landscape ‘is never simply a natural space, a feature of the natural environment . . . every landscape is the place where we establish our own human organization of space and time’.

(Jackson 1984: 156)

Introduction

With a focus on Australia and some reference to international practice this chapter examines culture–nature interplays and associated dilemmas. It addresses a number of points which are a crucial part of the critical culture–nature discourse. These include Indigenous Australian1 values and spiritual integration with landscape within the spectrum of the deeply rich association between people and country;2 alternative conceptions of cultural landscapes; and biodiversity as a driver of cultural landscape values in the culture–nature continuum. These are examined in the light of shifts over the past decade from what may be seen to be the myopically entrenched views of some conservationists for whom the idea that people shaping landscapes (country), as well as adding value such as biodiversity by their actions, is anathema.

Until the 1990s there was a clear, if to some of us, uneasy, division between cultural and natural heritage conservation. This was based on a hegemony of Western values where cultural heritage resided in monuments and sites and scientific ideas of nature and wilderness as something separate from people. Culture and nature were divided. Reflecting this, for example, cultural and natural World Heritage criteria were separate until 2005 when they were sensibly combined (UNESCO 2005).

Environmental ethics were central to the debate on natural values, in particular that of whether nature has instrumental value or intrinsic value. Instrumental value is assigned because of the usefulness of something; in contrast intrinsic value relates to values of things as ends in themselves (Feng Han 2006). To complicate matters further is the question of the origin of intrinsic value (ibid.). Is it subjective, created by human thought and value systems, or is it objective where value is endemic in its own right and simply waiting to be recognised objectively? Is nature valued as purely an object without any human interest or spiritual attachment? Entwined in our ideas of culture and nature is that of aesthetic appreciation. Here,
few would argue that aesthetic value of nature and that of creations from the cultural domain
which we can call works of art – and here we include human shaping of the landscape – both
exist, but that the kind of value appreciation each encourages within a Western historical and
philosophical perspective is often different (Berleant 1993). This schism has affected approaches
to conservation where aesthetics of nature and culture are separated. But in the final analysis
are not both cultural constructs and that to divide nature and culture is misleading?

Complicating matters even further was the emergence in the 1970s of deep ecology
(Naess 2003) which inspired extension of the debate on nature preservation for its own
intrinsic values. To preserve nature for its own sake was regarded as a mark of supreme respect,
and amongst the avid wilderness lobby still is. Nature is concerned with the natural world;
it is the phenomenon of the physical world – flora, fauna, natural environments and their
physical components, and the processes that shape these – and excludes made objects and
human interaction. In this concept even the word nature itself is a tool of separation
and a means of valorising a Western perspective of framing nature as a fixed commodity,
which is traded on the academic and commercial market.

**The idea of wilderness: what do we mean by nature?**

Central to the discourse on nature has been the concept of wilderness with its Western
connotations of supreme value where people are visitors but not residents. Indeed as visitors
they are often viewed by wilderness purists as a nuisance because they spoil the solitude
experience. But the question here is, whose solitude and whose values?

Another question also is whether the very act of visiting and looking renders a place no
longer wilderness as alluded to in Wallace Steven’s poem, *Anecdote of the Jar*:

I placed a jar in Tennesse,
And round it was, upon a hill,
It made the slovenly wilderness
Surround that hill.
The wilderness rose up to it,
And sprawled, no longer wild.

Even more critical are the value systems that traditional communities worldwide associate
deeply with so-called natural areas as part of their cultural beliefs, and the fact that many
traditional communities live in or visit these so-called wilderness places as part of their
life systems and may have done so for millennia. This prompts the question of what do we
mean by nature? Is it the 1960s American model enshrined in the Wilderness Act with
its connections to Protestant Christian, colonial, and postcolonial cultural associations from
the English-speaking Western world? It is what Edward Said pithily refers to as the ‘Puritan
errand into the wilderness’ (Said 1994: 63). Such concepts of nature have now assumed a
global perspective where some so-called ‘natural areas’ are seen as conservation (preservation?)
national park options with local inhabitants either evicted or marginalised to perform for
tourists.

