

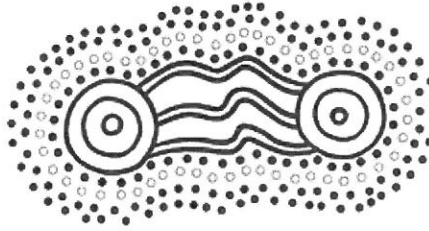
Indigenous Water Management 1

☐ Read the information then complete the task.

Indigenous people's relationship with water, land and resources are interrelated. Inland water, rivers, wetlands, the sea, islands, reefs, sea grass beds and sandbars are all part of an inseparable understanding of the Earth.

Indigenous people have always understood how water is stored below the land and is part of river or creek systems. In the desert a 'soakage' or 'soak' is the non-indigenous name given to water sources. The indigenous people depend on these 'soakages' in times of drought. Indigenous people scoop out the mud or sand of groundwater by using a tool known as a coolamon. They often dig down for several metres until clean water appears at the base of the hole. These 'soaks' are also known as a native well.

Indigenous people cover wells with dead branches and uprooted trees to keep away dead animals. They can maintain wells up to fifteen feet deep by using the coolamon to throw peat against the wall -



this sets like cement and helps to hold the loose sand on the sides of the well.

For the Aboriginal people water is protected by Lore, a system of sustainable management which was misunderstood by the European settlers. To a certain extent there is still a poor representation of Aboriginal knowledge of water in government laws and regulations. For example, in Aboriginal traditions, water is never to be separated from the sky or the features of the landscape. Modern regulations have treated each of these as completely separate entities - however, with further recognition of Aboriginal ownership of the land more consultation now takes place with the traditional land owners of Australia.

There has been recent

consultation with the Aboriginal people regarding the Gnangara Mound in Western Australia. This groundwater supply extends from the Moore River and Gingin Brook in the north; Ellen Brook in the east; the Swan River in the south; and the Indian Ocean to the west. The mound is of vital importance to supporting population and economic growth in the region. Water from the mound supplies public ovals, recreation grounds, household gardens, horticultural centres, businesses and industries. Water from the mound needs to be carefully regulated. The Aboriginal people request that water flow and vitality are protected from development. Long-term strategies to manage the mound include consultation with the Aboriginal people as a part of the spirit of inclusion and co-operation. The Aboriginal Heritage Act of 1972 and the Native Title Act of 1993 ensure that sites of heritage or spiritual significance for the Aboriginal people are protected.

Challenge

Why is it important that Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia are consulted about the use of water in Australia today?

Indigenous Water Management 2

☐ Read the information on page 25 then complete the task below.

- A. Use the traditional Aboriginal art symbols below to create a drawing or painting which shows the importance of water to the Aboriginal people. Use the box provided to practise drawing the symbols and then create your art design in your workbook.



rainbow or cloud or cliff or sandhill



two men sitting



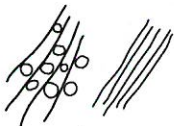
camp site, stone, well, rock hole, fire, hole or fruit



footprints



water, a rainbow, a snake, lightning, a string, a cliff or honey store



rain



fire or smoke or water or blood



water holes connected by running water



clouds, boomerangs or windbreaks



resting place



man



usually means four women sitting



sitting down place



star