

# Overcoming

## opposing worldviews

**Western conservation philosophies separate humans from nature.** This has led to the widely-held notion that people must be excluded if environments are to be preserved. In indigenous worldviews, however, such a division is unacceptable as ecosystems and social systems are intertwined. Landscapes are rendered meaningless if the interdependent relationship between social systems and ecosystems is severed, as they shape and sustain each other.

Furthermore, Western science traces its origins to an opposition of the rational and the spiritual. Indigenous thought, however, makes no such distinction, nor does it value the rational above the spiritual. Instead, they flow together and intermingle. For this reason, efforts to extract indigenous knowledge from its cultural and spiritual foundations often result in its misinterpretation, misrepresentation and fragmentation.



**A TABU LEAF** indicator in Vanuatu signifies that an area is closed to fishing.



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**FOR INUIT**, the continuity of hunting is crucial for maintaining respectful relations with animals. Wildlife managers impose hunting bans to preserve species.



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**EXCLUSION OF INDIGENOUS** peoples from Africa's national parks disrupted their management of socio-ecological systems.



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