The role model for the national park approach rests in the United States’ nineteenth
national agenda of sublime, awe-inspiring natural wonders as a basis for national parks.
They were regarded, as Nash (1973) critically explores, as symbolic of something special
to the New World bequeathed by God to the civilising hand of white Christian immigrants who would look after them as God intended. That the first national park at Yellowstone had been the ancestral home of Native Americans was ignored in this heroic epic; their forced and brutal eviction swept under the carpet of civilising history. Tourism and cleansing contact with ‘nature’ for city dwellers overruled any rights and traditions of looking after the land of their ancestors that the original owners had. The continuing tragedy of this is that it is a pattern of land management that continues to the present day in the name of national parks.

Certainly criticisms of this model arose in the 1990s. Notably one criticism came from the Indian writer, Ramachandra Guha, in 1989 (in Feng Han 2006). He condemned wilderness as harmful to developing countries because its creation, which excludes people, ignores the needs of local communities. Twenty years ago he saw wilderness preservation areas as a new, American, imperialist project. As places for rich visitors they transfer resources from the poor to the rich. This is now having wider impacts as some places in Asia are declared the equivalent of Western-inspired national parks, opened for tourism that is either restricted or is mass tourism oriented but where local communities are evicted and sometimes man-made structures are demolished.

It is our view that we should recognise culture and nature as entwined components of landscape. The alternative of extracting humans is a distorted concept built on the Western paradigm of separating nature from human occupation and shaping of the landscape.

In the cultural landscape idea – landscape as a cultural construct (Taylor 2012) – culture and nature coexist within a humanistic philosophy of the world around us. It is an holistic approach to the human–nature relationship as opposed to the idea of human detachment from nature (Taylor and Lennon 2011). It is also a non-Western paradigm central to the Indigenous Australian concept of country and the bond between people, beliefs, ancestors and the total environment, beneath, on and above the land or water. In this paradigm there is no division between culture and nature as in the Western conceptual division, the activities of humans and nature are fundamentally bound for mutual survival. All country is part of a made world, a cultural landscape.

Indigenous people have a holistic meaning for ‘country’, which encompasses land and landforms, water and marine resources, the plants, trees, animals, and other species which the land and sea support, and cultural heritage sites. The whole cultural landscape and the interrelationships within the ecosystem are encompassed in the term ‘Country’, and these relate to landowners under customary law in diverse ways, for example through links to totemic species.

(Hunt et al. 2009: 1)

Who owns nature?

The forgoing discussion prompts the fundamental questions of who owns nature and for whom is it to be protected? Descola (2008) lucidly probes these questions in an essay that takes as its starting point how international policies for environmental protection are predicated on a very specific – narrow? – conception of nature from the European Enlightenment. He proposes that this conception is far from being shared by all peoples of the earth who value different cosmological principles. He calls for the preservation of biodiversity (which often
drives the call for nature protection) within a paradigm of understanding plurality in the understanding of nature.

Underlying much of the debate on environmental conservation and the human–nature relationship is a focus on biodiversity protection, and to those concerned with human diversity, on cultural diversity. A notable UNESCO/IUCN international symposium in 2005 (UNESCO/IUCN 2006) served as a platform to address the developing interest in the link between environmental conservation, biodiversity and cultural diversity and for informed discussion on environmental conservation and sustainable development based on tradition belief systems. From a World Heritage perspective, for example, considerable attention over the last decade has swung towards an integrated concept of natural and cultural heritage (Rössler 2006). Reflective of this was the merging of cultural and natural criteria in the 2005 Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO 2005), helping to ‘provide a new vision [where] natural and cultural heritage are not separable’ (Rössler 2006: 15).

Whose nature is it?

What we call wilderness is a civilization other than our own.

(Thoreau 1859, in Nash 1989: 37)

Emerging from the debate has been an increasing questioning in the literature and in professional practice of the idea that in the field of nature conservation people are considered to be ‘disturbances of the natural ecosystem that result in some sort of loss of integrity’ (Dove et al. 2005: 2). Traditional human activities are, ipso facto, seen as a negative, disturbing influence in this paradigm. Such a conservationist mantra remained unquestioned until recently, particularly in relation to the initiation and management of national parks. We are used to hearing the overused adjective ‘pristine’ in connection with a Western view of ecosystem preservation where there is a blinkered and historically insupportable assumption that anthropogenic disturbance has somehow negatively altered and debilitated what is supposed to be pristine. This is seen particularly in colonial settler societies, for example North America and Australia, but has spread to Asia where in some instances the instigation of national parks has been accompanied by removal or marginalisation of traditional communities and land-use management practices. ‘Pristine’ is associated with what some conservationists assume is a precolonial, untouched landscape as nature intended taking its cue from the assertion that ‘Purely untutored humanity interferes comparatively little with the arrangements of nature’ (Marsh 1864).

