

To Whom It May Concern

30-03-2022

Re: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act Review

Please accept this brief submission to your current review of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Acts.

I believe that it is essential, and morally and culturally right, that Indigenous Peoples manage and protect of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage through self-determined processes and protocols. The State or other businesses and corporations should not be the decision-makers or have legal powers over those of the appropriate and relevant Traditional Cultural Custodians.

To achieve these ends, I would like to see the Cultural Heritage Acts reformed to:-

- I. Amend the definition of 'Aboriginal party' so that Traditional Owners with cultural connection to Country can be involved in consultation and negotiation processes, regardless of their status as a native title party.
- II. Create greater enforcement powers for First Nations, so that we aren't reliant on the State to protect our cultural heritage if it is in imminent danger of harm or destruction.
- III. Establish an independent First Nations-led decision-making body that is responsible for dispute resolution and mediation, and for assessing who the right people to speak for Country are.

I thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Catherine Ryan

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