



**Jack Green, Garawa Traditional Owner, 'Everywhere, all around us are the Dreaming Tracks and Sacred Sites.'**

**EDO supports the YES campaign to empower and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through a Voice.**

**June 2023**

The Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) supports the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples in the Constitution and the establishment of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice. Everyone should be treated equitably, and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the creation of a Voice is important to creating a fairer society.

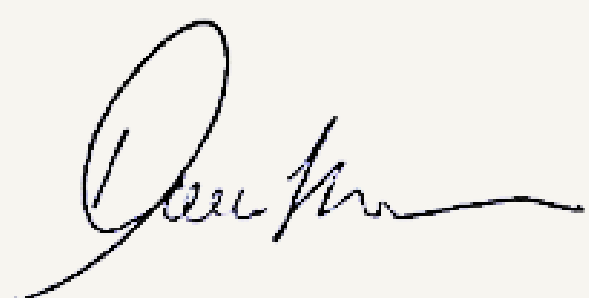
EDO works alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and individuals across Australia. Respecting more than 65 000 years of wisdom and leadership is a key principle of the way we operate, and in that we respect that there are various Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander views about the Voice.

The question asked of Australians at this year's referendum will be to support the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the creation of a Voice to Parliament. The creation of a voice is one of three crucial elements that were outlined in the Uluru Statement from the Heart - voice, treaty, and truth. All three elements of the statement are critical and must be worked on alongside one another.

Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the creation of a Voice provides an era of positive possibilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to set their own course – building on their strengths and resilience which will benefit the whole of Australia.

This referendum will provide an opportunity for Australia to unite as a nation - respecting, valuing, and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and cultures. A positive outcome of this referendum will also give momentum towards working together on broader justice issues. How the Voice operates will need to be informed by a process of deep consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities far and wide.

EDO's staff are united by a sense of pride to be living and working on the lands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations of this continent and sharing this place with the oldest continuous cultures in the world. Whether we have been here for 5 years, 5 generations or 5000 generations, everyone deserves the opportunity to be treated equitably, and a positive outcome of this referendum can move Australia closer to being a fairer society.



David Morris, CEO



Casey Kickett, Director, First Nations