

Impacts on Indigenous Communities and Culture

Myrtle Rust threatens our ability to practise Culture.

Impacts to Indigenous Communities are broader than ecological and industry values.

Country, Culture and Community are all connected, they are not separate.

Myrtle rust impacts the health of country and our ability to practise Culture, and therefore impedes the health of Indigenous communities.

Many Myrtaceae are edible, medicinal & culturally significant to Indigenous peoples.

Culturally significant species include:

- those that may be sourced for materials e.g., resources for ceremony, constructing shelters, utensils, tools & weapons (tangible cultural values)
- such species may serve as seasonal indicators (tangible cultural values)
- or contain connections to Lore, sacred stories, &/or totems (intangible cultural values)



Austromyrtus dulcis berries on K'gari
Photograph provided by Matilda Davis



Syzygium oleosum on K'gari
Photograph provided by Matilda Davis



Smoke stick made from Myrtaceae materials
Photograph provided by Matilda Davis

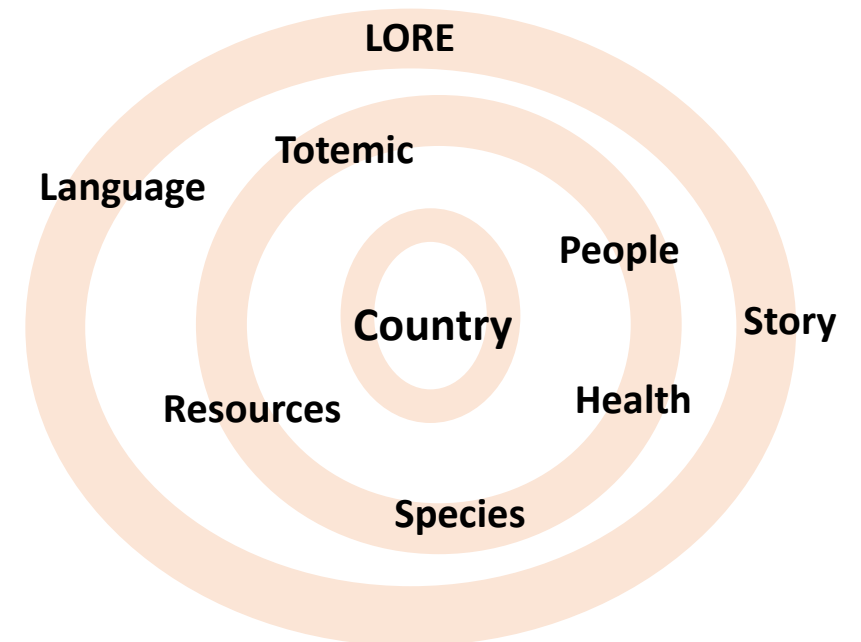


Figure provided by Aj Perkins

Healthy country Healthy people

Pilot Myrtle Rust Ready training Projects

Increasing awareness of myrtle rust and biosecurity threats to Indigenous peoples training workshops
Expanding capacity to detect and report
Identifying/document and capture Culturally Significant Species
Enable triggers of protection from Biosecurity threats



Cultural Land Management (Cultural Burning)

Hot burns, like wildfires, destroy mature foliage and cause the trees to become stressed. Due to this stress, epicormic growth is produced which means that there is abundance of new growth. Dr Geoff Pegg and Dr Louise Shuey taught us that mature foliage is resistant to myrtle rust and new growth is susceptible, and therefore, hot burns accelerate myrtle rust infection. Cultural fire management, where custodians read country and apply regular cool burning accordingly, reduces the risk of wildfires, minimises disturbance to the trees, and maintains the health of country.

Therefore, cultural burning can be a successful and sustainable strategy for myrtle rust management.



Into the future

- Establishing more partnerships with Aboriginal communities.
- More targeted engagement in Biosecurity.
- Further capacity building in Aboriginal community groups/ ranger teams – further workshops.
- Emphasis on Cultural protocols and significant species that are affected.
- Identify common values for greater outcomes.
- Knowledge and skills transfer through partnerships.
- Exploring Cultural Based Innovative Solutions.
- Co-Designing Solutions with Traditional Owners.
- Greater awareness in threats on Culture and country for communities.
- Further Investment!

