# Healthy Country Planning (HCP)

Healthy Country Planning (HCP) is an adaptation of the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation process for working with Indigenous communities in Australia. The HCP process guides project teams to identify effective conservation strategies. It provides an objective, consistent and transparent accounting of conservation actions and the intended and actual outcomes of conservation projects. It enables project staff to responsively adapt their actions to improve strategy effectiveness and achieve greater conservation impact. A brief summary of the HCP Process is provided below. For more information on HCP and the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation visit www.ccnetglobal.com.
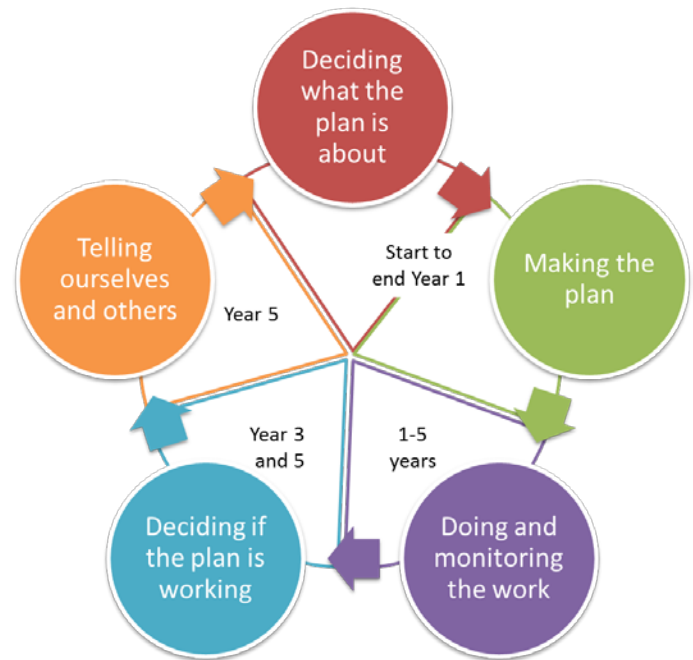
THE 10 STEPS OF THE HCP PROCESS

1. Pre-Planning – How you want to do the Plan

This step asks you to identify why you want to do a plan, and who will be involved in designing and implementing your project. Addresses questions like: ♦*"Why do we need a plan?"*, ♦*"Who is the plan for?"*, ♦*"Who will design our project?"*, ♦*"Who will be responsible for ensuring the plan goes forward?, "* *"Who can give us advice?,* ♦*"Who will help us through this process?"*

2. Define Project Area (Scope) and Dream (Vision)

With this step you point the plan in the right direction – you need to be clear about what you want the future to look like if you are successful in making the plan work. It is also helpful to be clear about where you are working. This step helps your project team come to consensus on the overall goal and scale of the project and your ultimate measures of success.

Addresses questions like: ♦*"Where is our project?"*, ♦*"What did country used to look like?"*, ♦*"What is our vision of success?"*

3. Targets - The key things that make project area healthy and as we want it

This step asks you to identify the values, features and assets that you most care about improving, protecting, restoring and keeping healthy. They will become the things to focus most of your time and effort on. It also looks at each of your targets carefully to determine how to measure its "health" over time. And then to identify how the target is doing today and what a "healthy state" might look like. This step is the key to knowing which of your targets are most in need of immediate attention, and for measuring success over time. Addresses questions like: ♦ *"What are the values, features and assets we most care about?"* ♦ *"How do we describe each of our targets?"* ♦ *How do we define 'health' for each of our targets?"*, ♦*"What is the current status of each of our targets?"*, ♦*"What is our desired status for each of our targets?"*

4. Threats – Problems and their Causes

This step helps you to identify the various factors that immediately affect your project's targets and stopping us from having healthy country, and then rank them so that you can concentrate your conservation actions where they are most needed. Addresses questions like: ♦"What threats are affecting our targets?", ♦"Which threats are more of a problem?"

5. Situation – Identify who is causing the problems

This step asks you to describe your current understanding of your project situation – the links between targets, threats, and the causes of those threats to ensure that our later actions are well targeted. This step probes more deeply into the conditions surrounding your threats and targets to bring attention/consideration to causal factors, key actors, and opportunities for successful action and can really help to explain to people how we see the plan will work. Addresses questions like: ♦"What factors positively & negatively affect our targets?", ♦"Who are the key stakeholders linked to each of these factors?"

6. Goals and Strategies

This step asks you to specifically and measurably describe what success looks like and to develop practical and *strategic* actions you and your partners will undertake to achieve it. In particular, you want to try to find the actions that will enable you to get the most impact for the resources you have. Addresses questions like: ♦"What do we need to accomplish?", ♦"What is the most effective way to achieve these results?"

7. Results Chains – Describing our Theory of Change

This step will help to make clear your assumptions about how strategies will actually help to reduce threats or make targets healthier. They also help you to be clear about what you will need to monitor and know to show that your plan is working. Addresses questions like: ♦"Why do you think the steps in your plan will work", ♦"What do you expect to happen when you complete each step in the project or process?"

8. Measures – How do I know if I am getting anywhere?

This step involves deciding what you need to monitor, when, who will do it, and what you will do with the results. This step is needed to help your team see whether its strategies are working as planned and thus whether adjustments will be needed. Addresses questions like: ♦"What do we need to measure to see if we are making progress towards our objectives and whether our actions are making a difference?", ♦"Who do we need to tell the results to?"

9. Actions, Time and Budgets (Work Plans) – Implementing the Plan

This step asks you to take your strategic actions and measures and develop specific annual budget and workplans for doing this work as your project goes forward. Addresses questions like: ♦"What do we specifically need to do?", ♦"Who will be responsible for each task?", ♦"What resources do we need?"

10. Analyze, Learn, Adapt, & Share

This step first asks you to systematically take the time to evaluate whether the plan you have put in place is working and achieving what you wanted. This reflection provides insight on how your actions are working, what may need to change, and what to emphasize next. This step then asks you to document what you have learned and to share it with other people so they can benefit from your successes and failures. Addresses questions like: ♦"What are our monitoring data telling us about our project?", ♦"What should we be doing differently?", ♦"How will we capture what we have learned?", ♦"How can we make sure other people benefit from what we have learned?"