Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations

Media Statement

11 August 2026

Victorian Traditional Owner body welcomes international Indigenous investment partnership

The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations welcomes today's announcement of a landmark Indigenous investment partnership as a critical step towards Traditional Owners' economic self-determination and intergenerational prosperity.

Federation CEO Kaley Nicholson said the relationship between Indigenous Business Australia and the New Zealand iwi Waikato-Tainui, announced today, was an unprecedented opportunity to unlock Indigenous economic potential on both sides of the Tasman.

"Traditional Owners have the capability, vision and drive, but are systemically locked out of the capital needed to accelerate independent economic development and provide for our communities," said Ms Nicholson.

"We've been calling for increased access to markets, capital and land for a long time, and this commitment to shared investment wealth, infrastructure investment, and project ownership for Victorian Traditional Owners is exactly what's needed. We see the opportunity to combine the experience and market knowledge of iwi Māori with the unique economic potential emerging in Victoria, boosting economic potential on both sides of the Tasman."

The Traditional Owner Economic Development Roadmap outlined the systemic barriers preventing Traditional Owners of Country in Victoria from participating in the economy – including restricted access to capital, land, markets and decision-making power – and outlined 23 ambitious steps, over three staged horizons, to end cyclical disadvantage and enable long-term prosperity for Victorian Traditional Owner communities.

Indigenous Business Australia and Waikato-Tainui have a combined balance sheet of $4.4 billion, and are prepared to explore investments in Traditional Owner organisations that could enable self-determination, stewardship and prosperity for future generations.

Ms Nicholson said international Indigenous investment in Traditional Owners was an important way to centre Country in economic development, while making gains in efficiency, competitiveness and prosperity.

"Indigenous investment from overseas powering the Traditional Owner economy keeps Country and culture at the centre of everything, and creates new, investable opportunities that link mob to markets and drive sustainable economic growth for our future. We couldn't be happier to see today's news, and look forward to seeing how Traditional Owners seize this landmark opportunity."

– 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.

Media enquiries – Sophie Raynor, 0434 578 933 or sophie.raynor@fvtoc.com.au