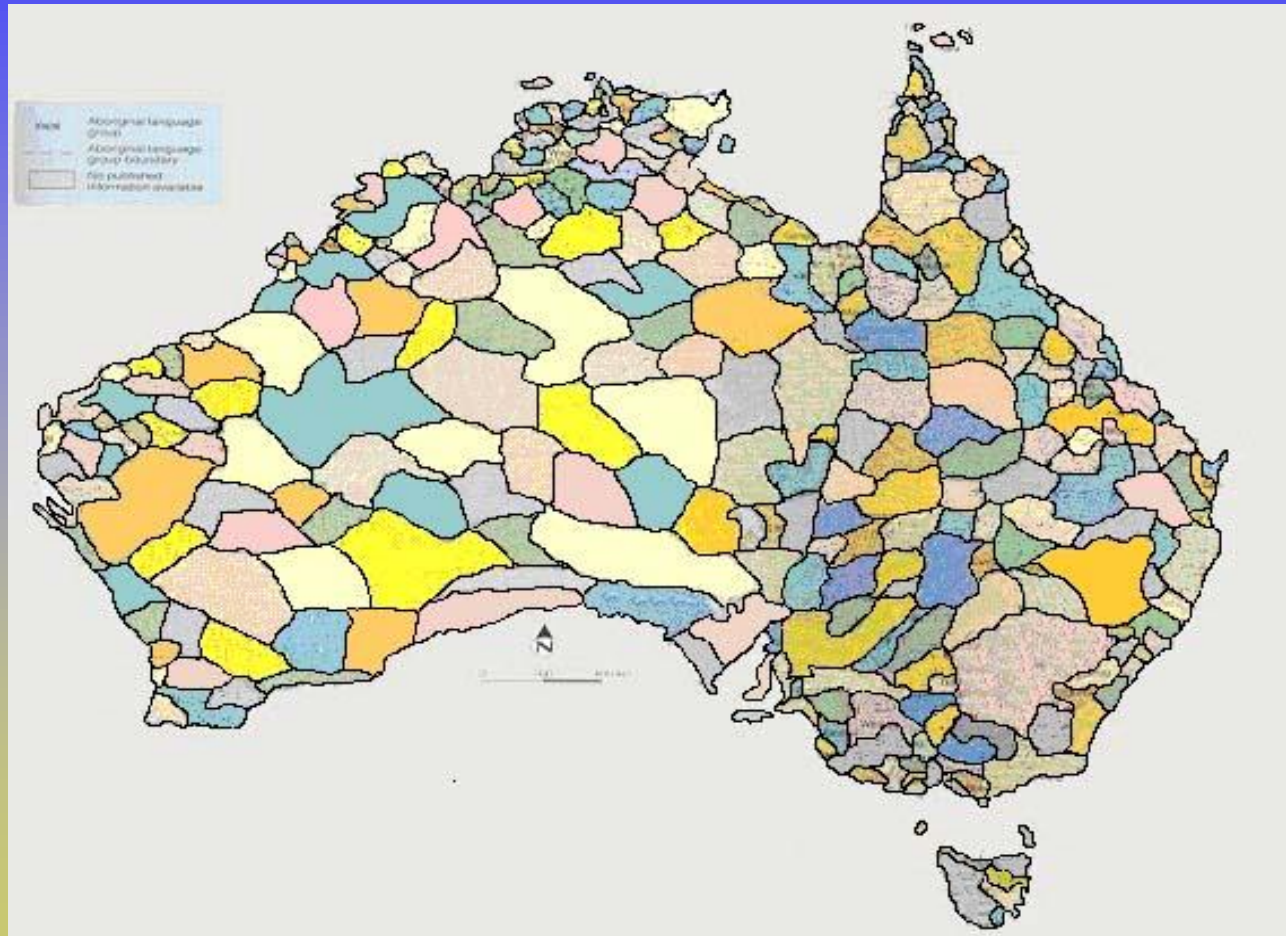


# Aboriginal Affairs – A Timeline

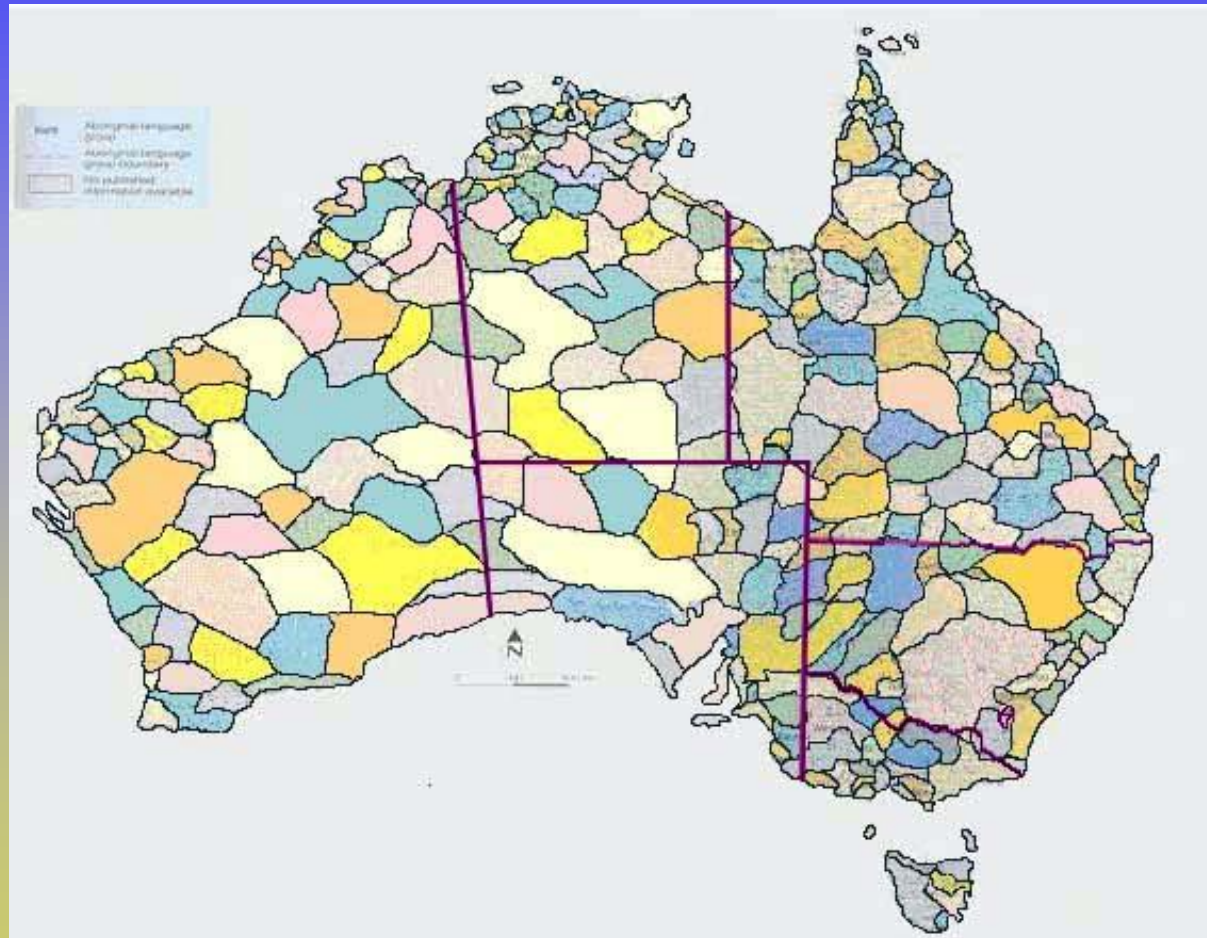
---

- **60,000 years of Aboriginal occupation**
- **1788 – British colonisation**
- **1889 – British courts - 'terra nullius' declaring the land 'practically unoccupied'**
- **1979 – High Court of Australia – 'by European standards, Australia had no civilised inhabitants or settled law'**
- **1992 – Mabo decision – rejected the notion of 'Terra Nullius**
- **1993 – Native Title Act – recognition of traditional connection and ownership – rights to live, use land for traditional purposes, protect values, hunt, fish, gather, teach on country**