Two examples serve to illustrate our point. The first concerns Yosemite National Park where abandonment of fire as a traditional historic management tool as used by Native Americans resulted by the 1960s in a landscape that ‘no longer resembled the “pristine” ecosystem that the park service set out to preserve’ (Dove et al. op cit: 4). Solnit (1994, in Dove et al. op cit: 5), writing about the treatment of fire in the American landscape, quotes the following from a plaque in a restored valley meadow at Yosemite:

Two hundred years ago the Valley’s meadows were much more extensive. Oak groves like the one across the way were larger and healthier. By setting fire to the meadows, and allowing natural fires to burn unchecked, the Valley’s Native American inhabitants
burned out the oak’s competitors and kept down underbrush for clearer shots at deer. With leaf litter burned away, it was easier to gather acorns – the Indians’ main food source. Without fires incense cedars are encroaching on the left side of the meadows and beginning to shade out the oaks, but now with controlled fires the NPS is reintroducing a natural process.

Even here the park service cannot accept that the process historically was never natural, that it was the fire management of the landscape by traditional owners that created the meadows and open woodland in the first place and contributed to the biodiversity of the area.

The second example comes from Australia. It is intimately associated as Gammage (2011) demonstrates with the traditional, carefully predetermined fire management by Aborigines. Over millennia Aboriginal management created a fecund and productive landscape scattered with trees, rich with an understorey of grass, interspersed with extensive grassy areas through which game and people could pass, treed areas where game could hide, and tracts of land farmed to raise crops such as yam vines. The result was a picturesque, park-like landscape that so delighted the early British explorers and settlers: for example Elizabeth McArthur summarised the landscape so created:

The greater part of the country is like an English park, and the trees give it the appearance of a wilderness or shrubbery, commonly attached to the habitations of people of fortune, filled with a variety of native plants, placed in a wild irregular manner.

(Quoted in Taylor 2000a: 60)

Notably the association between Aborigines and their country and the way it was managed did not escape some of the more astute early observers. In January 1847 the explorer Thomas Mitchell (1847, quoted in Gammage 2011: 186) observed:

Fire, grass, kangaroos, and human inhabitants, seem all dependent on each other for existence in Australia; for any one of these being wanting, the others could no longer continue. Fire is necessary to burn the grass, and form these open forests . . . But for this simple process, the Australian woods had probably continued as thick as those of New Zealand or America.

Of equal note is that a hardcore of Australian environmentalists and natural scientists today still, as Gammage (2011) reflects, deny the role of Aboriginal burning in spite of historical observational evidence from diaries and from images in colonial paintings. On 17 March 1841 Louisa Clifton (1993: 3 and 5) recorded in her diary as she arrived off the coast of Western Australia:

We are laying within sight of the Australian shores . . . A native fire has been distinguished on the shore . . .
I cannot easily cease to remember . . . the native fires burning along the country, the smoke of which we only saw.

Australian colonial landscape paintings in the picturesque genre consistently show broad sweeps of open park-like landscapes that we now understand as a product of the process.
of Aboriginal management dependent on predetermined sophisticated regimes of fires (Gammage 2011; Taylor 2000b). In some instances scenes of Aboriginal burning and hunting are depicted (Figure 2.1); in others we see smoke from fires dotted around the landscape. It was an Aboriginal cultural landscape that, soon after colonial occupation and cessation of carefully controlled regimes and mosaics of burning, degenerated into thick scrub and increasingly impenetrable woodland and forest prone to wildfires.

