# Country Handle with Care

# Episode 6 – Protecting Country transcript

Costa: Oh look at the seashells.

Dirtgirl: Amazing. Look at all the crabbies. Look.

Costa: Do you think we can sneak up on them?

Dirtgirl: Get down, get down. It’s so amazing that these crabs belong here. This is where they belong. This is their home, they are indigenous to here. What do you think would happen if something that didn’t belong here, came here? We need a barrier.

Costa: A barrier.

Dirtgirl: Okay, I’ll go here. This is good.

Costa: We need something here. What about a stick?

Dirtgirl: Yes

Costa: That works. Something, something here we need like.

Dirtgirl: Stay safe Australian coastline, we have you covered. Tricky business, I know. Costa, Costa, I’ll swap you. You can take this over that side. Beautiful. We need tape, like keep out tape. Caution. Caution, caution. What do we think? Caution, caution. Keep out please things that do not live here. Round there. Okay now I’ve got the scissors here. Just keeping the coastline safe.

Costa: Look what else I’ve got. Because the wind can bring insects and hang on I need to put my goggles on because I don’t want my special tea tree, my tea tree spray. Which is gonna protect for any bugs that might affect our plants. Dirtgirl but this is only three steps. What about out there? And all here?

Dirtgirl: We can’t keep all of Australia’s coastline safe. We’re gonna need some help.

Biosecurity officer: Across our ten thousand kilometre northern coastline here in Australia, we have a group of dedicated biosecurity officers, scientists and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rangers monitoring our plants, animals and oceans.

Biosecurity officer 2: We are also recording what isn’t changing.

Biosecurity officer 3: Our trading partners need proof that we don’t have the pests and diseases that can damage their countries.

Biosecurity officer 4: This is one of the least known but most important parts of the biosecurity story.

Biosecurity officer 5: It’s a story of antiquity and modernity relying on traditional knowledge of country while using 21st century technology.

Biosecurity officer 6: Respecting culture and providing hope for future generations.

Community liaison officer: I work for the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources. I’m a community liaison officer. We’re kind of the conduits between the scientists and the community and the rangers as well. So what the scientists want, we go out and work with the rangers and the community to get the information. The rangers are really good because they’ve got heaps of different skills to go out there in the environment and get the information for us.

Dirtgirl, Scrapboy and Costa: On country we walk and see, we listen and be. At one with the land and the great open skies. With the water that falls, with it all, with it all. On country we meet creatures of high and of seas of land of trees. See plants that amaze and delight. Night and days, days and night. How it is, is what makes it so, so, so unique, so precious. How it is, is how it’s always, always, always been. Pristine, serene. Now you and I have a shared mission, shared vision, a shared responsibility, that when on country we understand that our hands, our actions, our movements, our ways have a say in the future. And when we are here, or there, we handle country with care, with care. It’s about leaving it just so, so, for the future to know, to explore and adore. So tread lightly as you go gently so well, you know. It remains, sustains, flourishes, nourishes, grows. So when it comes to nature, it’s natural, it’s wise, don’t over analyse. Think simple and clear. With a common sense, common heart, common mind. Protect and check, take nothing and leave nothing behind that doesn’t belong here or there. And together, we can handle country with care. Let the adventure of a lifetime, of a billion star times, of a dreamtime begin. Begin. Begin.

Community liaison officer: People shouldn’t be fearful of biosecurity. So we’re all in it together, kind of working together as an organisation and as a community. So we want to safeguard the environment and food sources that we eat so don’t be scared if you’re coming back from overseas and you tick that box for food or animal products and plants and things like that. It’s okay to do it because you’re just letting us know we’ll look through your stuff and make sure it’s all safe so it’s not a bad thing, it’s a good thing that you say yes.

Dirtgirl: Let’s get down to the nitty gritty of what you can bring to our land from your faraway cities. We welcome your sense of adventure, your awe, you can bring curiosity but some stuff we implore that you don’t bring. Some stuff you have, we don’t need, can’t afford from foreign shores like a seed on your shoe or on your boot. We don’t need food and we don’t need fruit. To enter country, to cross state borders, to come from down south. It’s not that we’re mean or down in the mouth, this is serious business. See? It can bring disease in, deep down, where the eyes can’t see, see inside, underneath the skin, trouble can begin and spread and affect country forever. Now, even a biscuit, and we don’t wanna risk it, so eat before you reach our door and if you have more then bin it, don’t bring it in. Don’t sneak it in, there’s nothing to win and so much to lose so just choose, choose to start now, start how you plan to continue. Oh in you so with love and care, this is one thing we don’t want you to share. Hey there.

Biosecurity officer: Hey there.

Dirtgirl: Hey there.

Biosecurity officer: Is there anything you want to declare?

Costa: I’m a garden gnome.

Biosecurity officer: You’re a garden gnome? Oh wow.

Dirtgirl: Oh actually I do. I have a biscuit.

Biosecurity officer: Oh you have a biscuit? I’ll grab that, I’ll bin it for you.

Dirtgirl: Thank you.

Biosecurity officer: No worries.

Costa: And I’ve got this drum that I was given.

Biosecurity officer: Yep that’s the traditional artefacts here so what I’ll do is I’ll inspect it and make sure it’s free of any insect borers and if it does get passed then I’ll give it back to you okay.

Dirtgirl: Thank you so much, that’s great.

Biosecurity officer: No worries and you guys been to any farms?

Costa and dirtgirl: Yeah.

Biosecurity officer: I would have to inspect your boots as well if there’s any mud underneath.

Dirtgirl: And if we do?

Biosecurity officer: I’ll have to give it a clean yeah.

Costa: A clean? Yes, thanks boss.

Dirtgirl: A free boot clean.

Biosecurity officer:So I can see there’s mud and soil here so I’ll give it a good clean and I’ll give it back to you guys okay. Thanks.

Costa and Dirtgirl: Thanks.

Dirtgirl, Costa and Scrapboy: At the edge of our land, hearts and hands. One shared mission, the vision is clear, right there, handle country with care. In the trails beyond, a unifying bond, our eyes as one, prepared to handle country with care. Look out for the danger of the not so welcome strangers. Weeds and pests and creature galore, by wind and water set to explore. Many eyes needed to see, pests like electric ants, and Asian honey bees. Visitors, farmers, community, one planet we share, handle country with care.

Top Watch Biosecurity

To report and emergency pest, weed or disease call 1800 79 636 or visit [www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/australia/northern-biosecurity](http://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/australia/northern-biosecurity) for more information

Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

This is an initiative of the Australian Government’s Agricultural Competitiveness and Developing Northern Australia white papers, the government’s plan for stronger farmers, a stronger economy and a safe, secure Australia.

Biosecurity. It’s everyone’s business.