# Aboriginal Australia



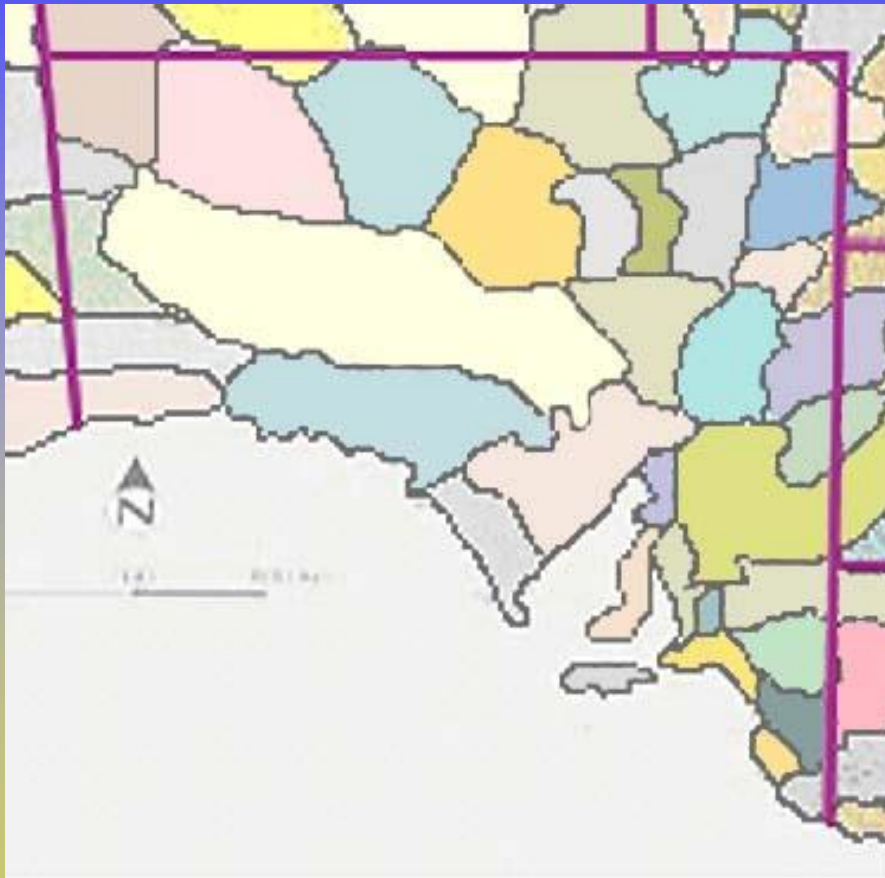
# Aboriginal Australia





# Aboriginal South Australia

---



South  
Australia

42  
Nations

# Connection to Country

---

## Yura Muda

Aboriginal people have an intimate connection to country since the dawn of time through the Creation 'Yura Muda'.

The Environment is like a book. We are taught by our Elders from this book. Chapters from this book is revealed as the land and our teachers believe it is time for us to move on to new learnings.





