



28 August 2024

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
Senate Inquiry into Offshore Wind Industry Consultation Process
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Submission to Inquiry into Offshore Wind Industry Consultation Process

The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owner Corporations (**Federation**) is the Victorian state-wide body that convenes and advocates for the rights and interests of Traditional Owner groups while progressing wider social, economic, environmental, and cultural objectives. We support agreement-making and participation in decision-making that enhances the authority of Traditional Owner Corporations in speaking for Country on behalf of their communities.

The Federation endorses and supports the Sea Country Alliance submission.

In doing so, we also highlight that Victoria is rapidly transitioning to renewable energy. This is placing significant importance on the role of Traditional Owners across the State including within Traditional Owners' areas of responsibility for Sea Country. With this importance is also a responsibility for (i) governments – to ensure the regulatory environment and decision-making is fit for purpose (ii) proponents – to ensure there is good faith in reaching agreements with Traditional Owners (iii) Traditional Owners in speaking for Country and community to enjoy the social and economic benefits derived from off shore wind activity.

Engagement and consultation based on free, prior and informed consent is critical to the processes of licensing and using resources for offshore wind development. This must recognise Traditional Owners' unceded interests in those lands and waters, and respect the millenia deep connections as part of the cultural heritage of the Country.

We strongly urge the Committee to take steps that help to discontinue the history of dispossession.

Yours sincerely

Paul Paton
Chief Executive Officer