



AUS
SEABED

First Nations Position Statement

AusSeabed seeks to engage genuinely with First Nations Traditional Custodians of Sea Country to achieve the AusSeabed mission.

“To improve the awareness, coverage, quality, accessibility and usability of seabed mapping products in the Australian region through coordination, collaboration and innovation”

Our mission will guide the development of a First Nations Strategy, whereby we will engage with First Nations Australians in the co-design of a strategy using a phased approach. We are beginning this process through consultation, community building, and the identification of representative groups to consult with.

Through this process, the AusSeabed community is committed to the following actions:

Genuine collaborative engagement

We will prioritise engagement to form genuine collaborations with First Nations Australians to provide the means for integrating awareness of their culture and values into AusSeabed activities and to look to First Nations traditional knowledge to help guide seabed mapping activities.

Together, we will identify the appropriate forums, and seek engagement for building relationships to support seabed mapping. We will raise awareness of cultural values, cultural sites, Sea Country custodianship and First Nation links to the sea within the AusSeabed community. We will proactively raise awareness of the AusSeabed mission with First Nations Australians to explore mutual benefits and strengthen two-way communications.

Embedding the cultural knowledge of First Nations Australians

We will seek to understand the seabed for the benefit of all Australians. We will collaborate with First Nations Australians to ensure that, where appropriate, traditional knowledge is incorporated into AusSeabed work and to provide opportunities to connect cultural knowledge with scientific discovery.

Respecting cultural and intellectual property of First Nations Australians

We will respect First Nations cultural and intellectual property and knowledge through co-design, consultation and consent. We will be guided by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and the *CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance (Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, and Ethics)*.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledge their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the elders past and present.

We acknowledge that our mission to be the trusted source of information on Australia’s seabed is preceded by tens of thousands of years of knowledge gained by generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.