# Connection to Country

---

## Yura Muda

**We were and still are Arraru (North Wind) and Matheri (South Wind).**

**We sang our way across Country, following the Yura Muda song lines.**

**We married with firestick placed between us, North and South Wind.**

**We traded and respected other groups culture, language and lore.**



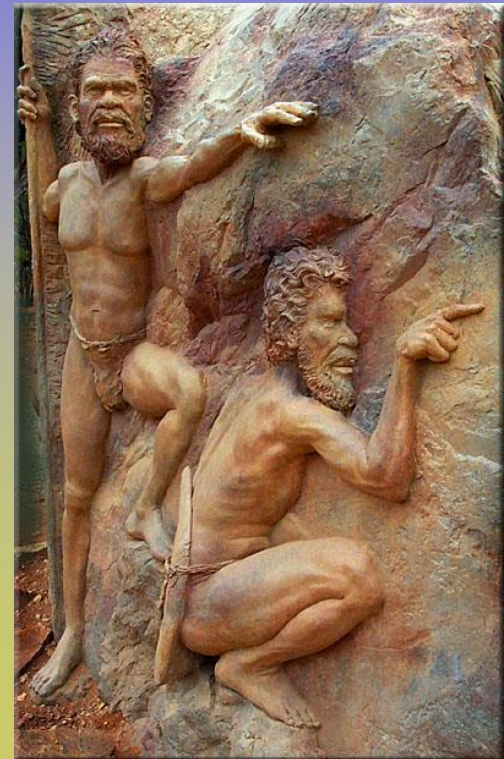
# Connection to Country

## Yura Muda

**We listened to our Elders who taught us.**

**We painted and carved on rocks created  
by our Creation Ancestors.**

**We have always been here.**



# Connection to Country

---

## Yura Muda

Teaches us about the:

Rules for Living

Environment

Spiritual World





# Ikara









# Connection to Country

---

**Ikara is our Parliament House – where Law was passed down**

**New Laws in the non-Aboriginal world can be made today**

**Aboriginal Law never changes – it is here forever!**





# Connection to Country

**The link between birth and culture cannot be overstated.**

**Birth/Born on Country you have responsibilities to care for the country and participate in or prepare for celebrations of life.**

**When you are born on country, you belong to that country and your spirit and the spirit of your people is there. You have a strong connection.**

**You know your stories, waterholes food, responsibilities, kinship etc.**

**You know your need to put your feet in the water and let the Land see, feel, hear and heal you.**



# Connection to Country

---

Through the 'Yura Muda' we are taught about all life forms in/of the environment– Animal, Plant and Human

Our view is people and country which includes our traditional land and waters are importantly connected as a whole and the entire landscape including the solar system has spiritual significance.

There is no separation of the environment, culture, language and the health of the natural environment and solar system.

Aboriginal people are intimately connected woven together as one with the Environment.

Our wellbeing therefore is influenced by both the health of the environment and the extent which we will go to actively be involved in caring, protecting interpreting and preserving it.

**The Land.....**

**Sees**

**Hears**

**Smells**

**Heals**

**Provides**

**Teaches**

**Touches**

**Punishes**

**Cares for our body, mind and spirit**

**Nurturing us physically, spiritually and emotionally**







**Aboriginal People:**

**Speak to the Land**

**Sing to the Land**

**Worry about the Land**

**Feel strong in the Land**

**Long for the Land**

**Respect the Land**

**Want to go home to country when  
We are sick and when we die**



# Connection to Country

---



**We share this  
land with all life  
forms**

# Connection to Country

Aboriginal people's metabolism was balanced by food which was converted into energy to sustain them.

We follow the seasons, the teaching and our Lore.

We moved freely, often and only took what we needed from the Land





# Connection to Country

**In just one generation, from 1850 to 1880, non-Aboriginal settlers took possession of our Land.**

**We struggled, we suffered, we resisted, we bled.**

**Many of us died.**

**But we are still here...**



# Connection to Country

**Introduction of the Pastoral Industry**

**Sheep & Cattle, Goats, Foxes, horses etc.**

**Water table dropped, shallow rooted plants disappeared, including Plants for food & medicinal purposes**

**Erosion started – dust etc.**

**Aboriginal people had to compete with sheep and cattle for water**

**We could no longer move around freely**

**Fences, restrictions to water holes etc.**

**Plants for healing became scarce**

**Land could feel the pain of its people**

**No longer hunt and visit important cultural sites**

**....Our people cried for the Land**





# Connection to Country





# Connection to Country

---



# Connection to Country

---



# Connection to Country

---





# Connection to Country

---



# Connection to Country

**We needed to go home**

**More families wanted to return to country**

**Families started to develop cultural tourism business'**

**Land welcomed us home**

**Culture is being shared, resurrected – started to breathe new life into the Land as well as into us.**

**Elders feel empowered to share the culture, language and 'Yura Muda' as they could see the pride in the younger generations.**

