



MEDIA RELEASE

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CAMPAIGN URGES VICTORIANS TO SUPPORT TRADITIONAL OWNERS NOW, WE CAN'T WAIT FOR TREATY

The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations (Federation) has today launched the 'Don't stop now' campaign, encouraging Victorians to support wider strategies and projects that affect First Peoples in Victoria.

The progress achieved by Victorian Traditional Owners is historic, being the only state or territory in Australia to have implemented processes to achieve Treaty, Truth-telling and creation of an independent Treaty Authority.

Building on this momentum, the campaign emphasises that now is the time to bring to the fore other conversations important to First Peoples.

The campaign will be rolled out across social media and will encourage Victorians to support key issues affecting Traditional Owners that require urgent action from the Victorian Government.

Important issues highlighted include the use of cultural fire, the native foods and botanicals industry and water rights, amongst others.

Cultural fire and burning are practiced by Traditional Owners across Victoria as a way to care for Country.

Many Traditional Owners are prevented from conducting cultural fire practices due to legislative, regulatory and resourcing arrangements, preventing fulfilment of their cultural rights and obligations.

A large portion of the native foods and botanicals industry is controlled by non-Traditional Owners in Victoria. Traditional Owner participation in the industry and use of their unique knowledge is directly affected by a lack of protection for Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) in the Australian legal system.

Successive government policies have forced the dispossession of lands and waters causing significant trauma for Traditional Owners. Traditional Owners cannot heal themselves or Country as they don't have decision-making authority over the ways in which water is used, in direct conflict with principles of self-determination.

Other topics that will feature as part of the campaign include the upcoming 2026 Commonwealth Games, cultural landscapes, game management, nation building, procurement practices within government, renewable energy, cultural heritage reform, self-determination and Victorian Government strategies.

Each of the causes featured in the campaign have solution strategies outlined by the Federation, which Victorians are encouraged to rally behind.

The campaign will run for four weeks until 29 September. To learn more, visit the Federation's Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/fvtoc>

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QUOTES ATTRIBUTABLE TO:

Paul Paton, CEO, Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations:

“The purpose of the ‘Don’t stop now campaign’ is to remind Victorians that while our State may be leading the nation in Treaty and Truth-telling, there are still many important causes outside of these processes that are vitally important to Traditional Owners. Each of these causes is just as deserving of our time and support.”

“The campaign will shine a light on many of the issues that non-Aboriginal Victorians may not be aware of but if addressed will positively affect everyone. These issues are core to the self-determination of our State’s Traditional Owners and consequently the wellbeing of all in the community.”

“The Federation has many strategies in place to address the most pressing issues that affect Traditional Owners. What we need now is for Victorians to make their voices heard so that these strategies can become a reality.”

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