**Culture–nature link**

**Sacred natural sites**

The culture–nature discourse has been given a high profile in a recent theme issue of *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal* (Vol. 22, No. 2, 2011). In the opening overview paper on traditional landscapes and community conserved areas Brown and Kothari (2011) demonstrate the role of what they call ‘living landscapes’ in sustaining agro-diversity as well as inherent wild biodiversity values, ensuring ecosystems function, and supporting livelihoods and food security. Their findings are that:

> Across diverse settings, traditional agricultural landscapes, created by indigenous peoples and local communities, have been shaped by the dynamic interaction of people and nature over time. These landscapes, rich in agro-diversity as well as inherent wild biodiversity and cultural and spiritual values, embody human ingenuity and are continually evolving.

(*Ibid.*: 139)
In addressing the challenge of conservation governance Brown and Kothari note the shift in conservation paradigms starting with the World Park Congress in Durban in 2003. The latter produced the Durban Accord and Action Plan, the Message to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and over 30 specific recommendations. All these outputs strongly stressed the need to centrally involve indigenous peoples and local communities in conservation, including respecting their customary and territorial rights, and their right to a central role in decision-making (Brown and Kothari 2011: 142).

The indivisibility of culture–nature is further explored by Verschuuren et al. (2010) in Sacred Natural Sites: Conserving Nature and Culture. The 27 essays in this excellent book are a welcome addition to the academic and professional literature on the relationship between people and nature. Its theme underscores the inextricable links between cultural diversity and biodiversity intimately existing between indigenous and traditional communities and their landscapes. The concern for the links relates closely to the work of IUCN where sacred natural sites play a particularly important role, demonstrating the special relationship between nature and people.

One aspect highlighted in Sacred Natural Sites is the increasing challenge in conservation management of the rights of traditional owners. It is articulated clearly by Studley (2010: 117):

The sacred dimension can and does play an important role in landscape care and nature conservation but eco-spiritual values continue to be ignored as a result of the mono-cultural myopia of dominant western research epistemologies. Intangible values only make sense when research epistemologies are predicated on pluralism, holism, multi-culturalism and post-modern logic and science.

In some countries in the developing world mimicking the Western wilderness ethic, the incidence of traditional people and local communities being removed or marginalised in some national parks and World Heritage areas has regrettably occurred. Instances are recorded in various chapters in Sacred Natural Sites. Following this line of thought, it is notable that a submission under the title Joint Statement of Indigenous Organizations on Continuous Violations of the Principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent in the Context of the World Heritage Convention was made to the 2011 World Heritage Committee meeting. In this connection it is instructive to consider the indigenous people/landscape relationship through the IUCN concept of protected landscapes. IUCN recognises six such categories (I–VI) for which its Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas takes responsibility. A protected area is defined as ‘an area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection and maintenance of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means’ (IUCN 1994). The six categories and management focus are:

I Strict protection: Ia) Strict nature reserve and Ib) Wilderness area.
II Ecosystem conservation and protection (i.e. national park).
III Conservation of natural features (i.e. natural monument).
IV Conservation through active management (i.e. habitat/species management area).
V Landscape/seascape conservation and recreation (i.e. protected landscape/seascape).
VI Sustainable use of natural resources (i.e. managed resource protected area).
It is noted that the National Park Category II is intended to focus primarily on ecosystem protection and visitor opportunities (Dudley 2008). Nevertheless it is also noted (ibid.: 16, note 3):

that the name ‘national park’ is not exclusively linked to Category II. Places called national parks exist in all the categories (and there are even some national parks that are not protected areas at all). The name is used here because it is descriptive of Category II protected areas in many countries. The fact that an area is called a national park is independent of its management approach. In particular, the term ‘national park’ should never be used as a way of dispossessing people of their land.  

(Our emphasis)

Not dispossessing a local ethnic community in a national park is exemplified in Doi Inthanon national park near Chiang Mai, Thailand, where Hmong hill-tribe people are allowed to live in their traditional villages continuing traditional lifestyle and crafts. Further they are allowed to undertake intensive market gardening raising produce for urban markets (Figure 2.2).

It is the practice whereby traditional owners who have managed the landscape often for hundreds, even thousands, of years, are dispossessed in the name of national parks that is, in our view, insupportable. It involves, all too often, extinguishing human rights and spiritual attachment to landscape. Accompanying this is the ignoring of the fact that rich biodiversity

![Figure 2.2](image-url)  

**FIGURE 2.2** Doi Inthanon national park, Chiang Mai, Thailand, showing intensive market garden activity within the wider landscape (Ken Taylor 2010).
is often linked to traditional cultural practices and what in effect is conservation management based on local knowledge systems and deep attachment to the land.

