

## Activity 6: Mapping Wathaurong Country

### Background:

Human occupation of what we now call Victoria has been continuous for over 40,000 years with evidence of human settlement and use of the land occurring since that time.

At various time during the earths history lower global temperatures resulted in Ice Ages that caused more ice formed on the ocean and land, and consequently a decrease in sea level. This caused major changes to the shape of the coast and areas that are covered by water.

The last of the ice ages was around 18,000 years ago and its effects on the coast lasted for the next few thousand years. Bass Strait did not exist and people were able to walk between what is now Tasmania and Victoria. During this period Indigenous people would have lived, hunted, played and explored many of the areas that are now covered by water, some of which are included in our Marine National Park system.

**Objective:** To consider changes in coastlines associated with ice ages and the occupation and use of areas now beneath the water by Indigenous Victorians

### Materials:

**Part A:** A map of Bass Strait showing depths.

**Part B:** A detailed underwater image of Point Addis Marine National Park showing submerged features

### Method:

#### Part A:

1. Using a map of Bass Strait showing the Tasmanian and Victorian coastline and the depths of water find the 100m depth contour and put a line along this.
2. Copy this line to the outline version of this map. Then shade areas less than 60 m depth to get an idea of what was "country" as it may have been 10,000 years ago. This area shows where people may have been able to live and travel.

#### Part B:

1. Using the online map of Point Addis Marine National Park examine closely the features that have been exposed through the Marine Habitat Mapping project. Have a think about what various features may have looked when this was part of Wathaurong Country and exposed as land.
2. Using the symbols provided create a "usage" map of locations that may have been used by Indigenous Victorians during periods of lower sea level.
3. Identify locations that may have been used for



fishing



hunting different animals such as mammals or birds



gathering shellfish on rock platforms



shelter



lookouts

# Marine Mapping Education Resource Kit

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### Discussion:

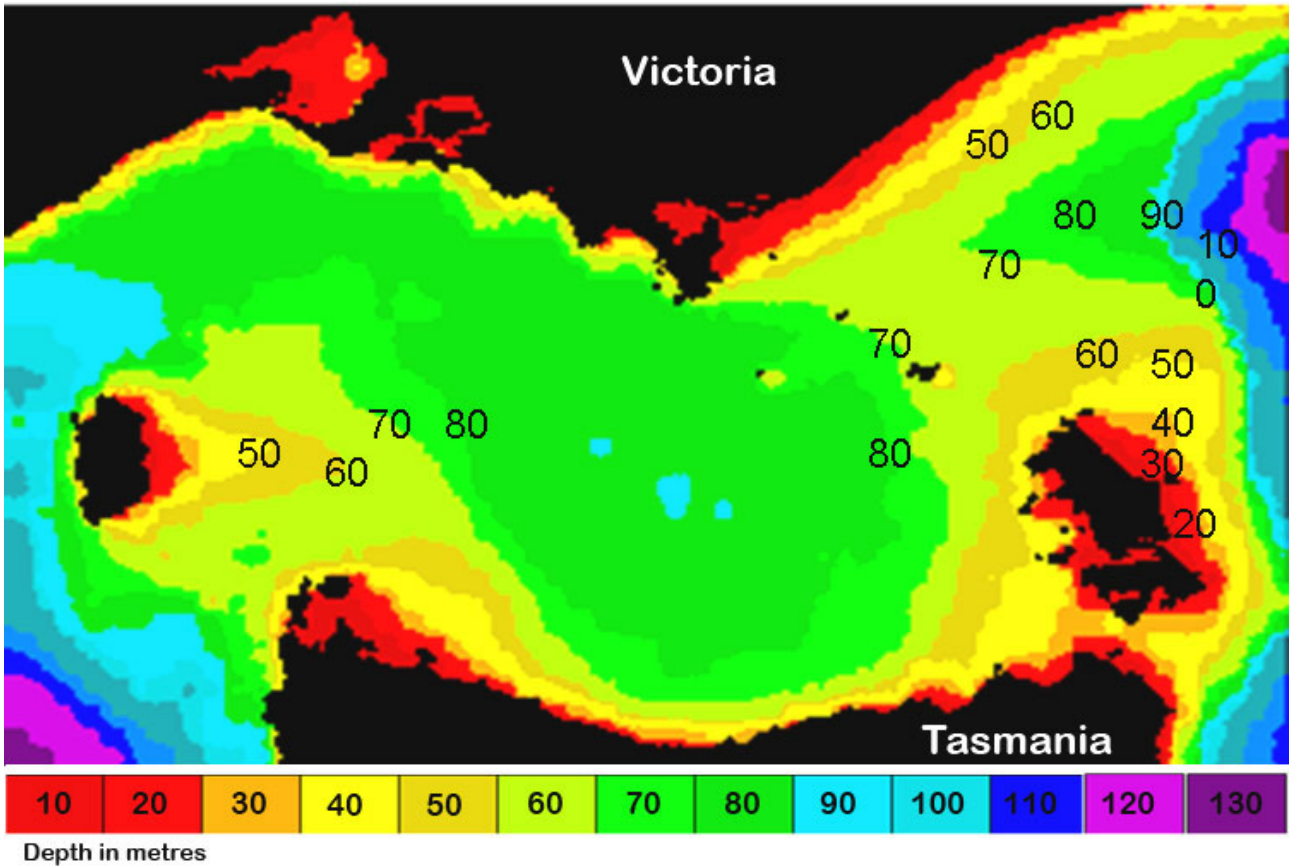
1. How does the shape of Victoria look 10,000 years ago compared with the present day?
2. How would changing sea levels after the Ice Ages have affected Indigenous Australian that lived along the coastline?
3. Creative writing – imagine life at Point Addis 10,000 years before present – describe what you would have seen and changes that occurred as sea levels began to rise – how does this compare with the predicted sea level rises associated with global warming.

### Extension:

1. Find out about shell middens along the coastline and what these important cultural sites reveal about the first Victorian.
2. Compile a list of marine and coastal species of animals and plants significant for Indigenous Victorians as food or other resources.
3. On a field trip to the coast invite local Indigenous people to share their knowledge of coastal animals and plants and how they may be used.

For more information call the Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963  
or visit our website - [www.parkweb.vic.gov.au](http://www.parkweb.vic.gov.au)

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Bass Strait depths



Bass Strait depths outline map

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