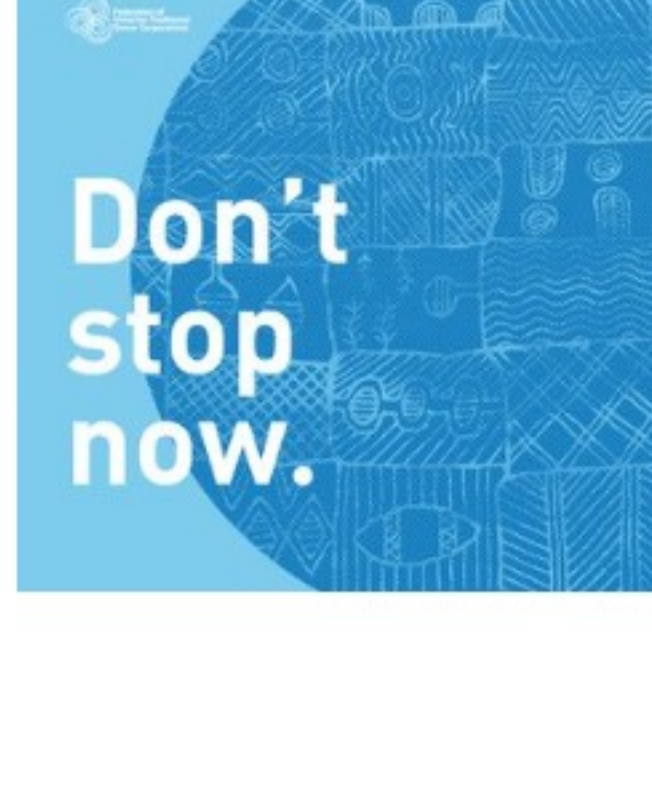


Don't stop now.



DON'T STOP NOW

Victoria is at the forefront of Treaty and Truth-telling in Australia, removing many barriers to First Peoples realising true self-determination.

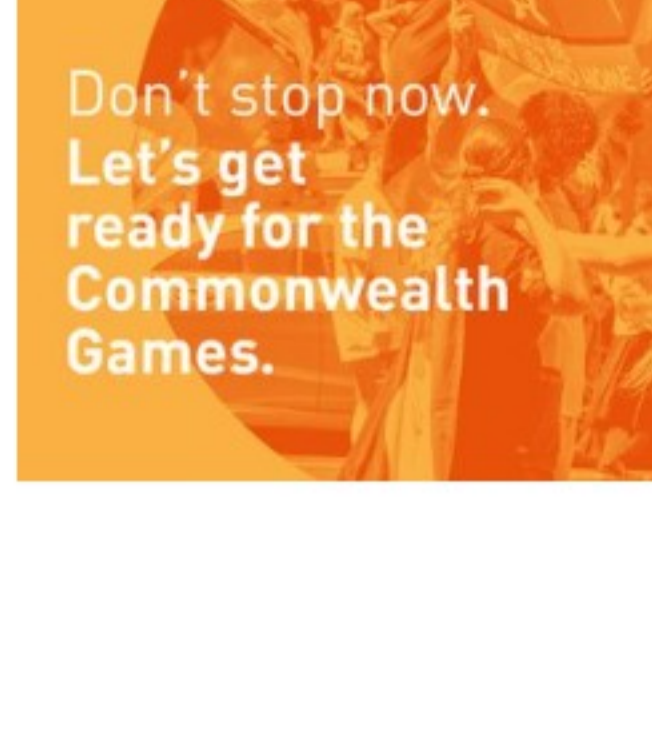
But we can't stop now, there are other issues that affect Traditional Owners that require support from all Victorians. We need to harness the momentum and keep generating progress for Victoria's First Peoples.



CULTURE CAN'T WAIT

It's time for First Peoples to have their cultures genuinely respected.