In 1992, with key support from ICOMOS and deepening international interest in the cultural landscape construct, UNESCO introduced three categories of cultural landscapes of Outstanding Universal Value for World Heritage recognition and inscription. Their purpose is to link culture and nature, tangible and intangible heritage, and cultural diversity and biodiversity (Figure 2.3). Enlarging on this the current *Operational Guidelines* for the World Heritage Convention propose that:

Cultural landscapes often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land-use, considering the characteristics and limits of the natural environment they are established in, and a specific spiritual relation to nature. Protection of cultural landscapes can contribute to modern techniques of sustainable land-use and can maintain or enhance natural values in the landscape. The continued existence of traditional forms of land-use supports biological diversity in many regions of the world. The protection of traditional cultural landscapes is therefore helpful in maintaining biological diversity.

*(UNESCO 2008: Annex 3, para. 9)*

By mid-2012 eighty cultural landscapes had been inscribed on the World Heritage List. As Bandarin (in UNESCO 2009) reflects most of these are living cultural landscapes and

![World Heritage listed (1994) Cordilleran Rice Terraces, Batad, Philippines (Ken Taylor 2012).](image)

over time cultural landscape categories (including relict and associative) provide an opening of the World Heritage Convention for cultures not or under-represented prior to 1992. Bandarin (in UNESCO 2009) quotes as examples the inscription of the Kaya Forest Systems in Kenya, or Chief Roi Mata’s Domain in Vanuatu, the Kuk Early Agricultural site in Papua New Guinea or the tobacco production of Vinales Valley in Cuba, reflecting that none of these sites would have had a chance prior to 1992 of being recognised as cultural heritage on a global scale. Herein lies the major importance of the inclusion of the cultural landscape category in the operations of the Convention. Of the 80 inscriptions only 17 are located in the Asia-Pacific region. In contrast many inscribed properties in the region listed as natural sites are in fact cultural landscapes and offer considerable scope for renomination and re-inscription as happened in 1992 with Tongariro (New Zealand) and 1994 with Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (Australia) (Taylor 2012).

An Australian perspective

In the Australian context, the division between culture and nature continued along the North American convention of managing natural landscapes under the philosophy of separation of people from their land. In part this can be considered a continuance of the British colonisation of Australia in 1788 and the forced or coercive removal of Indigenous Australians from their traditional lands by successive governments. In contemporary Australian landscape management, there is a move to recognise the necessity to manage both the natural and cultural aspect of landscape as one integrated environment. This is being led by the engagement with Indigenous Australians. ‘Indigenous people do not generally separate natural resources from cultural heritage, but refer to both in a holistic way when talking about “looking after country”’ (Hunt et al. 2009: ix).

The revision of landscape management terminology such as Natural Resource Management (NRM), when dealing with cultural and natural landscapes, has been progressive but slow in the Australian context. The term Cultural and Natural Resource Management (CNRM) is starting to be used to replace NRM, as utilised in 2011 Indigenous Cultural and Natural Resource Management Futures (Altman et al. 2011). Contributing to this shift in terminology is the policy development of the Australian government in seeking to improve the well-being of Indigenous Australians. Associated research, supported by the Australian government, such as the Healthy Country, Healthy People project (Garnett and Sithole 2007), considers an integrated approach to deliver both environmental and cultural outcomes through Indigenous CNRM.

The potential of the leadership in Indigenous landscape management is that it may translate into general landscape management models and provide meaningful cultural and natural sustainability. With regard to cultural sustainability the reference is related to sustaining the integrity of Indigenous authority, maintenance and evolution of their own intangible and tangible cultural heritage. In considering cultural and natural landscape management several Australian national models seek to link culture and nature more closely in properties that involve shared management with Indigenous Australians. These include, but are not limited to, National Parks and Indigenous Protected Areas, which both can be considered as shared management models linking culturally divergent stakeholders into a partnership for mutual benefit.
The term shared management, in the context of this discussion, is considered a philosophical and dynamic practical process. It incorporates interactions between groups, and individuals who have a common interest in a landscape, but a different understanding of its significance through their own cultural paradigm. It can also be expressed as joint or collaborative management where different parties manage a cultural and natural landscape together, with separate degrees of authority over the landscape management dependent on circumstances. In considering shared management the space of interaction is the common ground where each party is engaged with the other in dialogue. This meeting place is where participants can work cooperatively together, whilst still recognising the hidden conflicts of interest generated through secret sacred cultural practice, commercial in-confidence, government confidentiality, cabinet in-confidence and other interests held by the parties.

