

## Media Statement

31 October 2025

# Victorian Government is on notice to get out of the way of Traditional Owner Treaties

Significant attention and resourcing must be placed on Traditional Owner Treaties as the gateway for practical change in Aboriginal lives now that Statewide Treaty has passed both houses of Victorian Parliament, says the statewide body advocating for Traditional Owner groups' rights and interests.

The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations welcomes last night's vote that passed the Statewide Treaty Bill through the Legislative Council, guaranteeing the historic Treaty will become law – and urged Victorians to now focus on unlocking the potential of Traditional Owner-level Treaties as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for true progress.

"We know Treaty will improve life outcomes for Aboriginal communities, and it's in Traditional Owner Treaties we'll see the economic transformation, driven by land rights, that will set us up for generations to come," said Federation interim CEO Kaley Nicholson.

Economic [modelling](#) commissioned by the Federation found a rights-driven economic transformation could bring \$1 billion in benefits for the wider Victorian economy across productivity, health, tourism and employment, from a \$300 million investment over 40 years in the Traditional Owner groups that will negotiate future Treaties.

But the Federation is concerned that while the Government's historic investment in and commitment to Statewide Treaty is being rightfully celebrated, its policies and decisions are eroding the potential rights that would be negotiated under forthcoming Traditional Owner Treaties.

"The Victorian Government must not get in the way of good-faith negotiations and practical Treaty outcomes by approving mines, allocating fishing licenses and creating national parks before Traditional Owner groups have a chance to come to the table and negotiate over these resources, which were stolen, but always theirs," said Ms Nicholson.

The Federation believes the Aboriginal communities and their Country represented by the state's 12 formally recognised Traditional Owner Corporations are too often undervalued and overlooked – which must be rectified to ensure Traditional Owner Treaties are negotiated in good faith and just in their outcomes.

Traditional Owner Corporations collectively speak for nearly 80 per cent of Victoria, [comprise](#) one-sixth of Victoria's \$700 million Aboriginal economy, and are some of their regions' largest providers of employment opportunity and economic activity.

"Statewide Treaty is an incredible, significant and welcome achievement, and it's just the beginning – because Traditional Owner Treaties are where we'll really see generational change for our communities, and the proudly progressive state of Victoria," said Ms Nicholson.

"They're good for mob, good for the economy, good for Victoria, and will put us on the right side of history."

– ENDS –

## About the Federation

The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations is the Victorian state-wide body that convenes and advocates for the rights of Traditional Owners while progressing wider social, economic, environmental and cultural objectives. It was established in 2013 by Traditional Owner Corporations – inclusive and representative family group-governed organisations with cultural authority to speak for Country and community – who recognised they could be stronger together in advancing shared interests in policy, economic opportunity and caring for Country.

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