The Victorian Government's leading work must continue to progress key cultural issues. While Treaty will have a profound impact on the lives of Traditional Owners, there are changes can be made now that require your support. So, whether it's the Commonwealth Games, Cultural Landscapes, cultural fire or anything else affecting our ancient cultures, it can't wait.



LET'S GET READY FOR THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES

We must seize this opportunity and support First Nations Peoples to provide world class cultural experiences.

The 2026 Commonwealth Games will be the first ever predominantly regional Commonwealth Games, taking place across multiple cities and regional hubs. It is essential that cultural provision at the Games is made by representative and inclusive Traditional Owner groups and that their Indigenous Cultural Intellectual Property is protected. The tourism generated by the Games will extend across the state. Traditional Owner Corporations cover 75% of Victoria and are large regional employers and providers of Cultural tourism. However, there is no specific provision for most of the Corporations to scale current business capacity or develop new ventures to ensure they can leverage long term economic development opportunities from the Games.

Corporations need financial support and business scaling assistance to ensure that they are able to realise the full benefits of the Games both in 2026 and beyond. To do this, they must receive financial support to increase production in existing content provision areas of the business, create new businesses that will provide support to the Games and develop new cultural content for the Games. read more about our [Vision for the 2026 Commonwealth Games](#).



LET'S TALK ABOUT CULTURAL FIRE

For 60,000 years, cultural fire has been an essential way for Traditional Owners to care for Country.

Today however existing legislative, regulatory and resourcing arrangements largely continue to be barriers to the reintroduction of cultural fire to Country across the state of Victoria.

Providing Traditional Owners with the freedom to apply cultural fire to Country will ensure culturally important animals and plants, as well as cultural knowledge, can exist for future generations. Implementation of the [Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Fire Strategy](#) will provide a sustained and strategic approach to resourcing and enabling Traditional Owner led governance, management and application of Cultural Fire to Country.



LET'S MANAGE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Our cultural landscape continues to reflect invasion and colonisation. We must take steps to enable Traditional Owners to play a leading role in the governance, planning and management of their Country.

Existing systems, structures and practices do not enable Traditional Owners' worldview, ontology, history, institutions, practices and networks of relationships to be applied in the management of Country.

The [Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscape Strategy](#) sets out a strategic approach to create an environment in which Traditional Owners can play the lead role in the governance, planning and management of their Country and in the application of their knowledge and practice in land and water management.



LET'S REDEFINE GAME MANAGEMENT ON COUNTRY

Game management is an essential aspect of the way Traditional Owners care for Country, as well as a vital expression of identity for First Peoples. We must change our approach to game management, holistically incorporating cultural knowledge and practices to promote healthy populations of animals on Country. Traditional Owners possess the valuable knowledge and skills necessary to protect native species and habitats. This knowledge has been passed down through generations.

There is currently a lack of recognition of traditional knowledge and practice in the management of game in Victoria. This is exacerbated by the absence of collaborative management through a cultural landscapes approach and poor management of hunting reserves such as State Game Reserves (SGRs).

The [Traditional Owner Game Management Strategy](#) and the accompanying Implementation Plan sets out a practical approach to collaborative management of hunting areas and species within a Cultural Landscape approach.



LET'S SUPPORT NATION BUILDING

To achieve the shared goals and objectives of their communities, First Nations must be supported to come together, organise and govern in a culturally legitimate way. Activating rights as Traditional Owners over Traditional Country is a fundamental part of this.

Traditional Owner Corporations are largely responding to proponents and government agencies without the resources to progress their own agenda. Nation-building requires adequate resources to properly engage the group and build capacity to ensure nation-building is part of the fabric of day-to-day Traditional Owner business.

It is essential that principles from the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#) are embedded in legislation and policy. Traditional Owners' self-determination must be supported in practice by implementing systemic change and transferring authority and resources to Traditional Owner groups/nations.



LET'S RECLAIM THE NATIVE FOOD INDUSTRY

For over 60,000 years, Traditional Owners have held medicinal, dietary and harvesting knowledge about plants on Country. Today's native foods and botanicals industry is profiting from this knowledge.

