

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Friday, 27 August 2021

STRATEGY FOR TRADITIONAL OWNER MANAGEMENT OF COUNTRY

A new *Victorian Traditional Owner Cultural Landscapes Strategy* has been launched today setting out pathways to restore knowledge systems and return decision making powers to Traditional Owners.

The strategy was developed and written by Traditional Owners with support from the Victorian Government and land management agencies.

It provides a strategic framework for Traditional Owners to lead the management of Country in line with cultural obligations.

Access to Country and managing living cultural landscapes through cultural land and fire management practices is a vital part of self-determination. The Government is partnering with Traditional Owners to reform the systems and processes that create barriers to that self-determination.

The strategy seeks to address the significant impact European colonisation has had on Traditional Owner rights and obligations to care for Country by restoring knowledge systems and reconnecting Traditional Owners to Country and cultural land management practice.

The Federation of Victorian Traditional Owners Corporations coordinated and facilitated the development of the strategy, with \$350,000 provided by Government.

A further \$2.6 million was provided to fund officer roles in all 11 Traditional Owner Corporations to support Traditional Owner participation in Regional Forestry Agreement initiatives, including the development of the Cultural Landscapes Strategy.

As part of the *Victorian Budget 2021/22*, the Government is providing \$11 million to Traditional Owner Corporations to implement the Cultural Landscape Strategy on Country.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio

"We believe in self-determination and are proud to have worked in partnership with Traditional Owners on this strategy."

"We recognise the difficult and traumatic history First Nations people have experienced and are ensuring Traditional Owners have the power to make decisions about the care and management of Country in Victoria."

Quote attributable to Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Gabrielle Williams

"Strategies like this one are so important – not just in what they say, but how they are created – led by Traditional Owners."