National parks

Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, previously known as Uluru (Ayers Rock-Mt Olga) National Park is a demonstration of a significant Australian national park model. The park is managed under a joint management arrangement with the Anangu who were granted freehold title to the park on 26 October 1985, through their organisation Uluru-Kata Tjuta Aboriginal Land Trust. Subsequent to the granting of title, and on the same day, the park was leased to the Australian government for a period of 99 years. The current 2010–2020 Plan of Management (Director of National Parks 2010) states on its cover Tjukurpa katutja Ngargaantja, which translates into Tjukurpa above all else or Tjukurpa our primary responsibility. Here the management of nature and culture blur into one holistic concept of interdependence of people and the environment.

Whether the policies and programmes implemented at this location have been successful or not is not necessarily the primary issue, as this can be considered simply a reflection of a historically unaware government policy response to shared landscape management with Indigenous Australians. This is particularly so when informed by colonialist and wilderness perspectives. The most opportune issue is the continuing development of the underpinning philosophy of integration, which has become established within a Western management model supported by local Indigenous knowledge. The integration of cultural and natural landscape management at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park further pushes Western landscape management in that it also demonstrates a contemporary approach that recognises the integration of the intangible heritage of Tjukurpa and the tangible physicality of its entwined geological, biodiversity and human interaction.

An extension to this approach of landscape management modelling, where culture and nature are fundamentally intertwined, is the consideration that intangible and tangible heritage portray a symbiotic relationship, holding the physicality of landscape and its cultural interpretation. Detaching the intangible from the tangible causes a shift in understanding of place and is demonstrated when the same tangible heritage, such as the geological mount Uluru (Ayers Rock), is shared by different cultures with different intangible heritage understandings, interpretations and value within each party’s particular cultural paradigm. The Anangu relate to Uluru experientially through Tjukurpa, whilst others including settlers and Indigenous Australians not traditionally linked culturally to the site, attach an intangible value to the mount through their own history and interpretation. The Anangu and non-Anangu understandings of place attachment, aesthetics and phenomena, linked to Uluru-Kata
Tjuta National Park’s landscape, are often separated by cultural divisions. They identify different intangible heritage values and a different understanding of what natural conservation is appropriate and what processes are needed to maintain site-specific cultural landscape integrity.

**Cultural values in opposition**

Such potentially disparate cross-cultural interpretations of a landscape’s heritage values can paint a dark picture for sustainable joint management. They also reflect the potential crippling consequences of a lack of common valorisation of the intangible and tangible heritage of place held by the partners. In regard to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park, this outlook needs to be questioned as a general position, when there exists such a vast array of entwined shared history and a stated partnership intent that ‘Anangu and Piranpa9 will work together as equals, exchanging knowledge about our different cultural values and processes and their application’ (Director of National Parks 2010: i).

A demonstration of the complexity, collaboration and conflict emerging within the realm of intangible heritage interpretation of the tangible is the issue of tourists climbing Uluru. The Anangu, with assistance from park officials (both Anangu and Piranpa), some tourist operators and many supporters, have been attempting to close the Uluru climb for decades. Many people have been injured and more than 30 people have died attempting to climb the very steep Uluru path (Director of National Parks 2010: 90). Senior Anangu have continued to make statements about the Uluru climb, including Kunmaara10 Nguraritiya (ibid.: 90):

> That’s a really important sacred thing that you are climbing . . . You shouldn’t climb. It’s not the real thing about this place. The real thing is listening to everything. And maybe that makes you a bit sad. But anyway that’s what we have to say. We are obliged by Tjukurpa to say. And all the tourists will brighten up and say, ‘Oh I see. This is the right way. This is the thing that’s right. This is the proper way: no climbing’.

