Throughout her anthology “A Human Pattern”, Judith Wright suggests that death and loss are an inevitable reality of life this is explored through her passion for the Australian environment and her appreciation for aboriginal culture, shown through her poetry. However Wright also focuses equally on the vibrancy and powerful beauty of natural life in concepts such as relationships and reproduction, creating a balance of diverse aspects within the collection.

The devastatingly destructive impact western society has had on the natural Australian environment is a prominent concern shown through Wright’s poems. In “Australia 1970”, Wright urges the landscape to “stay strong” against the “torturing mind” which “corrupts” it. The tragic observation; “I see your living soil ebb,” conveys the strength of Wright’s connection to the land, and the almost calm conclusion seems to counter the negative influence as she rationalizes “we are ruined by the things we kill”. The concern of environmental loss continues through poems such as “Sanctuary”, in which Wright focuses on the irony of the “label” of safety, which is merely an illusion, hiding the true damage and death caused by human influence. The road leading to the “sanctuary” is described as a “fuse”, which is decorated with the “flatskins” of “possums” and other native creatures, which have been lost to the technological impact of western civilization. The juxtaposition of “the old gnome tree some axe-new boy cut down” represents the ignorance and naivety of society, unknowingly destroying ancient historical artifacts. The loss of natural landscape, and the deaths of Australian wildlife take a significant section of Wright’s work as she conveys the tragedy of their inevitable loss.

The slow, forceful destruction of aboriginal culture within Australia is a significant concern of Wright’s, although she accepts that loss and death are inevitable aspects of our lives, she will never accept the actions of her ancestors, when they forcibly removed the aboriginal people from their rightful land. This is depicted in her poem “Nigger’s Leap; New England”, simply the name suggests that there were numerous “leaps”, which strongly enforces her condemnation of the ignorance of her ancestors; “did we not know their blood channeled our rivers?” as they were pushed off their land, they had nowhere to go other than off
the cliff, where they “screamed falling in flesh” to their deaths. “Bora Ring” also reflects on the loss of culture, the very first line; “the song is gone” sets a tone of sadness at the loss of the ancient “ritual”, the representation of a people that “the world breathed sleeping and forgot”. All that remains of the rightful owners of the land are subtle reminders; “the spear is splintered underground” and the tone of ghostly loss echoes Wright’s connection and concern with their mistreatment.

Although much of Wright’s poetry reflects the loss and death that is an inevitable, yet regrettable aspect of Australia’s recent life, it also celebrates the powerful vibrancy and beauty of the natural aspects of pregnancy and relationships. “Woman to Man” celebrates “the intricate and folded rose, which “blossoms” within her, creating a beautiful image of through her unborn child; “the third who lay in our embrace”. She juxtaposes the power of “the strength that your arm knows”, with the delicate “arc of flesh that is my breast”, which draws on the organic naturalness of their love. Throughout “Age to Youth”, Wright celebrates relationships; “nothings better than love” and gently explores the connection between “age” and “youth”, and states that “the message we should send... is that every kiss and glance is truer than the truth”. The light, celebratory tone of these poems creates a contrast to those of death and loss, and draws on the power and vibrancy of natural aspects of life.

Throughout Wright’s poetry, a balance is created between her reluctant acceptance of loss and death as inevitable aspects of our lives, and the powerful vibrancy of the natural world, and organic concepts such as pregnancy and love, which contrast strongly with the loss of aboriginal culture, or the death of the Australian enviroment, and explicitly conveys Wright’s innermost thoughts and views of life.