

The Ancient Elements

The reason for giving a focus to the ancient elements of Earth, Air, Fire and Water is to highlight the strong inter-relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders share with all things natural. Much of their heritage makes connections between the physical and spiritual worlds in relation to the Elements. For example:

- The Ancestral Spirits shaped the landscape and created the rivers, mountains, etc.
- Fire is incorporated in many stories related to The Dreaming.
- The air carries special spiritual connections.
- Places of water are often significant spiritual sites.

In unpacking the meaning of Element:

a component part; a contributing factor or thing; any of the four substances (earth, water, air and fire) in ancient and medieval philosophy - any of these as a being's natural abode or environment

Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary, 5th Edition

we can see how they were prime factors in leading a traditional life in Country and how cultural heritage contains many references to them.

It is worth pondering how even in our highly sophisticated, technological world, many people still have a fascination in connecting with the Elements. For example, leisure activities enjoyed such as:

- Camping – fires
- Swimming, sailing, diving
- Bush walking – mountain climbing
- Fireworks displays
- Parachuting
- Fishing.