**Using our cultural knowledge we knew where to find traditional food e.g. Mayaka, Urti, Minnera etc.**

**Seeds were scarce to grind, however, we cooked in the ground oven using the same methodology that was passed down thousands of years ago.**





# Connection to Country

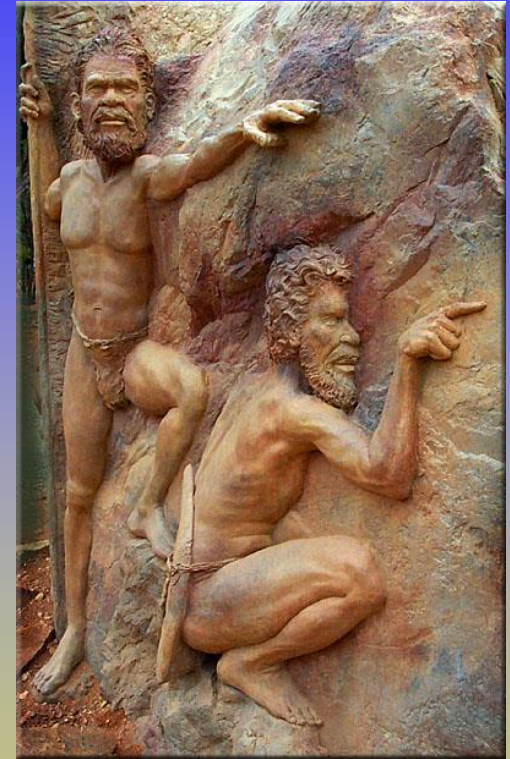
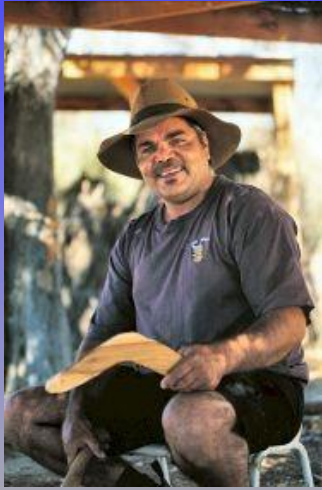
**Men needed to teach the boys hunting and cooking Kangaroo and Emu etc.**

**The Women needed teach the girls about the gathering, grinding and cooking of seeds, fruits, berries etc.**

**While this is happening the journey of the Creators are being told as we relive the journey spiritually**



# Connection to Country



**Teaching**



**Sharing Cultural  
knowledge**



# Connection to Country



Approximately 16 seeds were harvested, ground to make flour



Cleaning the damper



Mai – damper

Minnera leaves

# Challenges

---

- **Treaty discussions – differing expectations**
- **Co-management Board operations suspended**
- **Change of Government – new priorities, reviews**
- **Handback of National Parks to Native Title Groups**
- **Lack of trust in capability of Native Title Groups**
- **Government see Aboriginal ownership as a risk**





# Connection to Country

Aboriginal people need to be involved in decisions about natural and cultural resource management.

Aboriginal people have an inseparable connection with the land and natural resources which contributes to Environment Health and their own physical and spiritual wellbeing.

Governments can embrace the opportunity to make a difference to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people by ensuring our cultural rights, responsibilities and interests in the environment are acknowledged, valued and recognised.

