



Lodge a written submission

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Organisation Name :

Phone :

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Q.1 Please upload your document.

A.

Q.2 Do you have any comments you wish to add?

A. Whilst I'm not sure if this would count as a submission, I am writing to voice my concerns regarding the current Cultural Heritage Act, and suggesting reforms. Primarily, I'm concerned about the lack of veto power indigenous groups have over development works on their land. I believe that, unless indigenous people have the final say on whether works go ahead, there will never be an Act that truly respects their human rights. Therefore, the Act must be reformed to give Traditional Owners the ability to veto any work at any point. As well, Traditional Owners must be given greater enforcement powers on the ground, in the event that cultural heritage is protected from immediate danger, rather than needing to go through often time-consuming processes that could be devastating.

Secondly, I have issues with the consultation process. I believe who is invited to discussions and whose opinion is considered valid in regards to what happens on Country is something that must be decided by communities, not Government bodies. Therefore, new laws must be enacted that require for communities in question to form their own groups to discuss any potential developments on their land. Also, the term 'Aboriginal Party' must be changed to allow all those with cultural connection to the land to speak for it, not just legally declared Native Title holders. In order to mediate disputes over this topic, an Indigenous led independent body must be formed for the purpose of handling these processes.

I believe that the only way we can achieve true reconciliation with First Nations groups is by placing their relationship with the land over potential profits and developments, and allowing them genuine control over any projects proposed on their lands.