

Country-based Planning & Project Services



Traditional Owners asserting the strategic directions for healing and caring for Country is a critical nation building pathway.

The work to develop plans and strategies, such as Country Plans and sub-plans, are the foundational process to build support from within community as well as assert to all other parties including regional partners about the requirement to align efforts on Country to support Traditional Owners' defined objectives and priorities.

The planning context has changed significantly over the last decade with the advancement of formal recognition processes and will continue to evolve as treaty outcomes emerge in the future. Anticipated changes through the Public Land Act reform are also likely to provide greater formal recognition of Country Plans and other Traditional Owner strategies to ensure they are adequately considered by public land managers and agencies.

The role of Traditional Owner Corporations (**Corporations**) and Land Management Boards (**TOLMBs**) will increasingly become more critical, particularly through the growing authority and centrality of Country-based plans (including Country Plans and their sub-plans, Joint Management Plans, Indigenous Protected Area Management Plans and Sea Country Plans).

In many cases, government and agencies across Victoria have yet to consistently embrace planning partnerships with Traditional Owner Corporations or consider a Cultural Landscapes approach.

Country-based plans offer a Traditional Owner led way for landowners to effectively support TOCs and TOLMBs manage Country.

Plan Development



The development of Country-based plans places an unrealistic capacity burden on Traditional Owners organisations. Instead of re/deprioritising planning, organisations can still undertake this vital work with strategic and experienced support.

The Federation of Victorian Traditional owner Corporations (**Federation**) progresses the ambitions of Traditional Owners across Victoria, through engagement and advocacy, providing a state-wide perspective and expertise. Our work in developing Country-based plans has enabled the development of the policy positions and required statutory changes to move forward real self-determination for Traditional Owners.

We have the capability and experience to facilitate, enable and support Traditional Owners to undertake planning processes and develop culturally strong plans. Only then can organisations define the strategic direction for healing Country required to engage with the planning systems and bring community on a journey of nation building.

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Methodology

As a Traditional Owner organisation, we understand the importance of applying Aboriginal processes, decision making and cultural awareness at the centre of any discussions about Country and Culture.

We apply a four-step process to Country-based planning that has Traditional Owners at its core.



The statutory and regulatory planning environment continues to provide opportunities for Traditional Owners to manage Country. It is essential however that to embed TOC and TOLMB visions for Country management into these systems, Country-based planning is undertaken.

With the increasing pressure on organisations' and Traditional Owners' capacity to undertake this work, it is important that trusted and experienced partners are there to provide support. The Federation has the Aboriginal governance, cultural sensitivity and experience required to help you develop your Country-based plans.

We focus on understanding Traditional Owners perspectives across Victoria and work towards furthering Traditional Owners' rights and interests in meeting their Nations' obligations to care for Country.

Our multi-disciplinary team has extensive experience in developing plans across the range of planning contexts and coordinates a network of experienced industry specialists and contractors to deliver quality outcomes.

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