In the face of these deaths, injuries and cultural petitions ‘Many people feel that Uluru is a national icon and that all Australians have a “right” to climb it’ (Reconciliation Australia 2010). The 2010–2020 Plan of Management (Director of National Parks 2010: 92) attempts to address the issues and commits to permanently closing the Uluru climb under specific conditions.11 Whether these conditions will ever be met and the commitment fulfilled will largely rely on the will of politicians in the face of intense commercial and nationalist lobbying.

A tangible consequence of the continuation of the climb at Uluru is the physical degradation of the rock surface being continually etched by the feet of thousands of tourists. The climbing track is now a scar visible for several kilometres and the etching continues. The landscape in this example is managed within a joint management framework under cultural and natural World Heritage criteria. The result is that the intangible heritage of the Anangu has been detached from the tangible and replaced by the intangible heritage perceptions of another culture. Under this alternative regime the management of the mount’s physical degradation is seen as acceptable when linked to the new intangible nationalistic or colonial heritage that proclaims the right to climb Uluru and view the landscape from above.
Thus the intangible heritage of the Anangu has been subverted by the intangible heritage of the settler within a domain of joint or shared management. Whilst the management of Uluru and the actions of the dedicated park officials recognised the integration of culture and nature plus the relationship between intangible and tangible heritage, still the contradiction of the climb exists. Here another important aspect to cultural and natural landscape management arises: the disparity that can exist between heritage policy intent, its interpretation and implementation.

In the face of such contradictions, and in the light of a landscape management model that has received international acclaim through being awarded the UNESCO Picasso Gold Medal (1995) for World Heritage management, more innovative management solutions are needed. These must provide governance, policy and process models that deliver sustainable and meaningful outcomes for all parties, whilst supporting biodiversity and cultural integrity.

**Indigenous Protected Areas**

An alternative cultural and natural landscape management model is the Indigenous Protected Area (IPA) concept, which is part of the Australian government's Indigenous Australians Caring for Country programme (Figure 2.4) (Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities 2011). The first declared IPA was in 1998 at Nantawarra in central South Australia. It covers an area of approximately 23 million hectares. The declaration of the Nantawarra IPA marked ‘the first time that a formal Protected Area has been set up voluntarily in Australia by an Indigenous community rather than through government legislation’ (Muller 2003: 30). Today there are over 50 declared IPAs across Australia. A recently declared location is the Mandingalbay Yidinji Indigenous Protected Area, which includes the environments of mangroves, wetlands, rainforest, beaches, reef and islands. It was declared in November 2011 and was the first IPA to be established over existing government protected areas.

The shared management aspect within this model is built into the relationship of the government providing funding based on an understanding of negotiated outcomes. The Indigenous partners and government often have divergent views on the priority of such outcomes, which include: Indigenous health, education, economic and social benefits; biodiversity; cultural resource conservation; cultural maintenance. The partners’ different priorities are illustrated in the comparison of the two statements below, which are published on the same departmental web page (ibid.).
The government states:

An Indigenous Protected Area is an area of Indigenous owned land or sea where traditional owners have entered into an agreement with the Australian Government to promote biodiversity and cultural resource conservation. Indigenous Protected Areas make a significant contribution to Australian biodiversity conservation.

The Nari Nari Tribal Council from the Toogimbie IPA in New South Wales states:

Our vision is to protect and enhance our culture and history, while encouraging and protecting the natural environment and conserving biodiversity.

The Indigenous priority is clearly towards Indigenous culture and history, which in Indigenous understanding is integrated with nature. The government’s statement however emphasises biodiversity and references culture as a resource in relation to the broader Australian estate. The dissimilarity in emphasis and referencing articulated by the two parties reflects an underlying difference in management priority. This has the potential, even with the current goodwill and respect, to produce conflict and misunderstanding within the IPA model, particularly when the financial viability of the IPA projects relies on Indigenous compliance with government funding conditions.

In considering the Australian government national parks and Indigenous Protected Area models for cultural and natural landscape management, it appears evident that significant progress has been made to address the contradictory Western wilderness construct of separation of natural heritage management from cultural heritage management. In addition the importance of the interdependence, rather than separation, of the intangible understandings of tangible heritage is gaining recognition. This bodes well for the creation of understandings and intellectual foundations on which new cultural landscapes can be created, managed and protected.