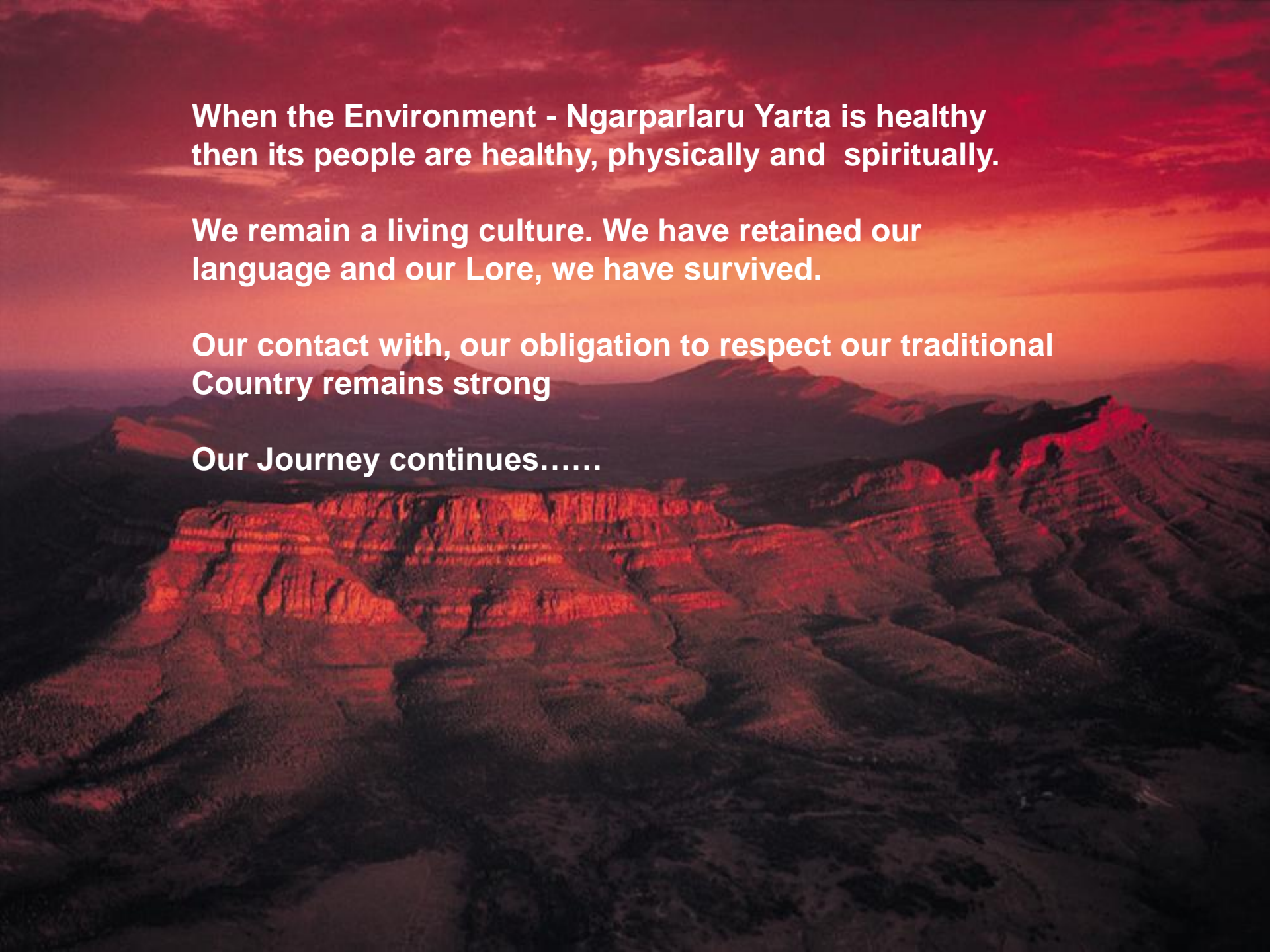


**When the Environment - Ngarparlaru Yarta is healthy  
then its people are healthy, physically and spiritually.**

**We remain a living culture. We have retained our  
language and our Lore, we have survived.**

**Our contact with, our obligation to respect our traditional  
Country remains strong**

**Our Journey continues.....**





# Connection to Country

## IKARA/ FLINDERS RANGES NATIONAL PARK

- Significant tourism destination
- Approximately 170,000 visitors annually,
- 93,695 hectares

## Co-Management Board

- 3 Departmental Officers appointed by Minister
- 1 Member nominated and appointed by Minister,
- 4 Members appointed by Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association (ATLA)
- Executive Officer Support
- First Meeting January 2012 – meets quarterly.

## Significant Achievements

- Park Management Plan
- Park Interpretive Plan
- Fire Management Plan
- Policy Development
- Governance including cultural Governance
- Traditional Hunting Zone
- Sacred Canyon – Pastoral Lease now managed by IFRNP

