

## **STEPHEN VAN LEEUWEN**

### **Bio**

June 2025

Professor Stephen van Leeuwen is a botanical ecologist, executive research manager and respected Wardandi Noongar leader with links to Country in the Busselton / Margaret River region. Stephen builds collaborative relationships with Traditional Custodians and other land and natural resource managers to deliver novel enduring outcomes for biodiversity conservation, bio-cultural land management, and the enduring stewardship of Country.

Stephen is Australia's first Indigenous Chair of Biodiversity and Environmental Science based at Curtin University. His position is supported by Curtin University, BHP and the National Environmental Science Program (NESP). Stephen has a diverse research pedigree extending from threatened flora survey, fire ecology and threatened flora and fauna management through to biological survey, arid zone ecology, plant taxonomy and pollination biology. He has worked for over 40 years across Western Australia, principally in the rangelands (Pilbara and Western Desert) and the Kwongan sandplains of the biodiversity hotspot that is south-west Western Australia

Stephen is the Director of the Australian Research Council's Training Centre for Healing Country at Curtin University, a research and training Centre focused on the restoration economy for Indigenous Australians by Indigenous Australians. Stephen is also Deputy Leader and Senior Indigenous Facilitator of the NESP Resilient Landscapes Hub based at The University of Western Australia. The Resilient Landscapes Hub undertakes terrestrial and freshwater environmental research across Australia to address priorities identified by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water.

Stephen is a member of the Federal Environment Minister's Indigenous Advisory Committee, and the Threatened Species Scientific Committee, Chair of the Murujuga Rock Art Stakeholder Reference Group and member of the Botanic Gardens and Park Authority Board. Stephen is also a member of the Academy of Science's National Committee for Ecology, Evolution and Conservation, a member of the Department of Education's National Research Infrastructure Advisory Group, a member of the Atlas of Living Australia's Advisory Board, a board member of the Ecological Society of Australia, a Trustee for The Nature Conservancy, a member of Bush Heritage Australia's Science and Conservation Committee and a member of the Research Committee supporting the Corporate Research Centre for Transformations in Mining Economies. In 2023 the Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand awarded Honorary Fellow status to Stephen for his outstanding contribution to the environment profession.

Stephen also Chairs the Karri Karrak Aboriginal Corporation, the registered Native Title entity that represents the Wardandi, Piblemen and Kaneang Noongar Traditional Custodians of the southwest corner of Western Australia. In this position Stephen also holds a seat on the Noongar Relationship Committee, Noongar Corporations Committee and the Karri Karrak Cooperative Management Committee.