**Conclusion**

The international discourse plus the actions of UNESCO and IUCN illustrate a philosophy leading towards more holistic practices in the management of cultural and natural landscape, particularly when encompassing shared management with traditional cultures. A more informed understanding is emerging that recognises the need to address the artificial separation of culture from nature and intangible from tangible heritage. As yet, the reduction of these separations is more akin to straddling the problem rather than reducing the chasm of division.

To implement this philosophical change there needs to be a movement beyond the debate of whether there is validity in the integration of culture/nature and intangible/tangible within landscape management. There needs to be an investigation into the governance and management of landscapes where they are treated as integrated environments.

Two questions, among many, arise from the struggle facing Indigenous people and governments working in the arena of shared management of cultural and natural landscape management. What are the governance structures and processes that can lead professional practice in the management of cultural and natural landscapes, when such landscapes are perceived and managed as a single integrated environment? How can the recognition of the
symbiotic relationship of intangible and tangible heritage, within management policy and process, contribute to continued cultural maintenance, sustainable development, conservation and biodiversity?

**Notes**

1. Indigenous Australians include the diverse range of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
2. The term ‘country’ encapsulates the fertile human meaning of interrelationships between people and places, as in Indigenous Australian culture and in the European notion of ‘landscape’ and its human associations.
3. Organised by IUCN’s World Commission on Protected Areas.
4. See UNESCO WHC Decision 35 COM 12E.
6. Note: the Rice Terraces were placed on the World Heritage in Danger List in 2001 as a result of changes taking place that were seen to affect adversely the Outstanding Universal Value of the Terraces. The Report on the Joint World Heritage Centre/ICOMOS Reactive Monitoring Mission to the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordillenas 13/24 March 2011 recommended to the 2011 meeting of the World Heritage Committee that they remain on the list pending recommended management actions; Decision 34 COM 7A.26, WHC-11/35.COM/7A.Add. See http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/4102 (accessed 18 March 2012)
7. ‘Anangu is the term that Yankunytjatjara and Pitjantjatjara Aboriginal people from the Western Desert region of Australia use to refer to themselves… it has come into common use in the region as a term referring to Aboriginal people, as opposed to non-Aboriginal people, as well as Aboriginal people who come from other parts of Australia’ (Anangu Tours 2011).
8. ‘Tjukurpa or Wapar is our law, culture, history, and our world view all bundled into one. Our ancestors have lived around Uluru (Ayers Rock) for many thousands of years, maintaining Tjukurpa, the law of the ancestors. Our grandparents taught us our Tjukurpa, just as their grandparents taught them. The term, Tjukurpa/Wapar, includes many complex but complementary concepts.
   - Aŋangu religion, law and moral systems;
   - the past, the present and the future;
   - the creation period when ancestral beings, Tjukaritja/Waparitja, created the world as it is now;
   - the relationship between people, plants, animals and the physical features of the land; and
   - the knowledge of how these relationships came to be, what they mean and how they must be maintained in daily life and in ceremony.

   …Tjukurpa is the foundation of Aŋangu life.
   (There is not a single word in English that conveys the complex meaning of Tjukurpa. This is why at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park we use the Pitjantjatjara word. The Traditional Owners who speak Yankunytjatjara use the word Wapar to mean the same complex body of Law and belief)’ (Anangu Tours 2011).
9. Piŋapa is a Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara term meaning, literally, ‘white’, but now used to mean non-Aboriginal people (Director of National Parks 2010: 175).
10. Kunmaŋara is a Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara ‘substitute used name when the name of a living person is the same as, or sounds like, the name of someone recently deceased’ (Director of National Parks 2010: 175).
11. The conditions for the closure of the tourist climb at Uluru are stated in Section 6.3.3 (c) of the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Parks Management Plan 2010–2020 (Director of National Parks 2010: 92). Section 6.3.3 (c) states:
   - ‘The climb will be permanently closed when:
     - the Board, in consultation with the tourism industry, is satisfied that adequate new visitor experiences have been successfully established, or
     - the proportion of visitors climbing falls below 20 per cent, or
the cultural and natural experiences on offer are the critical factors when visitors make their
decision to visit the park.'

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