



Voice of Country



A collective voice of Elders, Knowledge Holders and Custodians.

The Voice of Country theme was developed by the Aboriginal Peoples Knowledge Group (APKG), an advisory committee to the Environment Protection Authority. This theme includes details about the APKG members, ways that Aboriginal people identify, and aspects of our shared history and worldviews.

It includes a Truth Telling story where an APKG member provides a first-hand account of living conditions on a discrete Aboriginal community where residents are exposed to contamination and waste.

“We invite
you to *ngarragi**
– ‘to listen,
learn and
remember’.”

At a glance

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised as the oldest continuous culture on the planet.
- The APKG comprises seven Aboriginal Knowledge Holders descended from Saltwater, Freshwater, Rainforest and Desert Country of NSW. Their role is to guide, advise, nurture and challenge the NSW EPA.
- “We need to *ngarrangga** (listen deeply) to each other; walk together, value our differences, acknowledge our strength and have the courage to take action to implement change wherever it is required, for the betterment and care of Country and all peoples.”
- Four of the APKG members share their stories, knowledge and perspectives on how we can work together to care for Country in a [video series](#) for the Voice of Country theme

The big picture



The APKG members look forward to continually building relationships and partnerships with the EPA to uphold the agency’s [Statement of Commitment](#) to Aboriginal Peoples.

APKG recommendations

- The APKG and EPA to work in partnership to develop legislative reform to commit government to implement real change, and to ensure the protection of Country and people, and Aboriginal sacred sites.
- Include Aboriginal people in decision-making and the development of programs that aim to sustain healthy biosystems.
- Ensure Aboriginal knowledges and cultures are valued and promoted alongside western sciences through the inclusion of Aboriginal people on scientific, biodiversity and conservation (environmental management) committees.
- Increase the allocation of funding for healthy Country programs.
- Initiate community consultation, through public forums lead by the APKG, to amplify the voice of Aboriginal people to drive systemic reform and hold governments and services accountable for the health and protection of Country.
- Design a reporting framework for the APKG, outlining the actions and deliverables on the work being undertaken by government bodies and stakeholders in the sustainability and protection of the environment.

*Gathang language