The Australian legal system does not currently protect Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) from exploitation by others including where that ICIP relates to the use and management of native plants. As a result, the native foods and botanicals industry is growing without Traditional Owners having their place within that industry recognised and protected.

The [Victorian Traditional Owner Native Food and Botanicals Strategy](#) provides guidance to laying the foundations for a strong Traditional Owner led industry. Greater and more rapid progress could be made through legislative and regulatory reform and, potentially, Treaty.

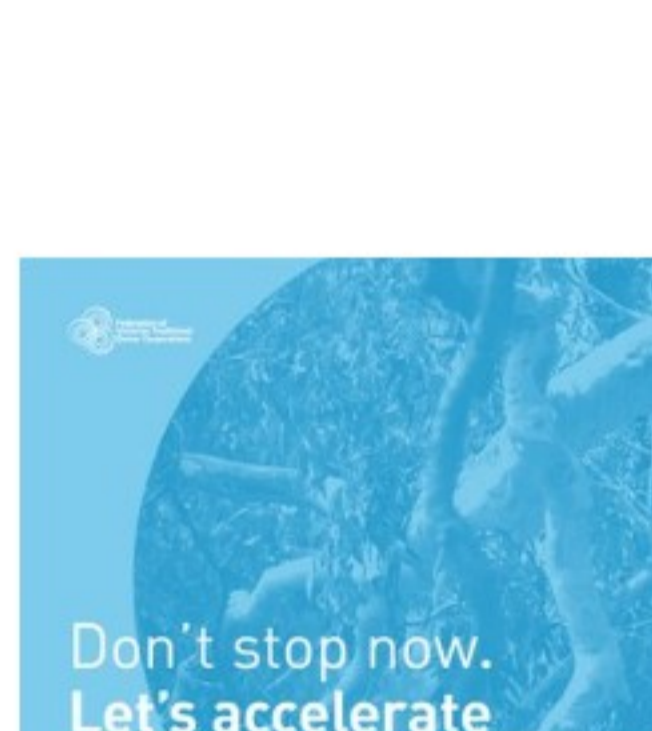


LET'S BECOME THE LEADERS IN FIRST PEOPLES' ECONOMIC GROWTH

Victoria is significantly behind the rest of Australia in its approach to Indigenous procurement and in the targets it commits to achieving. It's time to support Indigenous business to create significant jobs growth and become economic sector contributors through procurement policy reform.

Indigenous procurement plans and targets are necessary to support Traditional Owner groups who are looking to build the foundations for economic success.

It's time for the Victorian Government to develop a co-designed Indigenous Preferential Procurement Program that aligns with best practice in the context of the Victorian economy and the circumstance of Victoria's Traditional Owners. Doing so will support significant economic development within community and support Indigenous business to grow and become economic sector contributors.



LET'S ACCELERATE RENEWABLE ENERGY

As Victoria works towards becoming a climate change conscious state, all Victorians can benefit from Traditional Owners' knowledge of managing and mitigating climate change.

The renewable energy sector is complex and rapidly expanding. Traditional Owners are not adequately resourced to build the knowledge base and gain required technical, legal and financial advice to be able to engage in a proactive way with the expansion of the sector. Project developers should develop meaningful partnerships with Traditional Owners to negotiate benefit sharing agreements in relation to renewable energy projects.

A Traditional Owner Renewable Energy Roadmap should be developed to define a range of pathways for Traditional Owners to benefits from the expansion of the renewable energy sector. Traditional Owner groups should be adequately resourced to build their internal capacities and knowledge bases to enable them to realise their aspirations in the renewables sector.



LET'S REALISE SELF-DETERMINATION

Indigenous Peoples have an internationally recognised right to authority in making decisions affecting their own communities. In the future Treaty will provide an extraordinary opportunity but, starting now, the Victorian Government can enact structural and legislative reforms to build towards true self-determination across Country and culture.

Despite a stated commitment to self-determination and the transfer of power, resources and control to Traditional Owners in government policy frameworks, significant structural and legislative reform is needed to remove the barriers to enable self-determination in practice.

It's time to embed principles from UNDRIP in legislation and policy. Achieving the vision requires structural change that enables the transfer of resources and authority out of Government to enable self-determination in practice. Embarking on this learning journey with Traditional Owners in a way that supports the co-capacity development required to make this transition.

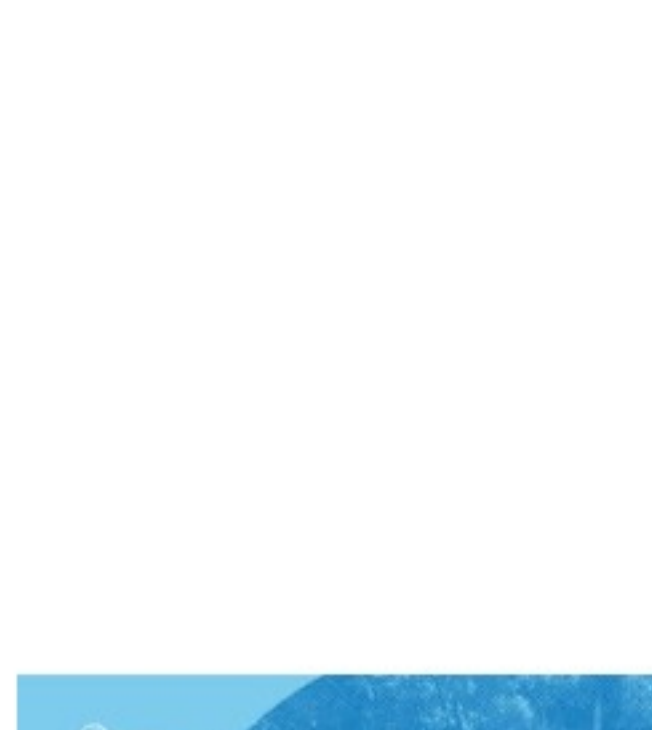


LET'S LEAD THROUGH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local government is responsible for many of the systems that impact everyone's lives. Improving Traditional Owner participation at a local government level is essential in protecting Traditional Owners' rights to make decisions for their communities.

The Victorian Government and local councils are responsible for many of the systems and structures that govern First Peoples' lives. Currently, Abariginal people are not appointed to positions of authority to determine what actions are in their communities' best interests. Self-determination in this regulatory and community environment requires systemic and generational reform.

All levels of government must make significant cultural shifts in the way they think about how they value, respect, and invest in Aboriginal knowledge, systems, and expertise. This means new legal and policy frameworks must be built to help create cultural change that shifts mindsets, actions, and behaviours. The Victorian Government must support Traditional Owners to provide valuable engagement with local government processes, so they can inform decisions affecting their communities.



LET'S PRIORITISE WATER JUSTICE

Successive government policies have forced the dispossession of lands and waters causing significant trauma for Traditional Owners. It's time for the Victorian Government to partner with Traditional Owners as equal decision-making authorities in water management.

Making decisions about water on Country is an essential element of Traditional Owner self-determination, especially when it comes to economic development, creating health on Country and wellbeing among Community.

Victorian Traditional Owners currently hold less than 0.0006 per cent of water share entitlements in the State, which restricts their ability to care for Country. The Federation urges the Victorian Government to provide significant long-term funding for the [Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap](#) to ensure this is changed in the future.



LET'S PROTECT OUR SACRED SITES

For over 60,000 years, Traditional Owners have cared for cultural heritage and Country. In a national context, they have detailed the support they need to continue this care. Cultural Heritage Management and Legislation.

Protection of cultural heritage means caring for our sacred sites, safeguarding our languages and having control of decisions about its care. It's time for the Victorian Government to meet the national Best Practice Standards in Indigenous Cultural Heritage Management and Legislation.